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Aplicaciones

TESIS DOCTORAL

**YOUNG ADULT DYSTOPIAN NOVELS OF THE  
TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY: CULTURAL DIMENSIONS  
AND RECEPTION OF S. WESTERFELD'S *UGLIES*, S.  
COLLINS' *THE HUNGER GAMES*, V. ROTH'S  
*DIVERGENT* AND B. REVIS' *ACROSS THE UNIVERSE***

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## Abstract

With the recent increase in popularity of dystopian science fiction novels targeting young adults (YA), academic interest has veered towards the themes and roles that these novels discuss, with the most frequent approaches ranging from feminism to education and from economy to sociology. This study focuses on YA dystopian fiction using a double, yet complementary, approach based on cultural dimensions and human needs and motivations with the aim to examine reader engagement. The four trilogies analysed, published before, during or after the onset of the 2008 economic crisis, are Scott Westerfeld's *Uglies*, Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games*, Veronica Roth's *Divergent* and B. Revis' *Across the Universe*. On the one hand, a cultural analysis of the societies depicted in the novels using Hofstede's six dimensions of culture helps to establish the differences and similarities, first, between the different societies within the same novel, and, second, between these societies and the cultures of three western countries: Spain, the UK and the USA. On the other hand, using Maslow's hierarchy of human needs as a basis, the satisfaction –or deprivation– of these needs in the aforementioned societies is analysed, establishing connections between the events narrated and the circumstances of the three real countries in the context of the years following the onset of the 2008 economic crisis. Thus, by linking these circumstances in fiction and reality I aim to offer insights into possible determinants of reader engagement of dystopian fiction among adolescents in this period. The results contribute to research on reader response and engagement, while offering a new perspective on the protagonists' basic and higher needs, from hunger to self-actualization. Regarding the topics analysed, the results offer insights on the problems of food distribution, new dietary trends, immigration and othersiation, supremacism, sacrifice, romantic love, the importance of family, depression and suicide, self-esteem and peer support, and academic achievement, among others. These topics are discussed considering not only the results of an annotation process, that is, the results of the analysis of the novels, but also the cultural characteristics of the societies. In this regard, cultural features prove to be an important factor in the interpretation of motivations and decisions made by the heroines.



## Resumen breve

Con el incremento de la popularidad de la ciencia ficción distópica juvenil, el interés académico ha virado hacia los temas y roles que se tratan en estas novelas, con enfoques que incluyen desde el feminismo a la educación y desde el ámbito económico al sociológico. Este estudio sobre la ficción distópica juvenil emplea un enfoque doble pero complementario, basado en las dimensiones culturales y las necesidades y motivaciones humanas y tiene como objetivo examinar la identificación del lector. Las cuatro trilogías analizadas, publicadas antes, durante y después del comienzo de la crisis económica de 2008 son *Uglies*, de Scott Westerfeld, *The Hunger Games*, de Suzanne Collins, *Divergent*, de Verónica Roth, y *Across the Universe*, de Beth Revis. Por una parte, el análisis cultural de las sociedades descritas mediante las dimensiones culturales de Hofstede permite establecer las diferencias y similitudes, tanto entre las varias sociedades descritas dentro de una misma novela, como entre estas sociedades y las culturas de tres países occidentales: España, Reino Unido y Estados Unidos. Por otra parte, empleando la jerarquía de las necesidades humanas de Maslow como base, se analiza la satisfacción o privación de estas necesidades en las sociedades ya mencionadas, a la vez que se establecen conexiones entre los acontecimientos narrados y las circunstancias de las tres sociedades reales en el contexto de los años que siguieron al comienzo de la crisis de 2008. Así, la conexión entre estos acontecimientos en la realidad y la ficción pretende ampliar el conocimiento existente sobre los posibles determinantes de la identificación del lector de ficción distópica entre adolescentes en este periodo. Los resultados contribuyen a la investigación sobre recepción e identificación lectora a la vez que presentan un punto de vista novedoso sobre las necesidades humanas de las protagonistas, desde el hambre hasta la realización personal. Respecto a los temas analizados, los resultados ofrecen información sobre los problemas de distribución de los alimentos, las nuevas dietas, la inmigración y discriminación, el supremacismo, el sacrificio, el amor romántico, la importancia de la familia, la depresión y el suicidio, la autoestima y el apoyo de los compañeros, y los logros académicos entre otros.

## Resum breu

Amb l'increment de la popularitat de la ciència ficció distòpica juvenil, l'interès acadèmic ha virat cap als temes i rols que es tracten a aquestes novel·les, amb enfocaments que van des del feminisme a l'educació i de l'àmbit econòmic al sociològic. Aquest estudi sobre la ficció distòpica juvenil fa servir un enfocament doble però complementari basat en les dimensions culturals i les necessitats i motivacions humanes amb l'objectiu d'examinar la identificació del lector. Les quatre trilogies analitzades, publicades abans, durant, o després del començament de la crisi econòmica són *Uglies*, de Scott Westerfeld, *The Hunger Games*, de Suzanne Collins, *Divergent*, de Verònica Roth, i *Across the Universe*, de Beth Revis. D'una banda, l'anàlisi cultural de les societats descrites a les novel·les mitjançant les sis dimensions culturals de Hofstede permet establir diferències i similituds, per una part, entre les diferents societats dins de la mateixa trilogia, i, per l'altra, entre aquestes societats i les cultures de tres països occidentals: Espanya, Regne Unit, i Estats Units. D'altra banda, fent servir la jerarquia de les necessitats humanes de Maslow com base, s'analitza la satisfacció o privació d'aquestes necessitats a les societats ja mencionades, tot establint connexions entre els esdeveniments narrats i les circumstàncies de les tres societats reals al context dels anys que seguiren al començament de la crisi de 2008. Així, la connexió entre aquestes circumstàncies en la realitat i la ficció pretén ampliar el coneixement existent sobre els possibles factors determinants de la identificació del lector de ficció distòpica entre adolescents en aquest període. Els resultats contribueixen a la investigació sobre la recepció i identificació lectora alhora que presenten un nou punt de vista sobre les necessitats humanes de les protagonistes, des de la fam a la realització personal. Quant als temes analitzats, els resultats ofereixen informació sobre els problemes de la distribució del menjar, les noves dietes, la immigració i discriminació, el supremacisme, el sacrifici, l'amor romàntic, la importància de la família, la depressió i el suïcidi, l'autoestima i el suport dels companys, i els èxits acadèmics entre altres.

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Over the past few decades, young adult (YA) fiction has obtained overwhelming popularity, engaging young readers through magic, vampires or heroines with a bow and arrows who defy the system. Targeting middle and late adolescents, the new wave of dystopian/science fiction reached unprecedented success with the publication of *The Hunger Games trilogy* (Collins, 2008, 2009, 2010). The trilogy's success and its film adaptations then paved the way for other works of the genre such as the *Divergent* novels (Roth, 2011, 2012, 2013), which were also notably well received. YA dystopian fiction can be considered a global phenomenon whose popularity has been partly attributed to the mixture of romance and fantasy with a political undercurrent that allows adolescents and adults to enjoy the stories while identifying darker versions of some of the features of our systems and societies.

This type of literature developed from the utopian tradition and, more particularly, from the dystopian visions of the future of 20<sup>th</sup> century fiction such as Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932) and Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949). Both subgenres, YA fiction and dystopian fiction, acquired partial academic acceptance only in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the case of children's literature, its relevance was downplayed given its lack of linguistic and stylistic complexity, while utopian literature was deemed unworthy of the literary focus because of its political and socioeconomic

connotations. Furthermore, some critics argue that good literature has conflict and dark events as a requisite, which would leave utopian fiction out. One may say, as Moores does (2018, p. 261), that conflict may be an important part of narrative, but these stories, as part of inspirational literature, typically end with a positive tone. In this sense, and despite the gloomy post-apocalyptic settings of the dystopian fiction subgenre, many of these novels, particularly those targeting a YA audience, have endings that show social improvement, hope, or personal growth of the protagonist.

Dystopian fiction's suitability in this study derives from the basic premise that cultural contributions such as novels are representations and interpretations of individuals as part of their communities. Unlike other subgenres, utopian and dystopian fiction's connection to social and political criticism is much more obvious. The particularly negative socioeconomic circumstances of the last decade, particularly the financial crisis and its global impact, may have offered the perfect breeding ground for these novels to engage the public and often to develop into trilogies; they offer not only the right content, with its pessimistic visions of the future and extrapolations of current problems, but also the means for engagement and identification of the readers: adolescents who have grown experiencing or being witness of the effects of the crisis on their families and their societies.

The popularity of this subgenre has fostered scholarly research on their themes, influences, educational possibilities and reception amongst their target audience. However, culture is seldom considered and studies that include the cultural approach typically focus on a single culture or cultures within a country. Plenty of studies have analysed the dystopian elements of the most popular novels of the subgenre like the panopticon surveillance, the use of repression and violence, the lack of freedom or the restricted agency of the population. These elements have been connected to greater or lesser extent with issues affecting real societies particularly concerning the extremes of technology use. Most of the studies comparing these novels focus on two novels, while in most cases comprehensive approaches to YA dystopian fiction take the form of essay collections. Each of these essays typically deals with a trilogy or novel or with a character and a specific topic. Wide-scope studies focusing simultaneously on various novels are inexistent.

Furthermore, to the best of my knowledge, existing research does not offer a cross-cultural approach on similarities and disparities between fictional and real societies in light of reader identification elements. Moreover, some studies have delved

into aspects of human needs such as affiliation elements (e.g. female friendship) or self-esteem in some of the novels of my corpus; however, these studies rely on the citation of quotes to support the ideas of the researcher and are therefore corpus-based rather than corpus-driven approaches.

This dissertation presents an interdisciplinary approach to YA dystopian fiction. The study draws on 1) the key importance of culture in assessing social organization, 2) the relevant role of historical events in the formation of yardsticks shared by a community, and on 3) the influence of teenage psychology and experience on reader engagement. Thus, this doctoral dissertation offers an analysis of four YA dystopian novels based on the following sets of questions:

SQ1: How are the cultures of the societies in the novels similar to or different from the cultures of western countries? How may these differences and similarities hinder or enhance reader engagement and identification?

SQ2: How do the problems posed by the represented societies reflect Maslow's theory of human motivation? What is the connection between these problems and current real events? How do these connections hinder or enhance reader engagement and identification?

In order to answer the first set of questions, I use Hofstede's six dimensions of culture to analyse the cultures described in the novels, the cultural traits that the protagonists complain about or rebel against, and the differences and similarities with cultural traits of Spain, the USA and the UK. This analysis aims to provide a detailed approach to the characteristics of dystopias written for young adults, offering the opportunity to identify cultural values criticised and seen as cause for dystopia while offering some insight into sources of engagement for readers of different cultures.

On the other hand, to approach the second set of questions, I analyse the satisfaction of the different human needs described by Maslow in the fictional societies through a systematic tagging of the novels. The resulting set of quotes tagged are discussed in light of previous research on some of the topics and of historical and recent events and situations that have taken place in Spain, the UK and the USA and that are related to the situations described. This analysis aims at shedding some light on culture-based reader reception in a globalized era.

The objectives of this dissertation are the following:

First, I attempt to analyse reader reception and engagement drawing on cultural similarities and disparities between three selected countries and the fictional societies

and on threats to the satisfaction of human needs –from food to self-actualization and self-transcendence– both in the novels and in those countries. The results are used to provide an in-depth cultural analysis of the models of dystopian fiction for young adults and considers the cultural journey as a variation of Vita Fortunati’s (1995) journey of the traveller in utopian fiction. These models are based on the cultural values reinforced or criticised, drawing on the culture of departure, the culture of arrival and the end culture (the final state of the social transformation narrated in modern dystopian novels).

Second, in connection with the previous objective, I aim at offering some information on the level of need satisfaction achievable by the protagonists in the given context, thus showing whether the heroines in the novels, as role models, represent different approaches to self-actualization.

The dissertation is structured as follows: Chapter 2 presents a review of the literature on utopian and dystopian fiction as a literary genre, exploring the popularity of YA fiction in recent years and the modern approaches to reader response. The review includes a discussion of approaches to the four trilogies that constitute the corpus – *Uglies*, *The Hunger Games*, *Across the Universe* and *Divergent*– and identifies the lack of a holistic approach to reader response and YA dystopian fiction through a cultural lens. Chapter 3 offers an overview of the chosen methods: Hofstede’s cultural dimensions and Maslow’s theory of human needs. This chapter justifies this choice and provides detailed information on other sources used to adapt Maslow’s theory to the present study, which involves its application to fictional worlds. Chapter 4 describes the cultures of the novels and presents a discussion of the similarities and differences among the different fictional societies but also between these societies and Spain, the UK and the USA, and the implied cultural criticisms. Chapter 5, the most extensive section, consists of five subsections, one for each of the main needs described by Maslow. Each subsection includes the results of the tagging of the novels for that specific need, which are displayed in a table and analysed to identify the major topics. This analysis is followed by a discussion of the identified topics that includes the connections between the threats to those needs faced by the protagonists and possible similar situations in real life that may be a source of engagement for readers from Spain, the UK and the USA. The last subsection, which deals with self-actualization and self-transcendence, delves into the overall journey of self-discovery of the characters in cultural terms and of awakening to the reality of their societies and discusses the heroic

role of the dystopian protagonist in shaping the better alternative as well as the challenges faced by teenagers regarding their self-actualization. Finally, the conclusions provide a summary of the main insights as well as the limitations of the study and future research opportunities.





## CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

### *2.1 Utopian fiction as a literary genre: literary utopia, dystopia and science fiction*

#### 2.1.1 Utopia: Eutopos, Outopos.

A utopian is a daydreamer, indeed, but does the fact that the dream cannot be achieved mean that we should not try to achieve it? Utopianism is broadly defined as social dreaming (Sargent, 1994, p. 3) and exists as an impulse (see Bloch, 1986), an urge to change socio-political injustices. This urge is present in “popular culture, in the fashion industry, dance, film, adventure stories, art, architecture, music and even medical science” (Sargisson, 1996, p. 12). It is nevertheless most clearly represented and transmitted through works of literature, which conform the utopian literary subgenre.

The literal meaning of the word used by Thomas More to describe his literary republic –utopia– has a Greek origin. It comes from ou-topos, where *ou* means “no” and *topos* means “place.” Thus, a utopia may be literally understood as a place that does not exist; however, as put forth by Mumford (1966, p. 276), “u” could also stand for “good,” eu-topos, hence changing the meaning of utopia to *good place*. With its duality, utopia has come to be the perfect representation of the subgenre named after the novel. A society that does not exist anywhere and that is an improved version of reality according to its author is considered the starting point of an ongoing stream of research

and theory that holds utopia as ideology but also as the object of literary study from the twentieth century onwards. According to Sargent (2010), there are three dimensions to utopianism: the literary genre, utopian social theory, and utopianism and intentional communities (p. 7).

Regarding the literary genre, More's *Libellus vere aureus, nec minus salutaris quam festivus, de optimo reipublicae statu, deque nova insula Vtopiae* (henceforth *Utopia*), published in 1516, represents a first formal literary attempt, a sketch of the path the genre would walk. Nevertheless, the utopian tradition can be traced back to visions and representations of better societies such as Plato's *Republic* (trans. 1871), *Cokaygne*, the biblical Eden, or the life of Essenes (Martínez, 1995). As Claeys (2011) indicates, the Greeks had the myth of the Golden Age, whereby people lived without growing old and without worries, with plenty to eat, while the Romans described their version of the myth as harmony and abundance under the ruling of god Saturn (pp. 17–18). Furthermore, the cities of Crete and Sparta represent some of the earliest examples directly connected to More's worldly model of a better place based on the prevalence of the common good (p. 24). Gerber's (1959) contribution to modern English utopian fiction accounts for some of the themes in this literary tradition, such as the better society, human evolution, the religion of progress or class struggles. Furthermore, the author identifies "the achievement of ever greater imaginative reality" as the aim of utopian writing (p. 26).

Many researchers have contributed to the discussion of the perfect definition of a literary utopia, and many of these definitions appear contradictory. Indeed, part of the problem at the core of utopian fiction is the fact that, like every complex concept, it resists definition. In 1972, Cioranescu (p. 22) defined it as "la description littéraire individualisée d'une société imaginaire, organisée sur des bases qui impliquent une critique sous-jacente de la société réelle." This broad definition, however, did not provide the necessary criteria to establish the limits of the literary subgenre. In an attempt to define what makes a work utopian, Morson (1981, p. 72) establishes three conditions. Thus, a utopia must be written "in the tradition of previous utopian literary works; (2) it depicts (or is taken to depict) an ideal society; and (3) regarded as a whole, it advocates (or is taken to advocate) the realization of that society." As an additional criterion, Sargent (1975, p. 143) argues that one of the key aspects of a literary utopia is that it must provide enough social description for an analysis of the society to be feasible. Eliav-Feldom's (1982, p. 1) definition focuses on the effect of the work on the

reader: "Utopia is an invitation to perceive the distance between things as they are and things as they should be." This definition reflects the intention of some utopian works that, with their prescriptive undertone, limit the discussion of possibilities that utopias are capable of arising (Ferns, 1999, p. 4). Both Morson's "ideal society" and Eliav-Feldom's prescriptivist conception associate utopia with perfection. Nevertheless, as Sargent (1975, p. 140) indicates, definitions stressing the perfection of the society depicted do not reflect the reality of the literary utopia. This point had already been established over a decade before Sargent argued his position. In 1961, Patrick argued that a utopia is "[a] society which is regarded as better, in some respects at least, than the one in which its author lives. He does not ordinarily claim that the fictitious society and its people are perfect in all respects" (p. 293).

A seemingly more complete definition is provided by Suvin (1979), who conceives a utopia as:

a verbal construction of a particular quasi-human community where sociopolitical institutions, norms, and individual relationships are organized according to a more perfect principle than in the author's community, this construction being based on estrangement arising out of an alternative historical hypothesis (p. 49).

However, this definition was considered too restrictive by Suvin himself in a later study in 1997 (p. 132), thus reviving the problem of finding the appropriate definition for a multidimensional concept. Vieira (2010) offers a wide conception of utopia as:

a strategy for the questioning of reality and of the present. Taking mainly the shape of a process, refusing the label of an 'impossible dream', utopia is a programme for change and for a gradual betterment of the present. [...] Utopia has become a strategy of creativity, clearing the way for the only path that man can possibly follow: the path of creation (p. 23).

In a definition that stresses the intention or purpose of the work, Levitas states that "utopia is about how we would live and what kind of a world we could live in if we could do just that" (2010, p. 1). More recently, Portolano (2012) has presented an approach to the rhetoric of utopia. She states that:

'utopia' is not an impossible political dream or a philosophical ideal but, rather, any kind of symbolic expression of hope for a better world, whether in a concrete future or in fictional or spiritual realms, and no matter if that expression is considered in a positive or negative light (p. 114).

The original form of a utopia is allegedly a mixture of the classical dialogue and the traveller's tale. In this regard, the first acknowledged relevant texts that form the

history of literary utopias, including More's novel, clearly contained elements of travel literature. In fact, Vita Fortunati's *La literatura utópica inglesa: Morfología y gramática de un género literario II* (1995, pp. 153–260) includes the travel as a core element of traditional utopias. Specifically, the author identifies the journey of a traveller into a new land in classical utopias including the description of the journey until the discovery of the new land or not among other variations. As a direct consequence of technological advances, and as all territories became known, the idea of finding an unknown land where utopia could exist became less plausible, thus breaking the implied agreement between writer and reader. Thus, the space dimension gave way to the temporal dimension and the novels of the genre became more intent on depicting the possible future and its societies.

The problem of the definition of utopia and the utopian literary subgenre is not the only challenge for research on this subject area. In fact, the literary subgenre was largely dismissed by the academia until the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. There are various arguments behind academics' refusal to acknowledge utopian fiction, some related to formal aspects such as poor characterization (Martínez López, 1997, p. 13). Although Ferns (1999, p. 5) suggests that the poor aesthetics of many utopian texts are the result of the writers' double intentionality –aesthetic and political– thus achieving neither, the truth is that a rather complex character would inevitably deviate the attention of the reader from the description of the new society to the psychological processes of the traveller. The traditional utopian traveller is thus generally lacking in complexity. Another issue has been the political content of the texts, which has been considered “naïvely impractical” (Ferns, 1999, p. 5). Historically associated with statism, and thus with the political left, and used by the right as a way to dismiss any attempts to control capitalism and the free market, utopia and utopianism are nowadays linked to a certain naiveté. Nevertheless, as Sargent suggests, utopias and anti-utopias have been written from all perspectives “socialist, capitalist, monarchical, democratic, anarchist, ecological, feminist, patriarchal, egalitarian, hierarchical, racist, left-wing, right-wing, reformist, free-love, nuclear family, extended family, gay lesbian,” etc. (Sargent, 2010, p. 21). This vision is shared by Ramiro-Avilés (2005, p. 88), who states that all ideologies may have a complementary relationship with a model of better society. Claeys (2011, p. 10) argues that despite the common association with modern socialism, Liberalism, which invoked the ideal of “universal opulence based on the division of labour and growth of trade [...] began failing to fulfil its promise.”

Allegedly, the reason behind academics' rejection to accept utopian fiction as a literary subgenre seems to come from its interdisciplinary nature. Today's confusion or perhaps mixture between utopian-dystopian and science fiction is only the last of a series of interactions of the subgenre with other themes and sciences including, as mentioned above, travel literature.

### 2.1.2 Dystopia and science fiction

Scholars have used a wide variety of terms to describe the different variations of the literary utopia, including eutopia, dystopia, anti-utopia, critical utopia, and critical dystopia among others. The literary utopia, unlike the social organization it describes, is not static. With the popularity of utopia and utopianism these other perspectives appeared.

The satirical utopia or utopian satire has its most iconic representation in an 18<sup>th</sup> century anti-utopia, *Gulliver's Travels* (Swift, 1723), and its purpose is to be seen by the reader as an iconoclastic response to Jonathan Swift's contemporary society and its naïve faith in "Reason." The anti-utopia –sometimes disguised as a utopia– represents a disbelief in the success of utopia, the idea of which is ridiculed. This concept surged around the 18<sup>th</sup> century and was coined by sceptics. These novels depict the impossibility or impracticability of the utopian society or on the potentially negative consequences of its realisation due to flawed human nature. The critical utopia involves a society that, like the utopia, is considered to be better than that of the author, but face difficulties that may or may not be overcome (Sargent, 1994, p. 9). The term dystopia appeared towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to describe the opposite of utopia: a place that is a worse alternative to the society of the author.

The term "dystopia" meaning bad place was reportedly first used in 1747 by Henry Lewis Younger in *Utopia: or Apollo's Golden Days* (Stock, 2011, p. 23). Nevertheless, the term has only been widely used from the 20<sup>th</sup> century onwards (Sargent, 2010, pp. 4, 27), propelled by the turn of the century global and national conflicts such as the Russian Revolution, WWI and WWII, which permeated the collective consciousness and boosted fears of totalitarian regimes.

According to Gerber (1959, p. 69):

[t]he original utopias were the best states because the citizens felt happy in them or because they at least safeguarded the greatest possible happiness of the greatest possible number. In modern scientific utopia, the citizens are

told to be happy because they are members of a community labelled: ‘Best State Possible’.

Therefore, following Gerber’s idea, failure of the state in preserving the natural order according to which utopian society is built –a society is designed to satisfy citizens, not the other way around– is what causes the society to become dystopian. Thus, dystopias of the first half of the twentieth century were fed by the fear of modern totalitarian regimes based on collectivism brought by an abuse of power of the government.

The association of dystopia with “bad place” as opposed to the “good place” that utopia is traditionally thought to represent is widely popular. However, the subgenre has evolved to the point where, according to Baccolini, traditional definitions based on the simplification of alternatives into “good” or “bad” are insufficient. Baccolini suggests that the dystopias of the 1980s were informed by changing socioeconomic circumstances, a sense of desperation and the cyberpunk. She argues that authors like Octavia Butler or Ursula LeGuin “refunctioned dystopia as critical narrative form that works against the grain of the grim economic, political and cultural climate” (Baccolini, 2003, p. 1). The critical dystopia is similar to the utopian satire in that both intend a criticism of the society of the author; however, as Moylan points out, the critical dystopia “offers not only astute critiques of the order of things but also extrapolations of the oppositional spaces and possibilities from which the next round of political activism can derive imaginative sustenance and inspiration” (Moylan, 2000, p. xv). Thus, ideas such as hope, or the realization or viability of rebellion are key. In this same vein, Alihodžić and Veseljević (2016, p. 36) argue that a definition fitting contemporary dystopias should include as key element a protagonist who initially agrees with or conforms to the system and eventually rebels against it, with an outcome that may be successful or not.

The definition of literary utopia is directly connected with its boundaries as a genre or subgenre. Utopian fiction is usually compared with science fiction with some scholars arguing that the former is included in the genre defined by the latter. The origins of science fiction are unclear not because of the absence of options but because it appears to surge as the product of multiple literary influences including utopian fiction as well as “the scientific romances of the nineteenth century, the science fictional novels of imperial Britain, or the pulp stories and paperbacks of neo-imperial United States” (Moylan, 2000, p. 4). Regarding the specific time of creation, Fitting (2010, p. 137) points out that science fiction’s origin as a genre dates back to a maximum of 200

years and argues that the popularity of the genre is linked to that of the scientific method. On the other hand, Fernández Delgado (2007), points out that the term used to define this genre was coined around 1920 by Hugo Gernsback and that, unlike fantasy fiction, some logical explanation needs to be provided for the events narrated (pp. 3–4).

Moylan (2000, p. 29) introduces the idea that “with recent claims for the triumph of finance capitalism” there is a series of science fiction works that “do not bring readers and audiences into brave new worlds, whether worse or better than the present, but rather spin them around within the one and only ‘paradise’ that is allowed to exist.” While utopian and dystopian fiction aims to generate a critical parallelism and identification between our world and that depicted in the text, more often than not, science fiction stresses its role as an escape from reality. This is particularly true in pulp science fiction, where the wonders depicted overshadow any criticism and may limit the utopian impulse.

Perhaps the main trait of a literary utopia or any of its variations (anti-utopia or dystopia) is the underlying critique to the society of the author or to the negative consequences of human development. Even though it may be considered a fine-grained distinctive trait, science fiction does not necessarily include such critique, the key term being “necessarily.” Suvin (1979, p. 238) argues that the estrangement technique is the backbone of science fiction in that it allows the reader to see a radically new society or scenario without reality’s prejudgments to go back to reality upon finishing the reading and being able to analyse it. Nevertheless, science fiction novels and films, for instance, are proof that the SF genre is popularly defined as one exploring humanity’s fears and hopes (Fitting, 2010, p. 138). While these hopes and fears may well include an undesirable or better society, the detailed description of such societies is not at the core of this genre. Furthermore, identifying science fiction with the technique of estrangement and the *novum* (novelty, innovation) highly restricts this genre or blurs its boundaries, fading it into the background and dangerously linking it to other genres or subgenres. While Suvin’s definition of SF as “a literary genre whose necessary and sufficient conditions are the presence and interaction of estrangement and cognition, and whose main formal device is an imaginative framework alternative to the author” (1979, pp. 7–8) was well received, the role of the *novum* has not gone uncriticised. However, this definition could perfectly apply to the utopian subgenre. In particular, the idea that the *novum* should be validated by cognitive logic is challenged by McGuirk (1995, p. 139), as is the conception of the metaphor in SF as an instrument to prop readers into

action in reality. According to McGuirk, these features may be applicable to numerous works of hard and soft SF, but its application to visionary SF is less clear. This definition would be impractical for cases in which there is no consensus regarding the validity of the scientific theories backing the plot, therefore rendering cognition too vague or too narrow a concept to limit the genre. Although Suvin considered the lack of response to his idea of the *novum* an indication of its acceptance, Moylan (2000, p. 46) considers a more pessimistic possibility based on the emergence of a new political Right that was “condemnatory of *all* Left discourse and praxis.” Despite these conditions, Suvin’s ideas are considered the basis of most theoretical research on science fiction and, following the definition of the genre as one that employs “an alternative framework to the author’s” utopian and dystopian fiction have come to be generally understood nowadays as a subgenre of SF.

The progress in theory has not solved the problems in classification. In this vein, some science fiction novels, or novels classified as such, are simultaneously classified as pertaining to the gothic genre, for example. One such case is Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* (1818/2012): It is considered to be one of the sources of science fiction as it is known today. As argued by Federici, Mary Shelly could be considered the mother of modern fantastic fiction, while it should be noted that Shelly drew on the gothic tradition (Federici, 2015, p. 12). On the other hand, some authors argue that it is “a satire on the failed aspirations of the [French] Revolution,” which is “one of the key terms of late dystopian writings” (Claeys, 2010, p. 110). On another note, its film adaptation was considered a horror movie. Obviously, the adaptation of a novel into another medium such as film, comic, or theatre is a different text; it is ruled by different conventions and is influenced by several elements such as music, style, lights, characterization or casting, among others. Ironically, like *Frankenstein*’s monster in a world not ready for such a different type of humanity, science fiction struggles to find its place in academic literary history.

Science fiction as is commonly understood nowadays by the general public would probably represent humanity’s fear of what we cannot control. In that sense, it is irremediably connected to horror and gothic. The border delimiting gothic and science fiction is that of paranormal situations or events that science cannot explain or cause because, as I have pointed out, technology and science in general are the basis of this genre. Regarding horror, the main difference refers to technology. Normally, pulp science fiction plots revolve around a technological advance or a use of technology that



causes a negative situation, which must then be solved by a group of chosen characters. In this sense, science fiction often involves human-made resources that acquire a conscience of their own, as with humanoid robots or resources that are used by other humans for negative purposes. Additionally, it can refer to external forces such as aliens, which cannot be controlled or understood by the human mind (e.g., H.G. Wells' *The War of the Worlds*, 1898).

Schelde (1993, p. 25) defines the main characters in science fiction films as the hero or honest Joe/Jane, the Scientist and the Monster. This idea cannot be adapted successfully to modern dystopias for young adults unless the characters are distorted to fit into the categories. To do so, in a general dystopia, the monster would be the system, the creator or mastermind behind the system would be the scientist and the hero would be the protagonist. Nevertheless, the myth of the hero is key to the development of the utopian genre, as explained by Tomberg (2017, p. 34). According to Tomberg, the development of modern dystopias stems from the inclusion of the figure of the hero. As the troubled dystopian hero awakens and attempts to overthrow the system, the narration goes from static to dynamic. Although Tomberg discussed the figure of the awakened hero with respect to the existence of historicity, it can be understood as the inclusion of story in narrative terms. Thus, the archetypes of the hero are another shared feature between utopian, dystopian and science fiction.

Another key issue in defining utopian/dystopian fiction is the implicit agreement with the reader that the story narrated is plausible according to the logical terms of the story. It is remarkably interesting to note that events such as an alien invasion may take place in present day without challenging the implicit agreement with the reader. An invasion may not be foreseen and therefore, the novel's context does not need to be further away in space or time. By contrast, dystopian fiction usually requires that distance in order to convey the message of warning or the distanced criticism of current state of affairs; thus, the absence thereof may affect the impact of the novel on the readership. An example is *The Carbon Diaries* (2009) by Saci Lloyd, a novel written as diary entries by a common teenage girl, Laura, after the government starts a carbon rationing program. The novel is set in 2015, only six years after its publication, which means that reading it today breaks the possibility of it happening in the time set. Nevertheless, that is also the case with classic dystopias such as *Nineteen Eighty-Four*; the main problem with Lloyd's novel is that the facts narrated are already happening or have happened recently not only in third-world countries but also in Europe and North

America, which questions its place within the genre. As C.S. Lewis said about Utopian fiction –and thus applicable to dystopian alternatives– “in utopian literature – as in Science Fiction – the more plausible, the worse” (1952, p. 115). Furthermore, and given that it details the process of degradation of society rather than the struggles in a post-apocalyptic world and the “new” world resembles the present that much, Lloyd’s novel has been classified as soft apocalypse.

Going back to dystopian fiction’s definition, Frederic Jameson conceives it as “a near future novel that tells the story of an imminent disaster—ecology, overpopulation, plague, drought, the stray comet or nuclear accident—waiting to come to pass in our own near future, which is fast-forwarded in the time of the novel” (Jameson, 1994, p. 56). Although the dystopian society is set almost always after the event of a catastrophe that triggers a rearrangement of the social order, the plot does not revolve around the event itself, but around the new society and its characteristics. Even if we were to include these events as part of the plot or as the main idea that explains how humanity must then work on novel methods to survive and relate with one another, events that escape human control should not be included as the main problem (e.g., a stray comet) because then the novel would fail to criticize the author’s society, which I believe is a key feature of the dystopian text, particularly since the 1980s. Instead, and judging by many popular SF novels and films, the nearly apocalyptic disaster fits this genre. Probably increasing in complexity as the time went by, from zombies to massive plagues, uncontrollable events have been a common trait of science fiction (e.g., alien invasion of a technologically superior species in *The War of the Worlds*). By contrast, other uncontrollable situations stem from human action and thus contain some degree of warning (e.g., the monster in Mary Shelly’s *Frankenstein*, the virus in Richard Matheson’s *I am Legend*). According to the discussion above, *Frankenstein* would not fit in the dystopian genre insofar as the novel does not narrate the way society is organized with the appearance of the new humanoid creature. By contrast, *I Am Legend* (1954) or Mary Shelley’s *The Last Man* (1826/1996) would fit within one of the subtypes of dystopian fiction: the last man on earth, in a similar way as the Robinsonades, are treated as eutopias of solitude (see Sargent, 2016).

Modern dystopian fiction focuses on the characteristics of a society resulting from a high-impact event related to human action or inaction. This event, which may be narrated or omitted –that is, implicit– works as a means to introduce the narration and description of the dynamics of the society. By contrast, science fiction may include

events such as natural catastrophes or uncontrollable events and still avoid focusing on the new society. In fact, Sargent's overwhelmingly extensive compilation of indexed bibliography including known utopian and dystopian fiction excludes "those that focused just on the catastrophe without any sort of human community after the catastrophe" (Sargent, 2016, § 11). In agreement with this statement, Campbell (2010) suggests that while dystopian fiction promotes critical thinking of the reader in order to question the society where he or she lives, science fiction's mission is to explain and explore the concept of othering, which enables the readers to see their own culture from the outsider's perspective. While the former implies the reader's criticism, the latter may be a means to expand one's understanding of one's own world, not necessarily tackling specific controversial issues and problems of our own societies.

In sum, because of new utopian and dystopian fiction's use of science fiction conventions such as the use of estrangement, technology, time travel, eugenics, etc., and despite the fact that utopian fiction precedes the first science fiction novels by at least 200-300 years, utopian fiction is considered to have become a subgenre of science fiction. In my humble opinion, establishing which genre encompasses the other does not necessarily help the development of theory or the analysis of novels belonging to either of these genres. In fact, it might well be better to assume as a matter of fact the seemingly ongoing convergence of these genres at present and to consider whether their evolution as genres will separate in future.

Regarding the corpus, the combination of purely dystopian characteristics and popularly considered science fiction tropes in these novels led to the common use of the label sf-dystopia. Even though they are hardly ever divided into anti-utopia, dystopia or critical utopia, I would like to break down the differences as regards the different types of labels in the utopian tradition mentioned earlier to provide initial insight into these novels.

The first trilogy, and the only one in the corpus published before the 2008 crisis, *Uglies*, by Scott Westerfeld, presents a high-control system, which is apparently utopian. However, the first few pages quickly introduce the first flaw of the system: teenagers move from "Uglyville" to "New Pretty Town" as they turn 16 and after having a highly invasive and risky surgery that adapts their physical features to beauty standards. The resistance to the system by a small group of people is significant and the protagonist progressively becomes aware of and immune to the manipulation. The inclusion of hope as a key element makes this novel a critical dystopia. When it comes

to dystopias for YA, *The Hunger Games* trilogy, by Suzanne Collins, is the most popular example and the one that can be compared to Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* totalitarian system. The climate of generalised oppression and manipulation suggests its classification as a traditional dystopia. Nevertheless, if we consider the element of hope and the criticism of media manipulation, the trilogy could be considered a critical dystopia. Beth Revis' trilogy, *Across the Universe*, is a less clear-cut example. On the one hand, the mechanism used to travel from present to future is inducted sleep through cryogenesis, which may be compared to the long, inducted sleep experienced by *Looking Backward*'s protagonist Julian West. Like West, Amy's "sleep" lasts more than it should have, although this detail is not initially disclosed. On the other hand, while completely different to the traveller's initial society and clearly criticised from the start, *Godspeed* could be perceived by the reader as a utopia, albeit a highly structured one. Given the series of problems faced by the protagonists and their attempt at creating a better society –with little success– this trilogy could be considered a critical utopia. However, if we only consider the first book, where the majority of the population is controlled through drug intake and given the clear pessimism of those who are not under the effects of the drug, the society would be classified as a dystopia, which is the most commonly used label. Finally, Veronica Roth's *Divergent* trilogy may be classified differently depending on the moment. Initially a critical utopia, since the alternative system is designed to prevent war and conflict and enhance people's professional and personal potential, the coup d'état organized by one of the factions creates a spiral of violence and instability that ends only with the protagonist's death, which ensures hope for the community. Thus, it could be considered a critical dystopia given the element of hope and the political connotations. All of the novels of the corpus present unique versions of the dystopian trend, more uniquely so given their target audience: young adults.

## 2.2 *Young-Adult fiction*

If utopian fiction's acceptance as a literary subgenre is recent, the case of young adult (YA) fiction is comparably remarkable in this sense. Despite having a consistent literary history throughout the second part of the twentieth century, it is only during the last two decades that the genre has started to gain relevance in research.

The first researcher to identify adolescents as a distinct demographic group to children or adults was the psychologist Stanley Hall in 1904. Most interestingly, for Hall, this group included people aged 14 to 24. Although the evolution of the conception of this age group varies across countries, high-school compulsory education and the popularisation of youth leisure activities among other factors reinforced the departure of this group from adults and children (Kett, 2003, p. 271). Given the appearance of this new age group composed by youth transitioning to adulthood, the market –including the literary market– began to offer new products for them.

Regarding the literary world, Hunt's (1996, p. 5) essay points to the problematic approach to YA literature as part of children's literature; the author stresses the lack of research focusing specifically on YA fiction and compares this lack of interest with the case of science fiction, arguing that the relative novelty of the genres is the major cause of this lack of research. Indeed, texts targeting very young readers cannot possibly share the same traits as those which have teenagers as intended audience. As with many other genres, some scholars have identified texts published long before the commonly agreed-on date of birth of YA fiction that could easily be included in the YA fiction realm. In particular, Marks (2003) provides an account of novels published between 1672 and 1839 that had young adults as target audience. Despite accounts of texts with YA features in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, YA fiction as a phenomenon is only clearly recognisable as an independent category after World War II and seems to be experiencing its golden age in the turn of the century as young adults are massively targeted by marketing campaigns as a flourishing market niche. In a world dominated by sales figures and statistics, YA fiction is the goose that lays golden eggs.

One of the main factors that must be considered to account for the rise in popularity of YA fiction is fandom and identity. Fandom studies account for the rise of consumers' identification of cultural products with the work itself, increasingly interacting with other fans and creating additional content such as fanfiction. Technology boosted this phenomenon, creating new spaces for the audience to share and develop a common identity (Hervás, 2017, p. 16). In recent years, the democratization of technology has provided young readers with the possibility of creating and publishing their own content or their fanfiction stories through participatory tools such as Wattpad. Perhaps the best-known recent example of fanfiction is that of *Fifty Shades of Grey* (James, 2011). The best-selling and blockbuster franchise story was created as a fanfic of *Twilight* (Meyer, 2005).

The role of young readers nowadays is much more active and is mostly displayed through social media and virtual spaces play a major role in the increase in popularity of YA fiction. Technology has globalised culture in a way that allows YA fans to increase the popularity of a work by connecting themselves with other fans and promoting it through forums, events and social networks. Why is this important? Millennials and the Generation Z, as the first technology-native generations, are the most active online and therefore influence the emergence and success of trends in popular culture as a whole and in literature in particular. Although most of the trends are a fleeting success, they are the breeding ground in which relevant works thrive. The immediacy of interaction at a global scale for fans might partially dilute the cultural boundaries of literary works; nevertheless, while news are increasingly becoming global, with information about other countries or continents being included in the daily news feed, the cultural influence of an author may still influence the reader's engagement and identification process insofar as the social reality depicted may be intended as a gloomy extrapolation of present-day events. It is thus important to conceive the analysis of this literary subgenre in cultural terms while focusing on the specific teenage experience.

Two main phenomena have marked YA fiction in the first two decades of the twenty-first century: vampires and dystopias (García, 2013, p. xi). Hunt (1994, p. 147) defined YA fiction as “the literary novel with an adolescent hero or heroine seen coming to terms with the world and self.” With this definition, it seems inevitable that YA fiction and dystopian fiction would eventually converge.

### 2.3 *Dystopian fiction for young adults*

Given that the new wave of YA dystopian fiction is very recent, and that the previous period of this phenomenon took place in the early 1990s, few scholars have delved into the traits of this subgenre. Those who have seem to agree on the influence of the Bildungsroman (Pataki, 2017, p. 429). This connection is evidenced by the commonly used trope of lies and secrets of authorities in the society that are – sometimes gradually– discovered by the protagonist in a way that evokes the children who come of age and learn about the dissatisfactory features of the adult world that they had been spared during childhood (Hintz & Ostry, 2003, p. 9). Furthermore, adolescents are often given the Romantic task of saving adults (p. 10). However, the main focus of YA literature seems to be on interrogating “social constructions, foregrounding the

relationship between society and the individual rather than focusing on Self and self-discovery” (Trites, 2000, p. 20). Thus, YA dystopian fiction seems to have drawn on this already established trend to become successful.

The basis of utopian and dystopian fiction, the alternative society, has promoted research that analyses those societies on many levels: education, interpersonal relationships, power relationships, economic systems, etc. Research focusing on the YA version of dystopian fiction has tended to focus on psychological and sociological aspects of the protagonists through different approaches such as ecocriticism, gender, cultural studies, etc. On the other hand, education and the application of YA dystopian fiction to the classroom has also been widely researched. However, research has yet to identify the factors and influences that compose and modify the trends in YA dystopian fiction.

One of the main topics of research on YA dystopian fiction is education. Over the last decade, scholars have stressed the suitability of using dystopian fiction in the classroom to foster students’ engagement with the texts and with the social issues narrated. In particular, Ames (2013, p. 4) suggests that using these texts could be useful to spark political action among young adults. Similarly, Marshall (2014, p. 141) suggests that YA dystopian texts can be used in class to foster English and Arts students’ critical and analytical literacy skills. Simmons (2014, p. 77) applied *The Hunger Games* to the classroom by encouraging students to make connections between the violence of the novels and the reality of their society and to actively participate in actions that could minimise that violence. Saunders (2014, p. 44) discusses the wide array of possibilities offered by Suzanne Collins’ texts in the classroom through an interdisciplinary perspective, including literacy-based lessons focusing on English, maths, history and science. Piotrowski and Rybakova (2015, pp. 23–26) include *The Hunger Games* and *Divergent* trilogies among their choice of texts to help students develop a healthy concept of gender by analysing these novels through the lens of feminism. In a reader-response approach to *The Hunger Games*’ first novel, Jerković and Alihodžić (2018, p. 233) discuss adolescents’ perception of the connections between the novel’s dystopian setting and the overall negative environment in post-war Bosnia Herzegovina, concluding that this socioeconomic environment draws adolescents to this type of literature. Soares (2018), as Ames (2013) did, urges teachers to incorporate dystopian fiction as a pedagogical tool to address current issues. At university level, Ames (2018, p. 23) discusses the advantages and challenges of

applying dystopian fiction –including fiction for young adults– to a cross-curricular composition module focusing on ethical issues related to progress. Among the novels included in the design of the module we find *Uglies*, which is included in my study.

Research on the pedagogical use of YA dystopian fiction is being undertaken also by postgraduate students and PhD candidates. Breen (2015, p. 55) conducted a reader-response approach to the influence of recreational reading of the dystopian novel *The Giver* (Lowry, 1993/2014), on undergraduate’s development of critical thinking, social and rationalization skills but also language proficiency. Ball analysed students’ perceptions of protagonists of YA dystopian novels including two of the novels in my corpus: *Divergent* and *Catching Fire* (second novel of *The Hunger Games* trilogy). By doing so, she explored the degree of identification of the readers with the protagonists but also found that female readers tend to be more critical of the author’s characterisation of the protagonists, considering the latter victims of their agendas (Ball, 2016, p. 95). Recently, Van Melckebeke (2018, p. 9) analysed Scott Westerfeld’s *Uglies* trilogy to identify topics that can be used in teaching English in the classroom.

Many of the contributions addressing YA dystopian fiction are collections of essays, each dealing with one or two novels and a specific topic. Although written before the first of the novels of the corpus was published, Hitz and Ostry’s (2003) book *Utopian and Dystopian Writing for Children and Young Adults* comprises a collection of essays on transport, politics, children’s agency and utopias and dystopias after World War II. Indeed, education is only one of the areas of study where YA dystopian fiction has been applied. Rather significantly, given that many of the most popular YA dystopias have a female protagonist, gender is a key approach. Especially interesting is the focus on *The Hunger Games* and the protagonist, Katniss. Much research has examined and interpreted her behaviour as challenging traditional gender roles, while other studies criticise the fact that social criticism fails to cover romance. Probably one of the most insightful works on gender and YA dystopian fiction is *Female Rebellion in Young Adult Dystopian Fiction* (Nelson, 2014). This collection of essays deals with three of the four trilogies of my study: *Uglies*, *The Hunger Games*, and *Divergent* and examines topics such as agency, sexual awakening and female friendship. Indeed, issues related to affiliation and esteem such as these are key to my study and some of the essays in this collection are discussed in light of their relevance in each of the subsections of the core of this dissertation. Another comprehensive account of YA dystopian fiction is the essay collection *Contemporary Dystopian Fiction for Young*



*Adults: Brave New Teenagers* (Basu, Broad & Hinz, 2014), which explores topics of this subgenre in a wide array of texts including adolescent liberty in *Divergent*, romance in *The Hunger Games* and environmental degradation in *Uglies* as far as the novels of my corpus is concerned. While these three trilogies have received considerable scholarly attention, Beth Revis' *Across the Universe* trilogy has been less researched. Passing remarks on the similarity of the protagonist –Amy– and other heroines in YA dystopian fiction can be found in Cothran and Prickett (2013, p. 26), who nevertheless focus on Tris from *Divergent*, as part of a study on a variety of YA dystopian novels (Scholes & Ostenson, 2013, n.p), or among titles in a list of popular YA sf-dystopias (Stilwell, 2016, p. 261). Perhaps one of the few studies focusing exclusively on this trilogy is McCulloch's (2016) discussion of the post-human nature of Amy's hybrid body. This lack of research is striking given that these novels were published at the same time as Veronica Roth's *Divergent* trilogy. This difference led me to selecting these novels together with highly popular ones published before, during and after the economic burst of 2008.

The growing popularity of dystopian fiction novels for young-adult audiences has provided the basis for a revision of the subgenre and its characteristics as new cornerstone novels appear. Titles like *The Hunger Games* (Collins, 2008; 2009; 2010) or *Divergent* (2011; 2012; 2013) have already become literary icons of the current wave of the YA dystopian fiction subgenre as judged by their film adaptations, the number of novels based on similar ideas that have followed their success and their impact on popular culture. Regarding *The Hunger Games*, for example, the cultural impact of Collins' novels is unquestionable. The trilogy achieved no.1 in the ranking of best-selling novels in the history of Amazon.com, it outsold all *Harry Potter* books in 2012 and some of its rebellious gestures have been used in real life, as shown by the arresting of people who used the “three fingers” gesture in Thailand to show opposition to the government (Mydans, 2014, n.p.).

While *The Hunger Games* or *Divergent* series were not the first novels to delve into the dystopian themes targeting the YA audience, it would be interesting to identify the reasons behind their success. Much of the success of fiction seems to be due to the context. These results are not the consequence of a single condition or cause, that is, the novels did not achieve such success only because of their aesthetics or because of its capability to connect with young adults, but also because of the socioeconomic situation that was taking place worldwide. García (2013) attributes part of the success to the fact

that “these works speak to the greater human condition, and not just to the specific teenage experience” (p. xi). Which seems to be in line with Sargent’s (1994) conception of utopianism as a universal phenomenon in that “the overwhelmingly majority of people [...] are, at some time dissatisfied and consider how their lives might be improved” (pp. 3–4). Dystopias seem to reflect the anxieties of “what could go wrong” while sometimes offering a piece of hope towards the end.

Indeed, many novels published in the 2000s can be identified as dystopian fiction and, although their success is not to be dismissed, it is nonetheless hardly comparable to that of Collins’ works. As will be explored in the following sections, many dystopian novels focus on one single aspect of a society, which is the trigger or determining factor of the dystopia. One example is *Unwind* (Shusterman, 2007), which hypothesizes on the consequences of a law that allows the retroactive implementation of abortion on adolescents. Although it is a situation that puts teenagers’ lives at risk –as with *The Hunger Games*– it failed to capture adolescents’ attention at the same level, perhaps because of the complexity of the subject. In other cases, dystopian novels for adolescents had but a fleeting success, as in the case of *Delirium* (Oliver, 2011). In this case, it has been argued that its exclusive focus on love, although a “safe” topic to capture adolescents’ attention, may have conditioned its success. Love is commonplace in YA fiction; therefore, it is not original unless other themes are tackled. In both cases, the connection with the real-world critique was too ambiguous or hard to grasp for the readership. In contrast, *The Hunger Games* novels focus on the resistance to general injustice from a clear enemy: the state (the Capitol). The novels included in this study were published in the years before during or after the start of the global economic crisis of 2008. In order of publication, they are the *Uglies* trilogy (2005–2006), by Scott Westerfield, *The Hunger Games* trilogy (2008–2010), by Suzanne Collins, *Across the Universe* trilogy (2011–2013), by Beth Revis, and the *Divergent* trilogy (2011–2013), by Veronica Roth.

Novels of resistance have a long tradition and *The Hunger Games* in particular was published in 2008, at the dawn of the global economic crisis, which also triggered a discontent and discredit of politics and politicians. However, some authors claim that – especially in the USA, despite being a considerably global phenomenon given the consequences for international politics– the 9/11 terrorist attacks, as a collective tragedy, could have promoted youth engagement in everyday political news (Sander & Putnam, 2019, p. 11). These same authors disregard social networks’ role in increasing

youngsters' political involvement because the major social networks Facebook and Twitter were born in 2004 and 2006, respectively. However, it is important to note two significant facts. On the one hand, the current wave of highly popular YA dystopian fiction, and the novels of the corpus in particular, targeted a demographic group that was born in the 1990s, which implies that they had access to social networks in their teens. On the other hand, the 2008 global crisis had an impact on middle-class and working-class families, which means that it affected the upbringing and development of people born since the early 1990s. Therefore, these now teenagers or young adults were not as affected by the 9/11 crisis as they were by the economic crisis.

The discontent of young adults with the socio-political and economic situation was complemented by what Brown, Lauder and Ashton (2011, p. 93) called a breach in the intergenerational contract whereby children were raised into thinking that academic titles would guarantee them economic stability and jobs, which did not prove true after the 2008 global crisis. Massive unemployment for these young adults was aggravated by the significant debt they incurred into during tertiary education in some countries. The generation gap between youth and older generations is reflected in the analysis of youth political engagement. Older generations criticise lack of involvement in traditional political mechanisms while negating the political implications of alternative political activism among the same collectives (Bessant, Farthing & Watts, 2017, p. 146).

In this vein, the film adaptation of the first novel of *The Hunger Games* trilogy, and the first novels of *Across the Universe* and *Divergent* trilogies were published in 2011, the same year social movements against socioeconomic inequalities and instability among other factors took the streets demanding more democracy and equality of opportunities. Some of these movements, which started with the Arab Spring (2010-2013) and spread to the 15M movement in Spain or the Occupy Wall Street movement in the USA, but also to other austerity-bound countries such as Portugal, with anti-austerity demonstration cycles (Cairns, de Almeida Alves, Alexandre, & Correia, 2016, "Protest Youth..." n.p.), were a show of higher political awareness among young adults at that particular moment (Askin, 2012, n.p.; Captain, 2011, n.p.).

According to Kurtz (2017, p. 270), the ambiguity of these YA dystopian novels favours the identification of people in a variety of circumstances across sociocultural boundaries. Even if some circumstances such as globalization or the 2008 financial crisis are necessarily global, the responses and the connections readers make with

regards to their particular experiences of those circumstances are affected by cultural values among other factors. Therefore, YA dystopian fiction's significant popularity at a moment of socioeconomic convulsion across culturally similar and diverse countries requires further analysis. This dissertation is derived from this idea as well as from the fact that dystopian novels, as texts with a high socio-political content, must indeed be analysed and understood as representations of people's anxieties and concerns over the present or the future at individual or collective level. As Sargent (1994, p. 3) puts it, "utopias, written in different times and spaces, need to be understood both in their historical and linguistic context and for what they communicate to a contemporary reader." The discussion is especially relevant in periods of social convulsion and when the target audience is young adults, who may be struggling to discover their place in a social structure that can be too complex.

As mentioned above, as a subgenre of utopian fiction, dystopian fiction surges from the creation of alternative societies based on the imagining of possible future solutions and consequences of policies attempting to cater to the population's needs. Thus, I propose an analysis of the reception of a corpus of novels classified as dystopian fiction based on two parameters: the degree of satisfaction of human needs on the one hand, and the culture of the readers and that of the societies depicted therein.

## CHAPTER 3: MATERIALS AND METHODS

First, I present an overview of reader response and the usefulness of this approach to deal with YA dystopian fiction in cultural terms using Hofstede's six dimensions of culture. Second, the different theories of motivation are explained, and the choice of Maslow's theory of human motivation is justified. Third, the annotation technique is discussed in light of the goals of the dissertation. Finally, the last subsection deals with the processes of data collection and analysis.

### *3.1 Reader response criticism*

Literary criticism has evolved throughout the centuries and a wide array of approaches has been used to interpret literary texts. Formalist critics such as T.S. Eliot developed and supported an idea of literature according to which the mechanisms and structure of a novel or a poem are the essence of its literary nature. Biography was irrelevant because, to put it in Eliot's words "[poetry] is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality" (1982, p. 42) and therefore, the poet's experiences should not be relevant in that he or she should not be identifiable in the text. Unlike Eichenbaum and others, who stressed the importance of literary history, the New Critics focused on individual pieces of work. For New Critics, the novel or piece of text

is “a well wrought urn” (Brooks, 1947) which contains all the possible meanings. This idea was highly criticised by Reader Response Theory supporters, who embrace the subjectivity emerging from the different interpretations of text based on the reader’s experiences, identity or ideology, among other factors. The text, in fact, does not exist without its reader, who, in turn, creates meaning through interpretation much like Bastian creates Fantastica by reading *The Neverending Story* (Ende, 1978).

Reader response criticism is thought to depart from the experiments and arguments developed by Richards (1929) and Rosenblatt (1938, 1982). Rosenblatt (1938, p. x) argued that “the experience of literature, far from being for the reader a passive process of absorption, is a form of intense personal activity.” The interpretation of the reader is dependent on various aspects and –as such– different approaches to reader response appeared and critics had different views of the role that the reader played in meaning creation. For Poulet, for instance, readers forget themselves, lose their consciousness and become passive elements in the interaction between themselves and the text, undergoing a “submission of one’s own subjectivity to the consciousness that generates the work (Tompkins, 1984, p. xiv). By contrast, Iser believed that the reader has a more active role, offering the piece of meaning that is only implied by the text. A much more radical view of reader response is Fish’s idea that the reader creates meaning not by extracting it from the literary text, but through the experiences during the reading. Culler’s ideas were similar to Fish’s but unlike the latter, he focused on the ideal reader, and therefore on the institutions that ensure that the reader is able to interpret the meaning implied by the author (Tompkins, 1984, p. 102).

On the one hand, the psychological approach was developed by Holland (1975), who stated that “the fantasy content that we conventionally locate in the literary work is really created by the reader from the literary work to express his own drives” (p. 125). Unlike Culler, Holland and Bleich consider personal identity to be at the core of criticism. This approach can be defined according to subjective criticism, as defined by Bleich (1978, p. 128), which implies the creation of meaning based on discussion and interaction of individual perceptions, a process known as the negotiation of meaning. These interactions result in a collective interpretation of the text. In addition, identity analysis is based on the idea that readers choose the texts that present ideas or characters with which they can identify themselves as regards their psychological needs.

On the other hand, cultural reader response draws on the idea that cultural factors and values can be used to interpret a text. Thus, readers with different particularities

regarding culture may read the same text differently. In this regard, a gender approach, a race approach or social class approach will elicit different responses from the readers.

Rosenblatt's (1982) more modern ideas offer a middle ground for research response criticism that conceives reading as "a transaction, a two way process involving a reader and a text at a particular time, under particular circumstances" (p. 268).

However, as explained by Brooks and Browne (2012, p. 77), she does not acknowledge the important role of cultural values in influencing the construction of meaning by readers. In fact, research on specific cultural approaches to reader response is still scarce. Here I review some studies in this line and describe the basis for my study.

According to Cohen (2001, p. 245), "identification" refers to the process the audience undergoes when exposed to a text whereby they perceive the situations endured by the characters as though they were experiencing them. According to Andringa (2004, p. 207) research shows that readers think about present and past events and their memories while reading, making connections and comparing the situations presented in the work of fiction with real-life scenarios. While two novels may present societies in which the problems are similar to those in real life, the position of the character with respect to those problems as primarily affected or privilege group member influence the reader's perception of those problems, the weight associated to them, as well as the degree of connection they establish between those problems and their societies' social, economic and cultural issues. In this vein, Reissman (1994) conducted an experiment with a group of schoolchildren involving blind reading in a multicultural class in order to examine how students from diverse backgrounds assumed the identity of the writer to be the same as theirs based on the characters' behaviour. An important contribution to reader response is Zhang and Lauer's (2015, p. 675) study of responses to fairy tales by Chinese and German children. The authors studied the influence of individualist and collectivist cultural dimensions on readers' understanding of character evaluation, adventurous attitude to plot development and time and special perception and found significant differences for the three categories. Chesnokova et al. (2017, p. 27) performed a reader-response analysis of Edgar Allan Poe's poem "The Lake" through a cross-cultural approach including readers from Brazil and Ukraine. The results show that readers from different countries had different responses to the same text, both in original and translated versions. Their results show that reader responses to poetry are influenced by culture. Brooks and Browne's (2012, p. 83) study is perhaps the most insightful as regards the mediation of culture between reader and text. The

authors identify four sociocultural dimensions –Ethnic Group, Community, Family and Peers– that are used by readers when creating a response to the text depending on the focus of the text on one topic or another. They discuss readers’ engagement and identification with the experiences of the characters who share their ethnic background –African American– and show that the books transmit knowledge about a community, establishing identification connections between readers and characters. The dimensions used by these authors focus on features of affiliation, one of Maslow’s categories of human needs.

As to this idea, I argue for a more inclusive definition of cultural reader response insofar as the cultural values that define a society influence the way a reader perceives a text and the degree of identification or estrangement that may take place during the reading process, not only in reference to the position the cultural group of the reader holds within his or her society, but also considering the idea of competition or cooperation in a culture, gender equality, power distance, etc.

Thus, I analyse the cultures of the societies or communities described with sufficient detail in the books using Hofstede’s six dimensions of culture. Using Hofstede’s (2011) detailed dimension factors, I analyse the novels and associate a number of these conditions to the facts and events described in the novels. Each dimension is described as a dichotomy based on up to 10 features; for example, Indulgence versus Restraint can be described based on “freedom of speech seen as important” versus “Freedom of speech is not a primary concern.” Depending on the number of features that effectively describe the society, I determine that a culture is mostly Indulgent or Restrained.

After determining the cultural characteristics of the societies, I present a comparative table that will help to establish patterns on the most typical cultural traits of the novels of the corpus and their similarities or differences with the countries analysed. This procedure is complemented with the analysis of the decision made by the protagonists of two of the novels, Tris from *Divergent* and Tally from *Uglies*, in terms of the decision to move from one culture to another made by the protagonists. These two trilogies are chosen in this particular case because the protagonists of the other two trilogies –Katniss and Amy– do not voluntarily change their culture for another. The comparison between the origin and new community will shed some light on the factors and values that triggered the protagonists’ discontent and whether the new community has different values in this regard. This two-step analysis involves comparing the values



of the communities and those of the real cultures in order to predict or estimate possible differences among readers of one or another culture as regards readers' engagement or their level of estrangement due to sharing cultural traits with one community or the other.

The approach followed in this dissertation is a two-step combination of reader-response and an eclectic perspective on literary criticism. Drawing on identity analysis, I suggest that the representation of human needs in the novels may speak at individual but also cultural level to the readers considering recent events that are ingrained in their collective memories. The idea is derived from the fact that dystopias are thought to work as cautionary tales. In the introduction to *Utopian and Dystopian Writing for Young Adults*, Hinz and Ostry (2003, p. 6) argue that "fantasy texts, especially those with utopian or dystopian concerns, can be more than escapist: they can offer an improved vision of the future or address deep and possibly unresolvable fears." Thus, and taking into account the fact that readers are theoretically drawn to pieces of literature that present situations relatable on a psychological level, as suggested by reader response critics like Holland, I suggest that a link can be drawn between the satisfaction of human needs, or lack thereof, in the societies portrayed and the satisfaction of those needs in the societies of the readers.

These analyses will provide a detailed reasoning for the acceptance of the novels among young adults but will also provide a first approach to the patterns of novels classified as YA dystopias in that it will indicate which needs are more critically threatened.

### 3.2 *Theories of motivation*

This study employs Maslow's theory of human motivation drawing on the fact that this theory is still being discussed and updated and presents the most complete approach but also the most pragmatic tool for the type of literary analysis proposed. This section provides a review of theories of motivation and human needs that justifies the choice of Maslow's contribution.

### 3.2.1 Motivation before Maslow

Motivation involves the organization of needs and goals within the personality system, that is, it concerns the organized pursuits of the individual (Koch, 1951, p. 152). For Ferguson (1994, p. 429), personality-related motivation refers to “internal states of the organism that lead to the instigation, persistence, energy and direction of behaviour.” Motivation has been studied based on the existence of a series of human needs, the gratification or threat of which was thought to be a source of motivation of individuals’ behaviour. An important number of scholars have studied this field of human needs gratification and human motivation; their theories differ radically from Skinner’s contribution. Skinner’s works allegedly pose the greatest contraposition to needs theory, insofar as they argue that behaviour is regulated through reinforcement and punishment. Thus, it does not take into account the individual’s personality or basic needs’ satisfaction; it aims at correcting the natural behaviour of the person through these techniques (Skinner, 1957). Even though Skinner’s theories have received considerable attention, they pose an outdated, though important attempt at analysing behaviour especially compared to humanistic psychology. The ideas of conditioning and reinforcement are notoriously frequent in dystopias of the twentieth century, as seen in *Brave New World*, but also in twenty-first century dystopias for young adults such as *The Giver*. As explained in the discussion about dystopian fiction, conditioning is seen as an especially hideous method and is a highly successful means to create a dystopia because it represents the failure of organization of a system. As mentioned earlier, a better society would understand the needs of its citizens and cater for them, shaping its structure to do so, while a dystopia sets the organization of the society and conditions its citizens to adapt to the already established system regardless of its suitability.

Murray (1938) also studied the field of human needs. His work presents a series of needs related to “inanimate objects, expression of ambition, power, injury to self or others, affection and other social goals (e.g. play)” (Baldwin, 1986, p. 139). Murray’s work was a ground-breaking advancement insofar as it provided the basis for the development of theories that focused on needs from a psychological perspective, rather than on a physiological one. His needs include acquisition, sex, play, and harm avoidance, among others. Furthermore, his work inspired the identification of other needs such as need for intimacy or fear of success.

McClelland's (1953) study is based on Murray's ideas so much so that his identified needs are included among "Murrayan needs" (Mayer, Faber & Xu, 2007, p. 94). He proposes a theory based on three axes: affiliation, power and achievement. These three criteria allegedly explain work behaviour of individuals. Research has applied this theory to graduate students, researchers and managers among others with successful results in the past (e.g., Harrell & Stahl, 1981; Stahl & Harrell, 1982). Harrell and Stahl (1984, p. 242) suggest that a person's satisfaction at his or her job position is related to their needs as regards power, affiliation and achievement in that particular positions entail tasks that are better performed by people that have a high or low level of each of these criteria. Despite the positive prospects for this theory, it is only applicable to certain controlled context such as the work environment of universities. In wider contexts involving cultural aspects and governmental aspects, those needs would fail to grasp the complexity of the situations.

In contrast to the previous theories of needs, which mostly focus on specific aspects, Maslow presented a general theory that involved all stages and possible needs for human development. Furthermore, while previous needs focus on aspects of individual development, Maslow's theory can be adapted to analyse needs at cultural level, which would offer the wider perspective that this study aims to offer.

### 3.2.2 Maslow's theory, upgrades and contemporary alternatives

As explained, most research on human motivation seems to focus rather stubbornly on work performance and business in general. This approach seems logical in the context of developed countries where basic needs are satisfied for a high percentage of the population and the focus of research is highly economic and oriented towards improving performance but may seem insufficient to analyse the complexity of human motivation and satisfaction.

One of the alternative approaches to Maslow's motivation is Alderfer's (1969) ERG (Existence, Relatedness and Growth) theory. The author draws the basis of the theory from Maslow's hierarchy; however, this theory is seemingly simpler in that it focuses on higher needs. Alderfer posits that ERG has the advantage that no particular order of needs appearance is demanded. Therefore, high needs can be a driver of human motivation even when existence or deficiency needs are neglected. Regarding this idea, it could be argued that someone whose safety is threatened due to the circumstances

such as war or an oppressive system, for instance, may well develop and satisfy affiliation needs. However, it seems logical to think that that person would then feel that the safety threat also threatens his or her loved ones and therefore the satisfaction of that need. Regarding its application, as Caulton (2012, p. 2) explains, most research applies ERG to productivity issues in business and is therefore not concerned with basic needs.

By contrast, other authors have extolled the relevance of Maslow's hierarchy or have provided support for some of his ideas. Baumeister and Leary (1995, p. 522), for instance, validated affiliation and self-esteem as psychological human needs. Furthermore, Leary, Tambor, Terdal and Downs (1995, p. 529) assert their interconnectedness, implying that self-esteem was affected in the event of a person's exclusion from a group for personal reasons. Furthermore, Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger and Vohs (2003, p. 25) suggest a positive relationship between high self-esteem and happiness and posited that the former leads to the latter. If we consider happiness as one of the concepts within self-actualization, Baumeister et al.'s results support Maslow's hierarchy order. Focusing on genetic transmission as a key part of human development and satisfaction, Yang (2003) builds a version of Maslow that is grounded on the idea that part of the needs represented in Maslow's model are culture-bound. Thus, Yang's version has a left branch that includes affiliation, esteem and self-actualization and a right arm that deals with sexual needs, childbearing needs, and parenting needs. Furthermore, Yang makes an important contribution to the contemporary application of Maslow's theory: the author implies that the differences of human needs perception are based on the collectivist or individualist nature of the culture. Perhaps following Yang's focus on parenting needs, Kenrick, Griskevicius, Neuberg and Schaller (2010, p. 294) proposed an extension of the hierarchy with the inclusion of reproductive goals such as mate acquisition and retention, and parenting. Furthermore, these authors indicated that their version of Maslow's hierarchy does not imply a substitution of a lower need by a higher need but rather a co-existence of needs to some extent. However, as Rowan (1999, p. 130) indicates, Maslow never implied that higher needs were stacked upon lower needs, but rather that the lower needs were included in the higher ones and that in given situations those needs can reappear. Further criticism of Kenrick's mammalcentric evolutionary perspective was most significantly carried out by Kesebir, Graham and Oishi (2010, p. 315) in the same issue where Kenrick et al.'s idea was presented. The authors argue that the uniqueness of human beings and the fact that we and our behaviour differ from that of other mammals

invalidates or conditions Kenrick et al.'s approach. Kesebir et al. take a perspective that focuses on the co-evolution of genetics and culture, insofar as culture is a high-level conditioning factor of human behaviour.

While some authors have tried to modify the structure of the pyramid and argue its lack of reliability or generalizability, Rowan works on its interpretation, by indicating that even after acquiring self-actualization, we may have to face situations that take us back to lower stages. Rowan's contribution successfully underlines the basis of motivation. As the author explains, two main types of motivation can be identified: deficiency motivation and abundance motivation (Rowan, 1999, p. 126). The former refers to human coping with issues that threaten one's well-being at any of the stages. Maslow himself identified 'being values' as those that are more closely related to needs that are not based on deficiency, such as peak experiences. These could be understood as abundance motivation, which includes the drive to behave in order to acquire an experience or result that does not serve to fulfil an uncovered need. For example, as Rowan explains, there is deficiency-driven love, which is sought in desperation to "relieve some discomfort," and there is abundance-driven love, which is not demanding.

Rowan argues that abundance motivation can well be identified in the two lowest stages of the pyramid, for example, when we have an appetite for food after having satiated our hunger. In the same vein, the author draws on Maslow (1970) to identify how deficiency motivation can exist even at the level of self-actualization based on the commercialization of 'peak experiences.'

Ryan and Deci (2000, p. 68) define human motivation based on three needs: autonomy, competence and relatedness. These needs allegedly substitute Maslow's three upper needs of affiliation, esteem and self-actualization. Perhaps the most interesting contribution of their Self-Determination Theory refers to the inclusion of intrinsic and extrinsic forces that influence an individual's capability to develop. In my analysis, these forces are considered by accounting for cultural factors and events related to the needs specified, but also by considering the psychology of the characters and their personality when it comes to self-actualization.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that social-psychology-related motives are the basis of the cultural dimensions developed by Geer Hofstede (Mayer et al., 2007, p. 93). In particular, Mayer et al.'s list on this topic includes scales such as "need for uncertainty," "desirability of control scale" or "need for structure," which can be

contemplated in Hofstede's uncertainty avoidance dimension, or "fear of social rejection," which is related to the dimension of collectivism versus individualism.

All in all, and as shown in the above discussion, Maslow's theory is the most complete (from hunger to self-actualization) for the purpose of this study, especially considering that I present a dual but complementary approach including Hofstede's cultural dimensions. In this regard, the procedure followed to carry out the second part of the research consists in a thorough qualitative analysis of the novels that form the corpus to identify the characteristics of the society that are related to the stages in Maslow's hierarchy of needs. In other words, I analyse the occurrence of problems related to food (e.g., equal distribution vs. hunger), safety (e.g., complete safety vs. death threats or genocides), affiliation (love, family, belonging, acceptance or lack thereof), esteem (respect by and of others vs. distortion of reality regarding achievements or physical appearance) and self-actualization/self-transcendence (fulfilment of dreams and aspirations vs. repression of goals and possibilities and moving from a self-centred focus to a community-centred motivation). To do so, I use annotation: I write a tag that identifies a piece of text with one of the human needs. The tagged results are then classified into tables, one for each need, in order to facilitate the analysis of the representation of said needs in the novels.

A section is dedicated to each of the needs and the problems related to each stage. Each section presents a discussion developed following a two-step process. On the one hand, the problem discussed (e.g., hunger) is analysed in light of present-day situations in three first-world countries: the UK, the USA, and Spain. That section provides insight on how readers may engage with the novel through identification; that is, a situation presented in the novels may be easily associated with a real-life situation experienced by the reader. On the other hand, an annotation-aided analysis of the novels helps shed light on the representation of the problem. The technique used and the degree to which it is applied are discussed below.

### 3.3 Tagging

The use of a mixed quantitative and qualitative analysis allows researchers to provide more nuanced and complete insights because the limitations of the individual approaches are balanced with the characteristics of the other methodology. It is safe to say that corpus linguistics (CL) and discourse analysis have been applied mostly to the fields of journalism and political discourse. Using CL, Baker et al. (2008) analyse the UK press discourse regarding asylum seekers and refugees to find the representation of this population group. On political discourse, Negro (2015) analyses metaphors for political corruption in the Spanish press. Nevertheless, CL has been applied to perform discourse analysis in an increasing wide array of formats and fields such as translation (e.g., Calzada Pérez, 2017), social networks, consumer reviews (e.g., Vasquez, 2014), sports discourse (e.g., Raffaelli & Katunar, 2016), university mission and vision statements (e.g., Efe & Ozer, 2015), etc. Literary works, however, have been less studied using a corpus-based or corpus-driven approach. On the one hand, Hoover, Culpeper and O'Halloran (2014) apply corpus linguistics to prose, poetry and drama in the field of Digital Humanities. The authors exemplify the multiple uses of corpus linguistics as a complementary tool for traditional approaches. On the other hand, Koutsoulelou (2017) analyses Greek songs to discuss the cultural representation of the economic crisis in the country. All these approaches, however, take relatively non-extensive pieces of text that are self-contained. By contrast, my corpus includes twelve books between 368 and 526 pages long, all of which are part of a trilogy.

Given that certain aspects of the analysis refer to subjective states such as fear and affection or esteem, it is important to highlight that corpus linguistics has been used to address psychological issues. Hancock, Woodworth and Porter (2011) analyse the language used by recluses convicted for homicide. An interesting case is Demjen's (2015) analysis of Sylvia Plath. In particular, the author uses annotation tools and concordance analysis to extract self-representation instances in the *Smith Journal* and exemplifies the usefulness of a corpus-based approach for the analysis of psychological states in narrative. However, as evidenced by the complexity of the approach followed by Demjen, metaphorical language and use of second person narration to describe the self are important setbacks. As a person diagnosed with depression, Plath's entries represent an intense pattern. By contrast, my corpus of analysis presents adolescent girls whose perceptions vary and evolve throughout the novels. Furthermore, their

psychological complexity is much lower than that of a real person, thus hindering the analysis using those techniques. This is not to say that analysing self-esteem using Demjen's technique would be fruitless, but rather that it would require a different approach. In fact, Demjen's contribution has been criticised for offering the author's pre-established assumptions about Plath's perceptions (Williams, 2017, p. 2). In order to avoid such complications, I use the tagging or annotation technique to identify instances of self-representation statements and representation by others. These results provide empirical evidence that drives the interpretations of this particular human need in the societies depicted in young adult dystopian novels. The approach used is chosen as a means to structure the results and discussion. For the first discussed need (i.e., hunger) statements involving assumptions and controversies regarding food and lack thereof are identified. The procedure is adapted to the needs of safety, affiliation and esteem. The results are listed and grouped in order to explore the situations in the novels. While the search tools could be used to find instances of the problem of hunger using a list of keywords (e.g. hunger, hungry, food, etc.), characters may express their perceptions on safety or lack thereof in many ways. Thus, for the sake of unification of the method, all needs are analysed using annotation. Therefore, the analysis was conducted using a qualitative methodology. Particularly difficult is the analysis of self-actualization or personal fulfilment. In these cases, I looked for statements that indicated happiness or satisfaction as well as concern for not being able to participate in or carry out activities banned or restricted by the system but also the professional possibilities offered to the characters. When the results were scarce, I drew on the acquired knowledge about the characters' motivations in order to offer an interpretation of the satisfaction of that need in the discussion section.

### *3.4 Data collection and analysis*

The main corpus of texts consists of four trilogies of novels published between 2005 and 2013, all of which have met with considerable success among their target audience: young adults. The novels are the four popular trilogies of *Uglies*, by Scott Westerfield, *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins, *Across the Universe* by Beth Revis, and the *Divergent* series by Veronica Roth.

The tagging of emotions is an emerging field and research is scarce. Therefore, this study presents a first approach on the tagging of emotions related to human needs



using these four trilogies as case studies. Tagging a novel for a particular emotion first requires developing a code system that caters to the needs of the study. Once the system of tags has been created, the specific tag is introduced next to the instance of that emotion or need in the novel in txt format.

The tags used were the following: [FOOD] for instances describing the characters relationship with food administration and production; [SAFETY] for circumstances that evidenced a danger for the protagonists or other characters; [AFFILIATION] for interpersonal and individual-organization relationships including collectivist and individualist behaviours; [ESTEEM], [NSR], [PSR], [PRBO] and [NRBO] stand for status, negative self-representation, positive self-representation, positive representation by others and negative representation by others and aim at identifying situations and descriptions that affected the protagonists' self-esteem and social position. Finally, [FULFIL] was used to tag situations describing personal fulfilment or self-actualisation. In chapter 5, each results' section is introduced with the table including the results for that novel. However, the tags have been removed in order to facilitate the reading of the quotes, except for the section on esteem. In this particular case, given the subcategories involved in the results (NSR, PSR, NRBO, PRBO), the tags are left to facilitate the understanding of the selection of quotes.

As explained before, utopias and dystopias provide the readers with alternative societies. This analysis is based on the idea that the level to which the individual in one society is satisfied can determine the success of such system. Thus, in my view, utopias describe alternative societies focusing on satisfying needs that are not sufficiently met in the writer's society. By contrast, dystopias are presented as terrible alternatives based on the threat or barrier to the fulfilment of human needs.

This analysis presents an original contribution to research on the subgenre of dystopian fiction for young adults. While several article-length studies have analysed the most common topics of dystopian fiction and their parallelisms with totalitarian regimes or the source problems such as the use of technology brought to an extreme, no studies to the best of my knowledge have delved into a human needs analysis to provide some guidelines on the most recurrent issues in connection with real events that could affect the way teenage readers from each culture perceive those problems. Therefore, the analysis is built in two stages for each of the needs of the hierarchy. First, the results of the tagging procedure are described to provide a detail account of how the need is met or threatened both in general terms for the community and for the protagonists.

Second, I develop a discussion for each of the needs analysed including references to existing research and new topics as well as a comparison of the situations described and those endured by readers of the above-mentioned countries. Finally, the conclusions section provides a summary of the most relevant results and discusses limitations and future research opportunities.

## **CHAPTER 4: HOFSTEDE'S CULTURAL DIMENSIONS**

In order to provide further insight into the characteristics of the cities and their similarities and differences with the countries selected, I attempt an analysis of the societies' cultural traits according to Hofstede's dimensions. This analysis will prove invaluable in order to analyse countries and societies' contextual factors that could affect reception of the novels. To do so, the societies in the novels are analysed, while information about the dimensions for the chosen countries –Spain, the UK, and the USA– are provided according to the data available at [www.hofstede-insights.com](http://www.hofstede-insights.com).

Hofstede's contribution to cross-cultural studies has been used in business-related fields such as customer satisfaction (e.g., Reimann, Lünemann, & Chase, 2008) or tourism (e.g., Forgas-Coll, Palau-Saumell, Sánchez-García, & Callarisa-Diol, 2012). Denissen, Penken, Schmitt and van Aken (2008, p. 190) employed Hofstede's measures for individualism for various countries in order to analyse the effect of affiliation on self-esteem. However, the role of individualism is not central, as it is used as a control variable. Furthermore, these authors used the study to suggest that individualism is a cause of GDP –used as measure of economic prosperity– thus equating correlation to causality. In fact, Hofstede and Bond's (1988, p. 14) discussion suggests that causality is reversed in this regard, and that wealth causes individualism. Despite these shortcomings, the study shows a pioneering use of the dimensions for cross-cultural

comparison of self-esteem and affiliation. Hofstede's model has also been applied to the academic context in analyses involving students. Jung, Kudo and Choi (2012) applied Hofstede's dimensions to the field of collaborative English learning for Japanese students. On the other hand, Rudowicz, Tokarz, and Beauvale (2009) studied traits related to creativity applying a cross-cultural approach involving students from Poland and China. In another study, more closely related to this dissertation's topic, Groeppel-Klein, Germelmann and Glaum (2010, p. 265) applied Hofstede's dimensions to analyse whether sharing cultural traits had a positive effect on the mutual perception of students at a university. Their results indicate that interaction is higher among students of culturally homogeneous groups. This idea supports the identification process of the reader based on culture. Thus, readers from countries with cultural values most similar to those of the societies depicted should find it easier to identify with the protagonists. Furthermore, the only instance of an application of Hofstede's model to fiction is a bachelor's final dissertation by Singer (2018), who applies the cultural model to identify connections between the different generations of migrants and their home or origin cultures. However, the author applies this to a novel in which the characters represent a real culture, thus differing from the present approach.

According to Hofstede, different nations can be classified according to cultural dimensions. Hofstede distinguishes six dimensions of culture, which are (1) power distance, (2) uncertainty avoidance, (3) individualism versus collectivism, (4) femininity versus masculinity, (5) long-term orientation versus short-term orientation and (6) indulgence versus restraint.

These dimensions can be applied to other levels apart from the national one such as organizational cultures. In this case, I will explore the differences between societies of departure and arrival in *Divergent* (Abnegation-Dauntless) and *The Hunger Games* (District-Capitol) and the only societies described in detail in *Across the Universe* (Godspeed) and *Uglies* (the city). Then, I will compare the cultural dimensions to those of the chosen countries (Spain, the UK and the USA) to assess possible connections that might offer some insight into the effects culture may have on reader reception.

#### 4.1 *Uglies*

The first trilogy analysed is *Uglies*, by Scott Westerfield. The first dimension, power distance, is ambiguous. While the society evidently has traits that indicate large power distance, other cultural values indicate mixed or small power distance. Regarding large power distance, (1) education is teacher-centred as judged by Tally's indication of the explanations of the lifestyle of the Rusties, which is the name given to our civilization. Furthermore, (2) the need for rules derives in a need to receive specific instructions. Pretties follow indications about what to wear by unknown committees, and Specials, who do not abide by any law, find it difficult to do just what they want. The supremacist ideas of the Specials imitate those of their creator, Dr Cable, who is not part of the government –which is not mentioned until the ending of the last novel– but who bends the rules regarding the ethical boundaries of surgery and is only reprovved by other cities. Therefore, (3) corruption is rather frequent and covered up. Regarding the government, there is not enough information to decide whether it is voted for or autocratic. The use of power, however, is considered legitimate, which is a trait of small power distance. The actions taken by the authorities obey to the ideology shared by the whole population as regards the inappropriateness of the lifestyle of the Smokies, who challenge the strict environment-friendly policies of the city. In this sense, preserving the environment and protecting it from human destruction is considered an important enough reason to legitimise the use of power by the Specials. Finally, inter-generational relationships indicate respect towards older people, but not fear. Instead, they are respected because younger demographic groups believe that they hold all the answers and transmit security and reassurance. Given the results –three examples of large power distance, one example of small power distance, and one mixed result– the society displays medium to large power distance.

The dimension of uncertainty avoidance could be defined as mostly strong. (1) The highly structured lives of the citizens and their need for such structure is evidenced by Tally's experience. Their lives are divided into stages, each marked by a surgery, and characterised by different behavioural patterns and purposes. So, when Shay suggests deviating from the established path, Tally refuses, showing risk-avoidance behaviour. Regarding the behavioural patterns of the citizens, middle pretties are conditioned to transmit reassurance and comfort to new pretties and uglies. In this regard, these groups look up to middle pretties for solutions to their problems. It would be reasonable to

consider that (2) teachers, as part of the middle pretties, provide all the answers to students, which is a trait of strong uncertainty avoidance. Furthermore, (3) uglies and specials live in constant anxiety and emotionality, the former because of their obsession with flaws and the latter because of the constant alertness intrinsic to their nature and their role as police force.

The cultural approach to difference is rather difficult to assess because of the double standards that rule the city. On the one hand, difference is seen as a goal among the New pretties, they aim at distinguishing themselves through surgery and fashion. On the other hand, pretties are the result of a complex and thorough surgery that homogenizes physical traits into a standard. In this sense, “transformed” citizens reject any person with a deviant behaviour or appearance. However, given the hermeticity of the city with regards to ideas that challenge the established truths and the way the city is protected from deviant ideologies, (4) difference is mostly considered a threat.

Regarding the need for rules, (5) the clique of the Crims defies the rules, but it is all part of the strategy of the authorities to identify those who may become part of the police force in the future. Another trait that indicates strong uncertainty avoidance is (6) the low agency of the citizens as regards their government. In fact, the surgery limits their capacity to react and defy the norms. Finally, regarding religion or beliefs, (7) they believe in ultimate truths, such as the one referring to only one beauty standard possible allegedly based on biological and evolutionary research. In fact, the only trait that could determine weak uncertainty avoidance is the fact that citizens have a good opinion of their health and wellbeing. The society takes good care of the citizens and the surgery that turns uglies into pretties also provides them with a life without illnesses.

As to the third dimension, this society’s culture is characterized by the following collectivist traits: (1) extended groups or clans are the norm; although until the age of 16 children are grouped into collectives according to age, when they become pretties they may join cliques, which are hermetic groups that protect all members. (2) In the same vein, the “we” consciousness prevails and (3) the protagonist and other characters place great importance on belonging, as shown by Tally’s wish to become a Pretty first, and a Crim later. In addition, (4) harmony is key within the group –they act and dress similarly– and within the social group (uglies, new pretties, older pretties, and specials). In this case, Cutters are at the extreme with their beehive connections via an antenna implanted into their skin. Finally, (5) because of the importance given to belonging, individuals are defined as in-group or out-of-group both regarding uglies vs. pretties and

one clique versus another. This tendency is stressed by the use of labels; uglies are given a nickname according to a physical flaw (e.g., Peris was “nose” and Tally was “squint”), while pretties adhere to the name of their clique (e.g. Crims).

The dimension of masculinity versus femininity is clearer; the tendency is towards femininity given that (1) the citizens are completely protected by the system and there is no discrimination of the weak. In fact, weakness is eliminated through surgery, as are any other important differences that might be cause for disruption. In addition, (2) sex is seen as an interaction activity; moralistic approaches do not apply. Regarding families, both parents deal with emotions and facts, as evidenced by Sol and Elly’s case after Tally’s surgery is postponed. Finally, (3) there is no gender discrimination; in fact, the person holding the most powerful position in this society is a woman (Dr Cable). In addition, all beauty standards apply to both sexes.

