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Department of English

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Totalitarianism between Fiction and Reality
In George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

*An Extended Essay Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for
a Master's Degree in English Literature and Civilization*

Presented by

Miss. Sara BENSAPHLA TANI

Supervised by

Dr. Daoudi FRID

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*'The darkest places in hell
are reserved for those who
maintain their neutrality
in times of moral crisis.'*

Dante Alighieri

Dedication

In the loving memory of my beloved grandfather.

I dedicate this work to my precious parents and my brother who stood by my side in every step of the way with their unconditional love.

To all my family and my dearest friends who have offered me their sincere support whenever I felt down.

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ABSTRACT

Since the dawn of time, history and literature have been braided into each other; scholars always sought to comprehend ways in which the former shapes the latter. This dissertation aims to examine the historical facet of totalitarianism and its representation in fiction through a meticulous investigation of George Orwell's magnum opus *Nineteen Eighty-Four* by shedding light on totalitarian themes. It initiates by providing sharp explanations of concepts in particular totalitarianism, dystopian literature and a take a glimpse in the author's life sketches that carved the novel. Besides, it delimits the significance of the principles of the new historicist theory that serves as a crucial tool for the exploration of aspects of the novel and aspects of similarities between reality and fiction in the second chapter. As this dissertation submits readers ought to view the novel as a timeless cautionary narrative about the dangers and perils of tyranny.

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General Introduction

General Introduction

Over the course of history, literature with its fictional and non-fictional fundamental backbones has undergone various monumental changes and movements specifically prose that purportedly constitutes literature's largest part and finest form. Nevertheless, despite these changes, literature has not ceased to provide concrete and vivid representations of the human experience and express the writers' ideas and emotions, as it is more than a mere sequence of random words printed on paper, it is intrinsically a projection of life and the human existence and English Literature is no exception since from Shakespeare's Renaissance to Postmodernist canons; all literary writings have served as a mirror to their era.

By the first half of the twentieth century a new literary genre referred to as Dystopia, has developed to satire and criticize the social and political deformities ensuing and following the steps of the political changes, their themes evolved likewise reflecting the social stratification, the war atrocities and in recent years the impact of technological development on the life of the individual. George Orwell as a great defender of the ordinary and oppressed people took it upon him to stand in the eyes of totalitarianism, and his works earned the status of classics in the tradition of anti-totalitarian and dystopian literature.

Nineteen Eighty-Four, a highly celebrated work of fiction and perhaps the most referenced novel in the dystopian genre in literature, it paints a tale of a society under the yoke of an oppressive, totalitarian government. The novel's controversial ideas have burst forth a myriad of commentaries on its political philosophies that were considered as convictions of various wings in the political spectrums. But most importantly the novel was argued to reflect the vibrant conditions of the totalitarian era and speculate the conditions of the modern day. Therefore, this research paper seeks

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to explore those representations by taking into account the following research questions:

- To which extent has George Orwell derived the novel from realms of the totalitarian mechanism of the Twentieth Century?
- Does *Nineteen Eighty-Four* predict and foreshadow the modern period?

For the purpose of answering the above research questions, the extended essay has been split into two chapters of equal importance. The first one devoted to explaining the new historicist theory as a tool that has been applied to decipher the historical sheets of the novel and explain George Orwell's careful usage of characters and settings as elements presenting the author's attitude towards totalitarianism. It, therefore, unveils the significance of totalitarianism as the ideology that reigned the twentieth century and its influence on literary works, most notably through dystopia, the literary genre that has become in vogue recently. In addition, the first chapter acquaints readers with the biographical sketches of the mastermind behind this incendiary novel, George Orwell, and pinpoints the circumstances that influenced his writings and in turn, were subject to great controversy since their publication.

The Second chapter, on the other hand, is a literary reading of the novel that enlightens the methods of totalitarianism used by both *Nineteen Eighty-Four's* Oceania and in European dictatorships mainly the Soviet Union and casts light on the way the assiduous use of characters, plot and settings take the readership back into history. By the same token, it analyzes the political allegories of the novel within all its themes of propaganda and thoughts control and finally deciphers the most focal similarities between Orwell's fanciful future and the existent one and precisely within the American society.

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Chapter One: Historical Perspectives of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

1.1. Introduction

Literature, being the versatile human expression as it is has always been subject to diverse apprehensions. Approaching literature with a critical eye, one is able to go beyond the text and delve deeper into a view expressed by the author and his milieu, it further seeks to discuss common sense interpretations of the meaning of a text. Henceforth, the historical aspect is a vivid medium that aids in the discerning of the literary canon... This chapter endeavors to demystify the historical facet of literary writings particularly of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* while exploring the notions that set forth this classic as an epoch-making, masterpiece in the dystopian genre.

1.2. New Historicism

Over the last decades, diverse schools have bloomed out of literary theory and attempted to understand the literary world. They constructed different platforms to analyze literature and draw the path for critics in order to obtain the real essence of a written work and its foremost significance.

Critics however have ceaselessly argued on the approaches to take, as there was “a series of theoretical battles between textualism and contextualism, swaying like a pendulum, with momentary victories to one side or the other” (Lai 2). While Formalism and Structuralism overlooked some salient aspects such as the author and the historical context focusing solely on the literary work and upholding it as an autonomous entity, New criticism, on the other hand, had concentrated on how parts of the written text contribute to the whole. Marxism aimed to characterize literature as a reflection of class struggle and materialism. However, beginning from 1970 a new

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wave of literary critics ‘new historicists’ propelled to the front fore and unveiled the relevance of the historical aspect in the literary work.

For the sake of understanding its relevance, a definition of the literary theory is needed. New historicism, or as known as ‘Cultural Poetics’ is a school of literary criticism; concerned with epitomizing the work as a product of its context. In other words, the product of the author’s imagination and the political, social and cultural atmosphere surrounding him; its foremost tenet is the interpretation of a given work in terms of the milieu from which it emerged. Hence it attempts to extract the meaning of a text not only according to the history of its author but also the history of its critics.

This school of literary criticism emerged in North America in the late 1970s and 1980s. It was coined and fathered by American literary historian Stephen Greenblatt and largely influenced by the works of Michel Foucault. It outlines that literary and non-literary texts are inseparable in a greater mission to comprehend history. Thus text and context are perceived as expressions of the same historical moment; such as Greenblatt endeavors to assert:

[New historicism] concern with literary texts has been to recover as far as possible the historical circumstances of their original production and consumption and to analyze the relationship between these circumstances and our own. New-historicist critics have tried to understand the intersecting circumstances not as a stable, prefabricated background against which the literary texts can be placed but as a dense network of evolving and often contradictory social forces. The idea is not to find outside the work of art some rock onto which literary interpretation can be securely chained but rather to situate the work in relation to other representational practices operative in the culture at a given moment in

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both its history and our own. In Louis Montrose's convenient formulation, the goal has been to grasp simultaneously the historicity of texts and the textuality of history. (Greenblatt 20)

New historicism implicates a juxtaposition of the literary and nonliterary texts that belong to the same historical period both prone to equal importance and to work as equal sources of information; in other words, the text is considered solely within the context of its creation and an 'equal weightage' is adapted in the study of literary and non-literary texts as it rejects at all costs the privileges of the literary text over the nonliterary, in New historicism according to G. Barghavi, the text can be scrutinized scrupulously when it is placed within its context; nevertheless, the contexts may vary from historical documents, politics, culture, art, legal papers. Henceforth, "the text is not a jewel in the crown but it is one entity among many. Hence privilege is denied" (Barghavi 158).

