



**THE IMPERFECT WORLD: A COMPARATIVE
STUDY OF THE MATERIALIST AND DYSTOPIAN
VISION OF ORWELL'S *NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR*
AND KEE THUAN CHYE'S *1984 HERE AND NOW***

**2021
MASTER THESIS
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

Mohammad Waleed TALALWEH

Supervisor

Prof. Dr. A. Serdar ÖZTÜRK

**THE IMPERFECT WORLD: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE
MATERIALIST AND DYSTOPIAN VISION OF ORWELL'S *NINETEEN
EIGHTY-FOUR* AND KEE THUAN CHYE'S *1984 HERE AND NOW***

Mohammad Waleed TALALWEH

T.C

Karabuk University

Institute of Graduate Programs

Department of English Language and Literature

Prepared as

Master Thesis

Prof. Dr. A. Serdar ÖZTÜRK

KARABUK

August 2021

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	1
THESIS APPROVAL PAGE.....	4
DECLARATION	5
FOREWORD	6
DEDICATION	7
ABSTRACT.....	8
ÖZ.....	10
ARCHIVE RECORD INFORMATION	12
ARŞIV KAYIT BİLGİLERİ.....	13
SUBJECT OF THE RESEARCH	14
PURPOSE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH	14
METHOD OF THE RESEARCH.....	14
HYPOTHESIS OF THE RESEARCH / RESEARCH PROBLEM.....	15
SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS / DIFFICULTIES	15
1. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	16
1.1. BACKGROUND ON GEORGE ORWELL.....	16
1.2. BACKGROUND ON KEE THUAN CHYE.....	18
1.3. PURPOSE OF RESEARCH.....	20
1.4. DYSTOPIA AND UTOPIA.....	21
1.5. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY	28
1.6. LITERATURE AND HISTORY	33
1.7. ORWELL'S MOTIVES FOR WRITING <i>NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR</i>	36
1.8. KEE THUAN CHYE'S MOTIVES FOR WRITING <i>1984 HERE AND NOW</i>	38
2. CHAPTER TWO: <i>NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR</i> : LAST MAN STANDING	42
2.1. INTRODUCTION	42
2.2. SETTING AND STATUS QUO	43
2.3. THE TRUTH OF COMMUNISM, FASCISM, AND NAZISM.....	48
2.4. JAMES BURNHAM AND HANNAH ARENDT	52

2.5.	FEATURES OF TOTALITARIANISM.....	54
2.5.1.	LONELINESS.....	54
2.5.2.	FALSIFICATION OF TRUTH.....	55
2.5.3.	DOUBLETHINK	58
2.6.	NEWSPEAK LANGUAGE	60
2.6.1.	EUPHEMISMS	62
2.6.2.	NEWSPEAK AND LITERATURE	63
2.7.	ROLE OF TELESCREENS	64
2.8.	ORWELL AND THE PROLES	66
2.9.	ASPECTS OF TECHNOLOGY.....	69
2.9.1.	TECHNOLOGY AND BIRTH OF IGNORANCE	70
2.10.	ARCHITECTURE AND HEGEMONY	71
2.11.	ORWELL’S NOSTALGIA FOR PRE-WAR PERIOD.....	74
2.12.	ARTSEM AND LONELINESS	75
2.13.	RELIGION AND WORSHIP OF BIG BROTHER.....	77
2.14.	CRIMESTOP	79
2.15.	DECLINE OF INDIVIDUALITY	81
2.15.1.	INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE IDENTITY.....	82
2.16.	MANIFESTATIONS OF TORTURE.....	83
3.	CHAPTER TWO: <i>1984 HERE AND NOW: CALL A SPADE A SPADE</i>	86
3.1.	INTRODUCTION	86
3.2.	SYNOPTIC COMPARISON	91
3.3.	SETTING.....	92
3.4.	THE NATIONAL CULTURE AND NEC (1970)	94
3.5.	KEE THUAN CHYE AND THE PROLES.....	97
3.6.	LANGUAGE	100
3.7.	ETHNIC DISINTEGRATION AND LACK OF TRUST	106
3.8.	PATRIARCHY AND CHAUVINISM.....	108
3.9.	VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN	111
3.10.	BIG BROTHER AND MANIPULATION	112
3.11.	GAMELAN MUSIC AND WAYANG KULIT	114
3.12.	OMNIPRESENCE OF BIG BROTHER.....	116
3.13.	PROPAGANDA AND ETHNIC DISINTEGRATION	120

3.14. SHADRIN AND MANIPULATION	122
3.15. MANIFESTATIONS OF TORTURE.....	123
3.16. ENDEMIC RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM	127
3.17. KEE THUAN CHYE AND WIRAN	128
CONCLUSION	132
REFERENCES.....	140
RESUME	149

THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that in my opinion the thesis submitted by Mohammad Waleed TALALWEH titled “THE IMPERFECT WORLD: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE MATERIALIST AND DYSTOPIAN VISION OF ORWELL’S *NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR* AND KEE THUAN CHYE’S *1984 HERE AND NOW*” is fully adequate in scope and in quality as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in English Language and Literature.

Prof. Dr. A. Serdar ÖZTÜRK

Thesis Advisor, Department of Western Languages and Literatures.

This thesis is accepted by the examining committee with a unanimous vote in the Department of Western Languages and Literatures as a Master of Arts in English Language and Literature thesis. August 6, 2021.

Examining Committee Members (Institutions)

Signature

Chairman : Prof. Dr. A. Serdar ÖZTÜRK (KBU)

Member : Assoc. Prof. Dr. Harith Ismail TURKI (KBU)

Member : Assoc. Prof. Dr. Norita OMAR (PU)

The degree of Master of Arts in English Language and Literature by the thesis submitted is approved by the Administrative Board of the Institute of Graduate Programs, Karabuk University.

Prof. Dr. Hasan SOLMAZ

Director of the Institute of Graduate Programs

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own work and all information included has been obtained and expounded in accordance with the academic rules and ethical policy specified by the institute. Besides, I declare that all the statements, results, materials, not original to this thesis have been cited and referenced literally.

Without being bound by a particular time, I accept all moral and legal consequences of any detection contrary to the aforementioned statement.

Name Surname: Mohammad Waleed TALALWEH

Signature:

FOREWORD

I would first like to thank my thesis supervisor and head of Western Languages and Literatures Department Prof. Dr. A. Serdar ÖZTÜRK at Karabük University. The door to Prof. Serdar's office was always open whenever I ran into a trouble spot or had a question about my research or writing. He consistently allowed this paper to be my own work but steered me in the right direction whenever he thought I needed it. I would also like to acknowledge Assoc. Prof. Harith TURKI at Karabük University as the second reader of this thesis, and I am gratefully indebted to him for his very valuable comments on this thesis.

Finally, I must express my very profound gratitude to my parents, Waleed and Khadijah for their wise counsel and sympathetic ear, Pınar Arslan for her unconditional love, providing me with unfailing support and continuous encouragement throughout my years of study, my classmates, and my best friends, Jebreel Ibrahim and Ahmed Abdulrazzaq for providing stimulating discussions as well as happy distractions to rest my mind throughout my years of study and through the process of researching and writing this thesis. This accomplishment would not have been possible without them. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

DEDICATION

I dedicate my thesis to my family and many friends. A special feeling of gratitude goes to my loving parents, Waleed and Khadijah Talalweh whose words of encouragement and push for tenacity ring in my ears. My Brothers Nedal and Kemal and my sister Shorooq have never left my side and are very special. I also dedicate this dissertation to my many friends who have supported me throughout the process. I will always appreciate all they have done, especially Didem KAYIKÇI for supporting me throughout the entire master programme, Professor Harith Turki for being there for me, Professor Mohammed Sabaneh for his support and encouragement, Gülsüm PÜGE for helping me throughout the university process, and Pınar ARSLAN for helping me through the writing process. I dedicate this work and give special thanks to the great authors Kee Thuan Chye and the late George Orwell, whose eminent works have taught me to work hard for the things that I aspire to achieve, for inspiring me to write my first-ever thesis. Thank you. My love for you all can never be quantified. May Allah Bless You!

ABSTRACT

Thanks to Raymond Williams' eminent contributions to the cultural studies field and the development of cultural materialism, his achievements helped cause a renaissance in the field of cultural studies in which cultures are historically perceived. Portraying culture as "a whole way of living" and accentuating the concept of culture, experiential essence, and cultural knowledge ontology, Williams broadens the concept of culture and meticulously emphasizes the cultural experience materiality. According to Williams' approach to culture, in its entirety, he does scrutinize and perceive culture as a dynamic entity, which is shaped together with the political, economic, historical, and social components of any society. Dystopias are also apparent manifestations of the cultural materialistic conditions. That is, gaining a better understanding of authors' conditions and literary texts is related to their interpretation through considering them as material objects and products of society. This thesis aims to examine George Orwell's dystopian novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and Kee Thuan Chye's play *1984 Here and Now* in order to study the contribution of cultural materialist conditions on shaping the authors' materialist and dystopian visions in their respective works. Moreover, this thesis highlights how Kee's play is divergent from Orwell's novel and how their authors' cultural, political, and historical milieus are reflected in their literary works by examining the aspects of class, race, language, propaganda, religion, and worship of leader. To approve that the contemporary life conditions of Orwell and Kee have an impact on shaping their materialist and dystopian visions in their works, the aforementioned texts' historical context, their political implications, and a close textual analysis are examined thoroughly through considering Raymond Williams' framework of 'Dominant,' 'Residual,' and 'Emergent' cultural elements and adopting an interdisciplinary approach with the aid of resources borrowed from historical, literary, and cultural studies. Since Raymond Williams' cultural elements are molded in numerous literary works, there is a growing demand for the analysis of dystopias from a cultural material point of view. The analysis shows that *1984 Here and Now's* materialistic and dystopian vision is more positive and open to change compared to *Nineteen Eighty-Four's* bleak vision. The results suggest that the 'Emergent' ideology in *1984 Here and Now* involves a positive vision and openness to change, unlike *Nineteen Eighty-Four's* 'Emergent' vision.

Keywords: George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Kee Thuan Chye, *1984 Here and Now*, Dystopia, Cultural Materialism, Raymond Williams, Totalitarianism, Comparative Analysis.

ÖZ

Raymond Williams'ın kültürel çalışmalar alanına ve kültürel materyalizmin gelişimine yaptığı önemli katkılar sayesinde, başarıları, kültürlerin tarihsel olarak algılandığı kültürel çalışmalar alanında bir rönesansa neden oldu. Kültürü “bütün bir yaşam biçimi” olarak betimleyen, deneysel öz ve kültürel bilgi ontolojisi kavramlarını vurgulayan Williams, kültür kavramını genişletir ve kültürel deneyim kavramını titizlikle vurgular. Williams'ın kültür yaklaşımına ve görünüşe göre, bir bütün olarak kültürü, herhangi bir toplumun siyasi, ekonomik, tarihi ve sosyal bileşenleri ile birlikte şekillenen dinamik bir varlık olarak inceler. Distopyalar da kültürel materyalist anlayışın bariz tezahürleridir. Yani yazarların durumlarını ve edebi metinlerini daha iyi anlamak, onları bir toplumun maddi nesnelere ve ürünleri olarak ele alarak yorumlamakla ilgilidir. Bu tez, George Orwell'in *Bin Dokuz Yüz Seksen Dört* adlı distopik romanı ve Kee Thuan Chye'nin *1984 Burada ve Şimdi* adlı oyununu incelemeyi ve kültürel materyalist bakış açısı ile söz konusu yazarların eserlerindeki vizyonlarını şekillendirmedeki katkısını incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Ayrıca bu tez, Kee'nin oyununun Orwell'in romanından nasıl ayrıldığını ve yazarların kültürel, politik ve tarihsel ortamlarının edebi eserlerine nasıl yansıdığını sınıf, ırk, dil, propaganda, din ve lidere tapma gibi açılardan inceleyerek vurgulamaktadır. Orwell ve Kee'nin çağdaş yaşam koşullarının eserlerinde distopya kavramının şekillenmesinde etkili olduğunu kabul etmek için, söz konusu metinlerin tarihsel bağlamı, politik çıkarımları ve yakın bir metin analizi Raymond Williams'ın düşünce yapısı çerçevesinde irdelenmiştir. 'Egemen,' 'Kalıntı' ve 'Ortaya Çıkan' kültürel unsurlar tarihi, edebi ve kültürel çalışmalardan ödünç alınan kaynaklar yardımıyla disiplinler arası bir yaklaşım benimsemektedir. Raymond Williams'ın kültürel unsurları sayısız edebi eserde şekillendiğinden, distopyaların kültürel materyal bakış açısıyla analizine yönelik artan sayıda çalışmalar vardır. Analizler, *1984 Burada ve Şimdi*'nin materyalist ve distopik vizyonunun Orwell'in umutsuz vizyonuna kıyasla daha olumlu ve değişime açık olduğunu göstermektedir. Sonuçlar, *1984 Burada ve Şimdi*'deki Ortaya Çıkan ideolojisinin, *Bin Dokuz Yüz Seksen Dört*'ün Ortaya Çıkan vizyonundan farklı olarak, olumlu bir vizyon ve değişime açıklık içerdiğini göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: George Orwell, *Bin Dokuz Yüz Seksen Dört*, Kee Thuan Chye, *1984 Burada ve Şimdi*, Dystopia, Kültürel Materyalizm, Raymond Williams, Totalitarizm, Karşılaştırmalı Analiz.

ARCHIVE RECORD INFORMATION

Title of the Thesis	The Imperfect World: A Comparative Study of the Materialist and Dystopian Vision of Orwell's <i>Nineteen Eighty-Four</i> and Kee Thuan Chye's <i>1984 Here and Now</i>
Author of the Thesis	Mohammad Waleed TALALWEH
Supervisor of the Thesis	Prof. Dr. A. Serdar ÖZTÜRK
Status of the Thesis	MA
Date of the Thesis	06/08/2021
Field of the Thesis	English Language and Literature
Place of the Thesis	KBU/LEE
Total Page Number	151
Keywords	George Orwell, <i>Nineteen Eighty-Four</i> , Kee Thuan Chye, <i>1984 Here and Now</i> , Dystopia, Cultural Materialism, Raymond Williams, Totalitarianism, Comparative Analysis

ARŞİV KAYIT BİLGİLERİ

Tezin Adı	Kusurlu Dünya: Orwell'in <i>Bin Dokuz Yüz Seksen Dört</i> ve Kee Thuan Chye'nin <i>1984 Burada ve Şimdi</i> 'sinin Materyalist ve Distopik Vizyonunun Karşılaştırmalı bir İncelemesi
Tezin Yazarı	Mohammad Waleed TALALWEH
Tezin Danışmanı	Prof. Dr. A. Serdar ÖZTÜRK
Tezin Derecesi	Yüksek Lisans
Tezin Tarihi	06/08/2021
Tezin Alanı	İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı
Tezin Yeri	KBU/LEE
Tezin Sayfa Sayısı	151
Anahtar Kelimeler	George Orwell, <i>Bin Dokuz Yüz Seksen Dört</i> , Kee Thuan Chye, <i>1984 Burada ve Şimdi</i> , Dystopia, Kültürel Materyalizm, Raymond Williams, Totalitarizm, Karşılaştırmalı Analiz

SUBJECT OF THE RESEARCH

Applying Raymond Williams' cultural materialist framework, this thesis provides a comparative study of the materialist and dystopian vision of George Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and Kee Thuan Chye's play *1984 Here and Now*.