The fifth dimension is defined by a mixture of long and short-term orientation. Regarding short-term orientation, (1) the society places a significant weight on past events such as the failure of the Rusties’ society (our current world) due to lack of sustainability. In fact, the organization of their society is based on ideas that are aimed at solving the problems posed by the Rusties and the consequences of their acts on nature. Furthermore, (2) there is a slow economic growth or stagnation; the society is self-sufficient, and everything is recycled to produce new items based on high technology. However, two other long-term orientation traits are identified. On the one hand, (1) there is high social spending and consumption. Regarding consumption, pretties constantly request products, costumes and the like and enjoy copious meals. As to social spending, everything is free of cost in the city as far as the reader can tell. Neither the pretties nor the uglies pay for anything. On the other hand, (2) citizens follow universal patterns about goodness and evil. In general terms, the way of life of the citizens is good, whereas everything related to the Rusties and the Smokies is evil.

As to indulgence versus restraint, the society in the novel is seemingly an indulgent society that prioritizes (1) leisure and (2) positive emotions. Leisure is the only activity that the pretties do, including parties of various types, skating, air-ballooning, etc. In the same vein, many uglies spend their time designing new tricks to perform or, in the case of those who know how to, using a board. Regarding emotions, all negative emotions are associated with a stage of development before adulthood or the operation that marks the new stage. For pretties, being happy is the normal state, as judged by the lack of arguments among pretties or Shay’s statement associating being

pretty with being happy. Furthermore, this society has (3) lenient sexual norms, as judged by the existence of pleasure gardens especially designed for that purpose. Furthermore, (4) eating is a pleasure in which people indulge; however, obesity is artificially prevented through the intake of calorie-purges. These characteristics are reminiscent of the society of the Capitol in Panem (*The Hunger Games*). However, as in the society of the Capitol, (1) maintaining order, with high police presence (Special Circumstances), is key; a trait that defines restrained societies. (2) Despite massive police presence, most citizens are unaware of their existence to the extent that they are considered a myth by many. Finally, (3) and taking into account that neither David, nor Shay or Tally mention having siblings, we could assume that there are lower birth rates, which is in agreement with the idea of self-sustainability and the control of growth. These two conditions are indicative of restrained societies. Taking this information into account, the city would be considered to have a moderate score (ca. 65%) for indulgence.

#### 4.2 *The Hunger Games: District 12 and The Capitol*

For *The Hunger Games*, I analysed District 12 and the Capitol. District 13, although promising, is only described in one of the books and thus has a disadvantage with respect to the other two societies.

Regarding power distance, District 12 has maximum power distance. The traits are the following: (1) Legitimacy of the power is irrelevant. The control of the Capitol is absolute, and no one can openly disagree or defy its rules. (2) Parents teach children obedience. Physical discipline is seemingly not uncommon as judged by Peeta's family behaviour. (3) Older people are respected: Katniss points out how being old is an achievement in District 12 and old people are congratulated and asked the secret of their longevity. (4) Extreme inequality: There are massive differences between people in power, like the mayor and his family, people downtown, like Peeta's family, and people from the Seam, a miners' area, regarding privileges, access to food or life expectancy. (5) Autocratic government: citizens of District 12 can do nothing to change the government except join a revolution with other districts. There are no peaceful channels to change those in power. (6) Corruption is frequent: on the one hand, some peacekeepers turn a blind eye on poaching because they sympathize with the hungry; on



the other hand, one of the peacekeepers used his privileged position to obtain sexual favours from young women in need. (7) Uneven income: District 12 is a poor district, but those in the Seam are poorer than those who have a business in the city centre.

In the Capitol, power distance is also large: (1) the legitimacy of the power is unquestionable and those who question it are repressed: President Snow is known to poison any political adversaries. (2) The government is autocratic, disguised of democracy. (3) As in District 12, corruption, which is frequent, is hidden to the general public. The victors are auctioned if they are considered desirable, as Finnick admits. In contrast, only one trait defines the Capitol as having small power distance, which is the rather even income distribution among the citizens.

Both in District 12 and the Capitol, uncertainty avoidance is high in the sense that (1) citizens live with high levels of stress and emotionality. In District 12 because of the threat of the peacekeepers and the Hunger Games, whereas in the Capitol stress is the result of social pressure to be constantly on trend and to pretend to agree with the governmental decisions, showing enthusiasm. In addition, (2) citizens are seen as incompetent towards the government. In both cases, citizens are manipulated or repressed with strict rules and conduct norms. The remaining characteristics cannot be assessed in this case due to lack of detail.

Regarding individualism versus collectivism, the results are mixed for District 12. On the one hand, individualistic traits include: (1) the idea that individuals are meant to look after themselves or their immediate family only. When Katniss was on the verge of starvation, she could not find help from anybody. However, it is important to consider the role of the system in preventing that help. As everybody is living hand to mouth, it is not surprising that people are not keen on running the risk of offering others what they can barely provide for themselves. Furthermore, as survival rates in District 12 are so low, the lack/absence of extended families is understandable. Despite this, the novels explain that Katniss' mother helped those who were injured or physically punished by the peacekeepers, which suggests that there are perhaps more examples that are not described. Thus, this characteristic is as ambiguous as the rest of the dimension. (2) Privacy is stressed over belonging to a group. Again, there are no clear collectives within the district aside from geographical ones, but even these are not collectives of affiliation for the citizens.

On the other hand, as to collectivism, (1) other individuals are classified as in or out of groups: from the Seam or the city centre. (2) Education focuses in learning how

to do rather than on how to learn. (3) Relationships are more important than the task at hand. (4) The transgression of norms leads to shame. As we will see in the close reading of the novels, for Katniss, not being able to provide food for her family, and having to kill a fellow district member in the games would be shameful situations. She is concerned about others' perception of herself. If it were necessary to classify the society in one of the two categories, collectivism would suit it better. In my view, the strict control and constant threat of the authorities hinders any bonding among citizens.

In contrast, the Capitol is a clearly individualistic society that shares the individualistic characteristics in District 12 and others: (1) classification of others as individuals who are valued for their personal achievements and public personae. (2) Prevalence of the task over the relationship: everyone is expected to play their role in the system. Only those mistreated by the government accept helping the rebels.

On femininity versus masculinity, District 12 could be considered a highly feminine society. (1) There are minimum emotional and social differences between men and women: Katniss portrays a stereotypically male role (family provider, hunter, romantically detached), whereas Peeta represents a stereotypically female role (into arts, caring, romantically involved, peaceful). (2) Men and women are modest and caring: the characters are highly protective of their close ones and, as I will explain in the "esteem" section, they rarely brag about their skills. (3) There is a balance between work and family. Although the extreme poverty suffered by the citizens of the Seam lead some of them to work long hours in the Seam, the characters in the novels tend to reserve some time for family. Again, the long shifts are enforced by the Capitol, it is not part of the district's culture. (4) People have sympathy for the weak: after winning the games, Katniss donates as much as she can to those who need it most in her district. (5) Mothers decide the number of children: Katniss indicates that one of the few freedoms in District 12 is the possibility to marry whoever you want or not marry at all, which indicates that there is low or no pressure on women, thus granting them more agency over their bodies. (6) There are no moralistic attitudes toward sex.

The Capitol follows a seemingly masculine model. (1) Although differences between sexes are minimized, the stereotypes are evident in that some tributes are coached to perform as delicate and sweet girls, but all girls are expected to follow the beauty procedures that are also prevalent in our society: the removal of body hair except for eyebrows, hair and eyelashes. Therefore, in comparison with District 12, the capitol is more masculine and has higher gender role differences. (2) Men and women are

expected to be ambitious. Competition is omnipresent in the system, not only in the type of punishment for the districts (games) but also in the professional life of capitol citizens. Designers are typically assigned a poor district and use it as a stepladder to obtain a higher status, which is Katniss' original thought about Cinna. (3) People admire strength: Strong tributes become part of the career pack almost immediately and receive a positive mark before the games. In addition, when Katniss decides that she wants "weak" tributes as her allies her decision is not understood by Haymich and the others. Strength is valued over good judgement, loyalty or skills that are more useful in indirect approaches as opposed to direct fight. Finally, as far as the readers know, (4) there are no female politicians in the close circle of the president.

Three characteristics define District 12 as short-term-oriented: (1) life's most important events took place in the past or are taking place now. The games and how to survive every day are the citizens' main concerns. (2) Personal stability: a good person's behaviour and values are consistent. We can appreciate this in Katniss' referent of good person: Peeta. Peeta lacks evolution insofar as his values remain intact while Katniss pays less attention to the effects of her acts on her reputation. (3) Economic stagnation in poor countries: District 12's economy is stagnant. On the other hand, the only long-term orientation characteristic is that shared tasks guide family life.

Curiously, the Capitol has also a short-term orientation. The Capitol is extremely past and present oriented: the constant references to the Dark Days and to the stability of the system are what sustains the system itself. (2) Traditions are honoured. The Capitol relies on the constancy of its rules and punishments. They have built a version of history that is reinforced with the passage of time using The Hunger Games as a yearly tradition. (3) Country pride: The message in the propaganda of the capitol is that of a perfect society where everything works because they work together. (4) Large spending and consumption rates. The capitol is the height of consumerism and changing trends, which are visible in the quickly changing styles and the marketing of all sorts of products related to the current trend, such as the mockingjay pin. All in all, both the Capitol and District 12 follow the trend of traditional anti-utopias which, according to Kumar (1987, p. 103), had a short-term and present-past focus.

Finally, the last dimension defines District 12 as a restrained society. The traits that explain this dimension are the following: (1) There are few very happy people. The Capitol's hold on the District and the fear that reigns leave little space to enjoyment. (2) People feel helpless; what happens to them is not the result of their actions. Indeed, the

Capitol controls the lives and destinies of all citizens in District 12. Although they may have a say in abiding by the rules, or not, often the legal way leads to death by starvation. (3) Freedom of speech is secondary: citizens' main concern is feeding themselves and their families, as we will see in the analysis of human needs of chapter 5. In addition, opinions against the capitol are punishable by death or whipping. (4) Leisure's importance is low: As mentioned above, leisure is restricted by the circumstances. Katniss remembers that her father taught her a song the meaning of which she did not know. The song is "The Hanging Tree" and tells the story of a man who was hanged whose corpse sings to his girlfriend to join him to be free from the Capitol. Katniss' mother made him promise he would not sing it again for fear the peacekeepers would kill the whole family. Finally, (5) there is a high number of police officers –called peacekeepers– who enforce the Capitol's law.

In the case of the Capitol, the traits that define it as an indulgent society are the following: (1) Leisure has an important role, which is evident by the overload of information regarding victors and their lives. (2) People are likely to remember positive emotions. The entertainment industry consists in a constant influx of emotions but overall the positive aspects are always stressed to leave the population content. (3) Although people are concerned about their bodies and try to avoid overweight through artificial mechanisms, people indulge themselves in eating and drinking in excess. Nevertheless, this society is also characterized by the use of massive police force to maintain order, which is a characteristic that defines restrained cultures.

#### 4.3 *Across the Universe: Godspeed*

In *Across the Universe* I analysed the society built in the spaceship Godspeed. First of all, it is important to mention that, given the drug-induced state of the majority of the population, psychological indicators will be assessed with respect to the people that are not under that state; that is, Eldest, Elder, Amy, the people at the hospital, and the engineers.

Power distance in Godspeed is large (five traits versus two). On the one hand, (1) power is considered a fact, the legitimacy of that power is not relevant. The Elder/Eldest system was implemented after "The Plague" as an extreme measure to recover from population loss. (2) Education is teacher-centred, as explained before, the student answers to the teacher's demands; it is not the teacher who adapts to the student's

needs. (3) Subordinates, in this case the general population, expect orders. Having no orders and no guide leads to confusion and rebellious behaviour. (4) The type of government is autocratic. Finally, (5) corruption is frequent and covered up: The population has no control over the choices made by the Eldest and crimes are concealed and normalized, disguised as accidents or blamed on human nature. For example, the first idea Eldest has to “solve” the problem that poses Amy’s presence is the possibility of throwing her off the ship and into space. Furthermore, Amy’s sexual assault is conceived as a problem derived from her exposure to the season, which is perceived as normal behaviour. On the other hand, two items are met regarding small power distance: (1) the hierarchy is established based on practicality, not on greed or existential inequality. Eldest has no option but to continue to be leader. There is no possible replacement but Elder. In addition, (2) income does not exist on Godspeed, so income inequality does not exist.

Regarding uncertainty avoidance, this society presents one of the highest scores in the corpus (Strong uncertainty avoidance). This society is described by eight of the ten indicators. (1) Uncertainty is a threat. The absolute control exerted over the population to ensure the continuity and survival of the population does not leave anything to chance: from food production to human reproduction. In fact, the degree of control of every aspect of life in this society is extreme to the point of dehumanization. Generations are controlled through hormones so that everybody conceives at the same time and are overdosed with tranquilizers when they reach a certain age (approximately 65). (2) People experience high levels of stress, neuroticism and anxiety as well as emotionality. Derived from the already mentioned control, Eldest and Elder live in a state of constant anxiety that is also derived from the weight of power. However, other individuals are much more extreme cases, like Harley, who keeps the mental countdown until planet-landing. In any case, “self-control” is certainly not a quality of the population on board of the ship. (3) Intolerance of the different: Difference is considered the first cause of discord<sup>1</sup>; therefore, it is avoided at all costs. When Amy is awakened, her physical appearance differs so much from the monoethnic inhabitants of the ship that Eldest considers killing her to avoid disturbances. (4) The population needs clarity and a straightforward structure for their lives. As mentioned before, structure is essential for the citizens on board of Godspeed; that much is evident given the complete

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<sup>1</sup> According to Eldest, there are three causes of discord: difference, individual thought, and lack of a strong leader.

submission to the leader and the scheduling of their whole lives, from conception (the season) to death (gerontocide). (5) Teachers are supposed to know all the answers and students are passive subjects. Although Eldest asks Elder to do some research to find out more about the causes of discord in societies, Elder expects him to deliver information and feels more comfortable with the traditional teaching style. (6) People conceive their jobs as their lifetime mission. They assume that their contribution to society is based on their performance as artists, leaders or engineers. (7) In relation to structure, rules are necessary for Godspeed to maintain peace. Without strict rules, citizens challenge the system and cause its failure, as can be seen in the rebellion that takes place once Eldest dies. (8) Citizens are considered incompetent towards leaders: in fact, Eldest despises the feeders because they lack any agency. Feeders follow their leader's commands unquestionably, even when that information goes against all logic, for example, when they are unable to see that the inoculations are in fact modifying animals genetically. The only trait that Godspeed society has that designates a weak uncertainty avoidance is the fact that the population has a high perception of their wellbeing. Even in that case, those perceptions are conditioned by drug intake through the water supply system.

As to individualism versus collectivism, Godspeed's society is the paradigm of the collective mindset and the most obvious expression is the lack of individual thought. As to the characteristics that define it as a collectivist society, five are relevant given the setting and rules. (1) People have a collective or "we" consciousness; that is, they do not think about themselves as individuals but as part of a community. We see that this is one of the most important values Elder needs to assimilate. Specifically, he is congratulated by Eldest for prioritising the wellbeing of the community to his own life when he believes the ceiling is opening and the community would be exposed to outer space. In the same vein, (2) there is a stress on belonging to the community. They share a mission, which is progressing and thriving until they land in the planet. To foster that idea of belonging, Eldest addresses the population as a grandfather and (3) uses the pronoun "we." Furthermore, the rules and decisions taken by the leader aim at (4) maintaining harmony by avoiding differences that may be a cause of disruption. Because of that unity, Amy is categorized as (5) "out-of-group" and cannot be integrated in the general community. Furthermore, to ensure that everybody focuses on their role in community, (6) children are educated in the tasks they will perform and the

techniques they require, but no general information is provided aside from the basics. In other words, children are taught “how to do” not how to learn.

Regarding the last category or dimension, femininity versus masculinity, the description in the novel does not allow to assess all the indicators and the text suggests a considerable degree of ambiguity. For instance, (1) there is minimum emotional and social differentiation between genders. However, (2) although there are women in power (e.g., among the shippers), the positions of highest relevance (i.e., Eldest/Elder and Doc) are held by men. This situation only begins to change once they arrive in the planet and Doc takes an apprentice who is a woman. Regarding family size, neither men nor women decide the number of children, pregnancies are programmed by the authorities. However, the situation lived by Amy in the fields when she is assaulted by a group of men, when a woman tells her that it only hurts the first time, normalises a situation of subjugation. Furthermore, women must endure and readily accept a pregnancy and motherhood they do not want. Finally, the fact that both men and women are supposed to be modest and caring is not exactly descriptive of the system. On the one hand, being assertive is frowned upon because it implies a challenge of the established system and an added problem to the complexity of ruling the community. However, while Eldest expects Elder to show character and behave as a leader, Amy is reprimanded for having precisely that behaviour.

Regarding their planning perspective, Godspeed’s society is long-term oriented. Despite the idea that the ship is falling apart, and the fact that the leader is more focused on maintaining everything as it is than on finding a long-term solution, the society follows five of the indicators of a long-term-oriented society. Because Eldest wants the young generation to focus on productivity, he gives them hope for the future. Therefore, (1) the most important events are the future ones. (2) Eldest teaches Elder to do whatever is necessary to keep the ship working, regardless of ethics. Adapting to the circumstances the standards of good and bad is necessary. In the same vein, (3) the concepts of “good” and “bad” are flexible and depend on context. (4) Families on the ship share the tasks and urge their offspring to learn and grow interested in the family duties (e.g., weaving). Finally, (5) perseverance is an important trait given the state of the ship. They continue trying to solve the problem of the engine (even though Eldest is unaware of the shippers’ sabotage).

The analysis of restraint and indulgence suggests a high restraint. Among the traits indicating a restrained society we can find the following. (1) Low number of

happy people. People on Godspeed do not consider themselves to be happy, even if their emotions are controlled. When Amy asks a woman if she is happy, the woman replies, “I’m not unhappy.” (2) Freedom of speech is not a basic right and individual thinking is avoided through drug intake. People are kept submissive and even in the case of Elder, who is not under the effects of the tranquilizers, he is unable to do as he wills: Eldest uses violence (a high-pitch tone directly played to Elder’s ear until he does as he is told) when Elder defies him. (3) Leisure is not important. The feeders are conditioned to be interested only in their jobs and cannot understand why someone would run for fun, for instance. In the same vein, (4) nobody practices sports. Since food is low in calories and production controlled, (5) there are no cases of obesity. (6) Sexual behaviour follows extremely defined patterns, although when it takes place no rules apply, the season is scheduled through hormone control. This idea is supposed to prevent incest and facilitate the management of the ship. Finally, (7) although there are no police as such, Eldest’s authority is absolute and the maintenance of order is of the utmost importance.

#### 4.4 *Divergent: Abnegation and Dauntless*

Regarding the first dimension, power distance, Hofstede indicates eight main differences between societies with large and small power distance. Abnegation’s power distance leans towards small power distance. Five criteria correspond to small power distance: (1) they advocate the legitimacy of the use of power, that is, power is to be used for specific purposes and is not imposing. They rule the city seemingly flawlessly on the grounds of selflessness, cooperation, and generosity regarding resources. The complaints and criticism received from other factions –mainly the Erudite– refer to the low quality of the products and low amounts they receive; however, the novel discloses the attempt at manipulating the public opinion of the government through these attacks, thus rendering them unreliable. (2) The inequality of roles obeys to a convenience criterion: all citizens are equal among the Abnegation, some actively participate in the government of the city, but they do not have privileges. (3) Religion among the Abnegation is more common than in other factions, but it does not stress differences or aversity towards those who think differently. (4) Corruption is rare. The choice of Abnegation as the ruling faction is based on their alleged incorruptibility given their selfless nature. (5) There is a pluralist government, which is changed peacefully. Their



government is an oligarchy, but the members are chosen by the community according to their values.

By contrast, two criteria indicate large power distance: (1) Parents teach their children obedience. This is highly stressed in the novels: children are taught to listen to their parents when they talk, they share family chores and do not interact with their parents as they would with friends. (2) Older people are respected. Although there is not much information on this point, Tris is surprised to find that no elderly live in Dauntless and when older people address her as an adult, which indicates some distance between these two age groups.

Regarding the other detailed culture of Chicago, the Dauntless faction leans towards large power distance. This faction presents two characteristics of small power distance: (1) parents and children do not have such strict interpersonal relationship structures and (2) older people are not given special treatment: if they cannot maintain the Dauntless lifestyle, they leave the faction or commit suicide. However, (1) their conception of power is not based on legitimacy, but on strength, which reflects the survival of the fittest –a concept that highly represents their lifestyle. (2) There is inequality between members and leaders, who hold absolute power. (3) Their governments are autocratic: leaders elect new leaders, (4) and corruption is frequent. Religion and philosophy are not mentioned as part of this faction and therefore there is one fewer trait.

The second dimension refers to uncertainty avoidance. In Abnegation, this dimension presents four characteristics of low uncertainty avoidance and two of high uncertainty avoidance. The former are the following: (1) Days are taken as they come: Abnegation is a quiet faction in which uncertainty is nearly non-existent as regards inner-faction affairs; they have a simple organization and they do not have a detailed planning of the future. (2) Lower levels of stress and higher self-control. Other factions describe Abnegation's lifestyle as boring. Indeed, Tris considers staying in her faction of origin the easy choice. Furthermore, (3) diversity is tolerated: Tris' mother chose Abnegation because of the safety it provided to those that were Divergent. Finally, (4) Abnegation members are seen as competent toward authorities. Abnegation members choose their leaders and therefore all viewpoints are considered. On the other hand, the two contrary characteristics are (1) need for clear rules and structure –their lives are highly structured and follow strict norms and behaviour rules– and (2) remaining in jobs

regardless of their comfort or satisfaction with their tasks. Because of their orientation toward others, no one would admit to not liking their job.

By contrast, Dauntless characteristics include four high uncertainty avoidance traits and three of low uncertainty avoidance. The first of the former is higher stress, anxiety: the members live seeking adrenaline and difficulties and challenges are common. Thus, members constantly challenge one another to exposing themselves to risks and to situations that evoke their deepest fears. (2) Intolerance of diversity: the Divergent are dangerous because they cannot be classified and are able to tell the difference between simulations and reality. Thus, they are eliminated. This situation is common as judged by Tori's description of her brother's disappearance. (3) Staying in jobs even if disliked: there is little possibility to improve once you are assigned a job position, as explained to the initiates. They are able to choose based on their score, but some positions do not allow for much variation. Finally, (4) citizens are perceived as incompetent toward authorities. In fact, faction members simply obey orders and doing otherwise is perceived as a challenge to your faction. Given that being factionless is the worst outcome for members, the threat of such destiny is enough to ensure obedience. On the other hand, the two traits suggesting weak uncertainty avoidance are (1) each day is taken as it comes and (2) people are comfortable with chaos. Although there are strict rules as regards missions, members are relatively free to do as they please. Furthermore, chaos is a defining trait of the faction.

The third dimension refers to individualism versus collectivism. In this case, it is evident that both factions are characterized by collectivism. (1) Dauntless and Abnegation stress the collective over the individual, thus prioritising the "we" consciousness. (2) It is also evident that belonging is more important than the members' right of privacy. In the case of Dauntless, all initiates, girls and boys, share a dorm room. In the case of the Abnegation, expressing one's desire for privacy would be perceived as selfish. (3) Others are classified as belonging to a group or being excluded from it. Labels are common to describe other factions, particularly Abnegation members, who are called "Stiffs." Furthermore, the classification is reinforced by stressing the importance of detachment from the previous faction, thus establishing a discourse of "us" and "them." This is true for all factions. (4) Transgression of norms leads to shame feelings. As the individual represents the group, behaviour that contradicts the factions' standards is a source of shame for the group. For example, we see this when Tris is unable to behave as children raised in Abnegation and when she

does not feel brave enough and is criticised by Cara for her attitude. This issue is closely related to the person's self-esteem and will be discussed in depth. Finally, (5) the goal of education is practical: initiates learn how to behave like a faction member and acquire the necessary skills to do so.

The femininity versus masculinity dimension again marks an important distinction between Abnegation and Dauntless. Five feminine traits define Abnegation: "Minimum emotional and social differences between genders." No such distinctions are described in the novel: both parents work, although the father has a government position and the mother works in charity, which is a typically feminine role. (2) Both men and women should show modesty and a caring behaviour. Modesty is the main value in Abnegation; citizens are completely other-oriented. (3) Work-family balance is important. The fact that members are able to pick their children from school and the time shared at home indicates that work is not the main driver of the Abnegation lifestyle. (4) People are sympathetic towards the weak: The Abnegation implemented charity programs to help the factionless and some of the members help by distributing food and clothes. (5) Religion is peer-oriented: Tris' father prays to give thanks for friends. The only masculine trait is the moralistic attitudes people show about sexuality. About this point, it is noteworthy that Tris is taught that interpersonal physical contact is very powerful and holding hands implies high intimacy.

By contrast, Dauntless is defined as masculine as per three traits: (1) people must be assertive and ambitious. (2) Work is more important than family. In fact, family is secondary, the main organization or collective that members should identify with is the faction itself. This requirement defies the reality of human psychology, whereby people naturally integrate family as their most important collective, as I will explain later on. (3) The strong are admired. Weakness and cowardice are cause enough to be expelled. On the other hand, as feminine traits, sex is conceived as a natural thing and, as with the Abnegation, differences between genders are minimum: faction initiates fight one another indistinctively of their gender. However, there are underlying gender differences that will be discussed in the close reading of the novels in chapter 5.

Regarding short-term and long-term orientation, Abnegation has four defining traits of short-term orientation. (1) Personal steadiness and stability: because people are not supposed to focus on themselves, little evolution is to be expected. (2) Universal guidelines for good and evil: Abnegation have a set of norms regarding behaviour that determine one's nature. (3) Service to others: Abnegation dedicate their lives to caring

and helping others. Finally, (4) there is high social spending and consumption: the available resources are destined to alleviating the factionless' emergency situation. The only long-term trait is that shared tasks guide family life.

By contrast, Dauntless has four traits that define long-term orientation: (1) good people adapt themselves to the circumstances. In fact, the main focus of Four's training was the stress on his need to constantly adapt. (2) The definition of good and evil depends on the context: This is evidenced by the fact that the circumstances justified the use of violence against a collective or another, thus defining the limits of what is acceptable. (3) Traditions are adapted to the context. There were various interpretations of the Dauntless ideas: while some thought that to be brave implied accepting your fears, others thought that lack of fear represented bravery. The training of the initiates varied according to the circumstances and the leaders. Finally, (4) perseverance is a key goal. In the same line, giving up could be interpreted as a kind of cowardice.

The last cultural dimension is Indulgence versus Restraint. Added by Hofstede in 2001, it complements the previous dimension. Abnegation presents the characteristics of a restrained society: (1) Few people are very happy, as the self is never the priority. (2) Freedom of speech is secondary. Members are advised to avoid voicing their opinions if they may make the other person feel uncomfortable. (3) Leisure is not very important and (4) few people engage in sports: seeking own pleasure or exercising was seen as self-indulgent. (5) There are strict sexual norms: As explained, physical contact is seen as a very powerful thing and make members wary.

The opposite situation is true for Dauntless: an indulgent society. The characteristics include (1) lenient sexual rules: Tris is ridiculed for being prude as regards physical contact and body perception; (2) more people actively involved in physical activities: the Dauntless are constantly seeking high-impact emotions related to adrenaline but they also consider running and climbing sets of stairs to be fun; (3) higher importance of leisure: drinking alcohol and getting tattoos are common activities. Finally, (4) a perception of personal life control: agency and initiative are important among the Dauntless.

#### *4.5 Discussion*

The following table presents a comparison of the above societies and the countries chosen for the study of reception.

Society / Dimension	The city (Uglies)	District 12	Godspeed	Abnegation	Dauntless	Capitol	Spain	USA	UK
Power distance	Large	Large	Large	Small	Large	Large	Large 57%	Small 40%	Small 35%
Uncertainty Avoidance	Strong	Strong	Strong	Weak	Strong	Strong	Strong 86%	Weak 46%	Weak 35%
Individualism/collectivism	C	C	C	C	C	I	I 51%	I 91%	I 89%
Femininity vs. masculinity	F	F	M	F	M	M	F 42%	M 62%	M 66%
Long-term vs short term orientation	Short-term orientation	Short-term orientation	Undefined (50%)	Short-term orientation	Long-term orientation	Short-term orientation	Short-term orientation 48%	Short-term orientation 26%	Long-term orientation 51%
Indulgence vs. Restraint	Indulgence	Restraint	Restraint	Restraint	Indulgence	Indulgence	Restraint 44%	Indulgence 68%	Indulgence 69%

Source: own elaboration.

What are the implications of the above analysis? Depending on the protagonist and narrator's positioning we may find out which of these cultural models lean towards utopianism and which are dystopian. In turn, comparing negatively perceived traits with the cultural traits of real societies could help explain which situations in our societies are criticised by the novels as well as the nature of some visions of possible futures. Finally, the cultures of the societies and the protagonists can suggest how the readers might have received the novels.

It is noteworthy to identify the traits that the protagonists criticise about the communities and their culture in order to analyse the decisions made and the main problems that cause the lack of satisfaction of the citizens that form it. Nevertheless, the only novel that presents a conscious and voluntary transfer from one culture to the other is *Divergent*. In other words, following Fortunati's (1995) definition of the utopian journey, *Divergent* presents the society of departure, from where the traveller (Tris) leaves, and the society of destination. In *The Hunger Games* we find a similar journey (District 12 is the society of origin and the Capitol is the new society); however, Katniss does not freely decide to move to the Capitol, nor does she defend any alternative systems. Similarly, in *Uglies*, although Tally decides to move to the rebel camp, she does so because she is emotionally blackmailed by Dr Cable. By contrast, the first two novels of the *Across the Universe* trilogy depict only one society in which Amy has no choice but to remain. According to Fortunati, in societies like the one depicted in Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, which does not depict a society of origin, the society against which the reader is led to compare the new society is in fact his or her own reality. Thus, the society of departure in these cases is our society, which offers a more clearly intended comparison between both societies than those which present a fictional society of departure.

The novels selected for the analysis present various degrees of agency of the protagonists and various results as regards the culture of the societies visited. Thus, I present an analysis of the dimensions in light of the results presented above and a discussion of societal issues derived from or influenced by one or another cultural phenomenon.

#### 4.5.1 Power distance

Firstly, as regards power distance, the results indicate that the low scores for the USA and the UK as per Hofstede's data (40% and 35% respectively) only find their counterpart in fiction in the faction of Abnegation, as in the previous dimension. In contrast, Spain, with a large power distance score (57%), shares this characteristic with all the other societies.

In the case of *Divergent*, we see that Tris moves from a community with a small power distance to another with large power distance. Ironically, the main feature of the Abnegation faction that Tris did not like in this regard was a large power distance trait. In other words, Tris did not like the distance between youngsters and their parents because she felt she could not talk to her parents and share her feelings or her opinions, which is one of the two characteristics of large power distance that Abnegation presents, in contrast with a majority of small power distance traits. However, she moved to Dauntless, which has a culture with clearly large power distance. Although she can express herself, people in control of the faction are unreachable, they are appointed by the faction leaders. Although she openly disagrees with the new system in this regard, she accepts the rules as the only possibility and values the idea of being considered an individual. Thus, this dimension intertwines with collectivism and individualism given that she prioritises an individual-oriented trait over the collectivist-oriented decision to do what would have ensured her parents' –and thus the group's– wellbeing, staying in Abnegation. Adolescents typically undergo the phase in which they negotiate their autonomy from parental authority. They aim to be considered individuals outside the mass of youth and struggle to be recognized the same authority as an adult. Countries with more strict parenting styles would thus facilitate their young citizens' identification with the protagonist of *Divergent*.

Research shows two main strategies to facilitate teenagers' adjustments: responsiveness and demandingness (Ciariano, Kliewer, Bonino & Bosma, 2008, p. 99). Demandingness involves the degree of control, and supervision exerted by parents and the maturity demanded from their children, whereas responsiveness describes the warmth towards and involvement with their children. Theoretically, moderate demandingness and medium-to-high responsiveness is considered the best parenting approach. These concepts are represented in modern research by four categories that can be combined: authoritarian, authoritative, indulgent and neglectful (Aunola, Stattin, &

Nurmi, 2000). Authoritative parents present high levels of demandingness combined with high levels of responsiveness. Authoritarian parents display high demandingness and low responsiveness. Indulgent parents present low demandingness and high responsiveness. Finally, neglectful parents show low demandingness as well as low responsiveness.

Parenting is considered a cultural construct (Harkness & Super, 2002, p. 253). In the USA, parenting is characterised by an authoritarian approach, with high parental power. This fact is noteworthy because it indicates that the absolute value of small power distance for the USA is favoured by other factors –perhaps related to the political system and interpersonal relationships in business– whereas parent-child relationships are those characteristics of large power distance countries. This scenario is highly representative of the Abnegation faction, which is characterised by small power distance, but employs a large power distance parenting style. As mentioned above, collectivism and individualism are an important dimension to consider as regards this issue. Spain is considered a culture characterised by horizontal collectivism, which implies equalitarian relationships (Gouveia, Clemente, & Espinosa, 2003, p. 59); therefore, strict parental techniques are less effective and less common than reasoning and highly responsive approaches based on indulgence.

For a Spanish child brought up according to the indulgent style, considered the norm in this culture, the parenting style of Tris' parents would probably seem illogical, restrictive, and too authoritarian and, hence, Tris' decision would be perceived as logical. The identification with Tris would stem from their shared cultural values regarding the adequate parenting style, but not from experience. By contrast, as authoritative parenting style is more common in the UK, children would likely react against authoritarian parenting displayed in Abnegation for failing to provide enough responsiveness. On the other hand, authoritarian parenting is common in the USA (Ciairano, Kliewer, Bonino, & Bosma, 2008, p. 100), which serves the purpose of identification of the readership. This outcome is to be expected given that the novel was written for an American audience. Thus, the criticism of authoritarian parenting is nonetheless effective for the three cultures.

Saving the differences, both Tally and Katniss endure relatively neglectful parenting styles, although their parents are not villainised: Tally assumes the lack of relevance of family for children's development once they turn 12. From that moment, their relationship is reduced to visits during holidays. Although they act warmly towards



Tally when she is in distress, it is only to reinforce the orders of Special Circumstances. They are not indulgent with her nor do they act in an authoritarian way, in fact, their parenting would be best represented as neglectful due to their absence from Tally's life and authoritative when they make an appearance. Given that rules and expectations are reinforced by the whole community of adults collectively, this parenting style would strike the readership of all analysed cultures as strange. Tally is faced with a family organization that would seem familiar to the audience –David's family– which she describes as strange for the use of words such as "mum" and "dad." Tally explains that she and all children in the city stopped using these terms as they grew up. This situation would therefore favour the audience's perception of the Smokies as a better alternative to the society of origin. This identification is also in agreement with Tally's internal process of progressive assimilation of the Smokies' lifestyle.

Finally, Amy's parents seem to have used an indulgent parenting style. However, the novel narrates another case in which authoritarian parenting style is applied: Elder. He is raised based on an authoritarian approach that reflects the ruling of the community as a whole: scientific control. Elder is more an experiment than a human being; he is a clone and his tutor (an older clone himself) demands that he meets his expectations after the failure of the previous clone (the generation between Eldest –the current ruler– and Elder –the current apprentice). However, Eldest does not reward Elder's effort with concessions. Elder constantly complains that he does not receive his mentor's trust and that his training is slow and unsatisfying. Thus, he shows low responsiveness not only emotionally but also cognitively. Eldest's parenting style is the most common in the USA. Thus, readers may feel identified with Elder's frustrations. Katniss, on the other hand, experiences neglect from a depressed mother. This situation is nevertheless not criticised inasmuch as these circumstances are the result of an accident. However, Katniss does criticise the physical discipline of Peeta's mother. Furthermore, she went to great lengths to prevent her sister from being taken away from their mother: "I'd grown up seeing those home kids at school. The sadness, the marks of angry hands on their faces, the hopelessness that curled their shoulders forward" (*The Hunger Games*, p. 33).

Corporal punishment of children is rather common in the USA, albeit in clear decline. According to data from 2002, over 62% of children aged 3 to 11 have been slapped or spunk and nearly a third have been hit with an object as reported by parents (Zolotor, Theodore, Ryntan, Chang & Laskey, 2011, p. 61). While this practice appears

to be in decline, it is still highly common (Straus, Douglas, & Medeiros, 2014, p. xvi; Miller-Perrin & Perrin, 2018, p. 2). On the other hand, 50 to 60% of European families justify corporal punishment with their own hands or an object (Red de Universidades Valencianas para el Fomento de la Investigación, el Desarrollo y la Innovación, 2013). In Spain, specifically, Del Hoyo-Bilbao, Gámez-Guadix and Calvet (2017, p. 111) found that 43% of the children surveyed aged 13 to 19 had experienced corporal punishment from their parents. While corporal punishment is completely banned in Spain and other European countries, the UK and the USA allow it within specific boundaries (Global Initiative...2018, n.p.). In the UK, a survey in 2011 indicated that nearly 50% of parents of secondary school children supported the use of corporal punishment of children at school (BBC, 2011, n.p.). Although no recent data is available, data from 2005 indicated that 7% of the participants in a study reported severe physical abuse, and 25% reported one or more incidents involving physical violence (May-Chahal & Cawson, 2005, p. 978). Although these percentages are alarming, statistically, most children are alien to physical punishment but may know somebody who suffers it. Therefore, most readers would easily identify with Katniss' criticism of the discipline that Peeta's mother inflicts on his child.

Another of the characteristics of power distance is the problem of corruption. Although no studies can measure the level of corruption of a country with accuracy, I rely on citizens' perception of the corruption of their country. The 2018 Corruption Perception Index (2019) gives countries a score from 0 –most corrupt– to 100 –cleanest. According to the 2018 report, which is elaborated by Transparency International, United Kingdom is 11<sup>th</sup> most transparent and least corrupt country as perceived by the Britons. United States ranks 22<sup>nd</sup>, whereas Spain is 41<sup>st</sup>. As I have explained, these results do not reflect the objective level of corruption, but rather the subjective perception of the level of corruption by respondents from a particular country. Thus, it could be said that the UK or the USA are higher up in the ranking because there is little corruption in these countries, because it is never aired, or because the citizens are not aware of the corruption cases. All the societies depicted in the novels are corrupt to a greater or lesser extent. In *Abnegation*, political corruption is not the problem, but personal corruption is. In this regard, the criticism is on the moral corruption of the leader of the city, Marcus, who physically abused his son. People's reaction to this piece of news is incredulity, they refuse to believe it. Thus, corruption is covered up, not criticised. Corruption is evident and described very critically in *The Hunger Games* as part of the dystopian

system; it is mostly referred to abuse of power at a physical level –exerting violence– and to the use of privileges to humiliate and take advantage of women. Corruption in totalitarian systems does not end political careers, as it happens in systems in which corruption is systematised and normalised. While in some European countries lying about one’s professional experience is reason enough to resign, in countries like Spain, with a high index of perceived corruption, politicians are able to continue with their careers. Thus, the corruption that characterises most of the large power distance societies would be familiar to the Spanish readership.

The third problem discussed is wealth inequality. All three of the analysed countries present important wage and wealth inequality indices (Anghel et al., 2018, p. 379). A report by Banco de España (2018, p. 16) indicates that the concentration of wealth in United States and the United Kingdom has increased significantly over the past 25 years. Especially remarkable is the increase in wealth of the 1% of the population, which has doubled in that same timespan. As per data from Inequality.org, the United States’ income inequality does not compare to that of most of the developed countries. Specifically, 0.1% of the population earn 188 times more than 90% of the population. These situations are mostly based on the fact that United States and United Kingdom are home for 44% and 6% of world millionaires, respectively, while the percentage of millionaires in Spain is 2% (Credit Suisse, 2018, p. 22), percentages that were the same or similar in 2017 (43% USA, 6% UK, 1% Spain) and in 2016 (41% USA, 7% UK, 1% Spain) (Credit Suisse, 2016, p. 22; 2017, p. 25).

Some interesting aspects should be highlighted. Despite the United States’ result indicating small power distance, its income inequality is notably high compared to the other two countries. There are two reasons why this situation may be related to the portrayal of the societies’ power distance. On the one hand, *The Hunger Games* represents a rejection of violence of authorities towards the unarmed citizenship, of non-legitimised use of power but clearly also of the extreme differences between the privileged and the working classes. In the novels, a small part of the population lives in privilege, while the 12 districts struggle to survive. Furthermore, the fact that the Capitol uses the districts as resources could mimic the gap between large company owners and executives’ income and their workers. In the USA, the most important companies’ CEOs earn up to 6000 times its workers’ wages. While this inequality is perhaps not as striking in Spain, high corruption perception indicates that the population understands the differences in income are in part caused by unfair situations, thus

favouring the identification with the situation. The culture that would be least relatable to the situation described is the British culture, with an inequality similar to Spain's but with low perceived corruption.

On the other hand, the fact that all the other societies present models in which income is non-existent suggests either the fact that alternative models of society should dispose of this element or that the target population is too young to focus on and understand the consequences and implications of wages and economic resources' equal distribution. Nevertheless, while *Across the Universe* and *Uglies* present no restrictions to resource access, *Divergent* and *The Hunger Games* show inequalities that, in the case of the former, are enhanced by the criticism to marginalized groups that will be discussed in the affiliation section.

#### 4.5.2 Uncertainty avoidance

Secondly, regarding uncertainty avoidance, only Abnegation presents weak uncertainty avoidance among the fictional cultures, as do the USA and the UK among the real cultures. This situation implies a correlation between Spain's high score on uncertainty avoidance and most of the cultures presented. The tendency is clear but as I will explain, further analysis is key to determine at what level those coincidences are actually a reflection of the overall dimension of Spain or the UK and the USA.

One of the points that define a culture with a strong uncertainty avoidance is fear of the different and inclusion. The Inclusiveness Index (Haas Institute, 2018, n.p.) is based on the degree of equality of different groups and measures inclusion and marginality. Its focus is on gender, race, ethnicity, religion, and sexual orientation. Thus, according to the Inclusiveness Index, the three countries analysed have a differing score. The country with the highest inclusiveness is the United Kingdom (72.88), while Spain appears in the second category, with medium-to-high equality (59.70), and the United States appears in the third category –medium– with a score of 47.75. This score is not correlated with the degree of homogeneity of a country, that is, having a high diversity does not imply a low inclusiveness and vice versa. What does this imply? It would mean that the low score of the United States on Uncertainty Avoidance is not the result of high tolerance, but the sum of high scores on other factors such as 'dislike for rules' or the easiness with which people change jobs. In contrast, the weak uncertainty avoidance of the United Kingdom agrees with its high position in Inclusiveness Index.

On the other hand, Spain's medium-to-high position in the index indicates that the strong uncertainty avoidance score (89) is not based on lack of tolerance and fear of the different but on high scores on areas like need for clarity and structure and the type of educational system, which may be teacher-oriented.

In the case of *Divergent*, Abnegation has a weak uncertainty avoidance with higher acceptance of diversity and inclusion, whereas Dauntless has a strong uncertainty avoidance culture with low tolerance of deviant behaviours. In this case, the society of departure (Abnegation) resembles the United Kingdom as per the above discussion. Neither Spain nor USA are clearly representative of Dauntless, although as regards tolerance, it would seem closer to the American culture. This point would imply a means of identification for British readers with Abnegation and thus with Tris' return to her original values, as we will discuss. On the other hand, US readers could read the criticism implied in the connection between Dauntless –a faction that the protagonist joins but that offers little room for diversity– and their home country. As we have seen, Dauntless presents a high score, which implies lower diversity tolerance, with lower safety for the different, and lower possibilities of promotion, than Abnegation. Not only was Abnegation an easier life, but also, as Tris learns later, a safer one for Divergent people. This issue is apparent also in *Godspeed (Across the Universe)*, since Amy and other different citizens (artists, mostly) are marginalised and stigmatized. The other two trilogies do not present an issue as regards inclusion: while Tally is separated from her friends temporarily, this issue is not a problem for citizens who undergo the normal procedure. In *The Hunger Games*, there is no diversity as such within the district or the Capitol but for the economic aspects in the former, which are explored in power distance. These two novels, however, derived their inclusion from homogeneity, not from tolerance. The topic of acceptance of the different and marginalization is further analysed in the affiliation section.

The characteristic that most clearly defines Spain's uncertainty avoidance is the need for rules to avoid ambiguity and risk as much as possible. Surveys invariably show a high percentage of students who would like to become civil servants as opposed to being self-employed. In particular, around 30% of Spaniards surveyed wanted to choose this option in 2015 and 2016, a choice reinforced by the circumstances of the economic crisis. Indeed, a change in job positions in the context of an unstable market is felt as a challenge; however, those circumstances were taking place globally and affected in a similar way neighbouring countries like Portugal or Italy, where the percentage of youth

that want to become civil servants is nowhere near 30% (17% and 11% respectively) (Barnés, 2016, n.p.; Soriano, 2015, n.p.). This need for security and risk avoidance is also clear in schools. Research shows that the high structure of the lessons ensures the comfortability of the children (Samovar, Porter & McDaniel, 2009, p. 187). Children are uncomfortable and may suffer from anxiety in ambiguous situations. By contrast, children in the USA are raised according to a culture where speaking one's mind, which is considered a form of confrontation in Japan, for example, is virtuous (García-Gavilanes, Quercia & Jaimes, 2013 p. 195). Finally, the UK has a very low level of uncertainty avoidance stemming from their approach to problems based on solving things without detailed preparation –which contrasts with Spanish or German cultures that give a high importance to preparation. This situation leads to higher risk-prone behaviour for UK and USA citizens. We can identify these characteristics with the heroine's disposition to abandon a secure and comfortable situation to take risks for the sake of higher human needs. We see a higher reluctance to take the necessary risks in *Across the Universe* and *Uglies* than in *The Hunger Games* and *Divergent*. While Amy has a reformist personality and pushes Elder to make changes, he seems more hesitant and takes into consideration the possible negative outcomes of losing control, for example, when deciding on the use of phydus. Similarly, Tally struggles throughout the novels with her desire to have a comfortable life within the boundaries of the system and reminds Shay of the possible negative outcomes of her actions. It is not until Special Circumstances order her to go to the Smoke as a spy that she follows Shay. However, and like people with a Spanish culture, she tends to bend the rules to avoid the conflict: she delays activating the pendant that finishes her mission because she wants to experience that life and fears betraying all the people in the Smoke. By contrast, Katniss tends to defy higher-ups instinctively, when she is ignored during her skills demonstration, when she faces the peacekeeper whipping Gale, or when she chooses the berries instead of killing Peeta. Being a more feminine culture than the European average, showing disagreement is avoided among Spaniards to a greater extent than among Americans. Thus, these scenes would allegedly be perceived as more tense by Spanish readers than by American and British readers, whose culture involves a normalization of disagreement.

Tris is probably the heroine that embodies the lowest uncertainty avoidance values. She is highly impulsive, and her refusal to plan strategies thoroughly would strike the Spanish readers as awkward and illogical, while American or British readers

would understand to a greater extent the think-as-you-go approach. Both Tris and Katniss defy the established cultural behaviour of uncertainty avoidance in this regard, while Amy represents the American culture, her culture of origin. The three heroines would be relatable for American and British readers in this regard, while Spanish readers would understand Elder and Tally's reluctance as logical.

#### 4.5.3 Individualism vs. collectivism

Individualism versus collectivism measures the extent of people's interdependency. Therefore, it is linked to cooperation and teamwork but also to belonging, and thus to the need of affiliation and the weight individuals give to that need. In cultures with highly individualistic values, people care for their immediate family only. As we will see in the next section, belonging to a group is a key aspect of teenagers' life and acceptance from this group or lack thereof affects their self-esteem. The country comparison tool indicates that the USA and the UK score highest. The USA is considered the most individualistic culture (91%), with the UK following close (89%). In this sense, and despite the score of 51%, Spain is considered a collectivist country compared to the rest of the European cultures, and with a difference of 40 points with the USA and UK. Spain's collectivism is reflected by teamwork nature and interpersonal support. In their study, Goodwin and Hernández Plaza (2000, p. 288) compared two samples of British and Spanish students with regards to collectivism. Their results indicate that Spanish students score higher in collectivism –thus supporting Hofstede's scores– and indicating higher perceived support and family support among Spanish students compared to British students. Both social and family support are also defined as determinants of self-esteem and personal life satisfaction.

Individualism and collectivism can be further divided into horizontal or vertical. As defined by Triandis (1993), horizontal collectivism defines cultures where the emphasis is on “sharing, concern, helping” (p. 163). People belonging to cultures characterised by this type of collectivism perceive others as equals. In contrast, vertical collectivism defines a perceptive emphasis on submission and “subordination of personal goals to group goals” (p. 164), thus presenting sacrifice for the collective as plausible. Regarding individualism, horizontal individualists focus on being independent and equal to others, while vertical individualists are highly competitive and focus on progressing (Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk, & Gelfand, 1995, p. 245; Moon,

Travaglino, & Uskul, 2018, p. 2). The definition of the features that characterise these cultural syndromes overlaps with other dimensions chosen, particularly with masculinity and indulgence. For instance, Triandis et al., (1986, p. 258) define individualism as determined by four concepts: self-reliance, competition, emotional distance from members of one's own group such as family, and hedonism. The first concept is intrinsic to individualism as per Hofstede's classification. By contrast, competition versus cooperation is a trait that in our classification belongs to the dimension of masculinity versus femininity, while hedonism could be measured with the dimension of indulgence versus restraint.

As explained by Triandis (2018, p. 5), cultural descriptions are based on generalizations, that is, when we say that a country is collectivist it is because the majority of the population follows this pattern of behaviour. However, some people belonging to a culture that is defined as collectivist may present a mindset that would be best described as that of a person from an individualist culture. People who act as collectivist within individualist cultures are *idiocentric*, whereas individualist members of a collectivist culture are called *allocentric*. Furthermore, according to Moskowitz, Suh, and Desaulniers (1994, p. 753), there are behaviours based on agency and communion. The former reflects the individualist mindset while the latter makes reference to the importance of harmony for collectivists.

For collectivists, the needs of the ingroup are more important than those of the individual. This trait characterizes Katniss as clearly collectivist, as she prioritizes her sister's safety –which would preserve the family ingroup– to her own need. Furthermore, when she becomes the Mockingjay, she continues prioritizing the group's needs (e.g., the rebellion) to her own personal needs. Taking into account the concepts of agency and communion, a first explanation to the lack thereof in Katniss' characterisation can be found. Katniss is a collectivist: her actions and behaviour are subject to the needs of her community. She is not *idiocentric*, as we would expect of a heroine in a dystopian novel. The expectation of the reader is for the heroine to defy the establishment and to provide a basis for identification to the readership. However, by not rebelling against the majoritarian behaviour of her community, against her culture, the protagonist is defending the collectivist approach. Therefore, Spanish readers would identify with Katniss, whereas British and American readers would experience a shock derived from their expectations about the hero (someone who defies the collectivist



culture to defend their culture –i.e., an individualist) and Katniss’ defence of the collectivist values throughout the novel.

As to *Divergent*, we acknowledge two aspects of collectivism as seen above, that is, hierarchical or vertical collectivism and egalitarian or horizontal collectivism. People from Abnegation focus on being a collective to become as selfless as possible, that is, they are extremely other-oriented. By contrast, the Dauntless focus on belonging to the collective to become stronger and to differentiate themselves from other factions. Furthermore, this approach stresses hierarchical power and reduces the agency of the individual, thus stressing inter-faction rivalry. As Tris is a Divergent and could easily fit into different factions, this trait becomes problematic for her to fit and assimilate the Dauntless culture. In this case, Tris is *idiocentric*. She belongs to a collectivist culture, but she presents traits of individualists. In this case, Tris’ values are relatable to those of the American and British readership: while Tris is keen on teamwork at certain moments, she strives to be her best version sometimes at the cost of friendships.

The only individualistic fictional society is the Capitol, so we can assume that – given the depiction of the Capitol as purely evil– pure individualism is highly criticised by the novel. In this regard, the Capitol comes across as selfish and cold, a culture without empathy, whereas the districts and the factions, for instance, could be more welcoming. Furthermore, the protagonist’s culture is collectivist, so, as mentioned above, the reader’s identification with such values is promoted. Thus, Spanish readers might find it easier to understand the lifestyle proposed by collectivist societies like Chicago, with the factions, and Godspeed or the city in *Uglies*. However, they could also identify the danger of excessive collectivism and the idea of being lost in the collective. That is, the inability to express themselves. This is a situation that has become cliché in fiction targeting adolescents, not only in literature but also in films. As children strive to find their identity, they increasingly demand that their voices be heard. In the context of a highly collectivist society, this behaviour might be considered inadequate –as with Tris in Abnegation– and the resulting alteration of the hegemony, unacceptable. It is precisely this situation that we see in *Across the Universe*. Amy is different and is told to be as invisible as possible. She must avoid situations that could alter the harmony of the society. Amy’s initial reaction is that of an individualist. She refuses to abide by the rules of the ship and criticises it, influencing the future ruler to challenge and reform the established path. However, we also see a change in Amy’s

values insofar as she gradually becomes more intent on being accepted, as she mentions towards the end of the trilogy.

Finally, Tally and Shay are two sides of the dimension: the collectivist and the individualist or, to use the mentioned terms: Shay is an *idiocentric* character, at least for the first part of the novel. While most uglies use labels to describe one another and which link them to the collective of “uglies,” Shay insists on the use of their real names. Even though she leaves the city and thus alters the harmony of the community – something that typically prevails among collectivists– the novels gradually show her loyalty to her group of friends. In other words, despite not being affiliated to the collective established by the city, she is portrayed as a collectivist insofar as she relies on her friends or the clan for safety and wellbeing.

#### 4.5.4 Femininity and masculinity

The following dimension, masculinity versus femininity, shows similar results. While the USA and the UK present scores that indicate the masculinity of their cultures<sup>2</sup> (62% and 66% respectively), Spain’s score of 48% indicates femininity. Parallely, the societies with masculine cultural values are Dauntless, the Capitol, and Godspeed, whereas feminine societies encompass Abnegation, District 12, and the city in *Uglies*.

Femininity, as explained before, includes not only equality between genders, but also modesty and sympathy for the weak. Furthermore, people in a feminine culture consider success to be the possibility of enjoying your way of life, not being the best at something. That is, competition is lower. In this regard, Tris’ ambitious nature and her dislike of weakness fit well within the masculine culture of Dauntless; nevertheless, the violence that impregnates the daily life of the Dauntless together with the inability to contact family members are key problems for Tris. In fact, she is attacked and almost killed in the context and as a result of the extreme competition atmosphere.

In this regard, Americans and Britons will probably understand Tris’ decision to leave the Abnegation in a search for adventure and a more competitive environment – Dauntless– while Spanish readers would theoretically be more comfortable with a heroine like Katniss, who is dedicated to protecting the weak instead of on competing. It is unclear, for instance, whether the Smokies outside the city are able to care for the weak. In the only instance of this situation –when they try to cure Zane– they decide to

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<sup>2</sup> All data about the selected countries are extracted from: <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/>

abandon him when the Specials are close to finding them, which meant that he would be taken back to the city. By contrast, Tally, who has a feminine cultural background, reacts by sacrificing herself to protect him. Tally represents best the Spanish culture of ambivalence, the refusal to take sides according to Hofstede. In that sense, she refuses to take either the City system or the alternative New System: she stays away from both. In any case, the violence lived in Dauntless, which is consequence of a hypercompetitive environment takes the form of abuse and murder attempt by male colleagues, which becomes an important critique to masculine societies, where gender differences and sexism are still widespread. Similarly, Godspeed's masculine society where the elderly are murdered when they are no longer profitable could pose a critique to modern societies –more commonly in USA and UK but increasingly in Spain– where families include only two generations, leaving grandparents to live in nursing homes. This issue is represented in *Across the Universe*. Amy finds unconceivable that the elder citizens are sedated to death to save resources. In this case, although Amy comes from a masculine culture, she criticises this aspect that connects both the culture of origin – USA– and Godspeed. Similarly, Katniss defends a culture where the old are respected and, in the city of *Uglies*, people have a long life expectancy.

#### 4.5.5 Long- and short-term orientation

Regarding the next dimension, short-versus long-term orientation, all three countries analysed show low to intermediate scores, the United States presents a very low score (26%) compared to Spain (48%) and the UK (51%) as per the data offered by Hofstede Insights (<https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison>). All fictional societies except Dauntless and Godspeed share short-term orientation values. Even so, the Dauntless give high importance to pride, which is a criterium of short-term orientation that is clearly comparable to American's national pride. Both protagonists of the trilogy –Tris and Four– criticise this belief, since they consider that one individual would be best if he or she had the characteristics of all the factions. This trait challenges the established culture and criticises the use of difference within countries to generate hate and destabilize harmony and cohabitation. Dauntless is in constant change and its values are changed depending on the leaders. By contrast, Abnegation has traits of short-term-oriented cultures that imply stability and safety. According to research (e.g., Kennon, 2005, p. 42), adolescents associate their home with a secure space. In this

sense, Abnegation is Tris' home and is Four's faction of origin, thus supporting the character's arch of return to her values. In addition, Abnegation's short-term orientation implies service to others, which indicates that they are people-oriented citizens. This short-term orientation trait is also shared by Spaniards. According to Ehlich, Wagener, and de Gruyter (1995, p. 204), the Spanish prioritize their relationships with other people to working on their goals. This trait, as explained earlier, overlaps with collectivism and femininity.

Godspeed's long-term orientation is apparently the most culturally remote trait of a society of the sample. The only culture with long-term orientation is the UK, and its score is practically neutral. Furthermore, the fact that Amy brings her American culture helps to portray a gargantuan culture shock. Godspeed's score is explained by their pragmatism, which is inevitable given the dramatic scale of the problems of the ship, which entail life or death decision-making. This significant gap between the readers' background and the presented cultural values might be attenuated by Amy's detective narrative, which helps understand the context in which these decisions were taken.

*Uglies* and *The Hunger Games* present short-time orientation, which is the expected outcome for utopias and dystopias. Most utopias are focused on the present and have clear behavioural rules and traditions that ensure the continuity of the system. *Uglies* presents a city that aims at stability. Similarly, the Capitol does not want to give citizens a planning that involves a long process because the state of affairs favours the system and the unaltered privileges. By focusing on today, the citizens are unable to hope for a different tomorrow.

#### 4.5.6 Indulgence and restraint

Finally, the results indicate that indulgence is a feature shared by the Dauntless, the Capitol, and the city in *Uglies* as well as the USA and the UK; by contrast, Spain, Abnegation, District 12 and Godspeed share a restrained attitude. While the comparison drawn by US and UK readers with regards to the Capitol would be that of excess in, for instance, eating being the norm –given the high percentage of obese people in these countries– the indulgence associated with the Dauntless and the city of *Uglies* represents freedom to enjoy their young lives, also a constant of teenage culture. In this case, the Spanish readers would find this society more ideologically remote than UK or US readers. This dimension is key to understand Tris' transfer and is closest to

traditional adolescent behaviour. While Abnegation is clearly restrained, the Dauntless encourage physical sports, adrenaline-seeking, getting tattoos –hence claiming agency over one’s own body– and, ultimately, a greater emphasis on discovering what is enjoyable to them. This phase is described by Freud in the sense that younger individuals tend to prioritise their own needs to those of others and to social norms (Neukrug, 2016, p. 141). This situation is also reinforced by an individualist personality. Respect to others would be the established limit among restrained cultures with regards to leisure and hedonism in general.

#### *4.6 Final thoughts*

The feature of the city that defines Tally’s criticism is the lack of agency she has regarding the city rules and her own body. Her personality reflects the culture according to which she was raised, which, for instance, implies a high need for structure and high levels of stress and anxiety, especially as regards the uncertainty of her future. However, the criticism is not referred to the inability to express herself, but to very invasive procedures, such as the various surgeries she is forced to undergo. We see thus two heroines whose agency is limited and who understand that this situation is problematic. Katniss’ attitude regarding agency is non-existent, as explained earlier, her collectivist cultural values weigh more than her individual need to focus on herself and thus on the restrictions and manipulations of her figure. Finally, the restrictions of the culture in *Godspeed* as to Amy’s agency refer to the inability to practice sports or entertain herself in ways that agree with the ship’s restrained culture.

If we compare the results with the cultures of real countries, Spain, the USA and UK, we can see a clear pattern. The authors of all the novels in the corpus are from the USA; therefore, they belong to the culture of the United States and their novels should be designed to appeal culturally, at least at first instance, to the citizens of that country and citizens of similar cultures. We can acknowledge that the USA and the UK share cultural traits that are quite drastically different from the Spanish culture. Therefore, even in the case of short-term orientation, shared by the USA and Spain, their drastically different scores (26% and 48% respectively) imply a greater difference than between Spain (48%) and the UK, with long-term orientation but with a score of 51%. These differences suggest the most likely difference in reader reception. In other words, readers of cultures with different values will probably be influenced by the descriptions

of the societies to a greater or lesser extent insofar as they will associate the criticism with their own societies to varying degrees.

All the topics addressed undoubtedly find a link with human needs, which, in some cases, has already been hinted. The following section presents an in-depth analysis of these needs and further connects cultural issues and real circumstances to human development which determines, to some extent, the success or failure of social organizations and the elements of our societies criticised by the novels.

## **CHAPTER 5:**

### **HUMAN NEED SATISFACTION IN YA DYSTOPIAS**

The first step in the hierarchy comprises physiological needs such as food, breathing, sex, sleep, homeostasis and excretion. In this case, the only problem identified in some novels is food shortage or perception of food misdistribution; therefore, I focused on representations and perceptions of food and hunger. This section begins with a discussion of food in utopian and dystopian literature, followed by the results of the analysis. Finally, the main topics identified are discussed in light of their similarities or differences with real-life situations in the countries analysed.

#### *5.1 Physiological Needs: Food or Hunger*

##### 5.1.1 Food and Hunger in utopian and dystopian literature

“A human being is primarily a bag for putting food into; the other functions and faculties may be more godlike, but in point of time they come afterwards.”

George Orwell, *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937/2001, p. 85)

Utopian and dystopian novels present models of societies that necessarily address the main concerns regarding human wellbeing. In the case of utopias, the organizational

models must provide an alternative for a society that is viable for the inhabitants; in the case of dystopias, failure to cater for the citizens' needs correctly might lead to discord or even the collapse of the system in the worst-case scenario.

Several classical utopias focused on the abundance of food as an indicator of the correct administration of the land. With skies that rain cheese, the 14<sup>th</sup> Century poem *The Land of Cokaygne* (ca. 1330) is one of the earliest examples of food as a main concern in the utopian tradition. Although early examples have been found in ancient Greek texts, the most popular folk tales, dating from the Middle Ages, were incorporated to the utopian tradition by authors who either sought to ridicule and criticise the idea of a society where citizens would want for nothing and work for nothing, or to portray an image of hope for the lower social classes. The latter seems to be the case in the representations of Cokaygne inviting immigrants to America, or those created in the context of slavery (African American Cokaygne). However, the first descriptions of America made by the first explorers evoke the Garden of Eden and those promoting colonialism compared starvation in Europe to the new continent's abundance of food and resources (Madden & Finch, 2006, p. 5). These descriptions encouraged mass migration but also the emergence of utopian communities, some of which were inspired by fictional works such as Étienne Cabet's *Voyage en Icarie* (1840).

The land of Cokaygne, an idyllic society, represents an icon for gastronomic utopias, has expressions in many languages (Sargent, 2015, p. 37) and has permeated across genres. In fact, this idea is also present in children's literature, where, in many cases, the tales present children's homes as cornucopias (Nikolajeva, 2005, p. 138). While many have been classified as escapist, the tales of a land of abundance are also a reflection of political hunger. As Honeyman explains:

*Uncle Remus and his Tales of Brer Rabbit* (Lester & Harris, 1987) is a comic book published by Walt Disney in 1946 which presents a hungry rabbit that manages to reach a land of abundance, but is restricted by the rules that define racial capitalism, whereby the temptation "proves an effective lure to manipulate Brer Rabbit right back into a hierarchy that will deny him food, unless he works exactly as demanded by an exploiting pig called 'Brer Big Boss'. (Honeyman, 2010, p. 44)

Like one of the heroines in our corpus –Katniss– Brer Rabbit represents the embodiment of "the struggle against political hunger" (p. 45). Some gastronomic utopias work as cautionary tales that warn about possible manipulation in other gastronomic utopias. In the African American tradition of gastronomic utopias,



Honeyman finds, there are tales that present Cokaygne-like lands described as a luring tool used by human traffickers.

In other cases, food is employed in order to draw attention to a failure of a system. García (2016) suggests that Leonardo Padura's *Las Cuatro Estaciones* (1997-2004) describe the failure of the Cuban revolution to provide food safety through a narrative that mixes the carnivalesque, the postmodern and the fantastic. Furthermore, Toni Morrison's *Tar Baby* (1981) explores food and hunger from the perspective of ecocriticism and environmental justice. In particular, as Carruth (2009, p. 602) points out, the representation of food and hunger as well as the textual contraposition of fragments describing multicultural meals and Caribbean slavery show the conflict between "everyday commodities [and] the places –and geopolitical histories– that have produced them." On a more philosophical level, and regarding the post-apocalyptic novel *The Road* (McCarthy, 2006), hunger has been argued to be McCarthy's mechanism to present the lengths to which some people are willing to go to satisfy the most basic need and the interjection of morality in the dialogue between the urge to survive and the will to save one's identity (Mullins, 2012, p. 80).

More's Utopians consider the pleasure of food and drink to be important, though not as much as the cultivation of the mind. Bacon's *New Atlantis* (1627) describes a society where food and drinks are abundant and varied (Bacon, 1627, p. 35). Communist and socialist utopias of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, of course, targeted the basic needs of men, one of which is food. Nevertheless, many utopias have dealt with the issue of food not in terms of its abundance or shortage but focusing on its composition and the logistics of its preparation and delivery. Examples of utopias that discuss this issue include Bellamy's *Looking Backward* (1888) or Gilbert Cole's *The Castle in the Air* (1919), among many others. For an extensive overview of food in literary and practical utopias see Sargent (2015) and Madden and Finch (2006).

Regarding anti-utopias, the first novel of the sub-genre is considered to be *Mundus Alter et Idem*, by Bishop Joseph Hall (ca. 1605), which in fact presented a reversed Cokaygne in which the excess of food and drinks is ridiculed and fiercely criticised. Modern dystopias vary in their presentation of food and hunger. In Le Guin's *The Dispossessed* (1974), Anarres offers a social safety net, a kind of welfare system, but lacks other needs in the pyramid. In other dystopias, such as *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, food is rationed and used to manipulate the population in a way that resembles the novels of the corpus. In *Brave New World*, food is almost synthetic, enhanced with non-

natural elements: “[...] take a carotene sandwich, a slice of vitamin A pate, a glass of champagne-surrogate” (p. 143). The same can be said about Zamyatin’s *We* (1924). In this regard, Bozic-Sejic (2009, p. 97) identifies three ways in which food is represented in Russian utopian novels (based on a corpus of three novels: Zamyatin’s *We* (1924), and Platónovich Kliméntov’s *Chevengur* (1978) and *The Foundation Pit* (1987): as unimportant –when food supply is generally sufficient –, as a representation of the advancements of society –food has new forms and properties– and as an indicator of the wealth of the society. The representations of food in utopian and dystopian fiction have been recently analysed, most importantly in a special issue of *Utopian Studies*, the main journal on the specific topic of utopian fiction. Boyd (2015) suggests that the changes in Margaret Atwood’s *Maddaddam* novel regarding eating habits represent the human ability to adapt and build a future. By contrast, Rouyan (2015, p. 144) discusses Ruth Ozeki’s *All Over Creation* (2002) pointing out the connection between the novel’s rhetoric against GMO in crops and the current debate regarding GMOs in agriculture and their possible negative effects on the human body.

All in all, research shows a wide variety of representations and topics connected to the issue of food and hunger in literature. The analysis performed will yield the main ideas portrayed in the novels that will structure the discussion.

### 5.1.2 Results: *Uglies*

The table below presents the results for the tagging of the first novel in the *Uglies* trilogy as regards the topic of food and hunger.

1	Shay giggled. “People don’t eat wolves, Tally. Rabbits, I think, and deer.” “Oh, gross. Thanks for the image, Shay.” (p. 93)
2	Her rumbling stomach reminded Tally that she hadn’t eaten breakfast, or dinner the night before. You weren’t supposed to have food or water for sixteen hours before the operation. She was starving. But she stayed in her room until lunch was over. She couldn’t face a cafeteria full of uglies watching her every move, wondering what she had done to deserve her still-ugly face. (p. 113)
3	“SpagBol...spaghetti Bolognese!” She found a fork in the knapsack and ate hungrily. With the sunrise warming her and the crash of the sea rumbling below, it was the best meal she’d had for ages. (p. 151)

4	Tally counted forty-one more packets, enough for three SpagBols a day for two weeks. She leaned back and closed her eyes, suddenly exhausted. “Thank you, Dr. Cable.” (p. 155)
5	Tally looked around, realizing that she was up on the cliffs, tangled in her sleeping bag. Tired, hungry, and desperate to pee, but not falling into oblivion. (p. 156)
6	The result was a dense, overspiced SpagBol that required lots of chewing. By the time she was done with the unhappy meal, the board’s light had turned green. (p. 157)
7	SpagBol never again tasted as good as it had that first time on the cliffs. Tally’s meals ranged from decent to odious. The worst were SpagBol breakfasts, around sunset, when the mere thought of more noodles made her never want to eat again. She almost wished she would run out of the stuff and be forced to either catch a fish and cook it, or simply starve, losing her ugly-fat the hard way. (p. 161)
8	“Trade?” Tally frowned. “What do you mean?” In the city, uglies might trade chores or stuff they’d stolen, but trade food? (p. 190)
9	Once in the Smoke, she could activate the pendant and be home within a day, maybe within hours. All the food and clothes she would ever need, hers for the asking. (p. 192)
10	Back in the days before the operation, Tally remembered, a lot of people, especially young girls, became so ashamed at being fat that they stopped eating. They’d lose weight too quickly, and some would get stuck and would keep losing weight until they wound up like this “model.” Some even died, they said at school. (p. 199)
11	Tally wondered if, here in the Smoke, Shay’s undereating would get worse and worse, until she wound up starving herself. (p. 200)
12	The food was serious too, and was piled on their plates in serious quantities. It was heavier than Tally was used to, the tastes too rich, like whenever her food history class tried to cook their own meals. But the strawberries were sweet without sugar, and although it seemed weird to eat it plain, the Smokies’ bread had its own flavor without anything added. (p. 204)
13	For the first time, Tally noticed the sameness of the food. Bread again, stew again. A couple of days ago, Shay had explained that the plump meat in the stew was rabbit. Not soy-based, like the dehydrated meat in her SpagBol, but real animals

	from the overcrowded pen on the edge of the Smoke. The thought of rabbits being killed, skinned, and cooked suited her mood. (p. 243)
14	Tally’s stomach rumbled after a whole day without food, but the first thing she needed was water. (p. 325)
15	He pulled out a big waterproof bag. “I’m starving.” Tally nodded, and her head swam for a moment. She hadn’t eaten since dinner two nights before. (p. 338)
16	They augmented their diet with fish caught from the river, and Tally roasted a rabbit on a fire she’d built herself. (p. 348)
17	Eating breakfast by the river, Tally took time to appreciate her SwedeBalls. If they got caught tonight, at least she would never have dehydrated food again. Sometimes Tally felt she could almost accept brain damage if it meant a life without reconstituted noodles. (p. 367)
18	“Hi, Shay.” David gave her a tired smile. “You guys look hungry.” “Only if you have any non-bogus food,” Shay said. “Afraid not. Three kinds of reconstituted curry.” (p. 404)

Source: own elaboration.

In this trilogy we find the only reference in the four trilogies to alternative eating habits and a rejection of the traditional assumption that humans naturally eat animals for survival. The city was created to control humanity and prevent humans from altering and destroying the environment. One of the measures imposed, apart from population stagnation, is a plant-based diet. Along with her awakening regarding the awareness of the deficiencies of the system, Tally experiences an evolution of her perception of non-plant-based diets, particularly hunting and eating meat. In this first novel, she is disgusted by the idea of eating animals such as rabbit and deer (1). After a few days in the Smoke, she assumes meat as part of everyone’s diet without questioning it, although she mentions its brutal nature (13). Finally, apparently influenced by her time in the Smoke and David’s ideas, she prepares meals with fish she fishes herself (16).

Hunger itself as an issue affecting a group or the population in general is absent from the novels’ societies. In the cases the protagonists endure hunger they purposely experience the situation, or it is a natural process, that is, the hunger felt before eating (5) after waking up in the morning. In the second example in the table (2), Tally skips dinner in order to avoid the pressure of being the only person over 16 years of age in the

dorm after she is denied the operation. On the other extreme, after Tally activates the tracker for the Specials to find the Smoke and she and David escape, they endure various days without food and with a shortage of water (14, 15). In fact, the culture of the city seems to have influenced children to understand the importance of correct nutrition. In particular, Tally shows concern about anorexia being developed in communities without the city's culture (10) and her friend's undereating habits becoming detrimental to her health due to the Smoke's requirement to work and the difficulty in obtaining food in nature (11).

The other issue in connection with food is the concept of city food and the protagonist's progressive rejection of it. When Tally is sent on her spy mission to the Smoke, she receives a survival kit including dehydrated food and a water filter to cook it. The first time she eats the food (SpagBol stands for spaghetti Bolognese) she considers it to be the best meal she has had, mostly because of the unique experience of being in the wild by herself (3). However, throughout the days she develops an aversion towards the only kind of food she has access to (4, 6) to the point of preferring fishing (7) or being hungry (18). The availability of diverse food is also a powerful temptation for Tally when debating on living in the Smoke or the city. Tally looks forward to the end of her trip to the Smoke because she will have access to any kind of food she wants (9). Even after learning about the brain damage that the operation entails, she playfully weighs that with the availability of real food (17). This mindset is the result of an indulgent attitude as identified in the previous chapter.

Interestingly, the city covers this need for everybody, so Tally considers trading for food to be unconceivable (8), which is part of her criticism to the Smokies' lifestyle, together with omnivorous diets, but also to the capitalist system. In this regard, Tally's viewpoint seems a vindication of the rights of all citizens to have their basic needs covered by welfare and is reminiscent of the concept of the utopian America as described by early explorers and settlers.

### 5.1.3 Results: *Pretties*

The following table presents the quotes from the sequel to *Uglies* that describe how food and hunger are conceived in this novel.

1	Shay had breakfast in tow: lobster omelettes, toast, hash browns, corn fritters, grapes, chocolate muffins, and Bloodies—more food than a whole packet of calorie purgers could erase. (p. 4)
2	Then the omelette; she might even try the caviar. Breakfast was the meal when Tally most felt like she had to make up for the time she'd lost out in the wild. A good breakfast binge made her feel in control, as if a storm of city-made tastes could erase the months of stews and SpagBol. (p. 5)
3	Maybe food would fix her. (p. 47)
4	Tally piled up a heated plate with eggs and cheese and slices of avocado, and shoved half a muffin into her mouth. Looking up at Zane, she saw that he held nothing but a cup of coffee, and she wondered if eating like a greedy pig was a bogus move. (p. 49)
5	She hoped that the breakfast had some calorie-purgers packed with it. (p. 50)
6	“Thinking. Hunger focuses your mind. Any kind of excitement works, actually.” (p. 59)
7	A layer of fuzziness was starting to sink across Tally's vision again, and her stomach growled in a food-missing way, which called up the mental image of a warm chocolate muffin. (p. 70)
8	Being a Crim wasn't about being satisfied, and hanging out with Zane apparently involved risking your life and not eating breakfast. (p. 80)
9	Zane and Tally skipped breakfast—a meal they hadn't eaten for the last month [...]. (p. 102)
10	As they grew thinner, it seemed like the rings of steel were closer to coming off, but how long was it going to take? Tally didn't much like being in a race between her own starvation and Zane's brain melting. (p. 124)
11	Hunger, the cold, and the kiss were all dizzy-making. (p. 168)
12	She ignored the details of the story, scarfing down cookies and coffee with lots of milk and sugar, luxuriating in the hospital's warmth and total absence of pounding rain. The rare sensation of calories entering her body softened the world a little, but Tally was glad for a few moments of pretty haze. (p. 181)

13	“You and Zane really must eat more. You’re looking a bit thin, and I’m told his blood sugar was terribly low when he came in.” “I’ll make sure he has some of those chocolate-chip cookies in the waiting room. They’re awesome.” (p. 187)
14	Remembering how valuable dehydrated food had been in the Smoke, Tally had packed three months’ worth, which was all wrapped up in waterproof plastic, fortunately. (p. 245)
15	Tally smelled food, and heard the unmistakable squawk of a chicken being captured for slaughter. Apparently, divine visitation was a good enough excuse for a midnight feast. (p. 267)
16	He did fill his pack, however, with the scary-looking strips of dried meat that were offered them. When Tally realized that the grisly stuff was meant to be eaten, she tried to hide her horror, but didn’t do a very good job. (p. 280)
17	She remembered from her days in the Smoke how much better food could taste in the wild. Even fresh produce was never spectacular when it had been harvested from hydroponic tanks. And she had to agree with Andrew—dehydrated food was resolutely not divine. (p. 286)

Source: own elaboration.

The refusal to include animals into the citizens’ diet that we have seen in the previous novel seems not to encompass all species. Instead, pretties are apparently accustomed to eating lobster (1) and caviar (2), for instance. In this new phase –as a Pretty– Tally has an ambiguous position regarding her diet. On the one hand, example 15 shows that she accepts the “midnight feast” prepared by the villagers based on chicken. On the other hand, she is horrified by the concept of dried meat (16). In this second novel, the protagonist seems to evolve towards natural food as opposed to processed or city food (17) –although she understands its usefulness for the Smoke (14)– rather than towards a diet with the lowest possible environmental footprint.

Regarding Tally’s general relationship with food and hunger, we see a change that could be influenced by her acquaintances. While at the beginning of the novel, and after her newly acquired Pretty body, she eats abundantly with Shay (1), she begins to question the adequacy of such large ingestions after meeting Zane (4) and seeing his restraint towards food. At first, she refers to the physical consequences of eating too much in reference to weight issues, which are solved by intake of calorie purgers (5). However, she later refuses to eat in order to pursue a higher clarity of mind (7, 11). This

tendency is suggested to her by Zane, her boyfriend, who insists on the need to avoid food in order to free themselves from the city's imposed careless mindset (6). Tally shows her influenceable personality when she prioritizes her inclusion in the Crims to food intake and safety (8). Later on, purposeful starvation is taken as a strategy to escape the city's control systems and save Zane's life (9), but she is aware of the dangers of taking this action to the extreme (10). In this sense, the focus is on the pressure of the city on people's desires to be free rather on the need of eating itself, which is covered by the system as explained in the previous novel. Food itself is culturally associated with wellbeing and happiness in the city. Examples 3 and 12 show how food can have restorative properties and help the protagonist to face stressful situations; moreover, it is encouraged by doctors to ensure citizens' satisfaction with the oppressive system (13). Therefore, the restraint shown by the characters towards food challenges the city's overindulgent culture, which offers food as a distracting pleasure that numbs people's conscience and prevents them from rebelling.

#### 5.1.4 Results: *Specials*

The only reference to food or hunger refers to the total independence of the Specials from the city as regards food: "Luckily, Specials gathered their own food in the wild; their rebuilt stomachs could extract the nutrition out of practically anything that grew. A few Cutters had actually taken up hunting, though Tally stuck to wild plants - she'd eaten her share of dead animals back in Smokey days." (p. 139)

In the previous novels we have seen Tally's progression from eating processed food and a plant-based diet to indulging in delicacies in the city to a more natural diet and a restraint from city food to preserve her agency. In this case, Tally's diet seems to be comparable to that of a wild animal, eating practically anything that grows. She confirms that she sticks to a plant-based diet, which contrasts with the Smokies' diet and that of the pretties.

On the other hand, her autonomy in this regard is key because it evidences the extent to which the Cutters are uncontrollable either by their creator or bodily limitations. In other words, the system's most powerful tool, the argumentation that they cater to their citizen's needs regarding food, safety, affiliation and self-esteem is not useful to manipulate this group of post-human creatures who form their own



independent clique and whose surgical transformations have increased their connection to nature and reduced their human concerns with material and bodily needs.

### 5.1.5 Results: *The Hunger Games*

The table below shows the examples that represent the depiction of the need for food in *The Hunger Games*.

1	The last thing I needed was another mouth to feed. (p. 4)
2	They're as hungry for fresh meat as anybody is. In fact, they're among our best customers. (p. 6)
3	District 12, where you can starve to death in safety, I mutter. (p. 7)
4	I avoid discussing tricky topics. Like the reaping, or food shortages, or the Hunger Games. (p. 7)
5	Fine bread like this is for special occasions. (p. 8)
6	how would they live without us? Who would fill those mouths that are always asking for more? (p. 11)
7	No one in the Seam would turn up their nose at a good leg of wild dog, but the Peacekeepers who come to the Hob can afford to be a little choosier. (p. 13)
8	It could keep a family in bread for months. (p. 14)
9	But what good is yelling about the Capitol in the middle of the woods? It doesn't change anything. It doesn't make things fair. It doesn't fill our stomachs. In fact, it scares off the nearby game. (p.17)
10	We decide to save the strawberries and bakery bread for this evening's meal, to make it special we say. Instead we drink milk from Prim's goat, Lady, and eat the rough bread made from the tesserae grain, although no one has much appetite anyway. (p. 19)
11	[...] the appetites of those in charge protect me. Not everyone can claim the same. (p. 20)
12	Gale and I agree that if we have to choose between dying of hunger and a bullet in the head, the bullet would be much quicker. (p. 20)
13	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. Just as we did in District Thirteen." (p. 22)

14	Their district will be showered with prizes, largely consisting of food. All year, the Capitol will show the winning district gifts of grain and oil and even delicacies like sugar while the rest of us battle starvation. (p. 22)
15	But the money ran out and we were slowly starving to death. There's no other way to put it. (p. 33)
16	Starvation's not an uncommon fate in District 12. Who hasn't seen the victims? (p. 33)
17	Katniss, I said aloud. It's the plant I was named for. And I heard my father's voice joking, "as long as you can find yourself, you'll never starve." (p. 63)
18	You see an elderly person you want to congratulate them on their longevity, ask the secret of survival. A plump person is envied because they aren't scraping.
19	My fear of the Career pack is minor compared to my burning thirst. (p. 202)
20	I finish off the loaf from District 11 and the last of the rabbit. How quickly the food disappears. (p. 291)
21	But there are things you don't question too much, I guess, when your home always smells like baking bread, whereas Gale questions everything. (p. 360)
22	My mother and Prim would live there with me. No more fear of hunger. A new kind of freedom. (p. 378)

Source: own elaboration.

There are 22 instances in the first novel where hunger or food distribution are mentioned in a relevant way. Hunger and food are indeed a central topic in Suzanne Collins' novel but the ways they are discussed vary. The example that summarises the relentless threat of hunger in people's lives is 20. Food is but a fleeting pleasure that leads them to concentrate on finding more as soon as it is finished. In this regard, a couple of instances refer to the drama of starvation (12,15), a bullet being preferable to starving. This is one of the main differences between this trilogy and the other novels in my corpus: the dramatic nature of food shortage and its wide scope.

One category is that of food as granting power (2, 11, 13, 14). In a food-deprived environment, being able to provide officers with fresh game and produce grants Katniss and Gale certain protection to continue hunting in the forest (2, 11). On the other hand, food is certainly used by the Capitol as a tool to manipulate and subdue citizens of the districts (13). The Hunger Games' winner is granted a comfortable life, but the district benefits from the victory, too (14). The Capitol uses this technique to foster rivalry

among districts, which prevents affiliation and union against the ruling power. The different forms of affiliation in Panem will be explored further in the section about affiliation. However, it is evident that these examples point to the topic of power distance and food and hunger as a means to ensure the continuity of the system and its power distribution, and example 2 shows that food restrictions affect the population as a whole, despite differences in the degree of duress experienced by officers and people in the Seam like Katniss and Gale.

The second category related to hunger is that of food conditioning behaviour and everyday life, comprising examples 5, 6, 7, 8, 17, 21 and 22. The scarcity of food leads to a generalised restrained attitude towards food as evidenced in example 5. Katniss and Gale are their families' sustenance; they would not survive without them, which prevents the youngsters from leaving the district and living in the woods, free from the Capitol, as suggested by Gale on the day of the reaping (6). This situation is connected to the previous idea insofar as the generalised shortage of resources limits dissenting behaviour. While Gale questions the capitol constantly and insists that something has to be done, the fact that Peeta is the baker's son and hence a privileged citizen compared to others regarding food availability limits his critical thinking according to Katniss (21). In addition, Katniss ironizes on most citizens' choice of the relative safety of the district instead of wandering in the forest for food (3). In other words, the fear of suffering the repression and punishment of the peacekeepers prevents people from taking the necessary risks to revert the situation.

Food is part of culture and collective identity and, in this context of shortage, hunger has permeated every aspect of their lives to the point that Katniss is named after an edible plant (17). Their customs and behaviour also reflect the situation, as judged by the use of special food for special occasions (5, 10), the fact that they would eat wild dog without hesitation (7) or the reluctance to accept a pet (1). Finally, Katniss' perception of her world revolves around food, as it is her primary focus. When she sees something expensive, she thinks about the food that the object could buy (8). Food and hunger are so important in Katniss' life that, when she thinks about life after the games, she wonders about her everyday life without having to hunt and trade for food (22) "What would my life be like on a daily basis? Most of it has been consumed with the acquisition of food. Take that away and I'm not really sure who I am, what my identity is" (p. 297).

