

## The Adaptation for Survival in Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind*

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### Abstract

Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind* (1936) is the only full-length narrative she ever wrote; however, she also wrote other forms of fiction. The novel was written in the 1930s, which was a time of tremendous economic difficulties and hardships. In fact, the Great Depression occurred in 1929, during the writing of the novel, and was by far the worst economic recession the United States of America has ever experienced. In terms of settings, the novel depicts the American Civil War, describes the radical changes created by it and portrays the sufferings of the Southern people in attempting to survive it. Therefore, the novel is broadly perceived to be dealing with and presenting survival as its principal concept. In that order, there have been numerous studies that have investigated the topic of survival in the novel. Other research papers have explored various themes in the novel, including feminism, historical and cultural relevance, the portrayal of women, and slavery. Yet, investigating the ways and strategies of adaptation for survival in the novel in a single and comprehensive effort seems either an untouched topic or been referred to slightly and as a secondary problem of study. In view of that, the current research paper aims to examine the adaptation for survival in Margaret Mitchell's novel *Gone with the Wind*. The study also intends to address the different strategies, ways and means of adaptation for survival as shown in the novel and enacted by its characters. The study at hand is theoretical and relies on a critical analytic approach in its discussion and analysis. In terms of findings, the study reveals that accepting change, acclimatizing to new changes, working, flexibility, breaking with traditions

and ignoring people's expectations have represented the major techniques of adaptation for survival in the novel.

**Keywords:** Margaret Mitchell, *Gone with the Wind*, Adaptation, Means and Ways, Survival

### Introduction

*Gone with the Wind* (1936) is Margaret Mitchell's one and only novel; yet, the novel has become a narrative text of a wider fame and an everlasting currency. Published in 1936, the novel has immediately made a huge success and Mitchell was "awarded the Pulitzer Prize for fiction a year later," (Konečná 5). It gained wider recognition and established a name for the novelist in the American literary scene. In addition, *Gone with the Wind* was and probably still is the best-selling American narrative text; it "was an instant success. Despite its length and its price of \$3.00 – fifty cents more than a standard novel – it exceeded every expectation concerning sales and still remains America's best-selling novel," (Rentz 2). All such fame and popularity of the novel indicates its relevance to people's lives and its richness in ideas and issues that have never ceased to spark academic interest. Besides, the initial currency the novel achieved was perhaps attributed to the fact that it quite vividly and delicately echoed and represented a decisive moment in the history of the American nation; the American Civil War. In addition, the novel was a contemporary text of the Great Depression; an event that was etched in the memories of Americans for generations.

In so doing, the novel seems to have recorded and documented a crucial moment of historical and cultural significance in the history of America. In addition, the upcoming WWII has apparently added to the novel's currency and revived its relevance for many readers seem to identify with some of the novel's characters like Scarlet and Rhett:

Scarlett O'Hara's and Rhett Butler's survival skills during war and poverty—and their self-conscious defenses of the virtues of whiteness—became models for many readers in 1936 and thereafter as they struggled to survive the Depression and then World War II; in the process *Gone With the Wind* became the most popular novel ever published in the United States. (Schmidt 3)

Thus, it remains fair and valid to argue that the novel's fame and popularity have been grounded on something of real and true value and relevance such as survival: "Mitchell's *Gone With the Wind* is one of the great novels of survival, and therein lies much of its appeal," (Hassan v). Economic depression and the outbreak of wars would represent the most obvious

manifestations of catastrophes and life hardships, and surviving them would become a struggling model for many.

Yet, it seems like the novel recently has immensely waned in fame and popularity to the extent that critics have tended “to discard *Gone with the Wind* as a piece of low-quality, racist, [and] historically inaccurate literature,” (Rentz v). In this regard, claims of racist inclinations and historical inaccuracy have been brought against the novel. The novel has apparently drawn its inspiration from the American Civil War—a historical moment of paramount importance—and is therefore considered one of the greatest narrative texts of survival. Still, the novel as such has definitely depicted historical events during which concerns of race, ethnicity, historical accuracy and others might be raised.