PURPOSE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH

Highlighting the changing political and material circumstances of the authors' societies, this thesis aims to analyze George Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) and Kee Thuan Chye's play *1984 Here and Now* (1984) in terms of prevailing economic, political, and cultural conditions. Applying Raymond Williams' structures of feeling, this thesis also examines how the authors' circumstances are demonstrated in the world of dystopian fiction, and how the interpretations, characteristics, and nature of dystopias relate to those circumstances and the zeitgeist of their times. This thesis also highlights how Kee's play is divergent from Orwell's novel and how the authors' cultural, political, and historical milieus are reflected in their literary works through examining the aspects of class, race, language, propaganda, religion, and worship of leader.

This thesis is a contributory factor for the emergence of forthcoming dystopian studies in the 21st century, which are tainted by contemporary themes such as survival, technological control, environmental destruction, and nuclear disasters.

METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

Applying Raymond Williams' framework of cultural materialism: 'Dominant,' 'Residual,' and 'Emergent,' this thesis analyzes George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and Kee Thuan Chye's *1984 Here and Now* in terms of the contemporary cultural, historical, economic, and political circumstances of their respective authors. The analysis of the above-mentioned literary works is conducted by studying their historical context, incorporating political theories such as Feminist and Marxist

theories, and adopting an interdisciplinary approach with the aid of resources borrowed from historical, cultural, and literary studies.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE RESEARCH / RESEARCH PROBLEM

Discussing the significance of contemporary cultural, material, and political conditions of George Orwell and Kee Thuan Chye, this thesis is supposed to provide background on the similarities and differences in the representation of the materialist and dystopian visions in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *1984 Here and Now*, how *Nineteen Eight-Four* and *1984 Here and Now* compare in the depiction of ‘Dominant,’ ‘Residual,’ and ‘Emergent’ cultures, and how the employment of ‘Dominant,’ ‘Residual,’ and ‘Emergent’ shape the dystopias in the aforementioned literary works.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS / DIFFICULTIES

According to Williams’ approach to culture, apparently, in its entirety, he does scrutinize and perceive culture as a dynamic entity, which is shaped together with the political, economic, historical and social components of any society. Dystopias are also obvious manifestations of the cultural materialistic conditions. That is, gaining a better understanding of authors’ conditions and literary texts is related to their interpretation through considering them as material objects and products of a society. This thesis aims to examine George Orwell’s dystopian novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) and Kee Thuan Chye’s play *1984 Here and Now* in order to study the contribution of cultural materialist conditions, to which a cultural materialism framework is applied, on shaping the aforementioned authors’ visions in their respective works.

Since this study relies on a deep analysis of the historical and material context of the aforementioned literary works, addressing all historical events, similarities, and differences almost requires more than a master’s thesis to cover the scope of the research.

1. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background on George Orwell

Eric Arthur Blair, known by his pseudonym George Orwell (1903-1950), born in Motihari, Bengal, India, is one of the most influential and important novelists, essayists, journalists, critics, and political writers of the twentieth century. His works are distinguished by their opposition to totalitarianism, biting social criticism, plain speaking, support for democratic socialism and political democracy, and emphasis on economic democracy. In the last sixteen years of his life (1934-1949), he wrote six novels, including, among others, the allegorical novella *Animal Farm* (1945) and the dystopian novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949). Being also an essayist, he expressed his motives for writing in his essay “Why I Write” (1946) as follows:

What I have most wanted to do throughout 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. (Orwell, 1956, p. 394)

From the beginning of the publication of his works, including *Burmese Days* (1934), to *Coming Up for Air* (1939), to *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949), the world-renowned Orwell exerts influence to transform “political writing into a mere art” (Orwell, 1956, p. 394). Upon close examination of the works of George Orwell, one finds that most of his documentary-fictional works are unique and significant, and inspired by the experiences he gained as a policeman in Burma, a dishwasher in Paris, a tramp in London, an eyewitness to World War II, a fighter against fascism in Spain, and finally as a journalist for some newspapers such as the *BBC*. Orwell’s fiction adopts a distinct documentary style of writing based on aesthetic experience. In his book *George Orwell: A Life*, Bernard Crick claims that Orwell has been neither “a political philosopher” nor simply “a political polemicist,” and refers to his fiction as “descriptive works” that are “not always directly political in the subject matter” but always exhibit a “political consciousness” (Crick, 1981, p. xiv).

Not surprisingly, Orwell had a distinctive experience like no other. This is evident in his early literary work, his first novel *Burmese Days* (1934), in which he

depicts the “imperialist shame and indigenous guilt” of having participated in the colonial system as a policeman (Malreddy, 2019). 2 years later, he published his essay “Shooting an Elephant” (1936), an outstanding work in which Orwell questions the British Imperial System. Moving to London, living among the destitute, working long hours in restaurants in Paris to survive, and living in the squalid, crowded streets and neighborhoods inhabited by the destitute added numerous agonizing events and grievous blows to his experiences. These experiences culminated in the writing of the memoir *Down and Out in Paris and London* (1933). This memoir was followed successively by *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* (1934) and *A Clergyman’s Daughter* (1935), in which he depicts imperialism and the loss of faith in God. 2 years later, in his book *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937), Orwell commented on the bleak living conditions of the working class and coal mines in England, where he witnessed the drudgery of coal miners and the sites of ancient slag- heaps.

George Orwell was known to abhor fascism. When the Spanish Civil War broke out, he engaged in the fight against fascism without hesitation as a volunteer for the Republicans against the Nationalists. When George Orwell came to Barcelona, he thought the communists and anarchists had a firm grip on life there, seeing their flags fluttering over the buildings where an atmosphere of freedom and collectivism prevailed. Orwell did not hide his sincere admiration for the communists when the bourgeoisie was weakened when an atmosphere of freedom and collectivism prevailed. In his book *Homage to Catalonia* (1938), he meticulously describes the horrors he experienced in the Spanish Civil War and political turmoil. A year later, Orwell published his next book *Coming up for Air* (1939), in which he describes how capitalism and commercialism were corroding the best of rural England, foreshadowing World War II, emphasizing memory, and recapturing idyllic childhood. When World War II broke out, Orwell’s deteriorating poor health prevented him from participating. The disappointment of his inability to participate in the war caused him to despair. In keeping with the metonymic adage “the pen is mightier than the sword,” penned by the English author Edward Bulwer-Lytton in 1839, Orwell’s frustration was short-lived, as he began working at the press in the mid-1940s, writing reviews for literary works at the *Tribune*, which provided him with an outlet. Working at the *Tribune* provided him with experiences that culminated in writing *Orwell in Tribune: “As I Please” and Other Writings* (1943-1947).

Concurrently, Orwell's life experienced numerous achievements and disappointments. According to Saunders, he began writing for the *American Partisan Review*, which linked him directly to the anti-Stalinist New York intellectuals and contributed to the Gollancz anthology *The Betrayal of the Left* (Saunders, 2000, p. 160). However, his tireless efforts to obtain a substantive position were unsuccessful when he applied for a position at Air Ministry. Meanwhile, he participated in some radio broadcasts for the *BBC*. In August 1941, Orwell began working for the *BBC*'s Eastern Service and after a few years became the literary editor of the *Tribune*. Orwell's unique experience as a prominent journalist, essayist, and editor culminated in his coming significant literary works. In his book *George Orwell: A Life*, Bernard Crick asserts that most of the dominant themes of both the allegorical novella *Animal Farm* (1945) and the dystopian novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) appear in the reviews of those years when he worked as a literary critic (Crick, 1981, p. 303). Compared to his earlier experiences, Orwell's stint in the press, writing reviews of literary works, working for the *BBC*, and observing government propaganda, Stalinism, totalitarianism, centralization, the pursuit of communism, and Russian Revolution may have spurred him to write two of the best political influential literary works of the twentieth century: *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. He had finished writing his *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in 1949 before he died in 1950. His novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* amalgamates both the capitulation of his thoughts and the themes of communism, Stalinism, and Nazism, all attempting to cling to power through dictatorial, repressive practices, including but not limited to abuse of power and oppression. In other words, his novel manifests his political, sociological imagination and reflects the social conditions that produced such an outstanding literary work.

1.2. Background on Kee Thuan Chye

Since then, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* has been an example to follow, a beacon to guide every artist, and an authentic reference. Kee Thuan Chye's play *1984 Here and Now* (1984) is one of the literary works that addresses the dominant themes of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and represent a derivative form of totalitarianism motivated by institutionalized racial discrimination. The aforementioned literary works selected for analysis in this thesis provide a clear, noteworthy example of the influence of cultural

material conditions on the shaping of a literary work. Considering both the ideological era Orwell witnessed and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the massive use of technology for espionage, camouflage, and propaganda dissemination purposes in the 1930s and 1940s, the turmoil of World War II, and the ideological regimes involved in the war, the reader can obviously intuit the influence the aforementioned factors had on Orwell's depiction of dystopia, particularly in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. 1984 *Here and Now*, which is played out under the scrutiny of Special Branch police, appropriates "Orwell's images of a ruthless oligarchy to expose the means by which existing hegemonic power structures perpetuate gross inequalities in Malaysian society while containing resistance to the oppressive political regime" (Lo, 2004, p. 84).

Nineteen Eighty-Four and *1984 Here and Now* both share a number of striking themes that have always been of interest to many readers and critics. They both feature cynicism, skepticism, denial of human rights and freedom, history, race, gender, culture, class, and the tyranny of power. While Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is about the breakdown of individual relationships —the fragility of Winston-Julia relation— in an autocratic, authoritarian, totalitarian society, Kee's *1984 Here and Now* clearly shows a paradigm shift in terms of depicting social relations under an authoritarian, totalitarian state ruled by an extremist regime. Furthermore, social relations in Orwell's dystopian society are not only characterized by despair, but are also overlaid with a distinct loss of faith. In contrast to Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the social relations and conditions in Kee's *1984 Here and Now* are characterized by a sense of hope and perseverance. The 1940s were marked by devastation, bleak prospects for the future, political tumult, and the crippling economic crisis caused by World War II. Such contemporary conditions play an important role in shaping Orwell's novel. In Malaysia, the last vestiges of the British Empire the independence of Malaysia, the Malayan Emergency or Anti-British National Liberation War (1948–1960), the Communist insurgency in Malaysia (1968–1989), the riots following the 1969 Malaysian general elections, and the consequences of the systematically discriminatory policies imposed by the government created an atmosphere of racism, contributed to the emergence of ethnic conflict between the Chinese and the Malays, and aided the emergence of an authoritarian state. In the 1980s, Malaysia also suffered from an economic depression caused by fiscal profligacy and an authoritarian political system based on the denial of freedom of speech as well as racial issues. In his essay

“Dilemma of a Dog Barking at a Mountain: Pragmatist-Idealist Dialectic and the Writer in Malaysia,” Kee states:

Race has always been an issue in my country, even before independence, but never has it been as serious and divisive as it is today. Almost every issue is seen from the perspective of race to the point where it is impossible to obtain a consensus of public opinion on any issue. (Loh & Ong, 1993, p. 145)

1.3. Purpose of Research

The atmosphere that dominates Orwell’s novel applies to the Malaysian society, which is governed by a collectivist regime, as opposed to British society, which is governed by an individualist regime. It is worth noting that both *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *1984 Here and Now* consider the circumstances that played a significant role in their creation in a way that encourages readers and critics to study the historical, cultural, and economic factors surrounding them and to illuminate their salient themes.

It is claimed that the material conditions involved in the production of any literary work are always exclusively reflected and limited in that work. As a result, this claim may be inconsistent. According to the *Guardian*, dystopias typically reflect contemporary “sociopolitical realities” and extrapolate worst-case scenarios as warnings for necessary social change or caution (McFadden, 2015). Moreover, dystopias universally reflect the fears, anxieties, and contemporary cultures of their authors. Thus, dystopias may also be cultural, material products of their societies. Against this background, this thesis, adopting the cultural materialist approach, aims to analyze George Orwell’s novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) and Kee Thuan Chye’s play *1984 Here and Now* (1984) in terms of their prevailing economic, political and cultural conditions. It also highlights the changing political and material circumstances of their societies, how these circumstances are demonstrated in the world of dystopian fiction, and how the interpretations, characteristics, and nature of dystopias relate to these circumstances and the zeitgeist of their times.

1.4. Dystopia and Utopia

For writers, authors, philosophers, political philosophers, and intellectuals, there are likely common tendencies they share, including but not limited to presenting alternative perspectives and challenging the conditions that define societies and their contemporary times. If one closely observes and analyzes the authors' literary works, the attempt to offer alternative possibilities and imagine possible alternatives for a better (or worse) future is a common feature that dominates the content of their fictional works. According to Jacques Derrida's book *Positions*, meaning is often defined in terms of binary oppositions, where "one of the two terms governs the other" (Derrida & Bass, 1982, p. 41). Since *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *1984 Here and Now* are based on a dystopia, understanding the meaning of "dystopia" requires studying its counterpart "utopia" in order to analyze it. In her article "The Concept of Utopia," Fatima Vieira claims that utopia is "then to be seen as a matter of attitude, as a kind of reaction to an undesirable present and an aspiration to overcome all difficulties by the imagination of possible alternatives" (Vieira, 2010, p. 7). Moreover, many contemporary critics have found that dystopian literary works are more likely to be true about the status quo and the present than about the future. Peter Firchow (1984) argues that "most of the memorable utopian fictions of our time are largely pessimistic-not of course about the future, but really about the present" (Firchow, 1984, p. 5). Authors also tend to write their dystopian and utopian works to educate readers, raise awareness of their society's flaws and weaknesses, analyze the zeitgeist, discuss reality, and criticize the status quo, embodying dystopias as harbingers of the future. Dystopian fiction deals with the idea of utopia, which is an ambiguous and ironic projection of the ideal state that achieves an apparent perfection.