Regarding plot distribution of the examples, most of them are concentrated in the first part of the novel. This distribution is logical considering that the beginning is when the protagonist introduces the reader to her world and, once she is in the games, the change of focus makes references to home relevant although less frequent.

#### 5.1.6 Results: *Catching Fire*

The following table presents the results of the tagging process, which allows the identification of quotes that deal with the topic of food and hunger for the sequel:

##### *Catching Fire.*

1	At fourteen, Gale, the eldest of the kids, became the main supporter of the family. He was already signed up for tesserae, which entitled them to a meager supply of grain and oil in exchange for his entering his name extra times. (p. 9)
2	They are determined, Hazelle and Gale, that the other boys, twelve-year-old Rory and ten-year-old Vick, and the baby, four-year-old Posy, will never have to sign up for tesserae. (p. 9)
3	Hazelle hugs me. “Enjoy the food.” “Absolutely,” I say. (p. 11)
4	He looks strong and healthy, so different from the sick, starving boy I knew in the arena, and you can barely even notice his limp now. (p. 17)
5	Parcel Day, the first of twelve, in which food packages were delivered to every person in the district. That was my favorite. To see all those hungry kids in the Seam running around, waving cans of applesauce, tins of meat, even candy. (p. 29)
6	I try to enjoy the food like Hazelle said. The kitchen staff clearly wants to please me. They’ve prepared my favorite, lamb stew with dried plums, among other delicacies. (p. 58)
7	A month of tribute winnings can easily provide for a family for a year. As long as we live, they will not hunger. (p. 73)
8	But the real star of the evening is the food. Tables laden with delicacies line the walls. Everything you can think of, and things you have never dreamed of, lie in wait. (p. 94)
9	How Hazelle had said he could have a bit in a cup of tea to soothe his cough, but he wouldn’t feel right unless the others had some, too. (p. 99)

10	In really bad times, the hungriest would gather at his door at nightfall, vying for the chance to earn a few coins to feed their families by selling their bodies. (p. 139)
11	The mines stay shut for two weeks, and by that time half of District 12 is starving. The number of kids signing up for tesserae soars, but they often don't receive their grain. (p. 159)
12	"Well, then this is your lucky day," I say, dropping my game bag on the floor. People are starving all over the district and we still have more than enough. So I've been spreading things around a little. (p. 171)
13	When I gave her the leg of groosling. "Oh, I've never had a whole leg to myself before." The disbelief of the chronically hungry. "Yeah, eat up," I say. Bonnie holds the bun as if she can't quite believe it's real. (p. 172)
14	It took less than forty-eight hours to subdue the city. Then, for a week, there was a lockdown. No food, no coal, everyone forbidden to leave their homes. (p. 175)
15	My father added a section on edible plants that was my guidebook to keeping us alive after his death. (p. 194)
16	Family and friends gather for a meal or bit of cake, if it can be afforded. (p. 300)
17	Without our thirst to distract us, we're all aware of how exhausted we are and make preparations for the night. (p. 354)
18	Haymitch's last words of advice to me. Why would I need reminding? I have always known who the enemy is. Who starves and tortures and kills us in the arena. Who will soon kill everyone I love. (p. 457)

Source: own elaboration.

In the second novel of the trilogy, some of the trends explained in *The Hunger Games* are explored and stressed. As action progresses, awareness of the situation of the whole country becomes increasingly evident for the readership and the protagonist.

First, regarding the power that controlling food grants the Capitol, Katniss and district population point out that the Capitol purposely starves the districts (18) for different reasons. On the one hand, reducing the amount of food available to the districts allows the Capitol to prevent uprisings (11, 14, 18). This is the same idea discussed in the previous novel and is also discussed in other novels. The lack of safety regarding this basic issue destroys people's possibilities of rebelling. Furthermore, the

way food is administered allows the government to reinforce other control mechanisms as in *The Hunger Games*. In this novel, this idea is represented by the fact that people in the districts usually receive parcels of food (5), but because of Katniss' behaviour the food is spoiled and scarce.

On the other hand, the only way families are able to access a greater amount of food is by letting their children sign up for tesserae. Signing for tesserae implies that the name of the child enters one extra time in the reaping bowl, so Gale and his mother try to prevent the younger ones from having to do so (1, 2). The fact that people risk their lives to access food further confirms food's position in the pyramid of human needs.

Second, food is power, as shown by the examples about Capitol strategies; however, that power is not always exerted massively towards the whole population. Example 10 shows that peacekeepers used their privileged position and the desperate situation of starvation to take advantage of young women in the district. Furthermore, examples 7 and 12 show that the gap between the victors' and the general population's lifestyle is exorbitant. A month of the winnings of a victor can provide sustenance for a whole family during a year. In fact, Katniss donates a considerable part of the food available to her to the district's population, which indicates that she is developing a sense of community that she did not have at the beginning of the previous novel. What might have been designed as a social status barrier between victors and population is used precisely to help those who have suffered most. As regards the victors, Katniss notices how victor's life has improved Peeta's health: from starving boy in the arena to a healthy and strong person (4). Thus, these examples show how hunger reinforces large power distance in Panem. Nonetheless, this power distance is slightly limited for the protagonist because Katniss' position was already privileged before the games: she could hunt in the woods and had access to his father's knowledge on edible plants (15). In fact, Katniss' relationship with nature is highly romantic. In nature is where she feels truly free, and she constantly states her dependency with nature for food resources.

Third, the idea that hunger and food shape peoples' mindset is stressed in this novel to a greater extent. Food is conceived as a luxury and thus it is something to enjoy when the occasion allows it (3, 6). The staff that works for Katniss and Peeta as victors try to please her by providing the food that she likes the most. As is evident throughout the novels, Katniss is not interested in material things, but she does not fail to mention the amount or quality of the food. One of the greatest culture shocks Katniss and Peeta experience has to do with the use Capitol citizens make of food. While some people

cannot even assimilate having enough food for themselves (13), Capitol residents throw parties where food is excessive and wasted (8). For someone coming from a restrained culture that is severely affected by food shortage, the overindulgence of the Capitol’s culture regarding not only food but also their flamboyant lifestyle is undoubtedly striking.

The fact that food is reserved for important occasions and its importance are highly ingrained in their mentality, as shown by Gale’s little brother refusal to take some corn syrup for his cough unless his brothers had some too (9). This idea is also indicative of the collectivist mindset of this culture. As explained in the previous chapter, the most important collective in a collectivist society is family. Therefore, a child takes into account the other members of his or her group and puts their wellbeing at the same level as his or hers. Special occasions include weddings, where tradition says people share some food if it is available (16). The fact that it is celebrated sharing the most precious products reinforces this idea of collectivism.

#### 5.1.7 Results: *Mockingjay*

This table presents the results of the tagging process regarding food and hunger in *Mockingjay*, the last novel in *The Hunger Games* trilogy.

1	[T]he food was relatively tasteless, but for the refugees of 12, these were minor considerations. They were safe. They were being cared for. They were alive and eagerly welcomed. (p. 9)
2	I was only told they were being confined. Why are they being punished? “For stealing food. We had to restrain them after an altercation over some bread, [...]” (p. 57)
3	First of all, every district is currently at war with the Capitol except 2, which has always had a favored relationship with our enemies despite its participation in the Hunger Games. They get more food and better living conditions. (p. 97)
4	I’ve slept right through the late afternoon and night, and I’m starving. My breakfast is disappointingly small. Just a few cubes of bread soaking in warm milk. (p. 121)
5	They have actually taken 3 and 1—the latter so crucial since it’s Panem’s main food supplier—and have made inroads in several other districts as well. (p. 140)

Source: own elaboration.

As action progresses and the focus moves from the stagnant society to the revolution to overthrow the Capitol's leader, the importance given to food is reduced, mainly because in District 13, although not very varied, food and safety are ensured (1). For Katniss, who is accustomed to eating good rations and fresh food, the portions she is assigned in District 13 are a nuisance (4). Although this matter is not thoroughly discussed by Katniss, who has greater problems at affiliation and esteem level, as we will see, she is highly concerned when she finds out that her crew of beauticians had been confined and abused for stealing food (3). This is another instance of cultural difference and culture shock. The beauticians, who are Capitol citizens and are accustomed to having as much food as they want, do not understand the concept of restraint over a basic product. This is one of the many differences between the Capitol and the districts; although they are part of the same country, their cultural differences are radical.

Examples 2 and 5 show how the focus shifts from the problems in society to the problems and advances of the revolution. District two, whose citizens are hated by the other districts for their close relationship with the Capitol, receives a favourable treatment and is the last district to fall to the rebels' power (2). In more strategic terms, the rebels aimed at taking control of District 1 because of its role in feeding the Capitol. If the population is hungry, they are less likely to support the government (5), as suggested by the fact that food is at the basis of the pyramid, whereas affiliation is the third stage.

#### 5.1.8 Results: *Across the Universe*

The table below presents the two quotes identified during the tagging process for hunger and food in the first novel of Beth Revis' trilogy: *Across the Universe*.

1	I stop at the fence and lean over it, panting and sweaty, and a few of the cows wobble in my direction. They have more muscle on them than normal cows, meat bulging under their hides, making them bowlegged and slow. They chew on cud in even, measured movements, smacking a little each time, releasing a whiff of dirt and grass that almost reminds me of home. (p. 188)
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2	I push in the button to the food door, and it leaves me a pastry filled with something that is almost eggs and that oozes with something that is almost cheese. I'm done after a bite. I'm tired of almost. I want something real. (p. 356)
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Source: own elaboration.

An important distinction to be made regarding this novel, which influences the weight of very basic needs in the total analysis, is the fact that it is an initially utopian society that becomes dystopian as the protagonists become aware of the details of the system, that is, a flawed utopia or an anti-utopia if we consider the important weight of criticism regarding topics such as power distance. Therefore, food, one of the most important needs, is covered by the system in this society; hence only two examples of issues regarding food can be identified.

Both complaints about food are voiced by Amy, who sees it from the privileged perspective of an outsider. The first refers to genetic manipulation of cows to obtain meat, which is closely related to current debates on the advantages and disadvantages of the application of technology to crops or the design of artificial meat. The second refers to the fact that food lacks the quality of food from Earth. This second position could be connected with the fear of denaturalization of everyday life due to technological advance. However, no mention is made of hunger or food scarcity in this society.

#### 5.1.9 Results: *A Million Suns*

The table below presents the four quotes identified in the second novel of the trilogy as regards food and hunger.

1	“That’s it?” I say to the small pastry that lies inside. I pull it out. Wall food has never been very appetizing, but this is the first time I can say that it’s small. The whole thing fits in my palm in a flat, depressed sort of way. Two bites later, and breakfast is over. (p. 19)
2	The ship is dying. You can see that, can’t you? You can see the rust. You can see how the solar lamp isn’t as bright as it should be. How the plants take longer to grow . . . if they grow at all. How the only thing that had been keeping the people calm and in check was Phydus. (p. 64)
3	“I thought it was . . . interesting. That ‘let them eat cake’ bit—I wonder if they would have even revolted if there hadn’t been the shortage of food.” [...] I—my

	mind is remembering the red line in the chart Marae showed me, the line that showed the decreasing food production. When the rest of the ship sees how quickly the food's disappearing—that the ship is dead in the empty sky, and that soon we will be too—how long will it be till they, like the people in Bartie's book, turn their farm tools into weapons and revolt? (p. 72)
4	People are afraid they won't have enough food later, so they're saving it now rather than eating it. Or they're eating as much as they can before supplies run out. (p. 88)

Source: own elaboration.

As in the previous novel, the first example of complaint about food is voiced by Amy, who judges the ration to be smaller than in other cases (1). However, as the action progresses, we see that the problem of food scarcity is becoming increasingly acute. In fact, due to the deterioration of the ship and the fact that people are no longer controlled by drugs, production lowered to a critical level (2). The logical consequence of that lack of food and insecurity for people is rebellion, as Bartie mentions (3) citing the French Revolution. The last example is the consequence of anarchy. The leader is unable to control the population or make them understand that working is necessary for food to be produced and they received no formal education where those values were taught. In fact, none of them had access to books until they were awakened from the drug trance; hence they hoard food (4). As we have seen, the lack of food or the threat of such lack is a sufficient condition to stir up a revolution and threaten the system. In spite of being part of a collectivist culture, once the drugs are out of their system, the people on board of the ship behave like individualists, for example, in hoarding food, while a collectivist would think about the consequences of his or her actions for those belonging to the collective.

Interestingly, all examples except for the first one offer the view of an observer and a person with some degree of authority rather than a subjective experience of food shortage. In other words, the examples evince the worry of those who feel the responsibility of the situation that affects the whole population, but do not express their angst about how the situation affects them personally as individuals.

### 5.1.10 Results: *Shades of Earth*

The following table shows the results of the analysis of food and hunger in the last novel of the *Across the Universe* trilogy.

1	“The negative ramifications of confining the ship’s crew and our own to the shuttle for an indeterminate amount of time, with limited food and water and without any restrooms, will be a bigger threat than anything the planet could plausibly present. [...]” (p. 76)
2	“My people (from Earth) will distribute food rations at midday, and with them, work assignments.” (p. 136)
3	I start handing out the packets to the next group of people. “But there’s work that has to be done first. I can’t let my people starve.” “Elder!” Amy looks shocked. “You can’t let them be food for pterosaurs either.” (p. 139)
4	I don’t think I’m hungry, but when we get back to the building, I find that I’m starving. I finish my ration of food much too quickly—probably for the best, given its bland taste and too-chewy texture. Even so, I’d like to ask for more, but I resist the impulse. We need to make this food last. (p. 198)
5	[...] we need to pack away every single bit of food we can. All our supplies on the planet were destroyed. (p. 294)

Source: own elaboration.

The idea of food as the most important resource both in terms of survival and as regards power over the population that has been obvious in the novels analysed so far continues in this last instalment of this trilogy. The first and third examples evidence how food is higher on the priorities of the characters than their safety from existing or possible dangers such as the pterosaurs. Furthermore, example 5, which explains the urge to acquire food resources in order to survive on the planet, stresses how basic this need is in comparison to any others. The second example shows a fight for power of the colony between the main leaders (Elder and Colonel Martin): being the person who delivers food to the population implies being associated with a problem-solving leader and facilitates gaining the population’s trust and respect. Furthermore, it increases power distance, as it conveys the idea that subordinates should expect to be told what to do. Finally, the exceptional situation that the colony lives is represented by Amy’s

restraint regarding food intake. She is aware of the scarcity of this paramount resource and thus acts prioritising the common good to her individual satisfaction. This situation is noteworthy because of her culture of origin is characterised by extremely high individualism and indulgence. Thus, this action could reflect an influence of the culture of destination on the individual and thus a criticism of the individualism initially portrayed.

In contrast with the previous novel, this sequel presents a more dramatic approach to the problem of food, but again from the point of view of people who are in charge of the situation. In fact, as in the previous novel, the only example offering a first-hand experience with hunger is Amy's (4). In general terms, the topic of food shortage is within a wider set of responsibilities, it is approached from an organizational perspective and is part of the game for power and respect that the leaders play. In these novels, the protagonists (Amy and Elder) are privileged insofar as their actions define the course of action, while in other novels, the hunger of food shortage is a threat posed by a larger organization such as the government and the protagonists are granted less control, which in some cases they must fight to gain.

#### 5.1.11 Results: *Divergent*

The following table presents the three examples that define the role and importance of food and hunger in the first novel of Veronica Roth's trilogy, *Divergent*.

1	In return for their work they get food and clothing, but, as my mother says, not enough of either. I see a factionless man standing on the corner up ahead. (p. 25)
2	You've never had a hamburger before?" asks Christina, her eyes wide. "No," I say. "Is that what it's called?" "Stiffs eat plain food," Four says, nodding at Christina. "Why?" she asks. I shrug. "Extravagance is considered self-indulgent and unnecessary." (p. 66)
3	"All that wealth...doesn't come from nowhere." "Currently, the factionless are a drain on our resources," Jeanine replies. "As is Abnegation. I am sure that once the remains of your old faction are absorbed into the Dauntless army, Candor will cooperate, and we will finally be able to get on with things." (p. 429)

Source: own elaboration.

The *Divergent* series, unlike *The Hunger Games* series, present a protagonist who does not belong to a community or group that struggles to obtain basic sustenance. This circumstance is directly related to the scarcity of examples found in the novels evincing this issue. In fact, she is a faction member and, therefore, a privileged individual. The factionless, on the contrary, are starving because they are treated as slaves (1). This example suggests the first topic of the novels in this regard: power distance and income inequality derived from the manipulative use of food.

Despite the situation endured by the factionless, the leader of the Erudite wants to eliminate this group of people arguing that they are a waste of resources (3). Although the word “resources” may well refer to goods other than food, the Erudite’s main argument to justify their hatred towards the factionless is that the low quality of the food they receive is directly linked to the Abnegation’s decision to feed this group of outliers. This extremely practical viewpoint is nonetheless derived from a supremacist mindset, similar to that historical leaders have yielded to justify mass murder in their quest for power. This topic is closely related to the previous one but also to the idea of inequalities based on the power of the collective and thus with identity and otherness.

Although Tris does not suffer from hunger, the faction where she was raised has a strict set of rules as regards their lifestyle that discourages self-indulgence and it applies to anything from dressing codes to food (2). This is a characteristic of societies that value restraint, as we have seen in the discussion section on Hofstede’s cultural dimensions. Thus, the relationship between the protagonist and food shown by this result is a representation of her culture.

#### 5.1.12 Results: *Insurgent*

The table below presents the five results of the analysis that offer insights into the role of food and hunger in society for the second novel in this trilogy.

1	“I’m amazed by how they live here,” he says as he takes the toast from my plate. “They’re completely self-sustaining. They have their own source of power, their own water pumps, their own water filtration, their own food sources.... They’re independent.” (p. 35)
2	Too hungry to do much of anything except look for food. But then the Stiffs started giving them food, clothes, tools, everything. (p. 95)

3	“You know, as a kind of ‘it sucks we got attacked, but at least there are desserts’ thing.” “I feel better already,” says Lynn dryly. (p. 215)
4	Peter sets a bottle of water next to the bed, and a sandwich. The thought of eating it nauseates me. (p. 359)
5	“Hey,” I say. “I like scrambled eggs.” “Must be a Stiff breakfast, then.” She grabs my arm. “C’mon.” (p. 403)

Source: own elaboration.

While in the first novel the factionless were presented as a minority group that could not cover their basic needs, this novel shows how Abnegation policies of charity allowed this group to organize and try to fight for their rights (2). While they were starving, they could not focus on anything else, both because they were too weak, and because in the pyramid of human needs, food is at the bottom. Therefore, and as another topic of discussion, governmental aid policies targeting access to food are presented as key to allow these people’s development on a motivational level.

Despite the natural order according to which food is the main need, the novels constantly present instances in which the order is reversed, as we will see in the next sections. In this particular case, Tris rejects food because she believes she is going to die (4).

Presenting the topic of alternative feeding and sustainability systems, *Insurgent* also introduces the reader to another faction, the Amity, who have a self-sustaining system (1). As extrapolations of possible problems and their solutions, it is noteworthy that YA dystopian novels include these topics. This topic is present in other novels, and its importance will be discussed in light of the current climate emergency. Furthermore, members of other factions seem to ignore the ways other factions provide for their members, which indicates a lack of knowledge sharing, a potential problem at affiliation level.

As in the previous novel, we see an association of a particular type of food with a specific faction (5), which strengthens the idea of food as an element that helps building one’s identity. Finally, factions other than Abnegation seem to have an indulgent attitude towards food, which is used as a consolation mechanism (3). In general terms, food as a problem –hunger– is exclusively related to the minority and discriminated collective of the factionless.

### 5.1.13 Results: *Allegiant*

The five quotations shown in the following table refer to food and hunger as conceived in the last sequel of the *Divergent* trilogy.

1	“All the other cities—that’s where most of the country lives, in these big metropolitan areas, like our city—are dirty and dangerous, unless you know the right people. Here at least there’s clean water and food and safety.” I shift my weight, uncomfortable. (p. 142)
2	“He saw her performing an experiment on a factionless man in exchange for something—food, or clothing, something like that. [...]” (p. 215)
3	“The records suggest—though they’re fairly vague on this front—that people joined the experiment so their families could escape extreme poverty—the families of the subjects were offered a monthly stipend for the subject’s participation, for upward of ten years. [...]” (p. 226)
4	“How do you hide a war?” I say. “People are isolated, starving,” Nita says quietly. “They know only what they’re taught, they see only the information that’s made available to them.” (p. 264)
5	“Feeding people is just putting a tiny bandage on a gaping wound. It might stop the bleeding for a while, but ultimately the wound will still be there.” (p. 348)

Source: own elaboration.

Each novel has introduced a new kind of society. In *Allegiant*, the protagonists leave the city, which allows them to see the big picture, gaining insights into how society works and how starvation is in fact a manipulation mechanism and, its consequences, minor problems for those in charge of the experiment at the Bureau. Amar, Tobias’ instructor, defends the Bureau as a safe “home,” where people at least are provided with food and are not prosecuted (1), in contrast with life at the fringe or in Chicago; however, neither the Bureau nor any other organization try to solve the starvation problem that exists outside the premises, at the fringe. Instead, they focus on genetic damage as the cause of the chaotic situation that prevents people from being fed properly (5).

This novel connects the satisfaction of basic needs with civil rights movements: The starving population is unable to fight injustice (4). In addition, the delicate situation in the world outside the city/bureau was used to recruit volunteers to participate in the

governmental experiment of genetic modification: the families of the participants would receive sustenance for ten years (3). Although sustenance is not necessarily related to food and hunger, the description of the world outside the experiment as an environment where starvation is common leads me to consider that the stipend is linked to these families' need to be fed in a similar way as the tesserae in *The Hunger Games* serves to provide the family with extra food. Following a similar pattern of behaviour as the recruiters of the bureau, the Erudite performed experiments on factionless individuals in exchange for food (2). Both ideas are connected to the lack of agency of people in need. All in all, food is used to manipulate people and to take advantage of them for ulterior motives. Furthermore, hunger is disregarded as a secondary matter and tackled as a consequence of other circumstances, rather than directly as it was in Chicago –to some extent– by the Abnegation charity policies.

#### 5.1.14 Discussion

Hunger has always been the driver of social change and revolutions (Caparrós, 2014, p. 10); perhaps particularly so because it is irremediably linked to inequalities. Hunger affects around 800 million people in the world; at the same time, a third of all produced food is wasted or lost: 1,300 tons of food every year (FAO, 2011).

Plenty of studies have provided detailed explanations about the extent of the problem, its causes and possible solutions, but also on the contradictions between developed countries, where food is wasted, and underdeveloped countries, where people die of inanition. Even though the most drastic inequalities are those between developed and underdeveloped countries, equal access to food is a rising concern in first-world countries. Over the past few years, research has provided an overview on the problematic situation arising in some of these countries as a consequence of the global economic crisis, which led to a reduction in the consumption of some products which became too expensive despite their nutritional value. Therefore, food inequality is a well-known problem for readers in developed countries.

In the novels of our corpus, two opposed situations define the perception of hunger and food distribution. On the one hand, some novels present a narrator who is affected by the shortage of food; on the other hand, we find narrators that realize the problem from a privileged perspective. The position of the first-person narrator is bound



to affect the weight that this matter has in the novel and is likely to condition the reader's interpretation and connection to the problem.

The analysis of the novels has yielded a series of issues discussed in one or more of the texts with sometimes conflicting ideas. In general terms, while the *Divergent* series offers a more relatable image of hunger and food distribution for developed countries, *The Hunger Games*' success may stem from the radicality and cruelty of the situation portrayed. For citizens of the analysed countries, the inside look Katniss provides on such a basic issue is a different approach, especially given that Katniss has a privileged position within that context of starvation, given her access to the resources in the woods, but also experiences hunger first hand during her childhood and through her interaction within her community. District 12 may be compared to a developing country at war in the real world. Parcel day, when the government provides the population with parcels of food evokes the image of NGOs and parties giving away food in countries at war. In stark contrast, *Divergent* presents a more distant approach, one that could engage readers in developed countries to a greater extent. The other two trilogies provide more estranged situations insofar as the context could be more subtly related to the reality of the readers.

#### 5.1.14.1 Power distance and hunger

Two trilogies present food shortage as a mechanism of the system to prevent rebellion: *The Hunger Games* and *Divergent*. In the case of former, the repression of the population impedes their involvement in rebellious activism. In the latter, the Capitol's policies are designed to sustain large power distance over time. By contrast, the *Divergent* series show how offering the starving population a safety net offered them the necessary support to organize themselves and fight for equality. On the other hand, one of the trilogies points out the weight of hunger as a cause of disruption and rebellion: *Across the Universe*; the society in *Uglies*, in turn, offers food as a basic right. Therefore, the main difference in these cases is the existence of policies that aim at smoothing the gap. Safety net policies would thus favour the reduction of power distance.

Inequality in the USA has been increasing since the 1980s. In particular, food insecurity has increasingly affected low-income families; nevertheless, this situation has recently become significantly alarming. In 15 years, the percentage of households in this

country that suffer food insecurity increased from 10.5% (2000) to 14% (2015). In addition, food security in minority households was significantly higher than the mean: food insecurity reached 26.1% among black households, and 22.4% among the Hispanic community. This situation was made apparent by the demand in food banks (Davis & Geiger, 2017, p. 344) especially after the beginning of the recession in 2008.

The situation in Spain as regards food insecurity during the period in which the novels analysed obtained a major success in sales figures is also significant. Studies have shown the impact that the economic crisis had on eating habits in Spanish households. In particular, the amount of food ingested per person decreased in the years following the onset of the crisis (Antentas & Vivas, 2014, p. 59). Similarly, Loopstra et al. (2015) examine the situation in the UK, noting that “between 2010 and 2013 the rate of food parcel distribution tripled” and pointing out the relationship between government welfare cuts and the rise of food distribution by food banks (p. 2). The situation in these countries resembles that of Chicago in the relationship between the welfare system and the accessibility to food. Furthermore, it supports the relationship between equality and welfare system because the USA, the country with the highest inequality score, also has a weak welfare system compared to that of the other two countries. The cutbacks in welfare could have been perceived by the population in the European countries as an attack on the part of the government, especially in southern Europe, where the Troika (comprised by the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund) was in charge of supervising the austerity measures demanded from highly indebted members. Even though analyses on the representation of the Troika are not abundant, Sosoni (2016, p. 284) performed a critical discourse analysis of political definitions of the troika in Greece and found out that while some considered the organization a helper in the difficult economic situation of the country, others defined it as an oppressive and dominating institution that threatened the country’s sovereignty. In this sense, as regards *The Hunger Games*, the restraint demanded by the authorities in these countries as many struggled to make ends meet might have reinforced the identification of the Capitol with the European authorities and the districts and thus the protagonist with austerity-driven countries in Europe including Spain.

As regards the use of food for political or ideological purposes, and in clearly close connection with the imposed austerity measures, far-right organizations during the economic crisis in Spain organized food collections where food parcels were restricted

to people considered Spanish by origin and birth (Martín, 2016, n.p.). This action intended to spread the message that immigrants were hoarding the charity food available. This same action has been taking place in the UK for years (Marsh, 2018, n.p.; Steward, 2016, n.p.). Readers from these countries, and possibly from others, given the strong connections among countries as regards information access thanks to the globalization and the internet, would be able to connect the Erudite's ideas about food distribution with the discourse of anti-immigration groups.

Despite the great recession and its effects on the population, social vindications were not massive in many countries until 2011, four years after the onset of the crisis. In this regard, the reaction of the population was similar to that of the districts, who chose not to act for fear of losing what little they had. Furthermore, although the crisis certainly affected most of the population, food safety did not have the same impact regarding the number of affected citizens. In this regard, the novels offer alternative viewpoints. While, as we have seen, Katniss' position is technically privileged, she belongs to a group that suffers from starvation. By contrast, Tris and Tally offer accommodated or middle-class readers the possibility to identify with them while identifying the fact that food insecurity is a concerning problem.

#### *5.1.14.2 Indulgence and overindulgence, the other face of inequality.*

The second topic reflected in the novels is the attitude towards food in terms of indulgence or restraint. As we have seen, some of the societies are indulgent but most are restrained. In particular, food production in *Across the Universe* is highly controlled, and the available supply on the planet is strictly distributed with efficiency and influence as the two main pillars. In the case of *Uglies* we see a high level of indulgence when it comes to food. As Peksoy (2014, p. 81) indicates, food shortage is a control tool as much as an excess of it. The city where Tally lives provides enough food for the population and is indulgent with its youth. Over-sixteens can have any food they want; however, it is portrayed as a tool used to control the general population and keep them as unquestioning and careless citizens, deprived from critical and individual thinking. This premise is the same as that followed by the Capitol with its citizens: *Panem et Circenses*. In a real-world comparison, the books criticise extreme indulgence and the culture of hedonism. Although, as I have explained in the previous subsection, the analysed countries have suffered the impact of the economic crisis, their economic

systems rely on consumerism and thus on hedonism. Furthermore, the dramatic disparities between developed and developing countries regarding food availability are sufficiently explicit for all citizens to understand the irony and the criticism in the novels. On the other hand, it is noteworthy to mention Katniss' behaviour as regards the excessive amount of food received as a prize for her victory in the games. Like Brer Rabbit, when Katniss receives a cornucopia, the first thing she does is replenish his neighbours' pantries so that they won't starve. This action contrasts with the overindulgence of the Capitol's citizens, who disregard the districts' suffering. This behaviour is closely related to Katniss' collectivist values and with the different affiliations that will be discussed in section 5.3.

#### 5.1.14.3 Processed food, GMOs and alternative diets.

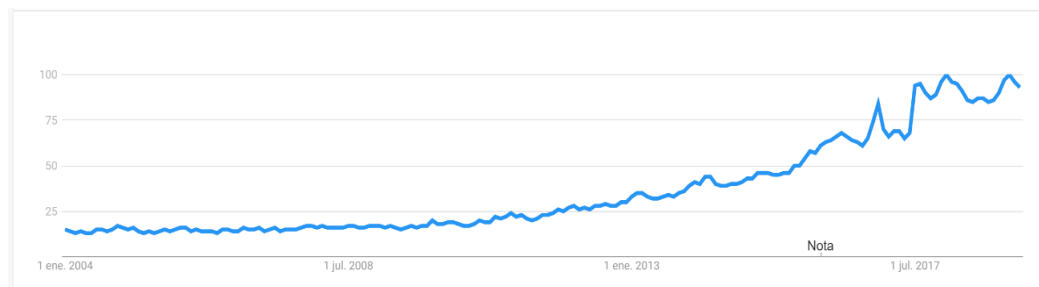
Hunger is unacceptable and a mortal flaw in any system, so what are the alternatives in the novels? Amy and Elder's society is focused on efficiency. Theirs is not a utopia per se, but the only solution they could find to a threat to the survival of the population. Nevertheless, the system works insofar as the food is available to everyone without discrimination. The main problem in this society, as explained in the results, is the uncontrollable effects of aging technology and limited resources, which affect the quality and quantity of the food much to Amy's dismay. Food does not resemble Earth-grown food, it does not seem real and is unsatisfying. Not only that, but it is genetically modified. Similarly, Tally's evolution towards natural sources of food suggest a criticism of processed and artificial products that are commonplace nowadays in developed countries as one further step into dehumanization. On the other hand, sustainable lifestyles in *Uglies*, compared to *Across the Universe*, are achieved through a dietary change involving vegetarianism or a radical reduction of animal-origin food.

In the context in which the novels were written, 2005-2006, most economies were thriving. Under these circumstances, with a tendency to extreme consumerism, *Uglies* presents a society in which food is readily available for individual feasts while sustainable thanks to technology and plant-based diets. This criticism to natural resource exploitation and depletion would have hardly found wide audience support in the context in which the novels were published. By contrast, the 2010s are proving to be a period of higher ecological awareness as judged by the new movements claiming stricter actions to control climate change or the steady increase of people swapping to

plant-based diets or reducing meat intake. In particular, reports show that 6% of United States citizens consider themselves vegan (data from 2017) compared to 1% in 2014 (PRNewswire, 2017, n.p.). In the UK, 3.25% of the citizens over 15 years of age do not eat meat (data from 2016), which also poses an important increase (350%) compared to data from 10 years ago (Ipsos Mori, 2016, n.p.). This trend may owe to several factors including the rise of the Internet, which exposes the practices of the meat and dairy industry and its consequences (Fiestas-Flores, & Pyhälä, 2018, pp. 17–20).

Google trends also shows an important increase in the search of terms like “veganism” worldwide, with a similar trend for USA, UK, Spain or France among others.

Figure 1: Search interest of veganism between 2004 and 2018.



Scope: 2004-2018 worldwide. Source: Google Trends

As the figure and data shows, this increase is fairly recent and had not started when the novels were published. However, nowadays, the novels’ proposal would allegedly be widely accepted as natural taking into account recent trends such as teenagers’ Fridays for Future movement started in 2018 by Swedish teenager Greta Thunberg –now nominated for Nobel Peace Prize– which has led to teenagers’ academic strike on Fridays to claim further ecological measures from governments and the general public. This movement has paired with traditional ecological movements, which advocate for meatless diets as a means to curb climate change. Some of the alternative meatless products have received great criticism because they contradict the values defended by those changing their diet for the climate: they are highly processed products with artificial ingredients.

Similarly, the use of GMOs has historically given rise to heavy criticism in what scholars have named irrational hatred. For the British public, geoengineering’s reception is polarised based on its relationship with nature. According to Corner, Parkhill, Pidgeon, and Vaughan (2013, p. 945), while some people consider geoengineering

unnatural and dangerous, others conceive it as an inevitable and necessary tool in the upcoming years marked by climate emergency. In general terms, Europeans seem much more sceptical regarding the benefits of GM crops than US citizens (Bonny, 2003, s.p; Lucht, 2015, p. 4272). The regulation in Spain of these kinds of crops is much stricter than in the US. Specifically, only one GM plant is authorized in Europe and most of the production takes place in Spain. The UK does not produce this maize. Accordingly, Spain presents a higher customer acceptance of GM crops than other European countries where GM crops are not grown, but lower than in the US where legislation is much more permissive (Gaskell et al., 2010, p. 20). Thus, British readers could understand Amy's position against GMOs to a greater extent than perhaps US readers and Spanish readers.

#### 5.1.14.4 Food: tradable resource or human right?

Utopias cater to their citizens' needs, and food is the main one. Nevertheless, dystopias are not necessarily a compilation of everything that may go wrong, but often a society damaged by a flaw in the mechanisms that form it. Typically, first person narrations imply a connection between protagonist and reader, who impose their perspective as the correct one. While Panem is clearly a dystopia, the other three worlds are ambiguously defined for the protagonists. This implies that the society may have utopian traits even if some other features scream dystopia. In this case, ensuring food for the population with no exceptions is clearly a utopian trait of the society in *Uglies*. Its representation in the books serves to criticise the understanding of food as a tradable item, thus jeopardising unprivileged people's access to the most basic of needs. Tally does not conceive a society in which people had to trade for a product as basic as food. Both in *Across the Universe* and *Uglies* food is completely free and at the disposal of the population without any exceptions. In Chicago (*Divergent*), food is freely available for the faction members free of charge, but a minority of the population does not receive enough. Conversely, food in Panem is clearly scarce and must be paid for in one way or another. The protagonists of the first three trilogies, where food is offered freely, agree with this policy, which is not part of the problem they see in their societies. In Tally's case, the mentioned criticism to the Smokies' social organization could be understood as a criticism to food shortage in real-life societies derived from the tenets of capitalism and the role of money. Trading for food is unacceptable for Tally because it challenges

the belief that it is a basic right and as such it should be available to all. For Tally, and hence for the reader, food-production sustainability is the most important factor. The implications of the novels are that collective management and distribution of food is the most efficient and least damaging system to ensure food access to the population. On the other hand, the other examples may be explained by teenagers' realisation of the dynamics of the economic system. The food system of Tris' Chicago is apparently functional and efficient for most of the population, although the fact that an important group of people –the factionless– need to rely on the kindness of the Abnegation faction members to feed themselves and the apparent lack of transparency as regards system management are two important flaws. Their system is based on a meritocracy and food is included in the set of privileges for those good enough to belong to their society. The idea of the self-made man associated with American culture impregnates the values of this society, which represents the masculinity that defines American culture.

Money is traditionally absent from children literature, and if there is money, it is easy to obtain. In *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (1997), for instance, the protagonist discovers that he has inherited a life-lasting amount of money from his parents. In this same series, money serves to buy academic material, but food is 'magically' provided by the school—although readers later discover that house elves work as slaves to produce the food for Hogwarts' residents. In fact, many works of children's literature present food through nurturing figures, associating it with wellbeing and safety but also with civilization. As Katz (1980, p. 194) points out, in C. S. Lewis' *Narnia Chronicles* (1950–1956), the children are welcomed with tea or dinner and receive similar treats after winning the battle against the White Witch. Aslan, Santa Klaus, or the Beavers and Mr. Tumnus are all nurturing figures. In classical tales, as we have discussed in the introduction to this section, food is magically provided to those who are desperate for it. In particular, in *The Sweet Porridge*, by the Grimm Brothers, an orphan girl wanders desperately into the forest in order to find some food for her and her mother. As an answer, she is given a magic pot that provides as much food as they might need (Daniel, 2006, p. 63). By contrast, one of the novels of the corpus, *The Hunger Games*, shows a similar situation with a very different outcome. Katniss relies on her skills and the knowledge passed to her by her late father to survive and provide for her family. When she needs extra food, she applies for tesserae, which increases her odds to become a tribute in the games and hence to die. Katniss is a victim of the system even before becoming a tribute: she was deprived from a regular childhood and had to

endure the trauma of losing her father without aid beyond the standard concession given to widows to grief before beginning to work to provide for themselves. By becoming the icon of the revolution against the Capitol and by defending justice, Katniss tells the readers that a system whereby food is traded for lower life expectancy or is not granted to those who need it is inherently wrong.

## 5.2 Safety

The second need concerns people's safety. This topic is one of the most varied because of the wide range of situations that can be discussed under the umbrella of safety. Furthermore, human history has proved humans' ability to outdo themselves when it comes to causing suffering and struggling for safety. Research fields dealing with the outcome and representations of such suffering have emerged over time. Trauma studies, for instance, represent collective traumatic events such as displacement, situations that endanger the collective at a particular moment –e.g., 9/11, civil wars, nuclear disasters, etc.– or racial oppression, among others.

The trauma of displacement is particularly interesting for the study of safety because home is a space typically associated with safety. We could understand homeplace as “a place where one can both return to and grow from, as a space where one can find reprieve from an otherwise often harsh world” (Davis, 2005, p. 26). This haven can be affected by uncontrollable circumstances such as forceful exile. Narratives of exile may present the trauma derived from losing the safe place that home is supposed to be. In this regard, Said (2001, p. 173) suggests that being displaced causes an alteration of one's identity and may lead to problems at affiliation and esteem levels. This idea can be seen in the novels of my corpus, particularly in District 12's refugee status in District 13, but also in Tally's constant loss of home. Regarding safety and race in particular, Davis (2005) discusses the pursuit of home and safety and the dangers encountered by African Americans in this quest in Ann Petry's *The Street* (1946) and Margaret Walker's *Jubilee* (1966). More precisely, she argues that the prevalent interpretation of homes, which involves the role of the African American woman as creator of a safe space for all African Americans, leaves out the personal struggle of the female characters, who face not only racism but also sexism and violence within the home. Furthermore, the ending of *The Street*, with Lutie's loss of a home and new attempt to find another is indicative of the safety that a proper home is meant to provide



to its inhabitants. On the other hand, Summers (2009, p. 624) explores how the city of New Orleans becomes polarized by extreme fear of the other in *Glass House*, by Christine Wiltz (1994), where the murder of an innocent black woman causes the outrage of the black community, in turn increasing white people's fear. The idea of safety is closely related to that of fear. In this regard, Svendsen expresses the safety and fear dichotomy and the way fear affects one's perception of the world:

The secure person lives in a reliable world – the word 'secure' means 'untroubled by feelings of fear, doubt or vulnerability' – while the insecure person lives in a world that at any time can turn against him, where the basis of existence at any time can be pulled out from under his feet. (2008, p. 12)

The common definition of fear is that of "an unpleasant emotion caused by the threat of danger, pain, or harm" (Oxford dict.). The likelihood of those threats is not the same for every citizen. What fear means for an individual is in turn related to its position within social structures. While scholars such as Beck (1992, p. 88) argue that the influence of traditional social structures on risk-managing has dissolved over the years, Furlong and Cartmel (1997, p. 2) stressed the impact that an individual's position within social structures has on his or her experiences.

Regarding women, for instance, Haskell and Randall (1998) point out that the fear of being attacked results in "social control insofar as [...] [it] results in the self-imposition of restrictions and limits" (p. 113). Risk and safety are not equal for all women either. As pointed out by Green and Singleton (2006, p. 856), "the intersections of gender, race and class inflect the social shaping of fear." In this regard, the authors found similar perceptions of fear regarding outside public spaces in comparison to the safety of inside spaces. However, while the white women discussed leisure in outside spaces, South Asian women preferred to stay indoors so as to prevent risky situations. In both cases women tended to walk in groups and feared the aggression of men.

These fears are reflected in literary criticism; however, the spaces associated with fear have changed over the centuries. In nineteenth-century fiction, safety for female characters was equated to marriage, as evidenced by domestic novels, in that following the path of "unvirtuous ladies" led to madness, while righteous women who managed to get married were apparently secure in the domestic sphere; however, "excellence" of the domestic woman was highly connected with the panoptical gaze of the husband (Kurant, 2002, p. 16). This idea of home as a place of constriction and reclusion is also present in modern literature. This idea is illustrated in Alice Munro's *Vandals* (1994),

where the home of the protagonist's friend, Bea, is associated with a place of terror where she and her brother were abused by Bea's husband. In this story, the home becomes a place of male dominance where women lack mobility and agency, as argued by McGill (2002), thus challenging the idea of home as safe place. Heaps (2001) points out that, before the nineteenth century, women "were likely to be 'accidental tourists' – wives and daughters accompanying husbands and fathers" (p. 82) or exceptionally travellers guarded and monitored by trusted chaperones. Mullin (2003, p. 56) identifies this social oppression in her reading of James Joyce's *Evelyn* (1914/19673). On the other hand, and focusing on narratives of exile in postcolonial writing, Githire (2005, p. 87) points out that for the women in the stories by Gisèle Pineau, home is "a place of nightmarish experiences, unending terror and grief. Far from being a loving place of connection, renewal, and healing, home is a place wracked by domestic violence and abuse-both mental and physical [...]."

### 5.2.1 Safety in utopian and dystopian fiction

Focusing on utopian fiction, the topic of safety is somehow less obvious and has been less researched than food. According to Maslow (1987, p. 18), safety refers to "security, stability, dependency, protection against abuse, neglect and exploitation, freedom from fear, anxiety and chaos." Safety of the utopian community as a whole is typically ensured in classical utopias by isolation, given that threats were perceived as mostly external. More's Utopians cave their territory apart from the continent following Utopos' orders. Furthermore, "the entry into the bay, occasioned by rocks on the one hand and shallows on the other, is very dangerous. [...] The channel is known only to the natives; so that if any stranger should enter into the bay without one of their pilots, he would run great danger of shipwreck" (*Utopia*, 1516, p. 51). Campanella's *The City of the Sun* (1602/2009) is a city on a tropical island protected by seven walls. The description of the city's defences suggests that its design ensures its impregnability. Bensalem in *New Atlantis* (Bacon, 1627) is protected by miles of ocean surrounding the island and while the inhabitants gather and use their knowledge on the rest of the world to their benefit, the island remains unknown to the world. In other works, utopia is global and therefore no isolation is necessary. Examples of global utopias include Mercier's (1770) *L'An 2440, Rêve s'il en Fut Jamais*, Bellamy's (1888) *Looking Backward*, or Morris' *News from Nowhere* (1890). Many of these novels depict

societies where power is handed over by the government. Based on this idea, several dystopias have tackled the consequences of power abuse on individual freedom and safety.

Safety of the individual or lack thereof is a recurrent topic in dystopian literature. In fact, most dystopias deal with safety or –more often– its absence (i.e., danger) at some point in the narrative. The nature of such danger may be other individuals or groups (e.g., authorities) or members of a group with a dominance over the collective of the protagonist (e.g., men over women). On the other hand, the mechanisms through which such threat is posed may also vary. Perhaps a very popular mechanism is that of technology, and more specifically surveillance. Surveillance’s advantages and drawbacks and the limits between the safety provided by surveillance and state control and the dangers of granting unlimited power to the controlling bodies in exchange for such perceived safety is discussed in dystopias in which technologies play a main role. The use of technology and science in general is undoubtedly linked to dystopia, as are the negative consequences of such use. From Shelly’s *Frankenstein* to Eggers’ (2013) *The Circle*, from the perversion of nature to the control of the population through technology, science fiction and dystopian novels have offered warnings on the dangers and limits of technological advances.

In general terms, the dystopian hero or heroine set to challenge the system is bound to endure the threat of violence or exile at some point. To cite the most popular dystopias of the twentieth century, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*’s protagonist, Winston Smith, receives a warning that is followed by torture, while in *Brave New World* people who repeatedly challenge the system, like John the Savage, are threatened with being sent to an island with those who “have got too self-consciously individual to fit into community-life” (p. 186).

It is interesting to notice how feminist utopias such as Le Guin’s *The Left Hand of Darkness*, or Russ’ *The Female Man* –as far as Whileaway is concerned– depict societies where safety for women is ensured insofar as no rape or dominance exists from men over them, because no men or genders exist at all. In particular, Le Guin’s population formed by androgynes stresses the idea that difference is the cause of conflict because that difference is based on power inequalities that may lead to a party exerting dominance over the other, which, in turn, leads to oppression and suffering on the other party. On the other hand, novels like Margaret Atwood’s *The Year of the Flood* (2009), arguably considered eco-feminist, portray a future world in which

technology is very advanced but individuals are far from safe. Among other things, Atwood's novel criticises violence exerted by men over women: Ren works as a dancer and prostitute and Toby escapes sexual assault by a manager (Blanco). Apart from individual safety, the whole population's safety is compromised due to the pandemic Oryx and Crake caused in the previous novel. In another dystopian vision, *Swastika Night* (1937), by Katherine Burdekin, women are relegated to mere breeders in a fascist patriarchal society. Similarly, *The Handmaid's Tale* (Atwood, 1985) presents a totalitarian regime in which fertile women are raped and become forced breeders for people in power. One of the themes that is analysed in the novels of my corpus, since all protagonists are female, is whether their safety is ensured or compromised as any other citizen's or if, on the contrary, being a woman entails extra risks in those societies. In this regard, the use of the first-person narrator in three of the four trilogies may allow for a more direct analysis of fear experienced by the protagonists.

In some instances, the idea of safety is yielded by the governing group as a propaganda banner to convince the population that the system and the current status quo works and is necessary. One of the preceding best-sellers to *The Hunger Games* –which is perhaps the most iconic trilogy of the current dystopian wave– is *The Giver* (Lowry, 1993). The novel presents a society where suffering does not exist, so the population is safe in that sense; however, all those experiences are concentrated in the Receiver. Thus, the system protects the population at the expense of that person. In addition, “flawed” children, those who fail to adapt to the expected new-born behaviour, are euthanised. However, this poses no threat to the existing population because they develop no affection for others. Furthermore, babies are given birth by selected girls who are denied the possibility to see them. This situation continues the trend of feminist dystopias that present forced pregnancies without the concept of motherhood attached. Hence, no emotional awakening is possible except for the protagonist.

By contrast, other dystopias represent situations where violence and control on the part of the powerful is evident. The lack of safety of the individual or group with which the reader identifies serves as a means to motivate a rebellion against the system. As an example, in the case of *Matched* (Condie, 2010), a YA dystopian novel, the majority of the population lives safe and war is but a story, whereas the minority group endures segregation silently. In the end, the safety ensured for citizens of the dystopia in the first case hides oppression of a minority, thus giving signs of the malfunctions of the system. These situations show –through the hero or heroine's awakening– that the society

depicted is in fact a flawed utopia, that is, a society that is initially perceived as utopian but presents some flaws discovered by the protagonist as he or she learns more about it (Sargent, 2016). In general terms, two types of safety can be differentiated: safety of the individual and safety as an abstract item perceived by the population. In other words, while the overall population may consider that safety is ensured within the society, particular individuals may be the target of violence and related behaviours. A key factor to be considered when identifying the relevance of safety and lack thereof is the position of the narrator within the system. Furthermore, and as indicated by Schwartz and Bilsky (1987, p. 552), safety is closely related to affiliation needs; therefore, this need may be compromised if the family or the nation are endangered. Finally, within the general notion of safety these authors also include health, both physical and psychological, as key for the survival of the individual. Since it is near the bottom of the pyramid of needs, a flaw in safety will pose a great problem to the correct development of the society.

### 5.2.2 Results: *Uglies*

The following table shows the results of the analysis of safety in *Uglies*.

1	Tally had memorized the map, but if she made one wrong turn, she was toast. (p. 7)
2	She always felt respect when face-to-face with a middle or late pretty. But in the presence of this cruelly beautiful man, respect was saturated with fear. (p. 101)
3	The cruel pretties seemed even more unearthly to exhausted eyes. Tally felt like a mouse in a cage full of hawks, just waiting for one to swoop down and take her. (p. 128)
4	Or worse, she would discover that Shay's trust in David had been misplaced, which could mean... anything. Probably something horrible. (p. 141)
5	"A few people still die each year, as with any surgery," he said. "From being unconscious so long, more than anything else." Tally bit her lip. She'd never heard that. (p. 263)
6	"And now everybody is happy, because everyone looks the same: They're all pretty. No more Rusties, no more war. Right?" (p. 267)

7	She wondered how they planned to capture her. Use a stunner? Throw a net? Simply bowl her over with their shock waves? At this speed and without crash bracelets, anything that knocked Tally off the board would kill her. (p. 316)
8	A shudder passed through his body. “Tally, what if they don’t bother to do it right?” (p. 350)
9	“The first time I came here at night, this place really scared me,” she said. (p. 351)
10	A minuscule part of Tally still expected her interface ring to warn her that she was leaving Uglyville. How had she worn that stupid thing for sixteen years? It had seemed such a part of her back then, but now the idea of being tracked and monitored and advised every minute of the day repelled Tally. (p. 354)
11	This floor was lit by a soft glow strip running down the middle of the hallway. A cold finger crept down Tally’s spine as she read the labels on the doors. (p. 379)

Source: own elaboration.

Perhaps because it is written in third person, the *Uglies* trilogy is lacking in examples of situations threatening the protagonist’s life directly. In this first novel, example 1 represents the risks taken by Tally as an ugly to see her friend. Two examples indicate that she is afraid of the harm that may come to her friends, both by the Smokies before she meets them (4), and by the system after they are captured (8). Interestingly, while in the first case the fear comes from a lack of information, in the second case (8) it stems from her newly acquired conscience and information on the city’s policies and practices. The fourth example, as the ninth, make reference to a fear of the unknown instilled by the city’s culture, that is, large uncertainty avoidance. In the case of this trilogy, this uncertainty avoidance could be cultivated as a means to prevent uglies from wandering away from the protective environment of the city.

Tally’s perception of the system as a threat revolves around three issues: Specials, the panopticon, and other hidden mechanisms of the system that Tally discovers and that are typical of dystopian systems. First, examples two and three indicate the protagonist’s initial and instinctive reaction when meeting the Specials, making special emphasis on their post-human and hunting features. In addition, example seven identifies the Specials as the main threat to her life during her escape after the Smoke is discovered by the city authorities. Second, as in many dystopias, the authorities control the population through surveillance systems. In this case, example 10 shows Tally’s realization that the interface ring that they wear all the time to interact with the city

facilities (elevators, for instance) and described as key to ensure that anyone who is lost or injured receives immediate help is in fact part of a panopticon system. This situation, especially given the choice of the word “advised,” indicates the parallelism established between Tally’s progressive rejection of the city’s tutoring and coaching presence and adolescents’ gradual distancing from parental monitoring and control. She weighs the safety provided by the laws and structure of the system against the freedom granted by her independence from the system notwithstanding the associated risks. Finally, examples five and 11 show Tally’s discovery of the dangers and crude repression mechanisms of the city: the silenced number of deaths during surgery and the rooms in Special Circumstances’ headquarters, which suggest the use of torture. In the first case, the authorities limit the flow of information towards citizens, especially towards those with intact critical thinking abilities, that is, uglies. The restriction of access to information on the risks that the surgery poses to their safety is a common mechanism of control in totalitarian dystopias, as is the manipulation of information. This control is extensive to the authorities’ repressive practices on rebellious individuals (11).

In the same vein, in example six, Maddy challenges Tally’s learned conception of difference as the source of discord, which is the system’s reasoning behind the surgery performed to every individual in the same way the society in *Across the Universe* conceives monoethnicity or the faction system in *Divergent* draws on similar values to facilitate coexistence and prevent violence.

### 5.2.3 Results: *Pretties*

The following table shows the results of the analysis of safety in *Pretties*.

1	But why was the figure following her? Every time Tally turned, it was there, moving with the terrible and predatory grace she remembered from being hunted through the ruins of the Smoke on that awful day when they had come to take her back to the city. (p. 18)
2	And there was another reason she was running: the Specials. It had only taken a glimpse of them to put every cell in her body on high alert. Their inhuman speed repelled her, like watching a cockroach skitter across a plate. (p. 33)
3	Everything felt very real: her intense revulsion at Croy’s ugly face, her fear of the Specials.
4	His lips were warm and soft and perfect, and she felt safe. (p. 56)

5	“Oh, right.” Tally remembered ugly days, how easy it was to trick the dorm minders. “The wardens last night— they said they were going to keep an eye on me.” [...] “So they can listen through the walls?” (p. 65)
6	Her finger felt naked without an interface ring, bringing back memories of sneaking across the river as an ugly, the terror of being caught. But fear kept her bubbly [...]. (p. 68)
7	[...] and hanging out with Zane apparently involved risking your life and not eating breakfast. (p. 80)
8	A feeling like panic began to well up in her. “What happened to David, Zane? Why didn’t he come?” (p. 88)
9	That meant the cuffs heard you talking even when you went outside and, unlike rings, they didn’t come off. They were manacles with an invisible chain, and no tool Tally and Zane had yet tried could cut them open. (p. 103)
10	“They’re keeping an eye on us already,” he whispered. “We can’t afford anyone poking around inside my head.” He flinched again, pain contorting his features. (p. 121)
11	“Listen, I’ll be fine. And no matter what happens, I’m glad we took the pills.” (p. 123)
12	Tally didn’t much like being in a race between her own starvation and Zane’s brain melting. (p. 124)
13	Tally took a step back, letting some of her fear show; even the most innocent new pretty would be frightened by the sight of Dr. Cable. Her cruel features, exaggerated by the moonlight, made her look like a beautiful woman half transformed into a werewolf. (p. 126)
14	Tally felt something punch into her stomach, something from ugly days: the old feeling of being caught. She tried to turn her fear into a look of surprise. (p. 128)
15	Even the cure wasn’t worth dying for. (p. 180)
16	Tally swallowed. “Must be more than a little risky.” (p. 191)
17	And, clutching her hoverboard, she threw herself into the void. (p. 232)
18	His change of heart stung her, but she didn’t have time to worry about it, not while plummeting toward the earth. (p. 237)
19	Of course, Tally realized, it wasn’t her own health she should be worrying about. Zane was somewhere out here too, maybe just as alone as she was. (p. 246)



20	Even if she wasn't being chased by a bloodthirsty raiding party, a sprained ankle alone in the freezing wilderness could prove fatal. She needed Andrew Simpson Smith, it was that simple. (p. 279)
21	Honor compelled him to hunt the enemy, even if it jeopardized both their lives. (p. 288)
22	But Tally couldn't bring herself to smile. The chill that had seeped into her bones while he was out looking for revenge hadn't gone away. (p. 290)
23	While her own survival had been an issue, it had been easy to forget them. But now that she had nothing to do all day but sit and watch the sky, Tally found herself slowly going crazy from worry. (p. 304)
24	"Tally, everyone in the city is manipulated. The purpose of everything we're taught is to make us afraid of change. (p. 339)
25	She was still pretty, of course, but her cruel, inhuman grace sent shivers through Tally, like watching a colorful spider traverse its web. (p. 364)

Source: own elaboration.

Two of the three main issues mentioned in the previous novel are developed further in *Pretties*. First, Tally's pretty mind still remembers the cruelty of the Specials and avoids them (1, 2). In fact, her new improved senses only accentuate her rejection of Dr Cable's creatures (3). As with other fears, she is forced to face the Specials once and again (13), until she sees her best friend turned into one of them (25). Second, the panopticon Tally discovered in the previous novel is enhanced in her new life as Pretty because her behaviour determines her recruitment as a Special agent (5) and because they have been able to trick the previous mechanisms of surveillance (9). As to the third issue (city mechanisms), example 24 indicates that the citizens are educated to fear change and thus to avoid risks. This conditioning is also evident by Tally's constant fear of being caught (6, 14).

As in *Divergent*, we see an alteration of the natural priorities according to the different human needs, not in Tally, but in Zane. He prioritizes being cured and escaping from the city to his own survival (10, 11). In the same vein, Andrew, a villager raised away from the city's civilisation, prioritises his honour and that of his family over his safety and Tally's. In contrast, Tally has a logical approach, as indicated in example 15, and fears the consequences of the measures taken in order to achieve their goals:

starvation from undereating and irreparable brain damage from not being able to escape (12).

Regarding Tally’s personal safety, she takes some minor risks in order to be accepted into the clique of her choice (7, 16) and a major one to free herself and the crims from the city system (17). However, in general terms she does not seem to challenge the order (food>safety>affiliation). For example, she worries about her personal survival over friendship bonds (18) and does not worry about the survival of others until she is safe (8, 19, 23). Nevertheless, this individualism cannot be associated with independence, as she links safety with a person –Zane (4)– and fears being alone in the wilderness (22). In fact, she relies on others whenever possible (20).

#### 5.2.4 Results: *Specials*

The following table shows the results of the analysis of safety in the last novel of the *Uglies* trilogy.

1	Tally shuddered at the thought of how lucky she’d been. The only purpose of her pill had been to switch off the nanos in the other one. (p. 62)
2	Just the thought of fighting with another city’s Special Circumstances sent a nervous trickle down her spine. (p. 72)
3	How would you run a city where everyone was Crim? Instead of most people going along with the rules, they’d always be stealing and doing tricks. Wouldn’t you eventually wind up with <i>real</i> crimes - random violence and even murders - like back in Rusty days? (p. 140)
4	But what if other villagers had learned to escape from their “little men”? (p. 201)
5	Then Tally heard one boy asking how far it was back to camp, and the strangeness of his accent sent a shiver through her. (p. 204)
6	She was alone and bare-handed against a military machine. But if this war really was her fault, she had to try. (p. 282)
7	Danger didn’t matter anymore. Nothing did. (p. 310)
8	“[...] Fear is the only thing keeping a New System from happening here, too.” (p. 320)
9	Or perhaps they were too afraid of Special Circumstances to raise their voices at all. (p. 325)

10	Don't you see, we've entered a new era. From now on, <i>every day</i> is a Special Circumstance!" (p. 337)
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Source: own elaboration.

Unlike the previous novels of the trilogy, *Specials* presents a new Tally that is not afraid of the system she lives in anymore. Instead, she feels the threat to her safety only in memories of the past, as in example 1. By contrast, she comments more generally on safety issues concerning the city and the new smoke, which gives the reader a better overview of the situation than the previous novels, where the characters make these remarks with regards to personal experiences and individual effects. Unlike other trilogies, these novels present a wide array of issues related to safety. In other words, safety is not mainly concerned with a threat to a group or the protagonist's life, but with various levels of the system. On the one hand, Tally comments the consequences of the cure for brain damage in terms of control of the city as well as the city authorities' reaction to the new situation. Example 2 explores Tally's fear of the possibility of a conflict between two cities in which she would have to participate, while at a lower scale, she points to the impossibility to control a whole city where spoiled adolescents break the law with no repercussions (3). The results of the previous novels have shown that the population fears the Specials. In this third novel, examples 8 and 9 show that the population of the city is not out of control –in Tally's opinion– due to the population's lasting fear of the Specials. It is evident from Tally's statements that she fears the new system and she considers it a negative outcome of freedom. Her rejection is evident from the "difference" viewpoint in that she is repelled by other accents (5). The city's leader –Dr Cable– suggests the suitability of the inter-city war for the perpetuation of her power and system (10) by creating a state of emergency that serves to control the population by positioning them all against a common enemy. This situation resembles the strategy of perpetual war presented in George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

On a personal level, Tally risks her own life to try to stop the inter-city war because the situation was accidentally caused by Shay and Tally (6). However, after losing Zane, she seems to lose rational thinking and survival instinct, both of which are undermined by grief in a situation that resembles the one suffered by Katniss and Tris.

### 5.2.5 Results: *The Hunger Games*

The results corresponding to the representation of safety and danger in the first novel of Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games* trilogy are presented in the following table. Overall, 21 relevant examples are identified.

1	Electrified or not, the fence has been successful at keeping the flesh-eaters out of District 12. Inside the woods they roam freely, and there are added concerns like venomous snakes, rabid animals, and no real paths to follow. (p. 5)
2	District Twelve. Where you can starve to death in safety, I mutter. Then I glance quickly over my shoulder. (p. 7)
3	Even here, even in the middle of nowhere, you worry someone might overhear you. (p. 7)
4	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. (p. 7)
5	We have to joke about it because the alternative is to be scared out of your wits. (p. 9)
6	If you lift a finger, we will destroy every last one of you. Just as we did in District Thirteen. (p. 22)
7	This is standard. Family devotion only goes so far for most people on reaping day. What I did was the radical thing. (p. 31)
8	No amount of pleading from Prim seemed to affect her. I was terrified. (p. 32)
9	I'd grown up seeing those home kids at school. The sadness, the marks of angry hands on their faces, the hopelessness that curled their shoulders forward. I could never let that happen to Prim. (p. 33)
10	You'll be perfectly safe, he says. But I'm not convinced I won't be perfectly barbecued by the time we reach the city's center. (p. 81)
11	No one will overhear us talking in my head. You do have the sense that we might be under surveillance here. (p. 98)
12	Who cares what they do to me? What really scares me is what they might do to my mother and Prim, how my family might suffer now because of my impulsiveness. (p. 126)
13	Peeta and I know the other's survival means our own death. How do you sidestep that? (p. 136)

14	This is what birds see. Only they're free and safe. The very opposite of me. (p. 174)
15	Like the medicine's having no effect at all. Suddenly, out of nowhere, I'm scared he's going to die. (p. 315)
16	There's a voice, the wrong voice, not my mother's, and I'm scared. Katniss, it says. Katniss, can you hear me? (p. 353)
17	As we settle in, he pulls my head down to use his arm as a pillow, the other rests protectively over me even when he goes to sleep. No one has held me like this in such a long time. Since my father died and I stopped trusting my mother, no one else's arms have made me feel this safe. (p. 363)
18	"[...] tell me what you need me to do," Peeta says. "Keep an eye out," I say. (p. 381)
19	My fear comes out as anger. "What are you doing? You're supposed to be here, not running around." (p. 386)
20	When I left the arena, when the trumpets played, I was supposed to be safe. From then on. For the rest of my life. But if what Haymitch says is true, and he's got no reason to lie, I've never been in such a dangerous place in my life. (p. 434)
21	I take his hand, holding on tightly, preparing for the cameras, and dreading the moment when I will finally have to let go. (p. 454)

Source: own elaboration.

Fear and the need for safety are a common issue in dystopian fiction. The results reflect three main issues: Katniss' fear for her own safety and the tension due to the impending dangers; the threat of the Capitol and the dangers entailed by the organization of society; and Katniss' fear for her loved ones' safety. Furthermore, the progression of the plot is reflected in the focus of the results. While the first nine examples deal with situations that any district citizen could experience, most of the other examples are linked to Katniss' role as a salient figure in society and thus as a target of the Capitol's rebellion-crushing policies.

Examples 1 and 2 describe the relativeness of the safety of the district. The system provides the idea of safety for those within the boundaries by focusing on external and natural threats such as wildlife and omitting the threat to citizens' safety that repression

implies, while failing to ensure the previous stage in human needs: food. In order to feed herself and her family, Katniss must be exposed to the threats of the natural space outside the District. This first result introduces the reader to what later becomes the norm for Katniss as regards safety, as she constantly exposes herself to protect others.

In general terms, the Capitol is the main cause of fear. There is a strong sense of censorship and constant surveillance, similar to Big Brother in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, whereby anything that is said can be heard and the speaker punished for it. In this regard, examples 3 and 4 show the self-imposed censorship that rules District 12 citizens' lives. On the other hand, example 11 shows how this monitoring is extensive to the whole territory, not only the districts. Some examples reflect the authoritarian power of the Capitol and President Snow, who Katniss believes capable of destroying a life without hesitation (6) and identifies as her biggest problem even after winning the games (20). Finally, examples 5 and 14 reflect Katniss' anxiety and fear derived from the situation created by the Capitol. All in all, these examples show that the organization of Panem is based on absolute control by the Capitol and the false hope of a better life, that is, not even Hunger Games victors are relatively free and safe. This idea is a clear indicator of the consequences of the extremely large power distance of this society, with extremely low possibilities of mobility across classes and a clear privilege and absolute control of the authorities over the lower classes. Example 20 is particularly indicative of this situation, whereby Katniss is awakened to the full scope of President Snow's control over every individual in Panem beyond the general repression.

Regarding the second area identified, the results show that fear is highly linked to Katniss' relationships, particularly with her family and Peeta, so her main safety concern is their wellbeing. As will be explored in the next section (Affiliation), Katniss' role as head of the family has made her develop a strong sense of protection over her family and close ones (9) that is uncommon in other families as shown by the fact that no one steps in to take Rue's (12 years old) or Peeta's (7) places. These relationships are used by the Capitol to their advantage, as the life and wellbeing of her loved ones is threatened should she fail to comply with the norms and rules of the system (12). Linked to the process of affiliation, she develops a fear for Peeta's life in the games (15, 18, 19), which is only clearly developed after it is known that they both can win the games and therefore she will not have to kill him (13). Regarding her relationship with Peeta, she identifies him as the only person making her feel as safe as her parents did when she was younger (17)

Finally, some examples show Katniss' fear for her own life. Firstly, after Katniss' father dies in a mine accident her mother is depressed and she has to take care of the family at the age of 11 (8). Secondly, she fears the unknown when she is at the Capitol (10) and when she hears an unfamiliar voice after regaining conscience (16). These three examples are indicative of the high uncertainty avoidance inherent to a culture that is constantly under the threat of violence and related dangers. Despite Katniss' heroic actions, her culture the fact that she repeatedly endures life-threatening situations stress this cultural trait. On the other hand, the collectivist nature of District 12 favours the creation of bonds and interdependencies. In particular, Katniss identifies herself with Peeta because they have both endured the same trauma, and thus fears having to face the new situations alone (21).

#### 5.2.6 Results: *Catching Fire*

The table below shows the identified examples that provide insight into the topic of safety in the sequel of this trilogy.

1	I can't fight the sun. I can only watch helplessly as it drags me into a day that I've been dreading for months. (p. 3)
2	Strategically placed almost midway between the annual Games, it is the Capitol's way of keeping the horror fresh and immediate. (p. 4)
3	But after my father and several other miners were killed in an explosion, I could barely force myself onto the elevator. The annual trip became an enormous source of anxiety. (p. 5)
4	I wish I could go back to it because, in retrospect, it seems so secure compared with now, when I am so rich and so famous and so hated by the authorities in the Capitol. (p. 8)
5	But they are determined, Hazelle and Gale, that the other boys, twelve-year-old Rory and ten-year-old Vick, and the baby, four-year-old Posy, will never have to sign up for tesserae. (p. 9)
6	Hunting in the woods surrounding District 12 violates at least a dozen laws and is punishable by death. (p. 11)
7	I'm getting the white liquor because a few weeks ago he ran out and there was none for sale and he had a withdrawal, shaking and screaming at terrifying things only he could see. (p. 12)

8	Just the sound of his voice twists my stomach into a knot of unpleasant emotions like guilt, sadness, and fear and longing. I might as well admit there's some of that, too. Only it has too much competition to ever win out. (p. 17)
9	He holds up a finger as if to say, "Give me a moment." Then he turns and my heart skips a beat. I'm staring into the snakelike eyes of President Snow. (p. 20)
10	If he's made the journey all the way from his city, it can only mean one thing. I'm in serious trouble. And if I am, so is my family. A shiver goes through me when I think of the proximity of my mother and sister to this man who despises me. (p. 21)
11	I don't welcome him or offer him a chair. I don't say anything. In fact, I treat him as if he's a real snake, the venomous kind. (p. 22)
12	"That's what I told them. I said any girl who goes to such lengths to preserve her life isn't going to be interested in throwing it away with both hands. [...]" (p. 23)
13	I've endangered Gale and his family and my family and Peeta, too, by my carelessness. "Please don't hurt Gale" I whisper. "He's just my friend. He's been my friend for years. That's all that's between us." (p. 34)
14	He means there's only one future, if I want to keep those I love alive and stay alive myself. I'll have to marry Peeta. (p. 54)
15	But with his recent orders to calm the districts fresh in my ears, it fills me with dread. What will he think of this very public salute to the girl who defied the Capitol? (p. 76)
16	We would be safe inside the Justice Building by now, if I hadn't stopped, if I hadn't left my flowers. (p. 76)
17	I lay out how we are all in jeopardy, how the whole country is in jeopardy because of my trick with the berries. (p. 81)
18	We manage the darkness as we did in the arena, wrapped in each other's arms, guarding against dangers that can descend at any moment. (p. 89)
19	There is no danger of an uprising here among the privileged, among those whose names are never placed in the reaping balls, whose children never die for the supposed crimes committed generations ago. (p. 90)
20	This is no place to be voicing such thoughts. "Save it for home," I tell him. (p. 99)
21	My nightmares are usually about losing you," he says. "I'm okay once I realize you're here." (p. 105)



22	All I can think about, every day, every waking minute since they drew Prim's name at the reaping, is how afraid I am. And there doesn't seem to be room for anything else. (p. 118)
23	(About Gale) But it's mixed up with fear over what kind of crazy thing he might do next. (p. 123)
24	Everything about this man, his commanding voice, his odd accent, warns of an unknown and dangerous threat. (p. 131)
25	I must accept that at any moment I can be arrested. There will be a knock on the door, like the one last night, a band of Peacekeepers to haul me away. (p. 147)
26	The Capitol has no end of creative ways to kill people. I imagine these things and I'm terrified, but let's face it: They've been lurking in the back of my brain, anyway. (p. 148)
27	My breathing is so rapid I use up all the oxygen and begin to choke for air. I can't let the Capitol hurt Prim. (p. 148)
28	"Did he get back all right?" I ask. In a blizzard, you can get lost in a matter of yards and wander off course into oblivion. (p. 152)
29	I'm worried now. I thought she'd be on our doorstep the moment the snow was cleared. But there's been no sign of her. (p. 156)
30	But for most people in District 12, a trip to buy something at the Hob would be too risky. And I expect them to assemble in the square with bricks and torches? (p. 157)
31	"I'll go with you," he says. "No. I've dragged you into enough trouble," I tell him. (p. 158)
32	Thread has paid little attention to the fence, perhaps feeling harsh weather and wild animals are enough to keep everyone safely inside. (p. 161)
33	As I focus on the immediate threat before me. What is going on? Has Thread turned on the fence as an additional security precaution? Or does he somehow know I've escaped his net today? (p. 182)
34	"Sure." <i>If they don't arrest me first.</i> (p. 191)
35	I want to tell him about Twill and Bonnie and the uprising and the fantasy of District 13, but it's not safe to and I can feel myself slipping away. (p. 192)
36	For the next few days, I jump every time there's a knock on the door. No Peacekeepers show up to arrest me, though, so eventually I begin to relax. (p. 193)

37	More people being punished or dropping from starvation. (p. 198)
38	The thought of such widespread rebellion has me quivering with fear and excitement. (p. 200)
39	Would I have let myself open up to him, lulled by the security of money and food and the illusion of safety being a victor could bring under different circumstances? (p. 223)
40	I only got engaged to save people’s lives, and that completely backfired. (p. 224)
41	“If you’re perfectly honest about it, you think President Snow has probably given them direct orders to make sure we die in the arena anyway,” I say. (p. 292)
42	The beauty of this idea is that my decision to keep Peeta alive at the expense of my own life is itself an act of defiance. (p. 293)
43	If I hadn’t spent my life building up layers of defenses until I recoil at even the suggestion of marriage or a family? (p. 310)
44	Took off and only thought of Peeta when I’d reached the Cornucopia. But this time, I trap my terror, push it down, and stay by his side. This time my survival isn’t the goal. Peeta’s is. (p. 359)
45	What has Haymitch possibly said to them, what has he bargained with to make them put Peeta’s life above their own? (p. 408)
46	A place like the meadow in the song I sang to Rue as she died. Where Peeta’s child could be safe. (p. 427)
47	There can only be one victor and it has to be Peeta. I must accept this. I must make decisions based on his survival only. (p. 431)
48	Who starves and tortures and kills us in the arena. Who will soon kill everyone I love. My bow drops as his meaning registers. Yes, I know who the enemy is. And it’s not Enobaria. (p. 457)
49	A new kind of horror to rise up inside me as I imagine firebombs hitting the Seam. (p. 471)

Source: own elaboration.

The results for the second novel of Suzanne Collins’ *The Hunger Games* show a remarkably high number of examples (49) in comparison to the first and third novels of the trilogy (20 and 22, respectively). The number of results more than doubles those identified for the first novel, which is an early indicator of the weight of this need in this

novel. Due to the complexity that explaining all the examples entails, they are classified by topic or cause of fear.

As in the previous novel, the main source of fear for Katniss is the Capitol and especially outsiders rather than the habitual peacekeepers. Although for the general population poaching or buying something in the illegal market is a risk that they would not dare to take (30), and even the weather is enough to keep people from trying to escape the limits of the district (32), District 12's laws are enforced more severely after the new head peacekeeper takes over the position (37). The association of this new authoritarian figure with evil is reinforced by his outsider stance. In particular, as described in example 24, Katniss describes him as an unknown threat. As explained in chapter 4, District 12 is a high uncertainty avoidance culture, which implies that they prefer routine and avoid risks and unknown circumstances. In this case, the introduction of this new head peacekeeper poses a heightened threat given citizens' uncertainty about his behaviour.

The peacekeeper is only one of the Capitol's cruel and terrorising features. It is described as purely evil (26). In contrast with other systems in the corpus, which offer some ambiguity that allows the reader to build his or her own opinion, this trilogy is clear: there is the heroine, Katniss, and there is the evil villain, President Snow. Katniss describes the Capitol's control mechanism on the general population but especially on her, as she is a victor. This mechanism consists in establishing events throughout the year that serve as reminder that the victors cannot escape the control of the capitol after winning the games. Victors like Haymich and Katniss suffer the psychological consequences of being in the arena. In Katniss' case, it is in the form of terrifying nightmares. In Haymich's case, alcohol abuse serves as a means to avoid reality (7). In fact, and despite the privilege that being a victor has in terms of food and commodities, Katniss thinks about her life before the games with nostalgia (4), much preferring a low-profile life and the routine to the high levels of uncertainty and the psychological control of the authorities. The depiction of the hero as highly emotionally unstable and vulnerable to the authorities differs from the portrayal of the traditional hero and of the other protagonists in the corpus, who are sometimes immune to the powers and influence of the system. In fact, one of the mechanisms that the writer uses to enhance Katniss' vulnerability and constant anxiety, or tension is her past, particularly her father's death and the aftermath of the accident. In this novel, example 3 shows how that death traumatised her and prevented her from living a normal life, conditioning

simple activities such as a school trip. This simple statement is another example of the forced alteration of her behaviour due to Capitol-related circumstances, which the reader can easily connect with her helplessness when it comes to the Capitol's manipulation mechanisms such as the victors' parade (1, 2).

However, the reaping is not the only threat to district people's safety. Leaving the district is illegal (6) and two examples make reference to the lack of freedom of speech or the self-imposed censorship to prevent being accused of displaying a rebellious behaviour (20, 35). Katniss' awareness of the situation reaches a peak towards the end of the novel, where she realizes that the other victors in the games are not her enemy, but victims of the real enemy: The Capitol (48). On the other hand, the Capitol's maximum expression of repression, which is, in fact, retaliation, is exposed in example 49: The Capitol bombs Katniss' district.

The greatest expression of the power of the Capitol is impersonated by President Snow. When Katniss receives the visit of Snow there are two types of fear she experiences. On the one hand, she identifies his persona as the source of the pain she may endure, as the source of the threats, and considers him an evil person (9, 11). On the other hand, she fears for the safety of those close to her (10, 12, 13) because retaliation from Snow tends to target family and friends, not the person that is blamed for acting against the Capitol. In fact, as example 17 shows, this situation leads her to blame herself for the possible threats to her loved ones. Finally, Snow controls Katniss' personal life by threatening her safety and that of her family and friends if she does not marry Peeta (14). All in all, the various mechanisms employed by the capitol to threaten Katniss' safety influence and regulate her behaviour to a great extent.

This situation affects her at affiliation level. In fact, example 22 exposes how she feels unable to develop romantic relationships because she is focused on safety, which is lower on the pyramid of needs than affiliation. She has mixed feelings towards Peeta, fear being one of them (8): he represents the imposition of the Capitol, and in that imposition, she sees the consequences if she does not perform as expected. In examples 39 and 43, she further wonders how her life would have developed emotionally were it not for the pressure of the Capitol. In fact, the main repressive policy of the Capitol, The Hunger Games, is closely linked to this idea. In general terms, the population fears for their families' lives and children are the main risk group (5). This situation is stressed by Katniss when she comments on the contrast with Capitol children, who are safe (19). The differences between the privileged lives of Capitol citizens and of people living in

the districts are especially marked in this regard. Not only are district people's lives threatened but their future is conditioned as family is concerned. That is, the fact that future children would be exposed to the threat of being chosen as tributes in the games represents an extension of the extent to which their safety is jeopardised. This circumstance is key to understand that some citizens, Katniss included, may decide not to have children, which is a highly debated topic that I analyse in the section about affiliation and in self-actualization (sections 5.3.13.1 and 5.5.14.2).

Katniss undergoes a clear evolution throughout the three novels, but most clearly during this second novel. Initially, she has a cautious stance. When the first public shows of recognition towards her as a rebellion figure take place, she is afraid of the consequences such situations would have for her and her loved ones (15). In fact, in example 16, she appears to believe that ignorance is preferable in certain situations. She rejects taking any risks, which is a reminder that high uncertainty avoidance defines her culture. She faces Gale's disapproval of her conservative and perhaps individualistic view (23): where he sees an opportunity to change things, she sees his life at risk (23). While the precarious and relative safety seems to be sufficient for Katniss as long as those under her wing are not targeted, her perspective changes gradually. As the repression in District 12 worsens and deaths ensue (37), she becomes increasingly aware of the situation and the possibility of being arrested at any moment (25, 34, 36) and seems to see rebellion as hope (38). This situation is described in the context of the announcement of the Quarter Quell, which implies that she will have to go back to the Arena. The dramatic intensity with which the district is oppressed and repressed and the impending participation in the Quarter Quell add momentum to the possibility and need to rebel. As all hope begins to fade for routine to be re-established in the districts, so does Katniss' reluctance to support open rebellion.

From the moment that she learns that Peeta will be the tribute going back to the arena with her, her relationship with him changes and she focuses on saving his life even at the expense of her own (42, 44, 46) to the point of obsession (47). When she was outside District 12, she and Peeta shared the burden of the fear derived from their experiences and the current threats (18). However, whereas Katniss worries about her family and friends' safety, Peeta's main concern is losing Katniss (21). At this point and considering the circumstances, Peeta's position seems illogical to Katniss. Later on, however, as she is positive that President Snow will have them killed in the arena (41), her perspective changes. She finds the support of other victors, who give their lives to

save Peeta in order to have Katniss lead the revolution (45). Both main characters bend over backwards to save one another, which again has been used as a basis to argue in favour of the romantic ending that I mentioned earlier.

In general terms, we can appreciate a change in Katniss from a focus on protecting her family (27), Gale (29) and Peeta (31) while keeping a minimum concern about her own safety (33), to a more stereotypically heroic self-sacrificing stance (40) that, due to the bombing of District 12 after being rescued from the arena, will lead to her developing a highly guilt-consuming situation that will be analysed in the section about “esteem.”

### 5.2.7 Results: *Mockingjay*

The table below presents the results corresponding to the analysis of safety and danger in the last novel of *The Hunger Games* trilogy.

1	They were safe. They were being cared for. They were alive and eagerly welcomed. (p. 9)
2	It speaks of unfinished business. It whispers, <i>I can find you. I can reach you. Perhaps I am watching you now.</i> (p. 18)
3	As we travel over District 12, I watch anxiously for signs of an attack, but nothing pursues us. (p. 19)
4	But after the surreal encounter with the rose, for the first time the descent makes me feel safer. (p. 23)
5	“Go back to sleep.” It’s automatic. Shutting Prim and my mother out of things to shield them. (p. 39)
6	Flavius’s foot catches on a metal grate over a circular opening in the floor, and my stomach contracts when I think of why a room would need a drain. (p. 59)
7	In other words, I step out of line and we’re all dead. (p. 69)
8	He must see the panic in my eyes, because he stops a moment and places his hands on my shoulders. “You will. Just let them see you. That will do more for them than any doctor in the world could.” (p. 102)
9	It wasn’t like hanging was something that only happened in a story. Plenty of people were executed that way in 12. You can bet she didn’t want me singing it in front of my music class. (p. 148)

10	I meet Haymitch’s eyes from across the room and see my own dread mirrored back. The recognition that with every cheer, Peeta slips even farther from our grasp. (p. 156)
11	“If Peeta’s right, these didn’t stand a chance,” he says. Peeta. Blood like raindrops on the window. Like wet mud on boots. (p. 170)
12	The thought of spending whatever remains of my life in this stone vault horrifies me. I want to run madly for the door and demand to be released into whatever lies above. (p. 172)
13	What will break me? This is the question that consumes me over the next three days as we wait to be released from our prison of safety. (p. 178)
14	It was hard to see clearly because I was so afraid. Now I’m not. The Capitol’s fragile because it depends on the districts for everything. (p. 198)
15	“Isn’t the honor of the thing enough?” he says. “You’d think,” I reply. “But word’s gotten out that mockingjays are hazardous to your health.” (p. 230)
16	Prim walks me as far as the hospital doors. “How do you feel?” “Better, knowing you’re somewhere Snow can’t reach you,” I say. (p. 301)
17	Underground. Which I hate. Like mines and tunnels and 13. Underground, where I dread dying, which is stupid because even if I die aboveground, the next thing they’ll do is bury me underground anyway. (p. 345)
18	I’m the only one reacting to the odor. Drifting up from the stairwell. Cutting through the sewage. Roses. I begin to tremble. (p. 359)
19	Later, the human feelings will come. Now I’m conscious only of an animal need to keep the remnants of our band alive. (p. 366)
20	The thought of Peacekeepers dragging Gale away starts the tune playing in my head again.... (p. 393)
21	The encounter with Snow opens the door to my old repertoire of nightmares. It’s like being stung by tracker jackers again. (p. 424)

Source: own elaboration.

In this novel, four safety related issues can be identified. Firstly, as regards the old and new circumstances for the population, repression in District 12 was evident and opinions could lead to capital punishment (9), whereas District 13 offers the general population safety after the bombing (1). However, Katniss faces a similar situation:

failure to abide by Coin's rules could mean her death (7). Furthermore, Katniss' discovery of repression facilities in the district makes her wary (6). District 13, like the bureau in *Allegiant* covers most basic needs of the general population who would otherwise struggle to satisfy those needs. However, Katniss' prior experience with the manipulation of the Capitol and the consequences of extreme concentration of power prevent her from easily conceding to the narrative of the saviour offered by President Coin. In other words, her experience has awakened her critical spirit and she is capable of identifying flaws in alleged utopias. In the same vein, example 14 shows a new change in her point of view about the Capitol's power: she is no longer afraid to die –as we will see in the “esteem” section– and thus can see the bigger picture of the rebellion (14). It is precisely given the protection offered by an environment outside the Capitol's control that allows her to understand the organizational structure and interdependencies of Panem.

Secondly, the constant threats and displays of power that Snow performed (2), which became a source of constant anxiety (3), derive into a trauma. Katniss associates the smell of roses and President Snow to dread (18, 21). This novel further defines the antagonist as the source of all dangers and threats to people's safety until Katniss recognises President Coin's potential as a substitute in that role. The use of images and smells as triggers of nightmarish emotions and experiences is also unique to this trilogy in my corpus, which adds complexity and further dimensions to the threats to safety. That is, safety is not merely conceived as lack of violence towards a person, but also as the state of peace at an emotional level following the possibility to heal and recover from negative experiences.

Thirdly, and in line with the fact that Katniss is denied safety even when she is physically away from the source of danger, the results show that she was, from the beginning, a traumatized child. Even before the games, the death of his father in a mining accident left her with a fear of being underground. This fear, which is first hinted in the previous novel, is clearly explained in this novel. The threat of Snow makes her prefer being underground (4); however, when she has to stay there due to safety precautions, she grows uneasy and panics (12, 13, 17). These examples show the various ways in which the Capitol conditions people's behaviour, as in the previous novels with self-imposed censorship. Furthermore, as Collins did in the previous novel, the reader can connect the preestablished conditions that defined Katniss' vulnerable



psyche given her past and thus can trace her evolution in this regard as well as her development as heroine.