Henceforth, a tracing of New Historicism denotes that it is a new-fangled school that came as a response to previous critical theories mainly Formalism and structuralism; and thus shifted away from the text-centered schools. With the intention of contributing to the formulation of a new way to approach literature, as the reading of any text would benefit from being put into its historical framework; plus, any document of history can be regarded as literary text as Said observes : "Texts are worldly, to some degree they are events, and, even when they appear to deny it, they are nevertheless a part of the social world, human life and of course the historical moments in which they are located and interpreted" (Said 4).

In the light of the working patterns of the new historicist literary theory, American author Gregory S. Jay describes it as "the revival of rhetorical criticism" and

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therefore outlines the steps taken into consideration while analyzing a given text in the rhetorical manner as it ought to describe:

(1) the set of discursive possibilities offered to the writer by the cultural archive; (2) the assumption within the text of a contemporary audience whose knowledge must both be used and resisted; (3) the projection within the text of a future audience constituted by its decipherment of the text; (4) the social and institutional sites of the text's production and reception; (5) the figurations of subjectivity offered or deployed by the text; (6) the effects of reflexivity inscribed in the text; (7) and the possible contradictions between the text's cognitive, performative, didactic, aesthetic, psychological, and economic projects. (214).

A vivid example of new historicist criticism in literature is that of the everlasting American novel *The Great Gatsby* by F.S. Fitzgerald. This latter can be examined as a historical record that illustrates the social and cultural circumstances of the 'Roaring Twenties' and the Prohibition Era in the United States along with The Economic Boom and Women Rebellion. Or in Shakespeare's plays that can serve as a testimony of anxieties of the Tudor monarchy and issues of legitimacy and aristocracy, for example, *Hamlet* which highlights the role of the monarchy precisely patriarchal monarchy while Britain was under the rule of Elizabeth I. In another instance, Charles Dickens collection of exceptional works is par excellence a representation of the underprivileged in the Victorian society during the industrial revolution.

In the last instance, New historicism aims to reinforce the evaluation of literature and history side by side considering the strong influence of history in literature and vice versa. It deviates from the literary theories that confine literary

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criticism solely to the form and language. It is therefore concerned in the ways in which social circumstances and political ideologies are embedded in form of fiction.

1.3. Totalitarianism

Totalitarianism is one of the most spread concepts in the twentieth century that was implanted in the horrors of modern war, terrors and genocides since 1945. Originally used by the opposition of fascist leader in Italy ‘Mussolini’ after the Second World War, it has grown to refer to the dictatorship of the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany.

1.3.1. Definition of the Concept

Totalitarianism in its core is an authoritarian political rule or system of governance which seeks to regulate nearly every facet of the public and private behavior of citizens whenever feasible. It is infamous for the establishment of total political, social and cultural control over the subjects. Typically, a totalitarian state is controlled by a single mass party led by a charismatic and paranoid dictator in urge to indoctrinate the populace with the official state ideology, denying individual rights and making use of police terror to spread fear among people and eliminate any act of defiance.

Different tyrannical governments erupted under the pretext of providing a sense of security and guidance for the future while abolishing any ray of civilian power. In *Was The Soviet Union Totalitarian ?*, Jay Bergman defines totalitarianism as “ a genetic concept applicable to societies in which politics was paramount, privacy non-existent and the individual essentially condemned to an eternal powerlessness by absence of institutions protecting him from the state” (248).

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All things considered, American sociologist Robert Nisbet in *Arendt on Totalitarianism* admits that German-American philosopher Hannah Arendt's book published in 1951 gave the word "Totalitarianism" a whole new currency and popularity which it had not before as her magnum opus *The Origin of Totalitarianism* is an apparent conviction of the infamous political concept in which she gives a reasoned analysis of the working nature of this kind of tyranny. She described it as "an ideological and psychological obsession to destroy the world as it now exists and to reform it into a hard, rigid, virtually delusional system of society." (Snyder 285).

1.3.2. Totalitarianism as an Ideology

The central attempts of the regimes' leaders are to have a complete control over the masses. For totalitarian governments urge for global rule and are unique in their successful mobilization of their masses, Arendt straightforwardly explains that the masses' support plays a convenient role in obtaining power and preserving it against all odds:

The totalitarian regimes as long as they are in power and the totalitarian leaders so long as they are alive command and rest upon the masses support up to the end. Hitler's rise to power was legal in terms of majority rule and neither he nor Stalin could have maintained the leadership of large populations, survived many interior and exterior crises, and braved the numerous dangers of relentless intra-party struggles if they had not had the confidence of the masses. Neither the Moscow trials nor the liquidation of the Rahm faction would have been possible if these masses had not supported Stalin and Hitler (306).

Hence, gaining total control of the masses facilitated their atomization as it is one of the fundamental strategies of totalitarian regimes; Dr. Arendt illustrates this idea exemplifying Soviet tyranny which had skillfully used frequent purges leading to

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perpetual group liquidation as a way to accomplish mass atomization. To put it differently, totalitarian rulers were efficient in separating the union of citizens and phasing out any opposition by condemning the rebellious and all their relatives, since the conduction of the frequent purges was competent in a way that threatened the litigant and all his regular relatives with the equal fate, from distant acquaintances and friends to intimate members of the family consequently eliminating the presence of any relationships and ties, pushing the community to avoid each and every intimate contact (323).

Correspondingly, totalitarian regimes are defined by their use of terror, constant surveillance and notably propaganda since essentially, “in totalitarian countries propaganda and terror present two sides of the same coin” (341) as in order to create brainwashed, obedient followers propaganda is their crucial weapon. It is: “one and possibly the most important instrument of totalitarianism for dealing with the non-totalitarian world” (344). She, therefore, accentuates that this strategy aided in the success of the total seizure of power and “it has been through the development of this device to its farthest and most fantastic extremes that Bolshevik rulers have succeeded in creating an atomized and individualized society” (323). As in their essence, totalitarian movements are not more than the mass formulation of dissolved isolated individuals.

Technology, as a matter of fact, is the offspring of human intellect evolution but has often been deemed inimical for humanity. For it should be noted that technological development played a salient role in the effectiveness of quintessential tyranny in the twentieth century, and favored the establishment of totalitarian regimes in terms of espionage surveillance considering that it did not prevail in previous years due to the absence of technology.

1.3.3. Cases of Totalitarianism

Totalitarianism is by birth defined by the colossal power of dictatorships like Hitler and Stalin due to their triumph to using this power to organize their bureaucracies as a mean to achieve their ideological goals. “Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Russia were viewed as the two principal and indubitable manifestations of the novel political phenomenon” (Tucker 555). As such throughout history Stalinism in the soviet union and Nazism in Germany were predominantly the most notorious cases inasmuch as American historian Jay Bergman puts it:

Totalitarianism was mostly a synonym for an aberrant form of Russian socialism that had gone from bad to worse, rather than a generic label for a number of political systems sharing certain distinctive characteristics (250).

Stalin as an already ruthless and canny militant succeeded to seize power after the death of Lenin and soon painted himself as the god-like character and engaged Russian in the whirlpool of totalitarianism by processing what was called ‘collectivization’ in the same manner blackmailing and eradicating nearly all his rivals. He was the single most driving power force in imprisoning an estimated five to nine million persons with the false accusation of conspiracy during the Great Purge of (1936-1938) (567-568).

Perhaps the most infamous dictator of the twentieth century was the German Fuhrer ‘Adolf Hitler’. After gaining control post First World War he executed his dictatorship by establishing concentration camps to imprison anyone not meeting the standards of the ‘Pure Race’. Hitler had the insistent furious determination to annihilate any enemies and with the reliance upon terror and propaganda; His extremist vision of the Aryan race and the Third Reich’s racial discrimination has

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resulted in the bloody massacres against the Jews in what it became to be known as “The Holocaust”.