Etymologically, Utopia, coined in 1516 by Sir Thomas More of Ancient Greek, comes from the Greek and is composed of the syllable ou- ("no") and topos ("place"), which translates as "no-place" and means "any non-existence society." However, the term "ou-topos" is also identical to the Greek word eu-topos. The homophonic prefix eu-, which translates as "good," also resonates in the word, suggesting that the perfectly "good place" is in fact "no place." In other words, it alludes to the fact that the predominant feature of utopia as an "ideal, perfect place" is the impossibility of its existence. Nowadays, the term has changed and is used not only to describe an

imaginary society, but also to represent it as a better place than the present society. Darko Suvin, one of the prominent writers and critics, defines utopia as “the verbal construction of a particular quasi-human community where sociopolitical institutions, norms, and individual relationships are organized according to a more perfect principle than in the author’s community” (Suvin, 1979, p. 49). Lyman Tower Sargent, one of the most eminent scholars of utopia, in his article “The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited” (1994), emphasizes the inaccuracy of the view that in discussing utopias, thinking about “ideal places” where every inhabitant lives happily would, strictly speaking, neither correspond to nor reflect the reality of utopian literary works (Sargent, 1994, p. 6).

What characterizes utopias is the impossibility of ideal and perfection. The dichotomy between utopia and dystopia means that they seem to have interrelated characteristics. Thus, the term “utopia” is closely related to “dystopia,” an “imagined state or society” characterized by “great suffering or injustice” and far from ideal (Oxford University Press (OUP), n.d.). The desire to challenge the status quo and strive for better living conditions is prevalent in utopias and dystopias, in the former by contemplating an idyllic representation of perfection and in the latter by depicting the inevitable consequences of the status quo. Utopias and dystopias also have a more critical portrayal of their contemporary times, in that authors embody the shortcomings of their societies. Moreover, they are, unsurprisingly, heavily influenced by the conditions that shape their content.

As an antonym for “utopia,” the term “dystopia,” composed of the prefix “dys” (“bad”) and “topia” (“place”), has entered the linguistic realm in the last 2 centuries. “Cacotopia” or “kakotopia,” meaning “wicked place,” was first suggested by Jeremy Bentham in 1818. However, its first documented use dates back to John Stuart Mill (1806 - 1873) (Claeys, 2010, p. 107). Although dystopian literature did not yet exist, there were several precursors of dystopian literary works in the eighteenth century in response to utopian works. The most notable of these was Jonathan Swift's (1667-1745) best-known full-length prose satire *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), in which he openly mocks misogyny and comic misanthropy and criticizes the optimism of Enlightenment Era, which saw a huge paradigm shift in science with a heavy reliance on reason. Thus, the Enlightenment Era sowed the seeds of utopia and provided fertile

ground for writing utopian works. The twentieth century, represented by World War I, World War II, and acts of sabotage by totalitarian regimes, helped sow the seeds of dystopia, in which negativity, destruction, displacement, and loss of faith predominate.

In a broad sense, including their historical, economic, cultural, and political events, the beginning of the Modern Age (Renaissance), Reformation, Enlightenment, Industrial Revolution, and the twentieth century have cooperated in building faith in and having a universal belief of humanity. Therefore, utopian works have played a significant role in these ages. Regarding the promising nineteenth century, Chad Walsh, a long-time English professor, poet, and writer, states that “the nineteenth century believed in inevitable progress” (Walsh, 1962, p. 118). This progress included the abolition of slavery, the increase in industrial productivity, the dedication of scientists to their tasks in the laboratories, the rising literacy rate, and the demand for women’s rights (Walsh, 1962, p. 119). These emerging rapid advances in science and industry turned the century upside down. Nevertheless, this paradigm shift led to a *fin de siècle* pessimism that led to degeneracy. The rise of dictatorship and the wake of totalitarianism represented by the so-called “the two greatest let-downs,” fascism and communism, as well as the two world wars, led to the decline of utopian visions (Walsh, 1962, p. 122). There are several reasons for this, including the fact that most utopian traits come true and that some utopian aspects, such as democracy, freedom, and peace, seem too far from realization than they were a century ago. Moreover, they have been “sharply set back in our century” (Walsh, 1962, p. 122). The rise of dystopia at the expense of utopia has many social, philosophical, and religious implications that correlate with humanity’s survival on earth. Child Walsh asserts this by stating that “the decline of utopia and the rise of its nightmare cousin is parallel to the history of this surrealist century, which is at once the partial fulfillment of 19th-century dreams and their negation” (Walsh, 1962, p. 15).

The last century was marked by misery, devastation, and the decay of human values broken by disasters, wars, and their aftermath, including World War I (1914-1918), the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria (1914), the Russian Civil War (1917-1923), the tumultuous European Politics (1920s-1940s), the Great Depression (1929), the German Reich characterized by its racism, Nazi eugenics,

especially the Holocaust (1941-1945), the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), the Nanjing Massacre (1937), Francisco Franco's dictatorship (1939-1975), World War II (1939-1945), the Invasion of Normandy (1944), the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki (1945), the Italian or Classical Fascism (1922-1945) led by Benito Mussolini, the Vietnam Civil War (1955-1975), the Globalized Counterculture of the 1960s (1964-1974), the Civil Unrest in France (May 1968), the Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988), Chernobyl disaster (1986), the dissolution of the Soviet Union (1988-1991), which led to its collapse, the Fall of the Berlin Wall (1989), the Cold War dichotomies (1947-1991), the Gulf War (1990-1991), and the Rwandan genocide during the Rwandan Civil War (1994), all of which contributed significantly to shifting the course of literary writing from utopia to dystopia. Referring to some prominent dystopian literary works such as *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *We, Brave New World*, Mark Hillegas highlights the themes addressed by the celebrated authors of these novels, George Orwell (1903-1950), Yevgeny Zamyatin (1884-1927), and Aldous Huxley (1894-1963), respectively, as follows:

Appalling in their similarity, they describe nightmare states where men are conditioned to obedience, freedom is eliminated, and individuality crushed; where the past is systematically destroyed and men are isolated from nature; where science and technology are employed, not to enrich human life, but to maintain the state's surveillance and control of its slave citizens. (Hillegas, 1974, p. 3)

Reflecting on the themes of destruction of individuality, blurring of identity, trepidation, blind obedience, erasure and obliteration of the past, and even the rewriting of history, Hillegas asserts that "welfare states, planned economies, dictatorships, and all manners of bureaucracies," including the regimes of "Stalin, Hitler, or Roosevelt," were the inspiration for the literary works of the period (Hillegas, 1974, p. 4). In *The Crooked Timber of Humanity* (2013), Sir Isaiah Berlin (1909- 1997), a British philosopher, social and political theorist, and historian of ideas, presents the protests and anti-utopias of the above-mentioned authors as follows:

Hence the protests, anti-Utopias - of Aldous Huxley, or Orwell, or Zamyatin (in Russia in the early 1920s), who paint a horrifying picture of a frictionless society in which differences between human beings are, as far as possible, eliminated, or at least reduced, and the multi-coloured pattern of the variety of human temperaments, inclinations, ideals - in short, the flow of life - is brutally reduced to uniformity, pressed into a social and political straitjacket which

hurts and maims and ends by crushing men in the name of a monistic theory, a dream of a perfect, static order. (Berlin et al., 2013, p. 47)

The Nazi regime is no different from the Communist; they are two sides of the same coin. Both demand rigid adherence to a single party and ideology by providing no room for different human potentials, imposing censorship on their inhabitants, attempting to extinguish individual freedoms under the pretext that people violate the regime's constitution, and using pseudoscience, technology, and the undue influence of mental distortion and emotional exploitation to subjugate people. Therefore, every society degenerates into what Mill calls "a tyranny of the majority" (Mill & Collini, 1989, p. 8) and Berlin calls "the uniformitarian despotism" (Berlin et al., 2013, p. 47). Moreover, freedom of speech and expression, freedom of thought, and even the most basic human rights are robbed and even crushed by the imposed ideology of these dystopias. J. S. Mill speaks of this in his "experiments in living" as follows:

[T]he freedom for what J. S. Mill called 'experiments in living' – in which there is liberty of thought and expression, views and opinions clash with each other, societies in which friction and even conflict are permitted, albeit with rules to control them and prevent destruction and violence; that subjection to a single ideology, no matter how reasonable and imaginative, robs men of freedom and vitality. (Berlin et al., 2013, p. 48)

Although forgotten for many years, Katharine Burdekin's novel *Swastika Night* (1937) is considered an outstanding success in the world of speculative fiction about the future in the first half of the last century. It is inspired by Hitler's call for a "Thousand Year Reich" and presents an alternative history in which the Nazis and the Empire of Japan defeat every single enemy, conquer the world, and win World War II. Moreover, Andy Croft, an English literary historian, writer, and poet, describes Burdekin's novel as "the most original of all the many anti-fascist dystopias of the late 1930s" (Hopkins, 2007, p. 138). In her novel, Katharine Burdekin emphasizes the aspects of masculinity, its connection with power, and the aspects of totalitarian Nazism, presumably reflecting on the dangers of Nazi victory. Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is little different from Katharine's *Swastika Night*; language is altered, history is rewritten, every aspect of life is monitored, propaganda in society is considerable, truth is distorted, people are manipulated, and the ruling power is omnipotent.

The fixed relationship that governs power and truth distortion by manipulating the masses in an effort made by a “small ruling elite” to mislead the general population, employing a “powerfully deceptive state religion” (Gottlieb, 2001, p. 267) and bringing a convincing excuse of “necessary lies,” is often invoked to justify “controlling the individual” in order to maintain social stability (Olander et al., 1983, p. 103). Most often, such a small ruling elite attempts to “manipulate language and (perceptions of) reality” for quite “reprehensible goals” (Booker, 1994, p. 36; Sisk, 1997, p. 121). Such a fixed relationship governing power and truth distortion persisted and was the most recognizable theme of the dystopian works produced in the second half of the last century. One of the most important examples produced during this period is the American author Ray Bradbury’s *Fahrenheit 451* (1953), in which Captain Beatty advocates the use of flamethrowers against books and people alike to prevent the “torrent of melancholy and drear philosophy” from drowning an otherwise happy world (Bradbury, 2012, p. 81). In his novel *Fahrenheit 451*, whose name represents the temperature at which books catch fire and burn, Bradbury depicts a future American society in which book burnings occur (an allusion to the practices of Nazi Reich, as such book burnings were common then). In *Fahrenheit 451*, books are outlawed by “firemen” led by “Guy Montag,” who destroys knowledge and censors literature before he eventually quits his job and commits himself to preserve cultural writings. Lack of interest in reading books, loss of interest in having meaningful conversations, and enjoying nature are the main characteristics that distinguish the society of *Fahrenheit 451*, where people are exposed to an excess of television and radio programs, and government tyranny clearly prevails. Bradbury also addresses his disdain for how the mass media diminishes interest in reading literature.

As the twentieth century progressed, dystopian novels continued to evolve. Thus, new concerns began to emerge at the expense of fascism and communism ceasing to be relevant; this is due to the changing circumstances of each historical period. Nevertheless, dominant concerns began to be reflected in the dystopian world, such as bureaucracy, equality, consumerism, racism, feminism, and the ubiquitous scientific-technological world. After World War II, the Cold War hostilities between America and the Soviet Union dramatically increased the likelihood of a nuclear holocaust, which played a crucial role in shaping dystopian impulses at that time (Booker, 1994, p. 91). The existence of “bourgeois dystopias” is attributed to the

cultural crisis and chaos of modern capitalism, as well as to the shortcomings of society, which relies heavily on technology, scientific efficiency, and the happiness of the population that comes from “the availability of techniques for this behavioral engineering” and consumption (Booker, 1994, pp. 57, 91).

As for the second half of the last century, that period witnessed many prominent dystopian authors emerging with their significant literary works, including Antony Burgess’s *A Clockwork Orange* and *The Wanting Seed* (1962). While *A Clockwork Orange* is based on Skinner’s vision and highlights freedom of choice, order, the interdependence of life and art, behavioral engineering, and psychological manipulation through indoctrination and brainwashing, the latter emphasizes some social issues such as overpopulation. It also has a significant part on the condemnation of war. Other notable works include the American writer Philip K. Dick’s science fiction novel *A Scanner Darkly* (1977), which is published in the 1970s against the backdrop of Dick’s experiences in California, USA, and touches on detailed depictions of abusive and recreational drug use and drug culture. Apart from the issue of *Roe v. Wade* court decision on the legality of abortion, which culminated in the legalization of abortion in 1973, the 1980s witnessed a period of conservative resurgence in the West, during which the elections of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan took place in Great Britain and the United States consecutively. Concurrently, a movement of religious conservatives (the religious right) criticized the so-called excesses of the “sexual revolutions” of the 1960s and 1970s, and there was a backlash against the second wave of feminism. It was no coincidence that the Canadian author Margaret Atwood was able to write her novel *The Handmaid’s Tale* (1985), which is no less essential than its counterparts in the previous decades, offering a feminist vision of dystopia and exploring a theocratic and totalitarian state based on the promotion of religious dominance, misogyny, and subjugated women in a patriarchal society.

The first two decades of the twenty first century witnessed the emergence of new dystopian themes of technological dominance, corporate power, environmental decay, and loss of individualism. With the development of technology, the emergence of its catastrophic effects such as global warming, the creation of robots to replace humans, human and natural disasters, human cloning, the depletion of natural resources, and the destruction of the environment through nuclear and atomic

experimentations, new dystopian themes and fictional novels took hold in the world of speculative fiction in response to such transformations and changes. David Mitchell's *Cloud Atlas* (2004), Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* (2005), Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* (2006), Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games* (2008), and Charlie Brooker's *Black Mirror* series (2011-2013) serve as examples of these new dystopian works and a response to the prevailing contemporary conditions.

1.5. Approach and Methodology

Since this thesis touches upon the analyses of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *1984 Here and Now* from a cultural materialist perspective, it is crucial to examine the cultural materialist approach and explain its repercussions for literary studies. In his book *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory* (1995), Peter Barry differentiates cultural materialism and states that culture encompasses all forms of culture, including television, popular music, and fiction, and that it is not limited to 'high' cultural forms and is neither a reflection of nor independent of the economic and political system. In terms of materialism, he states that:

Materialism signifies the opposite of idealism: an 'idealist' belief would be that high culture represents the free and independent play of the talented individual mind; the contrary 'materialist' belief is that culture cannot transcend the material forces and relations of production. (Barry, 1995, p. 183)

Culture can be an integration of a set of economic and political conditions that have only recently been fully elucidated. Therefore, the emphasis on the interaction between culture and material production probably has a distinct intellectual pedigree.