While she undergoes a clear evolution in some respects, as I have explained, she is consistent in her protective behaviour. Katniss’ main fear is for the lives of those she cares about. She instinctively protects Prim from even the smallest problem (5) and her wellbeing is conditioned to the safety of her sister (16). Prim’s wellbeing is the most precious thing for Katniss, she is –as I will argue in the following section– the most important person for Katniss. Katniss’ obsession for Peeta’s safety in the previous novel remains in this new instance (10) and Gale’s arrest towards the end of the novel adds a new concern to her list of proteges (20). The undertone in these examples is one of desperation. Despite all her acquired power as a leader of the rebellion, she feels unable to protect her loved ones from the fighting powers of the Capitol and District 13. In fact, and even though she fears becoming a leader (8) and some grow aware of the dangers that associating with her may entail for their safety (15), example 19 confirms that Katniss’ first and most developed instinct is that of protector. Her raw instinct is perhaps a distinctive trait compared to other heroines. While Tris and Tally also protect others, Katniss’ behaviour evokes the protective fierceness of mothers both in the animal and human realms.

#### 5.2.8 Results: *Across the Universe*

The following table presents the results of the analysis of safety and danger in the first novel of Beth Revis’ *Across the Universe* trilogy.

1	These are images approved for everyone, but the information Eldest wants me to find is restricted. I step over to the biometric scanner against the wall and roll my thumb over the scan bar. “Eldest/ Elder access granted,” the computer’s female voice chirps. (p. 41)
2	The doctor looks skeptical. “You can, of course, ‘run’ whenever you’d like. But...” His gaze roves over me. “It may not be advisable. You will stand out on board this ship... I cannot vouch for your safety when you leave the Hospital.” (p. 100)
3	Seeing the way the tall man looked at me reminds me of the doctor’s warning about leaving the Hospital. (p. 132)
4	One of them moos, but it’s not a regular moo; it ends with a squeal like a pig. Moo-uh-eeee!

	I back away from the fence. (p. 190)
5	Harley hesitates. “It’s not safe. Not now.” (p. 219)
6	Luthe straddles me and rips my tunic off, curses at the undershirt I’ve been wearing in place of a bra, and rips it off, too. The tattered remains of my clothes pool at my arms, but my breasts are exposed. And even though I’ve seen half the crew of this ship walking around naked in a lovemaking haze, I am ashamed of my nudity. And terrified. (p. 221)
7	then I don’t hear them anymore, but still I run and run and run, and I’m holding onto Harley like he’s the rope pulling me from the undertow. (p. 223)
8	I follow her gaze. “Hey, be careful out there. The Season’s pretty wild right now.” I’m glad Amy’s safe with Harley. (p. 245) Victria doesn’t look at me. “Luthe walked me over. Orion’s here now; he can walk me back.” (p. 245)
9	And even though I know their eyes aren’t interested in me, the soullessness of them fills me with a dread I cannot explain. (p. 255)
10	Eldest is like a spoiled child throwing his toys around. Waiting for an excuse to break us, watching for any sign that we don’t want to play his game. Always watching, with eyes that remind me of Luthe’s. He’s not helping people, like Elder almost seems to think—he’s twisting the situation to make no one really care about the fact that we’ll all be dead or super-old before we land on the new planet. (p. 301)
11	“I keep tabs on what you study on this ship. I know what you’ve used your access to open.” (p. 312)
12	“I think this ship needs some disturbance!” (p. 313)

Source: own elaboration.

Safety, or lack thereof, is represented in the novels as a topic that covers two areas: on the one hand, there are issues regarding control and information omission for the sake of safety, as in cases 1 and 11. The free access to information is considered a risk to the harmony and continuity of the community. Both examples show the privileged position that Elder holds in the community. He and Eldest are apparently the only people with unlimited access. Example 11, however, indicates the monitoring role of Eldest. Everyone on board is monitored through technology, including the future

leader. Furthermore, the absolute power held by Eldest is manifest. Example 10 shows Amy’s indignation in this regard, since Eldest seems to pose a threat to their safety instead of helping ensure it.

On the other hand, women are warned about the dangers of wandering alone and we see two assaults in the novel involving Victria and Amy, the two main female characters. The novel offers the readers a glimpse of the building fear that Amy experiences for a possible physical aggression in example 3. Example 5 is a direct warning: It is not safe for a woman to leave the building. Women have their freedom of movement limited during the Season, when people act on pure sexual instinct. In fact, example 6 shows the terror endured by Amy during the sexual aggression led by Luthe. While other novels also show hints of the existence of this behaviour, as in *Mockingjay*, where Finnick narrates that he was prostituted, or in *Divergent*, where Tris is harassed and touched, this novel offers the rawest example, as shown in quote 6. In contrast to women’s necessarily cautious behaviour, men are seen as protectors of these women, as we can see in example 7, when Harley saves Amy from the attack, and example 8, where Victria acknowledges the need to be accompanied by a male friend to be safe from possible sexual assaults. Furthermore, example 2 shows that Amy’s physical appearance, which contrasts with the monoethnicity of the community, is yet another factor that singles her out as a target of aggressions.

As is often the case, the uncanny elements that imitate yet strikingly differ from their Earth counterparts such as the genetically modified animals (4) are a source of fear for Amy. This fear is derived from a lack of knowledge and the shock resulting from observing a new world with the approach of an Earthling. Another example is altered human nature as Amy discovers that people’s reasoning skills and their genetics are altered by Doc as a means to ensure the cordiality and prevent malformation and illness in new-borns as a result from the lack of diversity in the genetic pool (9).

### 5.2.9 Results: *A Million Suns*

1	<p>“I’m sure you’ve noticed the increased . . . Well, it’s clear now that there are no more traces of Phydus in the people’s systems. And now we’re left with . . . The ship’s not especially safe at the moment, especially for someone who . . .”</p> <p>“Someone who looks like me?” I ask, flicking my long red hair over my shoulder.</p> <p>(p. 20)</p>
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2	A young man, slender and tall, stares at me openly as he follows the woman toward the path leading to the Hospital. I pull my hood farther down. He turns his head to look at me as he steps off the stairs, and something in his eyes makes me turn on my heel and rush into the Recorder Hall. (p. 35)
3	What am I supposed to say? That I still have nightmares about something that happened three months ago? How lame would that sound? If I was going to say something, I should have said it then. But then everything else became much more important. (p. 57)
4	I know he's going to try to rule without Phydus. And nothing could be more dangerous. When the Feeders are off it, when they see what is becoming of their world—then you'll have a true rebellion on your hands. (p. 64)
5	Here, in this one small part of the ship, with no one here but Elder, I'm not afraid. (p. 114)
6	I wrap my arms around myself, squeezing them tight against my body. Why should I be so afraid of him when he hasn't even really done anything? Is almost a good enough reason for fear? Yes. The room caves in around me. What I want to do is run, but I'm too afraid of what lurks in the dark, in the places where there's nothing but cows and sheep and no one to hear me shout for help. (p. 162)
7	I can already feel my face is hot. "All I know," he says, "is that we didn't need police before you. Everything was fine before you." I back down the first two steps. (p. 194)
8	"Nothing of importance," Luthor tells Elder. "Nothing I can't . . . handle . . . myself." I don't let my face betray my fear. (p. 258)

Source: own elaboration.

The eight examples of safety issues for the second novel, although fewer than in the previous novel and other novels of this corpus, provide very insightful information regarding the extent of the problem and shed some light on the fears of which the protagonist native to the world (Elder) is unaware. Extending some of the ideas introduced in the previous one, the results revolve around two areas: on the one hand, Amy's fear for her safety due to appearance and as a consequence of the traumatic experience narrated in the first novel. On the other hand, this novel discusses the

challenges for safety in organizational terms as a consequence of the decision to eliminate population control through drugs.

Amy defies the idea that the ship is not safe for her because of her physical appearance (1). The results clearly show her constant struggle to overcome the barriers set by physical and cultural differences. While she challenges the risk of being attacked for her appearance in the first example, she soon realises the scope of the threat: on the one hand, she fears the population, who are now not controlled by drugs. Example two shows her realization of the fact that her physical appearance makes her an easily identifiable target. The threats of allowing people to become aware of the situations and to be able to make decisions for the first time in their lives are one of the reasons that decision is not recommended by Orion, the previous Elder, as can be seen in example four. On the other hand, the population fear her difference and thus conceive her presence as the cause of the lack of safety derived from their regained reasoning abilities. Example seven shows that she has become the scapegoat for the community's safety problems. While against her values, sudden free thinking for the population of Godspeed is highly detrimental to Amy's safety and, overall, to the general population, who have not learned how to behave as part of a community.

Regarding the aftermath of the aggression endured during the first novel, examples three and six indicate that she struggles with the memory of the attack and considers whether it was sufficiently grave to become an ongoing source of fear. The fact that the lack of safety for women is assumed and not questioned hinders Amy's ability to process it and speak about it. This source of fear is stressed by the constant threat of her aggressor, Luthe, as can be seen in example eight.

The lack of safety Amy experiences and has suffered conditions her wellbeing and her everyday life. In other words, due to the fact that outdoors she is at risk of suffering an attack, she cannot carry out activities that she would in other circumstances such as jogging. As in *The Hunger Games*, the threats to safety cause Amy to impose limitations and restrictions to her behaviour (6). In this context, Amy feels safe only when she is alone with Elder. While Amy held on to Harley in the previous novel as a safe rope, in this novel she seems to associate a certain peace and safety to Elder (4). This concept is apparently recurrent in more or less obvious ways in other novels in the corpus. In all there is some passing or frequent remarks on the importance of being with a particular character to be safe (e.g., for Katniss, it is Peeta; for Tally, it is Zane or

Andrew for different reasons; the analysis of *Divergent* will reveal whether this is also the case for Tris).

#### 5.2.10 Results: *Shades of Earth*

The table below shows the results for the third novel in the trilogy. Twelve examples have been identified to account for the representation of safety.

1	“Let us go outside,” [...] “It’s not safe—” Dad starts, but I cut him off. (p. 62)
2	Just over half the people from the ship dare to go outside, even with the armed guard. They are filled with fear and take comfort in the walls they have known all their lives. (p. 63)
3	“Phydus!” Kit scrambles for her med bag, yanking out handfuls of green patches. Willing or not, I smack a patch on each of the remaining people who refuse to leave the shuttle. Better to give them a small dose of the hateful drug than leave them here to die. (p. 79)
4	“There is safety in numbers,” Colonel Martin calls. “We are a large group, and it is my hope that any creature that might attack one of us individually will be scared off by our sheer size.” Around me, my people start to grumble. They’ve noticed Colonel Martin’s choice of words—his hope for safety—and they are not comforted by it. (p. 83)
5	I look around me. True terror is painted on every face. I wonder if Colonel Martin knows what he’s done. Fear of the unknown is the greatest sort of fear there is, and he’s just ensured that everything on this planet is an unknown danger to my people. (p. 134)
6	“Elder!” Amy looks shocked. “You can’t let them be food for pteros either.” (p. 139)
7	“They were watching us,” I say, horror creeping into my voice. “They were watching us all along.” (p. 172)
8	“And how are we going to survive the frexing aliens that are down here?” My heart stills in my chest. “There’s something out there, Amy,” Elder says. He looks over my head, into the black forest. “Something that killed off the first colony.” (p. 176)

9	I remember the glass shards we found in the wound on Kit’s chest. If this glass cube can light up my room, there has to be some sort of energy in it. If it exploded. . . (p. 199)
10	But now we know something else is out there, and the knowledge makes the shadows feel ominous, deadly. (p. 203)
11	I watch my people’s faces carefully as Colonel Martin tells them that they’ll be relocated to the station. I can tell immediately that some of them—many of them—are happy to hear this. They want safety, and to them, living in space is safe. They cannot wait to go to the station. (p. 245)
12	The kind of men who had no problem turning people into mindless automatons would have no problem doing exactly what they wanted with the women, the women who could not even think to protest. (p. 348)

Source: own elaboration.

In this last instalment of the trilogy, the problem of lack of safety is directly related to the unknown new world that has forcefully become the population of Godspeed’s home. While for the population of Godspeed the source of fear is the planet as a whole, examples 7 and 9 show that Amy is more worried about being watched by other intelligent creatures (7) and being injured due to the manipulation of strange objects, and thus due to lack of knowledge (9). In fact, when she mentions the danger of Pteros, she does so as a source of danger for the population from the point of view of an authority or an organizational figure, not as a source of danger to herself (6). By contrast, Elder, who is the acting leader of the Godspeed community, is worried about the means they have to face this challenge and prevent them all from being killed (8). Regarding precisely the change in organizational authority, and as we can see in examples 1, 4 and 5, after landing in Centaury-Earth control is wielded by Colonel Martin, Amy’s father, who gives orders to the population to try to ensure their safety.

Examples 2 and 5 show that the people of Godspeed have a higher rejection and fear of the planet than those born on Earth. Apart from the fact that the Earth-born are part of a military mission and knew what to expect, people from Godspeed had no references from Earth to understand concepts such as rain (although it rains in Godspeed, it is controlled) or wind. Therefore, for people born inside Godspeed, safety is inside the walls of the ship, on space (11), and among their people, so they refuse to interact with the Earth-born.

The last example gives an idea of the linking topic of the lack of female safety both in Godspeed and on the new planet. The lack of control of their own lives is dramatic in itself, but Amy connects the especially weak position of women with her experience on board of Godspeed and with Victoria's aggression. Amy connects the lack of scruples necessary to deprive people from individual thinking with the exertion of control over the bodies of women as mere sexual objects. The use of phydus to control people was obtained from the planet, and those in charge of production used it permanently on the population in order to control them. Despite the threat it represents for people's safety, as it is used to overdose people and therefore as a weapon, Amy uses it to ensure that the people refusing to leave the shuttle do not die trapped inside it (3).

Finally, the role of nature is twofold. On the one hand, the first example shows Amy's eagerness to discover the new world and to enjoy nature in the same way she did before leaving Earth. However, as can be seen in 5 and 10, the new planet is highly associated with the unknown and thus creates a sense of insecurity in the population. Although not overtly stated, Colonel Martin's decision to create such fear, whether intended or otherwise, allows the authorities to retain power over the scared population.

#### 5.2.11 Results: *Divergent*

The following table presents the 27 results identified in the first novel of Veronica Roth's *Divergent* trilogy that account for the representation of safety and danger in this society.

1	The only difference is that Susan might not feel like she's going to throw up, and from what I can tell, her hands aren't shaking so hard she has to clutch the hem of her shirt to steady them. (p. 11)
2	I watch myself, pale and terrified, walking toward one of the doors. (p. 11)
3	The ceiling glows white with light. In the center of the room is a reclined chair, like a dentist's, with a machine next to it. It looks like a place where terrible things happen. "Don't worry," the woman says, "it doesn't hurt." (p. 12)
4	Never met a curious Abnegation before," she says, raising her eyebrows at me. I shiver, and goose bumps appear on my arms. My curiosity is a mistake, a betrayal of Abnegation values. (p. 12)



5	I stare at the word “murderer.” It has been a long time since I last read that word, but even its shape fills me with dread. (p. 17)
6	If I tell him I know the man from the article, something awful will happen to me. But I can convince him that I don’t. (p. 17)
7	I sit forward and wipe my palms off on my slacks. I had to have done something wrong, even if it only happened in my mind. (p. 19)
8	His voice is raspy. “Do you have something I can eat?” I feel a lump in my throat. A stern voice in my head says, Duck your head and keep walking. (p. 25)
9	My heart pounds at the mention of the ceremony. (p. 29)
10	It has been this way since the beginning of the great peace, when the factions were formed. I think the system persists because we’re afraid of what might happen if it didn’t: war. (p. 33)
11	Instead I get the distinct impression that my heart will burst out of my chest any minute now, and I grab his arm to steady myself as I walk up the front steps. (p. 38)
12	Apart from them [the factions], we would not survive.” The silence that follows his words is heavier than other silences. It is heavy with our worst fear, greater even than the fear of death: to be factionless. (p. 43)
13	[...] volunteering on the weekends, the peace of routine, the quiet nights spent in front of the fireplace, the certainty that I will be safe, and if not good enough, better than I am now. (p. 46)
14	He falls to his knees next to the tracks as we sail away and puts his head in his hands. I feel uneasy. He just failed Dauntless initiation. He is factionless now. It could happen at any moment. (p. 51)
15	Come on, it’ll be all right.” “No, it won’t! I’d rather be factionless than dead!” The Amity boy shakes his head. He sounds panicky. (p. 54)
16	The tunnel is lit at long intervals, so in the dark space between each dim lamp, I fear that I am lost until a shoulder bumps mine. In the circles of light I am safe again. (p. 61)
17	We’ll see how long you last.” I mean to say something—to assure him that I will last, maybe—but words fail me. I don’t understand why, but I don’t want Eric to look at me any longer than he already has. I don’t want him to look at me ever again. (p. 67)

18	“The second purpose,” he says, “is that only the top ten initiates are made members” Pain stabs my stomach. We all stand still as statues. (p. 71)
19	Never in my life did I expect to hold a gun, let alone fire one. It feels dangerous to me, as if just by touching it, I could hurt someone. (p. 77)
20	My feet leave the ground, and my attackers are the only thing keeping me from falling into the water. A heavy hand gropes along my chest. “You sure you’re sixteen, Stiff? Doesn’t feel like you’re more than twelve.” (p. 279)
21	“Are you sure you should be running around here alone at night?” she asks. (p. 319)
22	He stands between me and the door that leads inside. He starts to crack his knuckles. Other than that, he is completely still. I shudder involuntarily. The faint pop of his knuckle-cracking is all I hear apart from my own breaths, which grow faster by the second. (p. 361)
23	Listening to my father insult Erudite all my life has made me wary of them, and my experiences in the Dauntless compound make me wary of authority and human beings in general, so I’m not shocked to hear that a faction could be planning a war. (p. 375)
24	My worst fear: that my family will die, and that I will be responsible. “Do it,” she says again, more insistent this time. “Do it or I’ll kill you.” (p. 395)
25	Will and the other initiates toward the exit. I can’t wage war against Abnegation, against my family. I would rather die. My fear landscape proved that. (p. 418)
26	Divergence is just another problem for her to solve, and that is what makes her so terrifying—because she is smart enough to solve anything, even the problem of our existence. (p. 432)
27	But sometimes it isn’t fighting that’s brave, it’s facing the death you know is coming. I sob into the glass. I’m not afraid of dying but I want to die a different way, any other way. (p. 437)

Source: own elaboration.

In order to analyse this category, distinctions must be made as regards the type of fear or compromised safety that the character experiences.

The first subcategory is related to fear of failure or fear for the future. Especially at the beginning of the novel, Beatrice experiences the uncertainty and stress directly

linked to the choice of career that most adolescents experience. Furthermore, this uncertainty is a direct reflection of the type of culture that she chooses as representative of her values: Dauntless. Nevertheless, these examples are included as part of the “safety” dimension, because the threat that Beatrice and her colleagues experience is that failure to become a member of a faction means that the individual becomes isolated from a protective collective (the faction) and becomes factionless, a group that is excluded from democratic decision-making and survives through charity. In addition, this group is conceived as a focus of criminality. The first example (1) is also an indicator of Beatrice’s insecure nature, as she implies the inappropriateness of her behaviour by comparing herself with a person with a normal behaviour. Examples 2 and 3, on the other hand, are in line with a depiction of a terrible image of the fear that some adolescents endure when they face the process of selection of a career or a particular degree. This association of the selection room with a torture room helps the reader identify the first signs of the life-or-death importance that this selection has for Beatrice and her colleagues. Indeed, the transition to adulthood in a utopia would not evoke in children such imagery. In this line, the mere thought of not acting as expected of an Abnegation member causes Beatrice to panic (4), and she has the same reaction when faced with the uncertainty of her results (7). In the same vein, the ceremony itself, where she and others her age choose their future is also a source of anxiety (9, 11).

All the tension felt is highly linked to the need to belong in order to be safe. Not being part of a protective collective is a constant fear in the novel. Example 12 clearly shows the degree of importance that belonging has, and how threatening another lifestyle is for faction members. The tension that the initiation in Dauntless involves is based on the fact that at any moment, the initiates might become factionless (14, 18). To Tris, belonging is one of her priorities, and she does not consider the alternative even when the way to achieve it implies possible death (15). Therefore, we can assume that personal safety is second to affiliation for the protagonist and that the opposite is the exception in Chicago.

The second subcategory refers to a breach in safety as perceived by Beatrice regarding her integrity or major consequences for the safety of everyone. In particular, example 10 shows that the system persists because it is considered the lesser evil. In fact, violence and other threats seem to be compartmentalised and excluded from the factions. Example 5 and 6 shows the fear of the presence of a murderer in her society. Although murder is inconceivable in her society from her point of view, the possibility

scares her. On the other hand, the people who scare her in real life are the factionless, as shown in example 8. This idea is important because it shows that she has a privileged position in society, and that readers from developed countries could relate to her character. Unlike Katniss, for instance, she does not suffer a direct threat because of her condition or her position in society from the beginning of the novel. Factions are safe places, and factionless areas are ghettos. However, and contrary to the idea of faction as a haven, examples 20 and 21 show an additional threat: Tris is assaulted and nearly killed by other initiates, all of them male, and is groped by one of them, who body shames her. In reaction, Tris is told to keep a low profile and to appear weak and afraid, while her best friend, Christina, questions whether walking around the compound at night is advisable (21).

She prioritizes self-actualization over safety when she rejects staying in Abnegation in what would be a safe life for a Divergent like her (13). This decision is key because it is the starting point for her journey towards selflessness, which she associates with bravery and a fearlessness, including the fear to die (27). Finally, she fears the damage she can cause due to her lack of training as regards weapons (19), which can be considered to be a fear of the unknown or a lack of self-assurance. Another example (16) shows that she starts the initiation as a rather fearful person, which contrasts with her personality towards the end of the trilogy.

The third category deals with Beatrice's fear of specific individuals and the authority. As for the former, she perceives Eric as a threat from the moment she meets him (17, 22) and equally identifies Jeanine as a figure of power that might compromise her safety due to her divergence (26). This fear stems from her condition as a minority group, the Divergent, who are prosecuted and killed in secret. Finally, she considers that authorities are not trustworthy (23), since she has seen how values are twisted for individual purposes and benefits. These examples may correspond to her increasing awareness of the mechanisms that conform the system she thought to be solid and violence-free.

The last subcategory consists only of two examples, 24 and 25, and refers to Beatrice's fear for the safety of her loved ones. This group includes her family, as in the case of Katniss in *The Hunger Games*. Furthermore, as in Suzanne Collins' novels, Tris' traumatising experiences as regards her family's safety will be a turning point for the importance she grants to her own safety. As I will explain in the next dimension

(affiliation), she compromises her safety in order to protect the lives of those she affiliates with (her faction).

### 5.2.12 Results: *Insurgent*

The following table presents the results for the sequel *Insurgent* as regards safety and danger.

1	The wind picks up as we stand at the edge of the car opening, like a hand pushing me back, toward safety. But we launch ourselves into darkness and land hard on the ground. (p. 2)
2	He smells like sweat and fresh air and mint, from the salve he sometimes uses to relax his sore muscles. He smells safe, too, like sunlit walks in the orchard and silent breakfasts in the dining hall. (p. 50)
3	It feels real to me, suddenly, that I am unarmed and being herded into a building surrounded by Erudite and Dauntless, and if they discover me, there will be nowhere to run. They will shoot me on the spot. (p. 77)
4	A Dauntless man at the end of the aisle aims his own revolver at me. The black spot at the end of the barrel grows around me, and I can hear my heart but nothing else. (p. 81)
5	Or it won't matter if I heal, I add silently, because I'll be dead. (p. 93)
6	I shiver at the word "destruction." Somewhere in the darker parts of me, I crave destruction, as long as it is Erudite being destroyed. But the word carries new meaning for me, now that I have seen what it can look like: gray-clothed bodies slung across curbs and over sidewalks, Abnegation leaders shot on their front lawns, next to their mailboxes. I press my face into the pallet I'm sleeping on, so hard it hurts my forehead, just to force the memory out, out, out. (p. 110)
7	For the first time, it occurs to me that we don't have to do anything. We could hole up with the factionless and let the rest of them sort through this mess. We could be nobodies, safe, together. (p. 119)
8	The last time I saw someone inject Tobias with something, it was Jeanine, putting him under a new simulation, one that was effective even on the Divergent—or so she believed. I thought, then, that he was lost to me forever. I shudder. (p. 134)
9	I clear my throat. "You saved our lives, you know," I say. "Eric was trying to hunt us down."

10	They've developed a long-lasting transmitter," I say. He nods. "So now we're all wired for multiple simulations," I add. "As many as Jeanine wants, maybe." (p. 210)
11	This feels dangerous. My Divergence is something I am supposed to hide. Admitting it is supposed to mean death. (p. 218)
12	"That was not their intention." The words are past my lips before I decide to speak them. My voice sounds high and weak compared to Marcus's and Jack's, but it's too late to stop. "They wanted to kill us. They've been killing us since before any of this happened." (p. 220)
13	I have never spoken to him directly, but the sound of his voice makes me shiver. (p. 252)
14	Tobias presses into the wall behind me, so close to me that his chin floats over my head and I can feel his chest against my shoulders. Shielding me. I can run back to Candor headquarters, and to temporary safety. (p. 255)
15	I have no doubt that Jack Kang will agree to Jeanine's demands. We aren't safe here anymore. (p. 263)
16	I try to think of something helpful to say. I'm not going to die—but I don't know that. We live in a dangerous world, and I am not so attached to life that I will do anything to survive. (p. 289)
17	I go straight toward the last place where I felt safe: Tobias's small apartment. The second I reach the door, I feel calmer. (p. 309)
18	Tremors go through my body now that I am close, making it difficult to walk. Breathing is tricky too. (p. 319)
19	In my terror, his expression seems amusing. I smile a little and conceal my hands, which are trembling. (p. 320)
20	Again, I feel guilt and grief clawing inside me, warring with each other for dominance, but terror is stronger than both. (p. 322)
21	A machine I vaguely recognize as a heart monitor. And dangling above it, a camera. I shudder without meaning to. Because I know what this is. (p. 327)
22	I sound cavalier, like executions are something I face on a regular basis. But forming my lips around the word "executed" makes me shudder. (p. 333)
23	His arms tighten around me and squeeze. Warmth courses through me, and comfort. If he is here, that means I'm safe. (p. 371)

24	I was sure I wanted to emulate their self-sacrifice. But no. No, no. Burning and boiling inside me is the desire to live. I don't want to die I don't want to die. (p. 384)
25	She left Dauntless not because she was ill-suited for it but because it was safer to be Divergent in Abnegation. (p. 460)
26	I recognize this floor. It is my floor. My thoughts become sluggish. I almost died here. I craved death here. (p. 476)

Source: own elaboration.

*Insurgent* presents a cohesive account of safety problems for the protagonists and the community. We may find individual safety or group safety compromised and the risk situations and events affect the value Tris gives to her own life.

Regarding individual protection, Dauntless lifestyle implies rejecting safety (1) and because of her background, including her parents' sacrifice to save her and the mass murder of Abnegation members (6), Tris is more prone to risking her life carelessly. We see this behaviour throughout the trilogy and, in this case, in examples 3, 4 and 16 in particular. Her reckless attitude is not grounded on any clear idea or objective. In other trilogies, we see protagonists risking their lives for a cause or to save a particularly important person for them. For example, Katniss risks her life to save her sister or Peeta, and Tally risks hers to save her best friend, whom she had betrayed. By contrast, Tris seems to have accepted that she could die at any moment as if every day is simply extra (5). She also seems to be extremely willing to take any risks necessary instead of letting others take them. Example 7 shows that she hesitates and ponders on her attitude, considering the alternative: being safe and letting others –perhaps including authorities and more experienced groups– solve the situation. Tris tries to emulate her parents' deaths until she experiences torture and is nearly subjected to human experimentation at Erudite headquarters. Five examples (18, 19, 20, 21, 22) describe the terrifying experience during which she loses control of her own body (18, 19) and is overcome by fear (20); nonetheless, the results show that even in these circumstances, she is still trying to balance the terror she experiences and her willingness to look unbothered (21, 22).

Tris' behaviour can be described as fickle. After that near-death experience, she has an epiphany: she does not want to die (24). The reflection on these experiences seems to lead her to the realization that her behaviour was self-destructive and suicidal

(26). However, the third novel will shed some further light into the coherence of this though with her later behaviour.

This novel develops the problematic issue of safety of entire groups. While the first novel already explored the ways in which the Divergent were being targeted by the Erudite, this sequel presents this issue with a harsher tone. The results show the use of words like “hunt” or “kill” directly linked to divergence (9, 11). On the other hand, people opposing the Erudite dictatorship are endangered by misuse of technology (10); transmitters are developed that enable mind control. Furthermore, the alliance between the Candor leader and the Erudite poses an extra problem, given their joint strength and the fact that Candor was initially a safe haven for the rebels (15). These series of situations follow the mass murder of a whole faction (6). This experience not only creates a situation of general alarm and trauma, but also polarises society into groups, which leads to hatred, as expressed by Tris in example 6. Although the conflict reaches unprecedented dimensions in this novel, the targeting of groups is not new. In fact, Tris discovers that her mother chose Abnegation in order to escape the Erudite because she was Divergent (25).

Finally, as I began to explore in the previous trilogy, some protagonists appear to associate the feeling of safety with a particular person for various reasons (e.g., due to shared trauma). In this trilogy we see an increasing association of Tobias with safety for Tris. The words employed to describe this connection have various connotations. On the one hand, in example 2, Tris says that Tobias smells like safe, like “silent breakfasts in the dining hall.” In this case, the smell evokes in Tris safety of the Duntless compound, which, ironically, is not a safe place from an objective viewpoint. Examples 14 and 23 describe Tris’ association of Tobias’ body movements with safety. She finds comfort in his shielding attitude which, as I will explore in the discussion, can be argued to represent Tris’ contradictory “damsel in distress” behaviour. In fact, she seems to move from one extreme to the other throughout the novel, from heroic and kamikaze behaviour to craving the safety of Tobias’ apartment (17). On the other hand, the fact that she identifies Tobias as a safe haven might partially explain the importance she gives to that person’s safety (8).

On another note, an interesting difference between these novels and others in which safety is a pressing matter and the protagonists risk their lives and fear the dangers encountered is the indirect style employed in this trilogy. While *The Hunger Games* trilogy offered direct statements on fear and safety such as Katniss’ affirmation



that she cannot let the Capitol hurt her sister, *Divergent* seems to focus more on body reactions and perceptions. For example, in this novel the results show a remarkably high use of words related to the senses: smell (2), hear (the heart pounding) (4), shiver (6, 13), shudder (8, 21, 22). Whether it is intended or not, the use of these words to describe fear focuses the attention on the protagonist’s feelings rather than on action and her motivations, which may be contradictory considering the alleged collectivist culture that the protagonist is said to represent, a lack of coherence that could hamper readers’ engagement to some extent.

### 5.2.13 Results: *Allegiant*

The results corresponding to the analysis of safety in the last novel of the *Divergent* trilogy, *Allegiant*, are presented in the following table.

1	I see her crouched in front of me, fixing my mismatched shirt buttons before I go to school, and standing at the window, watching the uniform street for my father’s car, her hands clasped—no, clenched, her tan knuckles white with tension. We were united in fear then... (p. 22)
2	“[...] The first of these measures is a curfew: Everyone is required to return to their assigned living spaces at nine o’clock at night. They will not leave those spaces until eight o’clock the next morning. Guards will be patrolling the streets at all hours to keep us safe.” (p. 46)
3	<i>He’s all right he’s all right he’s all right. Tobias is all right.</i> My hands tremble, and Christina squeezes my knee. (p. 95)
4	Swelling inside me is the feeling that I am about to jump out of my own skin, because the farther we get outside the outer limit of the Dauntless patrols, the closer we get to seeing what lies outside the only world I’ve ever known. I am terrified and thrilled and confused and a hundred different things at once. (p. 100)
5	She knows my name. My throat tightens with fear. How does she know my name? And not just my name—my nickname, the name I chose when I joined Dauntless? (p. 105)
6	All the other cities—that’s where most of the country lives, in these big metropolitan areas, like our city—are dirty and dangerous, unless you know the right people. Here at least there’s clean water and food and safety.” I shift my weight, uncomfortable. (p. 143)

7	She takes a syringe and needle from its plastic-paper wrapping, and Tris tenses. “What’s that for?” Tris says. [...] “I just . . . don’t like to be injected with strange substances.” (p. 169)
8	“What do you mean, expendable?” I say. “The crimes they have committed against people like us are serious,” Nita says. “And hidden. I can show you evidence [...]” (p. 235)
9	I run my fingers over my name, carved into the metal panel, Tobias Eaton. These are my genes, this is my mess. I don’t want to pull Tris into it. (p. 237)
10	I thought this place could be home. But the Bureau is full of killers. (p. 276)
11	As much automatic, Abnegation-bred sympathy as I have for the people living in this place, I am also afraid of them. If they are like the factionless, then they are surely desperate like the factionless, and I am wary of desperate people. (p. 349)
12	“I knew that they let them off because they thought of her as something less than them. Like if the GPs had beat up an animal.” A shiver starts at the top of my spine and travels down my back. (p. 428)
13	In the rearview mirror I see her touch her face with both hands, grinning into her palms. I know how she feels: safe. We are all safe. (p. 488)

Source: own elaboration.

The protagonists’ main goal in this novel is probably to find a place where they can feel safe and at home. Given that the novel has two points of view –Tris’ and Tobias’– we have the opportunity to delve into their different motivations and experiences as regards safety. Tobias, Tris and other rebels left a society where safety was not ensured. In the case of Tobias, who carries a greater weight of the narrative in this novel, he leaves both parents behind, both of which are the antithesis of a safe home. On the one hand, example 1 shows that his father abused him and his mother (1), which created a bond between him and his mother; however, her mother, Evelyn, is ruling the factionless and has turned their society into another dictatorship where curfew and patrols are established (2). Both Tris and Tobias have no home to return to, which is especially relevant given the importance granted to the home as a safe place in children and YA literature.

The transition between Chicago and the Bureau implied getting acquainted with the real world, which causes Tris to re-experience the fear of the unknown that she had

felt at the beginning of the trilogy before the ceremony (4, 5). As regards the Bureau itself, the organization in charge of the experiments and the society of arrival for the protagonists, enthusiasm gave way to concern and dissatisfaction. Once again, the protagonists find inequality and high power distance. The fact that people are safe in the Bureau seems insufficient for Tobias (6), who belongs to a group of what they call “genetically damaged” (GD) people; therefore, he is treated as a lesser being. They have fewer rights and highly limited career possibilities. Indeed, the GD are a risk group in a similar way as the Divergent were in Chicago (8). Killing a GD and a genetically pure person are not considered to have the same importance, as shown in example 12.

From the perspective of a privileged individual –Tris– the Bureau is not the home she was looking for because people are treated unjustly, and the leaders are responsible for people’s deaths, thus equating the Bureau to Chicago (10). The world outside the limits of the Bureau is not better. The Fringe is described as dangerous because people living there are desperate (11). Once again, Tris describes the situation from a privileged perspective, not as a person living the desperation of the factionless or the population in the Fringe.

As regards personal fears, Tris’ experiences as subject of experiments and witness of mind control mechanism procedures have caused her a trauma with injections (7) that was mentioned in the previous novel. On the other hand, as interpersonal relationships is concerned, Tris experiences a fear of losing Tobias, as can be seen in example 3, while Tobias tries to prevent his problem with the genes from affecting Tris because it involves delving into dangerous matters and being exposed to threats (9). It seems that both characters develop an urge to protect one another in a similar way as Tally and Zane in *Uglies* or Katniss and Peeta in *The Hunger Games* protect one another.

Example 13 represents the level of tension that all the characters have experienced throughout the story. After preventing the memory loss of all citizens, Christina and Tobias feel safe (13). Being the last identified example as regards safety, this result gives a hopeful ending as far as the satisfaction of this need is concerned.

#### 5.2.14 Discussion

The results of the analysis of safety indicate a clear and significant difference among the trilogies. *The Hunger Games* and *Divergent* refer to the scope and intentionality of the problem: in the former, the whole population is at risk and the source of the danger is the government, whereas the latter presents a situation in which most of the population ignores the problem while the Divergent are killed and the factionless are mistreated. In *Across the Universe*, the population is relatively safe from violence although they are controlled through drugs; the problem about safety concerns mainly the Earth-born protagonist because she is physically and culturally different and she is purposely singled out as a target. Finally, *Uglies* presents a society where wellbeing and peace are ensured at the expense of people's capacity to make reasoned decisions, which is cancelled by the authorities during the surgery. Therefore, the main problem in these last two trilogies is the use of power and control with the excuse of safety. However, the results have yielded some ideas and situations that are shared by multiple trilogies. Thus, the present discussion includes not only the topics of surveillance and control, but also the role of sacrifice in heroic YA dystopian narratives, the archetype of the protector and the implications in terms of gender stereotypes, the higher levels of fear women experience and societies' reaction to sexual assault, the concept of home as safe haven and the conception and representation of violence on minority groups.

##### 5.2.14.1 Surveillance and control: *The price of safety.*

As outlined in the introduction on safety in utopian fiction, we can distinguish mainly two types of insecurity: general lack of safety –involving most of the population and a clear threat– and dangers threatening individuals or minorities. The fact that three of the four trilogies are written in first person, and the fourth presents an omniscient narrator, suggests the interest in analysing the perception of safety of the citizens in general and the main characters in particular. A key actor in the novels is the system or the authorities, given that in many cases they control the protagonists' lives and decide the fate against which they must fight. This actor may enforce surveillance or other mechanisms of control onto the citizens, who may react differently in each of the circumstances narrated. We found three levels of awareness in the novels. Panem has a high surveillance system, but everybody in the districts knows they are observed and

that they cannot speak against the Capitol because that surveillance is used against them. On an intermediate level, people in the city of *Uglies* wear an interface ring at all times that monitors her and transmits her location. It is only after being outside the city that Tally realises how willingly they offer information to the authorities. Finally, both *Across the Universe* and *Divergent* trilogies criticise the surveillance they were subjected to without being aware; they react against it. These two cases would represent the spirit of the fight against the tyrants and adds to the heroic nature of their endeavours. However, perhaps the most relatable reaction is the one narrated in *Uglies*. Carrying tracking devices and passively –and actively– offering personal information to external entities without understanding the use that they will make of it describes perfectly the use of modern Internet and smart technology in general and among teenagers in particular. As Prodnik puts it:

[i]t is all users of commercial online platforms such as Facebook and Google who are subjected to vigorous efforts of user surveillance, audience segregation, political control and exploitation – whether they are using those platforms for subversive political practices as well or not. (Prodnik, 2014, p. 1238)

Surveillance controversy has also affected new artificial intelligence interfaces. For example, Alexa –by Amazon.com Inc.– is said to have recorded conversations with users which are then analysed by Amazon employees, allegedly to improve the interaction abilities of this interface (Kumar, 2019, n.p.).

Some security measures that are commonplace in modern countries are in fact tools to control the population or could be used for that purpose and surveillance is one of them. Despite the danger to their safety that the panopticon-like state represents, neither Tally nor Tris feel threatened by this situation. In the case of Katniss, the results show that she is not scared either, as no mention is made to this fact according to the results. As to Amy, we see an instance in which she mentions the fact that they were observed on Centaury Earth in a context of fear. Massive surveillance from the government or similar organizations may be a significant flaw for a reader from the USA, where, culturally, people take pride in their constitution and particularly the 4<sup>th</sup> amendment:

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized. (U.S. Const. amend. IV)

This amendment is extrapolated to the prohibition of searching a person's personal devices for instance in order to obtain information without consent; however, following the 9/11 attacks, this right does not cover travellers entering the country. US border control may inspect cell phones, including chats (White, 2018).

Spaniards have their rights protected by the Constitution of 1978:

1. Se garantiza el derecho al honor, a la intimidad personal y familiar y a la propia imagen. 2. El domicilio es inviolable. Ninguna entrada o registro podrá hacerse en él sin consentimiento del titular o resolución judicial, salvo en caso de flagrante delito. 3. Se garantiza el secreto de las comunicaciones y, en especial, de las postales, telegráficas y telefónicas, salvo resolución judicial. 4. La ley limitará el uso de la informática para garantizar el honor y la intimidad personal y familiar de los ciudadanos y el pleno ejercicio de sus derechos. (Const. 1978, Art. 18)

In the case of the UK, since there is no codified constitution, there is no constitution, these rights are protected by the Human Rights Declaration –which has been incorporated into the domestic law of the country (Woogara, 2001, p. 234)– particularly by Article 12:

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Despite this, most of the population is ignorant of their rights. In fact, according to a report by the University of Pennsylvania, a high percentage of Americans cannot name the rights protected by the first amendment (freedom of speech, religion, assembly and press) or the three branches of government (Rozansky, 2017, n.p.). There are no similar studies focusing on the Spanish Constitution, although reports indicate that people display low knowledge levels about the political actors and political history of the country with differences between people with different socioeconomic backgrounds (Ferrín & Fraile, 2014, p. 55). Furthermore, the results of the Spanish centre for sociological studies (CIS) indicate that, as per data from a 2012 survey, over 90% of the population knew nothing or little about the Constitution. In the case of the UK, a report states that up to two-thirds of the population do not know their rights (Denvir, Balmer & Buck, 2012, p. 599). With this in mind, it is not surprising to see that adolescents show little concern about their personal information being exposed online.

Considering the plot of novels, the first three cases indicate that the protagonists are accustomed to the situation and simply act cautiously to avoid being watched: in the case of Katniss and Tally because they escape into nature illegally and in the case of Tris when she acts as a spy and tries to frustrate Jeannine's plans to rule the city and eliminate the Divergent. This situation –notwithstanding the differences– is similar to the acceptance of Millennials and Generation Z of the blurred and sometimes invisible wall between the public and the private; this fact is reinforced by these generations' use of social media, which is both a bridge and a display window.

In general terms, smartphone applications that use geolocation or other data about a person's behaviour such as the websites visited are controversial due to the use these companies make of that information. One of the main issues as regards data storage is the creation of a digital memory that includes not only data manually generated by users but also the information about the user's behaviour (Martínez López-Sáez, 2018, p. 28). One of the controversies involves Facebook, a social media and social networking service founded in 2004, which has approximately 2370 million monthly users. Recently, the company has undergone multiple questionings regarding the data collected, the way it is collected and the use they make of such data. In particular, New York has ordered the investigation of the database of the company because it is believed that they are storing health and sensitive information (Reuters, 2019, n.p.). Similarly, Google stores data about the places people visit and the time it took them to go from place A to place B as well as the websites people visit among lots of other details.

Given the pervasiveness of the use of smartphones among adolescents in all spaces and in all developed countries (Prodnik, 2014, p. 1223), it is not surprising to find representations of the dangers of these technologies in YA fiction following the dystopian tradition, although it remains unknown whether these cautionary tales are somewhat effective in this regard. Teenagers reportedly feel safe online (Agosto, 2017, p. 357) and consider that they employ sufficient protective measures to prevent undesirable outcomes. However, according to King (2018, n.p.) one in five millennials who stopped using social media attributed the decision to the lack of privacy. While the figure is relatively low compared to other reasons given for eliminating a social network from their choices for leisure, it is significant considering the increasing weight that the excess of details gathered by websites is acquiring in news reports. This decision reflects Tally's decision to stop using the interface ring, which works as a modern version of the smartphone. Other citizens' conscious decision to remain in the city

represents the fact that Tally's decision is –as in real life– minoritarian. In this regard, agreeing to be present in social media may be considered inevitable nowadays; as Martínez López-Sáez puts it, you only exist if you are on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, which has altered social interaction (2018, p. 28). One such report concerns a distant country, but its controversy has been stressed by western media. It refers to a smartphone application designed by the Saudi government and available for download that allows men to track their wives or to process permits to allow them to travel abroad (Sydell, 2019, n.p.). On a closer context, parental control could be compared to some of the situations narrated in the novels of our corpus. In fact, an episode of the dystopian-science fiction TV series *Black Mirror* –Arkangel– explores the risks of using technology to control everything a child does and sees, thus preventing their normal development and causing their inability to face problems. According to Nakayama (2011, p. 1802), parents in Japan reported increasing preoccupation over safety. In this regard, monitoring of their children through radio frequency or GPS systems became progressively common. In particular, the results of his study suggest that children strongly reject the use of such systems (68.8 to 82.8%), in contrast with the 51.8% and 63.5% of parents who reported their intention to use them to a greater or lesser extent. Fahlquist (2015, p. 44) suggests that the partial benefits for parents as regards their safety are offset by the violation of the child's right to privacy. Similarly, Gabriels (2016, p. 8) points out that there is a progressive understanding of good parenting as inevitably linked to intrusiveness and monitoring in western countries, which is necessarily connected with the rise of ICTs. Despite the lack of country-specific research on this topic for the countries under analysis, the available data suggests a global trend that leads to the assumption that teenage readers would understand the feeling or threat of surveillance regardless of their country of origin. Nevertheless, the prevalent behaviour of youth seems to reflect the apparent nonchalance with which the protagonists accept surveillance from known entities. As we see in the novels where the protagonists reject or are explicitly upset about this surveillance –*Across the Universe* and *Divergent*– the indignation is directed at the surveillance systems of external organizations or collective groups. In the case of Beth Revis' novels, Amy is outraged by the fact that they –the whole colony– have been observed by the native creatures. Similarly, Tris reacts negatively to the fact that the Bureau, an organization she did not know, streamed images of Chicago and the population knew the refugees as though they had participated in a reality show. These characters' acceptance of well-known



surveillance but rejection of hidden surveillance may reflect their conception of their conscious and safe use of the internet, as mentioned above. In other words, unknown surveillance cannot be avoided, which increases its potential as a threat.

#### 5.2.14.2 Fences and gated communities

*The Hunger Games*' issue of safety has various levels of interpretation. On the one hand, the use of security measures in the district, such as the fence, allegedly to keep wild animals out, is in fact a means to keep people in, that is, to prevent people from escaping the limits of Capitol-controlled territory. This same symbol appears in Chicago, where the fence that delimits the city was thought to be protective of something outside, while, in fact, it was used to prevent people from accessing the outer world. Enclosure is often a means to escape the negative influence of society. Thus, as Burke (2001, p. 119) points out, gating communities tends to generate a division between peaceful areas and battlefields, a definition that accurately describes these dystopian scenarios. As we have seen, two types of enclosure exist: those designed to prevent negative external factors from affecting the community, as in *Divergent*, and those designed to prevent individuals from leaving a dystopian society that benefits the privileged, as in *The Hunger Games*. Octavia Butler's *Parable of the Sower* (1993) presents an example of the first type: a gated community in L.A. struggles to preserve a small-scale paradise amidst the dystopian anarchic world outside. This idea of a gated community is more relatable for the audience in developed countries, where gated communities refer to exclusive residential areas that restrict access and preserve a particularly exclusive lifestyle, alienated from common people's struggles and the poor. As such, Chicago represents a garden of Eden of sorts, while District 12 resembles a refugee camp.

Fences inevitably imply segregation and inequalities. "Of the 51 fortified boundaries built between countries since the end of World War II, around half were constructed between 2000 and 2014" (Friedman, 2016, n.p.) and this trend is not changing. All three countries under analysis have situations representative of the wall fever with varying degrees of popular acceptance. Spain has perhaps the oldest of the problems discussed in this regard. Its geographical location as a gateway between Europe and Africa forced extreme contention measures against illegal migration. I use the term "illegal migration" rather than "irregular migration" or "clandestine

migration.” Despite claims that the term is inaccurate, Perkowska (2016) supports its use instead of “irregular migration,” which may also be inaccurate, as it can define temporary migration. With this term, I refer to the illegal border-crossing of people moving from a country to another without complying with the legal requirements. This phenomenon, which is considered to be the biggest migration crisis in Europe since WWII (Perkowska, 2016, p. 195), has been the focus of attention due to the unsettling rise of the far-right in European countries and, before that, the frequent terrorist attacks by Isis supporters and despite the fact that the attackers were typically second-generation migrants. In the particular case of Spain, the barbed-wire fence dividing Melilla from Morocco was introduced in 2005 by the Socialist government; however, this wire was removed from the top of the fence given the serious injuries that they caused on those trying to jump the fence. In 2014, the government decided to reinstate the wire (Hamilos, 2013, n.p.) and without a date for replacement for another system. With this situation, the border problem is ingrained in the Spanish collective memory and culture.

The U.K. experienced a similar situation with the creation of the refugee camp in Calais, the French city that connects the continent with Great Britain with the relentless departure of ferries. The refugees must climb over two wired fences in order to reach the port. By refusing to collaborate in monetary terms with the policing of the refugees camped in Calais, the British government created a temporary crisis with its neighbour country (Lichfield, 2014, n.p.). The eagerness to keep refugees away from the island evokes the voluntary isolation of classic utopias due to its geographical location, explained by the need to do the experiment at a small scale and to be detached from the corrupting patterns of the world, so that their citizens do not know other socioeconomic and political organizations. Given this situation, British readers are likely to connect the problems associated with fencing communities with their recent problems with illegal migration.

Precisely immigration was the primary reason given for the idea of the wall that the USA would build between themselves and Mexico. It is noteworthy to mention that, although not a mediatic issue during the years in which the novels were published, the creation of such border wall became key only a couple of years after their publication and during the US presidential election campaign. President Donald Trump based his candidature on the need to reinforce the borders in order to curtail illegal migration from Mexico. Far from being a false promise, plans are being made to attempt the building of

the wall. As in the previous issues, the fence or wall entails segregation justified with the idea of preservation of “Americanness” and wellbeing.

The discussion leads to the idea that most of the population in the mentioned countries is likely to understand the negative part of segregation and frontiers when represented in the novels. In the case of the USA, in particular, 58.9 million people, including around 10 million undocumented immigrants, are part of the Hispanic community, the second largest ethnic group, which establishes a link between these people and those being prevented from reaching the country. The case of the UK and Spain is different because of the small percentage of citizens living in these countries as a result of this particular type of migration and their recent arrival. Thus, for readers of these countries, the novels present the alternative view to the prevailing problematisation of the fence, particularly as point-of-view is concerned. In *The Hunger Games*, the role of Katniss as a person whose mobility is restricted by a fence offers readers the possibility of considering the position of the migrant attempting to reach their countries to escape danger. Furthermore, the limitations to the protagonist’s agency reflect the situation of undocumented migrants outside the borders. In *Divergent*, on the other hand, the fence bears testimony to the dangers of going at great lengths to preserve a lifestyle, as the experiment is required to remain unexposed to external influences. Furthermore, the division in the last novel of this trilogy marks the power distance between those at each side of the fence: the Bureau, completely knowledgeable and in control of the situation, and the citizens of Chicago, on the one hand, and of the Fringe, on the other hand, who are unable to reach the privileged society at the Bureau and deprived from agency to change their situation. Following the criticism of the author’s society that is typically present in utopian literature, these parallelisms offer readers a gloomy view on their countries’ policies.

#### 5.2.14.3 *Sacrifice*

This section discusses an important and controversial issue as per the results: personal sacrifice. The contradictions of feminist critics are significant when addressing the issue of the empowerment of the female protagonist or the extent to which she represents feminism. One could argue that an action and its opposite are criticised for not being feminist enough, which leaves writers, as well as the female protagonists, at an impasse. This problem may arise from the fact that women and girls in Western

cultures are reinventing themselves and the fiction that represents them in order to design a framework that encompasses their ideas (Nelson, 2014, p. 3). One such issue is self-sacrifice.

Young adult and children literature usually present a hero who fights evil forces. When the novels are addressed at young adults, the challenges they face are related to the struggle of growing up and facing adult problems. Some well-known novels for young adults present protagonists who put their lives in danger in order to save the world. In some cases, they give their life for the cause. In J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Deadly Hallows* (2007), the protagonist has to die –although temporarily– in order to kill Lord Voldemort. In C. S. Lewis' *Narnia Chronicles* (1950-1956), Aslan teaches the young protagonists the value of self-sacrifice by offering his life for the children's echoing Jesus Christ's sacrifice. In *The Messenger*, the third novel of *The Giver Quartet* by Lois Lowry (1993), Matty sacrifices himself to heal the forest, thus saving his friends. In these cases, the protagonist of the sacrifice was a male character. These deaths have been regarded as heroic, and yet, research on the novels of the corpus of this study has severely criticised the sacrifices of the female protagonists. In *The Hunger Games*, Katniss' defiance of the Capitol by almost committing suicide or participating in actions that put her life in danger in order to save others have been categorised as representations of heteronormativity (Broad, 2014, p. 117), thus undervaluing the "honour" that is granted to male protagonists in the mentioned novels. In the case of Tris, her ultimate sacrifice in order to save the city from having their memories erased has been criticised for representing a martyr that has been reproduced historically in fiction to expose the pattern of behaviour that women should follow in order to be "good" (Jarvis, 2015, p. 134). In this particular case, Tris has been compared to the figure of the maiden. According to Green-Barteet (2014, p. 46), Tris would have gained agency when she betrayed the person that she loved in order to pursue the truth about the attacks. Nevertheless, the author does not mention the importance of the last sacrifice. She saves the population as a whole, betraying her survival instinct and preventing her brother from assuming that role. In the case of Tally, she has been praised as a character for preserving the bond with her friend even at the expense of her own identity and safety. The characters are questioned by the male counterparts in various instances. Gale Hawthorne asks Katniss to run away with him so that they can avoid the games and the control and oppression of the Capitol. Tally is questioned by David over her decision to give herself in to save Shay. In the same vein, Four (Tobias)

asks Tris to stay away from danger, to value her life more. In Amy's case, it is not self-sacrifice, but a defiance of the fear imposed on her by the new society as an "alien" and as a woman, labelling her as a weak target. She is told to stay indoors by the male characters that interact with her (Doc, Harley, and Elder). All the protagonists dismiss their advice, taking the risks in doing what they consider the right thing.

It is important to note that young adult literature develops from an approach to fiction that is closely linked to children literature, while young adult dystopian fiction has a close connection with science fiction but also fantasy fiction. The role of the hero—or heroine in the case of these novels—is tightly linked to danger and sacrifice and their safety is compromised in order to draw the readers' attention to an issue that is relevant in real life but also to enable the development of the character in taking the choices that are morally adequate and that the writer wants to transmit to the intended audience. It is interesting to notice the alteration in priorities that Amy experiences in the last instalment of the trilogy. She gives more importance to solving the problem of the potential dangers of the new planet than to ensuring the population is well fed, while Elder's role as a leader is more connected to the population's immediate wellbeing. This situation may be a characteristic of the protagonist due to her heroic background stemming from the influence of science fiction and adventure fiction, from superhero prototypes focused on saving the Earth or the city from the villain. However, it is also true that this behaviour coincides with the trend and storyline of the character focusing on her safety, which may be extrapolated to community protection.

Furthermore, in the case of dystopian fiction in particular, the fact that the protagonists' first concern is the community's wellbeing rather than their individual wellbeing suggests a criticism of individualist societies. All the protagonists were raised in collectivist and feminine cultures except for Amy. As we will see in the section about affiliation, the fact that they prioritise the collective to the individual reflects the defence of these values, while Amy's behaviour serves as criticism of the prevailing individualism of the origin culture: the USA.

#### 5.2.14.4 *The male protector, the strong damsel in distress, and sexual assault*

Despite the heroic and empowering actions of the novels including the sacrifice described above, all the female lead characters associate safety to a person: a male character. This situation evinces not necessarily the partial lack of agency of the women in the novels or their dependency, but the fact that the societies depicted are unsafe for women unless they are protected by a man. There is no doubt that the role of protagonists grants the heroines partial agency, but it is nonetheless remarkable that at one point, and to various degrees, all of these protagonists make this association between safety and a male protagonist who, in various cases, is their significant other. In particular, as I have explained in the results section, Katniss feels safe with Peeta – who eventually becomes her husband– as evinced by the fact that Katniss searches his company when she is terrified or having nightmares. Furthermore, she states that she feels as safe with Peeta as she did with her parents as a child (*The Hunger Games*, p. 363). In *Across the Universe*, Amy associates safety with Harley and then with Elder, who is her romantic interest. Finally, Tris makes various assertions that Tobias' presence implies her safety. There is a difference between *Across the Universe* and *Divergent*, on the one hand, and *The Hunger Games* and *Uglies* on the other hand. In *Uglies*, Tally requires Andrew Simpson Smith's help, which will ensure her safety in the wild. In this case, this situation evidences her lack of survival skills in the wilderness, but not a general dependency of women on men. Similarly, and despite Katniss' savvy with regards to survival, she associates safety with Peeta due to their shared trauma. On the other hand, the other two trilogies portray societies in which the women face an extra threat: they are exposed to men's violence, a violence that is acknowledged but never solved. Lorenc et al. (2013, p. 6) explored research on fear and crime in the UK and offer interesting insights regarding gender. Apparently, women and girls perceive greater fear than men and boys, and the source of that fear is, precisely, men. Furthermore, these situations restrict women's activities insofar as they may decide not to walk or cycle, for instance, for fear of being attacked (Haskell & Randall, 1998, p. 113; Jacobsen, 2012, p. 7).

Apart from the attack to the integrity of the *Divergent*, and despite boys and girls being trained without gender distinctions, Tris suffers an aggression that body-shames and humiliates her and which is a clear example of sexism and abuse of women on the part of men, who consider themselves entitled to act as if women's bodies were their

property. In the same way, Amy and Victria, in *Across the Universe*, are subjected to sexual assaults. Despite the gravity of the act, these situations are solved without airing it, which sends a message of normalization, equating general violence to specific violence and taking away the socio-political connotations that the attack has. While including this type of gendered violence in the novels is in a way a means to reflect the existing problem in real life, I argue that the novels fail to construct a supportive environment for the victims, who do not seek justice for the victim, do not expose the aggressor's actions, and are instead silenced or advised not to appear affected by male characters. I will argue this position in the following paragraphs.

A connecting point between *Divergent* and real life in their treatment of sexual assault refers to the similarities between the Dauntless faction lifestyle and that of an army. In institutions, such as the army, where strict hierarchy and discipline are major characteristics, sexual assault goes largely unreported (Reuters, 2017, n.p.). In the Spanish army, the situation is not very different. The lawyer that defended commander Cantera, who filed a complaint for sexual assault and harassment, announced that his office receives 200 similar reports every year (Castellnou, 2015, n.p.). Similarly, a report indicates that almost all women in the UK military had suffered or had been witness of harassment and bullying (Sanghani, 2015, n.p.).

As regards the target group –teenagers– studies confirm that the figures of peer sexual harassment and bullying endured by teenage women reach 50% of the surveyed participants in some cases (Hill, 2011, p. 14), with only 9% of the victims reporting the crime to the authorities. In this context, what is the message the novel sends on this matter? When Tris is rescued by Tobias, an action that is in itself perpetuating the role of the hero and the damsel in distress, he physically punishes one of the aggressors, but Tris does not report the incident to the leaders. With this decision, the aggressors are left unpunished and the crime is normalized. On the other hand, the leader of the aggressors, Peter, is gradually accepted into the main character's group. He never accepts or assumes blame for his actions and finally decides to erase his memory, since he considers himself inherently evil. Similarly, the man that aggresses Amy and Victria, Luthor, is not punished and simply behaves like another law-abiding citizen in the society of Godspeed. Although he is eventually killed, he dies before the society can understand and judge his deeds.

Interestingly, in both cases, the issue is “handled” by a male protagonist. In the case of Tris, she is advised to look weak instead of defiant so that her friends protect

her. Similarly, in *Across the Universe*, Amy is constantly reminded that the ship is not safe for her. When both Amy and Victria suffer sexual aggression (an attempt in the first case), no punishment is inflicted upon the aggressor and both women diminish the importance of the incident. Once Amy tells Elder, apart from covered rage, he does not exert his influence as the leader of the community to address the problem nor does he impose any sort of penalty to the aggressor.

What is the attitude of others who discover this situation? In general, Tris' friends become extremely protective of her and see her as weaker than before. However, it is interesting to highlight Christina's attitude. After Tris suffers the attack, she advises her not to wander alone, thus validating the discourse that blames the victims. While Peter suffers no consequences in his everyday life, Tris' behaviour is questioned. This attitude, although seemingly involuntary in this case, is considered "victim blaming." Niemi and Young (2014, p. 230) point out that people tend to blame the victim of a rape instead of the perpetrator of the crime (see also Bieneck & Krahe, 2011, p. 1786). This situation appears to be generalizable to different countries. Half of men assign at least partial blame to the women who suffered rape if they had consumed alcohol or dressed in a particular way (Mortimer, 2017, n.p.).

Regarding teenagers, a study by Thomas (2018, p. 193) shows how female teenagers are faced with harassment through 'sexting', a practice consisting in exchanging nude photographs via phone. According to the author, victims of sexting are threatened when refusing boy's requests for the intimate pictures. These situations contrast with the way Finnick publicly denounces the abuses the victors had to endure, used as sexual objects:

President Snow used to...sell me...my body, that is," Finnick begins in a flat, removed tone. "I wasn't the only one. If a victor is considered desirable, the president gives them as a reward or allows people to buy them for an exorbitant amount of money. If you refuse, he kills someone you love. So you do it" (*Mockingjay*, p. 199).

The reaction of those present is of unanimous scandal. It is not undermined by Katniss or any other character: "Even as the waves of shock and recrimination roll over the Capitol, the people there will be waiting, as I am now, to hear about the president" (*Mockingjay*, p. 200).

All in all, *Divergent* and *Across the Universe* depict a half-hearted criticism of sexism and assault on women. The criticism of the approach used by the authors is in this case stressed by the inevitable comparison with the received treatment of a similar



situation in *The Hunger Games* trilogy, Finnick's case. In the mentioned trilogies, the abuses suffered by Amy, Victria and Tris are hidden, as if they were something shameful. In other words, the fact that it is narrated evidences the problem, but the way it is addressed fails to make a significant impact into young female readers' perception of sexual aggression. In my humble opinion, the novels set a questionable example as regards the treatment of sexual assault and harassment, evidencing that, although in theory men and women are equal in Chicago and Godspeed, such equality is only apparent. Had the novels been published in 2017-2018, the impact of these violent episodes could have been greater because the #metoo feminist movement unveiled the extent to which sexual aggressions are commonplace in the film industry, and some kind of harassment is endured by many women and girls throughout their lives. Furthermore, the means through which the movement became widespread was Twitter, a social network that is commonly used by the generation that the books target. "Me too" is the expression of sorority: female support of other women that helps them gather the necessary bravery to narrate an episode of their lives that will very likely be diminished by society. Victria is scared and only explains her situation to another girl (Amy). Amy did not want to tell what had happened to her to Elder, but she did so because she wanted to help Victria. Meanwhile, the men in the girls' circle fail to grasp the gravity of the situation and do not act in any way to prevent the situation but put the burden of their safety on their behaviour. While Katniss and Tally's decision to risk their lives is relatively on their hands, Amy and Tris fall in one of the traps of an imperfect system. Therefore, Tally, who is physically superior after her Special surgery, is able to defend herself. She is represented as strong and a weapon in herself, as posthuman. Katniss is represented as strong and able. She is capable of taking care of herself and surviving various direct attacks. Tris is training to become apt for the military, however, she is at times portrayed as weak and protected by her friends. She is even ridiculed by being called "a little girl." In the same vein, Amy is an average sixteen-year-old with no fighting skills. In terms of identification, an average teenager has more in common with Amy than she does with Katniss simply statistically in terms of background. However, it is interesting to see that the hero in female-led YA dystopian novels may go from an artificially physically enhanced girl as in *Uglies*, to a plain Jane as in *Across the Universe*.

#### 5.2.14.5 Supremacist views and affiliation connections.

Othering the factionless and equating their lifestyle with infra-humanity facilitates bearing with the injustice and marginality that society has imposed on them. Furthermore, marking them sociologically and physically –through the use of mixed-colour clothing– as expendable and using them in the same way animal life is exploited is exactly the practice the Nazi carried out. The “use” of the Factionless and Divergent for scientific purposes that the Erudite make is indeed comparable to that of the Nazis and other totalitarian xenophobic regimes but also to western countries like the USA and its CIA torture program (Physicians for Human Rights, 2017, n.p.): these programs consider the subjects a lesser kind. The fact that this issue is not one of the main topics of the novels, which focuses to a greater extent on the problems concerning the protagonist in her position of privilege even in belonging to a target group such as the Divergent –the Divergent have special powers (immunity), whereas the factionless are simply marginal– reveals a criticism, whether intended or accidental, of the position of the majority of the population in developed countries towards those affected by those safety breaches.

Another interesting issue is the terrorist group formed by the genetically damaged in the Bureau, outside Chicago. The organized rebellious acts of the genetically damaged, who aimed at denouncing the injustice of a system that limits their possibilities and treats them as expendable. Similarly, the factionless rebel against the tyranny of the system, especially against the cruelty of the Erudite that used them for experiments. These behaviours, as we have seen and will see, are an extreme response to the imposition of different types of violence on a minority.

In the USA, the Black Lives Matter movement, founded in 2013, was the result of the frequent violence endured by the black community, sometimes from police forces, but also from the system of Justice. The origin of the movement, the absolution of George Zimmerman, accused of the death of black teenager Trayvon Martin, resembles the case narrated in *Allegiant*. Matthew, a scientist at the Bureau, tells how his girlfriend, who was a GD, was brutally attacked by a group of GP people who were declared not guilty. According to Burns (2017), “the FBI has, since at least 2006, expressed growing concern about the active links between white supremacists and law enforcement, which should come as no surprise considering the deep history of racism in American police forces” (p. 178). Without a shadow of a doubt, young adults in the USA could easily

identify the two situations because the group suffering the injustice are not a small minority, but an integrated community within a highly diverse country. This is perhaps the most striking example and the most evident comparison given that the author is American and that there is a history of recurrent incidents with police actions. One of the best-known and famous cases is the shooting of Oscar Grant in 2009. The police officer who shot the unarmed and restrained man in the back was charged with involuntary manslaughter, as was the Genetically Pure (GP) who committed the aggression in Veronica Roth's novel. The different legislation on firearms in other countries makes this situation rather infrequent.

With the global change in governments towards right-wing parties with strong anti-illegal migration policies, minorities are being placed at the centre of political campaigns and social concerns. Even though violence towards these collectives is neither systematised nor implemented by the authorities, the exclusion discourse is a topic that requires thorough discussion (see section 5.3.8).

### *5.3 Affiliation*

First they came for the Communists  
And I did not speak out  
Because I was not a Communist  
Then they came for the Socialists  
And I did not speak out  
Because I was not a Socialist  
Then they came for the trade unionists  
And I did not speak out  
Because I was not a trade unionist  
Then they came for the Jews  
And I did not speak out  
Because I was not a Jew  
Then they came for me  
And there was no one left  
To speak out for me

Martin Niemöller (1892-1984)

The following stage in Maslow's human motivation theory corresponds to affiliation or belonging. It has been equated to social needs, and therefore to interaction. Leary (2010, p. 865) defines affiliation as "the act of associating or interacting with one or more other people." Leroy (2010, p. 2) argues that "social affiliation thus refers to

behaviors such as the reduction in the physical distance from others, postural orientation towards others, looks at others, and any verbal or non-verbal behaviors (facial expressions, gestures) that initiate or maintain visual, physical, and/or verbal contact with another.” In communicative studies, Stivers describes affiliation as the process whereby “the hearer displays support of and endorses the teller’s conveyed stance” (Stivers, 2008, p. 35). A perhaps more encompassing definition is provided by Wiesenfeld, Raghuram and Garud (2001, p. 216). The authors define the need for affiliation as “a personality attribute corresponding to individuals’ desire for social contact or belongingness [...] [that] is associated with tendencies to receive social gratification (rewards) from harmonious relationships and from a sense of communion with others.” That belongingness or sense of communion can be realized as part of different groups. For the purpose of this dissertation, affiliation is understood as a person’s attachment or connection to others or to a larger body. In general terms, groups of affiliation include but are not limited to family, which is considered the first and most important one, friends, a political party, an ethnicity, larger or smaller collective groups and purposeful or symbolic ones such as trade unions or social movements.

Furthermore, subjective identity is often affected by the relationships between collectives, mostly by power relationships. One’s own identification in terms of belonging to a collective or another shapes one’s role in society. Furthermore, collectives have different defining traits and are often labelled by other collectives. This identification process may be positive, neutral, or negative. There is a wide variety of groups of identification with equally varied connotations. In literature, characters are labelled as poor or rich, alien or Earthborn; Ravenclaw, Slytherin, Hufflepuff or Gryffindor; Divergent or not; littlies, uglies, pretties, Crims, Smokies, etc.; Golden or Red; Genetically Pure or Damaged, etc.

### 5.3.1 Affiliation in utopian and dystopian literature

The earliest form of affiliation a person experiences involves his or her family, a topic that has been widely discussed in utopian texts. More’s *Utopia* ensures that people do not become attached to groups and children are raised collectively. In fact, More’s work, as founding stone, set a trend in many social organization issues including this one. Gentleman’s *A Trip to the Moon* (1764) describes a society where women raise other women’s children because mothers are believed to be incapable of correcting their

own offspring. Similarly, there is no marriage in Fox's *Our Castle* (1961), where children are raised collectively. By contrast, Dugdale's *A Few Hours in a Far-Off Age* (1883) describes a society where parents are expected to teach their children for some time every day. More modern utopias or dystopias describe the death of the family institution. Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932) is perhaps a pioneering work in showing technology as the cause of this dissolution in portraying the artificial conception and development of children. Similarly, Vogel's *Tomorrow Is Now: A Possible Voyage into Man's Future* (1966) describes children's birth as the product of a completely artificial process. The theme seems to have reached the recent wave of dystopian fiction, for example, in Kavenna's novel *The Birth of Love* (2010), which portrays a society where children are born in breeding centres.

Taking into account the controversy and conflict caused by difference, affiliation in utopias should be non-existent for the most part, since most stress equality and eliminate differences that may stem from belonging to one or another social group. Nevertheless, there are differences among groups of people in utopias. In More's *Utopia*, differences refer to freedom status (slaves versus free people), or political position. Similarly, in Bensalem people are divided into the common people and the "scientists" and knowledge is limited to the latter. Traditionally, utopias may present some kind of division or classification of the population into groups; however, this is never considered a challenge to the harmony of communal living. The issue of belonging is more closely connected to anti-utopias and dystopias, where affiliation may be focused towards an individual or leader or the nation as a collective. Furthermore, failing to fit in could lead an individual to suffering and could become a determinant of the failure of a system.

It seems ironic that the novels of a genre that resists classification to such a great extent present, in many cases, such a rigid distribution of people in hermetic groups. In *Brave New World*, the classification of people is so rigid –they are conditioned from the moment of conception– that an accident that causes an individual to fall slightly off the scheme corresponding to the physical appearance of his category group hinders that person's socialisation and professional aspirations. In Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, we find the Inner Party, the Outer Party, and the Proles. In addition, the novel presents three superstates (Eurasia, Oceania, and Eastasia) that fight one another in perpetual war. Belonging and identification with the status within the state and with the state against the state's enemies is key to ensure the continuity of the system. In Thomson's

*Divided Kingdom* (2005) people are arranged into their predominant humour and, based on this, allocated to one of the four districts into which the UK has been divided. In *Places of Color* (Bartell, 2006), states are divided based on ideology (i.e. conservatives versus liberals).

The economic divide is tightly connected with the power distance in societies. Dystopias depicting rich and poor groups are numerous. In Wilson's *The Age of Light* (1994) the poor are isolated and marginalised. The society in Cummings' *Breakaway* (2000) is spatially divided into two living spaces: the streets and the towers. The dystopian society in *A Toxic Ambition*, by Otto (2011), adds to the injustice of this division. In this society, the rich are safe from toxicity derived from climate catastrophe, while the poor need to risk their lives in order to earn the possibility of escaping the imminent fate.

YA is said to be especially prone to include the topics of belonging and individual classification into groups. In Blackman's novel, *Noughts and Crosses* (2001), we meet the two groups into which society is divided, with the former being considered inferior to the latter. In *Red Rising* (Brown, 2014), people are born into casts that determine people's aspirations in life: if you are a red, you are a miner, if you are a gold, you belong to the elite. In *Red Queen* (Aveyard, 2015), the colour of your blood determines whether you have special abilities and belong to the economically and politically privileged class. In addition, your ability type links you to a sub-category.

Research shows that competition and sorting in dystopian novels for young adults have the purpose to reinforce the enculturation process. In particular, in *The darker side of the sorting hat: Representations of educational testing in dystopian young adult fiction* (2015, p. 213), Alexander and Black suggest that the trials the children in the novels analysed undergo are set to promote competition and favour the state. In other words, children must compete against one another, thus favouring an individualistic behaviour that will be shaped into collective thinking once the children are sorted into a group. That is, the individual is stripped from any affiliation connections to turn him or her into a pure individualist for whom it will be easier to focus on a high-level collective than on his or her peers. In the novels, this process would lead to vertical collectivism and horizontal individualism, which I have explained in Chapter 4. Therefore, the idea of belonging serves to dilute rebellious thinking and a collective mindset that would allow for empathy towards those that do not belong to the same group (the others). The above discussion suggests that these distinctions are especially

recurrent in dystopian literature for young adults. In this section, I analyse the protagonists' perception of this need as regards the groups with which they identify and their reaction towards the system's threat of those groups. Those affiliation patterns may include family, romantic interest, friends and community.

The following subsections are introduced by a table that presents the quotes extracted after the tagging process the results of which reveal the presence of affiliation.

### 5.3.2 Results: *Uglies*

This table presents the 31 results identify as regards the need for affiliation in the first novel of the *Uglies* trilogy.

1	But nothing had been beautiful since Peris turned pretty. Losing your best friend sucks, even if it's only for three months and two days. (p. 3)
2	On the familiar leafy path down to the water's edge, it was easy to imagine Peris stealing silently behind her, stifling laughter, ready for a night of spying on the new pretties. Together. (p. 4)
3	She smiled at the memory, realizing she would rather be on that expedition—soaking wet in the cold with Peris—than dry and warm tonight, but alone. (p. 6)
4	Tally sighed and whispered, “Best friends forever,” and took a step forward into the light. (p. 9)
5	She pushed from room to room, trying to distinguish faces without being distracted by those big pretty eyes, or overwhelmed by the feeling that she didn't belong. (p. 13)
6	Tally reminded herself of her promise to Peris. She was not going to get caught; she had to become pretty for him. (p. 25)
7	“That is so cool. I mean, I don't think I could stand to lose another friend. You know? (p. 37)
8	“So what if people look more alike now? It's the only way to make people equal.” (p. 45)
9	In less than a month she'd come to feel like they were best friends. (p. 51)
10	Without Shay around, things felt incomplete, and she'd spent even more time here, sitting on her bed and staring at New Pretty Town. (p. 85)

11	“All of a sudden I wasn’t alone anymore. I wasn’t afraid to go back out to the ruins, to look for David again.” (p. 91)
12	She’d always loved being independent, but now Tally felt like the last little to be picked up from school, abandoned and alone. (p. 96)
13	Even without oxygen, it felt good inside the crushing embrace. Ellie always smelled just right, like a mom, and Tally always felt like a little in her arms. (p. 114)
14	And she had made Shay a solemn promise. Even if she was just an ugly, a promise was a promise. (p. 118)
15	Tally turned away, unlacing her grippy shoes as she collected herself. She’d felt so abandoned since her birthday, it had never occurred to her that Peris would want to see her, especially not here in Uglyville. (p. 122)
16	But now Shay had done it again, disappearing like the track below, leaving Tally in free fall. (p. 143)
17	Her only way home was to betray her friend. (p. 186)
18	No one tried to hide their homesickness. Their faces looked years younger as they remembered old friends and old tricks. (p. 204)
19	Everyone laughed, and Tally felt herself enjoying the warmth of the group’s attention.
20	“I’d been out of the city before.” Tally put her arm around Shay’s shoulder comfortingly. “I was fine...” (p. 206)
21	All day long a terrible thought had kept crossing her mind: Maybe the Smoke was where she really belonged, but she’d lost her chance by going there as a spy. (p. 244)
22	Despite everything, it was a relief to see him. Eating alone had reminded her of the days after her birthday, trapped as an ugly when everyone knew she should be pretty. (p. 244)
23	“When you and Shay saw each other, you were so happy. I could tell that you’d really missed her.” “Yeah. I was worried about her.” (p. 248)
24	“Home,” she repeated. Just last night, that word had changed its meaning in her mind. And now home was destroyed. It lay around her in ruins, burning and captured. (p. 299)



25	She'd already lost Peris, Shay, and her new home. She couldn't bear to lose David as well. (p. 321)
26	"Yeah, and instead, I'm here." He looked at her. "But at least you are too. You're the one thing I never imagined, all those times. An unexpected ally." (p. 338)
27	"Do you think we'll ever be friends again?" (p. 352)
28	But she had called the others "the Smokies." She wasn't one of them anymore. (p. 384)
29	Tally nodded, but her heart wrenched inside her. David needed her. At least, she hoped he did. (p. 399)
30	Tally tried to smile at their cheers, but knew she wouldn't feel good about anything until she saw David again. Not until tomorrow night. She felt exiled, shut out from the one thing that really mattered. (p. 400)
31	Tally said. "I have to do this." "Why?" "Because of Shay. It's the only way that Maddy will cure her. Right?" Maddy nodded. [...] "I'm the reason she's like this, pretty and brainless." (p. 416)

Source: own elaboration.

The idea of affiliation in *Uglies* is unique in the corpus. While other protagonists depart from a strong affiliation with a collective (be it a family and friends, the Seam, Abnegation, or humankind in contraposition to another collective) Tally's initial loyalty lays only with Peris, her best friend. Although belonging is mentioned, as I will explain, interpersonal relationships and bonds are highly important for Tally's satisfaction of the need of affiliation. This character is in a battle between the search for stability regarding friendship and constant failure. Furthermore, this stability is related to the struggle to define herself in terms of independence. While example 12 indicates that she wanted to be independent, the same statement and example 15 show that she despises solitude and feels abandoned. Thus, being independent in terms of not belonging to any group is a challenge to Tally's affiliation satisfaction.

Tally's affiliation journey can be defined in terms of intermittent progression. In other words, she seems to make advances towards her goal, but she continuously moves back due to misunderstandings and bad decisions as well as manipulation from the authorities. Furthermore, the journey has a cyclic nature, that is, she seems to repeat the

same process with different people who, at one time or another, are her best friend. Specifically, the pattern first involves Peris, then Shay and finally David.

The first case takes place at the beginning of the novel, which starts with Tally preparing a visit to her best friend, now living with the pretties, and detailing how “nothing is beautiful” without someone to share it (1, 2). In fact, examples 3 and 4 show Tally’s nostalgia and hope for Peris’ friendship, which involved active behaviour such as “ugly tricks” that defy the city norms. This initial desire to recover that lost affiliation is key to understand how it conditions her future actions. Example 6 shows this, she refrains from doing tricks in order to preserve her promise to Peris.

Tally easily becomes friends with Shay (9) and she is glad not to have to lose her before the operation because, given that they turn 16 on the same day, both would undergo the operation at the same time (7). Shay’s decision to leave the city to go to the Smoke causes Tally to relive the feeling of loss she experienced when Peris turned Pretty and left Uglyville (10) and becomes inactive again (16). For Shay, the support felt by Tally has a similar effect. As explained in example 11, after finding Tally, Shay becomes active and loses the fear to go to find David as she did when her friends were with her. A key factor is the two promises made by Tally. The first, made to Peris, prevents her from walking uncertain territory and breaking the rules, that is, in fact, from leaving the city with Shay. The second promise, to Shay, involved not revealing her destination: The Smoke (14). The manipulation of the authorities, involving both her parents and Peris (13, 15) leads her to betray Shay in order to feel like she belongs (17).

The third relationship attempt involves David. After betraying the Smoke and getting everybody captured, Tally is left alone, and David, who remains ignorant of her betrayal, offers her friendship, which is a relief for Tally (22). Given the secret she holds from him –her responsibility in the fate of the Smoke– Tally develops a fear of losing David as it happened with Peris and then Shay (25). This feeling is reinforced by the fact that David considers her to be an ally (26). Eventually she loses him (29) and describes her feelings in a way that highly resembles the first example: “Nothing had been beautiful since Peris turned Pretty” (1); “[she] knew that she wouldn’t feel good about anything until she saw David again” (30). Furthermore, she considers that his forgiveness is “the only thing that really matters.”

The fact that her conception of home varies according to her loyalties and relationships suggests that Tally conceives home as a group of people rather than as a

physical place. Although she mentions the need to betray Shay in order to go back home (17), which would be the city, she seems to think so because her only friend at the time –Peris– is there. When she feels the acceptance of the Smokies (19), and despite others’ nostalgia for their days in the city as uglies (18), she feels that she could belong in the Smoke (21) and that it could be her home. She loses that ‘home’ as well when the Specials –the authorities from the city– find them and capture everybody (24), destroying the Smoke in the process.

Despite her failure to be a loyal friend, her attempts at protecting and strengthening her friendship with Shay in particular are notorious. She tries to keep her promise to Shay about not revealing where she went (14) and protects Shay from David’s criticism for not giving clear enough directions to get to the Smoke (20). In fact, throughout the novel she shows concern about the state of their friendship, she wishes to regain her trust (23), and worries about Shay’s wellbeing (27) All these examples and the cumulated guilt explain her decision to risk her life in order to try to save Shay, who has been turned Pretty, in order to cure her from being “bubbly,” which means that she lacks the ability to think critically (31).

Other traditional topics are absent from the text or minimally mentioned. On the one hand, Tally initially justifies the system that separates Uglies from pretties for the sake of equality. As shown in example 8, Tally justifies the operation that homogenises people’s appearance. She considers it necessary to prevent inequality. In this regard, separating uglies from those who have turned pretty is a necessary step to ensure the effectiveness of the policy. Since not belonging is a temporary issue, she is not highly affected by the situation; the only example showing her feeling of inadequacy is number 5, when she illegally enters New Pretty Town. On the other hand, family, which is a very important issue in all the other trilogies, plays a minor role in this one. Tally’s family visit her following Dr Cable’s orders in an attempt to convince her, playing with her emotions (13), particularly with the association of parents with stability and comfort. Finally, and in contrast with the other trilogies, *otherisation* is not a very important issue in the city, because everyone eventually belongs to the following age group and there are no significant distinctions among members of the same age group. However, outside the city, being a Smokie becomes a label and *otherisation* takes place when Shay becomes a Pretty. Example 28 shows that once she becomes a Pretty, Shay does not include herself among the Smokies. All in all, the need for affiliation is

ensured by the current system; it is only when they decide to leave the city that this need becomes threatened.

### 5.3.3 Results: *Pretties*

The following table presents the results of the analysis of affiliation in the second novel of Scott Westerfeld's trilogy.

1	If she made a comment like that tonight, one of the Crims might vote against her. It only took one veto to shut you out. And then she'd be alone, almost like running away again. (p. 7)
2	It was fun, though, hanging out with Shay and trying things on, then snorting and giggling and tossing the costumes back into the recycler. (p. 9)
3	She wanted to feel totally belonging somewhere, not waiting for the next disaster to strike. (p. 23)
4	Shay and Peris were also out on the balcony now; she was surrounded by all her new Crim friends, protected and part of the group. (p. 27)
5	But everything was okay now. With the uglies and cruel pretties gone and Peris here to take care of her, a restful feeling settled over Tally. (p. 40)
6	She saw that Shay had wrapped a black scarf around her forearm in solidarity. Shay also sported a version of Tally's flash tattoo, a nest of snakes coiling around one brow and down her cheek. (p. 105)
7	Suddenly, Tally needed Zane's touch, his silent reassurance, and she ran the rest of the distance to the goal. (p. 115)
8	Whatever was happening to Zane, staying bubbly wasn't worth losing him. She shook her head. (p. 123)
9	"I may be my pretty self again tomorrow, Tally. But I'll remember this, I swear. No matter what sweet things I say to you, trust me, I am not your friend." (p. 145)
10	"I thought pretties all liked each other." (p. 161)
11	Tally stared into his golden, perfect eyes. He was here with her right now, in the flesh, and she'd been stupid to let what was between them get tangled up in her messy past. (p. 166)
12	"She's not one of us anymore." (p. 174)

13	Of course, Tally had to return, if Shay still hadn't gotten the word. Her cutting was really just a struggle to be cured. There was no way Tally could leave her behind for good, whether Shay hated her or not. (p. 215)
14	Suddenly he was gone, and Tally felt as if she'd lost some part of herself in the fall. (p. 241)
15	How could he just leave her here? (p. 289)
16	She kept wondering why it had been Croy who'd brought her the cure. In Tally's letter to herself, she had been so certain that David would be the one to rescue her. He was the prince of her dreams, after all. (p. 324)
17	Tally hadn't forgotten Zane, after all. [...] His kiss had given her the strength to find the pills; he had shared the cure with her. (p. 327)
18	She took his hand. "I'm not leaving him." [...] he won't stand a chance without me." (p. 353)
19	She'd been played perfectly by Dr. Cable again, tricked into finding the New Smoke, almost betraying everyone one more time. (p. 361)

Source: own elaboration.

Tally's will to fit in and belong to a group becomes the main topic of the novel. She first fears being vetoed from the Crims (1) and stresses the importance of being in a group (3) to feel protected (4). The results also show how dependent Tally is of those within her circle, following the trend introduced in the previous novel. Examples 5 and 7 indicate her dependency, first on Peris, and then on Zane. When she is in the wild, she depends on Andrew –the villager (15)– and cannot stand being alone. Both Peris and Zane are highly important to Tally. On the one hand, she rejects risking Zane's life over the cure (8) and draws her will to act from his support (17) in the same way Peris and Shay's friendship prompted her into action. On the other hand, leaving Peris behind during her escape is defined as losing part of herself (14). However, while she accepts Peris decision and does not let it change her behaviour, she refuses to leave Zane to escape to the New Smoke, as mentioned earlier, which perhaps shows a lower investment in that friendship than in her romantic relationship with Zane.