Mitchell herself has on more than one occasion asserted that her novel is a novel of survival: “If *Gone with the Wind* has a central theme, I suppose it is the theme of survival,” (Mitchell: *Interview*, PBS.org). *Gone with the Wind* is thus first and foremost a narrative of surviving the hardships of life and war is the absolute manifestation of such adversities. Besides, it seems like Mitchell appreciates people of common sense, practicality and resourcefulness. Her novel has thus come to assert, celebrate and encourage such qualities in people, especially, during the times of war and other ordeals: Margaret Mitchell admired people who had gumption, people who fought their way through hard times triumphantly and came out survivors. She said that if her novel, *Gone with the Wind*, had a theme it was survival, ‘I wrote about the people who had gumption and the people who didn’t’. (Konečná 5) Therefore, the novel apparently emphasizes the necessity and privilege of strength, resilience and resolute determination in its characters and by extension in people in real life circumstances. It also seems to encourage people to embrace these qualities especially during war times and other life misfortunes.

In her novel, the writer draws the attention to women, more particularly through Scarlett; to their courage, strength and resilience to contend with and survive the hardships and complications of war: “Margaret Mitchell shared Scarlett’s secrets, and in so doing, she fascinated her readers with a private world of Southern history,” (Hanson 100). Some would even say that Margaret Mitchell knew that “she was more like Scarlett..., for Scarlett represents the New South,” (Pickrel 51, 53). Moreover, the source of admiration for Scarlett seems to originate in the fact that she has been a spoiled young girl who lived a comfortable life, and thus has drawn “her

courage from the future, rather than the past like most Southerners of that era,” (Railton 44). The principal idea for the research study at hand would then be adaptation to the new conditions and ways of life for the sake of survival.

According to her, to survive is necessary, and only strong adapting people have more chances of survival. To do so, people should have the courage to adjust and acclimatize to new conditions and ways of life just like Scarlet and Rhett—and Melanie for that matter—in the novel, which is worthy of admiration and respect. In view of that, the following research question seems to be of paramount importance: how could someone adapt to survive? And what are the main techniques and strategies of adaptation for survival in the novel? Therefore, the present research paper argues that adaptation represents the cornerstone for survival; an idea the study is set to investigate it and its various techniques and strategies in Mitchell’s novel.

#### ***Adaptation for Survival in Gone with the Wind***

As mentioned in the introduction earlier, there seems to be no doubt that the principal idea and major theme of Mitchell’s *Gone with the Wind* is survival. The novel depicts the necessity of survival, how strong people survive, celebrates such cause and encourages people to do so. This is quite obvious in the novel’s admiration and appreciation for Scarlet, Rhett, Melanie and others as survivors: “The basic theme of *Gone with the Wind* is survival. This can be seen from the main female character, Scarlett O’Hara who acts and behaves against the social norms in order to survive,” (Setyowati 172).

In broader terms, the novel presents and portrays how the upper class people of the South survive the American Civil War and its repercussions. After all, war brings with it hardships, tragedies and makes life unbearably difficult. The people of the South had to go through the agonizing hardships of war and were eventually defeated as well. Hard times such as war are incentively important events for they bring about drastic, sudden and at most times violent changes.

Before the war, American people of the South were living in peace and harmony, according to the novel. The novel shows that the people seemed to have and enjoy an identical character that perfected their harmonious social class. However, by the outbreak of the war people had been driven to follow different ways and to embrace uninvited changes to survive. It also describes the situation of the American South and its people after the war and after being defeated.

Therefore, the novel seems to strike a comparison of two starkly opposite contexts; dying for honor and adaptation for survival. It discusses holding up to the traditional values of the South that indicate fighting, sacrifice and even dying for the cause, and the necessity of adaptation for survival. The novel thus seems to ask “whether it is worth to live ‘for the sake of honor’ or if adaptation to the circumstances is a reasonable means for surviving and progressing, and to what extent the means to achieve these are admissible and excusable,” (Hristova 28). Yet, the novel seems eventually to stand in favor for adaptation for the sake of survival.

There definitely are several other themes than survival the novel presents and that could be addressed as such; nonetheless, the principal idea of the novel and its major concern is survival in the face of hardships, misfortunes and times of turmoil. In an interview with Mitchell, she enquires:

What quality is it that makes some people able to survive catastrophes and others, apparently just as brave and able and strong, go under? . . . We’ve all seen the same thing happen in the present depression. It happens in every social upheaval, in wars, in panics, in revolutions. . . . What qualities are in those people who fight their way through triumphantly — that are lacking in those who do go under? ... I only know that the survivors of the Civil war used to call that quality “gumption.” (Mitchell: *Interview*, PBS.org)

In view of the quote above, the concern of the research paper at hand is not survival in the novel per se; rather, it is more interested in addressing and analyzing people’s strategies of adaptation during such hard times; how people survive, how they adjust to survive and what their ways and means of adaptation for survival are.