The initial, decisive turn to materialism in Western thought dates back to the seventeenth century thanks to the prominent developments in philosophy and science that occurred during that period (Milner, 2002, p. 12). Thomas Hobbes (1588 - 1679), one of the notable figures and founders of modern political philosophy, "defended a range of materialist, nominalist, and empiricist views against Cartesian and Aristotelian alternatives" (Duncan, 2009). In his 1655 book *De Corpore* ("On the Body"), in which he suggests that it is unnecessary to assume an immaterial mind when material and corporeal circumstances are sufficient to capture the meaning of how thoughts work, Hobbes states, "I can explain all the workings of the mind using

only material resources. What need is there to postulate an immaterial mind when this perfectly good, and more minimal, explanation is available?" (Hobbes, 1981, 2.9). While the seventeenth century addresses the materiality of the body and human nature, the eighteenth century emphasizes both utilitarianism's denial of the categories of *right, wrong, good, evil, just* or *unjust*, and the physicality of the body and its tendencies to seek pleasure and avoid pain as "they govern us in all we do, in all we say, in all we think" (Bentham, 2007, p. 1).

Another prominent type of materialism that took hold in the nineteenth century is Marxian materialism, which differs from its previous counterparts, Utilitarian and Hobbesian, and is broadly explained. In his book *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (1859), Karl Marx (1818 -1883) notes as follows:

In the social production of their existence, men inevitably enter into definite relations, which are independent of their will, namely relations of production appropriate to a given stage in the development of their material forces of production. The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which arises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness. (Marx, 1859, as cited in Wells, 1981, p. 78)

According to Marxian materialism, the material conditions, including the means of production denoting the productive forces, such as raw materials, natural resources, labor and instruments, and the social structure mediating between people in relation to the production of commodities, determine and regulate the organization and development of society. Thus, the fundamental changes in human history are recognized through the study of these material conditions. According to Marx and Engels, the mode of production, for individuals, is a "definite form of expressing their life, a definite *mode of life* on their part. As individuals express their life, so they are. What they are, therefore, coincides with their production, both with *what* they produce and *how* they produce" (Marx & Engels, 1970, p. 42).

Raymond Williams (1921-1988), an eminent novelist, scholar, critic, and Welsh Marxist theorist whose works laid the foundations for cultural materialism and

cultural studies. In his essay “Notes on British Marxism since 1945” (1976), he explains cultural materialism as follows:

What I would now claim to have reached, but necessarily by this route, is a theory of culture as a (social and material) productive process and of specific practices, of “arts” as social uses of material means of production (from language as material “practical consciousness” to the specific technologies of writing and forms of writing, through to mechanical and electronic communications system). (Williams, 1980, p. 243)

In his book *Reading and Criticism* (1950), Williams comments on the insights and perceptions that literature can offer:

What is it that literature represents which has reference to our social needs? It is valuable primarily as a record of detailed individual experience which has been coherently stated and valued. This may be the commentary of a fully intelligent mind on the society and culture of its day. Or it may be the articulate statement of a perception of certain individual relationships which set the pattern of a culture. Or it may be the coherent evaluation of close personal relationships, or the exposition of intense and considered personal experience. ... Literature is communication in written language. To the language of a people, which is perhaps the fundamental texture of its life, literature is supremely important as the agent of discovery and analysis. (Williams, 1966, p. 107)

Setting out his approach to cultural studies and employing his distinctive voice, Williams states, “We cannot separate literature from other kinds of social practice, in such a way as to make them subject to quite special and distinct laws” (Williams, 2005, p. 44). Expanding his position on cultural materialism against criticism, he defines it in his succinctly written book *Marxism and Literature* (1977), which was in part a response to structuralism in literary studies, by stating that cultural materialism is a “theory of specificities of material culture and literary production within historical materialism” (Williams, 1977, p. 5). According to Williams, conducting a literary analysis has a traditional status. He asserts that literature can be a commentary through which the present conditions of society or culture are reflected, and describes the role of literature as a civilized, eloquent, and coherent written form of any culture, as well as “an area where the grip of ideology is or can be loosened” (Williams, 1983, p. 208). He also recognizes that the parts of narratives include economic, political, social, and cultural practices.

What Williams has contributed to the field of cultural materialism is invaluable. His break with the foundational discourse of Cambridge English led to the opposition of the compartmentalization of the so-called ‘high’ and ‘low’ culture and contributed decisively to the “shift from literary to cultural studies.” That break was embodied in his celebrated works *Culture and Society* and *The Long Revolution* (in the 1950s) and culminated in his seminal essay “Culture is Ordinary” (1958). By presenting the conditions and means of production, he offered a novel perspective from which to perceive culture both historically and materially. In relation to literary studies, he broadly brought about changes in the way literary studies is critiqued by moving beyond their esthetic and evaluative functions, outlining the role of critics, and bringing together “the three dimensions of textual, historical and theoretical analysis” in terms of a cultural materialist practice (Higgins, 2013, p. 173).

The need for historical semantics urged Williams to form an appendix to *Culture and Society* (1958). However, due to the length of the appendix, it was omitted. Instead, he wrote *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (1976). Williams traces the history of the modulations of words and examines them to understand their meaning more broadly, beginning with the term *culture*. This includes terms such as *class*, *status*, *hegemony*, *isms*, *aesthetic*, *bourgeois*, *liberation*, and *anarchism*. In his introduction, he highlights the importance of *Keywords* as follows:

An exploration of the vocabulary of a crucial area of social and cultural discussion, which has been inherited within precise historical and social conditions and which has to be made at once conscious and critical -subject to change as well as to continuity -if the millions of people in whom it is active are to see it as active: not a tradition to be learnt, nor a consensus to be accepted, nor a set of meanings which, because it is ‘our language’, has a natural authority; but as a shaping and reshaping, in real circumstances and from profoundly different and important points of view: a vocabulary to use, to find our ways in, to change as we find it necessary to change it, as we go on making our own language and history. (Williams, 1976, pp. 24–25)

By observing and tracing the modulations of word meaning, Williams establishes that language is a reflection of social change, which is a part of material practices. Therefore, language change is closely related to prevailing material conditions. By emphasizing the interaction of culture and language, Williams highlights culture and its ontology of the “whole way of life” as follows:

What we sometimes call ‘culture’-a religion, a moral code, a system of law, a body of work in the arts-is to be seen as only a part, the conscious part of that ‘culture’ which is the whole way of life. (Williams, 1960, p. 254)

According to Williams’ approach, the concept of “culture” goes beyond the notion of an “intellectual attitude” and forms a totality and a whole in which the interplay of social, economic, historical, and political conditions of society prevails. He also invented the term “structures of feeling,” which perceives “meanings and values as they are lived and felt” (Williams, 1977, p. 132). Williams describes structures of feelings as “a particular quality of social experience’, one that is ‘historically distinct from other particular qualities, which gives the sense of a generation or of a period” (Williams, 1977, p. 131). What distinguishes structures of feelings is that:

They are usually antagonistic to explicit systems of values and beliefs, and the dominant ideologies within society. Moreover, they are characteristically found in literature and oppose the status quo. Consequently, the structures of feeling reflect cultural materialism, which is much more optimistic about the possibility of change and often perceives literature as a source of oppositional values. (Barry, 1995, p. 183)

The structures of feeling involve the dynamic network of the ‘Dominant,’ the ‘Residual,’ and the ‘Emergent’ ideologies/cultures. Such dynamic network translates into a complex lived experience. Williams employs the structures of feelings to involve the whole society. Whereas the ‘Dominant’ refers to the most prolific dominant perspectives/ideologies in society, such as religion and politics, the ‘Residual’ is “something different from the ‘archaic,’” and refers to “any culture [that] includes available elements of its past, but their place in the contemporary cultural process is profoundly variable” (Williams, 1977, p. 122). In other words, the ‘Residual’ has been “effectively formed in the past, but it is still active in the cultural process, not only and often not at all as an element of the past, but as an effective element of the present” (Williams, 1977, p. 122). The ‘Emergent’ refers to “new meanings and values, new practices, new relationships and kinds of relationship,” which are “continually being created” (Williams, 1977, p. 123).

Apart from the structures of feeling and its dynamic network of the ‘Dominant,’ the ‘Residual,’ and the ‘Emergent,’ this thesis also adopts the four characteristics of cultural materialism identified by Jonathan Dollimore and

Allen Sinfield as an approach; the historical context, close textual analysis, political commitment, and theoretical method. The historical context refers to the historical events that happened when a literary work was produced. A close textual analysis refers to the theoretical analysis which significantly relies on canonical texts that are considered prominent. Whereas the political commitment refers to the incorporation of some political theories such as the Marxist and Feminist theories, the theoretical methods mean the incorporation of older theories such as structuralism and post-structuralism.

Since literary works are products of human social conditions, literature, according to Williams, is an outlet in which one can certainly encounter these structures of feeling. When literature is related to the shaping of society, it is easy to realize that literature unrealistically reflects the problems of society, exposes the faults and grievances, and profoundly exposes the cultural material conditions that have a massive impact on people. Thus, there is a possibility of perceiving literature as a material product of society.

1.6. Literature and History

In relation to literature and history, text and context, which are analyzed and blended together, are fully appreciated as they profoundly broaden the perception of the narratives of a literary work. The literary critic Jean Howard comments as follows:

A common way of speaking about literature and history is just that way: literature and history, text and context. In these binary oppositions, if one term is stable and transparent and the other in some way mirrors it, then that term can be stabilized and clarified too. (Howard, 1986, p. 24)

In other words, analyzing the historical context of a literary text helps to better understand the narrative of that literary text. This is also true of dystopias, as they incorporate supernatural elements to reflect reality. They also deeply reflect the cultural and material conditions of their time. According to Higgins, a text is formally read to reveal economic, political, social, and cultural components of its time of production, is “located historically, both in terms of its means and conditions of original production, and also in relation to the history of its readings; and it is read theoretically, in terms of whatever questions can be productively put to it” (Higgins,

2013, p. 173). Thus, examining the relationship between dystopian literary works and the material conditions of their contemporary time requires a firm focus on historical context.

The first half of the twentieth century witnessed numerous social, political, and economic changes. By the end of July 1914, before the outbreak of the First World War, a state of emergency had spread across Europe, heralding the formation of two opposing blocs that were vigorously seeking to recruit their populations and mobilize their armies to serve them in the war. The opposing blocs were the Entente and its allies known as Allied Powers, while Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire, Germany and their allies were known as Central Powers. During the war, the enormous use of military technologies and heavy equipment resulted in unprecedented carnage where death and devastation were the prevailing circumstances. As a result, World War I led to the mobilization of sixty-five million men and the death of over eight million people according to Mark Mazower. It also left about twenty-one million wounded, suffering psychologically from the ravages of war. It swept away four of the continent's old empires and transformed Europe into what the Czech politician Thomas Masaryk called "a laboratory atop a vast graveyard" (Mazower, 2000, p. ix).

The deteriorating economic conditions, the devastation that affected all walks of life and the political interventions of the victors were the straw that broke the camel's back. Therefore, the end of World War I was nothing more than a temporary armistice to reorganize the armies, to push for the development of more lethal military technological industries, and to renew the war treaty. The World War II, which lasted from 1939 to 1945, unlike its predecessor, erupted much more violently and adopted novel, considerable lethal military technologies waged by the opposing alliances of the Allies and the Axis powers, both representing three ideologies: Communism, Fascism, and Liberal Democracy. The outbreak of global war was nothing more than a means to interfere in the external and internal affairs of the clustering countries of the Axis and to impose the totalitarian hegemony of fascism and communism in an attempt to transform their hard-won utopian societies.

What set World War II apart was that it witnessed the use of nuclear weapons for the first time in history. As a result, the bloody war cost considerable heavy casualties, including but not limited to unprecedented carnage that played a crucial role

in restructuring the world map. On the other hand, the specter of war gave way and this led to setting the stage for a 46-year struggle known as the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union. As a result of the devastation inflicted on the countries involved in the war, the postwar period was characterized by many mass migrations, including voluntary and forced ones. Significant changes occurred on the behavioral and mental levels. In one way or another, those changes altered the characteristics of societies and the prevailing politics of that period. Mazower describes the circumstances that prevailed in the postwar period as follows:

We cannot hope to understand the subsequent course of European history without attending to this enormous upheaval and trying to ascertain its social and political consequences. The years of Nazi occupation, followed by the chaos of the immediate post-war period had sundered human ties, destroyed homes and communities and in many cases uprooted the very foundations of society. The thousands of ruined buildings, mined roads and devastated economies were the most visible legacy of these years; but alongside the physical destruction were more intangible wounds which lasted well after the work of reconstruction had been completed. Changing moral and mental perspectives changed individual behaviour, and thence society and politics. (Mazower, 2000, p. 222)

Since Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* was published in 1949 in the postwar era, Orwell's attitude that he embodied within his novel was not surprising. In his book *George Orwell: The Critical Heritage*, Jeffrey Meyers states that *Nineteen Eighty-Four* "appeals as a work of the political imagination, and that appeal is exercised with gravity and power, documents the crisis of socialism and belongs to the melancholy mid-century genre of lost illusions and Utopia betrayed" (Meyers, 1997, p. 268). Hamilton Fish, an editor of *Foreign Affairs*, the influential house journal of the American foreign policy establishment, described his impressions of Europe in July 1947 as follows:

There is too little of everything—too few trains, trams, buses and automobiles to transport people to work on time, let alone to take them on holidays; too little flour to make bread without adulterants, and even so not enough bread to provide energies for hard labor; too little paper for newspapers to report more than a fraction of the world's news; too little seed for planting and too little fertilizer to nourish it; too few houses to live in and not enough glass to supply them with window panes; too little leather for shoes, wool for sweaters, gas for cooking, cotton for diapers, sugar for jam, fats for frying, milk for babies, soap for washing. (As cited in Judt, 2011, p. 89)

Under the harsh and deplorable conditions, the penury of post-war Europe, and the impacts of the Great Depression, the enforcement of austerity was an absolute necessity. Therefore, rationing policies prevailed in Britain, including bread rationing that began in July 1946 and lasted for 2 years, “clothes coupons” that “remained in force until 1949,” and rationing for furniture, meat, and other foods until 1954 (Judt, 2011, p. 235). The British economy was hit the hardest as Britain was in a bind and its insolvency spread like wildfire in 1945 when it was in debt to the Americans. As a result, dollar-denominated debts burdened Britain, which was unable to repay them and was forced to sell its assets overseas to keep money and materials flowing. Thus, according to the wartime chancellor Exchequer Henry Morgenthau Jr. (1891-1967), Britain turned “from a position of the world’s largest creditor nation to the world’s largest debtor nation” (Judt, 2011, p. 161). In order to exert control over people, guarantee the obedience of population, and prevent freedom of speech, the powers that were prevalent during World War I and World War II attempted to create a fertile environment with censorship and restraints that were never lifted (Judt, 2011, p. 373).