On the contrary to the general knowledge, totalitarianism did not cease to exist after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the downfall of the Third Reich. For North Korea is a present-day and one of longest surviving totalitarian state led by Kim Jong Un. It is reined by brutality and constant execution as it was during his father’s rule. In a nutshell, freedom of speech and democracy seems to its citizens as a far distant mirage in the light of the total dominion.

1.3.4. Totalitarianism in Literature

The struggles and atrocities fought against a totalitarian regime is a frequent theme in literature, in the same vein that Hannah Arendt responded to the horrors of totalitarian regimes such as Stalinism and Nazism in *Origin of Totalitarianism*, distinct writers responded to such states’ ideologies not through political treaties but rather through works of fiction where they shed light on totalitarian societies and their desperate yet resistant characters.

Almost by definition, the genre is set in a futuristic society characterized by extreme oppression and despondence thus projecting the nature and extent of brutality bestowed upon citizens by despotic governments. This discourse has been popularized by novelists such as George Orwell and Aldous Huxley mirroring the repercussion of a hellish vision upon humanity if totalitarianism failed to be repressed immediately (Bergman 249); as Orwell himself claimed: “totalitarianism, if not fought against, could triumph anywhere.” (Orwell and Angus 502).

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It is worthwhile to mention that much of totalitarian fiction encompasses the helm of One State led by an enigmatic figure with contradictory ideologies worshiped by the supporters like a god such as Big Brother and protected by the devoted police force (1984's Thinkpol). That creates an asylum state with constant and mandatory surveillance for citizens who blissfully approve their prison hood and the society's unequal hierarchy while the rebellious protagonist fails to bring justice to the corrupted world. These totalitarian themes are the vital elements of the highly prominent dystopian fictional style. (From Lit Hub)

1.4. Dystopian Literature

Dystopian literature is largely in vogue these days, becoming one of the most commercially successful genres in the publishing world due to the youth's increasing interest in it. It presents nightmarish futures with terrifying alternate realities for mankind. Yet, before presenting a concrete definition of the concept of dystopia it is necessary to first delimit the significance of Utopian literature as its origin.

1.4.1. Definition and Characteristics

The term 'Utopia' the yin to dystopia's yang comes from Greek words οὐ (no) topos (place) defined as "a place of ideal perfection especially in laws, government, and social conditions" (Merriam-Webster). Hence a chief characteristic of utopia is the place that does not exist where governments are formed by citizens based on values; societies are conducted with fair rules. It originates from the novel *Utopia* written by Thomas Moore in 1516; with this book, Moore fathered and named this concept by creating a paradisiac and idyllic world that is too good to be true inspiring forthcoming authors to use this genre as a cry for help and improvement of society.

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The evolution of literary possibilities of the utopian genre opened a space for other writers to adopt different conceptions of texts of this kind enhancing utopia's counterpart 'dystopia' where they portrayed the absolute opposite, a dysfunctional world characterized by sufferings, oppression, and denial of essential and personal liberties. In an Academic context, Dystopia is explained in the *Glossary of Literary Terms* as such:

The term dystopia "bad place" has recently come to be applied to works of fiction, including science fiction, that represent a very unpleasant imaginary world in which ominous tendencies of our present social, political, and technological order is projected into a disastrous future culmination (Abrams 328).

Since its original appearance in a speech given by John Stuart Mill and Gregg Webber to the British Parliament in 1868, novels featuring utopian and dystopian societies have blossomed as a projection of totally administrated societies of the period as Moylan sums it up: "Dystopian narrative is a product of the social ferment of the twentieth century. A hundred years of war, famine, disease, state terror, genocide, ecocide, and the depletion of humanity provided fertile ground for this fictive underside of the utopian imagination"(xi). Therefore, such literary forms arise as a critique of modern social systems. *Gulliver's travels* (1726) by Johnathan Swift are one of the earliest literary works that adhere to the dystopian definition aiming to satirize the Eighteenth Century British society depicting a British traveler visiting most outlandish realms.

1.4.2. Dystopia's Evolution in Fiction

Myriad of works have spanned off the course started by Johnathan Swift and especially with the arrival of the twentieth century, the genre acquired new aspects and

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angles aspired from the current events of the rise of Nazism and the Russian revolution.

To exemplify some it is necessary to mention Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We*, originally published in 1924, it has served later on as a notable influence for Aldous Huxley and George Orwell's works respectively. This latter praised him in his review of the book expressing: "the genie that man has thoughtlessly let out of its bottle and cannot put back again. This is a book to look out for when an English version appears." (Cited in *The Guardian*). Zamyatin overtly criticizes the establishment of the soviet state by means of portraying a nation that eradicates the inhabitant's individuality and identity highlighting that "happiness and freedom are incompatible" (Orwell 73). This exaggerated reflection pinpoints the flaws in the communist regime. The same road is adopted by Aldous Huxley in *Brave New World* (1932).

In the aftermath of the Second World War, this literary genre obtained a wider range of various topics as the Cold War and the new world order that aided its development. It is in the fifties when Ray Bradbury wrote his magnum opus *Fahrenheit 451* (1951) warning about the dangers of the lifestyle of mass consumerism and modern entertainment and consequences over the larger culture.

During the last decades, new and contemporary topics have been blended in the new wave dystopian works, it is illustrated through works as *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood (1985) and *The Hunger Games Trilogy* by Suzanne Collins, these texts stemmed questions of women's issues and gender role in totalitarian societies from a feminist point of view while drawing inspirations from prior dystopian literature.

It is worthwhile mentioning that a wide range of changes dystopian fiction has witnessed since *Gulliver's travels*. Nevertheless, it is likely to discern that all

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dystopian writings behold some essential, identical features since they are largely concerned with environmental issues and the fragile barrier between technology and the self, oppression, and dehumanization of the individual. Those themes are consequently reflected in Orwell's last piece of art *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

1.5. Orwellian Literature

The mastermind behind two of the most famous classics of the twentieth century, born Eric Arthur Blair in Eastern India is a British journalist and author. He joined the imperial police in Burma until he resigned to become a writer, or in the deepest sense a 'political writer', he became an icon of prose style with books that have sold an astonishing forty million copies in more than sixty languages.

1.5.1. George Orwell's Works in a Biographical Context

Orwell is a great defender of the ordinary life and "the great dramatizer of the cold war values as seen from an anti-Soviet point of view" such as American scholars Abbott Gleason and Martha Nussbaum put it (1) and his masterpiece *Nineteen Eighty-Four* "is regarded as one of the great exposes of the terrors of Stalinism" (1). His ensemble of political writings served as a compelling device in transmitting ideas and searching for truth as he used literature for the only reason he believed it exists, to try to change the world for the better.

His prominence in the literary canon led him to create his own genre, 'Orwellian literature' that in its core is: "the depiction of the struggle of the lone individual against an omnipresent, Omni vigilant state that conducts a systematic and relentless assault against truth, against history, against normal human relationships and above all, against the very existence of individual will" (Gleason and Nussbaum 1).

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In order to thematically analyze George Orwell's works and notably *Nineteen Eighty-four* it is a necessity to pay attention to the author's personal interests and the backgrounds that have consequently shaped his texts, as Orwell himself notes the importance of the circumstances of the period upon any writer in *Why I Write*:

I do not think one can access a writer's motives without knowing something of his early development. His subject matter will be determined by the age he lives in—at least this is true in tumultuous, revolutionary ages like our own—but before he ever begins to write he will have acquired an emotional attitude from which he will never completely escape (6).