The present research aims to examine—as the ensuing discussion and analysis will show—how, for instance, the Confederate rebellion as depicted in the novel has caused Scarlett to follow and get adjusted to certain but essential means of adaptation for survival like being more manly and less ladylike: “In the New South, Scarlett had to become less womanly in order to preserve everything she held dear to her”, for it seems that “Scarlett thrives because she embraces this new identity,” (Braunscheidel 2, 13). After all, Scarlett survives because she adapts to the new conditions and ways of life in the South during and after the war.

Published in 1936, the novel also has a lot to tell about and refer to the Great Depression taking place in the late 1930s. This occurrence was a phenomenal event so much so that “the entire decade was marked by the Great Depression, the worst and most well-known economic downturn in United



States History,” (Rentz 3). It brought about drastic changes for all American people at the time. As such, American people—most of them to say the least—had to change and get adjusted to new values and ways of life to survive the depression. The Great Depression brought with it or rather caused extraordinary changes in almost all aspects of life including culture, traditional values, social norms, economy, and politics and people had no choice but to adapt to such changes or perish.

Likewise, Mitchell’s *Gone with the Wind* vividly depicts how the American Civil War was an event of phenomenal dimensions and overwhelmingly devastating repercussions. The novel demonstrates how the war has generated radical and sweeping changes as well. Therefore, people especially of the American South faced the hard reality of either standing in the face of those changes and consequences of war, thus most probably getting swept by them, or adapting to them and survive.

Scarlet, as the novel portrays, is a woman of the South and the necessity of survival compels her to change and make certain adjustments to survive the war. One strategy of adaptation Scarlet follows is, for instance, misleadingly befriending the Yankees by “buttering them up with smiles and kind words [which] was the surest way to get their business for her mill” (Mitchell: *Gone with the Wind*, 688). Scarlet shows a great ability to adapt and an impressive flexibility in the face of new circumstances like war.

Scarlet and other characters like Rhett and Melanie—to name only some—have in order to survive to make some adaptations to the new conditions and circumstances brought about by the war. Such characters understand fully that in the face of an overpoweringly sweeping event like war, they have to change and adapt to survive or otherwise get shattered by it.

The two major characters (Scarlet and Rhett) who are ready for change and adjustment is a tiny number, which indicates that within the Sothern society there is only a small segment who recognizes the need for change and adaptation in order to survive the war and the evolving new society. Among them is Scarlett who initiates this journey of change and adaptation; she starts behaving in a different way, and as a result soon comes to be an object for gossip and reprimand. She starts working and because of that she is admonished and shunned by her community who object to a woman doing a man’s work and looking after a family instead of being just a housewife.

It could hence be argued that the night Scarlet helps Melanie deliver her baby marks the beginning of Scarlett’s journey of adaptation for survival and change from a pampered young lady to a matured and independent woman. It

is deemed so because it is apparently the first assessment to Scarlet's strength and aptitude to change. Since this is happening during the war, Scarlet has also to run away from and be cautious of the approaching troops in order to take Melanie, her baby, other two children and a black maid to safety. Hence, she becomes responsible for the protection and safe arrival of those people, and she does her first assignment successfully eventually reaching her plantation with all the people under her responsibility safe and sound.

This experience gives Scarlet her first taste of obligation, responsibility and the need for change and adaptation. As a result, she feels obliged to fend for her family and for that Scarlet starts working. In that order, work is perceived as the first strategy of adaptation for survival and Scarlet starts adjusting herself to that ever new change. She senses the necessity of work in order for her and her extended family composing primarily of children, feeble and old members to survive the war. Scarlet realizes that the war leaves no space for fun or cossetting and thus starts working on their plantation; the Tara plantation.

For Scarlet, working on the plantation is an ever new experience. It is hard and requires being exposed to the sun and the use of bare hands; things that she has never done in her life or expected doing: "[Scarlet] had never in her life been out in the sunshine without a hat or veils, never handled reins without gloves to protect the white skin of her dimpled hands," (Mitchell: *Gone with the Wind*, 397). With hardened hands and speckled cheeks, Scarlet has to adapt to the new environment of work for survival; it is all that she cares about and because there is a scarcity of men as they are either fighting or already dead: "Now all that mattered was food enough to keep off starvation, clothing enough to prevent freezing and a roof overhead which did not leak too much," (473). All the luxuries of the pre-war life have vanished; balls, barbecue and other similar activities have gone and been replaced by activities that are necessary for survival only.