1.7. Orwell’s Motives for Writing *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

The postwar period was largely characterized by defeatism, pessimism, disillusionment, and cultural decline, as George Orwell noted in 1947, “The English are not sufficiently interested in intellectual matters to be intolerant about them” (Judt, 2011, p. 205). In general, reflecting on the works of George Orwell and scrutinizing his commentaries, it seems that Orwell observed the English tendency to be indifferent to issues of culture and politics, and that Orwell’s acute nostalgia for the antebellum period and disillusionment dominates most of his works more than any other. Orwell’s book *Coming Up for Air* (1939) has been called one of the most important nostalgia books in modern English fiction. Geoffrey Wheatcroft calls Orwell’s book “a locus classicus for Orwell’s yearning over a lost England” (Wheatcroft, 2000).

One of Orwell’s contemporary writers was T. S. Eliot (1888-1965). Although he differed from Orwell in his background and political, religious orientations, they shared the same flair for examining and writing about disillusionment and cultural

decay. In his opening chapter of *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture* (1948), Eliot notes as follows:

The most important question that we can ask, is whether there is any permanent standard, by which we can compare one civilization with another, and by which we can make some guess at the improvement or decline of our own. We have to admit, in comparing one civilization with another, and in comparing the different stages of our own, that no one society and no one age of it realizes all the values of civilization. We can assert with some confidence that our own period is one of decline; that the standards of culture are lower than they were fifty years ago; and that the evidences of this decline are visible in every department of human activity. (Eliot, 2014, p. 17)

The motives for writing literary works such as *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, in which Orwell depicts the reality where he lived in, can, perhaps, be seen in a number of conditions that prevailed in his contemporary time. Those conditions include the scarcity of resources, the economic collapse, the mass destruction, the ravages of war, the prevailing austerity policies, the cultural decay, the widening gap between people and culture, the intense censorship policies, the exercise of control through violence, the distortion of truth, and the practices imposed by totalitarian regimes to maintain their existence.

Shortly after the end of World War II, Orwell died of tuberculosis in 1950 at the age of 46. In the meantime, Britain had not yet begun to recover from the scourge of war. After Luftwaffe's blitz "bombing of London," the aftermath of the bombs was still being felt as the countryside of London was destroyed to the extent that the blast spared no effort to destroy graves. H. V. Morton notes as follows:

Here and there the side of a building rises gauntly from the rubble, a detached gateway stands by itself in the undergrowth, the towers of a few churches, or a spire, lift themselves mournfully, like tombstones in a forgotten cemetery ... How can anyone reconstruct a town from its cellars? (Watts, 2015)

World War II changed the map of the world and caused the balance of power to be upset. The prestige of Britain and France declined. Therefore, the United States of America and the Soviet Union took control and forced the defeated allies to sign onerous treaties that divided Europe precariously among them and announced the beginning of the political Cold War. In the early stages, the Americans launched a strategy they called the 'containment' of Russian expansion. A few years later, the bitter rivalry between the two parties went beyond fierce, successful attempts to

conduct nuclear tests and build devastating atomic bombs, as the contest extended to the invasion of space. While the United States launched a series of proxy wars in Korea and Vietnam from the 1950s through the 1970s in an attempt to disarm Axis-controlled regions, the Soviet Union spared no effort to launch several guerrilla conflicts, including the Communist insurgencies in Chile, Sarawak, Myanmar, Peru, Paraguay, the Philippines, and Malaysia.

1.8. Kee Thuan Chye's Motives for Writing *1984 Here and Now*

Four years after Orwell's death, Malaysia witnessed the birth of one of its most prominent writers and playwrights, Kee Thuan Chye, whose inimitable talent led him to start writing at a young age when he was still a student of literature in Malaysia in the early 1970s. His literary contributions have been of interest to numerous writers and critics. His talent goes beyond writing plays and literary books. He has played theater and film roles for more than thirty years and is a well-known civil rights activist. Locally and internationally, the period beginning with Kee's birth and culminating with the performance of *1984 Here and Now* at Mahathir Era in the early 1980s was marked by numerous momentous swings on social, economic, political, and cultural levels. Three years after Kee was born, Malaysia gained its independence during the Malayan Emergency, a guerrilla war fought in the Federation of Malaya in the late 1950s. During his childhood, he witnessed the 13 May 1969 incident of violent ethnic riots between the Malays and Chinese in Kuala Lumpur when opposition parties made gains at the expense of Alliance Party after the Malaysian general elections.

Although he was born Chinese and came of age in Penang, whose population is predominantly Chinese, Kee recognized the contradictions that arose when he moved to Kuala Lumpur, saw the injustices and imbalances that plagued and angered him, and blatantly witnessed how race was politicized to exert control and racial discrimination. Although the Chief Minister of Malaysia was Chinese, the sense of alienation, minority and marginalization in Kuala Lumpur was glaring. Thus, writing *1984 Here and Now*, which marked the beginning of his political phase, was an outlet to speak out and express what he had been through. Expressing his resentment at being racially

discriminated, Kee describes a *fait accompli* after his graduation from University Sains Malaysia as follows:

After I graduated from USM [University Sains Malaysia] - I was top of my class - I applied for a tutorship. I was surprised, or perhaps not surprised, to find that it went instead to somebody else who of course could not have had better results. But you see, he got it because he was Malay. So I had had already first-hand experience of this kind of discrimination but I think in KL you see things more closely because you're right at the metropolitan centre. (Yeo, 1999, p. 9)

As a literary editor, Kee joined the now defunct National Echo, where he wrote editorials on political and cultural issues and launched the "Culture Scene." Shortly thereafter, the effects of the 1969 social restructuring became even more apparent when Mahathir Mohammad became Prime Minister in 1981, whose era was dictatorial and spared no effort to suppress media and tolerate no criticism of him and his government. What Kee, therefore, could not express through newspapers, which were censored by the government, is expressed in his play *1984 Here and Now*, which openly opposes the Big Brother and institutionalized, politicized racial discrimination, surprisingly "obtained a permit to be staged," "played to full houses in 1985," and was followed by *The Big Purge*, which "brazenly satirizes Mahathir (Left) and Operation Lalang," performed by the Royal Malaysian Police in 1987 to thwart attempts at rebellion and racial riots in Malaysia (Wan, 2010).

Racial discrimination was not confined to Kee's university life. It also extended beyond his professional life. In 1983, Kee was working at the *New Straits Times* in the entertainment department. When the editor of the *New Straits Times* resigned, Kee and everyone else on the desks expected Kee to be the logical successor to fill the position. Instead, the administration had appointed a marine biologist who was a novice in the journalism profession. Describing journalism as his biggest mistake in life, Kee worked in journalism for several years. He was not satisfied with it, as he feels that working in such a field requires a responsibility to the public by exposing the truth as it is to them. Experiencing an atmosphere where the freedom of speech is suppressed, he describes some of the difficulties of his professional life with bitter sarcasm as follows:

My most difficult assignment has been my entire journalistic career in the mainstream media! Except in *The National Echo*, I have had to battle my bosses and, as a result, been punished, marginalized, shut out. It is not

something I would recommend to anybody – because if you work for a company, you should ideally not be fighting it. But I have always felt that journalism is not like a lot of other professions. As a journalist, you also have a responsibility to the public – to inform them the truth and certainly not to spin – in order to save someone’s skin or to spew propaganda or to create the illusion that all is well with the country when it is not. A newspaper is not a public relations rag; it should uphold journalistic ideals and principles. If you work in a newspaper that goes against these ideals, then you would not be fulfilling your responsibility to your readers and the society at large. What is worse is doing what you are told to do even though you know it is wrong. (Wan, 2010)

Although he grew up in an atmosphere of dictatorship and racial discrimination in Malaysia and went to England, where he graduated from the University of Essex with a master’s degree in drama, he never encouraged his friends to emigrate. He urged people to stay in their home country/Malaysia and demanded a chance to study, work or live a decent life. He also wrote an essay titled “All We Want Is an Even Chance,” which was published in the *New Straits Times* and “questioned by higher-ups” (Wan, 2010).

Attempts to marginalize the Malaysian writer were part of his career. As an Associate Editor of the *Star*, an English-language newspaper in Kuala Lumpur, Kee edited and designed the column *Mind Our English* during the period 2001-2009. In parallel, he started his Sunday *Star* column *Playing The Fool* in 2007. However, it ran for only 2 issues before being discontinued when he submitted his fourth article. In his inaugural article, he fearlessly states that he prefers to talk openly about social, cultural and political issues. His second article deals with institutionalized racial discrimination in Malaysia. The bitter tone of his third article prompted editors to suppress it. Finally, after he submitted his fourth and final article, the column received its coup de grace at the *Star*. Kee Thuan Chye’s earlier experiences with the May 13, 1969 incident, the 1969 social re-engineering effects during the Mahathir Era, marginalization at the *New Straits Times*, revocation of tenure and his later experiences at the *Star* are reflected in his *1984 Here and Now*.

The following chapters of this thesis aim to examine how cultural materialist conditions affect George Orwell’s and Kee Thuan Chye’s conceptions of dystopias in their contemporary times. In the first chapter, considering the framework of cultural materialism, Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four*’s totalitarian society is analyzed and considered in terms of Orwell’s life experiences and contemporary historical context.

The penultimate chapter introduces the analysis of Kee Thuan Chye's play *1984 Here and Now*, which is based on Orwell's *Nineteen Eight-Four* but Malaysianized by content, address, and setting, and presented as a product of dystopia in relation to Kee's life experiences and conditions. Furthermore, the penultimate chapter examines how Kee's play differs from Orwell's novel and how both works reflect the cultural, historical and political milieus of their authors. In conclusion, the two works are examined in light of Raymond Williams' framework of 'Dominant,' 'Residual,' and 'Emergent' cultural forms.

2. CHAPTER TWO: *NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR*: LAST MAN STANDING

2.1. Introduction

George Orwell's dystopian novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is set in a fictional totalitarian super-state called Oceania and highlights the story of its protagonist, Winston Smith, who works as a clerk in the Records Department in the Ministry of Truth, where his job involves historical negationism represented by falsification or distortion of the historical records for interest of the Inner Party line. The world of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, where there is a constant war between states, is dominated by three super-states: Oceania, Eurasia, and Eastasia. In Oceania, the nature of intense surveillance and espionage rules over the everyday life of the citizens who are constantly monitored by large telescreens. Thus, there is almost no privacy. Friendships and love affairs are forbidden. Sexual contact is outlawed and confined to reproduction purposes. In Oceania, the Party's hero, the Big Brother, is constantly glorified, enemies are vilified and detested, and freedom of speech and individualism are crushed. In Oceania, the Inner Party alters language, controls it, and restricts its grammar and vocabulary to completely eradicate criticism and rebellion, promote state ideology, and reduce complexity, ambiguity, and the so-called "subversive" values that might lead people to rebel against the rules and laws. State propaganda, totalitarianism, thought control, the incursion into every single detail of the masses, the destitute and the affluent, the breakdown of society, the breakdown of human relationships, identity, language, independence, and technology are the predominant themes of Orwell's novel.

In a world where far-right-wing populism, state propaganda, lethal technology, and surveillance systems reign supreme, Orwellian neologisms represented by coining and publishing well-known terms like "Big Brother," "*doublethink*," "*thoughtcrime*," and "*thought police*" are still prevalent in the world of readers and non-readers of literature. Although some of Orwell's predictions did not happen, his novel still reverberates with its controversial ideas, warning of the dangers and consequences of the rule of totalitarian regimes on the countries of the world and arousing harsh

criticism of the monstrosities of totalitarian and dictatorial regimes, especially communism and fascism. Thus, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* serves as a constant warning of the possible consequences and threats that such regimes pose.

This chapter mainly aims to analyze George Orwell's conception and representation of dystopia within the framework of Raymond Williams' cultural materialism in order to examine the political, material, and cultural characteristics of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*'s totalitarian society and to clarify the contribution of Orwell's contemporary conditions to the production of such a novel. In addition, crucial concepts such as language, culture, technology, science, state, geography, individuality, and sexuality are thoroughly discussed in the following paragraphs.

2.2. Setting and Status Quo

Concerning setting and geography, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* depicts a world made up of three super-states: Eurasia, a super-state encompassing the entire northern part of the European and Asiatic land-mass, from Portugal to Bering Strait, Eastasia, a separate entity encompassing China, Japanese Islands and much of Mongolia, Manchuria, and Tibet, and Oceania, an allusion to the Americas, the Atlantic Islands including Australasia, the British Isles, and the southern part of Africa (Orwell, 1980, p. 854). London, the chief city of Airstrip One, is the capital of Oceania and is dominated by misery, destruction, and war. London is a war-weary and dilapidated city, where Winston Smith, who has a varicose ulcer, lives in a ramshackle block of apartments called Victorian Mansions, whose hallways always smell of boiled cabbage and "old rag mats" (Orwell, 1980, p. 743). As lifts seldom work, razor blades are worn-out, and soap is coarse, the semblance of luxuries, prosperity, and amenities in his apartment are non-existent. Julian Symons (1912-1994), an English novelist, poet, essayist, literary critic, short-story writer, historian, and biographer, describes the circle of life in Britain during World War II as follows:

In one of its aspects *Nineteen Eighty-Four* was about a world familiar to anybody who lived in Britain during the war that began in 1939. The reductions in rations, the odious food, the sometimes unobtainable and always dubiously authentic drink; these were with us when the book appeared. (Symons, 1963, p. 41)

What the inhabitants of Britain gained during World War II was nothing but misery and squalor, which are appallingly portrayed in Orwell's Oceania, where chocolate rations are reduced, and shabby oily-tasting Victory Gin, Victory Cigarettes, artificial tea, coffee, cubes of sugar, ill-fitting blue overalls, and disgusting food are allowed in canteens, which are portrayed as "a pool of stew which is nothing but sloppiness, a filthy liquid mess that had the appearance of vomit" (Orwell, 1980, p. 772). Moreover, since loudmouthed telescreens, which are ubiquitous, spew out daily orders and praises of Big Brother and lavishly pour out barrages of promises and dubious statistics about the supply of "more food, more clothes, more houses, more furniture, more cooking pots, more fuel, more ships, more helicopters, more books, more babies—more of everything except disease, crime, and insanity" (Orwell, 1980, p. 777), Winston Smith attempts to squeeze his memory and ruminate on how life used to be different and questions reality as follows:

He meditated resentfully on the physical texture of life. Had it always been like this? Had food always tasted like this? He looked round the canteen. A low-ceilinged, crowded room, its walls grimy from the contact of innumerable bodies; battered metal tables and chairs, placed so close together that you sat with elbows touching; bent spoons, dented trays, coarse white mugs; all surfaces greasy, grime in every crack; and a sourish, composite smell of bad gin and bad coffee and metallic stew and dirty clothes. ... In any time that he could accurately remember, there had never been quite enough to eat, one had never had socks or underclothes that were not full of holes, furniture had always been battered and rickety, rooms underheated, tube trains crowded, houses falling to pieces, bread dark-colored, tea a rarity, coffee filthy-tasting, cigarettes insufficient—nothing cheap and plentiful except synthetic gin. ... was it not a sign that this was not the natural order of things, if one's heart sickened at the discomfort and dirt and scarcity, the interminable winters, the stickiness of one's socks, the lifts that never worked, the cold water, the gritty soap, the cigarettes that came to pieces, the food with its strange evil tastes? (Orwell, 1980, pp. 777–778)

It seems that Winston Smith laments the status quo and longs for erased memories that he cannot recall or even retrieve. The obsession over what happened in the past, where he had a different reality, and the state of overthinking in the present, where he lacks all the basic necessities of life, lead him to a barrage of questions that are difficult to come to grips with.