This analysis is, therefore, preceded by recounting the major biographical events of Orwell in their historical frame. As an infant of eight of age, he was sent to a boarding school that remarkably carved his character. In *Such Such Were The Joys* he unveiled the most abiding lesson of his boyhood; the strict discipline he must face and people's ability to commit out of control sins. Thus, it ejected hope of goodness for the human being (4).

One of his social determining factors was his concern with the middle-class and social problems caused by class divisions. It was thereupon, reinforced with his experiences as a British officer in the imperial police in Burma where he went in search of tyranny but later considered himself to be "a cog in the wheels of despotism" (137) as he wrote in *Burmese days*. Being put between his imperial duty and his moral beliefs had urged him to quit and return to England in 1927.

While squandering time in a few middle class jobs between Paris and London, by 1928 and 1932, Blair becomes more acquainted with the problems of the lowest social layers. These moments were crucial in his life with him adopting the pseudonym

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of George Orwell and writing his first book: *Down and Out in Paris and London* (1933). “Orwell”, wrote Michael Meyer, “lived among miners and worked as a scullion 'to find out at first-hand how poverty and near-starvation conditioned people's outlook. He felt that there had been too much theorizing about the feelings of the poor” (Davidson 35).

Having a hand in an oppressive system had left Eric Blair with a bad conscience. Such remorse gave way to a series of fictional works such as: *Burmese Days* (1934), *A Clergyman's Daughter* (1935) categorized as fictional realism mirroring the injustice and oppressiveness of the thirties. This literary assemblage written in a singular naturalist style and limited by an autobiographical bias exhibits the main character as a member of the middle class failing in leading a rebellion against a hostile and flawed social environment, a profound exploration of the character's psyche and critical attitude towards social deformity. Nearly all these features configure as main topics developed in his later works notably *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and base their plots on Blair's own life.

By 1936, Orwell had attained a stronger political awareness and commitment leading him to Spain precisely Barcelona with the intention of reporting the events caused by the confrontations of the civil war. Nonetheless, he soon joined the militia with the belief that it was a suitable action to the circumstances as he retails (Davidson 79). However, his journey for the fight against Franco and Nazi supported fascist had turned the scale for him and thereafter, he knew exactly where to stand in the political spectrum (Pynchon vii). He later himself wrote in *Why I Write*:

Every line of serious work that I have written since 1936 has been written, directly or indirectly, against totalitarianism and for democratic Socialism, as I understand it...What I have most wanted to do throughout

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the past ten years is to make political writing into an art. My starting point is always a feeling of partisanship, a sense of injustice. When I sit down to write a book, I do not say to myself, "I am going to produce a work of art." I write it because there is some lie that I want to expose, some fact to which I want to draw attention, and my initial concern is to get a hearing (11-12).

And the proper testimony of his Spanish experience was *Homage to Catalonia* written in 1938 which was once again a melting pot of autobiography, journalistic notes, and essays. This book however unlike previous present topics as governmental oppression and control that sets the ground for his latter and most distinguished works and the Orwellian world.

1.5.2. Orwellian Genre

Possibly the novel that set forth the 'Orwellian' genre was *Animal Farm* published in 1945 giving the adjective and a serious criticism for totalitarian societies as defined by Macmillan dictionary it is the literature "relating to a political system in which the government controls every aspect of people's lives ".intending to achieve excellence in the literary style as he recalled in *Why I Write* " *Animal Farm* was the first book in which I tried, with full consciousness of what I was doing, to fuse political purpose and artistic purpose into one whole" (14). The fable in which the livestock dethrone the farm owners and establish a regime initiated with egalitarian ideals but turned into a tyranny is a fictional but straightforward allegory painting the melancholic fate of the events that took place during the Russian revolution and the rise of Stalinism narrated through an accession of pigs into power. Davidson details the one chief source that inspired the novel: "*Animal Farm* originated (from Orwell's experience in Spain), and the incident that suggested its genre: the little boy driving a

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huge cart-horse, which could easily overwhelm the child, had it realized its own strength” (Davidson 125). Davidson also remarks that the attacks against the Soviet Union and communism in a pre-cold war era has guaranteed the success of the fable in the United States and paved the way for the triumph of his final and most remembered work.

1.6. Controversy

Like many of the canonical books that have been banned and challenged over the years, the controversial chef-d’œuvres that are *Animal Farms*, and *Nineteen Eight-Four* have been inevitably at the center of criticism during all these past decades and beyond. The novels have been misapprehended and interpreted as anti-collectivist, anti-socialist attacks or a direct condemnation on the agenda of the British Labor Party; however, before his death, Orwell denied these speculations in a letter:

My recent novel is NOT intended as an attack on Socialism or on the British Labour Party (of which I am a supporter) but as a show-up of the perversions to which a centralised economy is liable and which have already been partly realised in Communism and Fascism...I believe also that totalitarian ideas have taken root in the minds of intellectuals everywhere, and I have tried to draw these ideas out to their logical consequences (Orwell and Angus 502).

Considering the issues of the American audience using the novels as bait against the Party, Orwell responded: “I am afraid some of the US Republican papers have tried to use 1984 as propaganda against the Labour Party, but I have issued a sort of dementi which I hope will be printed.”(Orwell and Angus 504).

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It is fairly to consider that Orwell's works were not a mere attack on a particular political wing but a depiction of his political messages that were conditioned with his social milieu and written with the anticipation for an optimistic future for the ordinary life afar from excessive deviation of an economic system.

1.7. Conclusion

The 20th century was the bloodiest era in history. It has been the subject of endless perpetual wars either military slaughter or ideologically. Europe has been sandwiched between two great wars and preceded by a cold rivalry between supreme powers. This epoch witnessed various social, political and cultural disputes making way for countless writers to reprimand the dark forces that conjure up ethnic conflicts and imperial rivalry by reflecting them in their works.

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2.1. Introduction

This analytic chapter aspires to investigate the extent in which the novel derives from the political conditions of the first half of the twentieth century and the manner in which it consequently foreshadows a dark future that has to some degree become a reality, setting the novel as a timeless piece of literary work presenting the logical consequences for totalitarian ideals. As Orwell has anticipated something resembling could occur and expressed in “Literature and Totalitarianism” that modern literature: “is either the truthful expression of what one man thinks and feels, or it is nothing.” (Para 2).

2.2. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

Nineteen Eighty-Four or as initially named *The Last Man in Europe* is a futuristic novel written by Britain’s famous Essayist George Orwell, it is considered as his most widely recognized work. Despite the name, this political novel was published in June 1949 in England amid the rising of the cold war tensions. Depicting an imaginary post-apocalyptic London still raising from the ashes of the Second World War and facing the terror of an omnipresent figure ‘Big Brother’ .This bleak dystopian universe has thrust to the front view debates concerning allegories within fictitious and authentic events since it encompasses a complex network of connection and references to fiction/reality paradox making it challenged and banned on numerous occasions. In addition to the foretelling aspect of the work that has enabled the currents audience to draw enormous parallels to the present day.

2.2.1. Plot Summary

In this paralleled universe of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the tale revolves around the evolution of the rebellion carried by its main character. Winston Smith, a middle-class

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Londoner living in the totalitarian super-state of Oceania, one of the three fictionalized superpowers. This latter is governed by INGSOC a party ruled by Big Brother, an omnipresent figure in the region. The society is segmented into three classes the Inner Party as the elites, the Outer Party and the proles. People are forced to speak a constructed language and believe in the state's contradicted doctrines. It is crystal clear that the previous characters of Orwell's fiction galvanized the creation of Smith. Similarly to the others, Winston set in motion a rebellion against a rigid society, not able to change.

The story follow the footsteps of Winston who leads a monotonous and mediocre life between his job in the record department that consist of altering history in the Ministry of Truth for the benefit of the government, to condemning Emanuel Goldstein 'the ultimate enemy of Oceania' in the 'two minutes hate' rituals, than returning to his house where he is spied on day in, day out.