Tally's relationship with Shay is relevant and the three novels revolve around their mutual support and betrayal. In this case, the novel follows a similar pattern in the development of their relationship. Examples 2 and 6 show that they are as close as

pretties as they were as uglies before leaving the city. However, Shay eventually remembers Tally's betrayal, which adds to the fact that Tally decided to split the cure with Zane and not with her, and thus the friendship is once again damaged (9). Despite the situation, Tally points out her need to come back and cure Shay (13). Tally's realisation of Shay's change of affiliation in the previous novel whereby she was not a Smokie anymore repeats itself in the second novel. Example 12 shows Shay's distancing from the Crims to belong to her own clique: the Cutters. Nevertheless, as we can see, Tally's relationships with Peris or David, for instance, are temporary or fluctuate, while Tally and Shay remain close regardless of the conflicts that may appear. This issue will be developed further in the discussion.

In this second instalment, love interests become more prominent. Tally presents an evolution that gradually awakens her from the naiveté of fairy tales. This idea is relevant in an analysis of affiliation because romantic love is particularly important for adolescents. In this regard, the position that the protagonist holds in her relationship may be thought-provoking insofar as it may show her agency and independence or lack thereof from her love interests. Her blooming relationship with Zane is temporarily affected by Tally's recovery of her memories of David (11). Furthermore, in example 16 we see that she questions why it was Croy, and not David, who came to save her. This situation contradicts her idealised prince charming image of David, which is a recurrent comparison in the novels, that is, she compares herself with a captive princess. While her idea of her relationship with David involves the damsel in distress role, her relationship with Zane allows her to develop greater agency and, in the end, she becomes the "saviour" of Zane, as she rejects escaping to the New Smoke in order to protect him (18).

The system, which technically ensures that affiliation needs are met by creating spaces of interaction among equals, is altered by the inclusion of the cure and therefore of people who do not accept particular behavioural patterns as the only option and who react with emotion to offenses (10). The recovery of critical thinking leads to arguments and a break in harmony. Thus, regaining freedom –including freedom to relate with some and oppose others– involves having a less perfect society. Despite this new freedom, the expert manipulation of the authorities tricks Tally into betraying those who are not within the system by discovering the New Smoke (19). This situation poses an additional challenge to Tally's affiliation with a larger collective other than the one assigned by the system.

### 5.3.4 Results: *Specials*

The following table presents the quotations identified to analyse affiliation in the last novel of the *Uglies* trilogy.

1	The Cutters were connected, an unbreakable clique. She would never be alone again, even when it felt like something was missing inside her (p. 8)
2	Specials didn't forget their enemies. Not ever. (p. 21)
3	Maybe capturing him would end the trouble between them, once and for all. (p. 23)
4	Tally grinned and squeezed Shay harder. "Maybe they were more sure I'd stop for you." (p. 55)
5	Tally felt a burst of warmth, like she always did when Shay smiled. (p. 56)
6	"You're a Cutter, Zane's not—it's as simple as that." (p. 65)
7	"Anything to make you happy." Shay smiled and took Tally's hand, squeezing their thumbs together... hard. "Blood for blood." (p. 66)
8	"I'd rather keep this between us Cutters." (p. 74)
9	Tally turned away. "I don't want to see this way! I don't want to be disgusted by everyone who's not part of our clique, Shay!" (p. 92)
10	"For you, Tally-wa." Shay grinned, her eyes flashing. (p. 95)
11	"I hate seeing you all miserable like that. It's just not special." (p. 99)
12	"Miss you already..." Shay said as her signal faded. (p. 149)
13	"Yes. I still challenge them," she said softly, realizing that it was true. (p. 162)
14	"I'm choosing Zane." (p. 167)
15	"I care about the Cutters, Shay, honest. I care about <i>you</i> ." (p. 169)
16	She began to realize that being a Special wasn't just about strength and speed; it was about being part of a group, a clique. (p. 184)
17	Shay had already given up on her. What if Zane also decided he'd had enough of Tally Youngblood? (p. 198)
18	It reminded Tally uncomfortably of how people grouped themselves back in pre-Rusty days, into tribes and clans and so-called races who all looked more or less alike, and made a big point of hating anyone who didn't look like them. (p. 227)

19	She wanted to be able to look at Zane without disgust, to touch him, kiss him. But not if it meant being changed against her will <i>again</i> . (p. 257)
20	Tally remembered that Shay had been mad at her, and her smile grew. Shay-la didn't sound mad anymore, just concerned. (p. 262)
21	"I hate you <i>sometimes</i> , Tally. Like I've never hated anybody else before." Shay snorted. "Maybe that's why I keep coming back for you." (p. 266)
22	Tally was simply glad to be free again, fighting alongside Shay and being special. Nothing could stop the two of them together. (p. 269)
23	Shay would only slow her down. (p. 307)
24	She couldn't fix everything, for the simple reason that the only person she cared about was past fixing. (p. 321)
25	The closer she got to the city, the less it felt like she was home at all, especially now that Zane would never see this skyline again... (p. 326)
26	Repeating to herself: I'm not alone. (p. 349)
27	The wild still has teeth. Special teeth, ugly teeth. Us. (p. 372)

Source: own elaboration.

The trilogy's third instalment is the one which seems to show more concern about affiliation and belonging to a collective. If the first novel focused on being Pretty or a Smokie and the second was concerned with being a Crim, this third novel deals with the Cutters, a radical clique of Specials. As in the case of other groups such as the Crims, the Cutters are a hermetic clique (8); however, and unlike other cliques, this particular group is based on dichotomies and polarisation. In this regard, example 2 shows that enemies are a defined category and a permanent label. Furthermore, difference –defined as not belonging to the group– is drastically rejected (9), and interaction with outsiders is criticised (6). These two quotes show the otherisation that characterises the Cutters. While Tally's attitude towards the Crims could be described as admiration and acceptance of their behaviour, she questions the logic followed by the Cutters because it hampers her possibility to have a relationship with others, particularly with Zane.

As in the previous novels, Tally's eagerness to belong to a clique is closely linked to her fear of being alone. Throughout the novel we find examples of this urge. Examples 1 and 16 indicate that the relevance of being a Cutter lies in the strength of their bond. Tally's fascination with that bond is based on the failures in maintaining a



close relationship in the past with several people including Shay, Peris or David. This fear to be alone is present towards the end of the story as well. Example 26 shows her determination to believe that her perceived loneliness is not real, thus showing her struggle.

In this sense, her relationship with Shay and Zane is significantly represented by the results, which denote the hypocrisy or lack of coherence on Tally's part towards the end of the novel, as I will explain below. Regarding Tally's friendship with Shay, the results show a high involvement of each of them with the other's happiness (3) and safety (4) that is notably more significant than their relationship with any other member of the clique. In fact, Shay's happiness positively affects Tally emotionally (5), which is an area that will be further examined in the following section on esteem.

Examples 7, 10 and 11 show Shay's commitment to Tally's happiness; the results show the lengths she goes to ensure her friends' satisfaction while example 12 indicates the closeness of their relationship including the need to be in constant contact. Their relationship is damaged by Tally's decision to choose Zane over the Cutters and hence over Shay (14). This decision is in fact a challenge to the principles that guide the Cutters' group dynamics. Tally loses Shay's trust despite stating that she cares for her (15). Perhaps due to this situation, her dependency on Zane increases and in a similar situation to the one lived with David, Tally fears that she might lose him as well (17). Nevertheless, Tally apparently learns from experience and breaks the repeated dynamic explained. Example 19 shows that she refuses to give up her agency in order to preserve her relationship with Zane; that is, she challenges her fear to be alone. This new approach, rejecting others and choosing to act as a lone wolf is evidenced by the last representations of her relationship with Shay. Examples 20, 21 and 22 suggest that she gains back Shay's friendship despite their constant arguments, which makes Tally happy. Tally summarises the positive effects of her relationship with Shay when she states that they are unstoppable when working together. Despite that, she rejects her help and goes to the city by herself (23).

Perhaps the most striking result, which evidences Tally's emotional instability and lack of coherence, is exemplified by example 24, where she states that Zane was the only person she cared about, despite the evidence provided by the results about the closeness and importance of her friend Shay to her own happiness and development. The idea that home is a concept that is highly dependent on people is confirmed by example 25; Tally does not conceive the city as a home without Zane. In addition, the

apparent independence shown in example 23 by acting on her own without Shay’s help does not last. In fact, even in her new role of protector of nature, she is accompanied by David (27) and refers to themselves as “us” in her message to the population.

As I have explained, Tally struggles with the issue of belonging and questions the collectives in which she belongs despite the system’s brain lesions (13); however, she seems unable to question cliques and other closed groups’ homogeneity in her city the same way she criticises cliques in Diego, the other city, where people choose radical fashion styles and surgeries. Example 18 shows how she sees similar traits in collectives as something negative even though both the Crims with their matching tattoos and behaviour and the Cutters with their beehive mind are more intensely homogenised. In fact, her criticism, which attempts to compare Diego citizens with contemporary races and the hatred derived from such differentiation, seems to be a satire on Tally’s city mindset and thus a criticism of the failures of the system.

### 5.3.5 Results: *The Hunger Games*

The following table shows the results of the analysis of affiliation in *The Hunger Games*.

1	In the woods waits the only person with whom I can be myself. Gale. I can feel the muscles in my face relaxing, my pace quickening as I climb the hills to our place. (p. 7)
2	How could I leave Prim, who is the only person in the world I’m certain I love? And Gale is devoted to his family. We can’t leave, so why bother talking about [it]. (p. 11)
3	She just keeps to herself. Like me. Since neither of us really has a group of friends, we seem to end up together a lot at school. (p. 14)
4	A way to plant hatred between the starving workers of the Seam and those who can generally count on supper and thereby ensure we will never trust one another. (p. 16)
5	This is standard. Family devotion only goes so far for most people on reaping day. What I did was the radical thing. (p. 31)
6	I could never let that happen to Prim. Sweet, tiny Prim who cried when I cried before she even knew the reason. (p. 33)

7	The more likable he is, the more deadly he is. But because two can play at this game, I stand on tiptoe and kiss his cheek. (p. 88)
8	But they had everything here. No cause to rebel. "I'd leave here," Peeta blurts out. Then he looks around nervously. (p. 102)
9	I know that my apology runs much deeper. That I'm ashamed I never tried to help her in the woods. That I let the Capitol kill the boy and mutilate her without lifting a finger. (p. 104)
10	A pang of longing shoots through my chest. If only he was with me now! But, of course, I don't want that. I don't want him in the arena where he'd be dead in a few days. I just ... I just miss him. And I hate being so alone. Does he miss me? He must. (p. 136)
11	Gale and I were thrown together by a mutual need to survive. Peeta and I know the other's survival means our own death. How do you sidestep that? (p. 136)
12	Peeta has asked to be coached separately. Betrayal. That's the first thing I feel, which is ludicrous. For there to be betrayal, there would have to have been trust first. (p. 138)
13	I tell myself again that if I get killed, his winning will benefit my mother and Prim the most. This is what I tell myself to explain the conflicting emotions that arise when I think of Peeta. (p. 190)
14	They're the Capitol's lapdogs. Universally, solidly hated by all but those from their own districts. I can imagine the things they're saying about him back home now. (p. 196)
15	I wonder if the Gamemakers are blocking out our conversation, because even though the information seems harmless, they don't want people in different districts to know about one another. (p. 246)
16	As a thank-you? Or because, like me, they don't like to let debts go unpaid? For whatever reason, this is a first. A district gift to a tribute who's not your own. (p. 289)
17	Possibly they think Thresh did this. Wouldn't he be more likely to revenge Rue's death than I would? Being from the same district? Not that he ever took any interest in her. (p. 292)
18	I am determined to revenge her, to make her loss unforgettable, and I can only do that by winning and thereby making myself unforgettable. (p. 293)

19	I know I'll never marry, never risk bringing a child into the world. Because if there's one thing being a victor doesn't guarantee, it's your children's safety. (p. 378)
20	Just tell me what you need me to do, Peeta says. "Keep an eye out," I say. (p. 381)
21	My fear comes out as anger. What are you doing? You're supposed to be here, not running around in the woods. (p. 386)
22	I take his hand, holding on tightly, preparing for the cameras, and dreading the moment when I will finally have to let go (p. 454)

Source: own elaboration.

In this novel, affiliation can be identified in inter- and intra-district connections as well as interpersonal relationships. In general terms, this trilogy offers insights into organizational aspects related to affiliation and the ideas of collective action compared to the type of individualistic behaviour sought by the Capitol in order to prevent social change. Therefore, these novels are concerned with a higher level of affiliation than other novels in the corpus, which may focus more on interpersonal relationships and friendship and romantic love, such as *Uglies*.

Regarding District 12, at the beginning of the novel, Katniss states her lack of identification with the district in that she does not have close relationships with anybody except for her family and Gale (3). Furthermore, there is an important income gap between people living in town and those that, like herself, live in The Seam: a miners' area of extreme poverty (4), which may partially explain the lack of collective unity or her lack of affiliation with those who she may consider more privileged than her. This is an example of lack of affiliation to a collective and of individualist behaviour; as Gale says, as long as people in the districts act independently and as individuals no changes will take place as regards the system. Another example of individualistic behaviour boosted by the fear of repression refers to her refusal to help the capitol runaway that was punished and became an Avox (9).

Further on, however, Katniss lets on that the districts share their aversion against Districts 1 and 2 for their close relationship with the Capitol (14) and that the Capitol takes especial care not to let communication take place among districts (15). This is an indicator of the unspoken affiliation of all districts except 1 and 2 with one another against another group: the privileged districts and the oppressive Capitol. Given this situation, the rules of the Hunger Games seem to aim at fostering the needed rivalry and

hatred between districts. In this sense, the turning point as regards collective identity takes place once Rue –Katniss’ ally from another district– is murdered. The act of gratitude in District 11 towards Katniss, an unprecedented event, sets the first ties among districts that will later give rise to the revolution (16). Indeed, identifying and bonding with the other member of her district is a much more logical and expected alternative, as Katniss says, than believing that someone would avenge a participant from another district, as in the case of Rue (17). However, Katniss’ determination to avenge her, directly stated in example 18, shows a change in that historical pattern.

Interestingly, Katniss’ bonding with Rue, from District 11, is based on the fact that she reminds her of her sister Prim; therefore, it is prompted by her instinct as a family protector. Katniss’ family and Gale form her affiliation group as judged by her actions. On the one hand, her friendship with Gale is based on trust and mutual dependency in a context of extreme need, as shown in example 11. He is the only person with whom she can be herself and show weakness (1). Therefore, when she is in the arena, she wishes she could be with Gale, the only person with whom she does not have to act as the person in charge (10). On the other hand, her idea of family is clearly linked to her duty of protecting them, especially Prim (2, 6). As a matter of fact, one of the reasons explaining her decision not to have children in the future is the fact that she would not be able to protect her family (19). Nevertheless, Katniss’ extremely protective behaviour is not the most common. In general, family members do not volunteer as tributes to save another one (5), which again shows how most of the time safety precedes affiliation in citizens’ priorities.

Finally, her relationship with Peeta shows how deep her suspicion, and lack of trust towards people that do not belong to her inner circle, run. In fact, we see an evolution as the novel progresses. Examples 7 and 12 indicate an early stage, in which she openly thinks that his behaviour towards her is a strategy. Katniss is a character who seems to be in constant tension and who directly rejects anyone who might want to help her or be friends with her, perhaps because she found little help when she was in great need. Given that Peeta helped her when she was starving, Katniss is not fully convinced what his position is. Example 7 plays with the idea that he is creating a strategy, but had she not believed his words were sincere, she would not have felt betrayed when he decides to train alone (12). Once she begins to change opinion, she justifies it by thinking of the benefits for her family if he wins the games, because the district of the winner gets extra food (13). This example gives support to the role of her family as the

main factor she considers before acting. In other words, all her decisions are dependent on the effect that they may have on her family's wellbeing. Nevertheless, towards the end of the novel, we see that she has included Peeta in her circle of protection; she accepts him as an ally and equal (20) and fears for his life (21). The last example (22) suggests that Katniss has found in Peeta an ally to face the threats of the Capitol. Her description of a slight dependency of him shows some similarities to her description of Gale at the beginning of the novel. Both Gale and Katniss had suffered the trauma of losing their fathers and both had to take care of their families. However, after the games, the only person that might understand the way she feels is Peeta, hence the closer relationship. On the other hand, given the development of their relationship over the novels, it could be argued that this example is a first indicator of a romantic interest in Peeta. Given that Katniss' speech is usually oriented towards a practical goal, it is difficult to ascertain which of these options is the one intended by the author.

### 5.3.6 Results: *Catching Fire*

The results of the analysis of affiliation in the second novel of Suzanne Collins' trilogy are presented in the following table.

1	A stylist and friend, Cinna, who designed the gorgeous outfits that first made the audience take notice of me in the Hunger Games. (p. 4)
2	Hardly anybody knows me better than Hazelle. Knows the bond I share with Gale. I'm sure plenty of people assumed that we'd eventually get married even if I never gave it any thought. (p. 10)
3	"Good," he says. "Let's show a little district pride for a change, Miss Everdeen. Hm?" (p. 13)
4	We have that Seam look. Dark straight hair, olive skin, gray eyes. So some genius made him my cousin. (p. 14)
5	"[...] And then there's her family to think of. Her mother, her sister, and all those... cousins." (p. 23)
6	"[...] what is to stop them from doing the same?" he says. "What is to prevent, say, an uprising?" (p. 25)
7	Certainly, he could survive in the woods. But he's not alone and he'd never leave his family. Or me. (p. 39)

8	How exactly did Rue end up on that stage with nothing but the wind offering to take her place? (p. 68)
9	“But as a token of our thanks we’d like for each of the tributes’ families from District Eleven to receive one month of our winnings every year for the duration of our lives. The crowd can’t help but respond with gasps and murmurs. (p. 72)
10	What happens next is not an accident. It is too well executed to be spontaneous, because it happens in complete unison. (p. 75)
11	It was not intentional—I only meant to express my thanks—but I have elicited something dangerous. An act of dissent from the people of District 11. (p. 76)
12	“Don’t bother, Haymitch. I know you had to choose one of us. And I’d have wanted it to be her. (p. 83)
13	When they chant my name, it is more of a cry for vengeance than a cheer. (p. 89)
14	If my holding out those berries was an act of temporary insanity, then these people will embrace insanity, too. (p. 89)
15	We manage the darkness as we did in the arena, wrapped in each other’s arms, guarding against dangers that can descend at any moment. (p. 89)
16	I add Haymitch to the list. These are the people I must take with me when I escape into the wild. (p. 92)
17	“My nightmares are usually about losing you,” he says. “I’m okay once I realize you’re here.” (p. 105)
18	But I like Mayor Undersee’s house, especially now that his daughter, Madge, and I are friends. We always were, in a way. (p. 106)
19	This will be my last chance, this meeting today, to not lose Gale forever. (p. 114)
20	Hands that have the power to mine coal but the precision to set a delicate snare. Hands I trust. (p. 116)
21	“What about your family?” “What about the other families, Katniss? The ones who can’t run away? Don’t you see? It can’t be about just saving us anymore.” (p. 122)
22	That’s what nettles me. It’s the implication that there’s something going on between Gale and Madge. And I don’t like it. (p. 141)
23	[...] but fiercely committed, too, to keeping our families alive. Desperate, yet no longer alone after that day, because we’d found each other. (p. 142)

24	I wish that Peeta were here to hold me, until I remember I'm not supposed to wish, that anymore. I have chosen Gale and the rebellion. (p. 147)
25	I can't let the Capitol hurt Prim. (p. 148)
26	What I am about to do, whatever any of us are forced to endure, it is for them. It's too late to help Rue, but maybe not too late for those five little faces that looked up at me from the square in District 11. (p. 149)
27	Was it even planned, or something that simply erupted out of years of hatred and resentment? How could we do that here? Would the people of District 12 join in or lock their doors? (p. 149)
28	"You've seen how people are, when someone they love is in pain." Someone they love. The words numb my tongue as if it's been packed in snow coat. Of course, I love Gale. (p. 153)
29	"Did he get back all right?" I ask. In a blizzard, you can get lost in a matter of yards and wander off course into oblivion. (p. 153)
30	I feel like a pariah when I walk through the streets. Everyone avoids me in public now. But there's no shortage of company at home. (p. 160)
31	It's my mockingjay. It makes no sense. My bird baked into bread. (p. 167)
32	Bonnie has no home. Her family is dead. Returning to District 8 or assimilating into another district would be impossible. (p. 178)
33	It's a break for the district, having the Peacekeepers busy doing something besides abusing people. (p. 194)
34	But he must also know that if we don't revolt in 12, I'm destined to be Peeta's bride. (p. 205)
35	Over his shoulder, I see my mother and Prim clutching each other in the doorway. We run. They die. And now I've got Peeta to protect. End of discussion. (p. 216)
36	Would I have let myself open up to him, lulled by the security of money and food and the illusion of safety being a victor could bring under different circumstances? (p. 223)
37	Even if I had killed Peeta in the arena, I still wouldn't have wanted to marry anyone. I only got engaged to save people's lives, and that completely backfired. (p. 224)
38	I've sworn to myself to do all I can to keep Peeta alive. I will never reverse this journey again. (p. 226)



39	He won't see it or he'll think I am acting for the cameras. That, at least, is one weight off my shoulders. (p. 233)
40	And surely, two people who have caused the Capitol so much trouble can think of a way to get Peeta home alive. (p. 244)
41	Just a year ago, I was prepared to kill him. Convinced he was trying to kill me. Now everything is reversed. (p. 255)
42	In the tight, desperate clench of our fingers are all the words we will never be able to say. (p. 264)
43	I don't want to be next to Peeta. This awfulness with Darius belongs to me and Gale and maybe even Haymitch, but not to Peeta. (p. 264)
44	But do I really want to make a pact with her, only to possibly have to kill her later? No. Still, I made a pact with Rue under the same circumstances. (p. 269)
45	She did it to save the girl, just like I volunteered last year to save Prim. And I decide I want her on my team. (p. 279)
46	I feel as if I've somehow been initiated into the victors' circle. (p. 280)
47	And the more I come to know these people, the worse it is. Because, on the whole, I don't hate them. And some I like. (p. 281)
48	The beauty of this idea is that my decision to keep Peeta alive at the expense of my own life is itself an act of defiance. A refusal to play the Hunger Games by the Capitol's rules. (p. 293)
49	The sight of me in my white silk bridal gown practically causes a riot. (p. 302)
50	If I hadn't spent my life building up layers of defenses until I recoil at even the suggestion of marriage or a family? (p. 310)
51	All twenty-four of us stand in one unbroken line in what must be the first public show of unity among the districts since the Dark Days. (p. 311)
52	But this time, I trap my terror, push it down, and stay by his side. This time my survival isn't the goal. Peeta's is. (p. 359)
53	How yesterday morning, Finnick was on my kill list, and now I'm willing to sleep with him as my guard. He saved Peeta and let Mags die and I don't know why. (p. 379)
54	So why have they chosen Peeta to protect? What has Haymitch possibly said to them, what has he bargained with to make them put Peeta's life above their own? (p. 408)

55	I try to imagine that world, somewhere in the future, with no Games, no Capitol. A place like the meadow in the song I sang to Rue as she died. Where Peeta’s child could be safe. (p. 427)
56	There’s a much deeper alliance based on years of friendship and who knows what else. Therefore, if Johanna has turned on me, I should no longer trust Finnick. (p. 451)
57	I have always known who the enemy is. Who starves and tortures and kills us in the arena. Who will soon kill everyone I love. (p. 457)
58	“We had to save you because you’re the mockingjay, Katniss,” says Plutarch. “While you live, the revolution lives.” (p. 466)
59	I trusted him. I put what was precious in Haymitch’s hands. And he has betrayed me. (p. 470)
60	A new kind of horror begins to rise up inside me as I imagine firebombs hitting the Seam. (p. 471)

Source: own elaboration.

The novels show a gradual and measured shift and expansion of Katniss’ affiliations. If the first novel shows a character that limits her relationships to her family and Gale, *Catching Fire* introduces new links and evolved connections.

Katniss constantly stresses the central role that the family plays both in her life (35) and in Gale’s (7). In fact, as seen in the “safety” section, her affiliation is targeted as a weak point. In other words, her affiliation group, her family, is targeted by the Capitol in order to persuade Katniss to act as President Snow commands (5). The fact that Katniss’ affiliation modulates her behaviour has already been explored in the first novel. In this case, her first priority is to protect them and thus the rebellion or the possibility of escaping are secondary. Katniss’ attitude towards the rebellion and her idea of collective action evolve, although she continues to be led by her instinct of protection over her family, which in most cases means her little sister, Prim (25). She understands that only those who have no family left can run away (32).

As in the previous novels, her main affiliation circle continues to be her family and Gale (2), with whom she shares a common past: both had to hunt in the woods to feed their families (23). The new connections include Peeta, Haymich and Madge, the mayor’s daughter. Regarding Peeta, the last novel ended with an indicator that his

relationship with Katniss was progressing in terms of closeness. Example 15 is an indicator of the importance that Peeta has for Katniss, who finds in him an ally to fend off fears and challenges. Furthermore, the imagery is noteworthy, as it depicts a romantic as well as dramatic scene “wrapped in each other’s arms, guarding against the dangers”. Regarding friends, example 12 shows that Haymich chose to save Katniss in the arena rather than Peeta during the first games. Although his decision came from strategy, it marked the beginning of a strange friendship with both Peeta –whose priority is Katniss– and Katniss herself; in fact, she adds Haymich to the list of people she keeps in mind in order to protect them (16). The last addition to the group of friends that Katniss creates is Madge. Example 18 shows that although she considered her a friend in a way, it is only after returning from the Hunger Games that she can establish that friendship more clearly. The underlying fact is that Madge belongs to an upper class in the district, whereas Katniss belonged to the most depressed area. In fact, her new acquired social position as a victor, with privileges including food and house give her a higher status, which may be related to the overtness with which she confirms the friendship, given their same status. This would be in line with the high power distance of the district’s culture. An ambiguous role as regards Katniss’ relationships is the one played by Cinna. Although she considers Cinna a friend, he is not included in her inner circle of protection, as his safety is not mentioned, perhaps because of the fact that he lives in the Capitol (1).

Katniss’ relationship with Gale is deteriorated for two main reasons: their different point of view about the rebellion and their role in it and Katniss’ engagement with Peeta. On the one hand, example 21 shows Gale’s exasperation with Katniss’ passive attitude towards the possible rebellion. He, who would have fled the district with Katniss to escape the Capitol if she had asked him to, cannot accept Katniss’ indifference towards the district and the whole country. In other words, while Gale sees the bigger picture and feels that he belongs to a larger group of people oppressed by the Capitol, Katniss’ priority remains her family. However, according to Katniss (34), his eagerness to rebel seems to be related to the Capitol’s insistence on Katniss and Peeta’s marriage. On the other hand, even though Katniss eventually changes her mind as to the rebellion, her concerns about Gale have to do with losing his friendship due to her arranged marriage with Peeta and with eliciting her true feelings about him. Example 4 indicates that the Capitol goes as far as to manipulate the relationships of individuals in order to give support to the official story. Katniss’ close relationship with Gale was a

challenge to Peeta and Katniss' official romance, so he becomes her cousin for the audience (4). Quotes 19 and 20 show Katniss' worry about losing Gale and her trust in him, respectively. While she has insisted in her absence of romantic interest in him, quote 22 shows her jealousy at the thought that Gale and Madge may be romantically involved. Furthermore, in quote 28 Katniss explicitly says that she loves Gale, although the type of love she refers to remains for the reader to decide. These examples lead the reader to think about the possibility of an actual love triangle and are reinforced by Katniss' worry that Gale might interpret her romantic attitude with Peeta in front of the cameras as actual feelings (39).

On the other hand, Katniss' relationship with Peeta, who represents the traditional role of the romantic interest in classic utopias, also experiences important changes: from enemy in the first games to prioritizing his life to her own. The fact that Peeta's feelings for her are clear (17) and that the Capitol wants her to marry him condition her ability to come to terms with herself (24). However, as mentioned above, she gradually includes him into her circle of protection as seen in examples 29, 38, 41, 48, and 52. While the first indicator of Katniss explicit worry about Peeta's wellbeing is rather insubstantial (29) the next example (38) shows a rather drastic progression, whereby Katniss puts all her effort in keeping him alive. Example 41 describes the progression from being capable of killing him to prioritising his life, as shown in example 48. Her decision to sacrifice herself in order to save Peeta from dying in the second time they participate in the games demands of her a great effort involving ignoring her fear and focusing on love (52). In fact, her relationship with Haymich is eroded because he broke his promise of protecting Peeta (40), causing Katniss to feel betrayed (59). One key aspect of affiliation in this novel is the double level at which loyalties play a role. While Peeta and Katniss focus on the visible level, and on the threat of the games to each other's lives, Haymich needs to balance her loyalty to Peeta and Katniss with his commitment to a greater cause: the rebellion.

The idea introduced in the first novel that marriage is out of the question for Katniss becomes more relevant. She is forced to announce a staged marriage with Peeta and thus the ruling power of the Capitol constricts and compromises her relationships in this case by conditioning her decision of marrying or not. The context of her upbringing is a district where kids are a risk group, which hinders her ability to decide freely if she wants to form a family. Because safety of her children would not be guaranteed, she does not consider the possibility. Despite her attitude, society –including Gale's

mother— expected her to marry Gale eventually, given the bond they had (2). Even though she made her position clear from the first novel, she ponders on alternative scenarios and the possible change of heart she could have had regarding marriage and romantic relationships only to deny those possibilities (36, 37). Her point of view regarding the reasons for not getting married shows that she took an active part in building that cuirass (50). In fact, example 55 suggests that she might project her wish to have a safe place for children by focusing on Peeta's future children. Nevertheless, the fact that she contemplates this dilemma is significant given the controversy arisen regarding the ending of the trilogy, where, as we will see, she concedes to having children with Peeta.

Besides her inner circle, Katniss identifies herself as part of District 12 and thus is deeply concerned about the potential suffering to which the district can be subjected by order of President Snow both as a routine oppression and as consequence of her actions as the mockingjay (33, 60). As in the previous novel, the division of the district into downtown and the Seam is used by Katniss to explain the camaraderie existing between Gale and Katniss and the previous head Peacekeeper, Darius, who turned a blind eye on Gale and Katniss' poaching. He is turned into an avox for his benevolence, which unsettles Katniss (42), and she classifies him into the sector of the district that suffers the most, a sector in which Peeta does not belong (43). In this case, Gale and Katniss share a background that she thinks allows them to understand these situations to a greater extent.

Regarding inter-district affiliation, Katniss' attitude of defiance of the rules in the first Hunger Games and her alliance with Rue unfold in an affiliation of various districts with her as a leading figure (11). These people rebelling in their districts show an affiliation with the cause and values she represents as an involuntary leader, as the mockingjay, and offer her their loyalty as seen in examples 13 and 14. In fact, President Snow warns of the possibility of replicas following uprisings (6), especially so after Peeta announces their solidarity with the families of District 11's tributes (9). District 11 citizens organize collectively against the Capitol (10). While in District 11 and other districts she is a figure that represents the fight against the capitol (31) and is highly considered, Katniss is avoided in her own district (30). District 12 seems comparatively passive and thus Katniss wonders whether people would unite in collective action or prioritize their individual safety (27). Meanwhile, Katniss elicits Capitol citizens' compassion and discontent by presenting the Capitol as an entity that destroys a young

woman's romantic future (49). She unites the country at different levels and for different reasons.

In the second Hunger Games, she makes pacts and alliances based on the values those people share (45), although she has a practical approach and initially refuses to take any allies due to the fact that she would have to kill them eventually (44). The victors represent a group of seemingly privileged citizens who are reminded of the Capitol's absolute power by being sent again to the arena. Her relationship with them fluctuates as well. It is safe to say that Katniss is reluctant to trust anybody, but she gradually does (46, 47) when she realizes that they are also victims of the Capitol, against whom they unite because not only does the Capitol threaten their safety, but it also prevents Katniss' loved ones from being safe (51, 57). Those who protect Peeta share her objective and thus eventually earn her trust, although Katniss is highly suspicious as to why they protect Peeta at the beginning (53, 54) and easily distrusts them (56). As we have seen, she is an hermetic character and her personality remains consistent throughout the story.

All in all, it seems that Katniss' attitude towards the rebellion and her role as leader is mainly circumstantial and passive. So much so that she is saved to become the symbol of a revolution in which she had no intention to participate (58). She does not intend to represent her district as she is told (3) or to provoke an uprising. She acts to honour her values and beliefs, helping those close to her directly or symbolically (26). In fact, she is so oriented towards selflessness that she cannot comprehend the lack of volunteers for Rue, a twelve-year-old who was sure to die in the arena (8).

### 5.3.7 Results: *Mockingjay*

The table below presents the results of the affiliation analysis of *Mockingjay*. 22 results have been identified.

1	They were safe. They were being cared for. They were alive and eagerly welcomed. (p. 9)
2	Peeta's alive. And a traitor. But at the moment, I don't care. (p. 32)
3	This is one of the few good things about 13. Getting Gale back. (p. 33)
4	I know he only spoke out of concern for me, but I really need him to be on my side, not Coin's. (p. 76)

5	What I mean to the rebels. My ongoing struggle against the Capitol, which has so often felt like a solitary journey, has not been undertaken alone. I have had thousands upon thousands of people from the districts at my side. (p. 107)
6	In a minute, people will be here to do damage control on Peeta's condition and the words that came out of his mouth. I will need to repudiate them. But the truth is, I don't trust the rebels or Plutarch or Coin. I'm not confident that they tell me the truth. (p. 134)
7	So why does everything bring on a fresh pang of grief? Was I simply too out of it before to fully register the loss of my world? (p. 141)
8	The Capitol took away all of that, and I'm on the verge of losing Gale as well. The glue of mutual need that bonded us so tightly together for all those years is melting away. (p. 149)
9	Inside the bunker, cooperation is the order of the day. We adhere to a strict schedule for meals and bathing, exercise... (p. 179)
10	But thinking that he's being tortured specifically to incapacitate me is unendurable. (p. 180)
11	Today I might lose both of them. I try to imagine a world where both Gale's and Peeta's voices have ceased. Hands stilled. Eyes unblinking. (p. 194)
12	Outside of Prim, my mother, and Gale, how many people in the world love me unconditionally? I think in my case, the answer may now be none. (p. 228)
13	"Isn't the honor of the thing enough?" he says. "You'd think," I reply. "But word's gotten out that mockingjays are hazardous to your health." (p. 230)
14	I'm so desperately lonely I can't stand it. (p. 231)
15	The grieved expression on the face of the mine captain that could only mean one thing. <i>What did we just do?</i> (p. 243)
16	I miss him so badly it hurts. (p. 246)
17	"These people"—I indicate the wounded bodies on the square—"are not your enemy!" (p. 252)
18	"On your family's life," she insists. "On my family's life," I repeat. I guess my concern for my own survival isn't compelling enough. (p. 298)
19	"How do you feel?" "Better, knowing you're somewhere Snow can't reach you," I say. (p. 301)
20	"Give us a martyr to fight for," says Boggs. (p. 311)

21	“Because that’s what you and I do. Protect each other.” (p. 353)
22	I badly need help working this out, only everyone I trust is dead. Cinna. Boggs. Finnick. Prim. There’s Peeta, but he couldn’t do any more than speculate. (p. 422)

Source: own elaboration.

If the previous novel was about the evolution of affiliations and new connections, *Mockingjay* is about loss. Katniss’ losses include her district, Peeta, Gale, and, later, Prim and other people who became close with her such as Finnick or Boggs. All in all, she loses her identity, which included her role as protector and the environment that used to define her.

As the results of affiliation of the previous novels show, Katniss is highly reluctant to trust people, and the case of District 13 is not an exception. Although she states matter-of-factly District 13’s generosity in accepting the refugees from District 12 (1), she does not hide her suspicions and distrust for the rebels (6). Arguably, Katniss mindset, whereby she is concerned exclusively about her collective of affiliation (18), hinders her ability to develop affiliation connections in District 13 and assimilate their idea of collective (9). She limits the benefits of the new home to Prim’s safety (19) and having Gale close to her (3), although as part of the mentioned loss process, the distance between Gale and Katniss increasingly grows. Two factors cause such distancing. On the one hand, as shown by quote 4, Gale does not support Katniss’ ideas against Coin. Given his urge to defeat the Capitol, Gale is eager to become part of the new system, involving District 13, but Katniss, as usual, is suspicious. On the other hand, and as explained in the other novels, Katniss and Gale became friends through hardship, they supported each other and bonded over shared trauma. With their new lives, without the need to be family providers and help one another, their bond weakens (8).

The first sign that Katniss is still more focused on her affiliation circle than on the rebellion is example 2, where she prioritizes Peeta to the impact of his words against the rebellion. Katniss gradually deteriorates psychologically, as we will see in the discussion section and further in the esteem section, not only due to Peeta’s absence but because the Capitol uses him against her (10). As in the previous novels, her loved ones are her weakness and they are used to subdue her. Throughout the novel, she states the negative effect Peeta’s absence has on her (12, 16), possibly because they used to protect one another (21), which varies from the typical role Katniss has as people’s



protector. Being in another society after the destruction of District 12 (7) and not having close rapport with anyone apart from Gale and her family (12) leads Katniss to become isolated and lonely (14). Furthermore, this feeling is consistent until the end of the novel; in the aftermath of the rebellion, with most of her friends and her sister dead, she considers Peeta to be the only trustworthy person she has left (22).

Her affiliation with her personal history is present when she participates in the rebellion. She sees through war labels and identifies with the miners trapped in the mountain by the rebels (15). The fact that they are miners, like her father and Gale and his father, prompts her into action. They are a group with whom she empathises. Her message refers to people’s common enemy: the Capitol (5, 17).

Despite her importance to the rebellion, her role as the mockingjay serves the cause, but she does not identify with the leadership that accompanies the symbol, and people’s support of that role is only partial due to the dangers of associating oneself with a person targeted by the Capitol (13). Furthermore, after uniting the districts against the Capitol, she is a nuisance and is believed to be more useful as a martyr that would strengthen the union (20). All in all, Katniss’ reluctance to become the mockingjay is finally justified insofar as she is used by the authorities of one and the opposite side for their interest.

### 5.3.8 Results: *Across the Universe*

The results of the analysis of affiliation corresponding to the first novel in Beth Revis’ trilogy are presented in the table below.

1	Doc doesn’t look convinced. “I know it’s hard on you. You’re different.” “I’m not that different.” “Course you are. You know you are.” (p. 52)
2	“You. You don’t look like us, you don’t sound like us, and you are not one of us.” (p. 103)
3	I shake my head. This technology is better than anything on Earth. Another sign that I don’t belong here. (p. 122)
4	Goose bumps prickle under my cold sweat. I stare at them. They stare at me. I have never felt more different, more of a freak—more alone—than now. I bite my

	lip. These people are nothing like Elder. Elder may stare at my skin and hair, but he's not staring out of fear. He didn't look at me like I'm a sideshow. (p. 136)
5	Elder shakes his head. "No. I just never knew who they [his parents] were. An Elder isn't allowed to know. He must feel as if he is a child of the ship." (p. 166)
6	I have no idea why she needs them. I just know that I'd face another Plague to get them for her if I had to. Fortunately, it's a lot easier than that. (p. 172)
7	I have never felt this lost—this alone—before in my life. All the people who should be with me—my parents, Jason, my friends—are gone. Without them, the ship feels empty and small—I feel empty and small. (p. 186)
8	"Don't let her wake up," Amy says softly. "It's bad, being frozen, but it's better than waking up alone." (p. 208)
9	I snort. "It's easier to think of Elder than myself." Unexpected tears prick my eyes. I had not meant to say something so close to the truth. (p. 218)
10	I'm holding onto Harley like he's the rope pulling me from the undertow. (p. 223)
11	Because the only way I can believe anything will ever be okay again is if I hear one of them say it. (p. 231)
12	I squat, my face parallel to hers. "I need you!" I say. "It's so... strange here, and I don't understand any of them, and—and I'm scared. I need you. I need you!" (p. 234)
13	I can't let them hate me now. I don't know what they're hearing, but I can tell it's bad. They look very serious. And now Elder's staring at me, with this darkness in his eyes. I can't let them hate me. I won't let them hate me. (p. 266)
14	"Amy, Amy, Amy," he mocks. "Throw one pale-skinned freak your direction and your chutz shoots up to tha stars!" (p. 294)
15	After elder abandons me in the recorder hall, I stand there, alone in the dark. I'm not sure why Elder went with Eldest—I trust Elder, but not Eldest, and I thought Elder agreed with me about Eldest. (p. 318)
16	Inside the ship, we are always surrounded by one another, so much so that we cherish our tiny private rooms and time alone. Never before have I appreciated how truly alone we are on this ship. (p. 334)
17	"The first Eldest noticed that most of the survivors were members of a family—or were pregnant. People will survive anything for their children." (p. 335)

18	Past the paint, past the bubble window, I stare at the stars. It looks like a lonely, cold place out there. I put my hands on either side of the window. It's a lonely, cold place in here, too. (p. 396)
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Source: own elaboration.

Affiliation or lack thereof is the most discussed need in these novels. Here we should differentiate the emotions expressed by Amy (as an outsider) and those that constitute Elder's feelings. Nevertheless, a very obvious topic is that of family as an affiliation group. From Amy's viewpoint, being without her family is being alone in an unknown world. She mentions them together with words like "alone" or "lonely," "lost," and "scared," to describe herself in relation to her family (4, 7) and even addresses them (12), stressing her need for them. This institution is closely related to safety for Amy, as she states in example 11. Similarly, the strength of family connections and the instinct of protection of family members is systematically used by Eldest to prevent suicide once the population is informed that they will not land in the planet (17). It is precisely due to the importance of family in their culture (both in Amy's and Godspeed's) that Elder feels the lack of a family (5). It is through Amy's influence that Elder becomes aware of the population's isolation in the ship, the lack of affiliation to a greater group (humanity).

Nevertheless, the character that complains the most about not belonging is Amy. She is rejected by the population for her physical appearance and realizes that she does not belong in the society: both because of the social system and because of the new technologies (2, 3). Example 2 shows that her accent is one of the reasons she is identified as alien to the community. This trait is also mentioned in two other trilogies. In *The Hunger Games*, the Capitol accent is considered to be very affected and the accent of the new head peacekeeper is a sign of distrust for Katniss. On the other hand, the different accent and slang used by the citizens of Diego is shocking to Tally in *Specials*, but also marks the rangers she meets in the first novel as outsiders, the first ones she meets in her life. Example 3 shows how the highly advanced technologies make Amy feel disconnected from the community, they leave her out as older generations in our societies may have felt after the emergence of the internet. Her dissatisfaction is evidenced by her insistence on preventing one of the disconnected frozen passengers from waking up in their world (8). She hides her discomfort by worrying about Elder's position in the ship (9) but, despite her refusal to accept her new

reality, she fears losing the apparent initial trust from the residents at the hospital, which shows her eagerness to integrate (13). Her attempts are not successful, hence her increasing feeling of loneliness derived from the absence of a supportive community (18). Ironically, she simultaneously craves privacy and time alone, as seen in example 16, most likely because, despite being surrounded by people, she has few opportunities to interact with anyone.

Elder is also differentiated from the group (1) –though positively– and is criticized for prioritizing Amy to the needs of the population he will theoretically lead (14). This complaint is repeated throughout the trilogy, as we will see. Both Amy and Elder attempt to form new groups. One such “alliance” or relationship is formed precisely between Amy and Elder. Amy develops a dependency on Elder because he and Harley, particularly from the moment he saved her (10), are the only friends she has. This dependency is evidenced by the use of words such as “Elder abandons me” (15) when Elder must see to his obligations. Elder is infatuated with Amy, who is the only girl his age in the ship, and shows this in example 6, indicating the lengths he would go to make her happy. Their relationship has romantic undertones, but romance is not the main focus of the plot.

### 5.3.9 Results: *A Million Suns*

The results of the analysis of affiliation for the second novel of the *Across the Universe* trilogy are presented in the table below.

1	I don't know who I am here. Without my parents, I'm not a daughter. Without Earth, I barely even feel human. I need something. Something to fill me up again. Something to define myself by. (p. 9)
2	I used to go there a lot because the stars made me feel normal. Now they make me feel like [NSR] the freak that nearly everyone on board says I am. (p. 11)
3	But me, I remain as frozen as when I lay in the glass coffin and the ice stilled my beating heart. Frex is one of their words. I am not one of them. I, with a wi-com on my wrist, am not one of them. I'm not. (p. 25)

4	Eldest had me moved from family to family until I was twelve—six months with the shepherds, six months with the butchers, six months with the soy farmers. And with all that moving, I never knew which family belonged to me. But the blanket was mine. (p. 45)
5	I scan the entrance hall. Everyone’s watching us. A few have drawn closer, and from the worry in their eyes, I can see that they’re on the verge of coming to my aid. Still—they hesitate. Because he’s one of them. And I’m not. (p. 49)
6	She died, alone and scared. I’m not dead, but I’m still alone and scared. (p. 107)
7	I can’t change what I am or where I came from, and because of this, they’re never going to accept me. (p. 163)
8	“And why not? I live here too!” He shakes his head. “But you’re not one of us.” (p. 194)
9	“You can’t be Eldest if you care for Amy more than Godspeed.” (p. 284)

Source: own elaboration.

The second novel continues along the same lines presented in the first one. In this case, however, the idea of identity has become more relevant. In example 1, Amy expresses how she used to define herself as belonging to a collective: family and humankind at least. Her relationship with the collective of Godspeed’s population varies throughout the novels. While in the previous novel she seemed to be willing to integrate herself with the others, in this case she refuses to integrate culturally, including the use of vocabulary (3). In this novel, her resentment of the discrimination she suffers becomes more acute, as can be seen in example 2, where she states that everybody in the ship considers her to be a freak, or in example 7, which shows her frustration for not being accepted for things she cannot change. This last point is a clear reference to racism in our societies. Furthermore, as she is not part of the community, she is not helped when she is threatened by one of the members of the community (5). Although she defies their discriminating behaviour, she is shut out with a simple argument: she is not one of them (8). In this context, she feels connected with the victims and almost victims of the attacks to “the frozen” (6) because of her fear and loneliness.

Regarding Elder, his lack of affiliation with a group is explained by his upbringing. He was raised to belong to the population of Godspeed as a whole: no family or friends apart from those at the hospital. In a way, and as mentioned in the

previous discussion, Elder is an outsider to the population just like Amy, because even though he knows everybody on the ship, he has not developed close relationships with any of them (4). As in the previous novel, the relationship he has with Amy is criticized by the population because he is supposed to focus solely on the wellbeing of those on board of the ship; in other words, his institutional life is thought to be the only life he should have (9). His possibilities of satisfying his affiliation needs are purposely restricted, since the future Eldest is born in between generations. Therefore, he is prevented from having a romantic relationship with anyone his age until Amy is awakened.

### 5.3.10 Results: *Shades of Earth*

The table below presents the 18 results obtained from the analysis of affiliation in the last novel of the trilogy.

1	“And what’s my job?” I ask, gently breaking free of her grasp. “To protect <i>my</i> people. I have to do this.” (p. 25)
2	It’s not ideal, but it’s luxurious compared to the living conditions just on the other side of the shuttle. (p. 73)
3	Their clothes, so different from the homespun tunics and trousers made by the residents of Godspeed, do nothing but separate everyone even more. Synthetic fibers and bright colors pop up like blemishes among the browns and blacks worn by most of the crew from the ship. (p. 37)
4	My people don’t know how to respond to her. To them, the frozens are dangerous. Many of them agree with Orion and his actions. (p. 55)
5	I don’t like the way he calls them “shipborns,” as if by being born on the ship, they’re somehow less human than the people born on Earth. (p. 62)
6	I am not to be trusted, even with samples of sand. (p. 72)
7	“Don’t put yourself in a position where you sacrifice yourself for those people. If a few got stuck inside, that would have been their fault. If you’d gotten stuck inside...” (p. 80)
8	“They’re not bad,” I say. “They’re just people.” “They’re not our people.” (p. 81)
9	I might have the whole world now, but it’s not enough if I don’t get to share it with her. (p. 87)

10	“I’m here now,” I say. “And I’m happy. I’m with you and Mom.” (p. 109)
11	“The first part of the morning will be spent relocating. Bring whatever supplies you need for day-to-day life with you back to the building that will be your new home. My people will distribute food rations at midday, and with them, work assignments.” (p. 136)
12	They had to have seen us land, this close to the compound. If they’re human, if they made this plaque”—he points to the memorial embedded above the communication bay—“they would want to help us.” But no one’s come. (p. 166)
13	“Just look at them! The way they all look the same. The way they all think a kid is their ‘leader.’ They’re . . . strange. Different. For God’s sake, Amy, the shipborns are not like us!” (p. 179)
14	Elder and I have been butting heads recently, pulled in different directions by our own worries and the people closest to us. But my first instinct is to turn to him. When it comes down to it, he’s the one I trust. (p. 200)
15	“This is about survival. This is our home, and you are the trespassers.” (p. 319)
16	“At least they’re alive,” he says bitterly. “Unlike my Maria. You’ve killed too many of my people for me to have any sympathy for yours.” (p. 323)
17	“We can’t trust them...” Tiernan says, lowering his gun but not releasing it. (p. 351)
18	“There’s a difference between you and me,” I say. “I know that one day, my people will accept me again. They’ve done it before. They’ll forget about how I look because they’ll remember who I am and how I act. (p. 354)

Source: own elaboration.

In this third instalment of the saga, the focus of the situation shifts towards a completely different scenario. On the one hand, the people born on board of the ship become “the others” for the Earth-born “frozens.” On the other hand, the people arriving in the planet are trespassers for those already established there (15). In this scenario, the previous affiliation groups receive a lower importance. Now that Amy has both of her parents with her, she feels happy (10), but the issue of belonging to a larger group is still unsolved. Elder –as leader of the ship-born– and Colonel Martin –as leader of the Earth-born– use the words “my people” and “those people” to differentiate both

groups as we can see in various results, including quotes 1, 7, 8, 11. The first indices of such differentiation, which becomes discrimination, take place after landing: the Earth-born have “beds” while the ship-born must sleep on the floor (2). In addition, clothing distinguishes the groups more than their physical appearance does (3), which is a common feature in various novels of the corpus, such as *Uglies* –where the cliques dress similarly– and *Divergent* –where each faction has a designated colour. Despite the discrimination she suffered from the shipborn before landing, Amy becomes an active defender of their rights and of equality, against her father’s discriminating behaviour (7, 8, 13). Another discriminating factor is power distribution. From the moment the Earth-born are awakened, Colonel Martin establishes a clear hierarchy, which involves his people organizing and assigning tasks for the shipborns to carry out (11).

Amy, who was part of the Earthborns and an outsider to the shipborns has nevertheless developed connections with the other group to the point that she empathises with them and sees these distinctions –including the use of “shipborns” as something less than human (5)– as a negative issue. These conditions only reinforce pre-established judgement of the population of Godspeed about the Earth-born (4). Fear and lack of trust on both sides are the main consequences of such attitudes (6, 17). This issue changes when they have a common enemy: someone even more different, so much so that the natives of the planet identify them all as trespassers (15) and Colonel Martin refers to the victims of the natives (both Earthborn and shipborns) as “my people” (16). Finally, we see the conclusion of this conflict when Amy refers to shipborns as her people (18): she is once again the different one but is reassured that she will be accepted eventually as she was to some extent before that change. After the hybrids are discovered, both Earth-born and ship-born humans become part of the same group. We see a first indication of this change in example 12, when Amy identifies humanity as the affiliation group encompassing both the new colony and the previous one.

Finally, regarding smaller affiliations and relationships, Amy and Elder trust one another more than they trust the groups to which they belong. In the case of Elder, as in the previous novels, his interest in Amy is perhaps more evident (9) and romantic, whereas Amy places more weight on trust and reliance (14).



### 5.3.11 Results: *Divergent*

The following table presents the 19 results that represent affiliation in the first novel of Veronica Roth's *Divergent* trilogy.

1	It is on these mornings that I feel guiltiest for wanting to leave them. (p. 3)
2	To live factionless is not just to live in poverty and discomfort; it is to live divorced from society, separated from the most important thing in life: community. My mother told me once that we can't survive alone, but even if we could, we wouldn't want to. (p. 20)
3	But choosing a different faction means I forsake my family. Permanently. (p. 24)
4	I think of the motto I read in my Faction History textbook: Faction before blood. More than family, our factions are where we belong. Can that possibly be right? Marcus adds, "Apart from them, we would not survive." (p. 42)
5	It is heavy with our worst fear, greater even than the fear of death: to be factionless. (p. 44)
6	His Dauntless family will have the option of visiting him in his new faction, a week and a half from now on Visiting Day, but they won't, because he left them. His absence will haunt their hallways, and he will be a space they can't fill. And then time will pass, and the hole will be gone [...]. Humans can't tolerate emptiness for long. (p. 45)
7	I'd rather be factionless than dead!" The Amity boy shakes his head. (p. 54)
8	If you can't muster the will to jump off, you don't belong here. Our initiates have the privilege of going first." (p. 57)
9	"The second purpose," he says, "is that only the top ten initiates are made members." Pain stabs my stomach. (p. 70)
10	It will be all right here. I can look at my reflection whenever I want. I can befriend Christina, and cut my hair short, and let other people clean up their own messes. (p. 73)
11	I match my inhales to the inhales of the other initiates, and my exhales to their exhales. (p. 74)
12	My problem might be that even if I did go home, I wouldn't belong there, among people who give without thinking and care without trying. (p. 75)
13	"Why do you say that?" I ask, a little too sharply. I don't want to be associated too closely with the factionless. (p. 123)

14	Eric warned us not to appear too attached to our parents on Visiting Day, so visiting home would be betraying the Dauntless, and I can't afford to do that. (p. 347)
15	Even though he looks different and I'm not allowed to love him anymore, I run at him as fast as I can and throw my arms around his shoulders. (p. 351)
16	I should never have left. The Dauntless compound sounds like home now at least there, I know exactly where I stand, which is on unstable ground. (p. 355)
17	I can't wage war against Abnegation, against my family. I would rather die. (p. 418)
18	I betrayed you. I left you." "You're my daughter. I don't care about the factions." (p. 441)
19	But I am sure of what he would do if our positions were reversed. I am sure that nothing is worth killing him for. (p. 475)

Source: own elaboration.

In Veronica Roth's first novel we find two main groups: family and the faction. Tris is deciding her future and finding the place where she belongs. However, the tensions between factions complicate the situation. Furthermore, there is a conflict at affiliation level between the family –which is the first and typically strongest affiliation group– and the faction, which in fact represents the balance between professional and personal life.

The first examples give the reader the idea that Tris is uncomfortable with the requirement to choose between being self-actualized, as we will see in the last section, and having a strong family relationship (4). In fact, choosing another faction implies breaking all communication with her family (3) and is commonly felt by the family as a betrayal (6). Unlike other characters, Tris loves her family, and wishing to develop her career in another faction makes her feel guilty (1).

An additional problem posed by the faction-family polarisation is the feeling of irreversibility that the adolescents perceive. Even if they change their mind, going back to their factions of origin would not work, as their values are not shared by the adolescent who left (12). Furthermore, not being allowed to love their family is unnatural and therefore creates a tension and conflict for some faction transfers (14). In Tris' particular case, the plot moves towards her acceptance of a complex personal

identity, formed by Dauntless and Abnegation values and the fact that she cannot fight her faction of origin (17). The results show the internal conflict: example 15 shows that, despite the “faction before blood” motto, she needs her brother; however, his position in terms of inter-faction conflicts challenge Tris’ loyalty, who at that moment believes Dauntless offers her belongingness and stability, as opposed to part of her family (16). Finally, in example 18, Tris and her mother give absolute priority to family, which gives Tris closure to her guilt over transferring to another faction while wishing she could have her family. All in all, the story seems to show that despite the social organization of the society depicted, family is the most important group to satisfy one’s affiliation needs.

Apart from the family-faction issue, the challenge for many adolescents refers to the need to fit in and the negative consequences of not being able to become a faction member: factionlessness. Living as a factionless implies poverty but also lacking the support and the shared identity of a faction (2). Therefore, for some, it is the worst outcome (5). However, some choose factionlessness over the risk of dying (7). The rejection of this lifestyle by faction members and initiates is so extreme that Tris reacts bluntly to what she considers is the implication that she is associated in any way with this group (13). Each faction has a strong identity and initiates and faction members are expected to represent those values from the very beginning through their attitude and behaviour. In this sense, the Dauntless value bravery, so being scared to do what they are asked to do, even when it is a threat to their safety, is considered an indicator of their inadequacy to belong in the faction (8). Furthermore, initiates are required to excel in order to become members, since only the 10 initiates with the best results become members (9). An interesting effect of the assimilation into the collective is Tris’ ability to relax and overcome her emotional issues regarding her family by breathing and moving at the same time as the group in a beehive manner (11).

Besides factionlessness and belonging, Tris’s affiliation lies with her friend Christina and Tobias. Regarding the former, example 10 shows the beginning of a relationship that implies the support of a female friend, which is highly important for a girl’s development as the section on esteem will show. In fact, the freedom to befriend her is an important factor for Tris to continue striving to succeed. On the other hand, her romantic relationship with Tobias is described with dramatic intensity, as she states that she would rather die than kill him (19). This idea is consistent with the reversed

positions of affiliation and safety in people’s priorities in these novels: affiliation before personal safety.

### 5.3.12 Results: *Insurgent*

The following table presents the results of the analysis of affiliation corresponding to the second novel in the *Divergent* trilogy. A total of 37 examples are identified.

1	“The other members of your party got here a few hours ago, but they weren’t sure if you had made it,” she says. She is referring to the group of Abnegation who were with my father and Marcus in the safe house. I didn’t even think to worry about them. (p. 6)
2	“Tobias” was a name only I knew, among the Dauntless; it was the piece of himself that he gave me. (p. 7)
3	I could have shot his hand, why didn’t I, why?—and I almost scream his name. Then he’s gone. (p. 9)
4	He’s abandoned the useless spectacles he wore as a member of Erudite in favor of an Abnegation gray shirt and their trademark short haircut. He looks just as he did a few months ago, when we were living across the hall from each other, both of us considering switching factions but not brave enough to tell one another. Not trusting him enough to tell him was a mistake I do not want to make again. (p. 36)
5	Now it makes me want to talk louder, to be as far from that old identity and the pain that accompanies it as possible. (p. 40)
6	He smells like sweat and fresh air and mint, from the salve he sometimes uses to relax his sore muscles. He smells safe, too, like sunlit walks in the orchard and silent breakfasts in the dining hall. (p. 50)
7	I consider making a break for it. But where would I go that they could not catch me? (p. 78)
8	“...the factionless are better friends than enemies.” “Maybe. But what would the cost of that friendship be?” I say. He shakes his head. “I don’t know. But we may not have any other option.” (p. 101)
9	“Let’s just say,” says Tobias, “that for some, death is preferable to factionlessness.” (p. 104)

10	No factions? A world in which no one knows who they are or where they fit? I can't even fathom it. I imagine only chaos and isolation. (p. 110)
11	I'll tell him so, if he hasn't figured it out already." "My dear girl," she says. "I am his family. I am permanent. You are only temporary." "Yeah," I say. (p. 117)
12	We could hole up with the factionless and let the rest of them sort through this mess. We could be nobodies, safe, together. (p. 119)
13	"What?" Zeke, who secured my straps on the zip line, a traitor? (p. 132)
14	I thought, then, that he was lost to me forever. I shudder. (p. 134)
15	Part of me wishes I could burn them from my mind, so I would never have to mourn for them. But the rest of me is afraid of who I would be without them. (p. 158)
16	There are more Dauntless in the room, Dauntless without blue armbands—loyal Dauntless. My faction. My faction has come to save us. (p. 194)
17	"Don't tell anyone I'm Divergent." He bites his lip. "Shauna's my friend, and I don't want her to suddenly become afraid of me." "Sure," I say, forcing a smile. "I'll keep it to myself." (p. 200)
18	Caleb runs up to me and folds me carefully into his arms. I breathe a sigh of relief. I thought I had gotten to the point where I didn't need my brother anymore, but I don't think such a point actually exists. (p. 202)
19	Suddenly, I think maybe I'll let someone else take all the risks, maybe I'll just start acting selfishly so that I can stay close to Tobias without hurting him. All I want is to bury my face in his neck and forget anything else exists. (p. 204)
20	Teasing between siblings should feel familiar, but it doesn't for us. Abnegation discouraged anything that might make someone feel uncomfortable, and teasing was included. (p. 213)
21	And that he will do anything to protect his faction, even if it means sacrificing the Divergent." (p. 237)
22	I can't be popular with the Dauntless, because Tobias is right—I'm not Dauntless; I'm Divergent. I am whatever I choose to be. And I can't choose to be this. (p. 266)
23	Soon I will honor my parents by dying as they died. (p. 325)

24	I came here to protect as many people as I could. And I care more about Tobias's safety than anyone else's. So why am I here, if he's here? What's the point? (p. 337)
25	I press the heel of my hand to my forehead. My brother chose faction over blood. There has to be a reason. She must have threatened him. Or coerced him in some way. (p. 359)
26	"I'll still think delivering your sister to be prodded and executed is evil!" He is my brother, but I want to tear him to pieces. Instead of trying to, though, I find myself sitting down again.
27	His arms tighten around me and squeeze. Warmth courses through me, and comfort. If he is here, that means I'm safe. (p. 371)
28	Still, I would like to feel like I belong to my father again before I ... well, before it's over. (p. 380)
29	"Hey," I say. "I like scrambled eggs." "Must be a Stiff breakfast, then." She grabs my arm. "C'mon." (p. 403)
30	But this is not what I was taught to expect of factionlessness. I was taught that it was worse than death. I stand there for just a few seconds before people realize that I'm there. (p. 404)
31	At this the factionless cheer, and I am reminded that we, the Dauntless, are the same people who, just a few weeks ago, were criticizing Abnegation for giving the factionless food and other necessary items. (p. 421)
32	But they aren't mixed together; there is still an uneasy divide between them, factionless on one side and Dauntless on the other. (p. 422)
33	Cara removes her glasses and snaps them in half at the bridge. "We risked our lives by defecting from our faction," says Cara, "and we will risk them again to save our faction from itself." (p. 449)
34	My mother told me to be brave. But if she had known that her death would make me so afraid, would she have sacrificed herself so willingly? (p. 458)
35	There is no one left to keep me steady now. (p. 469)
36	It makes me feel a little better, and so does the fact that Uriah, at least, doesn't seem to hate me. (p. 504)

37	I bite my lip, hard, and try not to think, try not to dwell on the cold feeling that surrounds my chest and the weight that hangs over my head. He hates me. He does not believe me. (p. 508)
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Source: own elaboration.

The first novel in the trilogy showed the enormous importance that family has for Tris, even over belonging to her faction. This sequel follows the same line based on two main ideas: the effects of the death of Tris' parents on her affiliation need and her distancing from her faction of origin. In general terms, she changes her focus from a larger organization and its values –the faction– to the individual and family values. Thus, the Abnegation faction reminds her of her loss (5) and we see that she worries about a particular group of people, involving her loved ones, but not about the faction itself (1). In fact, the only example that shows her connection with the previous faction is 29, where her food preferences are associated with the Abnegation. All in all, her parents are an important part of her identity and remembering those teachings is important to Tris (15).

Furthermore, example 20 shows that the faction system and in particular, Abnegation's restrictive norms have prevented Tris and her brother from establishing a solid relationship. This condition may be a factor to consider when analysing the dynamics that the siblings follow after their parents' deaths. While Tris attempts to reconnect and rebuild her lost affiliation with her brother (4), and despite his apparent reciprocal behaviour (18), Caleb finally chooses his faction over that bond (25, 26). The betrayal of her brother further weakens Tris' bonds and damages the satisfaction of her affiliation needs. In fact, and as shown in examples 34 and 35, she is left without family affiliation, which causes her psychological instability. Another indicator of the effects of her parents' death is her repeated attempts to sacrifice herself as her parents did to save her (23). Example 28 suggests that she attempts to find that lost connection with her family by imitating her father before she faces her execution.

Apart from her family, the other affiliation links Tris has are Tobias and her friends. Example 2 shows how the true name of Four, a piece of his identity, established an affiliation bond between them. Furthermore, as shown in example 11, she considers that her relationship is stronger than Tobias' relationship with his mother. As explained in the section about safety, Tris identifies Tobias with safety and comfort (6, 27). While in the case of *Uglies* and *The Hunger Games* the male protagonist offers the heroine

support and protection, and encourages her to overcome the obstacles, in this novels Tris' heroic yet strategically weak and suicidal acts create a different dynamic in the couple. Although she momentarily considers avoiding her participation in risky missions to preserve that relationship (12, 19), she risks her life unnecessarily, thus forcing Tobias to save her and get in danger. He is her priority and is scared of losing him (14, 24); however, the fact that they act independently from one another, instead of as a team, leads to lack of trust and eventually, in Tris' opinion, to hatred on his part (37). Although the trauma she endured could explain her behaviour, the lack of honesty is what damages their relationship. From the reader's perspective, Tris seems to push people away from her life unconsciously.

Tris' identity problem and even her parents' death and her brother's betrayal are the consequence of a society that is structurally unnatural because it deprives people from all affiliation ties at a young age and demands rivalry to be the norm. This rivalry and tension are used to cause the conflict and allow the Erudite's coup d'état. The consequences of such political action include dramatic situations such as the killing of a friend who is manipulated into killing Tris (3). This death and her active role in it make a dent in her already weak affiliation network. On the other hand, the systematic prosecution of the Divergent affects these people's affiliation possibilities. In fact, due to the danger inherent to divergence and people's superstitious beliefs about that condition, Uriah is unable to be completely honest with her friend Shauna (17). Perhaps because he shares Tris' divergence, Uriah is the only person that maintains his friendship with her consistently (36).

The system has conditioned faction members' opinions on groups such as the factionless and their socialisation. Example 8 shows that, even after the faction system becomes openly damaged, Tris and other faction members still distrust the factionless. This suspicion remains unaltered throughout the novel; quote 32 exemplifies these prejudices, as faction members do not interact with the factionless in the same way they relate to one another. Despite this attitude, Tris recognizes that they were conditioned to believe that factionless lifestyle was undesirable (30) when, in fact, it has some advantages as regards socialisation over the strictness of the factions. In fact, the undesirability of the factionless lifestyle was promoted in order to keep factions apart and prevent their interaction. This assumption shows the extreme constraints of the system and the unnatural essence of its organizational structure. The control of the system is evident in the intention of an important group of people of saving the faction



system (33). Their position is based on their privilege over the factionless. In fact, and in line with the results in the first novel, example 9 indicates that older members of Dauntless choose to commit suicide rather than being exposed to factionlessness. In fact, these ideas are what lead the Candor leader to negotiate with the Erudite leader. In order to save his faction, he would be prepared to sacrifice the lives of the Divergent, whose presence challenges the structure of the system (21). Unlike other novels, where those willing to preserve the unfair system are clearly wrong from the point of view of the protagonist and their intentions are bad, the situation in Chicago is much more ambiguous. Proof of that ambiguity and changing positions is example 31, which shows the alliances created between groups who a few weeks earlier despised one another. Those ambiguities also refer to the loyalties of friends, who may seem to be traitors at some point in the plot (13). In this respect, Tris' opinion evolves along with the story.

At the beginning of the novel we see a Tris who feels a lack of belonging conceived as a group of protecting people (7). However, she cannot conceive a world without the factions, which, in her opinion, would prevent people from having a group with whom they may identify (10). Later on, as shown in example 16, her lost trust in her faction is recovered when they come to rescue them, which strengthens the link between faction and members' protection. Nevertheless, the novel shows an evolution that leads the main character to associating her identity with her divergence (22), and, therefore, her impossibility to fulfil the requirements of the Dauntless lifestyle. This decision has two important connotations: on the one hand, it represents a break from the lack of agency of faction members; instead of being influenced by cultural and social factors, Tris takes another path. On the other hand, it stresses the importance of diversity and the constriction of pre-established paths for human development.

### 5.3.13 Results: *Allegiant*

The following table presents the results of the analysis of affiliation corresponding to *Allegiant*.

1	I walk over dirty footprints and beneath flickering lights to her cell and I am admitted without question, because I bear the factionless symbol—an empty circle—on a black band around my arm and Evelyn’s features on my face. (p. 4)
2	I don’t owe the people outside this city anything, whether I am Divergent or not. (p. 7)
3	I don’t know. I don’t care, I think. But even as I think it, I know it’s a lie. He’s still my brother. (p. 16)
4	We were united in fear then, and now that she isn’t afraid anymore, part of me wants to see what it would be like to unite with her in strength. (p. 22)
5	I take the seat beside her, and though I tell myself that I am just an undercover agent obeying his supposed leader, I feel like I am a son comforting his grieving mother. (p. 40)
6	Sometimes I forget that Christina isn’t like me, with no family loyalty to tie her to one place anymore. (p. 43)
7	And I’m not sure how Dauntless I really am, anyway, now that the factions are gone. I feel a strange little ache at the thought. (p. 53)
8	Christina is with her mother and sister; and in a corner are two nervous-looking Erudite. New outfits can’t erase the divisions between us; they are ingrained. (p. 58)
9	“Is my sister going?” The question awakes inside me an animal rage that won’t be satisfied by sharp words or insults. (p. 82)
10	“Why haven’t I met him?” “Because he’s dead. He was Divergent.” I shrug again, but I don’t feel casual about it. (p. 86)
11	He’s all right he’s all right he’s all right. Tobias is all right. My hands tremble, and Christina squeezes my knee. (p. 95)
12	In the city we were divided by faction, by age, by history, but here all those divisions fall away. We are all we have. (p. 112)

13	I didn't realize how much Cara had already cleaved to the idea of being an Allegiant, loyal to the faction system, loyal to our founders. For me it was just a temporary identity, powerful because it could get me out of the city. For her the attachment must have been much deeper. (p. 133)
14	"It's a confusing place." "It certainly is." I start toward—well, I don't know where I'm going, but it's away from Nita, the pretty girl who talks to my boyfriend when I'm not there. (p. 180)
15	I'm not sure anywhere will feel like home again. Not even if we went back." Maybe that's true. Maybe we're strangers no matter where we go, whether it's to the world outside the Bureau, or here in the Bureau, or back in the experiment. Everything has changed, and it won't stop changing anytime soon. (p. 192)
16	The so-called "GPs" grew up in this community, their worlds saturated by experiments and observation and learning. The "GDs" grew up in the experiments, where they only had to learn enough to survive until the next generation. The division is based on knowledge, based on qualifications—but as I learned from the factionless, a system that relies on a group of uneducated people to do its dirty work without giving them a way to rise is hardly fair. (p. 196)
17	[...] it's the last piece of her son she has, just like this is the last piece of my mother that I have. I feel closer to her when it's with me. (p. 214)
18	For a few years when we were children, I was the taller one even though I was almost a year younger. Those were some of our best years, the ones where I didn't feel like he was bigger or better or smarter or more selfless than I was. (p. 221)
19	"The crimes they have committed against people like us are serious," Nita says. "And hidden. [...]" (p. 235)
20	These are my genes, this is my mess. I don't want to pull Tris into it. (p. 237)
21	"[...] In reality they're poorer, more likely to be convicted of crimes, less likely to be hired for good jobs... you name it, it's a problem, and has been since the Purity War, over a century ago. For the people who live in the fringe, it seemed more appealing to opt out of society [...]" (p. 243)

22	The worst crime I've ever seen a GP get charged with for killing a GD was 'manslaughter.' Bullshit." (p. 248)
23	I don't want to spend time with Nita and Tobias together, knowing that her supposed genetic damage gives her something in common with him that I will never have. (p. 260)
24	—not sure how to talk to her now that I have these advantages and she does not and there's nothing either of us can do about it. (p. 296)
25	"We're having a meeting, and your presence is required." "Who is 'we,' exactly?" "GDs and GD sympathizers who don't want to let the Bureau get away with certain things" (p. 333)
26	Now I know that I have done something to make myself worthy of that hatred; I have betrayed them all. Cara says, "Ignore them. They don't know what it is to make a difficult decision" (p. 335)
27	I feel bare, like there's nothing left to protect me against pain. Her absence stings worst of all. (p. 341)
28	As much automatic, Abnegation-bred sympathy as I have for the people living in this place, I am also afraid of them. If they are like the factionless, then they are surely desperate like the factionless, and I am wary of desperate people." (p. 349)
29	"Unfortunate?" I frown at her. "That's my home you're talking about, you know." (p. 350)
30	"The Allegiant are the enemies of the new enemies, the factionless," Cara replies. "Which gives the Erudite and the Allegiant a common goal: to usurp Evelyn." (p. 363)
31	"It's not a perfect situation. But when you have to choose between two bad options, you pick the one that saves the people you love and believe in most." (p. 389)
32	Our friendship has held up under an incredible weight, the weight of me shooting someone she loved, the weight of so many losses. Other bonds would have broken. For some reason, this one hasn't. (p. 393)
33	"Why do you think Tobias offered to get you out of the city before they executed you?" The odor of bleach plays over my nose. "Because I don't care whether you live or die? Because I don't care about you at all?" (p. 409)

34	“I knew that they let them off because they thought of her as something less than them. Like if the GPs had beat up an animal.” (p. 428)
35	Either way, with either parent gone, I am better off. (p. 437)
36	He is a part of me, always will be, and I am a part of him, too. I don’t belong to Abnegation, or Dauntless, or even the Divergent. I don’t belong to the Bureau or the experiment or the fringe. I belong to the people I love, and they belong to me—they, and the love and loyalty I give them, form my identity far more than any word or group ever could. (p. 455)
37	“Let them have the city and everything in it,” she says into my hair. I can’t move, can’t speak. She chose me. She chose me. (p. 466)

Source: own elaboration.

Affiliation in *Allegiant* can be divided mainly into two dimensions that correspond to the two points of view offered in the novel: Tobias’ and Tris’. As regards Tobias, he shows affiliation at three levels: family (1, 4, 5, 35, 37), romantic relationship with Tris (9, 20, 27) and Genetically Damaged (GD) people (16, 19, 21, 22, 25, 26, 34). Tobias’ relationship with his mother is unstable. Being her son grants him privileges among the factionless (1) and, although he is working as a spy, he tries to connect with his mother (5), who also suffered the abuse of Tobias’ father (4). In the end, even though he thought his parents were negative influences for him (35), he obtains his mother’s support and affection (37). Because of Tris’ role as the only affiliation left for Tobias before he reunites with his mother, and therefore his only emotional support, he acts protective of her, reacting against Caleb’s attempt at regaining contact with her sister and preventing her from being involved in the GD issue (9, 20). In contrast to example 20, which shows Tobias’ reasoning, example 9 shows his Dauntless influences, which stress aggressiveness. These examples provide the background to support the negative effect that their distancing has on him (27). These problems are caused by the tensions in the Bureau, which seem to lead characters in opposite directions.

Outside the experiment, Tobias finds a similar structure, a division between Genetically Pure (GP) and Genetically Damaged (GD). In contrast to the privileged position he held with the factionless, in the Bureau, he is considered a lesser human, because he is not actually Divergent. The discrimination endured by the GD is highly significant and is not exclusive of the Bureau (21). Example 16 compares the situation

of the GD with that of the factionless in Chicago. Tobias points out that segregation based on knowledge without a means for people to improve their position is unfair. His increasing indignation with the situation owes to his position in this system. While the previous novel showed the perspective of the privileged in the faction systems, Tobias' position allows him to experience the discrimination first-hand. GP's crimes are covered when they involve GD people (19, 22, 34). In this context, GD and sympathisers create a group, and Tobias becomes involved in it (25). However, as a consequence of participating in the attack orchestrated by that group, Tobias loses the acceptance of Bureau members (26). Nevertheless, he was suspicious of the Bureau from the very beginning, not willing to become part of their society, as can be seen in example 2.

On the other hand, Tris presents two affiliation links: family –her brother Caleb– (3, 17, 18, 31, 33, 36) and Tobias (12, 14, 23), and an ongoing struggle with her identity. Unlike Tobias, whose situation was more chaotic due to the GD situation, Tris undergoes and finishes a trip that began when she chose Dauntless as her faction. On the one hand, she struggles throughout the novels to find an identity, a group of people with whom to share values, and strives for belonging. Example 15 shows her pessimistic perspective as regards the possibility of feeling like home again (15). She is no longer part of Abnegation, the last of that identity gone after her parents' deaths (6) nor Dauntless (7) after the dissolution of the factions. Finally, the last identity she held was as “allegiant,” but she only used the identity as allegiant to achieve her goal: leaving the city (13). Given that she GP, she does not become involved with the GD group led by Nita. The only reaction that is linked to some extent to this issue is shown in example 29. Tris reacts against a GD person who argues that her city should be disbanded as an experiment.

Abnegation, Dauntless, Divergent, Factionless, and Genetically Pure are labels that were used, among other purposes, to delimit and guide interpersonal relationships. In general terms, although at the beginning faction members interact with members of the same faction (8), this situation changes when they leave the city (12). This situation as well as Tobias' identity as GD show that people unite against injustice when they are the minority under threat. This concept is represented in Chicago simultaneously by the allegiance between Erudite and Amity against the factionless (30).

On the other hand, Tris and her brother grew apart when he betrayed her by choosing faction before blood, as I explained in the previous subsection, but example 3

shows that she struggles to exclude her from her circle. Quote 18 illustrates the depth of the problem in their relationship: Tris' feeling of inferiority. Following the idea of sharing her parents' ideals and becoming close to who they were (17), she sacrifices herself in order to save her brother, deciding that her identity is not represented by a collective or a label but by the people she loves (31, 33, 36). Finally, Tobias' role in Tris' affiliation satisfaction is minor in this novel. In fact, it seems that he becomes the romantic element that was traditionally included in novels of the utopian genre to contribute to the plot. This is represented by the jealousy plot involving a GD girl, Nita (14, 23), which differs considerably with the tone of protection that had been identified in previous novels and at the beginning of this last sequel (11). On a side note, example 32 is particularly isolated and the only mention to Tris' friendships. She reconciles with Christina, but this situation has no preceding steps in this novel, that is, Tris does not have a relationship with Christina before that moment. Although the narrative justifies this by mentioning Tris' focus on the Bureau, it feels inconsequential.

Remnants of the old structures and affiliations are represented in the novel, although their weight is rather insignificant. The lower relevance may owe to the chosen structure of the novel, divided into two point-of-view narrators. On the one hand, Tobias hints how divergence was always a risk (10) and how loss affected him, although, as I have said, there is a lack of complexity to this issue. The structure of the new system affects Tris' relationships with Tobias and Christina, because they do not share the same rank (24). All in all, the society of arrival presents as many affiliation problems as the society of origin, judged not only by the complexity of the protagonists' interpersonal relationships, but also by the similarities between the factionless and the people outside the Bureau (28).

#### 5.3.14 Discussion

Perhaps one of the most interesting topics as regards the portrayal of human needs in literature is the role of affiliation as a cornerstone in dystopian novels for young adults. Basu (2013, p. 19) argues this point perfectly in stating that the novels seem to convey a sense that being classified into pre-existing categories is comforting and sought by adolescents, who try to adapt their personalities to fit in the pattern and exemplifies it using Veronica Roth's *Divergent*. This tendency is explained by two dimensions of culture: uncertainty avoidance and collectivism.

In *Divergent*, children choose a faction, which will become the ultimate collective to which the individual belongs, even over their own family, as the motto “Faction before Blood” states. Closely connected to the topic of collectivism and individualism, the characters in the novels demand the feeling of protection and social acceptance that their communities provide and see members of different factions as “others.” Similarly, teenagers in *Uglies* dream of being part of a clique that offers them unconditional support and social life security. This idea is nevertheless not applicable to *The Hunger Games*, where belonging to a district or to a particular group is irrelevant for the protagonist, or to *Across the Universe*, where adherence to a group is neither possible nor desirable for Amy, despite her eagerness to be socially accepted.

While the critique to the systematization of humanity is commonplace in dystopian novels for YA, the underlying principle behind the protagonists, the heroines, is one of individual nature at least at the beginning of the journey or, more precisely, one that prioritises their wellbeing to that of the biggest collective: the community. On the other hand, their attitude obeys to the high uncertainty avoidance of their cultures. They are not committed to the improvement of the system in principle, and, in most cases, except for Amy, they lack the drive for change that is characteristic of well-known heroes in other genres. In the case of Tris, her wish is to fit in the parameters of the system, she is accommodated and does not suffer the injustice of the system towards the minorities. This idea also holds in *Uglies*, where the protagonist cannot wait until she turns 16 and is physically changed through surgery to become pretty and fit in. All these protagonists are forced to challenge their beliefs through knowledge. They learn of the side-effects and consequences of their privileges and the reassurance of knowing everybody has a place in society and have no choice but to assume that they cannot condone the situation. In the case of Katniss, this is even more obvious. She has no intention of leaving her home or fighting the capitol and she tells so to Gale, the male character who incarnates the idea of rebelling against injustice. She becomes the face of the revolution unintentionally, since her personal circumstances appeal to the population suffering the oppression of the Capitol. Some characters have been criticised for allegedly assuming a patriarchal stance or a passive role despite being protagonists, especially as regards their love life. Are we witnessing a representation of female characters as conservative and unchallenging or is it a representation of the overall feeling of fear and doubt many teenagers experience? How are these teenagers’ attitudes representative of the functioning of our society? In this section, I analyse the process



that the heroines (Katniss, Amy, Tris and Tally) undergo. In particular, I examine their choices regarding romantic love, family, the city and nature, friendship and community commitment to a rebellious cause.

#### *5.3.14.1 Romantic love*

As seen in the results, Katniss' affiliation is perhaps the most coherent of the four, at least to some extent. She is not interested in romance, which is a distinguishing trait of the novel when compared to other YA novels, most of which feature a love interest on the part of the protagonist as part of the main plotline. Two male characters –Peeta and Gale– are overtly interested in her in romantic terms and technically compete to gain her affection. However, at a particular point both assume that she will only stay with the one that gives her the peace she needs. Her lack of interest in love or marriage establishes a conflict between her personal identity –the ideas and values that define her– the Capitol and the rest of society. These social conventions are in fact imposed by the Capitol and assumed in the end in an unexpected ending that has been criticised for the lack of coherence with her beliefs. Broad (2014) indicates that Katniss may be read as an unreliable narrator and compares her refusal to accept love with the traditional romance examples, where “a professed disinterest in love is easily remedied over time” (p. 119). One could argue, as the author does, that Katniss develops a real romantic interest for Peeta and Gale; however, Broad herself admits that it is the result of the manipulation of the Capitol, who is forcing her to perform an act that finally intertwines with reality to the point of confusing the protagonist. We see the parallel effect in Peeta, who is brainwashed through invasive methods so that she is unable to discern reality from fantasy. In fact, according to Pulliam (2016), part of such coercion and manipulation is exerted by Katniss' preparation team, including the stylists as well as Effie Trinket, and Haymich, her mentor. They teach her how to become desirable to the audience mainly by compelling her to sound, look, and behave in a stereotypically feminine way, which, according to Pulliam, entails becoming “an instrument of her own subjection” (p. 177), as well as an object of masculine desire so much so that she devotes herself to the happiness of her male friends. The main problem with Pulliam's argumentation is twofold. On the one hand, she does not consider her traumatic childhood and adolescence, with an emotionally absent mother and a father who died in the mines. On the other hand, she identifies protective behaviours with maternal ones

and associates them with hegemonic femininity in a negative way. That is, she implies that being protective of those closest to her or even showing high empathy is a behaviour that does not allow her to display agency, thus associating those behaviours with oppression or submission. As a final remark, Katniss' caring personality is questioned as stereotypically feminine; however, we can see this same trait in male characters in YA fiction without such criticism. As I have explained in the section about self-sacrifice, in *The Giver*, the protagonist puts himself in danger to save a baby who was going to be euthanised and escapes with him; that same attitude in Katniss, when she puts herself in danger to save her sister, or when she protects the weak, is questioned as heteronormative.