What distinguishes Winston's reality is his inability to remember the past. Thus, his inability to remember the past and recall his memories undoubtedly leaves

him helpless before an imposed reality in which food is shoddy, decent furniture and clothing are nonexistent, tasteless coffee is better than the one he has, soap is coarse, gin tastes oily, houses are dilapidated, and lifts seldom work. He is able to do nothing but complain and live a contented dissatisfaction in Oceania. On the other hand, with the ability to recall memories, the present opens the door wide for the possibility of making comparisons between the vivid past and the gloomy present. This creates a solid basis to increase the chances of rebelling against the status quo to cause change, which is not desired by totalitarian regimes as they always seek to tighten the screws on their people's opinions and replace their reality with another imposed one.

According to Orwell's *Diaries*, food rationing, shortages of clothing and furniture were well known, and daily needs including saccharine, ersatz coffee, and sugar were elusive. In addition, bomb alerts, periodic panic from air-raids, piles of rubble, shelter in disused tube stations, occasional impacts of rocket bombs, roar of helicopters hovering over every location, torpedoes, and machine guns were assumptive during World War I and II (Orwell, 2010, p. 269). Since the fierce war required massive financial support to sustain the front lines and make progress, raising taxes during the war was a must (Orwell, 2010, pp. 273–274). In addition, rumors, fake news, slogans praising the leaders, and huge recruitment posters were spread during wartime, such as the 1914 ad “Lord Kitchener Wants You” by the British graphic artist Alfred Leete, calling people to enlist in the British Army and the ad “Your King and Country Need You” by Eric Field. According to Meyers, it is claimed that the well-known slogans and posters that Oceania adopts, such as “Big Brother Is Watching You,” are inspired by Alfred Leete's 1914 recruitment poster (Meyers, 2010, p. 129). The experience of Winston Smith is vividly portrayed in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* as follows:

His father had disappeared some time earlier, how much earlier he could not remember. He remembered better the rackety, uneasy circumstances of the time: the periodical panics about air-raids and the sheltering in Tube stations, the piles of rubble everywhere, the unintelligible proclamations posted at street corners, the gangs of youths in shirts all the same colour, the enormous queues outside the bakeries, the intermittent machine-gun fire in the distance—above all, the fact that there was never enough to eat. (Orwell, 1980, p. 839)

In an effort to portray the English democratic society under the influence of the horrors of the Communist regime in order to warn of the politics of such a regime and

the severity of the potential dilemma, Orwell, in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, meticulously depicts the living conditions and aspects of life that prevailed in Russia where food rations were unequally distributed, black markets were common, and resources were solely controlled by the government. This indicates nothing but Orwell's ingenuity in portraying the conditions prevailing in Russia in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. In his book *The Captive Mind* (1953), the Polish essayist and poet Czesław Miłosz, who had culturally witnessed the Stalinization of Eastern Europe from the inside, pays a great compliment to George Orwell as follows:

A few have become acquainted with Orwell's *1984*; because it is both difficult to obtain and dangerous to possess, it is known only to certain members of the Inner Party. Orwell fascinates them through his insight into details they know well, and through his use of Swiftian satire. Such a form of writing is forbidden by the New Faith because allegory, by nature manifold in meaning, would trespass beyond the prescriptions of socialist real-ism and the demands of the censor. Even those who know Orwell only by hearsay are amazed that a writer who never lived in Russia should have so keen a perception into its life. (Hitchens, 2002, pp. 54–55)

Orwell was aware of the hegemony of the Soviet Union and its practices represented by the deprivation of people of their most basic daily needs, which were confined to the few elite, who purported the achievement of social homogeneity through the establishment of a more just, egalitarian society, eliminating social and economic differences and destroying class distinctions. Despite all this, the “Soviet Union” was “a highly stratified society” and “infinite gradations between employees” used to occur in workplaces where employees were classified based on “status, skill level, and experience” (Figes, 2014, p. 248). In relation to Soviet shops and elite families, Orlando Figes notes as follows:

Families of government workers received provisions which could be very hard to find in Soviet shops (meat, sausage, dairy products, sugar, caviar, cigarettes, soap, etc.). They could purchase clothes and shoes from special stores with coupons from the government. Below the Soviet elite nobody had much. Clothes and shoes were kept for years. Basic goods were often missing in the shops (a subject on which there was no shortage of Soviet jokes). Goods unavailable in the state stores were often sold at high black-market prices out of the back door. To cope with the problems of supply an ‘economy of favours’ operated through informal networks (a system known as ‘blae’). It was possible to obtain almost anything through contacts. (Figes, 2014, pp. 248–249)

Black markets were hugely popular in Soviet Russia and were called “second economy,” which refers to “all production and exchange activity that fulfills at least

one of the following two tests: (a) being directly for private gain; (b) being in some significant respect knowing in contravention of existing law” (Grossmann, 1977, p. 25).

Similarly, thriving black markets are common in Oceania and are called “free markets” to which party members are not admitted. Free markets are offered to ordinary people and provide people with various things, such as razor blades and shoelaces that cannot be offered in Party members’ shops (Orwell, 1980, p. 746). When Winston arranges to meet his love-interest Julia in Mr. Charrington’s shop upstairs room, which offers them an oasis of peace and privacy, she brings with her “Inner Party stuff” that Winston has craved for years (Orwell, 1980, p. 827). The contraband include real “sugar, a thing Winston had almost forgotten after years of saccharine” (Orwell, 1980, p. 829), “a tin of milk,” “a little pot of jam,” “a loaf of proper white bread,” “a packet of real tea” instead of “the bloody stuff” and “blackberry leaves” to which he is accustomed, and “real coffee,” which seems to him like “an emanation from his early childhood” (Orwell, 1980, pp. 826–827). Julia states, “It’s all Inner Party stuff. There’s nothing those swine don’t have, nothing. But of course waiters and servants and people pinch things” (Orwell, 1980, p. 827). By referring to Inner Party members as “swine,” Julia expresses her displeasure with the party members who run Oceania’s affairs. Julia’s generosity and her courage to bring contraband to party members, such as Winston, make Winston suspicious. This makes Winston doubt Julia’s credibility, as he assumes that she is a spy working for the Inner Party. However, his suspicions about her are dispelled when he gets involved in a relationship with her and figures out that she is against the party line.

Despite the abundance of resources, the aggressive greed of the Inner Party members tightening the screws on Oceania’s resources drives them to deprive the submerged masses of their basic daily needs and make them suffer in search of livelihood for their families, imposing the politics of domination and subordination on the inhabitants. Demonstrating the domination of the small privileged elite, Orwell notes the following:

It was possible, no doubt, to imagine a society in which *wealth*, in the sense of personal possessions and luxuries, should be evenly distributed, while *power* remained in the hands of a small privileged caste. But in practice such a society could not long remain stable. For if leisure and security were enjoyed by all

alike, the great mass of human beings who are normally stupefied by poverty would become literate and would learn to think for themselves; and when once they had done this, they would sooner or later realize that the privileged minority had no function, and they would sweep it away. In the long run, a hierarchical society was only possible on a basis of poverty and ignorance. (Orwell, 1980, p. 855)

Similarly, the regime of Soviet Russia, whose economic system was based on the accumulation of economic power in the hands of the ruling party and leaving the people destitute, rules concretely in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Addressing enormous challenges, the period of scarcity during wartime, the experience of scarcity of resources in the post-war period, and the melancholic ambiance of the war period serve Orwell to shape the conception of dystopia presented in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. The similarity between the economic and political conditions of both Soviet Russia and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*'s Oceania is remarkable. This striking similarity, which is an attempt by Orwell to illustrate the possible consequences of totalitarian rule and its atrocities in England, conveys a sense of simulated reality and dystopia.

2.3. The Truth of Communism, Fascism, and Nazism

In the late 1940s, there were 3 massive totalitarian regimes in the world: fascism led by Mussolini, Nazism by Hitler, and communism by Stalin. Meanwhile, though he lived neither in Soviet Russia nor Germany, Orwell began writing *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, in which the totality of his contemporaneous experiences during the turbulent times of the World Wars, the Spanish Civil War, and the post-war period are concretely embodied. It also appears that Stalin's policies in Soviet Russia motivated Orwell to criticize Stalin by writing *Animal Farm* (1945), in which he illustrates his condemnation of Stalin's corruption. Thus, the criticism and condemnation of fascism, Nazism, and communism through the embodiment of their political and economic structures in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* conveys Orwell's awareness. For Orwell and the vast majority of those who tended to be more left-leaning in England, fascism was considered the greatest totalitarian threat (Kumar, 1991, p. 302). However, the truth was revealed when Orwell joined the POUM (*Partit Obrer d'Unificació Marxista*: The Workers' Party of Marxist Unification), which was founded as a communist opposition to Stalinist Communism. Orwell's abhorrence of Stalin stems from Stalin's perfidy and

betrayal of the Spanish Revolution in 1936 when he risked the lives of the Spanish working class to establish his Communist Party and make peace with General Franco in Spain. John Rodden states that “Orwell had not understood the bitter divisions within the Republican camp when he went to Spain, and underestimated the determination of the Communists to control all the Republican forces” (Rodden, 2007, p. 5). However, upon his return to England, Orwell was doubly shocked because no one believed him when he told people about the treachery of Stalin’s agents. Orwell’s “views were unacceptable” and “his comrades in the POUM were labeled as objectively pro-fascist and then ruthlessly purged” (Rodden, 2007, p. 5). Thus, his experiences during the Spanish Civil War “added another dimension to his thought – a pervasive distrust of communism,” and he was “disgusted by the way the war in Spain was distorted for political reasons and for the first time began to fear that the idea of objective truth was in danger of disappearing” (Rodden, 2007, p. 5). In his essay “Looking Back on the Spanish War” (1943), Orwell reflects on his experiences and expresses his horror at the misleading news he heard in England during the Spanish Civil War:

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. I saw, in fact, history being written not in terms of what happened but of what ought to have happened according to various ‘party lines. (Orwell, 1968, p. 256)

During the same period (1936-1938), Orwell was cognizant of the Moscow Trials, executions of Bolsheviks, and the Great Purge, which all were carried out at the instigation of Joseph Stalin against Trotskyists and members of the Right Opposition of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Similarly, in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Orwell mentions the word “purge” 13 times, describing the period of the “great purges in which the original leaders of the Revolution” are “wiped out once and for all,” and “the rest had been exposed as traitors and counter-revolutionaries” (Orwell, 1980, p. 787). He also mentions its synonym “vaporization” being “a necessary part of the mechanics of government” (Orwell, 1980, p. 769).

As for socialism, despite that Stalin's perfidy toward the socialist forces in Spain "embittered him [Orwell] and made him pessimistic about the future," Orwell's "faith in socialism remained strong but he was disgusted by its adherents' blind hero worship of Stalin's Soviet Union" (Rodden, 2007, p. 6). Reflecting on his concerns about fascism and Stalinist Communism when he was in Spain, Orwell notes in one of his letters to his friend Geoffrey Gorer in 1937 as follows:

After what I have seen in Spain I have come to the conclusion that it is futile to be 'anti-Fascist' while attempting to preserve capitalism. Fascism after all is only a development of capitalism, and the mildest democracy, so-called, is liable to turn into Fascism when the pinch comes. We like to think of England as a democratic country, but our rule in India, for instance, is just as bad as German Fascism, though outwardly it may be less irritating..... The grotesque feature, which very few people outside Spain have yet grasped, is that the Communists stood furthest of all to the right, and were more anxious even than the liberals to hunt down the revolutionaries and stamp out all revolutionary ideas. For instance, they have succeeded in breaking up the workers' militias, which were based on the trade unions and in which all ranks received the same pay and were on a basis of equality, and substituting an army on bourgeois lines where a colonel is paid eight times as much as a private etc. All these changes, of course, are put forward in the name of military necessity and backed up by the 'Trotskyist' racket, which consists of saying that anyone who professes revolutionary principles is a Trotskyist and in Fascist pay. The Spanish Communist press has for instance declared that Maxton is in the pay of the Gestapo. The reason why so few people grasp what has happened in Spain is because of the Communist command of the press. (Orwell, as cited in Crick, 1981, pp. 234–235)

Although Orwell's wartime exploits and grueling ordeals in Spain embittered him, they significantly enlightened him about the truth of the Soviet Union and Stalinist Communism. Orwell's later significant literary works, such as *Homage to Catalonia* (1938), *Animal Farm* (1945), and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949), were an outlet to criticize fascism and totalitarianism and express his concerns about totalitarianism as a prevailing regime that would achieve universality, and are a testament to his enlightenment and versatility. In his essay "Literature and Totalitarianism" (1941), Orwell expresses his concerns about the prevailing conditions of world politics, especially totalitarianism in Russia, and explains the dangers threatened by totalitarian regimes:

For this is the age of the totalitarian state. ... When one mentions totalitarianism one thinks immediately of Germany, Russia, Italy, but I think one must face the risk that this phenomenon is going to be world-wide. ...With that the economic

liberty of the individual, and to a great extent his liberty to do what he likes, to choose his own work, to move to and fro across the surface of the earth, comes to an end. ... Totalitarianism has abolished freedom of thought to an extent unheard of in any previous age. It not only forbids you to express — even to think — certain thoughts, but it dictates what you *shall* think, it creates an ideology for you, it tries to govern your emotional life as well as setting up a code of conduct. And as far as possible it isolates you from the outside world, it shuts you up in an artificial universe in which you have no standards of comparison. (Orwell, 1968, p. 135)

In the light of the policy of abolishing freedom of thought pursued by totalitarian regimes, Orwell explains the consequences of such a policy for the future of literature:

The question that is important for us is: can literature survive in such an atmosphere? I think one must answer shortly that it cannot. If totalitarianism becomes world-wide and permanent, what we have known as literature must come to an end. ...For writing is largely a matter of feeling, which cannot always be controlled from outside. It is easy to pay lip-service to the orthodoxy of the moment, but writing of any consequence can only be produced when a man *feels* the truth of what he is saying; without that, the creative impulse is lacking. All the evidence we have suggests that the sudden emotional changes which totalitarianism demands of its followers are psychologically impossible. ...In Italy literature has been crippled, and in Germany it seems almost to have ceased. The most characteristic activity of the Nazis is burning books. And even in Russia the literary renaissance we once expected has not happened, and the most promising Russian writers show a marked tendency to commit suicide or disappear into prison. (Orwell, 1968, pp. 135–137)

To a considerable extent, Orwell was known for his hostility to fascism, which was the reason he volunteered for Spanish War. According to John Newsinger, “people on the left did not have any illusions about Hitler, but they did have considerable illusions about Stalin; this was his starting point” (Rodden, 2007, p. 116). John Newsinger notes as follows:

This neglect of Fascism on his part was made easier by the belief that he came to share towards the end of the 1930s that the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany were beginning to converge, that they were becoming similar kinds of society, some sort of bureaucratic collectivism. (Rodden, 2007, p. 116)

He also points out that “this is, of course, the notion that informs *Nineteen Eighty-Four*” (Rodden, 2007, p. 116). As the features and true intentions of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union became evident in the late 1930s, Orwell realized that fascism and communism were two sides of the same coin. Witnessing the post-war period was crucial for Orwell to write *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, as during that period Hitler and Mussolini were overthrown after their defeat in World War II. This, of course, made

room for the consolidation of communism under the leadership of Stalin. By that time, Orwell's views on totalitarianism and world politics were sufficiently well-defined in a way as to let him write such a significant work as *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Thus, the overriding motives for writing *Nineteen Eighty-Four* stem from his experiences in the Spanish Civil War, the Soviet Union's Great Purges and executions, Nazi and communist propaganda, the Tehran Conference's 1943 resolutions, wartime shortages, and the destruction in London.