Since for the Southern traditions a working woman is an anomaly, Scarlet has to depart from such traditions for she has to work, with men and in public in order to survive. During this critical moment of war, giving up on traditions is a necessary adaptation for survival: "The departure from custom spawned a new environment in which women could redefine themselves by accepting new responsibilities for basic economic survival," (Braunscheidel 91). Besides, in order to succeed and adapt to the new conditions for survival, she has to leave and forget about her ladylike qualities and become more manly: "Scarlett became a different character of the war, transforming from a

Southern belle to a masculinized, post-war woman, and as a businesswoman in the new South, she defies decorum at every turn, and breaks every rule in the name of survival,” (Haskell 94). War and the means of adaptation for survival have eventually transformed Scarlet like they would understandably change any other.

Moving along and adapting to the new circumstances created by war, Scarlet never hesitates or looks back; rather, she “uses the opportunities and her talent to run a business. It is unimaginable for proud Southerners that women would work outside the households and, moreover, be more successful than men,” (Svobodová 24). As a consequence, she becomes reproached and shunned by her own society, but it appears too little a price to pay for survival and even economic success.

As mentioned earlier, very few southern Americans understand the necessity of change and adaptation for survival. For Southern families as the novel shows, only some families could adapt to the new conditions and ways of life while at the same time preserving their name. Among them are the Merriwether, Elsing, Bonnell and the Fontaine families. Adapting themselves to small businesses and honest work, these families have managed to provide for themselves a simple but decent existence:

If women were so unfortunate as to be compelled to make a little money to assist their families in these hard times, they made it in quiet womanly ways – baking as Mrs. Merriwether was doing, or painting china and sewing and keeping boarders, like Mrs. Elsing [...], or teaching school like Mrs. Meade or giving music lessons like Mrs. Bonnell. (Mitchell: *Gone with the Wind*, 787)

Therefore, at the funeral of Scarlet’s father, grandma Fontaine seems to comprehend this new reality, understands Scarlet’s transformation—more particularly after her father’s death—and advises her with a number of ways on her journey of adaptation for survival:

When trouble comes we bow to the inevitable without any mouthing, and we work and we smile and we bide our time. And we play along with lesser folks and we take what we can get from them. And when we’re strong enough, we kick the folks whose necks we’ve climbed over. That, my child, is the secret of the survival. (Mitchell: *Gone with the Wind*, 717)

Another immediate strategy of adaptation for survival as demonstrated by Scarlet is befriending the enemy. She has been—as mentioned earlier—smiling at the Yankees as if they were friends. Besides, in her pretense to be friends with the enemy, Scarlet realizes how the present reality imposed by



the war works; those are not passersby but presiding customers who are going to pay money and improve her business.

In order to have enough money to help her and her family survive, Scarlet decides to deal with the Yankees despite objections and criticism from her society: “Being adaptable even when it means cooperating with the enemies is the characteristic that ensures her survival and success after the Civil War. It is also the characteristic that helps Scarlett become rich,” (Svobodová 20). She knows that in order to survive she has to adapt and to adapt she has to change and have courage; that is precisely what Scarlet has done.

In addition to Scarlet, Rhett is depicted in the novel to be a man of adaptation and thus is a survivor. He is shown to have adapted to new changes and conditions to survive. Still, he has to be addressed with relation to Scarlet as well; both are adapting survivors and their fates unexpectedly cross. Rhett as Scarlet describes in the novel is “a tall man, powerfully built, with such wide shoulders, so heavy with muscles, animal-white teeth, black moustache and bold eyes,” (Mitchell: *Gone with the Wind*, 97). Hence, it could be perceived from Scarlet’s description that she does not like Rhett, let alone consider him for a husband.

By the opening of the novel, Rhett is shown to be disapproved of and scandalized by the society. For one thing, he spends all his nights out with a woman with no love or promises of marriage despite the knowledge of his community. Therefore, it seems like for Rhett and Scarlet there is not the slightest chance they could be brought together as friends or mates of common interests, let alone a husband and wife. Scarlet loves Ashley and continues to chase him until her hopes are dashed by his engagement to his cousin. She even considers Rhett the negative example contrary to Ashley:

I hate to hear you talk like that, Ashley, she said vehemently. You sound just like Rhett. He’s always harping on things like that and something he calls the survival of the fittest till I’m so bored I could scream. Ashley smiled.