Katniss needs to behave as the prep team advise, precisely because, unless the spectators identify with her, she will not receive the support of sponsors. The Capitol's society presents a population among which femininity (in terms of delicate behaviour and physical appearance) is exaggerated but masculinity is not reinforced. Therefore, Peeta's caring attitude is accepted as likeable, but Katniss' challenging stance combined with her lack of physical power would hamper her possibilities to obtain sponsors. Broad goes on to interpret Katniss' heroic actions as romantic love. By contrast, I argue that Katniss's precocious maturation after her father's death, which left her as head of the household, transformed her into an extremely protective figure for those that are under her wing. As I have explained in the results, particularly since *Catching Fire*, Katniss increasingly cares about Peeta; their relationship develops from his status as Katniss' enemy during the first games to her sole comforting friend through shared trauma and her predisposition to saving his life even at her own life's cost. Similarly, although she does not express feelings for Gale, she is aware of the fact that he has an interest in her and she tries to avoid his suffering. Thus, she wonders about how he will feel when he sees her in her preparation for the staged wedding with Peeta. Furthermore, she comes from a feminine culture as per Hofstede's theory (see chapter 4), which, as I have explained, emphasises the importance of caring for and supporting the weak, as opposed to the emphasis on strength, assertiveness and egoism of masculine cultures. In my view, the dramatic context of the novels, in which a state-sized institution targets the protagonist, the actions become more heroic than they would in the context of Katniss' pre-arena world (e.g., illegally hunting in the woods to provide food). As I indicated in the results, the ambiguity with which Katniss behaves and the fact that she does not clearly express her emotions –she typically focuses on

others instead of reflecting on her own feelings— renders any absolute conception of her motives baseless. Thus, one interpretation would suggest that her decision to engage in a relationship with Peeta could be a consequence of the Capitol’s manipulation and could be interpreted as a conformist and conservative decision, not because she refuses to participate in the development of the new world or because she lacks ambition, but because she impersonates a passive attitude that assumes the decisions made by others (Peeta in this case) and accedes to their wishes. If we understand Katniss’ decision not to have children as reliable, the final decision to have them could be understood as the last victory of the manipulation of the Capitol and not as a sign of hope. However, considering that she develops real feelings for Peeta that lead her to sharing her life with him could also be a valid hypothesis, supported by the ambiguity and complexity of the emotions she develops towards him. As seen in the previous section on safety, Katniss sees Peeta as a person who makes her feel safe and who protects her as much as she protects him, though in different ways. While Katniss offers a more traditional physical protection, Peeta offers her emotional protection and comfort that helps her endure the psychological consequences of the shared trauma. In this case, and despite criticism of her decision, the statement Fritz (2014) makes about Dystopian Fiction for YA offering a representation of female characters as “empowered subjects rather than [. . .] subjugated objects” (p. 37) would still be applicable to Katniss. As explained by Rowan (1999, p. 126), there are two types of motivation for the fulfilment of human needs. On the one hand, deficiency-driven motivation refers to a reactive status, homeostatic in nature. For example, if we are thirsty and we drink, we act driven by a deficiency. On the other hand, abundance-driven motivation is proactive. It refers to the active seeking of experiences related to that need. Following the previous example, if we drink or eat for the pleasure it gives us, not only to satiate our appetite, we have a proactive attitude towards that need; we are driven by abundance. In the case of love, deficiency-driven love would be characterized by compulsiveness, fear, and predictability, whereas abundance-driven love is non-possessive and zestful. Her ending is different from traditional fairy tales insofar as she does not marry him because she would not be happy otherwise. She does not do so to satisfy the need, but because it provides her with some satisfaction. Katniss’ affection towards Peeta is gradually built from mutual support and respect after they heal and mourn their lost ones. Finally, the decision to have children, which shows the most controversial, could be understood as an indicator of Katniss’ healing and overcoming the fear that the Capitol instilled in the population, and as an

indicator of hope for the future. Furthermore, as I will explain in the section about self-actualization, her decision does not hinder female empowerment but rather support it. If we are to support women in their decisions, her decision to focus on her family should also be considered equally respectful and valid.

On the opposite end of the spectrum is Tris Prior, who enacts the role of traditional romantic love with a dramatic intensity. Not only does she not challenge established roles, but she promotes them with her dependency of Tobias (Four). Tris' motivation to pursue a romantic relationship with Tobias is representative of a deficiency-driven motivation. However, and following my statement that Katniss' stance was the most coherent –and the most mature, I would add–, Tris' actions and alleged feelings vary quite radically as she matures. The results show that her dependency of Tobias is still significant in *Allegiant*, although in that novel we see that her identity as Divergent is prioritised to her boyfriend's feelings and suffering, when she assumes her role of heroine to sacrifice herself for the wellbeing of the society as a whole. From this evolution we can infer that Tris changes her group of affiliation to the collective, thus defending an altruistic and collectivist stance. Tris' personality is complex and influenced by opposing forces, the main ones being her faction of origin (Abnegation) and her new faction (Dauntless), the two main local groups to which she belongs. While Katniss' behaviour is based on her upbringing and her only objective – safety of her loved ones–, Tris' behaviour is a mixture of cultural influences, which affect her interpersonal relationships. As explained in chapter 4, the two factions have opposing values: Abnegation is feminine, low uncertainty avoidance, short-term oriented, restrained, and with low power distance; Dauntless is masculine, has high uncertainty avoidance, is long-term oriented and indulgent. It could be argued that the common cultural background Tobias and Tris shared was partly the basis of their relationship, as was shared trauma for Katniss and Peeta, thus favouring their reliance on and protection of one another, which are traits of feminine cultures. As Tris develops or intensifies her individualist behaviour as a result of the new faction's masculine culture of competition, she distances herself from Tobias. Similarly, her attempt at reconnecting with her family values and the Abnegation culture is done in a way that focuses on high-level collective instead of on interpersonal and therefore relationship levels. Despite the evident psychological instability of the protagonist, which will be analysed in the following section, these novels present an evolution that could be considered a challenge to the traditional romance and happy endings. This idea is based

on the fact that the protagonist develops and changes culturally and her relationship is logically affected by those changes, but also to the fact that she chooses to develop her potential rather than being content with fulfilling her affiliation needs with friendship and romance.

Amy's situation is a middle ground. Her situation is particular because she actually has no other person with whom to have a close relationship. She challenges the expected plot by setting a distance with Elder from a romantic viewpoint; she demands a context in which choice is possible for love to be real. This trilogy and, to a lesser extent, *Uglies*, offer realistic and feminist perspectives regarding affiliation. The selection of Amy to be unfrozen to become Elder's partner resembles the myth of Adam and Eve but, instead of conforming to the designed destiny as is typical of fairy tales, Amy rebels against the narrative.

Finally, Tally has the behaviour expected from a teenager: she feels flattered by the attention received from the leader of the Smokies and accepts it despite the fact the suffering it entails for her best friend. The idea of sorority is present throughout the three novels as the characters mature. The two female characters finally break the bond after Tally chooses isolation following the death of one of her romantic interests. As discussed in the results section, Tally's dependency is obvious from the first book. As a personal trait, she becomes dependent on her love interests as well. Interestingly, Tally seems to gradually challenge fairy-tales. She represents herself as a princess trapped in a tower waiting for her Prince Charming to rescue her. Over time, this imagery changes, finally assuming that she does not need a prince to save her. Nevertheless, the results show that she is always dependent on a man (or boy) and that she becomes more independent the closer her relationship with Shay becomes. The ending, as with the other novels, sheds little clarity on her future dependency or independence, because, even when she decides to become a protector of Nature and challenge social roles and expectations, she does so with David's help. At the same time, instead of asking for his help, she decides to do so without thinking of possible allies and it is only after David asks her whether she would accept his help that they decide to act together.

It is a fact that romance is a key theme in fiction for teenagers, the popularity of which stems from the fact that the readers can identify themselves with the protagonists' new needs during their journey towards adult life. The *Twilight* frenzy is proof of the attraction power that tragic romance has for young readers. The concept and role of

romantic love in characters' motivations will be further developed in the section about self-actualization through Murdock's (2016) journey of the heroine.

#### 5.3.14.2 Family

As explained by Cicero in *De Officiis*, "Nature likewise by the power of reason associates man with man in the common bonds of speech and life; she implants in him above all, I may say, a strangely tender love for his offspring" (1951, I.iv.12). Family is the most powerful of affiliation groups. Its representation in the novels, however, gives this institution varying degrees of importance. A quick search of the texts indicates that family has a strong weight in Beth Revis' novels (*Across the Universe* trilogy). Family-related vocabulary (family, mother, father, mom\*, dad\* and parents) appears in *Across the Universe*, *A million Suns* and *Shades of Earth* a total of 313, 158 and 442 times. The greater frequency of these words in the last novel is obviously due to the fact that they become active characters and Amy interacts with them. Regarding the distribution of the words, the father figure seems to have a much greater weight in the novels and therefore in Amy's life. In particular, while the word "mother" is mentioned once in the second novel, the word "father" is mentioned 23 times. Furthermore, while Amy uses the more familiar "daddy" for her father, she does not use the equivalent word for her mother. This tendency is consistent throughout the trilogy, which agrees with the closer relationship Amy reports having with her father but also with the fact that his rank as military is brought into conversation throughout the novels due to it being a factor for being the target of attacks.

The results for the *Divergent* series indicate a significant –although lower– weight of this institution. In the first novel, the search gives 107 examples accounting for references about Tris' mother (words used "mother" and "mom"); there are 111 instances of the word "father" referring to Tris' father (4 other examples refer to colleagues' fathers). Regarding Caleb, Tris' brother, I used the words "brother" and "Caleb" and found 142 examples in total concerning exclusively this character (15 extra results referred to other characters). The second novel yields 35 examples for "mother" and 1 for "mom" referring to Tris' mother. These results amount to 70 examples in the third novel. 41 examples of "father" and two examples of "dad" refer to Tris' father (23 examples of "father" and 3 of "dad" or "daddy" refer to Tobias' father); in *Allegiant*, Tris' father is mentioned twice using "dad" and 24 times using "father" (other 41 refer

to Tobias' father). 16 examples in *Insurgent* and 22 examples in *Allegiant* correspond to the word "brother" and there are 141 and 160 examples, respectively, of the word "Caleb", although this is to be expected given the weight of this character in these two novels compared to the first one. Furthermore, the word "family" is mentioned 51 times in the first novel, 22 in the second and 41 in the third. Apart from faction, family is the most important group for Tris. This is to be expected given that she does not fully fit as a Dauntless member and she is defining herself. What the results indicate is in increasing importance of Tris' mother in the last novel despite both of her parents dying in the first novel. This result reflects Tris' identification with her mother's divergence and the fact that she was a Dauntless moving to Abnegation, which mirrors Tris' decision: transferring from Abnegation to Dauntless. The dwindling presence of her father is also noteworthy: she begins the story trying to mimic her father's behaviour, praising his role in the community and even though she respects him throughout the novels, she progressively moves her admiration towards her mother.

Katniss is the best example of a character that has a strong sense of family. Everything she does is to protect her family. She took the role of head of the family after her father's death because her mother was depressed and unable to care for them. Wider groups such as her district are not as important for Katniss. In contrast to Tris (*Divergent*), she roots for smaller groups from the beginning: family and closest friends (Peeta, Gale and Haymich). The search of family-related terms offers the following results: 139, 110 and 101 results for "sister" and "Prim" or "Primrose" in each of the novels; 61, 28 and 27 results for "father" and 106, 151 and 73 results for "mother." Furthermore, the word "family" whether referring to her family or another character's, appears 28, 57 and 30 times in the novels. In total, 334, 346 and 231 examples account for the weight of the family institution as represented in the novels. The highest representation is granted to her sister, which is to be expected given that the protection of her sister is the trigger of all the events narrated in the novels. The number of results for father is noteworthy given that Katniss' father died when she was young. This may indicate the influence of that traumatic event on her life but also the influence of her father in her personality and set of values. Finally, the high number of results for "mother" is an indicator of the importance of this figure despite Katniss' cold relationship with this character.

Finally, and in the opposite extreme we find Tally, who lives apart from their family in a hall of residence with all children between the ages of 12 and 16. The results

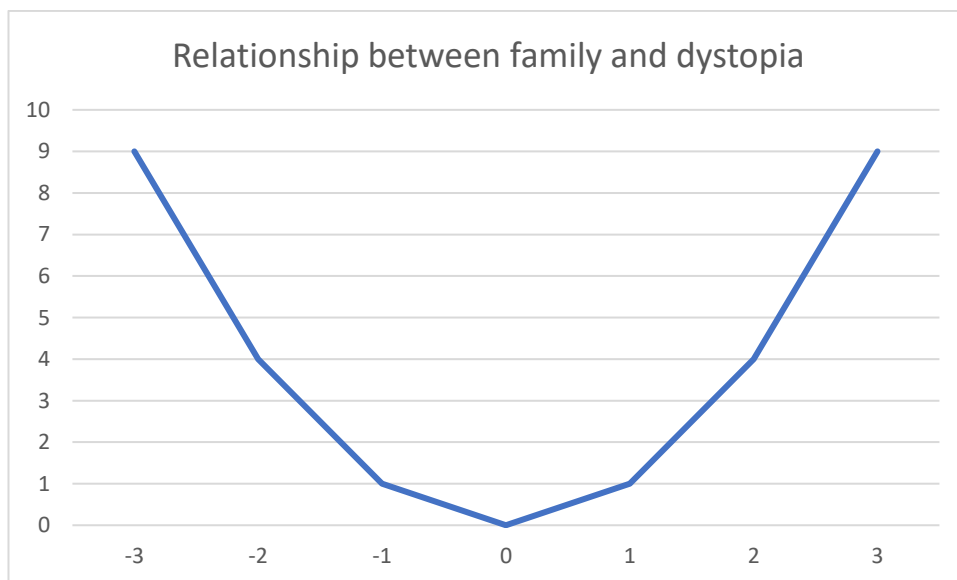
for this book are particular because it is written in third person. For the word “mother” the search yields 14 results, 13 of which involve David’s mother and only 1 refers to Tally’s. Similarly, of the 16 examples of the word “father” 4 refer to Tally’s father while 12 involve David’s. Tally calls her parents by their first name. Thus, there are 21 and 23 examples of the words “Sol” and “Ellie”, most of which are indications of the speaker (e.g., “Sol said”) or devoid of familiar connotations (e.g., Tally points out the resemblance between the driver and her father). Tally’s parents are not mentioned in the second and third novels. The results for the words “father” (29, 3) and “mother” (8, 9) refer mostly to David’s parents (5 out of 29 and 3 for “father” and 7 out of 8 and 8 for “mother”) and to Andrew’s father (24 of the 29 examples in *Pretties*). Similarly, the word “family” appears only twice in the first novel and both examples refer to David’s family. In general terms, she barely mentions her family, and they only visit her to try to convince her to confess to the authorities the whereabouts of her best friend.

The high importance of family for Katniss and Tris is justified insofar as that institution is attacked by the system: by endangering its members (through the games or hunger) and by establishing as a priority the faction to which they belong. According to Kennon (2005, p. 42), the idea of family for displaced teenagers and children is charged with nostalgia because they perceive this institution as a “secure space.” This is the case for Tris, who escapes her faction after being overwhelmed by pressure and the physical and psychological demands of initiation and tries to contact her family. Similarly, Amy feels safer in the space of the ship where her parents are frozen, despite not being able to interact with them. By contrast, Tally does not conceive family as a safe place, since she is not welcomed there. She seeks that protection and belonging elsewhere, which explains her eagerness to become part of a clique, to be pretty in general, or the fact that she decides to stay with the smokies once she sees she is accepted. The conception of family in *Uglies* resembles that of More’s *Utopia* also because in the 1516 novel, elders and public officials seem to display a higher authority than biological parents (Spring, 2012). For Katniss, the situation is different. Her family is not a protecting group, but the group she tries to protect. Again, her role as head of the household prevents her from having such conception of family as is typical of children literature. In the case of Tobias, who becomes narrator in part three of the trilogy (*Allegiant*), his family includes an abusive father and an absent mother; therefore, this conception of family does not fit his situation in Chicago.



New wave YA dystopian fiction offers a myriad of alternative visions of family, compared to traditional children literature. According to Mallan et al. (2005, p. 11), family in fictional utopias represents a key condition for the correct development of a society. In particular, the authors explain that a very hermetic family relationship might hamper the correct relationship of the individuals with the community, while a lack of family units might affect negatively children's empathy capabilities. This connection between family units and society suggests that the lack of strong and supportive family ties hinders the achievement of a utopia. Severing ties in the case of transfers in *Divergent* and all children in *Uglies*, or the dehumanization of reproduction in *Godspeed (Across the Universe)* are examples of societies that prevent a correct development of family relationships. Given these circumstances, children lack the appropriate empathy, necessary to create collective action. On the other hand, Katniss' simultaneous role of father and daughter creates an extraordinarily strong tie with her family that takes all of her time and prevents a connection with the district as a community. Therefore, the family connection's relationship with utopia could be represented as a U shape.

Figure 2: Relationship between family and dystopia



\*Note: The graph is developed in order to enhance the visualisation of the idea, it is not built based on data.

Where a high Y represents dystopia and 0,0 represents utopia. Thus, both a lack of family ties (represented by negative values of the horizontal axis: X) and a very strong

family unity (represented by high values of X) would lead towards a dystopian society. In sum, the novels of the corpus present examples of the role of family and lack thereof in preventing utopia.

Regarding reception, the family institution has different weights in the countries analysed. As we have seen in chapter 4, collectivist countries tend to have a wider concept of family, including the extended family (e.g., grandparents, uncles and aunts, cousins, etc.). Nevertheless, all three countries allocate great importance to immediate family, which is the only type of family represented in the novels. This fact is interesting because Spanish readers would probably expect more details about their extended family; in contrast, the reduced number of family members in all novels would not strike UK and US readers as strange. Therefore, the novels provide an extra element of estrangement for Spaniards from a cultural viewpoint.

#### 5.3.14.3 *Belonging to “the others”*

The idea of belonging to a social movement and its implications need to be considered to some extent. At least in one of the trilogies we have seen examples of groups of people formed to include those rejected by other majoritarian groups: the factionless and the Genetically Damaged (*Divergent* trilogy).

According to Pilkington, Omelchenko and Perasović (2018), far-right groups are perceived by young affiliates as a “big family.” In particular, the authors explain that among the members of the English Defence League (EDL), violence and communal singing in demonstrations allows them to “lose themselves in collective motion [...] and constitute an embodied way both to create and confirm the emotional collective” (p. 135). Furthermore, the authors show that for some members, the group offers them a support that their traditional friendships denied them (p. 144). While no scientific studies have delved into the dynamics of far-left groups such as Anti-fascist movement, their use of uniform clothes and organized and often violent acts suggest a similar concept.

In this sense, Tobias’ decision to betray the group’s perspective and join the GD terrorist group evidences the desperation and need to fit that exists among these youngsters. Furthermore, the novels portray a message of rejection towards these extreme groups by showing Tobias’ regret of joining and the consequences of his acts, especially the death of his best friend’s brother. Nevertheless, the dynamics within the

group resemble those of the factions themselves with their members. For instance, members of EDL and similar groups watch one another's behaviour and criticise them if they are not up to the standards of the collective. In the same vein, Dauntless leaders challenge their members constantly by questioning their bravery and their skills to be a real Dauntless, whereas family members stress the importance to represent Abnegation's selfless behaviour, although in less direct and aggressive terms. The groups analysed by Pilkington et al. (2018) are dominated by masculinity. Similarly, the Dauntless has been identified as masculine-oriented in cultural terms (see Chapter 4).

Looking back to the groups of affiliation formed in the novels, and focusing only on those that are built artificially for a cause and not due to race or class restrictions, three main groups exist in the *Uglies* trilogy that can be compared to the mentioned groups: cliques, smokies, and cutters (i.e., elite *Specials*).

Clearly, the most extreme group is the one created by Shay in *Specials*: a group of teens that use self-harm to feel a thrill that makes them more alert. Saving some distances, this group has behavioural patterns that resemble those of far right and patriotic movements such as the one discussed (EDL). Although this group does not typically inflict self-harm, they engage in violence and communal singing as a means to experience a feeling of extreme excitement and adrenaline before an event such as a football match. Similarly, cutters perform this behaviour before a mission to enhance their vision and collective hive-like mindset. This group has a mostly horizontal structure that works independently from the *Specials* collective directed by Dr Cable. In order to build a successful collective, there needs to be a solid atmosphere built on direct democratic practices, "which in turn strengthen collective sense of ownership of and adherence to the movement" (Mehreen & Thomson, 2017, p. 65). It is interesting to notice that the structure of student unions in the US, with a high apparatus at state level and national level seems to be counter-productive, in that it might hamper the possibility of building affiliation bonds between the students and the cause due its vertical organization or hierarchy, which contrasts with the horizontal collectivism that we have seen in extremist groups in the UK that favours affiliation with the group. The *Specials*, therefore, have a structure that resembles that of the EDL, and differs from student unions such as the US unions, which have a national structure that prevents collective affiliation based on interpersonal trust-building and action.

The Smokies also share a horizontal structure and rely on peer trust and shared goals to ensure the continuity of the movement and the safety of the community. They

depend on one another for their safety from the city agents, so they develop a unity that becomes a common identity. Unlike the Cutters, or the GD in *Allegiant*, who are depicted negatively in the novels for their purpose in the latter and for the means in the former, the smokies obtain the protagonist's favour until the consequences of their lifestyle on nature become more important. Therefore, we can state that the novels could warn young readers about the dangers and the negative implications of being part of an extreme group prioritising belonging to a small group to belonging to the society.

At the same time, the examples analysed indicate that big social movements such as that of the anti-fee students or anti-cuts movement require a structure that works best when it is formed bottom-up and comprises smaller groups (local or smaller) that help the individuals create a bond with the collective. Although described in less detail, the rebellion in *The Hunger Games* is similarly structured in districts instead of working at national level. In the case of *Divergent*, smaller groups are encouraged within factions. Specifically, Tobias (Four) advises Tris to seek the protection of her friends. Due to the high competition within the faction and the lack of horizontality of the collective, members need to establish affiliation groups that help them continue with the collective missions. In *Uglies*, the cliques are smaller groups among the "new pretty" population to which people aspire to belong. In the case of Tally, she wants to enter the Crims, who decide on her candidature in a direct democracy mechanism, thus showing the horizontality of their structure. Nevertheless, it is also important to consider the attraction of new members through previous friendship. In that vein, Tally chooses the Crims because her best friend is already part of the group.

It is evident as shown in the discussion above that the readers of the countries chosen have examples of collectives that work in a similar way as those in the novels. Furthermore, some of these collectives, which resemble ideologically extreme organizations, have negative connotations in the novel, which may help create the connection between the estranged and the real.

#### 5.3.14.4 *Difference, migration and otherisation.*

Although a significant part of the population contributes to charity, research shows that we see injustice and rarely react to it unless it affects our group, the collective with which we identify: be it the family unit, professionals of our same field, students when we are, immigrants when we leave our country, etc. In other words,

“people are more likely to participate in protest the more they feel that a group they identify with is treated unjustly” (Klandermans, 2002, p. 887). In this same vein, Lahusen and Grasso (2018) analyse data from respondents from eight countries belonging to the EU and find out that people are keener on providing aid for people belonging to their same identity group. In particular, citizens identify less with the EU than with their own nationalities and humankind in general, thus explaining their rejection of intra-community economic support. Research shows that people are less keen on helping groups of people who “compete” for the same resources if those people belong to “another” group, thus indicating the otherisation phenomenon. Research shows that far-right populist parties in some countries have been using the opposition between the refugees or immigrants in general and the national population systematically by presenting the former as a threat to welfare (Sakki & Pettersson, 2015). In the case of the countries that have received the greatest share of the impact of the austerity measures demanded by the EU, such as Greece and Italy, the results presented by Lahusen and Grasso (2018, p. 256) show that their level of solidarity with other countries is higher than in other countries in which the impact of the crisis was less significant. This situation is explained by the fact that southern European countries have shared a traumatic situation with respect to higher-income countries that could have equated them as belonging to a group. This group includes Spain, and the group was assigned the derogatory label of PIGS, standing for Portugal, Italy, Greece and Spain, or even PIIIGS, including Ireland and Iceland.

The concept of “otherness” is commonly used to refer to the difference between an individual or a group of people and another more majoritarian group, which usually causes rejection on the latter. Difference is an abstract and very wide concept; its use as part of the process of otherisation in literature has been widely researched and analysed particularly in relation to identity, through the topics of gender, race, or class among others. That is, otherness implies the discrimination on the basis of gender difference, racial difference, sexual identity difference, class difference, etc. In dystopian fiction, otherness is seemingly a recurring technique that is nevertheless exploited at different levels. We could argue that difference is a recurrent cause of dystopias, or that these societies tend to repress difference. Many utopian societies are built on the grounds of complete and absolute equality, which implies the necessary otherisation of those who fail to fit in the same mould. This subsection questions whether difference is used to

control the population through otherisation and the resulting fear and hatred (Wodak, 2015, p. 70).

The cause of dystopias is not sufficiently examined by the literature because most of the novels do not present the process through which a society becomes dystopian. However, in one of the clearest examples of this process, *Divergent*, the society becomes dystopian because a group of people use the existing unsolved difference in a society that is otherwise divided into highly homogeneous groups for which citizens are not prepared to instil fear and take control of the system. Unlike the conception of utopia for the 21<sup>st</sup> century defended by Ramiro-Avilés (2014, p. 93), defined by the acceptance of differences, in these dystopias, difference is used as a weapon by those who can take advantage of it. In particular, the Divergent are targeted as dangerous people with the potential to destabilise the system of factions, which faction members have been taught is the only way to prevent war. From a different point of view, the Divergent would challenge the values held by faction members, as each faction has a set of values that they transmit to new members. This idea bears some similarities with the idea that migrants from different cultures would transform society and change its cultural values. Furthermore, this idea is based on ethnocentricity, which implies that changes to one's culture would be necessarily negative and follows the basis of classic utopias: stagnation and conservatism.

Regarding racial differences, the dystopian/SF novel *Across the Universe* describes a society where all ethnic traits have been merged. After centuries without new blood, the society becomes mono-ethnic. In this context, when a passenger is awakened from five centuries of induced sleep she is rejected and feared by society as a whole because of her pale skin and red hair. When the society is no longer controlled through drugs, dissident acts succeed, and Amy's life is threatened. In fact, the leader of the society presented in this novel argues that difference, together with individual thinking and lack of a strong leader, causes discord and system failure. The citizens' reaction, however, is induced by the leader, Eldest, who warns the population of the danger that this person poses because she has become a problem for his continuity plans as regards his successor. Thus, this trilogy offers a clear view of the way a person whose appearance differs from the majority is used as scapegoat by authorities in order to gain control and power.

In recent years we have been witnesses to one of the greatest migration crises with European countries as receivers. In this context, political and social discourses about the

migrants have received scholarly attention due to the widespread concern about their negative portrayals affecting cohabitation and predisposition of the citizens towards helping the incomers. Overall, the increase of nationalism, the affiliation with the territory where one was born, is closely related to the previous stages of the hierarchy of needs, especially to safety, given that nationalist parties use fear of unemployment and crime to boost national identity. This situation bears some similarities with the conception of “the other” as a threat to the society’s cultural values, as explained above, in the case of *Divergent*. In turn, nationalism has been shown to favour generalizations of other groups, thus promoting stereotypes and stigmatization. Such stigmatization is experienced by Amy in *Godspeed*.

In order to discuss otherisation affecting children’s everyday life, we must focus on schools. Rivers, Carragher, Couzens, Hechler and Fini (2018, p. 16) conclude that the surveyed children –from US and UK schools– had assimilated key ideas about deportation and access to welfare by immigrants transmitted by the political candidates. In Spain, studies expose the ongoing problem of integration of children from different cultural backgrounds and warn about the existence of ghetto schools which, far from promoting integration, reinforce established stereotypes and prevent inclusion (Goenechea, 2016, p. 117). Furthermore, Olmos Alcaraz and Martínez Chicón (2017, p. 7) point out that the strategies used by the Spanish institutions to avoid problems resulting from cultural diversity are focused on the homogenisation of the children in cultural terms and not on promoting the understanding of diversity. This strategy has as a result or as a goal the assimilation of the minority culture into the majority culture and the eradication of difference. From a different point of view, Boussif (2019, p. 86) argues that teachers of culturally and academically diverse groups lack the necessary resources and specific training to address this situation, thus hampering inclusion. Thus, situations of academic discrimination may be the result of lack of resources and the fact that this diversity is rather recent, which may have prevented the application of adequate measures. Regardless of the intentionality of integration measures, the reality shows that efforts have been insufficient, and that discrimination is a real concern that can be perceived by adolescents.

These situations could be extrapolated to the pattern of institutional behaviour shown in some of the trilogies. In particular, in *The Hunger Games*, Katniss criticises the otherisation of the districts loyal to the Capitol given their common fight to survive the Capitol’s oppression; thus, she creates a common ground based on class struggle.

Similarly, Tally refuses the feeling of hatred and disgust towards everybody who does not belong to her clique and looks and acts like that group. From a more personal viewpoint, both Amy and Tris evince the negative consequences of division and otherisation be it caused by ethnic, socioeconomic or cultural differences. Therefore, while Katniss and Tally represent the rejection of these social views, Amy and Tris offer children the opportunity to identify with people suffering discrimination on the grounds of difference from the point of view of race and cultural values. All in all, children in the analysed countries could identify the discourses that praise homogeneity and blame diversity and difference to a greater or lesser extent, thus creating tension and an atmosphere that allows discrimination. In this sense, the societies mentioned are criticised by the novels and young readers could easily identify them as the target of the rebel protagonists.

#### 5.4 Esteem

##### 5.4.1 Esteem in utopias and dystopias

Closely related to the idea of belonging and affiliation, the topic of esteem is the following stage of Maslow's hierarchy of human needs. We can define esteem as the condition of a person who respects and is respected by others and as a pre-condition has a positive idea of him or herself (self-esteem). According to Neff (2011, p. 1), self-esteem is an "evaluation of our worthiness as individuals, a judgement that we are good valuable people." According to Orth, Robins and Meier (2009, p. 318), low self-esteem is a predictor of poor mental health, and Sowislo and Orth (2013, p. 15) found that self-esteem was significantly related to depression. Therefore, negative self-esteem could be considered a determinant of unhappiness.

Given that happiness is part of the essence of eutopia, it has been discussed in various novels both in the utopian and dystopian versions of the subgenre. In a dystopian approach to the subject, in Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932), esteem is measured in a pre-birth condition that establishes the person's status in a biologically organized society. Thus, Bernard Marx' physical alteration influences others' prejudged perception of him and thus his self-esteem. Similarly, Joan Hunter Holly's (1975) *Come and See the Last Man Cry*, presents a world where the population are deprived of emotions through a conditioning process similar to the one presented in *Brave New*



*World*; as a result, they need drugs and a spectacle consisting in watching a tormented child cry. In Mary Soon Lee's (1999) utopian short story, *Lifework*, citizens' happiness is managed by the government. Another short story, *For the Killing of the Happiest Man* by Max Hrabel (2010), depicts a dystopian society where depression affects the majority of the population, leading to the emergence of a "happiness movement," including a ritual of selection of the happiest man. Nevertheless, the use of conditioning to gain control of emotions is one of the most common thematic approaches in YA dystopian fiction. For example, Penelope Todd's (2005) *Box*, presents a society where the government creates an implant that controls emotion via chemistry regulation. The negative consequences of measures to prevent unhappiness or depression are also reflected by YA dystopias. *The Program*, by Suzanne Young (2013), presents a dystopian system where depression affects most of the population. People try to avoid the treatment, which is administered by The Program and erases people's memories. *Someone to Listen, Inc.* (Blank, 2017) is a flawed utopia, where surveillance aims at identifying any citizens suffering depression.

Dystopias for adults have also focused on technological approaches to human happiness. *The Happy Breed* by Sladek (1967) presented a world in which machines erase suffering from people but eventually gain control over every other aspect of their lives. Similarly, Amy Herrick's (2003) novel *The Happiness Code* deals with the scientific aspects of happiness and the human use of technology for that purpose. In this case, a scientist discovers a gene that ensures the baby's happiness, but the result is the baby's inability to feel pain or suffering.

Esteem may also be dependent on the possibilities of a person to develop his or her abilities in order to achieve a position that is respected in the community. On the other hand, cultural conditioning may influence the population's satisfaction with themselves. Therefore, an analysis of esteem (including self-esteem) must deal with direct statements but also on how and whether the protagonist holds an empowering position. The interesting fact of the chosen corpus of novels is that three of the trilogies are written in first person, thus granting the opportunity to hear the heroine's physical and psychological perceptions and her agency.

In *Texts and contexts: American women envision utopia 1890-1920*, Kolmerten (1994) deals with the ideas of work, motherhood and cultural values that oppressed women's agency. The author reviews some utopias written by women at that time and points out to work as a means to contribute to the community and to obtain a significant

position in that society while enhancing women's self-esteem. According to Kolmerten (1994, pp. 108–109), many of the women who wrote these feminist visions of a better future used the conventions of the romantic novel, which posed a problem when attempting to finish the novel while conserving the criticism of male privileges. In this vein, the writers who decided to follow those conventions regardless of the tone of the novel used either marriage or death for the protagonist's ending. Thus, in novels like *San Salvador* (Tincker, 1892) or Winslow's *A Woman for Mayor* (1909), the strong protagonists either die—as in the former—or accept submission and marriage as their happy ending—as in the latter. A century later, the new dystopian fiction for YA with female protagonists has faced the same problem, as we will discuss below.

An interesting approach to self-esteem deals with self-perception as regards physical appearance. Typically, insecurities play a key role in fiction targeting a young-adult audience, because of the process of development and change that adolescents endure, which puts them in a context of uncertainty. Some feminist utopias have tackled the insecurity of women, offering alternative worlds where being fat is positive, as in Bovey's (1999) *A Life in a Day*, or where physical appearance is not important, as in Matson's (2015) *The Day Without Body Shame*. In Smith's 1954 satire *The Laminated Woman*, body alterations are a constant including skin colour or body shape. On the other hand, dystopian fiction has offered post-human visions of the body, which has been altered as much and as deeply as societal visions of the future. Some of these alterations obey to an attempt to overcome the limitations of the human body and thus to scientific experimentation. For example, Brown's 1903 *Limanora. The Island of Progress* is home to humans who have altered their body and used technology in order to be able to fly. According to Parrinder (1997, p. 1), genetic enhancement or eugenics is part of the utopian literary tradition, with works like Morris' *News from Nowhere* (1890) being more modern descriptions of commonly applied policies since Plato's *Republic*. In other cases, as explained by Bukatman, the alteration of the body leads to its "deformation or disappearance": "the subject is dissolved, simulated, re-tooled, genetically engineered evolved and devolved" (Bukatman, 1993, p. 20). The contemporary YA sf-dystopia *Unwind*, by Neal Shusterman (2007), is a clear example of post-humanity and deconstruction of the human body that results in identity redefinition in a future society.

Alterations but also perceptions of the body are closely linked to wellbeing and self-esteem. However, there is an additional factor, which relates to the previous section

on affiliation: social support. Many of the dystopias discussed above are political texts in that they offer views that challenge the established patterns of behaviour regarding labour, for instance. Support from peers and relatives may be crucial in determining the protagonist’s self-esteem and the development of her potential to reach a respected position in society. Thus, I analyse the novels in terms of the instances of positive or negative descriptions of the protagonists uttered by others or thought or voiced by the protagonists themselves. This procedure also allows for a more detailed analysis of the support received by the protagonists, or lack thereof, and of the influence of this social support on her self-esteem.

#### 5.4.2 Results: *Uglies*

The table below displays the results of the analysis of the topics of “esteem” and “self-esteem” for the first novel of Scott Westerfeld’s trilogy: *Uglies*.

1	Tally felt uglier every second she spent there. [NSR] Being laughed at by everyone she met wasn’t helping much. But it was better than what they’d do if they saw her real face. (p. 13)
2	Sort of like a brother or sister—an older, more confident, much prettier brother or sister. One you’d be jealous of your whole life, if you’d been born a hundred years ago [ESTEEM]. (p. 13)
3	He wasn’t looking at her hand, or into her eyes. Not into her squinty, narrow-set, indifferently brown eyes. Nobody eyes. [NSR] (p. 16)
4	Tally pulled back into the darkness, trying to ignore the horrible feeling that she was a spy, a sneak, for not surrendering to the woman’s authority. (p. 26)
5	“Nice trick!” [PRBO] Tally smiled. It was actually a pretty good story, now that she had someone to tell it to. (p. 28)
6	Shay insisted they call each other by their real names most of the time, which Tally had quickly gotten used to. [PRBO] [ESTEEM] She liked it, actually. (p. 36)
7	“Making ourselves feel ugly is not fun.” “We are ugly!” [NSR] (p. 44)
8	Shay’s face clouded. She wiped off an eyebrow, then looked up sharply. [PRBO] “You’re not ugly.” (p. 80)
9	“I’m serious, Tally,” Shay said once they were out in the water. “Your nose isn’t ugly. I like your eyes, too. [PRBO] (p. 81)

10	“My eyes? Now you’re totally crazy. They’re way too [NSR] close together.” (p. 81)
11	“We’re [PSR] not freaks, Tally. We’re normal. We may not be gorgeous, but at least we’re not hyped-up Barbie dolls.” (p. 82)
12	Well, I want to be happy, and looking like a real person [NSR] is the first step.” (p. 84)
13	“Shay, I never would have gotten used to the idea. I don’t want to be ugly all my life. I want those [ESTEEM] perfect eyes and lips, and for everyone to look at me and gasp. (p. 92)
14	“Good for you, Tally. That’s very mature.” (p. 99)
15	Were they laughing at her? [NRBO] (p. 113)
16	Going anywhere else was pure torture. The uglies in her own dorm treated her like a walking disease, [NRBO] and anyone else who recognized her sooner or later asked, “Why aren’t you pretty yet?” (p. 120)
17	Tally peered into her mirror all day, noting every flaw, every deformity. [NSR] Her thin lips pursed with unhappiness. (p. 120)
18	The thought of what she must look like was too much. [NSR] Tally collapsed onto the bed, covering her face with her hands and sobbing. (p. 123)
19	When did you get modest, Squint? [PRBO] All my friends are fascinated.” (p. 123)
20	A little red and flaking skin should go quite nicely with the scratches on her ugly face [NSR]. (p. 154)
21	[...] Tally remembered, a lot of people, especially young girls, became so ashamed at being fat [NSR] that they stopped eating. (p. 199)
22	Tally felt the weight [NSR] of the mountain pressing down upon her, and found that she was still struggling to breathe as she pulled herself out into the sunlight. (p. 219)
23	In only one day she’d begun to realize that it wasn’t just Shay’s dream she’d be betraying. [NSR] Hundreds of people had made a life in the Smoke. (p. 225)
24	Tally let herself cry, burying her face in the scratchy wool sleeve of her new sweater, feeling Shay’s warmth against her, and feeling awful [NSR] [PRBO] about every gesture of kindness from her friend. (p. 227)
25	There was something comforting about the exhaustion of hard work. [ESTEEM] All her life, Tally had been troubled by insomnia, lying awake most nights thinking

	about arguments she'd had, or wanted to have, or things she should have done differently. But here in the Smoke her mind shut off the moment her head hit the pillow. (p. 228)
26	The thought of rabbits being killed, skinned, and cooked suited her mood. Like the rest of her day, this meal tasted [NSR] brutal and serious. (p. 243)
27	Tally Youngblood was a weed. [NSR] And, unlike the orchids, she wasn't even a pretty one. (p. 244)
28	"You must think I'm an idiot." [NSR] (p. 246)
29	"Not at all." He took her hand. "I think it was really brave." [PRBO] (p. 246)
30	She was going to get an award for bravery when she should really be kicked out of the Smoke [NSR] for treachery. (p. 248)
31	But the magic was all based on lies. She didn't deserve the look [NSR] in David's eyes. (p. 249)
32	"That's why you're beautiful, Tally." (p. 276)
33	She laughed, shaking her head clear. "What, with my thin [NSR] lips and my eyes too close together?" (p. 276)
34	"You resisted?" he said. "Huh. [PRBO] Guess I was wrong about you." (p. 298)
35	"Yeah, good work." [PRBO] (p. 302)
36	Dr. Cable said. "For someone who wants to be a pretty, you're always such [NRBO] a sight." (p. 304)
37	He held her tighter. "But I should have known [PRBO] you would escape." (p. 321)
38	She felt herself shudder, the words twisting in her like [NSR] a knife. (p. 322)
39	"Tally, [PRBO] you are amazing." (p. 324)
40	"Don't worry [PRBO]. You're a natural." (p. 326)
41	Every gesture of kindness from her victims would only make her feel [NSR] worse. (p. 329)
42	Or had Dr. Cable done something to him? One thought stuck in her mind: However it had happened, it was her [NSR] fault. (p. 392)
43	"I don't want you to hate me, Shay." Tally sighed. [NSR] "Or maybe I do. I betrayed you, and I feel horrible about it." (p. 396)
44	But I'm sorry, Shay. I'm sorry I ruined [NSR] your dream." (p. 397)

45	But no matter what David said now, he would always remember what she had done, the lives she had cost with her secrets [NRBO].
46	“You know, it’s my fault you’re not already pretty. I messed up everything by running away. [NSR] [SHAY] I owe you.” (p. 422)
47	Shay shrugged. “I just feel bad about [NSR] [SHAY] Tally. (p. 408)
48	“Having a criminal past is the only way into the really good parties. I mean, no one wants to hear about what classes you took in ugly school.” She giggled. [PRBO] “We should be a hit, then.” (p. 424)

Source: own elaboration.

The topic of esteem in this trilogy includes the following issues: unrealistic beauty standards and manipulation; social pressure, peer support and lack of family support; and agency.

In this first novel, the results indicate two main sources of discontent for Tally: physical appearance and guilt over her behaviour. The former is prominent during the first half of the novel, while Tally is in the city, whereas the second is the main problem during Tally’s life in the Smoke. In both cases, the result is a feeling of social anxiety that explains the great relevance of affiliation and belonging for Tally as exposed in the previous section (5.3). In this sense, Tally is faced with contrary forces that challenge her view and influence and shape her ideas.

The novels’ title is already indicative of the weight of physical appearance in the plot. More precisely, the author seems to seek to challenge established unrealistic beauty standards that are used to manipulate the population, which is a burning issue nowadays. First, example 1 offers an introduction to the devastating effects of a system equating worth with beauty on the self-esteem of individuals. In fact, Tally’s initial negative self-esteem is extreme to the point that interacting with her former best friend increases her self-awareness (3); she considers that being ugly implies being unworthy of pretty people and leads to her association of beauty with social relevance (3, 13). Beauty is also associated with superiority regarding power and rightfulness. Example 4 shows that Tally feels automatic guilt when she does not surrender to the beautiful agent of authority.

Her negative perception of her body is highlighted by the segregation between pretties and Ugliers. Since she is not accustomed to seeing pretty people, people who have undergone an extremely invasive surgery, she compares herself to them; her

conditioned perception of her physical appearance as unacceptable in society becomes more prominent in an environment lacking anybody with similar features. In other words, lack of representation of different bodies has a detrimental effect on her self-esteem. On the other hand, the conditioning of the system, which causes citizens to associate correct behaviour with submission to authorities creates in Tally a feeling of guilt.

The novel efficiently portrays the power of manipulation and conditioning endured by the population to ensure their adherence to their cultural values and beliefs. When Shay challenges both Tally's insecurities and the system-imposed beauty standards (6, 8, 9, 11), Tally reacts by adhering to the system's views and marking Shay's ideas as crazy (7, 10). Tally's acceptance of the system's ideas is based on the conception that following the rules will make her happy (12) and that the alternative is worse (2). Thus, she validates the system by justifying its role in preventing jealousy from those who are naturally pretty (2). Her defence of the system is also manifest in example 21; she considers that the system has provided solutions to age-old problems including eating disorders caused by social pressure and beauty standards.

The second stage of the process faces Tally with the negative side of the system. Example 5 showed that Tally gained some self-esteem as a result of her new friendship, Shay. Thus, isolation affects Tally negatively, while friendship and interpersonal relationships improve her mood. After Shay leaves and Tally is rejected for the operation, she is singled out by the uglies in her dorm and is avoided by all (15, 16). Given the lack of a supportive friend, a compensating force against her tendency towards self-deprecation, isolation only worsens Tally's self-esteem (17, 18). As she is forced outside the city for the first time in a clear reflection of the image of the misfit being expelled and following the reduction of difference and extraordinary situations, which are out of place in the system, she carries with her the city standards that associate marks and difference with imperfection (20).

In another show of peer support, a situation that resembles the one described with Shay, David challenges Tally's conceptions: when she considers her behaviour idiotic (28), he responds with praise (29). Tally questions David's judgement about her beauty, but, in this case, she does not dismiss it (32, 33). Although reluctantly, she seems to accept his praise about her skills (37, 39, 40) despite a passing mention to guilt (38). This tendency becomes apparent when Dr Cable criticises her appearance and Tally

does not react negatively nor does that criticism affect her self-esteem (36). Thus, these results support the idea that peer support fosters positive self-esteem.

The results show other examples of praise Tally receives from the authorities, Peris, and Craig, in all cases for her behaviour, not her physical appearance. Examples 14 and 35 show that the authorities praise her at the beginning for her maturity and for betraying the Smoke for the Specials. However, while the first one is accepted as compliment for doing the right thing, she does not want to be praised for the second, since she had decided to stay away from the system. The results thus portray the evolution of the character in a journey towards maturity and agency. While Peris (19) generates high expectations for Tally regarding her future in the system, telling her how others are fascinated, Craig's (34) recognition of Tally as a rebel, which takes place after she decides to stay, increases Tally's guilt as she is immediately discovered by the authorities as the betrayer. This example in particular exemplifies the control exerted by the city, not only over citizens living there, but also over those deciding to take a different route.

As in the previous trilogy, agency is a salient topic. As the novel progresses, and after the life experience of her solitary trip to the Smoke, Tally's main source of self-hatred is the terrible consequences of her decision to become a spy, to prioritise her beauty and staying in the system to her friend's happiness and trust. In this case, examples 22, 23, 26, 38 refer to Tally's direct negative self-esteem due to her actions. In particular, examples 22 and 23 show the weight of her responsibility in other people's fates and in destroying their dream. On the other hand, example 26 and 38 describe the effects of such responsibility on her self-esteem and mood, particularly derived from people's comments (38). However, there is another trend, which concerns negative feelings related to others' kindness towards her. This is patent not only when others are friendly and kind to her (24, 30, 31, 41), but also when she independently considers how her actions are going to damage others, comparing herself to the plague of the white orchids (27). The inevitably dramatic consequences become a burden for Tally (42), who begins to use the phrase "it's my fault," a highly recurring one throughout the trilogy. The main issue is the negative effects of her actions on her established relationships –with Shay (43, 44) and with David (45)– a situation that she feels unable to fix due to the circumstances. Her actions are the result of two poles of influence and the responsibilities imposed on her. As a consequence, social pressure to meet



traditional expectations in the city together with peer pressure to abandon learned cultural values and beliefs have a highly negative influence on Tally’s self-esteem.

This lack of agency is stressed by Shay’ decision to take the blame for the situation (46, 47). Shay’s protecting behaviour is a reflection of the citizens’ learned condescending attitude towards citizens who are an operation behind. Thus, pretties feel superior to Ugliers and consider that their inability to make the “correct” choices is due to the fact that their brain is not fully developed. In practice, they embody the parent-child struggle for agency recognition, which is in fact culturally represented by the society’s strong uncertainty avoidance and the fact that citizens are considered incompetent towards authorities. In this particular case, pretties are authorities to Ugliers.

As regards effective agency and holding a respected position, example 25 shows that physical exertion and working for the community are activities that the city does not encourage, and that Tally experiences in the Smoke. She values working for its benefits for health, but also because it impedes idle thinking and related problems such as insomnia. Undoubtedly, the city’s promotion of idle behaviour among the pretties is meant to reinforce the idea of carefree satisfaction, while among the ugliers it promotes an obsession with one’s own flaws, as Tally shows when she is left alone. Working or having a clear role in society are important for Tally, whose only positive comment about herself refers to her future as a Crim among the pretties (48). This result agrees with her eagerness to fit and the fact that she feels most comfortable when following the rules of the system. Furthermore, this established role would allow her to contribute to the creation of a respected image for herself thus gaining the esteem of others.

#### 5.4.3 Results: *Pretties*

As in the previous subsections, the following table shows the quotations that reflect self-esteem and esteem for the protagonist in *Pretties*.

1	“Crim costumes should be easy, Shay-la. We're [PSR] the two biggest criminals in town.” (p. 8)
2	Tally loved seeing how she [PSR] looked in new clothes, even silly ones. Part of her could still remember back before, when looking in the mirror had been painful, her eyes too close together and nose too small, hair frizzy all the time.

	Now it was like someone gorgeous stood across from Tally, following her every move. (p. 9)
3	It was totally stupid [NSR] being unhappy today, or any day. Probably just too much champagne.
4	No other Crims appeared among the tumult of costumes, and Tally began to wonder if they'd all ditched the party rather than [ESTEEM] [NSR] vote for her. (p. 17)
5	Tally wanted to leave the Smoke behind, to escape all the tangled memories of running and hiding [NSR] and feeling like a betrayer. (p. 23)
6	Zane always listened raptly [PRBO] to her Smoke stories. (p. 25)
7	They thought it was totally bubbly that real-life Specials were at the party, and our dive off the tower got six hundred milli-Helens from Zane! [PRBO] You are so Crim! (p. 42)
8	But Tally decided not to fix it yet. Like Peris had said, it did look really criminal. She smiled, remembering her [ESTEEM] [PSR] new status. (p. 45)
9	Tally looked away. It was embarrassing to [NSR] have your ugly life follow you across the river, at least in person. (p. 50)
10	Maybe it had been worth it all [ESTEEM] [PSR] [FULFIL] to wind up here, pretty and popular. (p. 55)
11	“At least you took the chance, Tally. You were [PRBO] brave enough to find out for yourself.” (p. 55)
12	“Tally, you gave yourself up, knowing you'd have to risk the cure. That's amazingly [PRBO] brave.” (p. 91)
13	“It's always [NSR] my fault.” (p. 67)
14	People were starting to point out Tally and Zane [PRBO] when they were in public, and there were more Crim wannabees every day. (p. 104)
15	Dr. Cable shook her head—“I realize that you're [PRBO] a natural. Join us.” (p. 132)
16	“Right, you betrayed us. [NRBO] After you stole David from me, of course.” (p.141)
17	I helped you become one of the Crims. Did it even occur to you to share the cure with me? It's your fault [NRBO] I'm like this, after all!” (p. 144)
18	“You should have heard her, Zane. She really [NRBO] hates me.” (p. 165)

19	“This is [NSR] our fault,” Tally whispered. (p. 174)
20	Though her celebrity [PRBO] kept the two mercifully quiet, their furtive glances were unsettling. (p. 182)
21	These two pretties weren't the type to become Cutters, Tally was fairly certain. But she couldn't escape the [NSR] realization that her criminal notoriety was feeding Shay's little project, creating pretties hungry to explore a certain kind of bubblyness. (p. 183)
22	Tally allowed herself a thin smile of self-congratulation. [PSR] This one time, at least, she hadn't betrayed Shay. (p. 188)
23	“Hey, you're Tally Youngblood!” “Who else?” [PSR] [PRBO] She grinned and leaned over the side. (p. 212)
24	This was her fault. [NSR] She had swallowed the pill that would have kept Zane from this, the cure for the cure. (p. 332)
25	“You managed to cure yourself without getting your brain chewed up. [PRBO] That's what I'd call incredible.” (p. 337)
26	Tally looked down at their clasped hands. She didn't feel very incredible. [NSR] She felt smelly and dirty, and horrible that she hadn't had the guts to take both pills, which would have prevented all of this from happening. (p. 337)
27	“Why not? I destroyed the Smoke, and [NSR] David's father died because of me.” (p. 338)
28	“Zane, no. It can't be your fault. That was a long time ago.” She sighed. [ESTEEM] [PSR] “Maybe neither of us is to blame.” (p. 341)
29	Maybe she didn't need a handsome prince to stay awake— or an ugly one, for that matter. [INDEPENDENCE] [PSR] After all, Tally had cured herself without the pill and had made it all the way here on her own. No one else she'd ever heard of had escaped the city twice. (p. 345)
30	She had called David ugly. He would never forget that, [NSR] nor would she. (p. 355)
31	Tally gave up trying to see what was going on through the entrance, and stared at the fire unhappily. Now that Zane had been taken away, Tally only felt defeated. (p. 361)

Source: own elaboration.

Given that one of the sources for her dissatisfaction is solved with the operation, Tally shows a positive start regarding self-esteem. She meets the beauty standards and enjoys doing so (2). Furthermore, her past as a tricky ugly provides her with an advantage in New Pretty Town (1). Nevertheless, her old insecurities appear straight away. Examples 3, 4 and 5 show precisely how her experiences in the Smoke affect her ability to fit in and to become self-confident. Thus, despite the operation, Tally's thoughts echo her past low self-esteem due to social pressure. However, instead of focusing exclusively on her physical appearance, her insecurities revolve around acceptance from the renowned clique of the Crims and whether her behaviour is up to standards.

Following the pattern already established in the previous novel, Tally receives the attention and praise of a boy –Zane– who makes her feel special (6, 7). The immediate consequence is an increase in her self-esteem (8) that is slightly affected by a first appearance of her past life (9). Zane's compliments (11, 12) cause Tally to remember her old feelings of guilt (13). It is noteworthy that Tally rejoices in her newly acquired popularity (14) until the Smokies, another external influence, make an entrance and force her to challenge and reject her life as Pretty. Therefore, Tally's self-esteem is positively influenced by peer support.

As in the previous novel, praise is not always a positive factor, especially if it comes from the highest authority in the city: Dr Cable tries to recruit Tally for the Specials (15), which unsettles her plans for the future. As we have seen in the affiliation section, she only wanted to be a Pretty, not a special agent of Dr Cable. Nevertheless, the turning point regarding Tally's self-esteem is when Shay discovers Tally's cure and her betrayal; she remembers Tally's treason both regarding the Smoke and her boyfriend, which adds to the fact that she did not share the cure with her (16, 17, 18). The sentence marked in the previous novel's results as the iconic line "it is my fault" appears here twice literally (13, 19), in example 19 to refer to Shay's self-harming behaviour due to Tally's inaction. From that moment, all positive situations appear to have a negative counterpart for Tally. Tally and Zane's popularity (20) automatically becomes a concern over its use by Shay to recruit more self-harming pretties (21). When her actions demonstrate a change for the better (22) and she is able to enjoy her status (23), Tally finds another source of concern and guilt: Zane's health (24). The Smokies send Tally two pills that would cure the brain lesions inflicted by the authorities to prevent critical thinking. However, she was too scared to take them, so

Zane suggested taking one pill each. Unfortunately, both pills were meant to be taken together, and taking the pill Zane took caused him severe brain lesions. Thus, Tally blames her cowardice for Zane’s health problem. Examples 25 to 28 show the struggle of the protagonist to come to terms with her actions. Despite Zane’s praise (25), she continues to blame herself for the situation (26) in a cumulative way. That is, she recalls past guilt and adds it to the current situation (27). In fact, only her protective behaviour towards Zane makes her agree on the fact that the situations were the result of the circumstances and that nobody was to blame (28). All this guilt is associated with the responsibility mentioned in the discussion about the previous novel: a salient position among rebels and a future salient position among the special force of the city.

At this point, Tally starts a new pattern. She claims to be independent from any men (29), claiming her agency and confidence, only to regain the feeling of guilt for her behaviour towards David (30), which adds to a general feeling of defeat with Zane’s absence (31). Despite this apparent contradiction, Tally becomes active in her decisions for the first time in the novels, albeit under clearly extraordinary circumstances.

#### 5.4.4 Results: *Specials*

Self-esteem and esteem examples of the last instalment of the trilogy are presented in the following table.

1	“We <i>are</i> [PRBO] special.” Shay looked back at Tally over her shoulder, a grin playing on her face. (p. 10)
2	That's what happens when you're [PRBO] special. Why feel guilty?” (p. 62)
3	Tally nodded slowly - she <i>was</i> [PSR] happy. Her special senses made the whole world icy, and every moment spent in this new body was better than a year of being pretty. (p. 65)
4	But now that she knew Zane was healthy, his absence muddled everything. Suddenly, she felt [NSR] unfinished and unreal. (p. 65)
5	“We <i>are</i> better [PRBO] than them, Tally-wa!” (p. 93)
6	He does have some bad-ass friends, [PSR] Shay-la. He has you and me.” (134)
7	I really thought you'd changed. But you're still the same self-centered little [NRBO] ugly you've always been. (p. 170)
8	Tally a lot of time to think, and she spent most of it wondering [NRBO] if she really was the self-centered monster Shay had described. (p. 184)

9	That, and all the mistakes I've made. All the people [NSR] I've disappointed." (p. 190)
10	Zane felt about her now. After what had happened, he must have realized how weak she really [NSR] was: Dr. Cable's feared fighting machine undone by a kiss, sickened by something as simple as a quivering hand. (p. 197)
11	But if this war really was [NSR] her fault, she had to try. (p. 282)
12	The awful sight was [NSR] <i>their</i> fault. (p. 294)
13	"It's [NSR] <i>our</i> fault." (p. 300)
14	Are you okay?" "No, [NSR] Shay-la. I'm not okay." (p. 306)
15	She carried a knife inside her now [...] She could feel it every time she [NSR] [GRIEF] swallowed, every time her thoughts strayed from the splendor of the wild. (p. 309)
16	David put up his hands. "I'm trying to say something. <i>You</i> were the one who thought your way out of being [PRBO] pretty." (p. 319)
17	"So it's [NSR] all my fault again." (p. 321)
18	<i>I don't</i> need to be cured. Just like I don't need to cut myself to feel, or think. From now on, [PSR] no one rewires my mind but me. (p. 371)

Source: own elaboration.

In order to display more clearly the patterns presented throughout the three novels, I focus on three points. Firstly, in each of the three initial situations, Tally feels unsatisfied: be it as an Ugly, a Pretty, or a Special. In the second and third novels, Tally fails to understand the reason why she cannot be fully happy, she becomes an anomaly in a system that guarantees every group's positive esteem. As a Special, as she did as a Pretty, Shay plays the role of a defender of the system, an agent that points out the marvels of their current situation (1, 2), thus highlighting the oddity of Tally's feelings (3).

Secondly, Shay's support or lack thereof conditions Tally's self-esteem. As I have explained in the discussions for the previous novels, peer support is a key determinant of Tally's self-esteem, but Shay's seems the strongest influence. Shay supports Tally by plotting so that Zane is considered to become a Special, and Tally feels satisfied and happy (6). However, after being criticised by Shay (7), Tally's self-esteem is not recovered. From then on, the situations that unfold around her become a source of self-

blame and criticism for Tally, be it regarding disappointments caused (8, 9), or her lack of resolution to take the correct decisions (10, 11). When Shay reappears, her time alone has changed her again, as in the first and second novels; Shay cannot and does not try to help Tally improve her psychological wellbeing. In line with the dependence Tally shows from others, she feels worst when losing somebody (14). In this case, Zane’s death causes her to blame herself (15). When presented with David’s positive comments about her ability to think herself out of the conditioning and modifications made to her brain (16), she first contradicts him (17) as in the other interactions of the same type, both in this novel and the previous ones. However, David’s support allows her to build self-confidence to declare her independence from the system (18) in a statement that resembles the one made at the end of the second novel regarding her independence from “princes.” All in all, throughout the novels, she struggles to find her agency and a position that is respected. On a side note, the importance of beauty standards seems forgotten given her new posthuman body, which is defined by Ostry (2004, p. 222) as a body modified by technology (e.g., cyborg) or by the injection of other species’ genes among other possibilities usually in order to enhance those bodies. In this case, Tally’s body would be the product of biotechnological improvement. She does not become critical of the change, which is considered an improvement similar to that given to the pretties. Instead, she enjoys the possibilities (3). Her decision not to change back into a more human body may be a representation of self-acceptance; however, it seems to contradict the general tone of the novels on the importance of accepting the natural unaltered body.

Finally, Tally’s self-blaming is notorious throughout the novels and it comprises an important part of the results in this novel with four instances (11, 12, 13, 17) out of 18 total results.

#### 5.4.5 Results: *The Hunger Games*

In this case, the table below presents the results for the tag “Esteem,” which represents the way Katniss perceives herself and how she is perceived by others.

1	I hardly recognize myself in the cracked mirror that leans against the wall. “You look beautiful, [PRBO]” says Prim in a hushed voice. “And nothing like myself,” I say. (p. 18)
2	“I’m all right,” I say. [NSR]. (p. 85)

3	She's excellent, [PRBO] says Peeta. My father buys her squirrels. (p. 85)
4	This assessment of my skills from Peeta takes me totally by surprise. First, that he ever noticed. Second, that he's talking me up. [NSR] (p. 85)
5	If I get jumped, I'm dead! [NSR] I can hear my voice rising in anger. (p. 110)
6	"She said, 'She's a survivor, [PRBO] that one'. 'She is,'" says Peeta. (p. 110)
7	They'll be tripping over each other to sponsor you. [PRBO] (p. 111)
8	I'm a tough trader. [PSR] Or am I? What effect do I have? That I'm weak and needy? (p. 111)
9	I know a few basic snares, [NSR] I mutter. That may be significant in terms of food, says Haymitch. (p. 109)
10	Besides, my game is first-class. [PSR] No one pitied me! I glower at the roll sure he meant to insult me. (p. 111)
11	I had been hoping my shooting skills might get me a six or a seven, even if I'm not particularly powerful. Now I'm sure I'll have the lowest score of the twenty-four. [NSR] (p. 127)
12	"I don't find you so. The prep team adores you. You even won over the Gamemakers. [PRBO] (p. 147)
13	In a sort of brave way. It's not as if I'm never friendly. Okay, maybe I don't go around loving everybody I meet, maybe my smiles are hard to come by, but I do care for some people. [PSR] (p. 147)
14	"I don't know, but a lot of boys like her," [PRBO] says Peeta. (p. 157)
15	You're golden, sweetheart. You're going to have sponsors lined up around the block, [PRBO] says Haymitch. I'm embarrassed about my reaction. I force myself to acknowledge Peeta. (p. 166)
16	I bite my lip feeling inferior. [NSR] While I've been ruminating on the availability of trees, Peeta has been struggling with how to maintain his identity. (p. 171)

Source: own elaboration.

In general terms the topics discussed in this trilogy revolve around responsibilities and social pressure, family and peer support, and praise. In this first novel, the main topics are support and praise. Furthermore, we see an approach to self-esteem that focuses on psychological traits and skills rather than on physical appearance.



The first noticeable aspect of the results is the fact that Katniss seldom describes herself in any way. In general, she could be described as the type of character that is focused on others and on reality and does not perform much introspection. The second significant aspect is the considerable number of examples of positive representation by others. Katniss is admired not only by her little sister, Prim (1), but also by people from the District, like Peeta's mother (6), who had never spoken directly to her or treated her kindly, or Haymich (15), who dislikes her personality but acknowledges her potential. She also receives the acceptance and praises of Cinna, her stylist, as well as the preparation team, people at the Capitol and the Gamemakers (12). The last person that expresses admiration or a positive image of Katniss is Peeta, firstly regarding her skills as a huntress (3) and her potential to gather sponsorships (7), and then regarding her attractiveness by mentioning the interest that several boys in town had in her (14). On the other hand, Katniss' descriptions or references to herself are mostly related to her hunting skills (8, 10, 11, 13). In this regard, although she is dubious when it comes to people's perceptions of her (8), she shows great pride in her role as householder and her abilities (10); however, she downplays her abilities with snares because she compares herself with Gale, who is more able in this regard in her opinion (9). Therefore, the topic of physical appearance that was so present in the previous trilogy is not relevant in *The Hunger Games* because Katniss prefers being herself to changing her identity by assuming others' beauty standards (1). Instead, the focus of negativity is personality and behaviour.

Thus, regarding negative self-representation we find three main ideas. Firstly, she is surprised by the fact that Peeta noticed her skills and the fact that he has a positive image of her (4), which implies that she is not aware of the extent to which she is perceived positively by others and a certain humility. Secondly, she downplays her possibilities in the arena by stressing her physical disadvantage in one-to-one combat (5), which is justified in the context of the discussion as she is competing with Peeta in talking the other up. This idea goes hand in hand with the fact that she considers that she has close to no possibilities of winning the games, hence her pessimism. Finally, the only aspect that she openly resents about herself refers to her personality. She is not friendly or open with outsiders and thus makes it difficult for her to be liked (13). However, even in this sense, she defends herself by mentioning that she cares deeply, but her circle is reduced. In addition, she considers that Peeta is morally superior because she has focused on the practical aspect of the games –strategy– and not on the

ethics and impact that killing may have on them after the games (16). This particular issue is relevant due to the alleged role that Peeta plays as a muse or guide for Katniss, helping and forcing her to become a better person.

#### 5.4.6 Results: *Catching Fire*

The following table includes the extracts that represent the protagonists' self-esteem and people's perception of her in the second novel of the trilogy.

1	I can't do it, I think. I'm not that good. [NSR] Peeta's the good one, the likable one. (p. 37)
2	Who else will I fail to save from the Capitol's vengeance? Who else will be dead if I don't satisfy President Snow? [NSR] (p. 49)
3	We would be safe inside the Justice Building by now, if I hadn't stopped, if I hadn't left my flowers. [NSR] (p. 76)
4	If I had just killed myself with those berries, none of this would've happened. [NSR] Peeta could have come home and lived, and everyone else would have been safe. (p. 121)
5	You haven't hurt people—you've given them an opportunity. They just have to be brave enough to take it. [PRBO] (p. 121)
6	I feel sick to my stomach, useless, the remaining snow dripping from my glove into a puddle on the floor. [NSR] (p. 137)
7	Because I'm selfish. [NSR] I'm a coward. I'm the kind of girl who, when she might be of use, would run to stay alive and leave those who couldn't follow to suffer and die. (p. 143)
8	No wonder I won the Games. No decent person ever does. [NSR] (p. 143)
9	You saved Peeta, I think weakly. [PSR] (p. 143)
10	Save him? More likely I stole his last chance at life, condemned him, by destroying the force field. [NSR] (p. 143)
11	Someone with clear and persuasive words, and I'm so easily tongue-tied. [NSR] (p. 150)
12	"I'll go with you," he says. "No. I've dragged you into enough trouble," I tell him. [NSR] (p. 158)

13	Tears spill from Bonnie’s eyes. “I can’t believe we actually got to meet you. You’re practically all anyone’s talked about since—” [PRBO] (p. 179)
14	But at the moment, I excuse myself from thinking about even those I love most. [NSR] I think only of me. And what lies ahead. (p. 211)
15	In this way, Peeta’s not hard to predict. While I was wallowing around on the floor of that cellar, thinking only of myself, [NSR] he was here, thinking only of me. Shame isn’t a strong enough word for what I feel. (p. 215)
16	You could live a hundred lifetimes and not deserve him, you know,” Haymitch says [NRBO] (p. 215)
17	Before I go down, I pause at the top of the stairs, feeling slightly embarrassed about the way I’ve handled the news of the Quarter Quell. [NSR] (p. 218)
18	I just want you to look straight ahead, as if the entire audience is beneath your notice.” “Finally something I’ll be good at,” I say. [NSR] (p. 249)
19	I can’t help catching glimpses of us on the huge screens along the route, and we are not just beautiful, [PSR] we are dark and powerful. (p. 255)
20	“For me, you’re perfect. They’re just teasing you.” [PRBO] (p. 260)
21	I tell Haymitch I’ll try, even though I think I’ll be pretty bad at the whole thing. [NSR] (p. 269)
22	“They saw her shoot,” [PRBO] says Peeta with a smile. “Actually, I saw her shoot, for real, for the first time. I’m about to put in a formal request myself.” (p. 280)
23	“We had to save you because you’re the mockingjay, Katniss,” says Plutarch. “While you live, the revolution lives.” [PRBO] (p. 466)

Source: own elaboration.

In the sequel to *The Hunger Games*, a new pattern arises as regards esteem. While in the first novel the dominant trend was Katniss downplaying herself or simply being unaware of her skills, in *Catching Fire*, she feels a strong sense of guilt, constantly blaming herself for people’s deaths and situations. Examples that reflect this are 2, 3, 4, 10, and 12. The choice of words to describe herself evinces the negative path she is walking as regards self-esteem. Interestingly, the person she is most concerned about is Peeta, not her family, because, in her own words, if she had died, Peeta would have won

and everything would have continued unchanged, the revolution would still be a chimera, and people would be relatively safe.

On the other hand, the responsibility and pressure that she is forced to endure is reflected in four examples: 1, 11, 18 and 21. These quotes reveal her uneasiness as to her role with the cameras; that is, acting as a compliant victor and a madly in love girl. She feels unable to meet President Snow's demands and Haymitch's expectations on sympathy, so she feels relieved when she is able to show her disgust towards the audience. It is important to mention that the responsibility, in this case, is to ensure that her actions do not cause the death of more people, including her family. Thus, it is not surprising to find that the results for this novel present a group of examples showing a self-deprecating attitude that will continue in the following novel, as will be explained later on. In examples 6, 7, 8, 14, 15, 17, and 18, Katniss repeatedly describes herself as useless (6), selfish and coward (7, 14, 15, 17) and indecent (8). She even feels that she has to justify herself when she thinks of her own safety before considering others' (14) and blames herself for doing so (15). The idea of Peeta being a role model and everything Katniss believes to be good is reinforced by Haymitch in example 16, when he tells her that she is undeserving of him.

By contrast, there is only one example in which Katniss thinks that she did something positive –when she saved Peeta (9)– and even then, the stance is weak and immediately contradicted (10). Nevertheless, as explained before, her low self-esteem is based on her behaviour and its outcomes, not on physical appearance. Therefore, she feels empowered thanks to Cinna's costumes, but the description does not refer to Katniss and Peeta's actual power or their behaviour (19), so it cannot be taken as a sign of improvement of her self-esteem.

In other novels I have shown how peer support is key in building self-esteem. In this case, Katniss receives the support of many, but the results show that this situation takes place towards the end of the novel, after all the examples showing her low self-esteem. Considering the novel is written in the first person and Katniss' feelings are rarely voiced, but thought –the novels offer readers not only characters' dialogue but also Katniss' thoughts– others' support could be less explicit than the support produced as a reaction to a voiced self-deprecating comment, as in other trilogies. Examples 5, 13, and 23 show that her role as a leader of the revolution is highly valued. She is reassured by Gale (5), but she fails to understand what she means for the districts when Bonnie praises her actions (13). On the other hand, Plutarch's idea of saving her so that she can

fulfil their plans is not a direct praise; in fact, it describes her as an instrument or a puppet. Finally, she is unconditionally held in high regard by Peeta, both regarding her skills and her personality (20, 22).

#### 5.4.7 Results: *Mockingjay*

The representations of esteem and self-esteem for the last novel of Suzanne Collins’ trilogy are presented in the following table.

1	Still, I hate them. But, of course, I hate almost everybody now. Myself more than anyone. [NSR] (p. 10)
2	How can I help the districts when every time I make a move, it results in suffering and loss of life? [NSR] (p. 14)
3	Prim thinks this over. “Katniss, I don't think you understand how important you are to the cause. [PRBO] (p. 40)
4	“They'll either want to kill you, kiss you, or be you.” Everyone's so excited, so pleased with their work. [PRBO] (p. 84)
5	Both my voice and body have a jerky, disjointed quality, like a puppet being manipulated by unseen forces. [NSR] (p. 87)
6	“All that work, down the drain. I'm not blaming you, Katniss. It's just that very few people are born with camera-ready faces. Like him.” [NRBO] (p. 96)
7	But it doesn't matter. Boggs is right. It's the sight of me, alive, that is the inspiration. Hungry fingers devour me, wanting to feel my flesh. [PRBO] (p. 107)
8	“I didn't do much, really,” I say. “You have to give yourself some credit for what you've done in the past,” says Boggs. [PRBO] (p. 108)
9	What I've done in the past? I think of the trail of destruction in my wake—my knees weaken and I slide down to a sitting position. [NSR] (p. 108)
10	I assumed, as usual, it was my presence that brought on punishment. [NSR] (p. 110)
11	“Cut!” Cressida's voice snaps me back to reality, extinguishes me. She gives me a nod of approval. “That's a wrap” [PRBO] (p. 118)
12	“No one even told us you were going until you were gone,” she says. I feel a pang of guilt. When your family’s had to send you off twice to the Hunger Games, this isn't the kind of detail you should overlook. [NSR] (p. 120)

13	Messalla beams and says, “There's our little star!” and the others are smiling so genuinely that I can't help but smile... [PRBO] (p. 122)
14	My palms grow moist in anticipation of seeing myself on television. What if I'm still awful? [NSR] (p. 124)
15	Plutarch crosses to me, laughing. “Where do you come up with this stuff? No one would believe it if we made it up!” He throws an arm around me and kisses me on the top of my head with a loud smack. “You're golden!” [PRBO] (p. 148)
16	And Pollux has tears running down his cheeks because no doubt my freaky song has dredged up some terrible incident in his life. Great. [NSR] (p. 148)
17	What is happening to us? Why are we always at odds now? It's all a muddle, but I somehow feel that if I went back to the root of our troubles, my actions would be at the heart of it. [NSR] (p. 150)
18	I'm gasping for air between sobs, but I manage one last phrase. “It's my fault!” And then I cross some line into hysteria and there's a needle in my arm and the world slips away. (p. 191)
19	“The way she could hunt and go in the Hob and everything. Everyone admired her so.” [PRBO] (p. 219)
20	Mind? How can I mind when she was almost tortured to death by Snow after the Quarter Quell? I have no right to mind, and she knows it. [NSR] (p. 256)
21	“Jealousy is certainly involved. I also think you're a little hard to swallow. [PRBO]With your tacky romantic drama and your defender-of-the-helpless act. (p. 257)
22	“And they're afraid of you.” “Here, maybe. In the Capitol, you're the one they're scared of now.” [PRBO] (p. 258)
23	I'm doing everything wrong. I don't know why I feel so defensive. He's been tortured! [NSR] (p. 268)
24	Finally, he can see me for who I really am. Violent. Distrustful. Manipulative. Deadly. [NSR] (p. 271)
25	I'll miss all the fighting. You need me—I'm the best shot you've got!” I shout. [PSR] (p. 272)
26	Anyway, even if she's sugarcoating my good points, I appreciate it. Frankly, I could use a little sugarcoating. [NSR] (p. 281)
27	“Maybe he just sees me as I really am. I have to get some sleep” [NSR] (p. 285)

28	“Katniss, as your oldest friend, believe me when I say he's not seeing you as you really are.” He kisses my cheek and goes. [PRBO] (p. 285)
29	“Because you've earned it,” he says. “Now get back to your squad.” [PRBO] (p. 311)
30	“I'm planning for you to have a long life.” “Why?” This kind of thinking will only bring him trouble. “You don't owe me anything.” [NSR] (p. 311)
31	We finally know the name of the girl who we watched the Capitol abduct from the woods of 12, the fate of the Peacekeeper friend who tried to keep Gale alive. This is no time to call up happy moments of remembrance. They lost their lives because of me. [NSR] (p. 320)
32	Have I turned him into a piece in my private Games? That's despicable, but I'm not sure it's beneath me. [NSR] (p. 347)
33	And here I am again. With people dying because of me. Friends, allies, complete strangers, losing their lives for the Mockingjay. [NSR] (p. 358)
34	So stupid as I sit shivering here in this cellar, tallying up our losses, fingering the tassels on the silver knee-high boots I stole from the woman's home. Oh, yeah—I forgot about that. I killed her, too. I'm taking out unarmed citizens now. [NSR] (p. 378)
35	“I think...you still have no idea. The effect you can have.” [PRBO] (p. 379)
36	A chill runs through me. [NRBO] Am I really that cold and calculating? Gale didn't say, “Katniss will pick whoever it will break her heart to give up,” or even “whoever she can't live without.” Those would have implied I was motivated by a kind of passion. (p. 386)
37	I was supposed to shoot him! That was my job. That was our unspoken promise, all of us, to one another. And I didn't do it and now the Capitol will kill him or torture him or hijack him or—the cracks begin opening inside me, threatening to break me into pieces. [NSR] (p. 403)
38	<i>My name is Katniss Everdeen. Why am I not dead? I should be dead. It would be best for everyone if I were dead....</i> [NSR] (p. 437)

Source: own elaboration.

The trend that began in the previous novel consolidates in *Mockingjay*. Katniss is consumed by guilt and blames herself for death and destruction surrounding her. Her

self-loathing could indicate that she suffers depression, apart from the post-shock syndrome that could be expected from someone who has been in a war-like situation twice in two years and at such an early age. The two most indicative examples of this behaviour are 1 and 38. In the first one she clearly shares that she despises herself more than anybody else. The situation reaches a peak when she wishes she were dead (38).

If we take a closer look at the examples, different trends can be identified. On the one hand, some examples clearly portray Katniss' idea that her actions bring destruction and pain to everybody involved with her (2, 9, 10, 16, 18, 30, 31, 33, 34). She blames herself not only for general destruction (9) and for people's reactions –such as Pollux's emotional response to her song (16)– but also for the deaths of people killed by the Capitol due to their participation in the rebellion or as collateral damage. She considers herself to be a zone zero for trouble and danger, so much so that anybody that helps her or is connected to her will be a target of the Capitol (30, 31, 33). Given the context of war, Katniss directly kills a civil (34), which adds to her list of deaths for which she blames herself. She is also deeply affected by her inability to kill Gale when he is captured (37). In the same vein, she blames herself for Joanna's torture by the capitol, as reflected by example 20, where she grants Joanna's wish for morphine over her own need. The fact that these examples are distributed throughout the novel suggests that this idea is an ingrained behaviour. On the other hand, there is a miscellanea of ideas linked to Katniss' lack of self-esteem. Example 3 is representative of the frustration over the fact that she is being manipulated and used by greater forces, while examples 5 and 14 are representative of the high stress involved in media exposure and her uneasiness with that role. Examples 12, 17 and 23 indicate the problems she has to maintain her relationships (with her family, Peeta and Gale). She identifies herself as the source of the problems. Overall, Katniss finds different ways to express her low self-esteem. Examples 24, 26, 27 and 32 indicate that she has a low image of herself as regards her actions. This is especially evident in example 32, where she admits that she has a manipulative nature. There is only one instance in this novel where Katniss describes herself positively. In line with the previous novels of the trilogy, she does so by referring to her archery skills, not her personality (25). Even so, she justifies that description in light of the circumstances.

All these negative statements about herself are somehow countered by the positive examples: instances where people indicate a positive idea about Katniss. It could be argued that the remarks made by people emotionally close to Katniss have a greater



weight than those made by people with whom she has no relationship. Specifically, Gale reassures Katniss when she is attacked by Peeta, who has been brainwashed by the Capitol (28). The statement is not very strong, he simply negates that Peeta's representation is accurate, but he does not produce a positive image of Katniss himself. On the other hand, Peeta (35) makes reference to Katniss' effect on people as a leader, which is a statement that is consistent throughout the trilogy (e.g., *The Hunger Games*, p. 85). Perhaps because of this consistent perception, Katniss assimilates this idea as true and is more receptive to Peeta's praise than to other people's: "I don't know why his voice reaches me when no one else's can" (*Mockingjay*, p. 310). As in the previous examples, positive statements come from people that are either close to Katniss or admired by Katniss (i.e., Boggs). Prim (3) insists that she is paramount for the cause in a way that resembles Peeta's statement about the effect she can have; Joanna (22) tells her that the Capitol fears Katniss more than they fear her. However, only Boggs (7, 8, 29) values the importance of her actions to achieve that position as leading figure of the revolution. Her insecurities about being a televised rebel are also compensated by the approval and praise she receives from Cressida (11) –who is in charge of filming her– but also Plutarch (15) and the rest of the crew (4, 13). Finally, and to Katniss' surprise, Debby, a District 12 girl, states that everybody admired Katniss for being able to hunt and trade in the Hob (19).

Finally, as regards negative representation by others, three examples are identified. The first one is example 6, where Katniss' physical appearance is criticised as not being "camera ready." In this case, Katniss does not react to this appreciation, she is not offended by that remark, presumably because she is not concerned about her looks. As mentioned before, beauty standards are not a salient topic of this trilogy. In the second case (21), Joanna Mason explicitly tells Katniss what she dislikes about her (her selfless attitude and relationship with Peeta), which Katniss accepts as part of their honest relationship that leads to the building of an "alliance" if not a friendship. This opinion does not affect Katniss in a negative way. Lastly, the only remark that clearly upsets Katniss is Gale's (36), possibly because he is part of her closest affiliation circle and because only Gale exposed clearly what she thought of herself. That is, Katniss agrees with Gale but is hurt by his statement. In addition, positive ideas about Katniss are addressed to her, but, in this case, Gale was talking to Peeta, and because Katniss was not present, she could have been led to believe that his statements were not conditioned or sugar-coated.

All in all, and unlike other trilogies such as *Uglies*, Katniss' self-esteem problem is not addressed by her loved ones. As mentioned in the previous subsection, she does not explain her feelings openly, which hinders others' reaching over to help her. On the other hand, her role as protector might prevent her from showing herself as the one needing aid. Not assuming her emotional state would then prevent improvement and, to some extent, as explained, the positive influence of peer and family support.

#### 5.4.8 Results: *Across the Universe*

The following table presents the results of self-esteem analysis for *Across the Universe*, the first novel in the trilogy by Beth Revis.

1	But I'm sixteen now, and I'm tired of doing nothing but lessons. It's time for me to be a real leader, whether Eldest likes it or not. (p. 15)
2	"You don't need to com Eldest," I say. "I vouch for Amy and Harley." I shift my weight so that I'm between Doc and them. I've always been tall, but I don't let myself slouch now. Instead, I make Doc look up to meet my eyes. (p. 215)
3	Although I was born Elder, for the first time I finally feel as if I can one day be Eldest. [ESTEEM] [PSR] (p. 316)
4	His voice is different now. Calmer. I meet his eyes, and I see something in them I've never seen before. [PRBO] (p. 24)
5	"There is a dark, serious manner in the way he stands now. I never noticed how much he slouched until he stood up straight. Before, I knew he was the destined leader of this ship merely because Doc and Eldest told me he was. Now I look at him, and [PRBO] I can see the determined leader within." (p. 217)
6	Eldest places the last needle in the basket and looks up at me. His face is very serious, but he looks tired, too, as if he is made of wax and slowly melting. "I don't say this enough. But I believe in you. [PRBO] I think you'll be a good leader. One day." (p. 228)
7	"It looks exactly like you," Victria says. She's abandoned her rocker and stands behind me, peering over my shoulder to look at the painting. [PRBO] "It looks like a leader," Orion says. (p. 248)
8	A leader? No. A leader would know what to do. [NSR] (p. 248)
9	I know Amy thinks that I just meekly followed Eldest, an obedient dog trailing after his master. I could see the disappointment in her eyes as I left her in the

	Recorder Hall. I will have to let Amy think me weak; [NRBO] I will have to sacrifice her image of me. (p. 315)
10	I must play this game a little longer. Rely on Eldest's perception that I am stupid and [NRBO] ignorant, on his contempt for my weakness. (p. 315)
11	"I'm so useless," [NSR] she sighs. "I can't do anything but hide here and cry like a little girl! Look at me!" I look, but I don't think I see her the same way she sees herself. (p. 346)
12	"We can figure this out," I say, dipping my head down so I can catch her gaze. "Don't give in. You're not [PRBO] useless." (p. 347)

Source: own elaboration.

The results for this trilogy reflect four issues related to esteem and self-esteem: agency, peer support and expectations.

Esteem issues in this novel are mainly concerned with Elder and his role as a future leader. In particular, examples 1 to 3 show his eagerness to take on his role and his confident attitude (1, 2, 3). However, his statements reflect the tension between this character and his father figure, Eldest. While challenging the rules and the highest authority, he portrays the typical tension between children coming of age and their parents, due to the reconfiguration of the relationship and the agency demanded by the child. The apparent support received from Eldest, as shown in example 6, is key in fostering Elder's self-esteem. Both peer support and family support are reportedly paramount in helping children build resilience and self-esteem. His confidence also leads to higher peer acceptance or better perceived image, as seen in examples 4 and 5, thus reflecting the bidirectionality of these factors. As it happens with many novels with adolescent characters, there is some evolution and acquisition of responsibilities and the associated challenges. The increase in the pressure perceived by Elder takes a toll on his confidence. Where others see a leader (7, 8), he sees somebody who does not know how to act. This insecurity is reflected in example 9, when he describes the consequences of his strategy in terms of the negative perception Amy would have of him. In fact, the only two instances in which he believes others may have a negative opinion about him are examples 9 and 10, where he strategically portrays that image.

Despite being the protagonist of the novels, representations of Amy's feelings and self-esteem are virtually absent. Even though Amy suffers significant abuse due to her physical appearance and her condition as alien to the community, the novel fails to

convey her feelings in this regard. Compared to several accounts of Elder’s emotions regarding his self-esteem and his desire to be respected, the results only offer one instance (11) where Amy describes herself as useless. This negative opinion is immediately opposed by Elder’s support (12). Interestingly, Amy’s chosen word (i.e., useless) could imply a relationship between her negative self-esteem and the fact that she is not given a role in the community. Thus, the importance of work to become part of the community and to feel and be respected is implied. On the other hand, Amy seems to be highly resilient to being different and standing out and does not question her physical appearance, which contrasts with the weight that beauty standards have in other novels in the corpus.

All in all, the novel offers no insights into the esteem of the general population. We are only able to perceive how Elder and Amy feel. Given their roles as future leader and complete “alien” respectively, and the fact that they are teenagers, the overall perception is that they do not lack self-esteem and have good relationships with those surrounding them. If only, Amy’s slight negative self-esteem may be derived from the lack of support from her parents, who are absent throughout the novel.

#### 5.4.9 Results: *A Million Suns*

The following table presents the results of self-esteem analysis for *A Million Suns*, the second instalment of the trilogy.

1	“Outta the way, freak,” [NRBO] a hefty woman says. (p. 35)
2	[He has no idea] [T]hat now, on top of everything else, I have the dead engine to worry about. All he sees is my failure. [NRBO] (p. 76)
3	“Maybe Bartie is right,” [NRBO] she says clearly. (p. 272)
4	Bartie takes a step back, looking me up and down, measuring me. “You can’t be Eldest if you’re still Elder,” [NRBO] he says finally in a voice calm and quiet, but still loud enough for everyone to hear. (p. 284)
5	“You never wanted to be Eldest, did you? You always wanted to be just Elder. That’s why you wouldn’t change your name. You knew, didn’t you, that you weren’t good enough to be Eldest. [NRBO] You’re still just a child, preoccupied more with your silly infatuation than responsibility.” (p. 358)
6	Doc nods. “I’m glad you’ve thought of this sort of thing,” he says. “I’m . . . well, [PRBO] I’m impressed.” (p. 22)

7	Marae eyes me. “You did well today,” [PRBO] she says finally. (p. 158)
8	You don’t have to rule with drugs. You’re good enough the way you are. Fight it. [PRBO] Be yourself.” (p. 352)
9	“It’s all my fault. [NSR] [ELDER] I didn’t think any of this would happen...” (p. 326)
10	You’re still just a child, preoccupied more with your silly infatuation than responsibility.” Elder—patched and silent—nods in agreement. [NSR] (p. 358)
11	For the first time in my life, [PSR] I feel as if I am truly Eldest. (p. 273)

Source: own elaboration.