His daily routine changes when Winston gets fed up with the system and starts a mental rebellion with the purchase of a journal, a white elephant, where he records his ideas about the party's perverted policy; in Oceania this is considered as a thought-crime, since the party is fond of using terror to intimidate the citizens whilst securing their loyalty and submission. Later in the novel; in the second part, a young girl named Julia approaches him and declares her love for him; Julia is his work comrade and she shares his disgust of Big Brother and the party as well. They initiate in a secret and forbidden love affair and start meeting in a rented room fully aware of the deadly repercussions that might bring.

At a certain point when Winston's hatred towards the party and its agenda progresses ;he encounters Obrien a member of the privileged inner party who tricks Winston and Julia to believe he belongs to the 'Brotherhood', a secret anti-government

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organization, and that he has his similar disobedient thoughts however O'Brien turns out to belong to the secret police that suspected Winston as thought criminal and captures him along Julia as hostages in the Ministry of Love precisely in 'Room 101' where they are brainwashed, tortured and faced with their ultimate fears in order to realign them with the party's mentality. By the concluding chapters they both surrender and accept the power of the party admitting faith and love for Big Brother in the price of betraying each other; presenting no threat to the party anymore, they get released simultaneously with another victory of the party. The story concludes with a note that the biggest victory was Winston's: "He had won the victory over himself. He loved Big Brother" (342).

2.2.2. Characterization

A myriad of Orwell's ideals and political standpoints have been integrated into the novel and especially illustrated through his meticulous use of characterization and settings. Characters of the novel are a mixture of rebellious and repressed attitudes to oppressive and ruthless ones. From the fragile nature of the protagonist to the unshakable power of Big Brother who is a mere image. The depth of the characterization in the novels is assiduously represented in the interaction of the triangle Winston, Julia, and O'Brien. Through the trio, Orwell's arguments of resistance are manifested

2.2.2.1. Winston Smith

The novel's protagonist, he exemplifies the quintessential and pure British intellectual named with Britain's most common surname 'Smith' granting that Winston is a 'common man' and the author is attempting to put the fate of Britain in the hands of a working man. However, the first name Winston is seemingly borrowed from the head of state Sir 'Winston Churchill' who led Britain in its most critical

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period. Another attempt to set the main character as a potential hero, he is the cornerstone of the story, a very aged thirty-nine years old Outer Party member; he works in the Ministry of Truth charged with distorting history in favor of the government. This makes him develop an uncanny obsession with the past. Unlike other outer party members, he is portrayed as a nonconformist who repeatedly undertakes small acts of defiance.

The opening chapter displays an introductory physical description of the character spotlighting his illness and weakness: “a smallish, frail figure, the meagerness of his body merely emphasized by the blue overalls which were the uniform of the party” (4). This description evidently paints Orwell's physical condition in the course of writing the novel while it's worth mentioning he died a year later due to tuberculosis, henceforth: “Orwell's own wretched physical condition played a role in his vivid description of both the poor health and the physical deterioration of Winston Smith over the course of the novel” (Gleason 83).

2.2.2.2. O'Brien

A member of the inner party, also the manifested antagonist of the story; physically described as “large, burly man with a thick neck and a coarse, humorous, brutal face” (13). Through the course of the novel, it is noticeable that Winston holds great admiration for O'Brien's smartness and authoritativeness in the society despite the torture he carries out upon him, which pinpoints his invincible nature and thus the nature of the party.

With the character of O'Brien Orwell exhibits his dislike for power-worshipping intellectuals whom he believed promoted autocracy; in spite of his anti-intellectualism beliefs, he mostly feared to be one of them as Gleason assumes: “Orwell's detestation of power-worshipping Stalinists was probably not posited on a secure sense of his

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difference from them but connected to a secret fear that he might ultimately turn out to be like them.” (84)

2.2.2.3. Julia

A dark-haired, intelligent young girl, like Winston she is rebellious but unlike him, she displays an optimistic view of the world as she believes the real world exist only through her sight. She works in the same department of Smith, in the Ministry of Truth. Despite being a member of the Anti-sex league she engages in sexual relations as her own expression of rebellion. She is considered as the trigger in Winston’s revolt and the impetus that set the story into motion. It is worth noting that Julia is nothing less than a portrait of Sonia Orwell, the second wife of George, like Winston and Julia’s love story, Sonia and George’s was doomed after his death.

2.2.2.4. Big Brother

The exclusive face of the party and its alleged leader; he represents the relentless guard over the citizens “the dystopian god” with pictures of his face captioned BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU all over the cities. He is never seen in flesh but ironically, his presence is more palpable than of citizens, this is declared in a dialogue between O’Brien and Winston:

‘Does Big Brother exist?’

‘Of course he exists. The party exists. Big Brother is the embodiment of the Party.’

‘Does he exist in the same way that I exist?’

‘You don’t exist’ said O’Brien (296).

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The painstaking physical description of Big Brother given by the author is undoubtedly corresponding to the facial features of the head of Soviet State ‘Joseph Stalin’ and of the German Fuhrer ‘Hitler’: “the face of a man about forty-five, with a heavy black moustache and ruggedly handsome features” (3). Furthermore, it is essential to mention that the connotation of two words used in his name ‘Big’ and ‘Brother’ tend to express both protectiveness and familiarity enhancing people to feel secure by him and worship him as their savior. On a similar note, the Soviet’s Stalin was referred to as ‘Uncle Joe’ attempting to paint the image of an affectionate familiar man and the father of all Russia.

2.2.2.5. Emmanuel Goldstein

An equally evasive figure is Emmanuel Goldstein, the head of the underground resistance organization named “the brotherhood”, and the author of the rebellious and incendiary work *The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism* or “the book”. This latter criticizes the party’s political rule in the same fashion Leon Trotsky’s Manifesto does, thus Goldstein’s book is undoubtedly a replica of *the revolution betrayed* which clashed the totalitarian workings of the Russian revolution. That is a reason Goldstein is the scapegoat of the ‘two-minute hate’ sessions and the victim of all the party’s failures. As indicated previously, this character is loosely based on the persona of the historical icon Léon Trotsky ‘Stalin’s major rival’. On a similar note, the United States had as well used an infamous figure as a target for all extremist attacks in the Twenty-First century, he is identified as “Osama Bin Laden”, the founder of the Islamist organization ‘el Qaida.’

2.2.3. Settings

The when and where the actions have taken place in the novel are vital elements for the overall apprehension of Orwell’s universe that is based on one principle setting

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'Oceania'. This region is a subject of a perpetual war with Euranacia and Eastasia. As a matter of fact, the setting classification is immediately recognizable with the division of the world after ww2 (Britain, U.S.A, and the Soviet Union). In the land of Oceania rebellion is impossible and resistance is destined for failure. As mentioned the entire physical actions take place in the capital of Oceania Airstrip One (London) "the third most populous of the provinces of Oceania" (5). London is portrayed as a dread and a dilapidated place with explosion craters all over the streets where there is no sufficient food or clothes, electric lights are cut during the hate week; everything is colorless and tasteless: "there seemed to be no colour in anything, except the posters that were plastered everywhere." (4). Winston's apartment is a clear example that hints the general settings as described in the first pages "The hallway smelt of boiled cabbage and old rag mats...". The inefficiency is related to the post war England since at the time Orwell wrote the book the British were suffering from ration and shortage; like British Essayist Julian Symon deduces: "the dismal conditions of everyday life in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* were a replication of what the author saw around him in 1948" (Symons 20).