Did you ever stop to think, Scarlett, that Rhett and I are fundamentally alike? Oh, no! You are so fine, so honorable and he— She broke off, confused.

But we are. We came of the same kind of people, we were raised in the same pattern, brought up to think the same things. And somewhere along the road we took different turnings. We still think alike but we react differently. (Mitchell: *Gone with the Wind*, 1063-4)

Likewise, Rhett seems to have no liking for Ashley; he often criticizes him in his discussions with Scarlet. For Rhett, Ashley is an example of the old and traditional South and thus lacks the aptitude to change and adapt to the new

realities. As shown in the quote above, it also appears that Rhett is the one who has disillusioned Scarlet of the society's flaws and insincerities. He has also heartened Scarlet in terms of breaking with traditions and disregarding social expectations.

In addition, Rhett seems to enact his ideas into actions; he has no worries or fears of what the society thinks and expects and behaves as he pleases. He tells Scarlet that "until you've lost your reputation, he tells her, you never realize what a burden it was or what freedom really is," (Mitchell: *Gone with the Wind*, 196). He enjoys practicality and common sense, and never hesitates to make use of any opportunity reaching him, including the war: "there is just as much money to be made out of the wreckage of a civilization as from the up building of one," (Mitchell: *Gone with the Wind*, 196). Rhett is not obliged by principles or traditional ideals and always assesses things through the lens of practicality and profit.

Hence, Scarlett and Rhett look eventually much alike; they both have a keen sense of business and they both employ that to their advantage and succeed. Both Scarlett and Rhett depart from traditional values, both are practical and have common sense, both adapt to the new world and both survive. After all, the same society that has scandalized Rhett has taken him back again because as a blockade-runner the society needs him, his goods and his skills.

More surprisingly though, Scarlet accepts Rhett—although he is her sister's fiancée—as a husband out of practicality and common sense. After the war is over and after all Scarlet's hopes to marry Ashley are shattered, she uses her feminine delicacy and charm to trap Rhett into marriage for he turns out to be a wealthy and successful man. Their marriage, however, lacks true love, compatibility and is hence nothing but an obvious illustration of adaptation for survival: "Scarlett's marriage with Rhett, who is alike her, is not happy. In their case, due to their strong personalities they are able to survive, but not to live together," (Konečná 29). Both Scarlet and Rhett are people of practicality and both can adapt to survive; their marriage is the ultimate manifestation of adaptation for survival.

Once Scarlet believes that Ashley—after his engagement—is out of her reach for ever, she thinks of getting Rhett instead: "I'll think of it all tomorrow, at Tara. I can stand it then. Tomorrow, I'll think of some way to get him back. After all, tomorrow is another day," (Mitchell: *Gone with the Wind*, 1011). Accordingly, Scarlet's strategies of adaptation for survival have ranged from working, befriending the enemies and dealing with them as regular customers to breaking traditions and marrying Rhett.

In order to survive Scarlet adapts, and adaptation makes her work (with men), befriend the enemy, agree to a loveless marriage, murder, hire criminals to work for her and even prostitute herself:

That sawmill, for example. It was the shock of his [Frank's] life when she [Scarlett] told him with a sweet smile, in answer to his questions, that she intended to run it herself. "Go into the lumber business myself," was the way she put it. Frank would never forget the horror of that moment. Go into business for herself! It was unthinkable. There were no women in business in Atlanta. In fact, Frank had never heard of a woman in business anywhere. (Mitchell: *Gone with the Wind*, 621)

Scarlet apparently never misses a chance that would improve her situation and help her survive. She adapts in ways that she might agree and disagree to for survival such as lying and utilizing her own appeal as a woman: "She uses her charms and ladylike manners to attract attention and benefit from that, which proves to be very important when adapting to new conditions brought by the war and helps her to survive," (Konečná 40). Although Scarlet is a Southern woman—born and raised—she has emerged after her long journey of adaptation for survival as a daughter of the new South, of the new world brought about by the war.

### **Conclusion**

The discussion and analysis of Mitchell's novel *Gone with the Wind* have clearly revealed that adaptation is highly essential for survival, particularly during desperate times of war or radical changes. During difficult times like these, adaptation is a prerequisite for survival; an individual human being has to endorse particular ways to greatly change and adapt to new conditions and circumstances so that they may survive. In the novel under discussion, Scarlet has provided a prominent example of a survivor. She has exhibited a great potential for adaptation, change and thus for survival. Following certain strategies of adaptation such as embracing change, working, flexibility and breaking with traditions, to name only some, Scarlet has survived the American Civil War and even thrived.