The same trend seen in the previous novel is reinforced in the second instalment. In this case, social pressure on Elder to make the grade affects his self-esteem and his confidence in his capabilities. The results show a fluctuation of esteem levels in accordance with the input from others; in other words, support from others changes from positive to negative as does his self-esteem. This does not necessarily imply a cause-effect, but rather that the narrative employs the mechanisms of support and lack thereof to stress Elder’s perceived pressure and engage the readership. Elder struggles to manage and meet people’s expectations and obtain their respect as a leader. In particular, the complaints come from Doc (2), most loyal crew members (3), and former friends (4, 5). As action progresses, Elder manages to regain their trust (6, 7) and receives Amy’s support (8). Although his esteem is undermined while facing Doc (9, 10), at the end of the novel his role seems reinforced (11). This situation exemplifies the struggle many youngsters undergo while trying to meet social and family expectations of their future.

It is noteworthy to mention that Amy’s feelings are not conveyed in this respect in this second novel despite being addressed as “a freak” (1) by members of the community, which relegates her to a secondary role. In general terms, as the situation becomes increasingly critical, Elder’s esteem is equally affected as a result of his role in deciding the course of action.

#### 5.4.10 Results: *Shades of Earth*

The following table offers the results obtained for the last novel of the trilogy: *Shades of Earth*.

1	Bartie and over eight hundred other people are still in orbit around Centauri-Earth, and they're going to live and die in the remains of Godspeed, and [NSR] that's my fault too. (p. 43)
2	I swallow a lump in my throat. It's my fault the shuttle's degrading into fighting, [NSR] just like Godspeed did. (p. 56)
3	Their looks were clear. I am not to be trusted, [NRBO] even with samples of sand. (p. 72)
4	I run from the building, Colonel Martin's accusation [NRBO] digging into my heart like a salted blade. (p. 105)
5	It doesn't matter that I hadn't intended this. It's done. And [NSR] I was the one who did it. (p. 118)
6	I have [NSR] failed them. (p. 172)
7	I left my people to die. [NSR] (p. 173)
8	I lean up, pressing my face against the window as I seek out individuals, begging each person to forgive me [NSR] for my part in their disastrous end. (p. 271)

Source: own elaboration.

The scenario of the last novel is drastically different because the earthborn are awake and have taken control in practice, although Elder is still leader of the ship-born humans. However, what remains invariable is the absolutely exclusive focus on Elder's emotions and guilt in this last novel. No results evidence the way Amy feels and is affected by the circumstances, perhaps partially because of the greater support she receives from her awakened parents. Due to Centauri-Earth's environment and the dangers it entails, Elder endures a great deal of guilt for his actions as a leader. He blames himself for the fate of his people throughout the novels. Examples 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, and 8 reflect this self-blaming attitude, related not only to the sure death of those who freely decided to stay in space (1) but also to his leadership skills (2, 7 8). In addition, the ship-born do not consider him a trustworthy person (3), and Colonel Martin (4) blames him for Amy's accident. In contrast with the previous novels, the results do not show any support from the community nor from Amy. Therefore, Elder is isolated and

must take full responsibility for the community without guidance or help. Two literary quotes define Elder’s situation. The first one is: “uneasy lies the head that wears the crown” (William Shakespeare, *Henry IV*). Elder was worried throughout the novels about possible usurpation of his power from his friend Bartie, but also about his inability to lead his people without drug control. In this last novel, we see that he is unable to perceive the positive aspects of his leadership. In this line, the second quote, from the field of pop culture is: “with great power there must also come great responsibility” (attributed to Uncle Ben, from *Spiderman*). At his young age he is in charge of the whole community and in an unknown and dangerous planet, which highly increases the difficulty regarding making decisions and ensuring safety. As we will see in the following sections, the circumstances surrounding the character and the responsibilities imposed on them have a highly negative influence on those characters’ confidence and self-esteem.

#### 5.4.11 Results: *Divergent*

The following table presents the results for *Divergent* including positive and negative self-representation and positive and negative descriptions of the protagonist by others.

1	I grab Caleb’s arm as I stumble over the man’s shoes. My slacks are too long, and I’ve never been that graceful. [NSR] (p. 4)
2	“Just do what you’re supposed to,” he always says. It is that easy for him. It should be that easy for me. [NSR] (p. 10)
3	I watch myself, pale and terrified, walking toward one of the doors. [NSR] (p. 11)
4	I sit forward and wipe my palms off on my slacks. I had to have done something wrong, even if it only happened in my mind. [NSR] (p. 19)
5	Is that strange look on Tori’s face because she doesn’t know how to tell me what a terrible person I am? I wish she would just come out with it. [NSR] (p. 19)
6	My voice sounds clear and stern—not what I expected to hear. I feel like it doesn’t belong to me. [NSR] (p. 26)
7	Why was I so focused on myself that I didn’t notice his deep frown and his sagging posture? [NSR] (p. 33)

8	I stare at my peas. I am not sure I can live this life of obligation any longer. I am not good enough. [NSR] (p. 35)
9	But I am not selfless enough. Sixteen years of trying and I am not enough. [NSR] (p. 43)
10	Then, with a gasp I can't contain, I shift my hand forward, and my blood sizzles on the coals. I am selfish. I am brave. [NSR] [PSR] (p. 47)
11	Clumsily, [NSR] I fumble along the side of my head to find the edge of the blindfold. (p. 280)
12	Choosing to quit, to be factionless, would be the bravest thing I have ever done, and today I feel like a coward. [NSR] (p. 347)
13	My worst fear: that my family will die, and that I will be responsible. [NSR] (p. 395)
14	I am weak from blood loss and too small. [NSR] (p. 433)
15	I feel like someone breathed new air into my lungs. I am not Abnegation. I am not Dauntless. I am Divergent. And I can't be controlled. [PSR] (p. 442)
16	Somehow, I get up and start running. I am brave. [PSR] (p. 444)
17	He did what he did because he believed in my strength. [PRBO] (p. 366)

Source: own elaboration.

The topics discussed in this trilogy are physical appearance, social pressure and expectations, lack of peer support, responsibility and agency.

Tris' account of herself is extensive. Examples 1 to 14 depict Tris' negative representations of herself. Multiple groups can be distinguished. On the one hand, examples 3, 6 and 14 make reference to her body. In the first case (3) she makes reference to the way she looks. In the second case, she indicates that her perception of herself is lower than reality because she is surprised when her voice sounds "clear and stern." Finally, in example 14, she conveys a negative image of her body, described as too small to be able to fight and win. The adverb "too" is key in this case. On the other hand, examples 2, 4, 5, 8 and 9 indicate a low self-esteem as regards her abilities and personality. All these examples reflect her inability to comply with the Abnegation lifestyle and the fact that she has been chastised on several occasions for not behaving as selflessly as all members of that community should. It is noteworthy that all these examples take place during the first part of the novel, before she leaves Abnegation for



Dauntless. This idea is relevant because it could indicate that the system was too strict and affected children psychologically in the cases where their aptitudes did not match the faction in which they were raised. Furthermore, the lack of family support to reach these standards and to express herself cause her to lose confidence.

The remaining examples indicate a negative self-image related to her skills (examples 1 and 11 depict her as clumsy) and her behaviour. Example 12 uses the word “coward,” which is recurrent throughout the novels, because in Dauntless people’s worth is measured in terms of bravery. However, this conception of herself is far from being the norm. On the other hand, example 13 shows the idea that she feels guilty for the pain and harm that could come to her family due to her actions. In this case, she follows the pattern of other trilogies, where the protagonists feel the weight of social pressure to perform as expected and not to cause harm with one’s decisions. This idea is based on the fact that prioritising her needs to that of others goes against her culture, which is feminine and collectivist. However, it is also linked to her struggle to gain agency. If there is a word that can describe Tris is *conflicted*, as represented by example 15. Her identity is divided and so is her personality and the actions shaped by both her upbringing and her training.

Regarding positive representations, examples 15 and 16 show that she takes pride in being brave, the only positive word she uses to describe herself in this first novel and the word that defines her actions throughout the trilogy. Only one example shows a positive description of Tris by a third person. In fact, it is her idea of what Four things of her (example 16) and it has to do with strength and resilience. The lack of social support is patent here. She does not receive support or positive reinforcement from her family or friends in this first instalment.

Finally, although no results are disclosed as regards negative representation by others, there is a constant teasing and attacking attitude on the part of a small group of initiates, led by Peter. They address her with the word “stiff,” which is slang for Abnegation, but is not always used in a negative sense and therefore cannot be objectively pointed out. A qualitative examination, however, shows that Peter and the others display a bullying and deprecating behaviour towards Tris as shown, for instance, by the painting of the word “stiff” across her mattress, or the violent attack she endures. However, this situation is arguably more related to safety than to esteem.

#### 5.4.12 Results: *Insurgent*

The analysis of self-esteem and esteem for the *Divergent* series continues in the following table, which includes the examples for the second novel.

1	I feel suffocated, but at least I feel strong. [NSR] (p. 23)
2	“You may have succeeded in shutting down the attack simulation, girl, but it was by luck alone, not skill. I would die of shock if you managed to do anything useful again for a long time.” [NRBO] (p. 45)
3	I know that I am birdlike, made narrow and small as if for taking flight, built straight-waisted and fragile. [NSR] (p. 49)
4	He smirks. “If only you could see how ridiculous you look when you threaten people. Like a little girl telling me she’s going to strangle me. [NRBO] (p. 55)
5	He’s handsome, isn’t he? I don’t really know why he likes me so much. I’m not very nice, am I? [NSR] (p. 60)
6	The Abnegation are dying again, dying like they were when I pretended to be under the simulation. And all I’m doing is running. [NSR] (p. 84)
7	He still believes that I am strong. Strong enough that I don’t need his sympathy. [PRBO] (p. 85)
8	It is my fault, of course, that that was never a possibility, because I chose another faction. [NSR] (p. 114)
9	I am the only thing that kept him in the faction he wanted to leave. I am not worth that. [NSR] (p. 144)
10	I am tired of being Tris. I have done bad things. I can’t take them back, and they are part of who I am. [NSR] (p. 157)
11	“You’re ridiculous, is what you are.” She sighs. “Get your stuff together. You’re Dauntless, and it’s time you acted like it. [NRBO] (p. 163)
12	“You are brave,” she says. “You don’t need me to say it, because you already know it. [PRBO] (p. 170)
13	“I meant don’t let anyone else do anything stupid. They’ll listen to you.” [PRBO] (p. 171)
14	I scream into gritted teeth, frustrated. I can’t help. I am worthless. [NSR] (p. 195)
15	I glance up at my reflection. My jaw is swollen, and fingernail marks are still on my arms. Disgusting. [NSR] (p. 200)

16	“It’s not brave, choosing the position you were in yesterday. It’s beyond stupid—it’s suicidal. [NRBO] (p. 211)
17	I can’t launch an attack based on a little girl’s speculations” [NRBO] (p. 222)
18	That way, you can look at her without wanting to punch her in her exceptionally long nose.” [NRBO] My hand moves automatically to my nose. (p. 223)
19	“I don’t know where you get this delusion that I’m useless, but that’s what it is,” I snap. [PSR] (p. 244)
20	I wonder how I seem to them. They must see someone I don’t see. Someone capable and strong. Someone I can’t be; someone I can’t be. [NSR] (p. 265)
21	How is it that only half of us are left? I feel responsible for that. [NSR] (p. 284)
22	“Because you’re better at it than I am.” [PRBO] (p. 286)
23	I know he’s strong, steady, unstoppable. All things I need to be, but I am not, I am not. [NSR] (p. 312)
24	Hope and pray and wish that no one else dies because of my selfishness. [NSR] (p. 319)
25	Again I feel guilt and grief clawing inside me, warring with each other for dominance...[NSR] (p. 322)
26	“You’re the bravest person I’ve ever met. Stay here. Let yourself mend.” [PRBO] (p. 424)
27	“Why would it?” I say softly, so no one else can hear “After all I’ve done ...” [NSR] (p. 440)
28	“Shooting people who get in your way is a Dauntless trait, after all.” I feel a pinch at the back of my throat. [NRBO] (p. 444)

Source: own elaboration.

As in the previous novel, Tris continues to refer to her body in a negative way. In a general way, she refers to her appearance after the struggle as “disgusting” (15). In example 3, she repeats the fact that she is slim-framed, which is reflected as an insecurity especially in her relationship with Tobias (Four). In fact, examples 5 and 9 show that she feels inferior to Tobias in a way. Example 9 indicates that she feels guilty for the fact that he stayed in the faction system instead of pursuing what he wanted. Blame is also a constant in these novels, as in *The Hunger Games* trilogy and *Uglies* trilogy.

Examples 8, 21, 24 and 27 depict her guilt and the burden she carries. In example 4, she feels like she prevented her neighbour from having her idealised life in Abnegation, because she decided to pursue her career as a Dauntless, which reflects the social pressure she endures. On a bleaker note, she blames herself for the deaths of others because she is Divergent and is the target of those killing innocent citizens (24). In fact, she considers that she is not worthy of forgiveness (27).

In more general terms, due to inaction or to her choices, examples 6, 10 and 25 show Tris' inner conflict. Example 10 is noteworthy for her acceptance of what she has become, her bad decisions included. Nevertheless, the tone indicates symptoms of depression. In fact, she remembers her late friend, who jumped into the chasm because he was tired of who he was, which indicates that she considers that alternative in relation to her situation at that moment. In fact, her frustration over her inability to solve the conflict or being strong enough is patent in examples 14, 20, and 23. Examples 20 and 23 are remarkably similar in the choice of structure. She repeats that she cannot be what Tobias is (strong, unstoppable...), what she demands herself to be (23). Similarly, she fails to see the good traits that other people see in her (20).

In contrast to all the negative examples, and perhaps not surprisingly, only in two instances does Tris make positive remarks about herself (1, 19). As Tobias mentions somewhere else in the novels, Tris becomes brave and strong when she faces an obstacle. In this case, when she faces Peter, she defines herself in positive terms (19).

Examples 7, 12, 13, 22 and 26 show positive descriptions of Tris by others. It is highly relevant to notice that four out of five are made by Tobias, who is romantically involved with Tris. In example 12, Lynn reassures Tris on her bravery. However, she says so as if she already knew it, and it were annoying for her to have to remind Tris of that. Throughout the novels, it seems as though she is a strong character, with very positive aptitudes, that insists on undervaluing herself.

Regarding negative perceptions or statements about Tris, examples 2 and 4 are made by anti-heroes Marcus and Peter. Examples 11 and 16, by Lynn and Tobias, represent a change: people close to Tris begin to chastise her for being reckless or not valuing herself enough. Tris lies to Tobias in various occasions and puts herself into unnecessary danger, thus mining his trust and making him doubt her psychological stability. Example 17 shows how she is not taken seriously because of her age. Nevertheless, the statements that seem to have an impact on Tris are Cara's (18 and 28). The first one refers to her physical appearance, which Tris has shown to be insecure

about. The second highlights her mistakes, which include killing a friend in an exceptional situation. All in all, we see a lack of support from friends and a recriminating stance of those friends, which undermines her self-assurance.

#### 5.4.13 Results: *Allegiant*

Lastly, the table below comprises the results of the analysis of self-esteem and esteem in the last novel, which in this case have Tobias and Tris as co-protagonists.

1	Thank you for trying to prevent one of your faction leaders from killing Jeanine Matthews? You [Tris] behaved like a traitor.” Evelyn Johnson spits the word like a snake. [NRBO] (p. 11)
2	I don’t know when I became so good at acting, but I guess it’s not that different from lying, [NSR] which I have always had a talent for. (p. 12)
3	He shakes his head. “I just . . . I’m not used to telling people things. I’m used to handling things on my own.” “I’m reliable,” I say. “You can trust me. And you can let me be the judge of what I can handle.” [PSR] (p. 28)
4	I do like to hit people—I like the explosion of power and energy, and the feeling that I am untouchable because I can hurt people. But I hate that part of myself, because it is the part of me that is the most broken. [NSR] (p. 78)
5	Rather than angry, I just feel heavy, useless. [NSR] I don’t want to think about him anymore. (p. 85)
6	“A lot of the younger people think you’re downright heroic.” [PRBO] (p. 148)
7	The word “damaged” sinks inside me like it’s made of lead. I guess I always knew there was something wrong with me, [NSR] but I thought it was because of my father, or my mother [...]. (p. 176)
8	“Yeah, I do!” Tris exclaims. “You’re the same person you were five minutes ago and four months ago. [PRBO] (p. 177)
9	I am separate from this place and these people and my own body, and besides, I have always been a good runner. [PSR] (p. 198)
10	And even beyond that reasonable suspicion, I have brewing inside me the desperate hope that I am not damaged, that I am worth more than the corrected genes I pass on to any children I might have. [NSR] (p. 236)

11	I am not a desperate, unsteady child who throws his trust around. I am not damaged. [PSR] (p. 274)
12	The Bureau is responsible for my parents' deaths. Why do I have to keep repeating it to myself to believe it? What's wrong with me? [NSR] (p. 277)
13	You're all set." I nod. I wish I could tell her that I'm not a hero, [NSR] that I was using him as a shield, like a wall of meat. (p. 293)
14	As I look at them, Rafi meets my eyes and nods. As if to say, <i>Well done</i> . If I did well, why do I feel sick to my stomach? [PRBO] (p. 297)
15	How many of those am I responsible for, because I participated in this? [NSR] (p. 298)
16	Do you understand these terms?" With the words "genetic deficiency" lingering in my mind, I nod and say, "I do." [NRBO] (p. 303)
17	I wanted to believe they were all wrong about me, that I was not limited by my genes, that I was no more damaged than any other person. But how can that be true, when my actions landed Uriah in the hospital, when Tris can't even look me in the eye, when so many people died? [NSR] (p. 304)
18	"You seem to get involved in a lot of conflict. I suppose we should all be grateful that you are steady in a crisis." [PRBO] (p. 306)
19	I feel like what I have become is halfway between my mother and my father, violent and impulsive and desperate and afraid. I feel like I have lost control of what I have become. [NSR] (p. 318)
20	Now I know that I have done something to make myself worthy of that hatred; I have betrayed them all. [NSR] (p. 335)
21	I thought of how strong I have become, how secure I feel with the person I now am, [PRBO] and how all along the way he has told me that I am brave, I am respected, I am loved and worth loving. (p. 372)
22	"You'll stop them from resetting the experiment. I know you will." I hope she's right. [PRBO] (p. 393)
23	"[...] you didn't kill Uriah. You didn't set off the bomb that injured him. You didn't make the plan that led to that explosion." "But I did participate in the plan." [NSR] (p. 400)
24	"It happened. It was awful. You aren't perfect. That's all there is. Don't confuse your grief with guilt." [PRBO] (p. 400)

25	“No one has ever told me that before,” he says softly. “It’s what you deserve to hear,” I say firmly, my eyes going cloudy with tears. [PRBO] “That you’re whole, that you’re worth loving, that you’re the best person I’ve ever known.” (p. 414)
26	“Sorry,” he says. “I just . . . you used to be so clumsy, remember? I don’t know how I missed that you weren’t like that anymore” [PRBO] (p. 424)

Source: own elaboration.

As with the other novels, the results here are divided into positive self-representation, negative self-representation, positive representation by others and negative representation by others, with the particularity that this novel has two first-person narrators: Tris and Tobias. Presumably because of this division and because of the intense action, there is less discussion of the characters’ emotions.

Only on one occasion does Tris describe herself in positive terms in this novel (3): when she tells Tobias that she is reliable, but this situation is more related to their problems as a couple than to her everyday life in the Bureau. On his part, Tobias describes himself as a good runner (9), a physical skill which contrasts with the nature of his insecurities, that is essentially behavioural. More than a positive description, the last example (11) is a negation of Tris’ judgement on his behaviour. It is significant to notice how the percentage of positive self-esteem examples are remarkably low in comparison with negative esteem ones. This is a constant in this trilogy as well as in *The Hunger Games* trilogy and *Uglies* trilogy and will be addressed in detail in the discussion section of this study.

Regarding negative self-representation, most of them (8 out of 11) are about Tobias, which confirms the idea that the novel focuses more on Tobias than on Tris, at least at an emotional level. Tris’ negative statements are not strong either. Example 2 simply states that she has lied successfully on various occasions, which is a negative trait, but she does not dwell on her guilt over doing so. In contrast, she perceives her behaviour as negative when she addresses her brother, Caleb. She wants to relate to him in a more positive way and she resents the fact that she cannot forgive him for betraying her (12). Finally, she internally discusses the fact that she used the leader of the Bureau as a human shield and thus is not a hero as most people think (13).

On the other hand, Tobias’ insecurities are much more complex. His main insecurity stems from his new status as Genetically Damaged, that is, a non-Divergent

individual. Because Tris is Divergent, he may feel inferior and blames his recurrent feeling of inadequacy to that genetic condition. This idea is reflected clearly in examples 7, 10, 17 and 23. In particular, examples 17 and 23 show how his guilt over participating in a terrorist attack that cost his friend's life mingles with the idea that he is damaged, thus reinforcing it. In fact, the responsibility for people's deaths, which was highly present in Tris' esteem results in the previous novel, is highlighted in example 15. Finally, Tobias' insecurities and negative self-representation are the result of his upbringing. His father was abusive, and his mother faked her death to escape her husband, abandoning him. In examples 4 and 19, Tobias reflects on the idea that his behaviour is similar to his parents' behaviour, but only the negative aspects. He hates the fact that he craves control over people, which is a trait his father has, and he is "desperate and afraid" like his mother. In more general terms, having to face his father makes him feel useless and tired (5). In this sense, the structure of the society and its rules were inefficient in identifying the suffering of a child that was physically punished by his father, and that such lack of control affected his development in a negative way, leading to self-esteem issues.

As to how people see the protagonists, nine examples show positive portrayals and three examples indicate negative ideas. As to the subject of the positive examples, five are about Tris (6, 18, 21, 22 and 26) and the others about Tobias (8, 14, 24, and 25).

Tris is respected by the people at the Bureau (6), who have seen her actions in the city. She is praised for her leadership attitude in crises (18) and trusted to carry out the mission to save the city (22). Furthermore, Tobias considers Tris to be brave, which, as we have seen, is the most important quality for the Dauntless. Finally, her brother points out that she is no longer the clumsy Abnegation girl (26). She accepts all these remarks willingly except for the one about her heroic feats, mainly because those voicing them were watching as they died and did not help them.

On the other hand, Tobias receives the support of Tris (8, 25) on the matter of his alleged genetic damage. Although in the first case he refuses to accept it, he finally acknowledges the truth. Similarly, Cara comforts him (24) when he feels guilty for Uriah's death (15). Finally, his participation in the GD's attack to the Bureau is praised by Ragi, one of the members of the insurgent group against the Pure and Damaged genes system, but, in this case, Tobias is not convinced that the praise is positive because he feels guilty.



In the last group of examples, we see that the only negative attitude towards Tris is Evelyn's accusation of betrayal (1). She is the leader of the factionless, who fought to overthrow the Erudite leader, Jeanine Mathews. Tris wanted to air information about the purpose of the city, and thus had to protect Jeanine against her superiors' orders. However, this accusation is soon dismissed and has no consequences on Tris' esteem or on people's perception of her. Conversely, Tobias feels the hatred of the community (20) and the discrimination of the Bureau, who defines him as a lesser human being (16). In this case, due to Tobias' already conflicted situation, these situations have a significant negative effect on his esteem.

#### 5.4.14 Discussion

Because of the type of audience to which these novels are addressed, protagonists may be conceived as role models and their behaviour and values may be imitated by the readership. Therefore, it is paramount to identify patterns in esteem, not only as the stage of status acquisition and respect, but also as referred to the characters' perception of themselves. Since three of the trilogies analysed are written in first person, this issue can be seen more clearly. In the four trilogies, the protagonists undergo a journey regarding their self-representation and appreciation.

Regarding *The Hunger Games* and *Divergent*, we find some differences as far as self-esteem and self-confidence is concerned. Interestingly, while Tris starts as an insecure and apparently weak girl and becomes a strong leader, Katniss' confidence gradually ebbs away taken by trauma and the pressure of the systems. Differences between the two heroines are notable. Katniss feels relatively comfortable in her district; she has access to the wilderness and conceives a life in the wild as desirable. She does not seek a high social status or privileges. By contrast, Beatrice is demanding, she strives for the best and her objective is to achieve a respected position in a profession of her liking. In the same way, Tally's self-esteem fluctuates, starting from a negative representation and ending in a positive self-image due to her clear idea of her duty and role in society (guardian of nature). However, Tally's journey is the one that takes longest and the least evident. By contrast, Amy starts from a neutral self-esteem, which is constantly undermined by the fact that she is regarded as alien to the society of Godspeed, while Elder –the male protagonist– undergoes a process of acquiring positive

self-esteem that is then influenced by the negative events affecting the community for which he is responsible.

As the results have shown, Katniss' psychological state in the third novel could easily be considered as depression, the result of constant threat to her safety, the safety of her loved ones, and the pressure to be the leading figure of a revolution in which she had no intention to participate. Nevertheless, Katniss' mental state, although more obvious to the people surrounding her than to herself, resembles the post-traumatic stress disorder suffered by soldiers after being in an armed conflict. The nightmares and hallucinations –the latter suffered by Haymich– as well as the addictions of victors to various drugs are proof of the psychological aftermath of the games.

There are multiple factors influencing mental health, one of which seems to be natural spaces. The statistics indicate that one in nine teenagers are likely to suffer depression in the USA. Interestingly, research shows that having surroundings with green spaces reduces the odds of suffering depression among teenagers according to Bezold et al. (2018, p. 493). This effect seems to be generalizable to other countries, as Dzhambov, Markevych, Tilov, and Dimitrova (2018, p. 238) report similar results in a sample of Bulgarian adolescents and Barton and Pretty (2010, p. 3951) had already reported these positive effects as reflected in studies on British samples with the effects being more positive for younger groups. Finally, regarding the Spanish population, Rodríguez, Fuentes and Sánchez (2016, p. 25) found out that the presence of green spaces had a positive effect not only on overall mental health but also specifically on self-perception.

In the novels, Katniss feels most comfortable when she is surrounded by nature, using her tools (bow and instincts) to survive and feed her family. In the arena, we see how she moves easily climbing trees. In the same vein, Tally develops a connection with nature that makes her feel at ease when she is in the wilderness not only after becoming a Special but since the first trip to the Smoke. Nature has a transformative effect in her, stripping her from the structures of social life and, in turn, of the demands of the social game, including the guilt associated with her past and current relationships, and her future prospects as regards her position in society or her profession. In the same vein, Amy explains that running in the wild and getting fresh air is what she enjoys the most. Although the fact that the book is split into point-of-view chapters hinders a greater understanding of Amy's psyche, her dissatisfaction with space life seems highly related to the constriction of the spacecraft and the lack of exploring possibilities that

open a wide array of life experiences. In other words, nature and the unexplored world equal freedom of choice as regards her future, while the spacecraft takes away any choices or plans that she could make. One of the trilogies does not cover this issue. Tris is mostly bound by the social constructions and dynamics, away from the wilderness.

Furthermore, the protagonists pursue the possibilities of being in an environment where their abilities are useful. In the case of Katniss, her hunting abilities allow her to play her role as family head, so she feels comfortable using them in the environment. Tris, as Divergent, is skilled for more than one faction, so she tries to involve herself to the greatest extent in the inter-faction conflict. In the same vein, Amy pursues crime-solving both on board of Godspeed and on the new planet in order to be accepted by and receive the appreciation of the collective. By contrast, Katniss' self-esteem is compromised by the situations she has had to endure and her actions under exceptional circumstances. Her recovery starts only after returning to her home in what is left of District 12 and in close connection with the environment. Similarly, Tally's self-esteem is constantly affected by her role in betraying the Smoke in the first novel and Shay and her group later on in order to pursue other ideas. In the first case, Tally's betrayal starts due to social pressure to achieve what people her age typically achieve: becoming Pretty. In the second, she pursues the path to follow her ideas about righteous courses of action. Although the results do not show a clear recovery as regards self-esteem, Tally finds her place and a role outside the dichotomy of old and new system, neither of which shared her ideas fully. This result can be read from different perspectives: as an expulsion from the system due to her misfit nature or as self-sacrifice.

Indeed, the fact that all novels deal with a significant presence of negative self-representation or even self-deprecating opinions suggests a possible link with teenagers' anxieties and insecurities. The world-famous *Twilight* saga (Meyer, 2005-2008) presents a protagonist that describes herself in comparatively negative terms. For instance, when describing her eyes, which are the same shape and colour as her mothers' she says: "On her they're childlike—so wide and pale blue—which makes her look like my sister rather than my mom." [...] "On me the pale blue is less youthful and more... unresolved" (Meyer, 2006, p. 2). Regarding her skills, she describes herself as clumsy already in the first chapter "It threw my balance off a little—not that I was ever really balanced." Bella Swan has been criticised as a character for portraying a Plain Jane with a notorious lack of agency who is extremely dependent on her love interest (Kokesh & Sternadori, 2015, p. 150), an attractive and powerful vampire, while others

argue that Bella has agency in her relationship (Walters & Kimmel, 2016, p. 133). Nevertheless, its success among young adults and teenagers is unquestionable given the revenue of the franchise. Furthermore, Kokesh and Sternadori's (2015) study suggested that most girls did not criticise Bella's dependence or insecurities, but rather, they identified with her. Esteem in teenagers is commonly associated with popularity in the school context. In this vein, different characterisation of protagonists will appeal to different types of adolescents. According to Kokesh and Sternadori's (2015, p. 151) interviews involving teenage readers of young adult fiction, adolescents identify with the characters according to their role in real life. In this vein, one of their interviewees stated that she would identify with the leader because she considered herself the leader of her group of friends. It could be assumed that young readers who are introverts and have reading as their main hobby could easily identify with controversial characters such as Bella Swan from *Twilight*.

These ideas suggest a two-way process. On the one hand, these insecurities are akin to those experienced by teenagers and young adults; therefore, writers targeting this audience probably write characters that share those same insecurities in order to favour reader identification. On the other hand, readers may choose from the myriad of novels and characters, and popularise the books that present characters with those traits. In any case, it is important to question the writers' stance with respect to the protagonists' self-esteem. In this section I will explore the roles of parental support and peer support in self-esteem, the roles of the protagonists in developing their esteem, and the traditional endings for women in dystopias regarding profession and personal development.

#### *5.4.14.1 Parental support*

Even though research on human motivations typically focuses on adults, some studies have delved into the idea of esteem and psychological wellbeing of children and adolescents in the academic context (e.g., Deb et al., 2015; Quach, Epstein, Riley, Falconier, & Fang, 2015). Esteem is understood as the achievement of a job position or a position in the community that is respected and admired by others. Nevertheless, adolescents struggle in their contexts to achieve a position of recognition within their groups and to meet their parents and social expectations. According to Sarita (2015, p. 385), failure to meet parents' expectations and student's own expectations about the

future may lead to anxiety and depression. Furthermore, the study indicates that social support is a key factor for children to overcome the situation. In particular, Laible, Carlo and Roech (2004, p. 713) found that both parental support and peer support are key in contributing to adolescents' self-esteem.

According to Patalay and Gage (2018, p. 16), the percentage of children aged 14 who present symptoms of depression –as perceived by parents– has increased (from 9% to 15%) in ten years (2005 vs. 2015) in the UK. According to Cardila et al. (2015, p. 273), the prevalence of depressive disorders in Spanish samples differs depending on the study. Variation goes from 3.8% in Jaureguizar, Bernaras, Soroa, Sarasa and Garaigordobil (2015, p. 257), to around 18% according to López, Alcántara, Fernández, Castro and López (2010, p. 331). Despite this variation, the prevalence of depression is strikingly high in university students (typically aged 17 to 22) in Spain, reaching 63,8% in 2009 (Balanza, Morales, & Guerrero, 2009, p. 181) or 60% in a more recent study of Galician students (Pérez, Nieto, Rodríguez, & García, 2018, n.p.). According to Andrews and Wildling (2004, p. 514) 9% of people who were mentally healthy before starting university studies developed clinical depression during their studies and 20% developed high anxiety. Regarding the USA, the American College Health Association [ACHA] (2018) indicates that approximately 18% of students are diagnosed with depression in a given year. Furthermore, 42.7% students indicated that their depressed mood prevented them from functioning normally. An average of 27% of medical students were found to present prevalent depressive symptoms (Tam, Lo, & Pacheco, 2019, p. 3). This review suggests that there are no significant differences regarding the state of mental health in the selected countries. Therefore, this issue may be important for audiences from Spain, the USA and the UK.

The role of families in the novels analysed, as we have seen, varies to some extent. However, none of the protagonists relies on their families (because they are absent for different reasons –Amy, Tally and Tris– or because they are unable to help them –Katniss). In this context, they lack their parents' support, which may explain in part the low self-esteem according to the results. This issue is particularly interesting in the case of Tris, since she strives to honour the memory of her late parents, but her initial low self-esteem could paradoxically be explained by her parents' parenting style. According to research, parent-child closeness is a determinant of self-esteem. Harris et al. (2015) found that US and German children's self-esteem presents a positive correlation with their parents' closeness; the researchers asked children questions such

as “How often does your mom or dad make you feel tense while you are around her or him?” “How often does your mom or dad show concern for your feelings and problems?” (p. 11). Only by looking at these two items, we may conclude that the parenting style in Tris’ upbringing suggests a lack of closeness despite the apparent care and sensibility to other family members’ problems. In particular, Tris reports being stressed by the fact of not being able to behave as her family expects (*Divergent*, p. 43). Furthermore, the fact that they are Abnegation and live a life of selflessness impedes Tris and her brother to communicate with their parents or with one another to transmit their anxiety and problems (*Insurgent*, p. 213). Amy’s case could be the opposite: She shows a close connection with her parents and explains her problems to them even when they cannot physically hear her (i.e., they are cryogenised). Throughout the novels, Amy shows resilience. Despite the common references to her as a “freak” and less than human, she does not describe herself in negative terms for that reason. However, as explained above, the third person narrator and the split point-of-view narration might have affected the extent to which her feelings are described. In Tally’s case, her family does not provide her with comfort when she is left alone to force her confess Shay’s location. They tell her to comply with the requirements the authorities demanded. Since they are a tool of the system rather than a support and constant presence in Tally’s life, her low self-esteem might have been influenced by their absence. Finally, Katniss’ childhood, marked by the trauma of her father’s death and her mother’s depression, is likely to have affected her self-esteem, particularly since she refers in the novels to her father and how she misses him.

#### 5.4.14.2 Peer support and body perception

The second significant factor influencing the levels of stress and psychological wellbeing related to performance is peer support. Research shows that students who have the support of their classmates present lower levels of academic stress (Torsheim & Bold, 2001, p. 708). Again, *Divergent* presents the clearest example. The results of the analysis show that Tris presents herself as a girl with low self-esteem who improves her self-image as the novels progress. However, it is noteworthy to remember a particular example in the results in which Tris acknowledges the importance of Tobias’ support:

I thought of how strong I have become, how secure I feel with the person I now am, and how all along the way he has told me that I am brave, I am respected, I am loved and worth loving. (*Allegiant*, p. 372).

Choi and Choi (2016, p. 255) focused on the role of adolescents' body perception in Korean and American samples and found a connection with self-esteem and depressed mood. According to this study, differences between the two samples regarding the strength of the correlation are the result of cultural differences (the Korean sample was more negative about their body image and expectations and the negative effect on self-esteem was stronger than in the American sample). Sujoldžić and De Lucia (2007, p. 128) performed a cross-cultural analysis of adolescents' body image and psychological well-being including self-esteem. Their results suggest that positive body image presents a positive relationship with self-esteem in adolescent girls. In these studies, the results show a higher concern over body image by female participants. This fact also applies to the girls in the novels (except for Katniss, whose self-esteem is not affected by her appearance or others' opinion of it), but not to the male protagonists in general, especially Tobias and Elder. In fact, as we have seen, Tobias' positive statement about himself is referred to his physical skills. Similarly, Elder's negative statements of self-image are related to decision-making and responsibility. This situation is explained by cultural factors (Jung & Lee, 2006, p. 363). As explained in chapter 4, the USA and the UK are mostly masculine societies, as are the Dauntless faction and Godspeed's community. This condition implies gender differences among the population, associating stereotypically feminine and masculine traits to the population. In this regard, in masculine societies, women are more concerned about physical appearance as perceived by others than in more feminine societies. For example, in a comparative study between French and American teenagers, American teenagers reported being excluded from groups because they did not reach the physical standard, whereas French teenagers did not report this situation (Ferron, 1997, p. 741). This idea does not imply that females from masculine and feminine societies have different levels of body dissatisfaction (Williams, Ricciardelli, McCabe, Waqa, & Bavadra, 2006, p. 285), but rather that the differences between boys and girls in masculine countries as regards the issue of self-perception are connected with the cultural trait of the country.

In contrast with *Across the Universe* and Dauntless in *Divergent*, the society in *Uglies* is perfectly feminine in cultural terms because boys and girls do not have

differentiated behaviours, that is, there are no gender differences, as explained in chapter 4. In accordance, both Tally –as a girl– and male characters such as Peris – Tally’s Pretty best friend– or even Smokies such as the Boss long for surgery that allows them to meet the standards or to recover their youthful appearance. Furthermore, the criticism of the established ideal of beauty is not exclusive of a gender. As Tally mentions, Peris used to question the operation the same way Shay does in the first novel.

Similar to the idea of academic stress and pressure-related low self-esteem, research shows that strong friendships favour a decrease in adolescents’ negative perception regarding body image (Kenny, Sullivan, Callaghan, Molcho & Kelly, 2018, p. 7). In the same vein, research reports positive effects of close friendship on teenagers’ psychological wellbeing (Narr, Allen, Tan & Loeb, 2017, p. 1; Wilkinson, 2010, p. 714). Drawing on these ideas, I provide a closer examination of the results of self-esteem for the protagonists considering friendships in *Uglies* and *Divergent*.

Tally starts with low self-esteem. She feels alone because all her friends and particularly her best friend have become pretties. As she establishes a close friendship with Shay, the latter tries to change her negative self-image by challenging the beliefs all children learn throughout their life: that they are all ugly until they undergo surgery. She eventually seems to accept this idea and her self-esteem improves regarding body acceptance. However, betrayal and distancing from Shay affect Tally’s psychological well-being in terms of feelings of guilt over her friend’s situation.

In Tally’s case, the environment plays a key role in shaping her perception of herself both regarding physical appearance and personality. In this case, the city’s division of the population in terms of age heavily influences the rejection of the uglies (under 16-year-olds) by the pretties and damages uglies’ already low self-esteem. Due to the conditioning they have been exposed to by the city, children before the operation are encouraged to stress each other’s flaws, which creates a vicious cycle. The manipulation and group dynamics are so intense that when one tries to break away from the standard beliefs –Shay– she is disregarded as a misfit or a deluded person. This situation becomes a source of anxiety for the protagonist as well as a great pressure that conditions her behaviour. On the other hand, being with other common people in the Smoke, and being praised by her looks and skills by her friends, influence Tally’s opinion on the city and its beauty standards and favours her self-acceptance.



Despite her evolution, Tally's dependency regarding others' acceptance is noteworthy. As she admits in the last novel, all the situations she has endured and even the modification of her body were brought to her unwillingly, showing a lack of agency of the character due mainly to the system.

The results gave a very clear pattern for *Divergent*, where Tris' esteem is affected by very specific events. In particular, she presents 10 instances in which she describes herself in negative terms. A situation that begins to change once she moves to another faction. Even though she continues to present herself in the same terms (clumsy, too small, etc.), she ends the novel with two positive self-representation examples related to her new identity as Divergent and Dauntless (uncontrollable and brave).

After starting her training with the other transfers in Dauntless, Christina and Tris become friends and we see examples of the dynamics of help and compliments that research indicates is typical of female friendships. Even though Tris still refers to herself in negative terms –“I am not pretty—my eyes are too big and my nose is too long”— she acknowledges Christina's compliment: “but I can see that Christina is right. My face is noticeable” (p. 87). This statement is the protagonist's first—and only—positive comment about her physical appearance in the first novel. As pointed out, research indicates that close friendships improve self-esteem and prevent depression. In this sense, Tris' humour changes when she sees that Christina smiles once they join the other Dauntless: “When we walk in, the Dauntless inside stand. They applaud. They stamp their feet. They shout. The noise surrounds me and fills me. Christina smiles, and a second later, so do I” (p. 65). The closeness of the relationship is patent by the way Christina takes care of Tris when she is injured:

Christina just passes me a muffin and crouches in front of me to tie my shoes. Gratitude surges in my chest.”—or defending her from Peter's insults: “I feel calmer when I'm near her. If Peter tries to taunt me, she will defend me. (*Divergent*, p. 119)

However, as the novels develop, their relationship weakens (e.g., when Tris suggests the best strategy to win the competition), crucially when Tris kills Will in self-defence. Furthermore, the respective relationships of the girls with Tobias and Will establish parallel supports within the faction that eliminate their dependency and reliance between them. The only result of a positive instance by others is Tris' supposition that Tobias considers her a strong person.

While the second instalment of the trilogy starts with Tris following the positive self-esteem ending, her relationship with Tobias is a source of self-deprecating behaviour based on the idea of not deserving him. The compliments she receives are regarding her bravery, but despite Cara's and Tobias' positive comments, Tris develops a kamikaze behaviour derived from the fact that she killed Will and Christina's absence as a support, which derives in her ultimate sacrifice in the last novel. All in all, the trilogy presents a highly negative protagonist who fails to value herself and her life and depends on other people's approval (friends, boyfriend and parents).

#### 5.2.14.3 *Depression and suicide*

The way depression or mental health issues are represented in this novel is also noteworthy. As we have seen, Tris dislikes Al's behaviour from the beginning and dismisses it as weakness. She stresses that his weeping at night bothers her and not only shows no empathy –none of the characters do– but she associates depression with weakness. When Al commits suicide in the Dauntless compound the leader of the trainees praises his figure and distorts his image so that he is remembered as a man brave enough to end his own life. By contrast, Tris calls his action coward and associates him with weakness in a deprecating way: “He wasn't brave! He was depressed and a coward and he almost killed me!” (*Divergent*, p. 122). As we have seen in the chapter on the cultural dimensions, Dauntless has a characteristically masculine culture in which the strong are praised and the weak are denigrated. This situation, together with the fact that men should be stronger than women –as we saw with the criticism of Will to Peter for attacking “a little girl”– depicts a phenomenon that is labelled as toxic masculinity.

The choice of a boy to play the character of the weak misfit in a context of high competition and strength-praising culture is an element that disrupts the traditional gender roles; however, by presenting a female main character who fails to support this person, the writer is both challenging women's stereotypically caring personality and failing to offer a positive response to this situation. What would be bravest than challenging the faction's strict ideas over weakness and strength and helping a peer instead of following competition guidelines? How does main characters' disregard for the boy's situation affect the representation of male teenage readers? Parent (2018, p. 284) points out the relationship between toxic masculinity and depression. Furthermore,

Lomas (2017) stresses the fact that adolescent boys at risk –those feeling most vulnerable– may engage toxic masculinity behaviours; they “compensate by engaging in hypermasculine behaviours” such as aggression (p. 2). On the other hand, Kupers (2005, p. 720) found out that male convicts with hypermasculine/toxic masculinity behaviours rejected participating in mental health therapy.

Although Tris’ attitude may and probably does stem from ignorance, the message that the writer transmits the readership embodies that association. This case is not exclusive of *Divergent*. In *The Hunger Games*, Katniss’ mother suffers depression after her husband’s death in a mine accident leaving the protagonist and her little sister without help to care for their basic needs. Although Katniss indicates that she was angry at her mother for letting them starve –“all I can see is the woman who sat by, blank and unreachable, while her children turned to skin and bones” (p. 8)– she later explains that she came to understand that the depression she felt was an illness, not a choice: “That part about her being ill might be true. I’ve seen her bring back people suffering from immobilizing sadness since. Perhaps it is a sickness, but it’s one we can’t afford” (p. 33). Finally, two characters in *Across the Universe* commit suicide (Harley and Kayleigh), both of whom were treated medically, thus being the only representations of depression as an illness treated as such. According to Parcesepe and Cabassa (2013), in the USA, both adults and children commonly stigmatize people suffering from depression. The authors state that “beliefs of shame, blame, incompetency, punishment, and criminality of people with mental illness are common” (p. 394). Regarding the UK, reports indicate an increase of awareness of depression as a mental illness (86%) (Time to Change, 2015, p. 5). Among the Spanish population, and as per data from 2004, depression is considered one of the three most important illnesses and the results indicate that, in general terms, the population believe that there is an increasing trend regarding the number of people who will suffer it in the future (Comas & Álvarez, 2004, p. 371). These data suggest that the degrading attitudes of the protagonists towards people suffering from depression might be rejected to a greater extent by British and Spanish readers than by US readers.

#### 5.4.14.4 Challenging established values.

As introduced in the review of esteem and utopias, writers of feminist utopias were sometimes confronted with the difficulty of ending a novel based on romantic conventions without challenging the critical spirit of the protagonist against the established social norms portrayed throughout the novel. Intelligent and strong female characters who did not submit to the institution of marriage and the desires of men would typically sacrifice themselves or die for the greater good, whereas those who did would inexplicably accept marriage after having rejected it. These women would abandon her socially relevant positions in favour of marriage and motherhood. If we analyse the endings of the novels, we have another explanation for *Mockingjay*'s ending. As we explained in the affiliation section, this novel's ending was controversial due to the lack of coherence with the protagonist ideas. Taking into account that Suzanne Collins used the love triangle as a means to attract the target audience and as a tool for action development, it could be assumed that the author decided to follow the romantic novel's conventions to provide Katniss' happy ending or utopia. On the other extreme, Tris sacrifices herself for the community and dies. As explained by Kolmerten (1994, pp. 108–109), since she could not fit in the society –she did not follow the rules, she did not obey male characters' suggestions– she meets the convention by providing protection but dies in the process. However, Tris' endured social pressure should be acknowledged. Her guilt for leaving her faction and preventing her neighbour's idealised life from happening is reminiscent of the guilt inherent to women who are accused of selfishness for pursuing a professional career instead of raising their children. Thus, Tris is showing the struggle of those who choose agency to social pressure, as in the feminist utopias discussed in the introduction to this section.

The other two trilogies contain some sentimental content or romantic relationships or interests; however, the endings are somehow different to the marriage or death dichotomy presented in feminist utopias a century ago. In the case of Tally, and after bringing down the system but failing to control the consequences of the return to “old” means of production involving a threat to nature, she abandons society and rejects contributing to shaping the post-system city. Her special physique and her rejection of the new cultural values imply that there is no place for her in the city. Tally's fate is not completely decided by herself. She is used as a weapon to try to stop the fight between the cities. Shay tells Tally that she is the only one that might stop it because she is the

only one left with a Special mindset. Shay and the cured cutters offer Tally no choice but to become a sacrificial victim for the good of the community. In the end, she is saved by her creator, Dr Cable, who wants to preserve her masterpiece. This situation represents the icons of the scientist and the monster from science fiction literature, and marks Tally as completely unable to fit in the system, as alien.

Finally, Amy's situation is similar to Tally's. She is physically changed against her will into a hybrid by those opposing Earthlings' control so that she can become a mediator between the two groups. Her new hybrid morphology leaves her out of the new planet society formed by Earth-born and Godspeed natives where she had already achieved people's respect. Thus, as in Tally's case, she becomes the other; however, unlike the protagonist of *Specials*, she is eager to regain her people's trust. The ending offers a hopeful view of the future from Amy's perspective, who is probably the most resilient of the characters in the corpus, and the most coherent; she does not undergo a transformation from a psychological viewpoint in this regard. Nevertheless, as explained above, her role in the new society is conditioned by her alien body. These two novels offer a variation of the solution involving death of the character.

Both novels challenge established values and pre-determined options, becoming posthuman and thus representing hybridity at physical and cultural levels. The approach, however, is different. While Amy represents resilience and eagerness to gain social respect (esteem), Tally assumes, accepts and values her new identity outside society (self-esteem). According to Anaou (2015, p. 65), the humane characteristics of Tally's post-humanity identify her as a post post-human. Considering his definition, hybrid Amy would equally classify as such. This approach on Amy's new humanity is shared by McCulloch (2016, p. 86), who highlights the positivism of the novel drawing on the idea that "the posthuman turn [is] an amazing opportunity to decide together what and who we are capable of becoming, and a unique opportunity for humanity to reinvent itself affirmatively, through creativity and empowering ethical relations" (Braidotti, 2013, p. 195). My position is not concerned with the human or post-human body per se, but on the implications of this hybridity in cultural and social terms; that is, the blend of different influences that breeds a new perspective. Thus, rejecting available choices, as Tally does, or being forced to face new scenarios, as in the case of Amy, while becoming empowered in alternative bodies, could represent the importance of self-acceptance but also a criticism of high uncertainty avoidance. The protagonists, who have been enduring high levels of tension and anxiety associated with the cultures

of Godspeed and the City, respectively, are “re-tooled” and “evolved” through post-humanity, thus overcoming the obstacles and gaining agency to face upcoming challenges without suffering the initial negative impact of change and uncertainty.

All in all, the four novels offer a myriad of alternatives for female characters, but none of these alternatives involves becoming a leader or having a salient social role.

#### 5.4.14.5 Culture and self-esteem

As we have seen, the protagonists’ self-esteem issues may obey to a myriad of circumstances such as parental or peer support and literary and gender conventions. However, an important factor to consider is cultural values.

The first two concepts that I focus on are guilt and humility or modesty. The way people perceive the transgression of norms differs depending on the culture. In collectivist cultures, doing so implies shame. However, the words used to express it may or may not correspond to this definition. For example, in the first novel of *The Hunger Games* trilogy, when Katniss thinks about the possibility of returning to District 12 as a victor after killing Peeta, she points out that it would be unacceptable and that she would be treated as a pariah. This would correspond to the concept of shame.

These concepts and the way the protagonists feel are also related to their role in society, not only as representative figure but also as voluntary or involuntary reformist. Tally, Tris and Katniss become prominent figures in their respective societies. As they become idealized figures, they are also individualized, singled out by the awe and jealousy their special abilities provoke in others. Katniss’ prominence in the rebellion marks her, causing her to feel guilty. The process is similar for Tally, who is given a role that she did not want. Similarly, at the beginning of the trilogy, Tris is ashamed of her behaviour, while after gaining social relevance, she constantly describes her guilt for the consequences of her acts as an individual. In other words, from the moment they become the heroines, with all the responsibility lying on their shoulders, the weight wears them down: It is not shared as a “we” but worn as an “I.”

In close connection with differences in the perception of guilt and responsibility, uncertainty avoidance states that teachers are supposed to have all the answers. Elder is given the responsibility of leading the community despite not having completed his training and, since the community sees the Eldest as a father and teacher, he is not allowed to hesitate or fail. In addition, Elder also experiments a consequence of strong

uncertainty avoidance cultures: anxiety, emotionality and neuroticism. As explained in chapter 4, he is more cautious than Amy and, being in charge, he feels the anxiety of having to assume the consequences of his actions and decisions. The obsession of the protagonists with their experiences affecting their self-esteem (in the case of Elder, Tris, Katniss and Tally) represents this dimension.

Another important cultural dimension is restraint and indulgence, given the fact that, according to Hofstede's model, people in restrained societies are less like to remember positive emotions, which could definitely affect self-esteem. Furthermore, research shows that self-esteem and self-enhancement levels are higher in indulgent societies than in restrained societies, where the other should be at the centre (Kurman, 2003, p. 507); thus, people in restrained cultures are more likely to engage in emotion suppression in preserve harmony.

Emotional expressiveness is thought to have a positive effect on coping with life struggles. In other words, individuals who express their emotions tend to receive more social support, while the opposite is true for individuals who suppress their emotions. In particular, according to Tsai, Nguyen, Weiss, Ngo and Lau (2016, p. 658), failure to voice one's emotions after a traumatic experience may "fail to signal distress and recruit support from others, resulting in reduced social support." Furthermore, the authors indicate that "adolescents who experience interpersonal stress and poor social support may increasingly withdraw and engage in emotion suppression to insulate against further social problems" (p. 658). Interestingly, the results show that the gravest cases of low self-esteem are those involving characters with low expressiveness and thus low explicit social support: Katniss and Tris.

This discussion offers some ideas to presume readers' level of identification with the novels regarding esteem or self-esteem. Thus, for readers from highly indulgent cultures such as the UK or the USA, the expressiveness of Amy, who represents the indulgent US culture, or Tally, who represents the indulgence of the city, could be more relatable than Katniss and Tris' emotional repression, which would be more relatable for Spanish readers.

### 5.5 Personal Fulfilment

The last stage of human needs fulfilment is self-actualization and self-transcendence, for which I use the umbrella term of personal fulfilment.

Recent attempts at modernizing or adapting the hierarchy challenge the topic of self-actualization. Kenrick, Griskevicius, Neuberg and Schaller (2010, p. 294) suggest that self-actualization can be determined by mate acquisition and retention, and parenting. This view was challenged years later by Krems, Kenrick, and Neal (2017, p. 1351), who found no support for the idea that mate acquisition and retention as well as parenting are related to people's perception of self-actualization. Nevertheless, it has been suggested that activities considered self-actualizing such as art are closely linked to an increase in esteem and social connections and suitability as a mate and, therefore, genetic transmission. Interestingly, in these authors' study, the group of undergraduates that participated identified high academic performance as a goal of self-actualization, thus indicating that for youngsters, their education and future career aspirations are key to their personal fulfilment (p. 1349).

The idea of mate acquisition as main part of the fulfilment of a person in terms of motivation seems to fit awkwardly with the protagonists of YA dystopian fiction, because it could restrict the organization of priorities of female characters, who are said to present girls with alternative and positive female roles, and because it resembles traditional endings for female characters that could only choose between death and marriage, as I have explained in the section on esteem. This is not to say that having children is not fulfilling or cannot be the source of fulfilment for some, but rather that the discourse on female heroines tends to deviate from that ending, most probably because of the young age of the protagonists (15-16 years old).

The most striking controversy with regards to mate acquisition and reproduction conceived as the peak of people's happiness and their greatest accomplishment is, perhaps, the duality it presents in terms of opportunity cost for the female character. As one of the characters of the novels representing the previous wave of young adult fiction, *Twilight's* Bella renounces to higher education and settles with marrying Edward and having his child. In contrast to paranormal romance, dystopian fiction is said to present stronger and more independent female protagonists who challenge the established gender stereotypes to a greater or lesser extent, and not without controversy, as I have explained in the section about romantic love (5.3.14.1).



In the previous section, I have explained the representation of personal happiness in the novels and explored some representations in utopias. Nonetheless, happiness in that sense is equated to subjective well-being and thus to self-esteem and status. In this case, self-actualization may be conceived as happiness of another sort. According to Raibley (2012, p. 1112), some measures of subjective well-being may imply episodic happiness as defined by Feldman (2010, pp. 127–136), which refers to a momentary or temporary psychological phenomenon “the feeling we attribute to people who are in high spirits, a good mood, who are feeling good, who are smiling” (Raibley, 2012, p. 1108). Another more persistent variation of happiness refers to a personal attribute sense (p. 1010) including harmony and balance as key factors.

The idea of self-actualization is often related to that of happiness as defined by Aristotle: the “activity of the soul in accordance with virtue” (in McGill, 1967, p. 17). If we consider the main theories about the source of happiness, two radically opposed ideas can be identified. On the one hand, the Epicurean ideal and Utilitarianism conceive happiness as a consequence of having as much as possible and satisfying as many needs and desires as possible, respectively. On the other hand, Eudaemonism is based on the importance of filling the role that is in accordance to the skills and capabilities of an individual (Shin & Johnson, 1978, p. 479). In the utopian tradition, happiness has a negative relationship with freedom and the desires and their satisfaction. That is, following Götz, contentment is essential in utopias for happiness to be possible (2010, p. xv), which is the approach supported by Stoicism and hedonism among others.

D’Souza and Gurin (2016, p. 4) point out the relationship between Maslow’s concept of self-actualization and “the Hindu stages of life (Kakar, 1968), Erikson’s theory of Psycho-social development (Erikson & Erikson, 1998), Freud’s (1957) theory of the id, ego and superego, the ancient Jewish tradition’s understanding of human progression (Sacks, 2005), and Kohlberg’s stages of moral development (Kohlberg, 1981).” In contrast to other researchers’ claims that self-actualization is closely linked to the previous stages and to mate acquisition and retention, D’Souza and Guri (2016, p. 6) place more emphasis on self-awareness and transcendence from selfish states to selflessness. The authors posit that children and young adults would typically focus on D-needs (deficiency needs) with the latter shifting “towards socially valued profession or cause” (p. 8). In the same vein, Ivztan, Gardner, Bernard, Sekhon and Hart (2013, p. 124) found that individuals aged 36 or more are more concerned with self-actualization

than younger adults. Nevertheless, the authors also indicated the overlapping of needs across age groups. From my point of view, these dystopian societies may portray an accelerated growth of the characters in order to represent the whole process of development of a person and his or her aspirations. Thus, by analysing the characters of the novels, we can ascertain whether a person could grow self-actualized given the conditions offered by the system.

As regards self-transcendence, its place within Maslow's theory is controversial. Maslow's theory has not remained untouched or unaltered since its conception, but, on the contrary, Maslow himself suggested alterations in his lectures and in personal journal annotations (see Koltko-Rivera, 2006). However, and apart from some exceptions (e.g., Fadiman & Frager, 2002) most textbooks present his theory without his later addition (self-transcendence). According to Vogler, who draws on Aristotle and Aquinas, for someone who reaches self-transcendence:

[...] life is lived through participation in a good that goes beyond personal achievement, expression, security and comfort, beyond even the need to promote those goods for members of my intimate circle. I work on behalf of bettering the community in ways that will help strangers, say. [...] My own life is a part of some good crucial to good life more generally, as best I can understand, serve, and embody that larger good (Vogler, 2016, p. 228).

The individual that reaches the high stages of motivation becomes more concerned with a higher cause greater than or separated from him or herself, wondered by beauty outside him or herself. Self-transcendence has been linked to the idea of spirituality and altruism but also to common good. It follows, as explained by Koltko-Rivera (2006, p. 309), that Maslow's self-transcendence stage could be used in cross-cultural theories involving the dimension of individualism-collectivism.

Self-actualization theory has been criticised by many researchers. However, and drawing from different theories of motivation, Winston presents a conceptualization that allegedly offsets these weak points. Winston's (2016, p. 142) theory mixes Maslow's theory of motivation with Seligman's (2002) concept of happiness –based on the three stages of life: Pleasant, Good and Meaningful– and Kierkegaard's (1941) idea of despair. Unlike Kierkegaard or Seligman, who state that each individual stage is insufficient to reach the ideal life, Winston's theory determines that a person may be satisfied and fulfilled with the pleasant life, the good life or the meaningful life independently. She equates the Meaningful Life with self-transcendence in a conceptualization of the ideal life. According to the author, a person who satisfies her or

his self-actualization needs reaches self-transcendence, which, as per Kierkegaard's theory, can only be achieved by those who integrate themselves into a larger whole; this idea can be related to religiousness or to a particular cause that is based on the common good.

#### 5.5.1 Self-actualization and self-transcendence in utopias and dystopias

Traditional anti-utopian views, seen as consistently pessimistic and conservative by some, and as realist by others, considered humans to be capable of attaining but a meagre amount of happiness and believed utopias eradicated creativity and aspirations (Kumar, 1987, p. 102).

Regarding self-actualization in More's *Utopia*, Setek notes that:

what people choose to do with their spare time is an essential element of culture, as it is closely related to self-identity and self-actualization. To create model citizens, who are always improving themselves and their country, Thomas More imagines leisure options that are ideal but limited, generally including some form of learning (Setek, 2016, p. 19).

As such, people are highly limited to develop and become self-actualized.

According to Burnett and Rollin (2000), anti-leisure, which is perverted leisure in dystopian fiction, "harms the individual and his or her hopes of self-actualization" (p. 79).

As explained by Boos (2010), Morris' essays deal with contemplation of nature and "Kantian sublimity," she cites as an example Morris' "The Origins of Ornamental Art":

herdsman and tiller, [who] ... though he [had] to take his share of rough torment from storm and frost and sun, yet [had] his eyes on beautiful things forever, and his ears often delighted by the multitudinous voice of nature as he [went] to and fro through the changes of the year, nursing his hope of the harvest which is to be (Boos, 2010, p. 153).

This admiration of nature as a greater whole seems to be consistent with one of the pathways to self-actualization and self-transcendence. This admiration is connected with religion in that often nature is conceived as a creation of God. Although most YA dystopian fiction of the 21<sup>st</sup> century does not deal with religiosity, religion was a central or underlying topic in many classical utopias: More, Bacon and the classic Utopian tradition draw on Christianity. Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* is thought to present the reader with a society ruled by the tenants of the Religion of Solidarity as

exposed by Ferrara (2007). The author identifies *Looking Backward* as a rational utopia in that it draws on Judaeo-Christian traditions to portray a future society based on “selfless action [that] leads to the expression of our true (benevolent) human nature” (p. 85). Furthermore, Ferrara contends that the utopian dialectic of *Looking Backward* “results in the achievement of an altruistic and communal morality” (p. 90).

Interestingly, in dystopias, the fulfilment of basic needs, the Pleasant Life as described earlier, represents in itself a utopia (Kumar, 1987, p. 102). Certainly, the scarcity of examples for self-actualization in the novels analysed seems to confirm this idea. Nevertheless, as I will discuss, some of the patterns of behaviours and motivations of protagonists are closely related to higher needs including self-actualization but also self-transcendence.

The wide range of approaches to this concept or this stage of human needs, which is extremely abstract, hinders its identification in the novels. To do so, I identified situations that could exemplify the protagonists’ eagerness to become something, professionally or socially, the lack of possibilities for creativity or leisure that could hinder their development as regards their identity and cause an emotional response that borders on nihilism as well as examples of the importance of hope for people’s motivation to strive for fulfilment. Furthermore, I offer a discussion on the three types of fulfilment: The Pleasant Life, The Good Life and the Meaningful Life. The first one is associated with the satisfaction of hunger and safety needs; the Good Life is associated with the satisfaction of Affiliation or Esteem needs and the Meaningful Life is related to self-actualization and self-transcendence. Thus, the discussion on the heroine’s journey will also provide the possibility of assuming love, mating and having children as personal fulfilment.

### 5.5.2 Results: *Uglies*

This section discusses the results of the first instalment of the trilogy by Scott Westerfeld, drawing on the examples obtained and displayed in the following table.

1	“Doing what you’re supposed to do is always boring. I can’t imagine anything worse than being required to have fun.” (p. 49)
2	“But what if they get mad enough that they won’t make me pretty?” (p. 55)
3	“Shay, I never would have gotten used to the idea. I don’t want to be ugly all my life. I want those perfect eyes and lips, and for everyone to look at me and gasp.

	And for everyone who sees me to think Who's that? and want to get to know me, and listen to what I say." (p. 92)
4	"This'll all be over in no time. Just have a nice chat with Special Circumstances, tell them everything, and you'll be headed where you really want to be." They all looked out the window at the towers of New Pretty Town. "I guess so." "Sweetheart," Ellie said, patting her leg, "what other choice do you have?" (p. 119)
5	"Having fun?" Shay asked, wiping sweat from her brow. [WORK] Tally nodded, grinning. "Don't just stand there, let's finish the job." (p. 211)
6	"Because you'll be happy!" Shay took a couple of deep breaths, and her usual calm returned. She smiled, beautiful again. "Like me." (p. 410)

Source: own elaboration.

This stage of the hierarchy is the one that poses the highest problem for the society of the city. The city effectively caters to the needs of its citizens regarding the previous stages, but it fails to do the same in this case because offering self-actualization options to the population as a whole implies giving the citizens enough autonomy to decide on their aspirations, which would in turn compromise the satisfaction of the previous needs. Thus, the examples we see of this need being discussed are those related to whether becoming pretty is desirable. The first three examples show how Shay and Tally have differing ideas of the future they want for themselves. While Tally seems content and even looking forward to the plan the system has for her—becoming pretty and constantly having fun and being admired—Shay questions the validity of being required to have fun as ‘the real thing’ and is not content.

As the discussion on esteem and affiliation shows, friendship and interpersonal interaction shapes a person's ideas and perceptions, but also his or her aspirations. Tally's clear ideas about her future are challenged when Shay leaves the city and the authorities require her to betray her to achieve her goals. Example 4 shows how she hesitates about “where she wants to be” and is faced with the fact that the city does not give her freedom to choose (5). In contraposition to the ideas of the Smokies, who criticise the city's ferrous control over citizen's lives, Pretty Shay associates her new life as pretty with happiness, as opposed to the Smokies' troubled lives (6). The dilemma between freedom and happiness is a constant element in utopian literature. In the case of *Uglies*, both Shay and Peris embody the position held by those who believe what the system offers is the best alternative in this regard. This situation can be

compared with Lenina’s statement: “I don’t know what you mean. I am free. Free to have the most wonderful time. Everybody’s happy nowadays” (*Brave New World*, p. 91).

### 5.5.3 Results: *Pretties*

Interestingly, the analysis of the second novel offers the same number of results as the first one (i.e., six examples), which are presented in the table below.

1	“I don’t want to work for Special Circumstances. I just want to live here in New Pretty Town.” (p. 30)
2	Finally, she was a full-fledged Crim. Everything she’d ever wanted had come to her at last. (p. 42)
3	Whatever was happening to Zane, staying bubbly wasn’t worth losing him. (p. 123)
4	There were too many things to juggle. Too many worries all falling on her alone. All she’d wanted was to become a Crim, to feel safe inside a clique of friends, and now she’d found herself in charge of a rebellion. (p. 125)
5	“You’re wrong!” Tally shouted. “All I ever wanted was to be pretty. You’re the one who keeps getting in my way!” (p. 134)
6	“Why am I unhappy?” Tally repeated softly. “Because the city makes you the way they want you to be, Peris. And I want to be myself. That’s why.” (p. 230)

Source: own elaboration.

Tally’s conformist mentality continues throughout this second novel. Neither the city authorities nor the Smokies understand her needs for fulfilment. She had an idealised idea of her future and did not want to be promoted (1) to become part of the authorities, nor did she want to be the leader of a rebellion (4). As she says in examples 2 and 5, she simply wanted to be part of a group in order not to be alone. An important aspect to consider is that she was not given time as a Pretty without external factors influencing her life. That is, even before she adapted to her new life and thus satisfied her need to belong and her esteem, external factors such as the Smokies or the authorities come to change her world again. Furthermore, her decisions are influenced by the fact that she is still struggling to maintain the satisfaction of her previous needs. Contentment with the life laid for her by the city also implies the safety of Zane, since

the cure causes him brain damage that could be cured by the city at the expense of his ability to think critically (3). In this case, she is preserving her affiliation needs, including romantic love, by prioritising his health to her self-actualization and critical thinking.

Despite the continuous affirmations of her satisfaction with a simple Pretty life, Tally eventually decides that such life makes her unhappy because of the lack of agency it implies (6). This example is a reflection of the problem posed by the protagonist in *Brave New World*, who says “I’d rather be myself” [...] “Myself and nasty. Not somebody else, however jolly” (p. 82). In Tally’s case, this struggle to define herself could be understood as the process of growth teenagers experience or as the process of self-discovery and agency claims of people who shake against the shackles of a predetermined set of options, as in *Divergent*, for instance.

#### 5.5.4 Results: *Specials*

Tally’s discussion of her aspirations to be happy is mostly inexistent in this last novel of the trilogy. Instead, throughout the novel, the protagonist focuses on the other needs in the hierarchy, which are under constant threat. The only example of personal satisfaction refers to the fact that she is able to get into the helicopter that takes the runaways to the new smoke without being seen: “But she’d made it. Tally finally allowed herself a slow breath of relief. Watching the scenery pass below, the pleasure of accomplishing a really icy trick washed through her” (p. 215). In this regard, as she applies her skills to the accomplishment of a goal, she feels satisfied. This satisfaction, however, is highly temporary, it refers to a specific action in a mission. Thus, it does not refer to her overall constant satisfaction with her lifestyle or to the use of her skills to serve a greater cause (i.e., self-transcendence). In fact, even the ending of the story seems to describe a situation whereby she will face challenges in order to protect her home. Since the novel finishes with her promise, the audience cannot perceive whether her task allows her to feel self-actualized.

#### 5.5.5 Results: *The Hunger Games*

No examples found.

### 5.5.6 Results: *Catching Fire*

The only three examples that may represent the topic of self-actualization and self-transcendence in the second novel are presented in the table below.

1	If a community exists in District 13, would it be better to go there, where I might be able to accomplish something, instead of waiting here for my death? (p. 177)
2	We star-crossed lovers from District 12, who suffered so much and enjoyed so little the rewards of our victory, do not seek the fans' favor, grace them with our smiles, or catch their kisses. We are unforgiving. And I love it. Getting to be myself at last. (p. 256)
3	As I drift off, I try to imagine that world, somewhere in the future, with no Games, no Capitol. A place like the meadow in the song I sang to Rue as she died. Where Peeta's child could be safe. (p. 427)

Source: own elaboration.

The examples from this second novel indicate a desire for change that is not even considered in *The Hunger Games*. Katniss shows hope for a better place for herself in example 1 and for Peeta in example 3. Example 3 is particularly interesting because it marks the extent to which the perfect society for Katniss, the circumstances that would make her happy, are related to safety and affiliation defined in terms of family, and in terms of children's safety. Furthermore, the society is so restrictive that she does not complain about a particular situation preventing her from being happy but considers happiness in an alternative society.

Finally, example 2 shows how the Capitol and the constant exposure to the cameras restricted Katniss' capacity to be at ease. In other words, she lives in constant tension and cannot be herself. Furthermore, at this stage, being able to express herself and her hatred towards the Capitol is paramount. Although this is not necessarily self-actualizing, it represents an important part of the process, which involves being satisfied with what one does and the way one acts.

All in all, these three examples are a reflection of the fierce repression of the state, which, as I have shown through my analysis, compromises fulfilment at all motivational stages.



### 5.5.7 Results: *Mockingjay*

The last novel offers insights into this need as reflected in the four examples obtained through the analysis and displayed in the following table.

1	Once off the main corridors, Gale and I race like schoolchildren for the armory, and by the time we arrive, I'm breathless and dizzy. (p. 62)
2	But [hunting] it's about as close to happiness as I think I can currently get. (p. 63)
3	"That's great," I say. Prim a doctor. She couldn't even dream of it in 12. Something small and quiet, like a match being struck, lights up the gloom inside me. This is the sort of future a rebellion could bring. (p. 176)
4	"It's why no one ever wants the center unit. Workmen coming and going whenever and no second bath. But the rent's considerably cheaper." Then he notices Finnick's amused expression and adds, "Never mind." (p. 348)

Source: own elaboration.

In contrast to the previous novel, which focuses partially on an ideal future, examples 1 and 2 in *Mockingjay* refer to Katniss' idea of happiness. In both cases, the situations are related to hunting, directly in example 2 and indirectly in the first one: being outside in nature is perceived as an experience that reminds her of the feeling of freedom she used to get while hunting with Gale in the woods outside District 12.

As professional self-actualization is concerned, Katniss does not focus on her own possibilities, as she did in the previous novel (see example 1 *Catching Fire*), instead, she projects hope onto her sister's future as a doctor (3). Her perspective agrees with her depiction of an alternative place where others can be safe from the Capitol in the previous section.

Finally, example 4 shows the cultural and socioeconomic differences between the Capitol and district citizens when it comes to satisfaction. While Messalla considers the inconveniences of having one bathroom instead of two, complaining about such comfort is ridiculous for Finnick, who comes from the districts and used to struggle to survive the day. Large power distance involves a highly uneven income distribution, which hampers people's possibilities of becoming self-actualized. The opportunity to access housing would seem trivial to someone whose basic needs in the previous stages are threatened and limited by the Capitol; however, the target audience is more likely to identify as relatable the situation described by Messalla than that of Finnick, because

accessing housing is a pressing issue for young adults, whereas the basic needs are covered to a greater extent.

### 5.5.8 Results: *Across the Universe*

The following table offers the seven examples where topics related to the idea of self-actualization or self-transcendence are discussed or represented.

1	It's not just that there is no Jason. There is no marathon. There is no New York. New York—New York! It's huge. There are—there were so many people there. No New York. Whatever New York exists now, it's not the way it was. It's not subways and Central Park, marathons and Broadway. By now it's something else entirely—flying cars and teleporters for all I know. I'll never see it, and it will never be what it was. For me, forever, there is no New York. (p. 189)
2	“Do you think they're happy, at least?” she asks, nodding her head at the couple. Before I can answer, she adds, “Because I never am.” (p. 247)
3	“Filomina,” she says in an even tone, even though the doctor's doing something to her now that would have made me squirm with unease. “Are you happy?” I know it's a weird question, but it was the first thing I could think of. “I'm not unhappy.” (p. 253)
4	“She felt trapped by the walls of the ship. We all knew we'd land one day—we'd be the generation that would leave this ship and live in the new world.” (p. 261)
5	Would Amy really be happier if she stayed hollow inside? (p. 286)
6	Although I was born Elder, for the first time I finally feel as if I can one day be Eldest. (p. 316)
7	I want to tell him no, that he's wrong, but I know that's a lie. And I understand now, oh, how I understand why Eldest lies and makes the people all raise their children with the hope of planet-landing. If we don't have that, what do we have to live for? Does it matter if it's a lie if it keeps us alive? Taking away the chance for planet-landing has left Harley nothing more than an empty, desperate shell. (p. 354)

Source: own elaboration.

Happiness and hope on board of Godspeed are not common. Most people live under the effects of powerful drugs that dilute their will into a neutral, calm state. That is why people like Filomina respond with a double negation (3). Those who are aware of the situation, because they are artists or contribute to culture in a way or another are not happy. In fact, Harley explains that his girlfriend committed suicide because she felt trapped inside the ship (4), while Harley himself struggles to continue living. Similarly, Victria says that she feels unhappy (2), which indicates a pattern among conscious citizens, those who are not under the effects of the drug. Example 7 explores how the lack of a life goal affects everybody's motivations. In Amy's case, this situation becomes so acute that Elder questions himself about whether Phydus is a good solution for Amy (5) and, therefore, on whether being free is worth being unhappy. These examples pose the classic debate of dystopian literature about happiness and freedom and that is famously represented by John the Savage in *Brave New World* in claiming his right to be unhappy in exchange for art, danger and, all in all, freedom (p. 197).

Regarding Elder, he looks at the moment in which he will become Eldest with hope and expectations despite the disadvantages of holding that position (6). In this case, Elder is probably the only Godspeed citizen who is able to become self-actualized in professional terms because his role is directly connected to others and is selfless, while the work of other freethinkers like Victria, who is a writer, or Harley, who is a painter, will not be appreciated, since non-freethinkers are not interested in art. These artists simply contribute to the history of creative art of humanity, but do not have a clear role in that society.

The main challenge for the free citizens on board of Godspeed to be happy is precisely the lack of possibilities for self-actualization, including leisure. Every person's self-actualization has a different channel, and while some people may be fulfilled by helping others, many others find the limited space and monotony of the ship constricting, which may be caused by the lack of choice, the impossibility to be in contact with nature –a context that is connected to self-actualization and self-transcendence– or the restrictions on leisure.

### 5.5.9 Results: *A Million Suns*

The second novel of the trilogy by Beth Revis includes only two instances that represent the aspirations and dreams (or lack thereof) about self-actualization of the protagonists.

1	“Just because we’re the only two teenagers on this whole ship doesn’t mean I have to love you. Why can’t I have a choice? Options?” (p. 57)
2	I always thought the worst that could happen was a rebellion, but this dead-inside depression makes me feel hollowed out too. Would it be better for us to rip the ship apart in rage or silently scratch at the walls until we simply quit breathing? (p. 85)

Source: own elaboration.

The situation lived in the previous novel worsens in this new sequel. Due to the fact that other needs are not secured, personal fulfilment becomes a secondary issue, with only two examples resulting from the analysis. Example 1 reflects Amy’s questioning of her personal life with regards to Elder. She feels like being involved with the only person with whom she could be is not the result of choice. In fact, she feels that she cannot feel fulfilled unless she knows that she is in fact choosing that relationship. As we have seen, the need for choice to become self-actualized seems to become even clearer.

The second example follows the lines of the previous novel, the depression caused by the state of the ship, which is falling to pieces, leads Amy to question whether it is worth living when the days are counted, and the planet is too far away to be reached within their lifespans. The lack of hope for more options in the near future affects their aspirations and motivations.

### 5.5.10 Results: *Shades of Earth*

The last of the novels of the trilogy offers no objective representation of self-actualization or self-transcendence. This issue, which occurs also in other trilogies, will be solved by offering an in-depth discussion considering plot characteristics and the circumstances that may lead to self-actualisation not being a discussed topic in the novels.

### 5.5.11 Results: *Divergent*

The table below includes the four examples found in *Divergent* on self-actualization or self-transcendence issues.

1	Welcome to the day we honor the democratic philosophy of our ancestors, which tells us that every man has the right to choose his own way in this world.” Or, it occurs to me, one of five predetermined ways. (p. 42)
2	I can see it now. I watch myself grow into a woman in Abnegation robes, marrying Susan’s brother, Robert, volunteering on the weekends, the peace of routine, the quiet nights spent in front of the fireplace, the certainty that I will be safe, and if not good enough, better than I am now. (p. 46)
3	The phrase “do whatever you like” sticks in my mind. At home, I could never do what I wanted, not even for an evening. I had to think of other people’s needs first. I don’t even know what I like to do. (p. 70)
4	“The first is that it determines the order in which you will select a job after initiation. There are only a few desirable positions available.” My stomach tightens. (p. 71)

Source: own elaboration.

Although scarce, the four examples where personal fulfilment is discussed are significant because they may be highly relatable for youngsters nowadays in a developed country, especially the first and the last ones. Example 1 explores the constraints students feel when they have to choose a degree or a professional option. Although much more varied nowadays, lack of information about the possibilities to develop oneself professionally may be challenge for students’ self-actualization depending on the academic system. On the other hand, the last example reflects the pressure of transfers to get a desirable job and thus be able to become self-actualized; this situation may be compared to the pressure undergraduates and prospect students face when trying to get a desired job or get into a specific degree.

Choosing a different faction implies running a risk. In this vein, example 2 refers to the possibility of contentment: Tris struggles to balance her background conception of happiness and achievement and her aspirations and potential, balancing social and family expectations against her wishes. Furthermore, this approach to her future is based on the idea of uncertainty avoidance. One of the reasons she decides against the

safety granted by this Abnegation lifestyle is precisely the weak uncertainty avoidance that characterises this faction, as shown in chapter 4. Finally, the third example, which shows Tris' possibility to focus on herself, deals with the newly acquired freedom for those coming of age and the importance of knowing one's desires and aspirations in order to be able to fulfil them.

#### 5.5.12 Results: *Insurgent*

No results found.

#### 5.5.13 Results: *Allegiant*

Most of us woke up late, at ten, I suspect because there was no reason not to. When we left the city, we lost our factions, our sense of purpose. Here there is nothing to do but wait for something to happen, and far from making me feel relaxed, it makes me feel jittery and tense. (p. 202)

The only result for self-actualization in *Allegiant* is representative of the importance that self-fulfilment has and the consequences of its restriction. Tris has her only family –her brother Caleb– her boyfriend, and her friends with her; she is safe and well fed and respected in her community. Therefore, she has all her needs covered. Consequently, having her self-actualisation needs restricted affects her emotionally. She has no purpose in the new society until she decides to participate in a mission to overthrow the leading power. Like Amy or all inhabitants of Godspeed, once they know they will not land, they have no purpose, no motivation, they consider that they are not part of a greater whole. These two examples, involving Amy and Tris, also show a passive attitude. They have “nothing to do” but they do not discuss possibilities that could offer them self-fulfilment; that is, they lack the drive to create new spaces and alternative activities to solve their problem.

#### 5.5.14 Discussion

The last step in Maslow's hierarchy concerns personal fulfilment, which may also be a source for dystopian fiction set in modern, developed societies. That is to say, if a western writer from England, for instance, writes a dystopia for young adults, in this case, failure to have a satisfactory personal fulfilment of the population would be a source of disruption. Nevertheless, if the author targets people from less developed

countries, personal fulfilment may be disregarded, since other more vital stages of the hierarchy could be compromised more seriously. Alternatively, and as explained in the section about affiliation, if the main character belongs to a developed society or to a high social stratus, this topic may still be a source of concern. In other words, one person's utopia is another's dystopia.

In fact, Katniss states her confusion about the reasons that would lead somebody to leaving the Capitol when she speaks about the Avoxes: people who attempted to flee the Capitol and were physically punished, their tongues cut. "They called the Avoxes traitors. Against what? It could only be the Capitol. But they had everything here. No cause to rebel" (p. 102). By contrast, Peeta seems more aware of the possibility of being unhappy and wealthy: "'I would leave here' Peeta blurts out. [...] 'but you have to admit, the food is prime.'" The difference between the two characters is precisely that he did not suffer starvation in District 12. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, "if all the needs are unsatisfied, and the organism is then dominated by the physiological needs, all other needs may become simply non-existent or be pushed into the background" (Maslow, 1970, p. 4). It would therefore be reasonable to think that someone who is lacking in physiological fulfilment is unable to see other people's lacks when these correspond to higher levels of the hierarchy.

As explained earlier, there are various alternatives or approaches to personal fulfilment as a stage of human motivation. Taking into account the results and the implied alternatives, I propose to analyse some of the characteristics of Maslow's self-actualization and self-transcendence with the inclusion of Winston's approach, that is, Seligman's happiness alternatives: the Pleasant Life, the Good Life, and the Meaningful Life. Happiness has often been dismissed as irrelevant or even counterproductive in creating good literature. Nevertheless, as argued by Moores (2018), utopian fiction, as part of inspirational literature, offers a positive perspective that, the author says, is not "dark and depressing" (p. 260). The YA dystopian versions of this type of literature, however, offer a highly gloomy version of life, and yet, most end with a positive note. In literature, Moore goes on, many affectively complex works end "perhaps with the protagonist's growth or the resolution of tensions in a way that results in an improvement of some previously deplorable social condition" (p. 262). Regarding precisely this idea, I examine the possibility of an accelerated growth as an expression of human motivation in dystopian contexts and challenge previous research on the heroine myth based on gender using Murdock's (2016) journey of the heroine.

Self-actualization was thought to be achieved by individuals whose lower needs or deficiency needs (physiological needs, safety needs, affiliation and esteem needs) are satisfied and who grow to become fulfilled with the application of their skills. In other words, a self-actualized individual is someone who enjoys his or her activities and finds happiness in performing them. On the other hand, self-transcendence refers to a further stage, developed in Maslow's last years of life, based on the idea that individuals grow to focus on applying their skills and efforts to external and higher causes. Specifically, while the previous stages involved a focus on the self, this stage is achieved by those who find joy in what they do and in altruistic activities or the common good. The main ideas are the following:

1) Tally: Self-transcendence through beauty appreciation.

Tally's growth process is very gradual insofar as she is conceived by her friend as individualistic and self-centred; however, Tally breaks away from comfort once and again in order to save others. Furthermore, while it may not be as instinctive and immediate as for other protagonists, she eventually detaches herself from her needs, especially after becoming a Cutter. Her admiration and absorption with nature's beauty is underscored by her new senses. Setting aside her other needs, she decides to become devoted to the only task of preserving nature and thus humanity's future. Therefore, she works on self-transcendent goals.

2) Katniss: Pleasant Life or Good Life.

According to Kislev (2018, p. 2244), people who have endured experiences involving materialist obstacles (e.g., economic obstacles) seek security and having a family, whereas people who have experienced stability growing up tend to seek the development and fulfilment of their needs concerning creativity, for instance, instead of family life. Katniss is a person who has endured prolonged hunger involving not only her but her whole family. Research has attempted to force love interests onto Katniss as her role as a hero and as a female protagonist; however, and as shown by the results, Katniss' affiliation involves her role as protector and thus is linked to the need for safety. As both her life and that of the people belonging to her inner circle are threatened by the Capitol, a life without the concerns of starvation and life-threatening forces would seem idyllic to her, as explained by the conception of the Capitol as perfect place to live, compared to District 12. Indeed, after losing her closest family



member, her sister, she goes back home to a reality that is the closest thing to a happy ending for her. She does not need to feed others, nor does she have to fight to protect them. Deprived from her only role and motivation in life, she becomes static. As she assimilates all her losses with the help of Peeta, she starts living the Pleasant Life. The epilogue is –as already mentioned– highly puzzling for any reader. Collins grants Katniss The Good Life based on the idea of marriage and children. Nevertheless, she was never deprived from being loved; in fact, she has two suitors that overtly express their feelings towards her, both of whom are rejected by Katniss. Therefore, she would not be as satisfied with that life as someone who had been deprived from romantic love or family love, like Peeta. Taking this into account, Katniss' relationship with Peeta is an abundance-driven motivation. In other words, her decision to create that relationship is not based on the need to fulfil a need that has not been satisfied before (necessity-driven motivation). Instead, it is a conscious and unrushed decision. Furthermore, the ending is seemingly the Good Life granted to Peeta, who had been deprived from love, rather than the best ending according to Katniss' needs.

3) Amy: not fulfilled. Working on esteem.

While all the previous heroines seem to reach one or another level of fulfilment, Amy is clearly still walking the path. The initial limitations regarding leisure, such as the impossibility to run a Marathon, for instance, or visiting another city, represent the idea of leisure limitations as an obstacle to self-actualization. Research shows that leisure satisfaction is correlated with the feeling of self-actualization of an individual (Shuman, 1983, p. 179; KangJae, Cho, Kim & Hwang, 2019, p. 15). In addition, it should be noted that running a marathon, which is one of Amy's wishes, is considered "serious leisure" (Stebbins, 1992, p. 2), which is connected to self-actualization (Kim, Heo, Lee, & Kim, 2015, p. 155). The fact that this character comes from an indulgent culture, where leisure's importance is emphasised, stresses the significance of the absence of this element in a restrained society such as Godspeed.