This in return demystifies the mystery around the year in which it is set as it is a transposition of the year in which George Orwell concluded the book, he had reversed his current year in attempt to persuade readers that the story is just "no more than a comic transcription of the London of the end of the Second World War"(Burgess 41). Nevertheless, what renders the novel's setting more distinguishable are the ministries:

2.2.3.1. Ministry of Truth (Minitrue)

A misnomer for a ministry that is essentially "Concerned itself with new, entertainment, education and fine arts" (6) and precisely concerned with the falsification of 'truth' and historical events. It is one of the focal agencies of Oceania's

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government; plus, it is a satirical alteration of the Broadcasting House where Orwell used to be employed as a propagandist. Insomuch, it is the heart of the major propaganda.

2.2.3.2. Ministry of Love (Miniluv)

A kind of judicial system that is busy with singling out any opposition and capturing anyone against the party in order to incline them to believe the official state ideology. The name given to the ministry is quite sarcastic, as it is everything but loving but more importantly responsible for torture and brainwashing in room 101, similar to the soviet's labor camps where millions of people died of torture and starvation. Over and above, as hinted on before, Room 101 is a little nod to the BBC conference Room Orwell used to work where he painfully endured boring meetings.

2.2.3.3 Ministry of Peace (Minipax)

Primarily "Concerned itself with war" (6) more specifically, ensures the progress of the perpetual wars between the three major superstrates by constantly broadcasting threats and firing rocket bombs. Oceania misnaming this ministry bore a large correspondence to the euphemism of the United States 'Department of Defense' while its truly essential work is not to defend but rather to initiate wars notably in the Middle East.

2.2.3.4. Ministry of Plenty (Miniplenty)

The ministry is charged with planning Oceania's economy and ration over the inner and outer party. Like other ministries its real aim to keep pretending deterioration in the economy and thus reinforcing scarcity and shortage for the lower classes (the proles). In other words, it impoverishes its own working population.

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2.2.4. Language and Style

It is important to realize that for Orwell language takes another dimension, he was extremely absorbed with the power of language and particularly how it was abused. That is a reason the audience makes a thorough attention to the language and style of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*; it is also worth mentioning that Orwell was a fierce advocate of plain language; the language that speaks to common people particularly middle class British; this is illustrated in the book as in some cases the language used is remarkably mundane and mediocre that it serves the exclusive purpose of reflecting the educational degradation of the proles which consecutively echoes the state's objective of keeping the populace ignorant so that their system become more leviathan. This is elucidated via the party's notorious motto "Ignorance is strength" (6).

The competence of language corruption and misuse can be demonstrated throughout an analysis of 'Newspeak', a constructed language by INGSOC (the English socialist party). It is promoted in the novel with limited vocabulary and grammar in order to confine thoughts and thus ideas such as individualism, imagination and thought crimes cease to exist, portraying that anarchistic concepts are effectively eradicated as the engineer of Newspeak goes on to inform:

Don't you see that the whole aim of Newspeak is to narrow the range of thought? In the end we shall make thought crime literally impossible, because there will be no words in which to express it every concept that can ever be needed will be expressed by exactly one word (60).

For instance, words like freedom, honor, and democracy are forbidden to be used, the government suppresses individualism by limiting language, Newspeak vocabulary contains blunt words for daily functions, and compound nouns suchlike "goodthink", "crimethink" hence it promotes oppression and ignorance.

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In a nutshell, the atmosphere, the story, and characters highlighted in the novel have a striking resemblance with the general mood of the post-World War Two era. In like manner, the novel draws further allegories to the political tendencies in the 20th century.

2.3. Political Allegories in George Orwell's *1984*

The book was written in the late forties when Britain was still haunted with the memories of the Second World War, the atrocities of Nazism and the menaces of the Soviet Union. These sinister thoughts are all reflected in the novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, which suggests Orwell's pessimism about the possibility of his most deeply held fears to become a reality in what he regarded as the Age of Totalitarianism (Gleason and Nussbaum 6). It is a primary satire about what might face the world if not dealt with the problems facing it. In a strong sense, the novel is every so often classified as a prophecy of societal regression. As far as this research is concerned it analyses the political allegories between Orwell's entourage and circumstances in Oceania since the themes tackled in the novel were a daily reality for the Soviet people, and the police state of *1984* manifests obvious resemblance to Stalin's U.S.S.R.

2.3.1. Propaganda

Propaganda, nothing less than an array of communication techniques used deliberately for psychological manipulation, is a rampant element in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and probably the most associated theme with the novel since its emergence. The party takes it to an excessive level to project political control over everything the population thinks or believes. It is manifested through ubiquitous telescreens that beam repeatedly party slogans famously 'Big Brother is watching you' in addition to blasting spurious victories and fictitious achievements to compare the society with other super-states situations and brainwash the citizens into thinking they live in a

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utopia, this is particularly hinted at with the subtle use of the label ‘victory’ in all the supplies and housing materials, for example, all through the chapters Winston mentions Victory coffee, Victory cigarettes, Victory gin, and the Victory mansions where he lives. Ironically all what is described as victorious is, in fact, tasteless and rotten which exhibits propaganda’s expertness in embellishing the real world. After all “the book represented among other things, a kind of integrated anthology of his fears [George Orwell] of the party’s elite’s ability to shape reality” (Gleason 83).

Relatively, after the revolution, when the Bolsheviks seized power in Russia they had found out what would unify the masses and lead a totalitarian society, this was acquired by visual propaganda and blasting glittering generalities. Stalin’s developed what was called “the personality cult” as there were pictures in every corner of the country glorifying him. Therefore in the novel, it represents a striking aspect since In Spain Orwell encountered first-hand the power of Soviet propaganda, he knew the communist party’s true aim to control the left wing opinion by spreading lies about the Spanish left.

Pinpointing the enemy is an essential aspect of propaganda displayed in the book when a single figure is blamed for every catastrophe beholding upon the society, it is strongly mirrored with the devilish scheme termed ‘the two minute hate’, a ritual practiced by the inner and outer party members were they convict Emmanuel Goldstein, the quintessential party traitor, by broadcasting tons of lies and fabricated information about him and accepting him as a scapegoat, and same maneuver is used to alienate Eurasia as this excerpt highlights it:

A new poster had suddenly appeared all over London. It had no caption, and represented simply the monstrous figure of a Eurasian soldier, three or four meters high, striding forward with

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expressionless Mongolian face and enormous boots, a submachine gun pointed from his hip (171-172).

On a similar vein, the surname Goldstein is a mixture of Jewish and German origins (Hanks et al. xxxvii) denoting that it is far from being used arbitrarily, but rather Orwell uses it as a reference to the German Fuhrer's hatred towards the Jews and his regard towards them as the source for their impurity. Hitler attempted to unify all his citizens to engage in an anti-Semitic clash by identifying them as responsible for their defeat in the First World War and the economic collapse that succeeded in Germany.

It is noteworthy that George Orwell argues that propaganda is, in fact, a more important means of social control in the United States than it is in a closed society like the former Soviet Union or Nazi (Gleason and Nussbaum 6). Ironically enough, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* was used as a chief tool of propaganda from the U.S capitalists against communism during the cold war rivalry.

2.3.2. Thoughts Control

As Orwell himself admits his collection of works was written to foster socialism and convict totalitarianism for the reason that totalitarianism intended mainly to narrow people's liberty by conditioning them and preventing any individual thinking. The novel does explore how even the inner thoughts of Airstrip one's citizens are policed, as the party aims to have a grip on Oceania not solely by total control of its member's public and private life but also seeks to control their beliefs and demand a complete orthodoxy from its citizens.