Scarlet, as the discussion and analysis have shown, stands for the model of adaptation for survival in the novel. In the face of war and the consequent hardships and changes brought by it, she adapts to the new conditions and realities and does whatever it takes to survive. She embraces war as a new and unescapable change and impressively adapts to it and its exceptionally difficult conditions of living. Scarlet has a large family to look after and thus she has to work, out with men and even starts her own business. To do so,

Scarlet has to break with traditions and become stronger and hardier, which is an impressive strategy of adaptation for survival. She also befriends the Yankees and treats them as regular customers as yet a further strategy of adaptation for survival.

Scarlet has common sense, is flexible and enjoys a strong character and she employs such qualities to her advantage as strategies of adaptation for survival. In turn, such traits have eventually helped her adapt to the new realities of the war and thus survive it and even prospered in its midst. As such, she could speak and act as she wishes demonstrating an obvious indifference to traditions and social expectations. The aptitude, strength and courage to adapt have all assisted Scarlet as fundamental techniques for surviving the war and the drastic changes generated by it. Scarlett succeeded in surviving the war because she has followed various but necessary techniques and strategies of adaptation for survival. She has tremendously changed and could thus adapt to the new world of war and circumstances created by it. Rhett, too, has shared with Scarlet the courage to be different from the crowd, the aptitude to adapt, the will to break from traditions, the fortitude to speak their mind and establish themselves as successful businesspeople, not only as survivors.

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### التكيف من أجل البقاء في رواية "ذهب مع الريح" لمارجريت ميتشل (1936) مستخلص البحث:

تعد رواية مارجريت ميتشل "ذهب مع الريح" (1936) النص السردي الوحيد والمتكامل الذي كتبت على الإطلاق؛ ومع ذلك فقد كتبت أشكالاً أخرى من الخيال السردى. كما كتبت الرواية في فترة الثلاثينيات من القرن الفائت وقد كانت فترة صعوبات ومصاعب اقتصادية هائلة. في الواقع، حدث الكساد الكبير في أمريكا في عام (1929)، في وقت كتابة الرواية، وكان إلى حد بعيد أسوأ ركود اقتصادي شهدته الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية على الإطلاق. ومن حيث سياق الرواية الزماني والمكاني، فإنها تصور الحرب الأهلية الأمريكية، وتصف التغييرات الجذرية التي أحدثتها، كما تصور معاناة الشعب الأمريكي في الجنوب في محاولته النجاة منها. لذلك، يُنظر إلى الرواية على نطاق واسع على أنها تتعامل مع مفهوم البقاء وتقدمه كفكرتها الرئيسية. وبناء على ذلك، كانت هناك العديد من الدراسات التي بحثت موضوع البقاء في الرواية. كما كانت هناك أوراق بحثية تناولت مفاهيم أخرى في الرواية مثل النسوية والأهمية التاريخية والثقافية وتصوير المرأة والعبودية. ومع ذلك، فإن دراسة طرق واستراتيجيات التكيف من أجل البقاء في الرواية في جهد واحد وشامل يبدو إما موضوعاً لم يتم التطرق إليه أو تمت الإشارة إليه بشكل طفيف ومشكلة ثانوية للدراسة. وفي ضوء ذلك كله، تهدف الورقة البحثية الحالية إلى دراسة مفهوم التكيف من أجل البقاء في رواية مارجريت ميتشل «ذهب مع الريح». كما تهدف الدراسة إلى تناول استراتيجيات وطرق ووسائل التكيف المختلفة من أجل البقاء كما تظهرها الرواية وتمثلها شخصياتها. وهذه الدراسة نظرية بطبيعتها حيث تعتمد على النهج النقدي التحليلي في مناقشة وتحليل أفكارها. وقد كشفت الدراسة من خلال نتائجها بأن بعض أبرز طرق وتقنيات التكيف من أجل البقاء في الرواية تمثلت في قبول التغيير، التأقلم مع المتغيرات، العمل، المرونة، ترك العادات والتقاليد وكذلك تجاهل آراء الآخرين وتوقعاتهم.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** مارجريت ميتشل، "ذهب مع الريح"، التكيف، الوسائل والسبل، البقاء.