As the novel ends, the reader learns that she will focus on gaining trust and acceptance from others in the community after becoming a hybrid. Since she has not mastered the deficiency needs on which she is focusing, the conclusion is that the novel has an open ending, and so does Amy's motivation journey.

4) Tris: Self-actualization and self-transcendence through sacrifice.

Tris' main objectives when she left her faction of origin were to fit within a group and to feel that she was capable of meeting the standards of the faction. Abnegation is a faction based on altruism and oriented towards the other. However, as Maslow and later research pointed out, children and teenagers are primarily and typically concerned with deficiency needs, which are mostly individual-oriented. In this sense, deficiency needs are intrinsically selfish. Thus, having high numbers of children transferring from Abnegation to other more individualistic communities would be logical insofar as being in Abnegation requires them to move the focus away from their needs and focus on others instead, while Dauntless and other communities would allow them to express their needs and focus on satisfying them. Regarding Tris' particular case, she becomes self-actualized by acting as leader of the resistance against the tyranny of the Erudite leader. Nevertheless, once she feels self-actualized, she becomes increasingly selfless to the point of sacrificing herself for the common good. Although this behaviour contradicts the basic need for safety, the dramatic output is the result of a highly traumatising series of events that damage her perception of priorities by focusing on honouring the values according to which she was raised. It could be said that she grows to become apt for Abnegation when the Abnegation faction has completely disappeared, and she tries to represent it in what she believes is the most accurate representation of selflessness. In conclusion, Abnegation seems to be the faction that would suit the needs of actualized people, since their objective is transcendence. By contrast, the faction of Amity focuses on satisfying deficiency needs and in a definition of happiness based on the ideas of Utilitarianism, that is, satisfying one's needs as much as possible (Shin & Johnson, 1978, p. 479). For Amity members, as explained by a former Abnegation, the purpose of life is being happy. During a Dauntless activity Tris meets Robert, a transfer to Amity, who calls her attention to the fact that she is being targeted by other initiates and that maybe she should try to go back to her faction of origin, with her family, so as to be happy. Tris' response is that of someone ambitious in all aspects of life, specifically career: "The goal of my life isn't just to be happy." The Amity member's reply is left as food for thought: "Wouldn't it be easier if it was, though?" (*Divergent*, p. 128). Therefore, Tris rejects this idea of a Good Life in order to attain self-actualization and, hence, The Meaningful Life.

#### *5.5.14.1 The journey of the heroine and self-transcendence*

Murdock describes the heroine's journey as consisting of various stages according to which the woman follows the masculine path of success only to later become aware of the emptiness it causes her, which leads her to the descent to the Goddess. This descent involves a recognition of the inner self, a discovery of the activities that make us feel fully satisfied. According to Murdock, this step follows the achievement of success defined in masculine terms and a decrease of the importance of esteem, that is, recognition by others. Furthermore, Murdock explains that being in a patriarchal society implies that the only model of success available is the masculine one. In this sense, she says:

women emulated the male heroic journey because there were no other images to emulate; a woman was either 'successful' in the male-oriented culture or dominated and dependent as a female. To change the economic, social, and political structures of society, we must now find new myths and heroines. This may be why so many women and men are looking to images of the Goddess and to ancient matristic cultures to understand modes of leadership that involve partnership rather than dominance and cooperation rather than greed. (Murdock, 2016, p. 10)

What Murdock is expressing is a cultural inadequacy. In a feminine culture, there is higher equality among the sexes and the weak are protected. In a collectivist culture, collaboration and cooperation are the norm, while competition is not perceived as necessary. As per Murdock's ideas, collectivist cultures are more welcoming and suitable for women's fulfilment. However, this idea may be related to the different priorities that, according to Murdock, women have in comparison to men. In this regard, feminine cultures prioritise quality of life and personal and professional life balance over professional success, while work takes the lead in masculine cultures' list of priorities. Therefore, a feminine and collectivist culture may be more suitable for the heroines in the corpus of novels to develop and move along the need-satisfaction stages.

Murdock's journey of the heroine has received wide acceptance from Academia. From my point of view, Murdock's proposal mimics Maslow's theory of needs, whereby the individual grows detached from deficiency needs –such as esteem– and becomes engaged in activities for which he or she is fit but also in activities that contribute to the well-being of the community. The first part corresponds to self-actualization, whereas the second part can be explained by self-transcendence. Murdock exemplifies her idea by explaining that highly successful women according to male standards may feel an

emptiness regarding their fulfilment. As explained in the previous sections, once a need is satisfied or, more specifically, mastered, the person stops being concerned with those needs and progresses to the following stage. Thus, once a woman (or man) masters success in the materialist world, she (or he) will be faced with the following need: to achieve self-actualization –that is, to find happiness in her (or his) actions– and to move the focus from the individual to the community: self-transcendence.

Murdock's ideas also suggest what could clearly be a criticism of the current economic system, which has been said to fail to satisfy workers' needs and more specifically to limit women's development. In fact, in the introduction to the book that develops these ideas, *The Heroine's Journey* (2016), Murdock stresses the importance of creating new measures of success beyond money and power.

Self-transcendence has been questioned on the grounds of the difficulty involved in its description. In general terms, as explained above, it implies an orientation towards others and the community in general. Martínez and García (2007) suggest that self-transcendence values include “universalism–referring to understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection of the welfare of all people and of nature–and benevolence in reference to preserving and enhancing welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact” (p. 339). Furthermore, according to McDonald, Wearing and Ponting (2009, p. 370), the renewal and aesthetic pleasure obtained from direct contact with the wilderness may lead to peak experiences linked to spiritual expression and hence to self-actualization and self-transcendence. On the other hand, according to research, parenting style is related to the importance given by adolescence to self-transcendence values. Thus, Martínez and García (2007, p. 345) indicate that in Spain, a feminine culture, indulgent parenting styles (high responsiveness, low demandingness) and authoritative parenting styles (high demandingness, high responsiveness) are more effective in transmitting self-transcendence values. In other words, children raised in these households give higher priority to universalism and benevolence than children raised by neglectful or authoritarian parents. Furthermore, their results show that authoritative and indulgent parenting styles are more effective in ensuring children's high priority to tradition values and safety values.

These results are particularly interesting for the corpus of study, especially because of the possible comparisons between Murdock's journey of the heroine and Vita Fortunati's (1995) journey of the utopian traveller. Fortunati, whose work has already been mentioned in this thesis, presented an important contribution to the

structure of utopian fiction based on the idea of the journey of the protagonist. According to the author, the protagonists depart from their homeland and known territory towards the unknown. This unknown world is a mechanism that serves to confront the protagonist with a world radically different from his or her own. There, the protagonist learns about an alternative organization of society and becomes estranged; he or she perceives the alternative world as alien. This learning process implies an inevitable comparison between the society of arrival and the society of departure, which evolves into a criticism of the society of departure when the return trip takes place. The traveller has learned about different systems and thus can clearly see the flaws of his or her own system. This process bears some similarities with the culture shock phenomenon, from a cultural viewpoint, experienced by people traveling to significantly different countries. In this regard, the traveller arrives to the new country/culture and is shocked by the difference as regards values, beliefs, etc. To the extent to which the person learns and assimilates the new culture, that person will feel a reverse culture shock after returning to the culture of origin, seeing the previously normal features of their culture as strange. Following Murdock's journey of the heroine, the protagonist first rejects feminine values and traits to embrace masculine values only to recognize that she needs the feminine values to feel fulfilled. As we have seen in the previous sections, at least two novels pose such contraposition of the feminine and masculine and related collectivism and individualism. However, in both cases, but for different reasons, the protagonists move to the criticised world and come back to their roots, which are considered positive according to their description. Therefore, the heroine's journey is modified, and so is the journey of the traveller described by Fortunati. This reversal is logically explained by the fact that the dystopias present the reverse of a utopia. However, this pattern seems to apply exclusively to *The Hunger Games* and *Divergent*, whereas the other two trilogies present more complex or less clear patterns.

Original pattern: Society of departure – Society of arrival (eutopia) – society of departure (return trip and criticism of the society of departure)

Suggested alternative: Society of departure – Society of arrival (dystopia and criticism of the society of arrival) – society of departure (return trip and appreciation of the society of departure)

In this model, the society of departure is the society of origin of the traveller, but not the society that is compared to our real societies. In fact, the society that the reader

is supposed to compare with his or her society is the dystopian society or society of arrival. In the two trilogies mentioned, the labels would be distributed as follows:

1. *The Hunger Games*: a) Society/culture of departure: District 12; b) society/culture of arrival: The Capitol.

2. *Divergent*: a) Society/culture of departure: Abnegation; b) Society/culture of arrival: Dauntless

#### 5.5.14.1.1 *Uglies*: Tally

In Tally's case, the separation from the feminine can be identified in Shay's departure and later in Tally's departure from the City. I argue that the city, which has a feminine culture, and Shay's protective behaviour towards Tally embody Murdock's idea of the feminine. However, the journey in this trilogy is less obvious than in *The Hunger Games* or *Divergent* series, as I will explain. She does not acquire the values of the figure of the father, which is the second stage in the journey, because she does not have a relationship with her parents. Instead, she seems to assimilate David's values as regards his practical approach to nature. This approach dismisses the importance of Nature and the role of humans in protecting it.

On the other hand, unlike other protagonists, Tally has a mentor who guides her in her discovery of the importance of freedom and the limitations of the city: Shay. As we have seen in the section about affiliation and esteem, Shay is a highly relevant character for Tally's development and final self-actualization. However, Shay is also the character that carries Tally forward. She exposes Tally to different experiences until she develops her agency in the last part of the last novel. It is the exposure of these experiences, and the different trials that she has to succeed at, that finally break Tally, a process that symbolises her descent into the goddess.

Tally initially embraces the technological utopia, although her opinion changes gradually as she becomes increasingly connected to nature. Thus, she becomes the equilibrium, the guardian of nature. In contrast to Katniss, Tally does not go into nature to feel its protection, but to protect nature from human beings. While Katniss' stance is representative of a personal decision for her own wellbeing, Tally takes the role of guardian as a personal duty and for the greater good. In order to compare the role of nature for Tally in *Uglies*, I have performed a close reading of the novels with regards to nature.

In the first novel, before leaving the city to follow Shay to the Smoke in her spy mission, Tally does not mention nature aside from the biological lessons she took at school that explained the reasoning behind the operation to provide the “natural” tendency towards the mean in body features. The first perceptions she has about nature describe its beauty and the loss of the safety she had in the city. “That’s how things were out here in the wild, she was learning. Dangerous or beautiful. or both” (*Uglies*, p. 151). As explained by other scholars, her trip to the smoke serves as an awakening that helps her understand her society from an outsider’s view (McDonough & Wagner, 2016, p. 162).

Her admiration for nature grows with every experience during her trip to the Smoke, which helps her understand humans’ way of life before the current urban model was established: “Tally had always thought of the city as huge, a whole world in itself, but the scale of everything out here was so much grander. And so beautiful. She could see why people used to live out in nature, even if there weren’t any party towers or mansions” (*Uglies*, p. 153). Furthermore, she establishes a connection with the wilderness: “The world seemed to belong to her. Even in the cool air, the sun felt wonderful on her skin” (*Uglies*, p. 162). In her description of nature, as someone who has not experienced simple things such as sunbathing, she shows not only the freedom that being alone in nature granted her but also citizens’ deprivation of such experience.

Tally does not feel utterly comfortable in the Smoke because of her learned ideas about the preservation of nature and her solitary experiences on the way there. She sees nature as precious and perfect, unlike humans: “Nature, at least, didn’t need an operation to be beautiful. It just was” (*Uglies*, p. 230). Furthermore, she sees natural elements as living creatures, not tools: “The long tables had clearly been cut from the hearts of trees. They showed knots and whorls, and wavy tracks of grain ran down their entire length. They were rough and beautiful, but Tally couldn’t get over the thought that the trees had been taken alive” (*Uglies*, p. 203).

She and the city-born Smokies challenge David’s practical but environmentally harmful approach of clearing the path: “‘Burning?’ Tally said. [...] These trees had been growing there for decades, and David wanted to use them just to cook a meal?” (*Uglies* p. 233). Interestingly, David’s influence seems to alter her acquired protecting stance. “‘Stupid trees,’ Tally muttered, gritting her teeth as she plunged the blade down again.” (*Uglies*, p. 234). As seen in the section about food, Tally temporarily eats animals after

traveling with David. However, her connection with nature strengthens in the second novel, as she remembers the crimes committed by the Smokies against nature, hinting her final role of protector of the natural world: “The fire was topped off with fallen branches gathered from the park, and the hiss of still-green wood reminded Tally of cook-fires in the Smoke, when the water inside fresh-cut trees would boil, steam spitting out as if giving voice to the angry spirits of the forest” (*Pretties*, p. 137).

Despite being programmed to feel satisfied in her life as Pretty in the city, Tally persists in her tendency towards nature: “The view from the tower—gentle hills, fields of white flowers, and a deep, dark forest—fascinated her.” (*Pretties*, p. 243). Even when the inconvenience of being in nature frustrates her —“Sometimes, you could almost see why the Rusties had tried so hard to destroy nature. Nature could be a pain” (*Pretties*, p. 249)— the use of the word “almost” indicates her consistent admiration of nature.

Another issue that is reflected in the novel is Tally’s preference of the natural world over the civilization and the technological utopia of the city: “Nature was tough, it could be dangerous, but unlike Dr Cable or Shay or Peris—unlike people in general—it made sense” (*Pretties*, p. 252). While this reasoning seems to be due to a failure to fit within the parameters of civilization, after becoming Special, Tally radicalizes her ideas and understands Nature as good and humanity as evil and tainted: “She liked being special, being outside and icy and *better*, and couldn’t wait to get back to the wild and strip this ugly mask from her face” (*Specials*, p. 6). As in the case of Katniss, not only does Tally protect nature, but she also conceives it as a space of peace of mind that contrasts with humanity: “scents of human habitation came from the spinning air extractors that dotted the roof. Totally unlike the fresh air of the wild, it made her feel anxious and crowded” (*Specials*, p. 72). This symbiosis is the source of her reaction against the New System, which implies people’s freedom but also their expansion into nature and therefore into her space and home: “Has anyone thought what’ll happen to the wild if everyone becomes cured all at once?” (*Specials*, p. 321)”

Therefore, Tally’s source of satisfaction stems from her experiences in the wild. This factor is important given that nature is considered part of “the feminine” as explained by Murdock. Thus, by deciding not only to stay in nature but to protect it and become part of it, Tally is reconnecting or healing the feminine. On the other hand, her



acceptance of David's help may symbolise the healing of the masculine, which implies the integration of both parts in order to become self-fulfilled.

#### 5.5.14.1.2 *The Hunger Games*: Katniss

This trilogy, as well as *Divergent*, are good examples of character development as regards self-actualization. Due to the extension of the discussion in this regard, I have divided it into subsections corresponding with the main stages of the journey according to Murdock.

In the case of *The Hunger Games*, Golban and Fidan (2018) analyse Katniss' case using Murdock's journey cycle. However, I believe that the approach is inaccurate and requires some revision and extension, given that they focus exclusively on the first novel. First of all, and on a general level, the authors use Murdock's model without any alterations, assuming that Katniss detaches herself from the feminine at the beginning of the journey. Specifically, the authors identify the separation from the feminine as her separation from her mother who is typically the person with whom the heroine has the strongest relationship. Katniss does not willingly differentiate herself from her mother nor does she share any traits with her –physically nor psychologically– and definitely did not had the closest rapport with her. The person with whom Katniss shared most time and personality traits was her father. In this regard, and according to Murdock, Katniss is her father's daughter. The author states that, when a daughter faces an absent, or chronically depressed mother, she seeks to mirror the father. Furthermore, when the father nurtures the daughter's aspirations and becomes a mentor, women are more successful. In Katniss' case, her father's teachings when she was a child saved her and allowed her to save her family. Later on, the same teachings, which derived in greater self-assurance and independence, grant her the necessary skills to not only survive the Hunger Games but to help others (e.g. Peeta). Nevertheless, and in contrast to Murdock's paradigmatic example of Athena, Katniss does not “lack empathy and compassion for vulnerability” (p. 34). Furthermore, although she rejects her mother's vulnerability at the beginning, she does not reject all feminine traits as negative, nor does she approve only of masculine characters as judged by her admiration and adoration of her little sister, Prim, who has a caring nature and is stereotypically heteronormative. In fact, I argue that the opposite happens: Katniss has feminine values: she is connected to nature, she is a protector of her family and a mother figure for her

sister, she feeds and takes care of them and they are her only task. Similarly, and as pointed out by Golban and Fidan (2018), she “acts motherly when she sees Rue” (p. 109). However, unlike these authors, I argue that these qualities are not new to Katniss. She has the feminine traits of caring for the weak (see chapter 4), which are those transmitted by the community where she lives and thus also shared by other members of the community, such as Peeta.

The fact that she associates the wilderness with avoiding the problems of society implies that she represents the bond between human beings and nature praised by the Romanticism in a world that pulls her into social constrictions, but also a connection with the feminine as described by Murdock. Katniss’ attitude reflects the need to find the necessary agency in order to liberate herself from the Capitol’s impositions and repression. Nature, as a space untouched by the human hand, becomes the perfect ground for her to develop. Furthermore, her detachment from greater issues such as the building of the new system, and her self-imposed isolation reinforce the idea of an independent character but also sustainability.

The choice of a sustainable lifestyle, one that is not based on consumerism or high social aspirations and overachievement, is reflective of ecology and minimalism. However, contrarily to the idea that associates oppressed female characters and ecology in the idea of eco-feminism, I argue that Katniss does not directly protect nature; in fact, she obtains resources from nature in the same way society at a greater scale does. The difference between the lifestyle in District 12 and the Capitol’s lifestyle is that the former is not designed on the grounds of the intensive exploitation of natural resources. The fact that she is an individual diminishes the impact of her actions, and her lifestyle is designed to minimise environmental impact because she does not exploit resources but to cover her needs in a context of great difficulty. The novels do not provide the reader with enough information on whether Katniss would be as she is if she had not had to endure the weight of family provider and grief, furthermore, her post-rebellion lifestyle is not sufficiently described in order to determine whether she has developed a different relationship with nature. Nevertheless, she reflects a return to traditional simple life, which is linked to her aspirations and motivations.

When she moves to the Capitol, she is faced with a masculine world, violence and extreme competition. Throughout her journey she carries with her, and exposes, the feminine traits of compassion and collaboration as clearly demonstrated by her refusal to kill others –her strategy is to stay away from the battle– and her alliance with Rue.

Again, Peeta also represents those cultural values in that he wishes he could avoid killing others because that is what the Capitol (opposed culture) wants. Golban and Fidan choose to focus only on the male characters surrounding Katniss during her journey as mentors and helpers, but fail to mention Rue, who has a decisive role in motivating her to win the games and is also representative of feminine cultural values, as she cures Katniss and collaborates with her instead of competing.

Embracing the masculine: Regarding her self-actualization, her first stage, the process through which she becomes autonomous and excels in her job (householder), imbues in her the characteristics of the achiever that cannot say no. The masculine culture imposed to the districts, with the impossibility of community collaboration, she becomes the overachiever as a householder and accepts no criticism (e.g., she is deeply offended when she believes Peeta implied she needed people's help). After the games, once the rebellion starts, she lacks agency in a system or rebellious plot designed for her to excel. Once the journey ends, with the fall of President Snow and President Coin, she refuses to be part of the new system, she refuses to continue achieving in favour of her wellbeing. Murdock explains in her book that women must learn to be autonomous and to "say no to superwoman standards [...] [in order to] acknowledge her human limitations" without it affecting her self-esteem (2016, p. 69).

Descent into the Goddess: The descent into the Goddess represents a moment of crisis for the heroine: she may get there after experiencing a loss, as in the case of Katniss. Given Golban and Fidan's exclusive focus on the first novel, they do not acknowledge the complete journey. In this case, after losing Prim and thus failing in her lifetime goal of protecting her sister, she retreats to her home—in the culturally feminine District 12—and close to nature. Unlike in the traditional view of the heroine journey, Katniss did not replace feminine values with masculine ones during her quest and thus cannot be identified with the prototype. Nevertheless, the descent is based on a need to cure herself from the self-inflicted wounds and impositions of the superwoman, as explained before. Furthermore, her femininity is attacked by the masculine culture of the Capitol and District 13, which killed her sister. She is no longer the protector, no longer a motherly figure for Prim.

The descent and recovery start with the appearance of Buttercup, Prim's cat. The cat, Murdock explains, has been since time immemorial a representation of the feminine. In this regard, the return of the cat to Katniss after losing her sister helps her get to terms with her pain and despair and finally express her repressed feelings, thus

initiating the process of healing of the feminine. From that point, she is able to re-establish the damaged relationship with her mother. After losing Prim, she establishes a bond with her mother, derived from the fact that she understands how loss can affect one's emotions in the same way her mother was affected after losing her husband. Furthermore, she returns to a space connected with nature.

As in the myth of Innana and Ereshkigal, Katniss needs the assistance of a helper. Like Enki, Peeta is creative and empathetic and does not require Katniss to do anything, but he accompanies her in her mourning. She is no longer the leader of the rebellion nor the protector of her family and has lost the feminine support of her sister.

Healing the masculine: Golban and Fidan consider Peeta to be Katniss' masculine side or animus and argue that her physical healing of Peeta symbolises her acceptance of the "rules, logic and order." Associating Peeta with the masculine is at least questionable. Most research supports the idea of role reversal in that Katniss represents the typically impulsive masculine character, while Peeta acts as the logical and helpful female character. In fact, she acknowledges that not saving Peeta and going back as a victor would be unacceptable to her community, thus indicating the high importance given to feminine values here represented by Peeta. By saving Peeta she is saving her feminine side from the masculine influence of the Capitol and the maximum expression of the masculine culture of this system: The Hunger Games. On the other hand, based on the obvious fact that Katniss embodies the problem associated with femininity of prioritising others' needs to her own, in saving Peeta, she is saving the only person who sees her needs before she does and can thus help her recover autonomy and balance. In prioritising others to herself she damages and dismisses her need to become herself, to listen to herself. However, it is true that after healing her feminine side, damaged from loss of her sister and purpose and her detachment from her mother, she needs to heal her ego, which is part of her masculine side. She does so by recovering her previous life routine: hunting. This choice takes her to nature and represents her self-actualization. The idea of a collaboration between Peeta and Katniss as co-heroes is supported by Baker and Schak (2019), who argue that Katniss embodies a collaborative heroine that challenges individualised all-mighty libertarian heroes and supports a non-gendered approach to heroism and caregiving (p. 210). On the other hand, by re-establishing her relationship with her mother and starting a relationship first of friendship and later of romance with Peeta, she covers her affiliation needs that had been damaged after her sister's death and her friend's participation in the event.

Is Katniss self-actualized? As has been previously stated, for Katniss, the Pleasant Life would be self-actualization, because the two basic needs are the cause of her sacrifice for others. She sacrifices her childhood and adolescence to satisfy safety and prevent hunger of her sister and mother, thus forgetting about other needs that could help her develop. According to Murdock, women need a change in society in order to balance different parts of herself such as family and career. Katniss's wielding of her feminine values against the difficult trials of the Capitol represents the heroic act of a woman in trying to change the system to allow for all to be self-actualized. Like the hero, the heroine must overthrow the system and create the community, which de facto means a colonisation of the Capitol by the districts and thus the cultural assimilation of feminine values of the district by the Capitol.

If we take into account Maslow's theory, it would be impossible to conceive some degree of self-actualization in Katniss before the epilogue where the reader finds her future life with Peeta in District 12. However, as mentioned before, she is given safety and food in a community context and has an extended affiliation group. Thus, she would be living the Pleasant Life and, to the extent that she overcomes her grief, and seeks to develop a romantic relationship and have children, the Good Life. The epilogue of the last novel, I argue, introduces the readers to a new world, which would equate to the return trip of Fortunati's utopian traveller. That is, following the reversal of positions regarding departure and arrival societies whereby the arrival society is worse, Katniss goes back to the departure society to recover from her struggle and fight against the oppressive culture of the arrival society. In doing so, she is showing the reader that she chooses what she wanted from the very beginning: living in her home without the threats to her loved ones' safety, a collaborative community away from the competition, stress and manipulation of the Capitol, a society, all in all, that allows her to develop herself freely and in her own terms.

#### 5.5.14.1.3 *Across the Universe*: Amy

The other trilogy with unclear patterns is Beth Revis' *Across the Universe*. As I have explained throughout this dissertation but specifically in chapter 4, Amy represents the USA and its culture, which is highly masculine compared to Spain, for instance. She is the visitor at a mostly masculine culture as well. "The feminine" as Murdock puts it, could be represented by Nature and lack thereof in this case, or by the creative citizens:

Harley and Victoria. In this case, Amy becomes obsessed with solving the crimes that are affecting the frozen Earthlings. Later on, she becomes committed to the mission of taking everybody to Centaury Earth. Throughout the novels, and throughout all the challenges, she leaves herself out of her own focus; in other words, she does not concern herself with her own needs. Instead, there are some instances in which we see Amy connect to some extent with female characters such as Victoria –through the shared trauma– or Kit, Doc’s apprentice, but also her mother. This last character, her mother, is important because despite her attempt at connecting with her, she once again moves the focus away from herself, giving priority to safety problems instead: “There is so much I want to tell her. I need to tell her. But as I look into her face, I know: it doesn’t matter. Not now, not in this moment” (*Shades of Earth*, p. 33).<sup>x</sup> The moment never arrives. According to Murdock, she does not complete the journey of the heroine, which corresponds with the fact that she does not fulfil her previous needs as per the discussions in the previous sections.

#### 5.5.14.1.4 *Divergent*: Beatrice (Tris)

The last journey analysed is Beatrice Prior’s transfer from Abnegation to Dauntless. The differences between cultural values of Abnegation and Dauntless have already been explained in chapter 4. While Katniss’ feminine cultural values were her armour during her journey, Beatrice cannot wait until she leaves her culturally feminine society for a culturally masculine one: Dauntless. By choosing to leave her family and acquire values that involve aggressiveness, vicious competition and admiration for the strong, she represents the first stage of Murdock’s journey of the heroine: the separation from the feminine. During the next phase, the assimilation of masculine values takes place: she strives to excel at fighting and strategy and deprecates others’ weaknesses. This stage also shows the same issue that Katniss experiences: the overachiever syndrome. However, unlike Katniss, Beatrice willingly adapts her values. The trial stage corresponds with the challenges of the initiation process, when she finds in Tobias an ally. For Tris, Tobias represents success in the masculine world of Dauntless, and follows his advice as a mentor. In contrast to *The Hunger Games* or *Uglies*, for instance, Beatrice does not have to protect anyone but herself, thus fostering her individualism, which eventually breaks her only female connection: her friendship with Christina.

All her illusory success as a Divergent and leader of a rebellion is undone once the truth about the system is discovered. As she discovers the unreal nature of her life and the futility of her struggles, she starts the descent into the Goddess. The reading of her mother's diary represents the healing of the mother-daughter split and gives her a connection with her original values. She learns about her heritage and the strength of her mother, who prioritised her relationship and future family to her professional life as an agent of the Bureau. Her decision to sacrifice her life for her brother's and the future of the community exemplifies the last stage, the integration of the masculine and the feminine, of leadership and duty on the one hand, and family, compassion and affection on the other hand.

Self-actualization, for Tris, is becoming part of the contribution of her family to the community, the integration of her skills and her desire to honour her family. Much unlike Katniss, Tris' strives for the Meaningful Life, as per Seligman's conceptualization (2002). In this sense, and following the concept of self-transcendence, she not only becomes self-actualized through the successful application of her skills but endorses self-transcendence as a goal because she prioritises a greater cause to her own needs and desires.

#### *5.5.14.2 Self-actualization and academic achievement*

Although research on self-actualization of teenagers is relatively scarce, the few studies addressing this issue focus on education and children development so that they can reach their fullest potential once they become adults and on sociological impacts that may hinder that development. In particular, a study by López-Pérez, Sanchez and Gummerum (2016, p. 2446) on the conceptions of happiness among Spanish children and adolescents showed that early and late adolescents mentioned "achievement" as an important part of happiness. For these participants, achievement implied good grades and being praised for getting good academic results. This result was confirmed in a more recent study involving a Spanish sample (López-Pérez & Fernández-Castilla, 2018, p. 1823). In another recent study on self-actualization of adolescents from Indonesia, Agust, Subroto and Malik (2018, p. 388) found that lacking the resources to develop one's academic potential had a negative effect on self-actualization. Finally, the study by Erdogan and Yurtkulu (2018, p. 204) found that intellectually gifted students showed higher levels of self-actualization than non-gifted students, which could support

the link between academic achievement and self-actualization for this age group. Personal fulfilment may correspond to the person's capability to develop intellectually and spiritually. This aspect of fulfilment is not uncommon in the utopian tradition; in fact, More's Utopians gave a high importance to intelligence and cultivation of the mind. In a more modern context, it may refer to the possibility of the person to develop in a suitable career (Tziner, Loberman, Dekel & Sharoni, 2012, p. 100), which is a matter of discussion in Veronica Roth's *Divergent* but also briefly discussed by Katniss in *Mockingjay*, on the career opportunities for her sister in District 13. Furthermore, the limitations for career development in *Uglies* are clear, as well as the lack of structure and career opportunities for Amy in the new world.

Florêncio, Ramos and Silva (2017, p. 67) identify lack of future expectations and hope, regarding their careers and adult lives, as one of the main causes of stress in adolescents. In turn, stress has been related to low life satisfaction (Extremera, Duran & Lourdes Rey, 2009, p. 119). By forcing children to choose a career that will bind them in all aspects of life forever, without the possibility to change their mind and with the added risk of being left outside the system in the event of failure during the transfer process, the society or system in *Divergent* is putting unnecessary extra pressure on adolescents, who may then choose unwisely and thus have an unfulfilling life in this regard.

One of the causes of this situation is pressure and influence exerted by parents. As we have seen, Tally and Tris are clearly deprived from choice as regards their future. Both systems necessarily imply the pre-establishment of its citizens' options, which seem insufficient to fulfil the needs for self-actualization of some of them. As the results show, for Tally and Tris, parental influence is a source of anxiety or personal conflict regarding the future the protagonists want.

Previous research shows that parents have a strong influence on their children's career choices (Jungen, 2008; Keller, 2008). Pablo-Lerchundi, Morales-Alonso and Karaosman (2016, p. 15) show that children are more likely to become entrepreneurs when their parents have that profession. According to Li and Kerpelman (2007, p. 105) and Identity Control Theory, parental feedback influences adolescents' ideas about who they might become. Feedback that contradicts their aspirations may be distressing because of the importance that parental approval has on children but especially daughters. Parental pressure could lead to a potentially poor decision, the consequences of which can be detrimental to the person's self-actualization. Conversely, parental



support and low demand as regards, for example, intergenerational professional choices are key for adolescents to explore career choices (Tziner, Loberman, Dekel, & Sharoni, 2012, p. 100). As I have shown in other sections, Tally's parents present a neglectful parenting style, while Tris' parents are authoritarian, both of which imply low responsiveness and therefore low support, a situation that mimics the absence of Amy and Katniss' parents in their stories. Taking into account the review on parenting styles in the three cultures analysed, it would seem that children in the USA, where authoritarian and therefore low-responsiveness parenting is most common would statistically identify more easily the conflict between one's own career aspirations and the expectations of one's parents in this regard than readers from the UK or Spain, where responsiveness is higher.

Furthermore, and according to data from the Spanish Ministry of Science, Innovation, and University (Ministerio de Ciencia, Innovación y Universidades, 2019, p. 42), the dropout rate of students after or during their first year of university is 21.5%, with slight differences between public and private institutions (22.3% and 16.9% respectively). In addition, 8.20% of the students in Spanish universities ask for a degree transfer during the first year of the program. This figure suggests that the possibility to change to a different degree is an important aspect and that prospective students worry about their choice not being the correct one.

In other countries, the situation is different, although there are important factors to take into account, such as the high university fees for students in UK (except Scotland) and the USA. Regarding the USA, Barker (2017) explored student retention at university level in Midwest private colleges and concluded that social adjustment and self-regulation were the main problems. According to Braxton, Doyle and Hartley (2014, "Introduction," §. 1), the majority of the dropouts take place during the first year of college, 28% of the total. In general terms, around 30% of first-year students do not return for the second year (Schneider, 2010, p. 2).

In *Divergent*, the choosing ceremony is seen as a situation to fear, a moment that will decide the rest of their lives. The protagonist explains how there are only two options after choosing a faction: membership for life or exile. After passing the initiation tests an initiate becomes a faction member forever, failure to pass the tests or willingness to leave the faction leads to being factionless. This situation could be a dramatization of the pressure students suffer when they choose the program.

Even though this case may be uncommon, many students are unsure of the degree they want to choose and what is more important, the opportunities that a particular degree can offer regarding professional careers. According to research, the 30% dropout rate in Spanish universities is essentially the consequence of “unsatisfactory first year experiences and students who did not enrol for their first choice option [*sic*]” (Rodríguez-Gómez et al. 2014, p. 10); those unsatisfactory experiences may correspond with a difference between expectations and reality. The most common cause of uncertainty, which may lead to a bad choice, is lack of information. In fact, adequate information access is commonly listed as the best technique to ensure students’ continuity in their studies. According to Lagares, Lagares and Ordaz (2012, p. 50), 42.61% of the sample of students from Huelva (Spain) qualified the information received before choosing a university degree as insufficient. Another study on a sample of students from a university in the north of Spain offers similar conclusions: career orientation and expectations with regards to contents were among the main factors of desertion (Tuero, Cervero, Esteban & Bernardo, 2018, p. 135). Although research on this issue in the British educational system is scarce, recent research identifies poor choice as one of the determinants of first-year dropout (Bradley, 2017, p. 38). In this regard, Soilemetzidis and Dale (2013, p. 2339) suggest that pre-enrolment information is key and point out the relevance of summer school programmes to prepare entrants. By contrast, research on this issue concerning US students suggests that lack of timely feedback from lecturers, affiliation issues, overcrowded rooms and irrelevant first-year content are among the factors causing students to withdraw (Barefoot, 2004, p. 16).

In this vein, Dauntless initiates learn the implications of their choice as regards the process that results in the selection of members and, therefore, in the discard of some initiates once they are immersed in the process itself. Similarly, the expected academic path for adolescents towards higher education may be problematic and unsatisfying. This idea is the basis for the problem in *Uglies*: Tally follows the established path albeit with some difficulties but finds her new status unsatisfying and limiting. Although these characters do not find difficulties in developing their potential, the stress they suffer conditions their self-actualization. In fact, both characters are forced to create new avenues for their personal fulfilment that are not among the pre-established choices and within the system. Therefore, even though this professional problem analysed would be easily identified by readers from all countries, students who see the available options as limited or constricting and those choosing to become entrepreneurs in order to find their

call are more likely to identify with these two characters. On the other hand, lack of information before university enrolment may be considered more relevant by Spanish and British readers than by US readers. Regarding wealth inequality, and as hinted at the beginning of this dissertation, the *Divergent* trilogy, given its focus on higher-order needs, is likely to be the most relatable and realistic, to some extent, for audiences in developed countries (i.e., Spain, the USA and the UK). Furthermore, adolescents belonging to low income households would identify with Katniss' world and her enthusiasm for her sister's possibility to become a doctor. In any case, and the great importance granted to the study of a degree in developed countries, the idea of not being able to choose or being part of a world where your aspirations are not contemplated, as in the case of Amy, could easily be identified as a negative social aspect.



## **CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS**

By analysing four contemporary YA dystopian novels through the lens of cross-cultural studies, this dissertation has presented the factors that may prevent or favour reader engagement in three countries: Spain, the USA and the UK. On the other hand, through the analysis of motivations, I have also provided a detailed and corpus-driven explanation of the motivations of the heroines in the novels that contributes to several open research discussions involving these protagonists.

Twenty-first century YA dystopian fiction became popular at a moment of socioeconomic convulsion and instability caused by a global phenomenon: the 2008 economic crisis. However, while the consequences of this event were perceived worldwide, the cultural characteristics of the countries might have mediated and still mediate readers' identification and engagement with these novels, which have a strong criticism component targeting current states of affairs in socioeconomic terms. While the ambiguity of the narrative style typically allows readers to identify, to some extent, with the story and topics, I have argued that both specific events and cultural values

condition readers' experience with the novels. Over the past two decades, academic interest in this subgenre, its characteristics and motives has increased. However, no studies have focused so far on the differences in reader response in cultural terms. Furthermore, the representation of the heroines has been often criticised for not being rebellious enough or for perpetuating gender roles and stereotypes, a matter that can be explained from a cultural point of view. All in all, the originality of this study stems from the approach followed.

In chapter four, I have addressed the first set of questions defined in the introduction:

SQ1: How are the cultures of the societies in the novels similar to or different from the cultures of western countries? How may these differences and similarities hinder or enhance reader engagement and identification?

Using cultural psychologist Geer Hofstede's six dimensions of culture to analyse the societies depicted in the novels, together with the protagonists' attitude towards these societies, I have established some cultural similarities between Spain, UK and USA and these novels' societies. Furthermore, the results of the comparison presented in chapter 4 are discussed in great detail, thus showing the nuances in the classifications, and helping to determine the traits that could favour identification or critical reading.

Specifically, as to power distance, two topics are identified: parenting styles and corruption/inequality. The results indicate that readers from the USA, where authoritarian parenting is the most common style would identify with the protagonist from *Divergent* due to shared experience, while readers from Spain and the UK, with indulgent and authoritative parenting styles, respectively, would understand the criticism because they share the ideas of the protagonist. This same situation is reproduced in the case of *Across the Universe*, where Eldest shows an authoritarian parenting style with Elder, who criticises it, and in *The Hunger Games*, where Peeta's mother uses physical discipline and Katniss criticises violence towards children. Corporal punishment is banned in Spain, while the UK and the USA allow it under particular circumstances, which may influence the degree of identification of the readers from these countries. As to corruption and inequality, all the fictional societies analysed are corrupt to some extent and present inequalities. While Spain has a higher corruption perception index, the USA presents an inequality rate that does not compare to that of the other two countries. Therefore, while Spanish readers would identify the problem of

corruption more easily, the high inequality of the USA suggests that US readers would perceive the criticism implied in this regard in one of the novels: *The Hunger Games*.

Furthermore, the analysis showed that the USA shares a low uncertainty avoidance with one of the societies, but this country presents a much lower inclusiveness than the UK and Spain, despite Spain's high uncertainty avoidance. This result indicated that the overall score in a dimension is insufficient and that deeper analyses are required. Thus, Abnegation –low uncertainty avoidance and high inclusiveness– resembles the culture of the UK, which would increase British readers' positive perception of this society compared to Dauntless or Godspeed in *Across the Universe*, whose low tolerance may be more easily identified by the American reader. On the other hand, low uncertainty avoidance also implies a greater risk-prone behaviour, compared to the reluctance to change of cultures with high uncertainty avoidance. Thus, UK and USA readers would identify to a greater extent with protagonists who present risk-prone behaviour, such as Katniss, Tris and Amy, while Spanish readers would understand the cautious stance of protagonists such as Tally and Elder.

The discussion on collectivism and individualism shows that the comparatively collectivist Spanish culture implies that Spanish readers would understand Katniss' decisions, insofar as she prioritises the collective to her own needs, while UK and USA readers may feel that this character does not represent her idea of the hero. By contrast, they may be able to understand better Amy's initial individualism as well as Tris' behaviour because she is an *ideocentric* character (i.e., an individualist within a collectivist society). Similarly, the proposed societies in Chicago, Godspeed, and the City in *Uglies* would be more logical to a collectivist reader than for an individualist one. The analysis also showed that, given the negative portrayal of individualist cultures in the novels, individualism is highly criticised in most of them.

Similar results have been found for the dimension on femininity and masculinity, whereby Godspeed, the Capitol, and Dauntless, which are criticised, present a high masculinity that is comparable to the USA and the UK, while Abnegation, District 12 and the City are feminine, as is Spain; however, Spain's progressive change towards masculinity would facilitate Spanish readers' identification of the implied criticisms.

As to long- and short-term orientation results have shown that attention to the traits comprising the score is essential to understand the comparisons between the novels and the countries. Adolescents' alleged association between home and safety

explains Tris' conception of Abnegation –a long-term-oriented culture with this long-term-orientation trait– as her home. The comparatively higher score of the UK and Spain implies an association between these countries and Abnegation, while American culture's short-term orientation would be equated to Dauntless and perceived as too dangerous. Short-term orientation is also criticised in *The Hunger Games* and *Uglies* insofar as this orientation prevents long-term plans and progress, favouring the status quo. It is worth mentioning that the characteristics of Godspeed qualify it as the most culturally remote society, which would could hamper not only readers' identification, but also the criticism implied.

Finally, the dimension of restraint or indulgence indicates that UK and US readers belong to indulgent cultures, thus sharing this trait with the city in *Uglies*, the Dauntless and the Capitol, whereas Spain, a comparatively restrained society, shares this trait with Abnegation, District 12 and Godspeed. Both overindulgence and excessive restraint are criticised in the novels. Therefore, depending on the culture of the readers, they will identify the criticism that is closest to their experience.

The results indicate patterns of culturally similar traits in the novels that could facilitate readers' understanding of the various organizational and societal characteristics of the communities. Both UK and US readers belong to cultures that share the values of masculinity represented by Amy and Tris before she tries to reconnect with her culture; they also share the type of individualism shown by Tally and the indulgence represented by the Capitol, the City in *Uglies*, and Dauntless as well as by the character of Amy in *Across the Universe*.

While US and UK readers would easily identify with Amy, Elder has a more relatable behaviour as regards uncertainty avoidance and risk-avoidance. Thus, while UK and US readers would identify with Amy and perceive criticism in first person, Spanish readers would identify with Elder, who balances and criticises Amy's risk-prone behaviour, and with Katniss and Tris as regards collectivism. Spanish readers also share the feminine culture represented and defended by Tally and Katniss, and with Amy's defence of the elderly.

In general, Spanish readers appear to have more in common with the better society than with the criticised society. While US and UK readers would view Katniss' criticism of overindulgence of the Capitol as a criticism to their society, Spanish readers would identify with Katniss, since she represents a restrained culture that is more similar to Spain in that regard. However, Spanish readers belong to a culture that has to



deal with the corruption and wealth inequality described in all novels, and hence are also sensitive to this type of criticism.

Furthermore, in this section, I have established a first approach to the cultural journey. The choice made by Tris, from *Divergent*, and Katniss' behaviour and reaction to the alternative culture show that the protagonists criticise particular aspects from the society of departure or arrival, which have been used in the definition of criticism and identification of the reader in cultural terms.

Chapter five is concerned with the second set of research questions:

SQ2: How do the problems posed by the represented societies reflect Maslow's theory of human motivation? What is the connection between these problems and current real events? How do these connections hinder or enhance reader engagement and identification?

Using Maslow's human needs theory as a basis, I have analysed the representation of these needs in the novels. To do so, I applied a corpus-driven analysis based on annotation. Thus, the four trilogies were manually tagged for hunger, safety, affiliation, esteem, self-actualization and self-transcendence. The resulting quotations were displayed in tables to facilitate the analysis and to support the discussion. The description of the results provided the key topics related to each of the novels' depiction of each of the needs, which were then developed in the discussion that closed each need section. These discussions established parallelisms between the situations narrated in the novels with regards to the need satisfaction or neglect and real-life events and situations in Spain, the UK and the USA, in order to identify the background of the readers and their engagement with the novels.

The section on Food and Hunger (5.1) has shown that this need is approached differently in every trilogy. Most importantly, the role of high power distance in food distribution has been discussed. Thus, I have suggested that, in the aftermath of the 2008 global economic crisis, all of the countries analysed experienced an increase in food insecurity, which affected minority households more severely in the USA. Spanish and UK readers could engage with *Divergent*'s depiction of Erudite's hate speech against the minority for hoarding food because, in these countries, immigrants were partially blamed for the increasing trend in malnutrition derived from families' lower purchase power. Furthermore, while Tally, Tris and Amy offer a view of hunger as a problem from the point of view of the privileged, Katniss experiences it and thus gives a more engaging account of this issue. From an objective point of view, given that the

majority of the population in these countries did not suffer from food scarcity, readers were bound to identify more easily with the aforementioned privileged characters; however, the outsider approach reduces the ability of the reader to fully engage with the problem. On the other hand, GMO and artificial food are criticised in two of the trilogies. While Tally follows a natural-sources diet and limits the intake of animal food, Amy's aversion towards GMOs represents a direct criticism of this practice and was a more popular topic in the years of publication than alternative lifestyles such as veganism. Thus, while veganism and alternative diets have increased exponentially over the past few years, which would be a source of identification for adolescents nowadays, its relevance was much more limited in the first decade of the twenty-first century. By contrast, studies have shown that the population in the UK is highly averse towards GMOs, with US population being much more open to their use and Spain holding a middle ground. Thus, Amy's rejection of this genetic improvement would be a source of identification for UK readers, while US and Spanish readers could engage with the criticism to their use in their respective countries. Finally, I also delved into the food system and the use of money to access it. Only two novels address this issue: both *The Hunger Games* and *Uglies* are highly critical of the conceptualization of food as a tradable good, which contrasts with typical children literature where food is magically at the characters' disposal, as in *Divergent* and *Across the Universe*; even though the latter offers some discussion on the food system, it is mostly referred to the effects of freedom on labour.

The section on Safety (5.2) discusses the topics of surveillance and control, fences and migration, protagonists' sacrifice, sexual violence and violence towards a minority group. The analysis shows that the protagonists typically accept surveillance as part of their lives and only react negatively –in *Across the Universe* and *Divergent*– when the surveillance agent was external and unknown to them. I have suggested that this behaviour is comparable to most young adults' use of social media and the Internet in general, where they offer personal information. On the other hand, as explained by Merino (2008, § 10), the future of our societies does not invite optimism; instead, it seems that humankind will be subdued by big corporations. Recent scandals involving corporate surveillance and use of protected data show the limits of this exposure and of acceptable surveillance. The fact that readers from the three countries have their rights to privacy ensured but are generally largely ignorant of these rights suggests that no particular differences exist in this regard.

The analysis has also explored the idea of fences in connection with power distance. Hence, two novels –*The Hunger Games* and *Divergent*– present societies where fences are used to isolate people or prevent them from leaving. In this regard, I have discussed the parallelism of strong anti-illegal immigration policies in the three countries and suggested that readers of these countries could identify the problem from two different approaches depending on the novel. While *The Hunger Games* offers the perspective of a person whose mobility is limited by the fence in a similar way as the fences in Melilla, the Mexico-USA border or Calais, *Divergent* presents the opposite perspective, given that Chicago is isolated from external influence and people from the Fringe cannot live in the Bureau, which is considered a safe place. Furthermore, I have suggested that the abuse on the factionless and the Divergent on the part of the authorities and privileged Erudite is reminiscent of police violence towards the black community in the USA. Thus, US readers are more likely to identify this criticism than UK or Spanish readers. Finally, I have suggested that the way sexual assault is discussed in *Across the Universe* and *Divergent* fails to support the idea of female empowerment and reporting of the aggressors. In this vein, I argue that given the recent popularity of the “metoo” movement, this topic would be highly identifiable nowadays by readers of all the countries analysed, but the criticism offered is only half-hearted. Furthermore, the reaction of male friends in these novels is representative of the traditional approach to sexual abuse: silencing instead of publicly denouncing the crime.

The third section focuses on affiliation (5.3). The discussion presented has focused on romantic love, family, belonging in marginality and otherisation as the main issues covered by the novels. In doing so, I have found that the novels offer a plethora of approaches to romance that follow and challenge traditional happy endings. While Tris lives her relationship with dramatic intensity, the ending shows her choosing a heroic role and collective interest over personal love life. Similarly, Tally seems to gradually challenge fairy tale conceptions of the damsel in distress and gain agency; however, and following the discussion on this idea, I found that female friendship seems key to prevent heroines’ dependency on male characters. The protagonist of *Across the Universe*, Amy, also challenges the traditional “boy-meets-girl” storyline by demanding choice in order to make a truly free decision with regards to her partner. Finally, Katniss’ controversial decision to marry Peeta and have children shows that the traditional ending could also be a conscious and free decision made by the heroine. In other words, the heroines in the novels offer readers traditional and unconventional

approaches to love while stressing the freedom of choice of the protagonists. The second issue discussed in this section is the role of family. The weight that this institution has in the novels varies. While family is key to reinforce or transmit cultural values as seen in *The Hunger Games* and *Divergent* trilogies, it is a necessary support for Amy in *Across the Universe*. By contrast, the relevance of this institution is close to non-existent in *Uglies*. The discussion suggests that the connection between family ties and utopia is essential and depends on balance. Hence, a healthy presence of family is necessary to transmit empathy, which facilitates collective action. By contrast, excessive responsibility with regards to family, as in the case of Katniss, prevents her affiliation with the community, as does the absence of this institution for Tally. As to reader reception, although the three countries have cultures where close family ties are important, Spanish readers might expect extended family to be mentioned given their more collectivist mindset. This section also deals with the affiliation of those who are marginalised. In this regard, I have established a connection between ideologically extreme groups such as the English Defence League and extremist groups in the novels, including the Cutters and the Dauntless, who use violence and communal rituals to enhance their sense of belonging to the collective. Furthermore, I have discussed the importance of a horizontal structure for affiliation with the collective in light of the comparison with vertical US student unions. Finally, I have argued that the negative portrayal of ideologically extreme groups and violence is aimed at showing youngsters the dangers of becoming involved with similar real-life groups. Following the idea of groups and otherisation, in the last subsection the use of difference to increase hatred towards minorities is discussed. In particular, I suggest that the situations of political and mediatic otherisation of immigrants experienced by adolescents have affected their perception of these minorities. This idea is represented in *Divergent* and *Across the Universe*, where the Divergent and Amy, respectively, are blamed for the negative situations experienced by the general public. Furthermore, the other two protagonists, Tally and Katniss strongly reject the otherisation of groups on the grounds of ideology or physical appearance. Thus, these novels offer a clear criticism of real-life otherisation situations that can be easily identified by readers of the three countries.

The following section, which deals with esteem and self-esteem, explores the influence of parents and peers on the protagonists' self-esteem as well as the treatment of suicide and depression in the trilogies studied, the roles in society of the protagonists and how they fit or challenge the traditional endings in nineteenth-century feminist

utopias, but also with the role of culture in these girls' decisions with regards to their chosen social roles. Parental pressure on children is thought to lead to depression and low self-esteem in the three countries, as is lack of support due to death or neglect. The discussion of this section suggests a shared identification point for readers of all three countries. The discussion on body perception and self-esteem indicates that some of the protagonists' self-esteem improves when they have the support of a close female friend and worsens when this support disappears. This is the case of Tally and Tris. It is also found that these friendships decrease the protagonists' dependency on male protagonists, particularly their love interests. The discussion shows that Amy's self-esteem is hardly depicted in the novels, which mostly focus on the male protagonist. In addition, Katniss' self-esteem is only affected positively by Peeta's support. Regarding social roles and traditional endings, the discussion shows that both Katniss and Tris fit the conventional death by sacrifice or marriage offered to heroines, while Amy and Tally offer alternative positions that challenge stereotypes. Nevertheless, the endings of these novels as well as these protagonists' self-esteem are explained further by their cultural values. Since they have culturally collectivist values, becoming individualised prominent figures of rebellion detached them from the community and affected the protagonists' self-esteem. Furthermore, the restraint of these cultures may lead to the repression of emotions that we acknowledge in Katniss and Tris, the protagonists with the most severe form of low self-esteem, which is deepened by the low peer support derived in part from the fact that they do not express their feelings in order to preserve group harmony.

Finally, the last section deals with personal fulfilment (5.5) and discusses self-actualization and self-transcendence focusing on academic achievement, on the one hand, and Murdock's journey of the heroine, on the other hand. Furthermore, the discussion of Murdock's journey of the heroine is deepened by the introduction of the cultural journey. Thus, and drawing again on Fortunati's (1995) journey of the utopian traveller, I have argued that Katniss and Tris represent a journey that has the objective to criticise the society of arrival while increasing personal growth. The culturally feminine society is the society of departure, while the society of arrival is masculine and presents challenges for the heroine, who criticises the set of values of this society. Finally, the return to the feminine culture (society of departure) takes place either physically –in the case of Katniss– or psychologically –in Tris' case– through personal growth and development. While in Fortunati's journey the society criticised in classical

utopias is usually the society of departure, in these dystopias the society of arrival is criticised and compared to the society of departure, which differs to a greater extent from the reader's society. That is, the reader's society, particularly in the case of UK and US readers, has more in common with the society of arrival than with the society of departure. In the case of Spain, I have shown that in more than one occasion, this society has values and circumstances that appear to bear more resemblance with the better society than with the criticised society in cultural terms. Although many of the issues discussed involving need satisfaction are shared by the three countries, self-actualisation in terms of the journey of the heroine is not among them.

The results indicate that all the protagonists except for Amy, the heroine in *Across the Universe*, reach self-actualisation through different mechanisms. While Tally and Tris become self-actualised and self-transcendent by focusing on the greater good –by protecting nature and the community respectively– Katniss becomes self-actualised by choosing the Good Life, that is, the satisfaction of basic needs and affiliation. Katniss chooses not to become part of the social organization of the new system, but instead chooses to honour her feminine culture and chooses a life centred on her new family and the pleasures of leisure in nature, rather than on societal demands and the overachiever syndrome. In this regard, she embodies Murdock's idea that for heroines to thrive, there should be a change in the system of values towards cooperation rather than competition and greed. Thus, the Spanish culture would be more suitable than the UK or US culture. As to academic achievement, I have suggested that Tris and Tally's restricted professional possibilities are reminiscent of adolescents' fear of choosing a career without sufficient information or without a clear vocation. Thus, the data indicating the relatively high dropout rate among undergraduate students in the three countries suggests that adolescents, and readers in general, who might struggle to find a suitable professional option would identify with these two characters to a greater extent. On the other hand, and within the same countries, adolescents from low-income households would probably identify with Katniss' hope for her sister to become a doctor in the new-found home of District 13. This idea suggests the existence of differences not only in cultural terms but also in economic terms.

This study has some limitations that offer opportunities for future research. Although this dissertation includes an extensive corpus, with a total of 12 novels (four trilogies), future research could analyse other popular YA dystopian novels of the same period or other periods using the same technique for reader engagement analysis. On the

other hand, the results could be further extended and completed by studies using reader response from youngsters who read the novels at that time to ascertain whether they believe that the context influenced their engagement in the way suggested in this study. Regarding self-actualization, more research is needed on what it means to become self-actualised for children and young adults. As it is, the studies on this topic focus on special groups such as gifted children, and on academic achievement, although some research exists on the conception of happiness in relation with self-actualisation among children and adolescents. Furthermore, as I have explained, the results suggest differences not only in cultural terms but also in economic terms. Future research could examine differences in reception of the novels among groups of adolescents from different cultures and different economic backgrounds within those countries. In addition, multicultural societies should receive more academic attention. In this regard, future research could examine reception among different cultural groups within the same country. However, Hofstede's insights are limited and cannot be applied in those scenarios. In addition, researchers could attempt a quantitative reception study that considered editorial aspects of the novels in my corpus such as book sales, sales channels, reviews, etc.

Dahrendorf (1958) began a discussion that I believe should be born in mind whenever an academic intends to research a topic, on whichever area, but especially on the Humanities. When we raise an issue or develop a problem the option of relating it to our environment sounds reasonable. In other words, striving to reach the highest of human needs –transcendence– is a legitimate, and even desirable goal. Transcendence implies providing the world with the extra piece of knowledge that we have acquired after our journey to the other world –in our case utopia or dystopia– to the depths of a topic; this knowledge is acquired during our journey; like the hero in the monomyth (Campbell, 1949), it is granted to us after overcoming the trials set forth by our own pre-journey assumptions. In following this symbolic idea, I present this research project as an interdisciplinary contribution in that it does not discuss novels as individual works; on the contrary, I have tried to but established a dialogue among the various problems posed, their similarities with the circumstances in in three western countries, and the implications of these identifications have for a literary subgenre that has reappeared and for the socioeconomic and cultural situations of these countries, but mostly for the readers of these novels.





## RESUMEN

En las últimas décadas hemos sido testigos de la enorme popularidad de la ficción para jóvenes adultos, que ha conseguido atraer a sus lectores a través de la magia, los vampiros, o las heroínas con arco y flechas que luchan contra el sistema. Con un público objetivo adolescente, la nueva ola de ciencia ficción distópica ha obtenido un éxito sin precedentes con la publicación de *The Hunger Games* de Suzanne Collins (2008, 2009, 2010). El éxito de esta trilogía y su adaptación cinematográfica favorecieron que surgieran otras novelas del mismo género, como la trilogía *Divergent*, de Veronica Roth (2011, 2012, 2013), que recibieron una similar bienvenida por parte de la audiencia. La ficción distópica juvenil puede considerarse un fenómeno global, cuya popularidad se atribuye en parte a la mezcla de romance y fantasía con un tono político subyacente que permite a adolescentes y adultos disfrutar de las historias al mismo tiempo que se identifican versiones más oscuras de algunas de las características de las sociedades y sistemas actuales.

Este tipo de ficción se desarrolló a partir de la tradición utópica, más específicamente de las versiones distópicas del siglo XX como *Brave New World* de Aldous Huxley o *Nineteen Eighty-Four* de George Orwell. Tanto la ficción juvenil como la distópica empezaron a ser aceptadas por parte de la Academia en la segunda mitad del siglo XX. En el caso de la literatura juvenil, su importancia fue desestimada por su falta de complejidad lingüística y estilística, mientras que la literatura utópica fue considerada indigna de ser tomada en consideración por la crítica académica, por su alto contenido político y por su agenda socioeconómica. Podría decirse, como hace Moores (2018, p. 261), que el conflicto puede ser una parte importante de la narrativa, pero estas historias, como parte de la literatura inspiracional, pueden ofrecer finales esperanzadores. En este sentido, y a pesar del contenido negativo y postapocalíptico de las novelas distópicas, muchas de ellas tienen finales que muestran posibles experimentos de mejora social, esperanza o el crecimiento personal del héroe o heroína.

La utilidad de la ficción distópica como herramienta se basa en la premisa básica de que las contribuciones culturales, como son las novelas, son representaciones e interpretaciones de individuos como parte de sus comunidades. A diferencia de otros géneros narrativos, la ficción utópica y distópica está altamente relacionada con la

sociología y la política. Las circunstancias particularmente negativas de la última década, en particular la crisis financiera y su impacto global, podría haber formado el caldo de cultivo perfecto para la aparición de este tipo de novelas o para su redescubrimiento. No solo ofrecen el contenido adecuado, con visiones pesimistas del futuro y extrapolaciones de los problemas actuales, a veces anticipados como verdaderas profecías de autocumplimiento, sino que presentan los mecanismos necesarios para la identificación y participación del lector en la interpretación del texto. Hablamos, después de todo, de adolescentes que han vivido o sido testigos de los estragos de la crisis en sus familias y sus sociedades.

La popularidad de estos subgéneros ha dado pie a la investigación académica sobre los temas que tratan, las influencias y posibilidades educativas, así como sobre la recepción entre sus lectores objetivo. Sin embargo, estos estudios rara vez consideran la importancia de la cultura, mientras que los que lo hacen tienden a centrarse en una única cultura o en culturas dentro de un mismo país. Muchos estudios se han centrado en los elementos distópicos de las novelas de forma individual como la represión, la violencia, la falta de libertad o la restricción de la capacidad de decisión de los protagonistas. Estos elementos se han relacionado en mayor o menor medida con los temas que afectan a las sociedades actuales, en particular respecto al excesivo uso de la tecnología. La mayoría de los estudios que comparan estas novelas se centran en dos de ellas, mientras que en la mayoría de los casos los enfoques integrales sobre este subgénero tienden a plasmarse en forma de colección de ensayos. Además, cada uno de estos ensayos suele centrarse en una trilogía, novela, personaje o tema concreto. Los estudios amplios que analizan simultáneamente varias novelas son escasos. Por una parte, la investigación existente no ofrece un enfoque intercultural sobre las similitudes y diferencias entre las sociedades ficticias y reales en función de los elementos de identificación del lector. Por otra parte, algunos estudios han investigado aspectos de las necesidades humanas como las necesidades de afiliación (p.ej. la amistad femenina) o la autoestima en algunas de las novelas de mi corpus. Sin embargo, estos estudios se basan en la citación de extractos de los textos para apoyar la idea que defiende el investigador y por tanto ofrecen un enfoque basado en el corpus (*corpus-based approach*), en lugar de ofrecer un estudio derivado de los resultados obtenidos (*corpus-driven approach*).

### *Preguntas de la investigación y objetivos de la misma*

Esta tesis doctoral ofrece un enfoque interdisciplinar sobre la ficción distópica juvenil. El estudio se basa en 1) la importancia clave de la cultura a la hora de evaluar la organización social; 2) el papel relevante de los acontecimientos históricos en la formación de referencias compartidas por la comunidad; y 3) en la influencia de la psicología adolescente y la experiencia sobre la capacidad de identificación del lector.

Así pues, se propone un análisis de una muestra de novelas distópicas juveniles basada en las siguientes preguntas:

Grupo de preguntas 1: ¿cuáles son las similitudes y diferencias entre las culturas descritas en las novelas y las culturas occidentales? ¿Cómo pueden mejorar o dificultar la identificación del lector estas similitudes y diferencias?

Grupo de preguntas 2: ¿Cómo reflejan los problemas descritos en las sociedades la teoría de las necesidades humanas de Maslow? ¿Cuál es la conexión entre estos problemas y los acontecimientos recientes? ¿Cómo pueden estas conexiones mejorar o dificultar la identificación del lector?

Para responder al primer grupo de preguntas, se aplican las seis dimensiones culturales de Hofstede, que permiten analizar las culturas descritas en las novelas, las características culturales que critican o contra las que se rebelan los personajes, así como las diferencias y similitudes con las características culturales de España, Estados Unidos y Reino Unido. Este análisis tiene como objetivo presentar una definición detallada de las características de las distopías juveniles, ofreciendo la oportunidad de identificar los valores culturales criticados y que son percibidos como causa de la distopía, a la vez que se amplía la información disponible sobre las fuentes de identificación para los lectores de distintas culturas.

Por otra parte, y para abordar el segundo grupo de preguntas, se analiza la satisfacción de las diferentes necesidades humanas descritas por Maslow en las sociedades ficticias a través de un etiquetado (anotación) sistemático de las novelas. El conjunto de citas resultante se analiza y se comenta basándose en la investigación existente sobre los temas y acontecimientos históricos y recientes, así como sobre las situaciones que se han dado en España, Reino Unido y Estados Unidos y que pueden relacionarse con las situaciones descritas en las novelas. Este análisis pretende una incursión cualitativa en la recepción de los lectores basada en la cultura en la era global en la que vivimos. Los objetivos específicos de esta tesis son los siguientes:

Objetivo 1: En primer lugar, se pretende analizar la recepción y la participación por parte del lector basándose en las similitudes y diferencias entre los tres países seleccionados y las sociedades ficticias y en las amenazas a la satisfacción de las necesidades humanas –desde la comida hasta la realización personal y trascendencia– tanto en las novelas como en los países. Los resultados sirven para ofrecer un análisis cultural detallado sobre los modelos de distopía juvenil, además de considerar el viaje cultural como una variante del viaje utópico de las utopías clásicas (Fortunati, 1995). Estos modelos están basados en los valores culturales que se refuerzan o critican en las sociedades de origen, destino y cultura final, es decir, el estado final de la transformación social narrada en las obras distópicas contemporáneas.

Objetivo 2: En segundo lugar, y en relación con el objetivo anterior, se busca ofrecer información sobre el nivel de satisfacción posible para las protagonistas en el contexto dado, mostrando así si las heroínas de las novelas, como modelos de conducta que representan diferentes enfoques o concepciones de realización personal.

### *Estructura*

Esta tesis doctoral está estructurada de la siguiente manera: El capítulo 2 presenta una revisión de la literatura sobre la ficción juvenil y las aproximaciones modernas a la recepción de y reacción a las obras por parte de los lectores. La revisión de la literatura incluye una discusión de las estrategias existentes, que se centran en las cuatro trilogías de mi corpus –*Uglies*, *The Hunger Games*, *Across the Universe* y *Divergent*– e identifica la necesidad de una orientación amplia e inclusiva que incluya la recepción y la ficción distópica juvenil desde un punto de vista cultural. El capítulo 3 ofrece una descripción de los métodos elegidos: las dimensiones culturales de Hofstede y la teoría de Maslow de las necesidades humanas. Este capítulo justifica esta elección y ofrece información detallada sobre otras fuentes utilizadas para adaptar la teoría de Maslow al presente estudio y por tanto para su aplicación a los mundos ficticios. El capítulo 4 describe las culturas de las novelas y presenta un análisis sobre las similitudes y diferencias entre las sociedades ficticias, así como entre estas sociedades y España, Reino Unido y Estados Unidos, y sobre las críticas implícitas. El capítulo 5, el más extenso, está compuesto por 5 subsecciones, una por cada una de las necesidades principales descritas por Maslow. Cada subsección incluye los resultados de la anotación de las novelas para esa necesidad específica, resultados que se muestran en una tabla y se analizan para identificar los temas principales. A este análisis le sigue una

discusión de los temas identificados que incluye las conexiones entre las amenazas a esas necesidades a las que se enfrentan las protagonistas y las posibles situaciones similares en la vida real que pueden suponer una fuente de identificación para los lectores de España, Reino Unido y Estados Unidos. La última subsección, que trata sobre la realización personal y la transcendencia, entra en el viaje general de autoconocimiento de los personajes en términos culturales y en el despertar a la realidad de sus sociedades. Además, se trata, por una parte, el papel heroico de la protagonista de la distopía a la hora de conformar la mejor alternativa y, por otra parte, los retos a los que se enfrentan los adolescentes en relación a su realización personal. Por último, las conclusiones ofrecen un resumen de los principales resultados del estudio, así como las limitaciones y oportunidades para investigaciones futuras.

#### *Principales conclusiones del estudio*

Al analizar novelas distópicas juveniles contemporáneas a través de la perspectiva cultural y de la psicología humanística, esta tesis doctoral presenta los factores que pueden favorecer o dificultar la identificación del lector en tres países culturalmente diferenciados –España, Reino Unido, y Estados Unidos– basándose en el análisis de cuatro trilogías y las motivaciones de sus protagonistas. Por otra parte, a través del análisis de motivaciones, se ha ofrecido una explicación detallada y derivada del corpus sobre las motivaciones de las heroínas en las novelas, que contribuye a varios debates abiertos sobre estas protagonistas.

En primer lugar, usando las seis dimensiones culturales del psicólogo cultural Geer Hofstede, se analizan las sociedades descritas en las novelas junto con las actitudes de las protagonistas hacia las mismas para establecer similitudes culturales entre los tres países seleccionados y las sociedades descritas positiva o negativamente. Además, los resultados de la comparación del capítulo 4 se argumentan con mucho detalle, mostrando los matices en las clasificaciones y ayudando a determinar las características que podían favorecer la identificación o la lectura crítica. Por ejemplo, y a pesar de la puntuación global similar entre la sociedad criticada en *Divergente* y la sociedad española, la protagonista indica que la característica que critica está relacionada con las técnicas de crianza. Así pues, Reino Unido y España presentan un estilo de crianza autoritativo y permisivo, respectivamente, más relacionados con el ideal de la protagonista, mientras que su crítica al modo de crianza autoritario –basado en la autoridad de los padres, grandes demandas y baja capacidad de respuesta– podría ser

identificada más claramente por un lector estadounidense, ya que en este país este es el estilo de crianza predominante.

Los resultados indican patrones de características culturales similares en las novelas que podrían favorecer la comprensión del lector de las características organizativas y sociales de las comunidades. Lectores de Reino Unido comparten valores culturales con Abnegación en cuanto a la baja evitación de incertidumbre con las políticas de alta inclusión, lo que significa que las personas no evitan los riesgos ni discriminan al diferente por norma general. Tanto lectores de Reino Unido como de Estados Unidos pertenecen a culturas que comparten los valores de masculinidad representados por Amy y Tris antes de que se reconectara con su cultura y el individualismo mostrado por Tally o la indulgencia mostrada por el Capitolio, la ciudad de *Uglies* y la facción Osadía, así como Amy en *Across the Universe*. Por otra parte, los lectores estadounidenses pertenecen a una cultura con una baja distancia de poder, pero un estilo de crianza mayoritariamente autoritativo que es típico de sociedades con una gran distancia de poder y que podemos encontrar en Abnegación. Además, la desigualdad de riqueza en las novelas y la baja evitación del riesgo mostrada por Tris, Amy y Katniss es representativa de la cultura estadounidense.

Mientras que lectores de Estados Unidos y Reino Unido podrían identificarse fácilmente con Amy, Elder (co-protagonista de la misma trilogía) presenta un comportamiento más cercano en cuanto a evitación de la incertidumbre y el riesgo. Así, mientras los lectores de Reino Unido y Estados Unidos se identificarían culturalmente con Amy y percibirían su crítica en primera persona, los lectores españoles se identificarían con Elder, quien compensa y critica la tendencia al riesgo de Amy, y con Katniss y Tris en cuanto al colectivismo. Los lectores españoles también comparten la cultura femenina representada y defendida por Tally y Katniss, así como por Amy en su defensa de las personas ancianas. En general, los lectores españoles parecen tener mucho más en común con la sociedad ideal que con la criticada. Los lectores de Reino Unido y Estados Unidos podrían ver las críticas de Katniss a la indulgencia excesiva del Capitolio como una crítica a su sociedad, los lectores españoles podrían identificarse con Katniss, ya que ella representa una cultura con mayores constricciones que es más similar a España en ese sentido. Sin embargo, los lectores españoles pertenecen a una cultura que comparte la corrupción y desigualdad de riqueza descrita en todas las novelas y por tanto pueden percibir parte de la crítica.

En segundo lugar, utilizando como base la teoría de las necesidades humanas de Maslow, se analiza la representación de estas necesidades en las novelas. Para ello, se aplica un procedimiento de análisis derivado del corpus (corpus-driven) basado en la anotación. Así, cuatro trilogías se etiquetan manualmente para el hambre, la seguridad, la afiliación, la estima, la realización personal y la transcendencia. La sección sobre la comida y el hambre (5.1.) muestra que la representación de esta necesidad varía en cada trilogía. Se expone el papel de la alta distancia de poder en términos culturales en relación a la distribución de la comida. Así, se explica que, en la situación posterior al estallido de la crisis económica global de 2008, todos los países analizados experimentaron un aumento en inseguridad alimenticia, que afectó a los hogares de minorías de forma más preocupante en Estados Unidos. Los lectores de España y Reino Unido podrían entender el discurso del odio de los Eruditos en *Divergent* contra la minoría por acumular comida ya que, en estos países, se culpaba en parte a los inmigrantes de la tendencia al alza de la malnutrición ocasionada por el menor poder adquisitivo de las familias. Además, mientras que Tally, Tris y Amy ofrecen una visión del hambre desde un punto de vista privilegiado, Katniss lo experimenta y por tanto ofrece a los lectores la oportunidad de participar de la realidad del problema. Objetivamente, dado que la mayoría de la población en estos países no sufre hambre, los lectores podrían identificarse más fácilmente con los personajes privilegiados; sin embargo, el punto de vista externo reduce la posibilidad del lector de participar del problema plenamente. Por otra parte, la modificación genética y la comida artificial se critican en dos de las trilogías desde puntos de vista distintos. Mientras que Tally sigue una dieta de origen natural y limita la ingesta de comida de origen animal, la aversión mostrada por Amy hacia la modificación genética es más directa y un tema popular en los años de la publicación. Así, aunque el veganismo y dietas alternativas han incrementado su popularidad exponencialmente en los últimos años, y por tanto podría favorecer la conexión de los lectores hoy en día, su relevancia estaba más limitada en la primera década del siglo XXI.

Por otra parte, los estudios han demostrado que la población en el Reino Unido tiene una gran aversión a la modificación genética, mientras que los estadounidenses tienen una mentalidad más abierta en este respecto y los españoles se encuentran a medio camino entre unos y otros. Así pues, el rechazo de Amy a la mejora genética podría suponer una fuente de identificación por parte de los lectores en Reino Unido, mientras que los lectores de los otros países podrían identificarse más con la crítica a su

uso en sus respectivos países. Por último, también se indaga en el sistema de alimentación y el uso del dinero para acceder a la comida. Solo dos novelas consideran este tema: tanto *The Hunger Games* como *Uglies* critican la concepción de la comida como un objeto de actividad comercial. Esta crítica contrasta con la literatura típica infantil o juvenil donde la comida suele aparecer mágicamente y está a disposición de los personajes, como en *Divergent* y *Across the Universe*. Cabe destacar, sin embargo, que *Across the Universe* trata el tema del sistema de organización de la comida, aunque no se centra directamente en los medios de producción, sino en cómo la producción se ve afectada una vez que se elimina la sustancia química que controlaba su comportamiento y que, por tanto, les obligaba a trabajar.

La sección sobre la seguridad (5.2.) trata los temas de la vigilancia y el control, las vallas y la inmigración, el sacrificio de las protagonistas, la violencia sexual y la violencia contra un grupo minoritario. El análisis muestra que las protagonistas tienden a aceptar la vigilancia como parte de sus vidas y solo reaccionan de forma negativa –en *Across the Universe* y *Divergent*– cuando la vigilancia se lleva a cabo por parte de un agente externo y desconocido. Se sugiere que este comportamiento es comparable al de la mayoría de los jóvenes en su relación con las redes sociales e Internet en general, donde ofrecen información personal; por otra parte, los escándalos que han afectado a empresas por su uso de la vigilancia y datos protegidos muestran los límites de la exposición y la vigilancia permisible. El hecho de que los lectores de los tres países tengan sus derechos protegidos pero que al mismo tiempo ignoren en su mayoría estos derechos sugiere que no existen diferencias entre países en este respecto.

El análisis también sugiere la conexión entre el concepto de las vallas y la distancia de poder. Así, dos trilogías, *The Hunger Games* y *Divergent*, presentan sociedades donde las vallas sirven para aislar a la gente o evitar que escapen. En este sentido, se trata el paralelismo entre las políticas antinmigración ilegal en los tres países analizados y se sugiere que los lectores de los mismos podrían identificar el problema desde dos puntos de vista distintos dependiendo de la obra. Mientras que *The Hunger Games* ofrece el punto de vista de una persona cuya movilidad se ve limitada por la existencia de la valla de forma similar a las vallas de Melilla, la frontera entre México y Estados Unidos o Calais, *Divergent* presenta la perspectiva opuesta, dado que Chicago está aislada de la influencia externa y la gente del exterior (Fringe) no pueden vivir en la Oficina, un lugar seguro. Además, se sugiere que el abuso que padecen los sin facción y los divergentes por parte de las autoridades y los Eruditos privilegiados recuerda a la



violencia policial sobre la comunidad negra en Estados Unidos y los inmigrantes ilegales en España. Así pues, parece más probable que los lectores españoles y estadounidenses identifiquen esta crítica que los del Reino Unido. Por último, se sugiere que la forma en la que se trata la agresión sexual en *Across the Universe* y *Divergent* no consigue apoyar la idea del empoderamiento femenino y la denuncia de los agresores. En este sentido, sostengo que dada la reciente popularidad del movimiento #metoo, este tema sería más fácil de identificar hoy en día de lo que lo fue en su día por los lectores de todos los países considerados, pero que la crítica es poco ambiciosa. Además, la reacción de los amigos de la víctima es representativa del comportamiento tradicional ante un acto de estas características: silenciar en lugar de denunciar públicamente.

La tercera sección se centra en la afiliación (5.3.). La discusión presentada se centra en el amor romántico, la familia, la pertenencia en la marginalidad y la discriminación como temas principales tratados en las novelas. Las novelas ofrecen una plétora de enfoques sobre el romance y siguen o desafían los finales felices tradicionales. Mientras que Tris vive su relación con dramática intensidad, el final muestra que elige un papel heroico y el interés colectivo por encima de la vida amorosa personal. De forma similar, Tally parece desafiar de forma progresiva sus convicciones de cuento de hadas sobre la dama en apuros y recupera su capacidad de acción y decisión; sin embargo, y siguiendo la discusión sobre el tema, se descubre que la amistad femenina parece evitar la dependencia de las heroínas de personajes masculinos. La protagonista de *Across the Universe*, Amy, también desafía la típica historia de “chico conoce chica” y exige opciones para poder decidir libremente su pareja. Por último, la controvertida decisión de Katniss de casarse con Peeta y tener hijos muestra que los finales tradicionales pueden suponer una decisión libre y consciente tomada por la heroína. En otras palabras, las heroínas de las novelas ofrecen a los lectores perspectivas tanto tradicionales como poco convencionales con respecto al amor haciendo hincapié en la libertad de elección de las protagonistas. El segundo tema tratado en esta sección es el papel de la familia. Aunque la familia tiene una importancia clave a la hora de transmitir o reforzar los valores culturales, como hemos visto en *The Hunger Games* y *Divergent*, esta institución supone un apoyo necesario para Amy en *Across the Universe*. En comparación, su importancia es prácticamente insignificante en *Uglies*. La discusión sugiere que la relación entre familia y creación de la utopía es básica y depende de su equilibrio. Por tanto, una presencia saludable de la familia es necesaria para transmitir empatía, que facilita la acción colectiva. Sin embargo, la

excesiva responsabilidad familiar, como en el caso de Katniss impide que se relacione e identifique con su comunidad, de forma similar a la ausencia total familiar en el caso de Tally. En cuanto a la recepción e identificación del lector, aunque los tres países tienen culturas en las que la familia cercana es importante, los lectores españoles podrían esperar que se mencionara a otros parientes dado su cultura más inclusiva de relaciones familiares de segundo y sucesivos grados. Esta sección también trata sobre la afiliación de los marginados. En este sentido, se establece una conexión entre los grupos ideológicamente extremos, como el English Defence League y los grupos extremistas en las novelas, incluyendo a los *Cutters* y los miembros de Osadía, quienes utilizan la violencia y los rituales comunales para incrementar su sentido de pertenencia al colectivo. Además, se considera la importancia de una estructura horizontal para favorecer la afiliación al colectivo, teniendo en cuenta la experiencia aportada por las estructuras verticales de los sindicatos de estudiantes de EEUU. Por último, sostengo que la representación negativa de grupos ideológicamente extremos y de la violencia pretende mostrar a los jóvenes los riesgos de involucrarse con grupos similares en la vida real. Siguiendo la idea de los grupos y la marginalización, la última subsección trata sobre el abuso del concepto de diferencia para incrementar el odio hacia las minorías. En particular, se exploran las situaciones experimentadas por adolescentes con respecto a la discriminación de los inmigrantes por parte de los medios y los políticos. Esta idea se representa en *Divergent* y *Across the Universe*, donde los Divergentes y Amy respectivamente son culpados por las situaciones negativas que afectan a toda la población. Además, las otras dos protagonistas, Tally y Katniss, critican estas prácticas basadas en la ideología o la apariencia física. Por ello, estas novelas ofrecen una clara crítica a la discriminación en la vida real que puede identificarse por parte de los lectores de los tres países.

La siguiente sección, que trata la estima y autoestima, explora la influencia de los padres y compañeros sobre la autoestima de los personajes, así como el tratamiento del suicidio y la depresión en las trilogías, el papel en la sociedad de los protagonistas y cómo siguen o desafían los finales tradicionales en las utopías feministas del siglo XIX, pero también el papel de la cultura en las decisiones de estas heroínas respecto a los roles sociales elegidos. La presión paterna sobre los niños puede llevar a la depresión y a la baja autoestima en los tres países tratados, como también puede hacerlo la falta de apoyo parental por muerte o negligencia. El análisis de esta sección sugiere una identificación común por parte de los lectores de los tres países. En cuanto a la

percepción física y la autoestima, los resultados indican que la autoestima de algunas protagonistas mejora cuando tienen el apoyo de una amistad femenina y empeora cuando desaparece este apoyo. Este es el caso de Tally y Tris. Los resultados también sugieren que estas amistades reducen la dependencia de las protagonistas de los personajes masculinos, especialmente de sus intereses románticos. Esta discusión muestra que la autoestima de Amy apenas aparece representada en las novelas, que parecen centrarse en el protagonista masculino. Además, la autoestima de Katniss solo mejora con las apreciaciones positivas y el apoyo de Peeta. En cuanto a los roles sociales y los finales tradicionales, la discusión muestra que tanto Katniss como Tris encajan en las opciones de muerte o matrimonio ofrecidas a las heroínas mientras que Amy y Tally ofrecen posiciones alternativas que desafían estos estereotipos. Sin embargo, los finales de estas novelas, así como la autoestima de sus protagonistas se explica también por los valores culturales.

Al tener valores correspondientes a una cultura colectivista, el proceso de convertirse en prominentes figuras individualizadas, líderes de la rebelión, afecta a la autoestima de las protagonistas, quienes se ven separadas de su comunidad. Además, el control y limitación de estas culturas puede llevar a la represión de las emociones, como vemos en los casos de Katniss y Tris, las protagonistas con los problemas de autoestima más severos que se ven agravados por el bajo apoyo recibido. Este bajo apoyo se debe en parte a la baja expresividad que pretende preservar la armonía del grupo.

Por último, la última sección trata sobre la realización personal (5.5) empleando como apoyo el viaje de la heroína de Murdock e incluyendo el papel de los logros académicos en la realización personal de los adolescentes. Los resultados indican que todas las protagonistas excepto Amy, la heroína de *Across the Universe*, alcanzan la realización personal a través de distintos mecanismos. Mientras que Tally y Tris obtienen la realización personal y transcendencia centrándose en el bien común – protegiendo la naturaleza y la comunidad respectivamente– Katniss obtiene la realización personal mediante la Buena Vida (*Good Life*), es decir, la satisfacción de las necesidades básicas y la afiliación. Katniss elige no ser parte de la organización social del Nuevo Sistema y elige honrar la cultura femenina, centrándose en su nueva familia y los placeres del ocio en la naturaleza en lugar de en las demandas sociales y destierra el síndrome de quien debe ser excelente en todo. En este sentido, representa la idea de Murdock de que las heroínas necesitan un cambio en el sistema de valores que pase de la competición y avaricia a la cooperación para poder prosperar. En cuanto a los logros

académicos, sugiero que las restricciones en cuanto a posibilidades profesionales para Tris y Tally recuerdan a los miedos de los adolescentes a la hora de elegir una carrera sin suficiente información u opciones. Así, los datos indican una gran tasa de abandono en los tres países indica que los adolescentes y lectores en general que encuentran opciones disponibles restrictivas se identificarían con estos personajes en mayor medida. Por otra parte, los adolescentes de hogares con bajo nivel de ingresos probablemente se identificarían con la esperanza de Katniss de que su hermana pueda llegar a ser médico en su nuevo hogar en Distrito 13. Esta idea sugiere la existencia de diferencias no solo en términos culturales, sino también en términos económicos.

Este estudio tiene algunas limitaciones que ofrecen oportunidades para investigaciones futuras. Aunque esta tesis incluye un corpus extenso, con un total de 12 novelas distribuidas en 4 trilogías, investigaciones futuras podrían analizar otras novelas distópicas juveniles del mismo u otro período utilizando la misma técnica de análisis de la identificación del lector. Por otra parte, los resultados podrían extenderse y completarse mediante estudios que utilizaran respuestas directas de jóvenes que leyeron esas novelas en ese período para esclarecer si creen que el contexto influyó en su identificación de la forma en que se sugiere en este trabajo. En cuanto a la realización personal, se requiere más investigación en cuanto a lo que significa la realización personal para los niños y jóvenes. Hasta ahora, los estudios existentes se centran en grupos especiales como los niños superdotados o tienden a limitar la realización personal a los logros académicos. Además, podría abordarse un estudio de recepción cuantitativo que tomase en consideración aspectos editoriales de estas novelas, como el número de ejemplares vendidos, los canales de venta, las reseñas, etc. para comparar la influencia de estas novelas con los factores culturales y motivacionales analizados.

Dahrendorf (1958) empieza una discusión que considero que debería tenerse en cuenta cuando un investigador se plantea estudiar un tema, en cualquier área, pero especialmente en las Humanidades. Cuando destacamos un problema o desarrollamos un tema, la opción de vincularlo a nuestro entorno resulta razonable. En otras palabras, intentar alcanzar la mayor de las necesidades humanas –la trascendencia– constituye un objetivo legítimo y hasta deseable. La trascendencia implica ofrecer al mundo un extra de conocimiento que hemos adquirido tras nuestro viaje al otro mundo –en nuestro caso la utopía o distopía– a las profundidades del tema; este conocimiento se adquiere durante nuestro camino, como el héroe en el monomito (Campbell, 1949), y se nos

otorga tras superar los desafíos establecidos por nuestras asunciones previas. Siguiendo esta idea, presento este proyecto como una contribución interdisciplinar, ya que no analiza las novelas como interpretaciones individuales de una realidad, sino que establece un diálogo entre los diversos problemas presentados, sus similitudes con situaciones en tres culturas occidentales, y las implicaciones que estas identificaciones tienen para un género literario que ha resurgido y para las situaciones socioeconómicas y culturales de estos países, pero sobre todo para los lectores de las novelas.



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## **Appendix: List of abbreviations**

1. CL: Corpus Linguistics
2. YA: Young Adult
3. SF: Science Fiction
4. SQ: Set of Questions
5. GP: Genetically Pure; people with good genes and therefore considered to be superior by the Bureau (*Allegiant*)
6. GD: Genetically damaged; people with genes deficiency and therefore prone to violence and inferior according to the Bureau.
7. PSR: Positive self-representation.
8. NSR: Negative self-representation.
9. PRBO: Positive representation by others.
10. NRBO: negative representation by others.