“Hope lies in the prole” (80-95-99). Winston seems to repeat as a belief if any efficient resistance would result from the proles since they compose major part of the

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population and they lack the privileges of party members but the government had successfully abolished any ray of individual consciousness turning the proles into law-abiding robots, blindly accepting anything the Party says no matter how clearly false it is, the sharp example for this is “two plus two equals five” theory illuminating that even a mathematical false statement is ready to be accepted as a truth from the party. Winston knew that a prole rebellion was a mythical truth and palpable reality as he writes later in his diary: “Until they become conscious they will never rebel, and until after they have rebelled they cannot become conscious” (81). The paradoxical situation they are confined in suggests their engagement to the abusive status quo and the powerless battle they come to face.

Aside from the propaganda, unconsciousness is implanted through Newspeak, a parody of Basic English, in the same way, Nazi and Soviet rhetoric was designed to make dangerous thoughts unthinkable by eliminating the words indicating them (poster 197). Therefore, the thought control system depicted by George Orwell in the novel is typically the Soviet rule under Stalin, which began eroding shortly after Stalin died. (198)

2.3.3. Distortion of History

The prior intention of Oceania’s sole party is to systematically wipe out the past and replace it with a brand new history beginning from 1950 by vanishing all newspapers, books and rewrites them to suit the government ideology. Winston is obsessed with the past or in the deepest sense the truth about the past, this accordingly reflects Orwell’s interestingness in truth-telling and one of the most prevailing phrases in the novel is “who controls the past controls the future” and “who controls the present controls the past” (40). Meaning that the past exists solely in human memories and historical records and since the state controls the records and the memory of

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people, it controls their past preventing any opposition and hence controlling the present and even the future as O'Brien clarifies by the concluding chapters with one of the most quoted sentences in literature "If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face -- for ever" (307). Orwell's keen interest in truth has emerged since his Spanish experience being startled at how truth was easily distorted; according to Gleason he wrote later of his Spanish experience:

Early in my life, I had noticed that no event is ever correctly reported in a newspaper, but in Spain ... I saw newspaper reports which did not bear any relation to the facts, not even the relationship which is implied in an ordinary lie. I saw great battles reported where there had been no fighting and complete silence where hundreds of men had been killed. I saw troops, who had fought bravely denounced as cowards and traitors, and others who had never seen a shot fired hailed as the heroes of imaginary victories; and I saw newspapers in London retailing these lies and eager intellectuals building emotional superstructures over events that had never happened. (Cited in Gleason 74)

Likewise, the readership can notice Winston's equal concern about the past and history being ingeniously altered letting place for the party's version of reality. The government skillfully destroyed historical records to a degree it will be hopeless for people to prove it. "Do you realize," Winston says to Julia in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*:

...That the past, starting from yesterday, has been actually abolished? If it survives anywhere, it's in a few solid objects with no words attached to them. . . . Nothing exists except an endless present in which the Party is always right. I know, of course, that the past is falsified, but it would

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never be possible for me to prove it, even when I did the falsification myself (128).

Furthermore, in the novel people routinely disappear and the mere evidence of their existence is erased from public records and they are immediately replaced by fictional characters with a stroke of a pen. These aspects give a nod to the Stalin's epoch when all previous history contradicting the communist ideals were erased and rewritten and all Stalin's crimes and conviction had been vanished off records, taking into account that when someone vanished in the Soviet Union he becomes an 'unperson' (Mathers 25).

2.3.4. Surveillance

Like propaganda and control over language, surveillance is a central detail in the world of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. The absence of privacy is sufficient to break down individuality since, under telescreens and microphones, even facial expression have been regulated; in Oceania there is something known as facecrime, leading the people to live a life practically intolerable "the telescreen received and transmitted simultaneously; "Any sound that Winston made, above the level of a very low whisper, would be picked up by it" (5). Thus every place becomes a source of paranoia. Similarly, it reflects the KGB (Komitet gossoudarstvennoï bezopasnosti) or in other words the Russian version of the 'thought police' which gained mythical status in espionage and spycraft in the Soviet regime by always keeping an eye on citizens by bugging their telephones, censoring mails and extinguishing any nationalism and dissention.

Surveillance is not only by mean of digital devices but through relations, which are to a large degree destroyed. The party was successful in forming loveless marriages and in educating children to grow a fondness for the party to the extent of

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reporting their parents. Children are tough from a young age to betray their parents if they commit thoughtcrimes, such is the case of Parsons as cited in the novel: “‘it was my little daughter’, said Parsons with a sort of doleful pride. ‘She listened at the keyhole...and nipped off to the patrols... I don’t bear her any grudge for it. In fact I am proud of her’” (268). A clear stance on the way the party virtues loyalty to the system above everything even family ties and relationships. This example pays tribute to a landmark case in the Soviet Union when Pavlik Morozov, a peasant boy denounced his father as the state’s traitor and Kulak supporter in 1932 making an evidence of Stalin’s drive to destroy family bonds (Thurston 556).

The significance of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* lies upon its realistic portrayal of the mechanics of totalitarianism in the state, the novel’s brilliant take on language, thoughts, and technology has made it a focal concern since its publication and more specifically that some of its fictional world’s ideas had come to life after eons.

2.4. Orwell and Our Future

Plenty of points that have been tackled in the novel back in the forties some which were inexistent have been fulfilled in modern time to an astonishing degree enabling *Nineteen Eighty-Four* to be read as a contemporary piece of art; it can be demonstrated in various themes. A reading of the novel provides a myriad of parallels between the fictional storyline and the actual reality in “one of the scariest examples of life imitating art” (Dice 236).

2.4.1. Public Mind Manipulation

In Orwell’s chilling prophecy about the future, the government controls people mainly through suppression and manipulation; he was well aware of propaganda and its role in controlling information thus the population’s mind; therefore, it is present a

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major theme. However, this theme was not limited to the narrative of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, as it was prominently used in the United States after the milestone events of the 9/11 attacks as such, media controlled the mind of people like puppets constantly reporting news and threats day in day out about terrorism and planting fear in the head of the American population.

This is also illustrated with Oceania's perpetual wars; for the superpower's supposed enemies keep changing; from fighting Eastasia and being allies with Euranacia to fighting with Euranacia, the shift is instant and the public opinion is efficiently manipulated that no one seems to notice and acceptance is ingrained:

...Winston well knew, it was only four years since Oceania had been at war with Eastasia and in alliance with Eurasia. But that was merely a piece of furtive knowledge which he happened to possess because his memory was not satisfactorily under control. Officially the change of partners had never happened. Oceania was at war with Eurasia: therefore Oceania had always been at war with Eurasia (39).

Oddly enough, Dice asserts that the exact sequence of events had taken place when the United States had successfully diverted its "War of Terror" from Afghanistan in 2001 to Iraq briefly after the September attacks in 2003 lasting for many years (241). This argument particularly illustrates Orwell keen ability in understanding the effective political strategic calculations.

Julia at some point explains that rocket bombs fell constantly in Airstrip one as an orchestrated parade by the Party to keep the populace of Oceania under constant fear: "in her opinion the war was not happening. The rocket bombs which fell daily on London were probably fired by the Government of Oceania itself, 'just to keep people

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frightened”(176). As a matter of fact, ‘The false flag terrorism’ is a ruthless but real strategy that has been executed by numerous governments in the course of history, as allegedly, The Reichstag fire of 1933 was, in reality, a well- planned plot that paved way to the establishment of Nazi dictatorship (Rabinbach 100). However, the eminent one is the aforementioned example of 9/11 and the fall of the Twin Towers that is until today perceived as an alleged false flag operation to deceive the entire world and thus successfully set a fertile ground for their foremost intention, economic exploitation, and world domination.