2.4. James Burnham and Hannah Arendt

In his essay "Second Thoughts on James Burnham" (1946), Orwell refutes the erroneous assumptions of the American political theorist James Burnham about "power worship" and politics, criticizes his works, and summarizes his thesis of *The Managerial Revolution* as follows:

Capitalism is disappearing, but Socialism is not replacing it. What is now arising is a new kind of planned, centralised society which will be neither capitalist nor, in any accepted sense of the word, democratic. The rulers of this new society will be the people who effectively control the means of production: that is, business executives, technicians, bureaucrats and soldiers, lumped together by Burnham, under the name of 'managers'. These people will eliminate the old capitalist class, crush the working class, and so organise society that all power and economic privilege remain in their own hands... The new 'managerial' societies will not consist of a patchwork of small, independent states, but of great super-states grouped round the main industrial centres in Europe, Asia, and America... Internally, each society will be hierarchical, with an aristocracy of talent at the top and a mass of semi-slaves at the bottom. (Orwell, 1998, pp. 268–269)

In his book *The Managerial Revolution*, Burnham argues that "in the short period since the First World War a new society had emerged in which a social group or class of manager" had waged a "drive for social dominance, for power and privilege, for the position of ruling class" (Burnham, 1941, p. 71). For Orwell, Burnham's theory is "only a variant." He notes that Russophiles, people who harbor admiration and affection for Russia, belong to the "managerial" class. He also notes as follows:

They [the Russophiles] are not managers in the narrow sense, but scientists, technicians, teachers, journalists, broadcasters, bureaucrats, professional politicians: in general, middling people who feel themselves cramped by a

system that is still partly aristocratic, and are hungry for more power and more prestige. (Orwell, 1998, p. 282)

Nevertheless, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*'s society, to some extent, is akin to Burnham's one that he predicted and resembles the features of the society of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia, where dominance and control are in the hands of a technocratic ruling elite that exercises a considerable role in the economy, while the middle class enjoys some privileges and advantages at the expense of the lower class, which is deprived even of its bare-minimum basic daily needs for survival. According to Goldstein's fictional book "*Oligarchical Collectivism*," "the essential structure of society has never altered," and the world, whose goals are irreconcilable, is divided into 3 main parts: "The High, the Middle, and the Low" (Orwell, 1980, p. 853). The structure of Oceania's society, in which the High strive to maintain their rule and power, the Middle strive to "change places with the High," and the goal of the Low—if they have goals at all because of their oppressive circumstances—is to narrow the gap between them and the other classes and strive for equality, is overwhelmingly fixed (Orwell, 1980, p. 860). The traits that characterize the Middle in Oceania are overwhelmingly similar to their counterparts in the society of Soviet Russian, where the Russophiles, who are considered Middle, are "hungry for more power and more prestige" (Orwell, 1998, p. 282). They seized power, exploited the Low, turned the life of the aristocratic class upside down, and formed a managerial oligarchy, whose essence of rule is not "father-to-son inheritance" and "who yields power is not important, provided that the hierarchical structure remains always the same" (Orwell, 1980, p. 863).

As already indicated, Goldstein's book "*Oligarchical Collectivism*" bears remarkable similarities to James Burnham's analysis of Soviet Union. Thus, Orwell's mentions of Goldstein's "*Oligarchical Collectivism*" are not pulled out of thin air, as they considerably can be seen to a considerable extent as an explicit embodiment of Burnham's ideas in *The Managerial Revolution*. The social stratifications in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* consist of the High, which dominate everything, the Middle, which serve the High and are called "semi-slaves," and the Low, which enjoy absolute subservience to the Middle and High and are considered "slaves." Burnham's ideas in the aforementioned book, however, express his predictions about society and its new

structures, whereas Orwell's aim is not to predict but to warn of the menaces of totalitarian regimes on society.

Orwell was influenced not only by Burnham's thoughts but also by Hannah Arendt's. Hannah Arendt (1906-1975) is a German-born American political theorist, who wrote the book *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951), in which she examines the roots of Nazism and Stalinism, the politics and history of totalitarianism, and argues that totalitarianism is a "novel form of government," which "differs essentially from other forms of political oppression known to us such as despotism, tyranny and dictatorship" (Arendt, 1973, p. 460). She also argues that totalitarian regimes "demand unlimited power," which can be secured "if literally all men, without a single exception, are reliably dominated in every aspect of their life" (Arendt, 1973, p. 456). The fact that "all men are reliably dominated in every aspect of their life" is fully embodied in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, where members of society are monitored by wall-mounted telescreens that record every single moment they experience and give them orders to follow (Arendt, 1973, p. 456). Arendt also asserts the totalitarian states' need for "organized loneliness," which "threatens to ravage the world as we know it" (Arendt, 1973, p. 478).

2.5. Features of Totalitarianism

2.5.1. Loneliness

Loneliness is an essential element for totalitarian states that seek to instill inhibition into their societies. Such undesirable loneliness is abundant in the world of Oceania, where systemic isolation is prevalent, human communication is scarce, and Winston-like individuals find themselves permanently lonely and significantly isolated despite the presence of large crowds around them. Winston's crisis, epitomized by his lack of communication, does not subside unless he meets clandestinely with Julia. Loneliness in Oceania is characterized by the fact that people feel lonely. Furthermore, loneliness is characterized by people feeling lonely and having a sense of detachment, depression, and social anxiety. For example, when Winston and other workers in the department where he works gather in front of the huge telescreen during the Two

Minutes Hate, silence dominates them without uttering even a single word even though they sit next to each other. Moreover, the possibility of being alone is stifled when every member of the party is excessively surrounded by telescreens that constantly say, “BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU.” As a result, emotions are neglected and overwhelmed by fear. Such systemic and organized isolation is based on intimidation of the masses and is likely carried out to avoid any collective attempts to undermine the security of the nation and instill gullibility in the masses. Arendt states that “what prepares men for totalitarian domination in the non-totalitarian world is the fact that loneliness has become an everyday experience” (Arendt, 1973, p. 478).

2.5.2. Falsification of Truth

On the other hand, an essential aspect of the totalitarian elite is that it “never compares the lies with reality,” and its leader seeks to “assure the ultimate victory of lie and fiction over truth and reality” (Arendt, 1973, p. 385). Accordingly, in Oceania, where literature, reports, books, films, and even any individual piece of information are subject to rectification in departments set up for the purpose. Individuals who keep records of the past are likely to be annihilated. Thus, control of the past increases the possibility of controlling the future, and control of the present paves the way for control of the past. Moreover, the shape of lie becomes reality and inscribes a new history which later becomes the sheer truth. What distinguishes man from a machine is that the former behaves on the basis of its consciousness, while the latter behaves as it is taught to behave. Similarly, people in Oceania who work for the Party are taught to do the required tasks and are left with nothing but blind obedience. For example, the protagonist Winston, while dissatisfied with the tasks assigned to him, is compelled to complete those tasks in a way that rectifies records when necessary and annihilates any news that might threaten the future of the party and Big Brother and run counter to the party policy.

The Party’s efforts to fill people’s days with false promises, statistics, and empty rhetoric are the main characteristics of totalitarian regimes that seek to abstract the feelings of the masses. The Party has tight control over the masses, including hiring spies that penetrate deep into people’s privacy, which is fictional, tends to watch Party

members more than anyone else, and digs into every single thought they may even think. However, the Party and the totalitarian rulers are phobic about the possibility of being overthrown. Arendt claims that totalitarian rulers “feel more threatened by their own than by foreign people” (Arendt, 1973, p. 119). Therefore, the manipulation, elimination and alteration of the past, subversion, the exercise of tyranny, the control and even alteration of language, the censorship of literature, the waging of genocidal campaigns, the commission of crimes against humanity, the distortion of truth, and the misleading, unobjective propaganda that Arendt notes are ubiquitous in Orwell’s Oceania. Orwell points out in this regard:

From the totalitarian point of view history is something to be created rather than learned. A totalitarian state is in effect a theocracy, and its ruling caste, in order to keep its position, has to be thought of as infallible. But since, in practice, no one is infallible, it is frequently necessary to rearrange past events in order to show that this or that mistake was not made, or that this or that imaginary triumph actually happened.Totalitarianism demands, in fact, the continuous alteration of the past, and in the long run probably demands a disbelief in the very existence of objective truth. (Orwell, 1956, p. 371)

In this context, Winston’s duties, like those of the rest of the staff in the other departments, include the rectification of common dates and statistics, disposal of subversive content, reformulation of news that seem to contradict the status quo, and obliteration of scraps of waste paper bearing anti-party ideas by throwing them into “memory holes,” which serve as a medium for transferring embarrassing documents to “hidden furnaces where the original copies” are destroyed (Orwell, 1980, p. 767). The mechanism of memory holes is described as follows:

[T]his last was for the disposal of waste paper. Similar slits existed in thousands or tens of thousands throughout the building, not only in every room but at short intervals in every corridor. For some reason they were nicknamed memory holes. When one knew that any document was due for destruction, or even when one saw a scrap of waste paper lying about, it was an automatic action to lift the flap of the nearest memory hole and drop it in. (Orwell, 1980, p. 764)

Accordingly, with totalitarianism’s pursuit of infallibility, the constant need to adjust reality becomes a must. The mention of the numerous slots called memory holes indicates how sensitive the Party is to the possibility that an employee might inadvertently or even deliberately forget some scrap of paper with anti-party content that might undermine the security of the State in one of the halls or corridors of the

building. That is, having such an enormous number of slots eliminates the existence of anything that must disappear.

Despite the assigned tasks Winston constantly does in Records Department in the Ministry of Truth, including annihilating news, producing fake news, destroying history, and blurring past memories, he loathes what he does every day. The same is probably true for the rest of the staff in the various departments of the Ministry. The only outlet for the tremendous amount of anger, outrage, and disgust is writing in the diary, which was the first thing that he purchased from Mr. Charrington's shop. For Winston, the diary and the pen bear a high profile for a reason; "the beautiful creamy paper" deserves to be "written on with a real nib instead of being scratched with an ink-pencil" (Orwell, 1980, p. 746). Since writing thoughts in a diary or expressing them in any form is considered a *Thoughtcrime* that can lead to death and "is not a thing that could be concealed for ever" (Orwell, 1980, p. 753), Winston feels that he is doomed from the start and will be caught by the *Thought Police* sooner or later. Thereby, writing his thoughts in a diary is a remarkable outlet through which he expresses his anti-party ideas and his rebellion against the monolithic leader Big Brother. In this regard, Bernard Crick asserts the importance of "the authenticity of memory, thus the diary: the attempt to write the diary begins the main thread of the plot, in which private memory is defended against the official attempts to rewrite history; and these become parallel themes" (Rodden, 2007, p. 152). To express one's anti-party thoughts in that way, to be antagonistic to the Party's policy, and to carry out what the Party dictates to them by destroying objectivity in a short time would create an inevitable internal conflict, fuel it, and entrench a sense of contradiction in their minds. To clarify the authentic nature of totalitarianism and truth, Terry Eagleton points out in his book *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* as follows:

Gross deception, whitewash, cover-up and lying through one's teeth: these are no longer sporadic, regrettable necessities of our form of life but permanently and structurally essential to it. In such conditions, the true facts — concealed, suppressed, distorted — can be in themselves politically explosive; and those who have developed the nervous tic of placing such vulgar terms as "truth" and "fact" in fastidiously distancing scare quotes should be careful to avoid a certain collusion between their own high-toned theoretical gestures and the most banal, routine political strategies of the capitalist power-structure. (Eagleton, 1991, p. 379)

2.5.3. Doublethink

Thoroughgoing contradictions are common in Oceania. They are not limited to changing beliefs, but also to adopting contrary beliefs that cannot be tolerated. In Oceania, this policy is called “*Doublethink*,” which means accepting two opposing ideas as true at the same time, adopting such salient slogans as “WAR IS PEACE,” “FREEDOM IS SLAVERY,” “IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH,” and “Two plus two make four” (Orwell, 1980, pp. 745, 790). According to Winston, “*Doublethink*” is described as follows:

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, to repudiate morality while laying claim to it, to believe that democracy was impossible and that the Party was the guardian of democracy, to forget whatever it was necessary to forget, then to draw it back into memory again at the moment when it was needed, and then promptly to forget it again: and above all, to apply the same process to the process itself. That was the ultimate subtlety: consciously to induce unconsciousness, and then, once again, to become unconscious of the act of hypnosis you had just performed. Even to understand the word ‘doublethink’ involved the use of doublethink. (Orwell, 1980, p. 763)

In view of the foregoing, *doublethink* is a systematic method which makes it necessary to understand logic illogically and to absorb its meaning unconsciously in a world where terms are misleading and oxymorons are abound. In Oceania, there are 4 ministries whose names imply both contradiction and *doublethink* and contradict the nature of the activities carried out in each of them: the Ministry of Peace, where the Party promotes war conspiracies; the Ministry of Love, where hatred and torture reign; the Ministry of Truth, where distorted truths and falsified statistics reign supreme; and the Ministry of Plenty, which is distinguished by its preoccupation with deprivation and scarcity. Moreover, the word “BLACKWHITE” has two contradictory meanings:

Applied to an opponent, it means the habit of impudently claiming that black is white, in contradiction of the plain facts. Applied to a Party member, it means a loyal willingness to say that black is white when Party discipline demands this. But it means also the ability to BELIEVE that black is white, and more, to KNOW that black is white, and to forget that one has ever believed the contrary. (Orwell, 1980, p. 864)

Concerning *doublethink*, Orwell notes as follows:

The Ministry of Peace concerns itself with war, the Ministry of Truth with lies, the Ministry of Love with torture, and the Ministry of Plenty with starvation. These contradictions are not accidental, nor do they result from ordinary hypocrisy; they are deliberate exercises in DOUBLETHINK. (Orwell, 1980, p. 866)

The principle of *doublethink* is significantly correlated with the adoption of dissonant thoughts in order to serve the interests of the Party. Holding clashing thoughts may lead to a state of being inconsistent in thoughts, attitudes, or even beliefs. This state is called “cognitive dissonance,” which causes people to feel mental discomfort because they hold two or more conflicting beliefs. Consequently, conflicting thoughts can cause people to stand apart from the absolute truth they need in order to think smoothly and make a conscious decision based on logical reasoning. They can also foster a schizophrenic or frozen mindset through which it is difficult to achieve direction toward solving a problem or even healthy thinking.