2.4.2. Doublethink

It is one of the pivotal elements in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and probably making the book distinguishable from other dystopian classics. It is endorsed by the Party meaning beholding two completely contradictory beliefs concurrently; better explained in the book by Winston as: “To know and not to know, to be conscious of complete truthfulness while telling carefully constructed lies, to hold simultaneously two opinions which cancelled out, knowing them to be contradictory and believing in both of them, to use logic against logic.” (40-41). It is predominant throughout the book but is clearly illustrated through the party’s sacred slogan:

Freedom is slavery

Ignorance is strength

War is peace

George Orwell’s preoccupation with ideological lying and retaining power by reconciling contradictions consequently resulted in the creation of doublethink although Mather explain that as a concept it has existed long before, from the days of the Soviet Union it had been famously in usage in the way that since childhood

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Russian were indoctrinated with Lenin's communist belief; Yet, while growing up they start to recognize the system's flaws and hence hold contrary beliefs privately "for fear of being shipped off to a forced labor camp in Siberia." (Mather 26).

Far from being a foreshadow, doublethink lasted until the twenty-first century as the entire world witnessed Mr. Obama, previous president of The United States of America, in an Orwellian chutzpah receiving the Nobel peace prize in 2009 while simultaneously conducting two full terms of bloody wars, with a record of the longest-serving American war president. The chief commander of the war machine was honored as the world's peacemaker emphasizing in his speech: "I believe that force can be justified on humanitarian grounds". This historical momentum represents a bright instance of doublethink, more specifically of Orwell's recognized phrase "War is Peace".

2.4.3 Technology and Espionage

The novel has dramatically shaped queries of technology and surveillance by imagining a world on which every human activity is recorded and monitored and the daily life of people would be watched through camera lenses.

Even though instruments of thought control existed during the Soviet and Nazi era but technology was not advanced to the extent portrayed in the Orwellian world. Thereupon, due to Orwell's aspect of futurism in the book, it comes as containing predictions about technological development and its excessive use in espionage.

There is no doubt that some of the predictions have become true. The author imagined a trifling gadget in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* "a telescreen" a double-edged device installed throughout party workplaces and party members houses, capable of broadcasting propaganda and recording image which serves for surveillance

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simultaneously. Interestingly enough technological progress has introduced the world to smartphones, devices that spread propaganda through social media and are also equipped to keep the user under- never-ending surveillance.

It is said that truth is stranger than fiction; this is true as modern technological tools are even more powerful and scary than Orwell had imagined and have a strong grip over people's both public and private life.

To sum up, while one cannot fully associate the totalitarian facets of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*'s Oceania to today's society, but there is no denial that some parallels are prevailing and worth mentioning. Just like Orwell's imagined future, in contemporary society, power hunger is excusable and privacy is an unaffordable luxury.

2.5. Conclusion

After a detailed examination of the dystopian novel, One does necessary draw the conclusion that George Orwell has to a great extent shaped his stories and particularly *Nineteen Eighty- Four* in accordance with the dark age of the twentieth century and he sought in a noble act not to predict the future but to exaggeratedly set a moral from what the world had experienced in interwar period and warn future generations about the consequences of the re-emergence of despotic and corrupted systems and its repercussions upon thoughts and speech as Winston gloomily writes in his journal, this is addressed "for the future, the unborn"(9)

General Conclusion

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A myriad of legendary literary satirists namely Johnathan Swift and George Orwell, the architects of the dystopian genre, were misperceived as pessimists while Orwell precisely had been recognized as a fed up socialist painting a bleak image of the future and his intended literary warnings were taken into consideration as predictions for the future.

In this light, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is an incendiary classical work that sprung never-ending interpretations during the course of the years. It has been broadly approached as an anti-communist or anti-socialist manifesto; others regarded it as a condemnation of the British Labor Party or even Capitalist values while contemporary critics tend to approach it as a sort of fulfilling prophecy.

After dealing with both chapters, that has provided a thorough analysis of the totalitarian themes within literature. The novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* authored by George Orwell affirms the Oceania and Post-War Europe parallels in the manner that the plot, the leading characters namely Winston and Big Brother, the symbols and the entire ambiance of oppression clearly reflect the profound impact of the contemporary political extravaganza of Stalinist Russia and Nazi Germany and especially the former have upon Orwell as a political writer establishing the novel as a fictional record of his era that offered a singular understanding of the social events of that epoch

Albeit, a considerable number of aspects discussed in the novel's fictional world have become a vivid and horrifying reality, it is inappropriate to consider the present day as an Orwellian nightmare nor the novel as a biblical prediction but rather a portrayal of a world destined to a total destruction if not immediately aware of

General Conclusion

certain dangers of power hunger and the aftereffects of the existence of extremist regimes that have reigned in Orwell's epoch but have not faded into oblivion.

This is particularly true since the political atmosphere of the novel and its influence on people epitomize it as a controversial piece of art and used as a primary reference and therefore, subject of discussion in every political struggle. In the same manner, it was a source of resistance for people during the pro-democracy uprisings in the Middle East and even during the recent political changes in Algeria.

Once again, this extended essay aims to pinpoint the manner literature draws and shapes the human experience; the novel is a starting point for reflection about issues of political rebellion and oppression within a totalitarian regime. Henceforth, it is necessary to approach *Nineteen Eighty-Four* as George Orwell's last letter to humanity, as an exposure of the nature of power abuse and a revolt against the debasement of language, and the way human nature ultimately will deteriorate if people mindlessly accept such basically destructive forces.

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تلخيص :

منذ الازل كان الادب و التاريخ متطافرين فكان الباحثون دائما ما يسعون لفهم العلاقة بينهما. هذه الاطروحة تهدف لفحص الوجه التاريخي للشمولية و تمثيلها في الخيال عن طريق دراسة مدققة للرائعة الادبية لجورج اورويل ألف وتسعمائة وأربعة وثمانين حيث سلطت الضوء على مواضيع الشمولية. الفصل الاول يشرع بتقديم تفسيرات حادة لعدة مفاهيم بشكل خاص للشمولية وللأدب الدستوبي و اخذ لمحة عن حياة الكاتب التي شكلت هذه الرواية. بالإضافة الى ذلك، يشرح اسس النظرية الادبية التاريخية الجديدة التي كانت بمثابة اداة حادة لاستكشاف جوانب التشابه بين الواقع و الخيال في الفصل الثاني. بعد تقديم هذه الاطروحة ينبغي للقراء النظر لهذه الرواية على انها حكاية خالدة تحذر من مخاطر الدكتاتورية. الكلمات المفتاحية : الشمولية، ألف و تسعمائة و اربعة و ثمانين، الادب الدستوبي، الادبية التاريخية الجديدة.

Résumé :

Depuis l'aube du temps, l'histoire et la littérature ont été tressés l'un dans l'autre. Les chercheurs ont toujours tenté de comprendre la façon dont la première forme la dernière. Cette dissertation, a pour but d'examiner la facette historique du Totalitarisme et ses représentations dans la fiction à travers une investigation méticuleuse de l'œuvre maîtresse de George Orwell intitulée *1984* par jeter la lumière sur les thèmes totalitaires. Le premier chapitre, initie par fournir des explications tranchantes des concepts en particulier le totalitarisme, la littérature dystopique et jeter un coup d'œil dans les esquisses de la vie de l'auteur qui ont sculpté le roman. En outre, la dissertation délimite la signification des principes de la théorie du nouvel historicisme qui a servi comme un outil crucial dans l'exploration des aspects de similitudes entre la réalité et la fiction dans le deuxième chapitre. Comme cette thèse soumet, les lecteurs devraient considérer le roman comme un intemporel récit qui avertit des dangers de la dictature.

Mots Clés : Totalitarisme, *1984*, la littérature dystopique, théorie du nouvel historicisme.