Such inconsistency in thought and rapid change in determining actual enemies and threats happened in 1939 when Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union agreed to sign German-Soviet Nonaggression Pact, each guaranteeing the other’s peace for the next 10 years. However, since politics knows nothing but the language of interests, efforts to maintain peace between the 2 countries soon faded when Nazi troops invaded the Soviet Union in 1941. Nazi Germany then went from being an ally to a formidable enemy, and hospitality turned to enmity overnight. Similarly, such colossal shifts take place in Oceania, whose enemy is significantly vaguer. When Winston was arrested and asked about Oceania’s enemy, “I remember that until only a week before I was arrested, we were not at war with Eastasia at all. We were in alliance with them,” he says, “The war was against Eurasia. That had lasted for four years” (Orwell, 1980, p. 885). Such an abrupt shift in enemy determination is epitomized in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* when “merely it became known, with extreme suddenness and everywhere at once, that Eastasia and not Eurasia was the enemy” (Orwell, 1980, p. 851). Accordingly, it seems that enemies are inconsistent. Rather, they can become volatile and change unpredictably. In his essay “Inside the Whale,” Orwell notes as follows:

Every Communist is in fact liable at any moment to have to alter his most fundamental convictions, or leave the party. The unquestionable dogma of Monday may become the damnable heresy of Tuesday, and so on. This has happened at least three times during the past ten years. (Orwell, 1940, p. 165)

2.6. Newspeak Language

Since *Doublethink* deals with contradictory ideas, language is considered as the main source of ideas. Therefore, devising a manipulative language and restricting its grammar by applying syntactic changes, replacing words with abstract ones, and oversimplifying concepts to the point where words become meaningless is a must. Therefore, an intentionally confusing language, whose syntax is limited to a limited range of vocabulary that does not include subversive connotations that would evoke a sense of rebellion, revolution, or even acts of violence, is called *Newspeak* and used in Oceania “to DIMINSH the range of thought” (Orwell, 1980, p. 918). *Newspeak* is reminiscent of the language of Houyhnhnm, which has a limited vocabulary in Jonathan Swift’s 1726 satirical novel *Gulliver’s Travels*. In Oceania, *Newspeak* is developed to serve the goals of the Party, and all party members are compelled to learn it because it is the language of communication and news. Syme, a philologist and specialist working to compile the Eleventh Edition of the *Newspeak* Dictionary, has a primary job that is not limited to “inventing new words” but also “destroying them [words] —scores of them, hundreds of them, every day,” including “cutting the language down to the bone” (Orwell, 1980, p. 772). Diminishing the range of thought by destroying language and filling it with rigid meanings can limit the range of thinking of the masses. To deprive the masses of thought is thereby to dehumanize them and unconsciously determine their status as obedient to the ruling regime. Syme says, “In fact there will be no thought, as we understand it now. Orthodoxy means not thinking—not needing to think. Orthodoxy is unconsciousness” (Orwell, 1980, p. 774).

The control of language by totalitarian regimes suggests that a great calamity would befall literature and language because literature is filled with creative, meaningful, and expressive thoughts. This tragedy leads to a decline of language, about which Orwell comments in his essay “Politics and the English Language” (1946) as follows:

[One] ought to recognize that the present political chaos is connected with the decay of language, and that one can probably bring about some improvement by starting at the verbal end. If you simplify your English, you are freed from the worst follies of orthodoxy. ... Political language – and with variations this is

true of all political parties, from Conservatives to Anarchists – is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind. (Orwell, 2000)

Orwell's dissatisfaction stems not only from his concern about language decay but also from the fact that language is being oversimplified and emptied of meaningful vocabulary and complex thoughts. Instead, language is replaced by meaningless abstractions and filled with rigid meanings that fit the doctrine of the ruling regime. The words *better*, *splendid*, and *excellent* are replaced by some abstract words such as "plusgood" or "doubleplusgood" (Orwell, 1980, p. 773). Moreover, vocabulary is classified into 3 types that diminish the range of thinking and expressing ideas: the A, B, and C vocabularies.

Orwell grew up with a keen awareness of the power of language and devoted the last literary works of his life to exposing the endeavors of governments to control minds through the manipulation of political language and to harness it as a means of domination. Political manipulation pervades when any encroachment on individual freedoms is justified through the dissemination of misleading news, the fabrication of facts, the falsification of statistics, the pursuit of cunning evasive tactics, and the overuse of metonymy, euphemistic expressions, and pretentious diction. Thus, *Newspeak* is deployed to serve the Party's ideology in a way to cover the Party's lies with the veneer of truth, which Orwell has repeatedly sought to expose through an eternal, long-standing legacy of revealing the intentions of totalitarian regimes over the years. Emphasizing political euphemisms and their vagueness, Orwell in his essay "Politics and the English Language" (1946) notes as follows:

Political language has to consist largely of euphemism, question-begging and sheer cloudy vagueness. Defenseless villages are bombarded from the air, the inhabitants driven out into the countryside, the cattle machine-gunned, the huts set on fire with incendiary bullets: this is called *pacification*. Millions of peasants are robbed of their farms and sent trudging along the roads with no more than they can carry: this is called *transfer of population* or *rectification of frontiers*. People are imprisoned for years without trial, or shot in the back of the neck or sent to die of scurvy in Arctic lumber camps: this is called *elimination of unreliable elements*. (Orwell, 2000)

2.6.1. Euphemisms

“Euphemism” is not a recent word, but its definition dates back to the seventeenth century when Thomas Blount included it in his *Glossographia* in 1656. The use of euphemisms to disguise the truth and manipulate people’s minds is commonplace nowadays. For example, the 10-warhead missile was called a “peacekeeper” by the former US President Ronald Reagan. Moreover, some “attacks” on specific targets have been replaced by “active defense,” “nuclear weapons” by “anti-personnel weapons,” torture by “enhanced interrogation techniques,” “targeted killings” by presidential-ordered drone assassinations, and wounded and killed civilians by “collateral damage” (Astore, 2016). The use of figurative language and bloated, vacuous writing is not limited to contemporary politics, but also to the last century. For example, euphemistic terms were used in World War II when the atomic bombs were called “Little Boy” and “Fat Man” (Wellerstein, 2015). Moreover, there is no doubt that concentration camp¹, which was later used to describe Guantánamo Detention Camp, is one of the most notable metonymies, if not in the history of politics.

Orwell’s embodiment of language manipulation in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is not out of thin air. His keenness drove him to figure out the manipulation of language during his life and write a variety of words used as abbreviations and euphemisms in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. For example, “prolefeed” refers to “rubbishy entertainment and spurious news, which the Party handed out to the masses,” “MINIPAX [Ministry of Peace]” refers to the Ministry of War, and the word “JOYCAMP” refers to forced-labor camps (Orwell, 1980, p. 921). The use of euphemisms tends to obscure unsavory truths, obfuscate and deny incriminating acts. In Oceania, the abolition of people is associated with the word “vaporize,” meaning that the wanted suddenly disappear, especially at night under obscure conditions, including the erasure and removal of their names from registers and the denial of their existence (Orwell, 1980, p. 777).

¹ Concentration camp refers to “a place where large numbers of people (such as prisoners of war, political prisoners, refugees, or the members of an ethnic or religious minority) are detained or confined under armed guard—used especially in reference to camps created by the Nazis in World War II for the internment and persecution of Jews and other prisoners” (“Concentration Camp,” n.d.).

Since totalitarian regimes seek to distinguish themselves from other regimes such as imperialism and capitalism, social classes in Oceania are not divided into upper, middle, and lower classes. Instead, they are named as follows: the Inner Party, Outer Party, and Proles. Moreover, the use of abbreviations of words is prevalent to narrow down the range of meaning and avoid misunderstanding when reading. “NAZI, GESTAPO, COMINTERN, INPRECORR, AGITPROP” are examples of the “telescoped” words used by the Inner Party (Orwell, 1980, p. 922). Whereas “the words COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL, for instance, call up a composite picture of universal human brotherhood, red flags, barricades, Karl Marx and the Paris Commune,” the word “COMINTERN, on the other hand, suggests merely a tightly-knit organization and a well- defined body of doctrine” (Orwell, 1980, p. 922). The use of abbreviations also involves obscuring and even destroying some undesirable concepts, such as truth, peace, love, and plenty. Such concepts are replaced by abbreviated names: “Minitrue, Minipax, Miniluv, and Miniplenty” (Orwell, 1980, p. 745). Such abbreviations are used intentionally. Once words are abbreviated, their meanings narrow and change, and their associations shrink. Thus, vagueness expands, and the perception of such vague words is hardly possible for observers and readers.

2.6.2. Newspeak and Literature

As the Inner Party in Oceania attempts to alter language and replace it with *Newspeak*, this wave of changes involves altering the language of literary works. Thus, literature loses its cultural and historical value, its pithy meanings, and its influence on readers, if any. The loss of literature denotes nothing but the process of demolishing the past, which is simply the aim of the Party. In this regard, anticipating lurid, hazardous speculations about the future of literature under totalitarian regimes, Orwell, in his essay “Prevention of Literature” (1946), notes as follows:

[B]ut apart from newspapers it is doubtful even now whether the great mass of people in the industrialized countries feel the need for any kind of literature. They are unwilling, at any rate, to spend anywhere near as much on reading matter as they spend on several other recreations. Probably novels and stories will be completely superseded by film and radio productions. Or perhaps some kind of low grade sensational fiction will survive, produced by a sort of conveyor-belt process that reduces human initiative to the minimum. ...

Anything so produced would be rubbish; but anything that was not rubbish would endanger the structure of the State. ...Imagination – even consciousness, so far as possible – would be eliminated from the process of writing. (Orwell, 1956, p. 376)

The Party's endeavors involve changing language, stripping literature of its authentic values and aesthetics, and replacing it with a monotonous, mind-numbing cultural content that suits the Party's policies, which are directed by a party, namely the Ministry of Truth, in which culture is not only reconstructed but also put at the service of the Party's interests. In Oceania, the Ministry of Truth provides Party members with "newspapers, films, textbooks, telescreen programmes, plays, novels-with every conceivable kind of information, instruction, or entertainment, from a statue to a slogan, from a lyric poem to a biological treatise, and from a child's spelling-book to a Newspeak dictionary" (Orwell, 1980, p. 767). On the other hand, the proles are supplied with "the lowest kind of pornography" and "rubbishy newspapers containing almost nothing except sport, crime and astrology, sensational five-cent novelettes, films oozing with sex, and sentimental songs" (Orwell, 1980, p. 768). The five-cent novelettes provided to the proles conjure up images of five-cent weeklies and even pejoratives that are written to portray superficial literary works and call up to mind low-cost dime novels, which were prevalent in the late nineteenth century. The Ministry of Truth's endeavors that boil down to satisfy the false needs of the masses and render the masses docile are reminiscent of the concept of *culture industry* (German: Kulturindustrie) coined by Max Horkheimer (1895-1973) and Theodor Adorno (1903-1969). Horkheimer and Adorno, who are critical theorists, suggest that popular culture resembles "a factory producing standardized cultural goods—films, radio programs, magazines—that are used to manipulate mass society into passivity" (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2002). In this regard, Booker suggests that "Orwell's Ministry of Truth functions as the official organ of an Adornian Culture Industry that seeks to interpellate individual subjects within the ideology of the Party" (Booker, 1994b, p. 79).

2.7. Role of Telescreens

The Ministry of Truth and the omnipresent telescreens that function to maintain the security of the state and inculcate the ideology of the state in the masses are

reminiscent of the ideological state apparatus of Louis Althusser (Booker, 1994b, p. 79). The telescreens are a pivotal means by which the Party promotes every policy and issues instructions and directives that would dominate the masses to make room for unilateral, frivolous, and conformist mindsets that acknowledge nothing but blind allegiance. The duty of the ubiquitous telescreens is not only to dictate instructions, but also to ensure that the tasks assigned to Party members are performed to the fullest potential. When Winston Smith makes a lukewarm effort at morning exercises, his half-heartedness warrants a harsh rebuke when “the shrewish voice” from the telescreen yells, “6079 Smith W.! Yes, YOU! Bend lower, please! You can do better than that. You’re not trying. Lower, please! THAT’S better, comrade. Now stand at ease, the whole squad, and watch me” (Orwell, 1980, pp. 763–764).

Telescreens excel at manipulating statistics and pouring them into the minds of the masses. They incessantly supply people with false statistics to prove that “people today had more food, more clothes, better houses, better recreations—that they lived longer, worked shorter hours, were bigger, healthier, stronger, happier, more intelligent, better educated, than the people of fifty years ago” (Orwell, 1980, p. 786). People are informed that there was “more of everything except disease, crime, and insanity” to boost the credibility of the Party among people (Orwell, 1980, p. 777). In this regard, such policies adopted by the Party guarantee the allegiance of the public and ensure that people would not seek to question their dilemma. Consequently, the Proles and the vast majority of the Party members frequently attend the filthiest places such as pubs, where garrulous people play the dart and talk about lottery, which is people’s “delight, their folly, their anodyne, their intellectual stimulant” (Orwell, 1980, p. 793), the stench of “urine, sawdust, and sour beer” overwhelms all over the place (Orwell, 1980, p. 792). The disappointments of the Proles are consoled by the fact that the Party provides them transient entertainment. Thus, rebellion is avoided, and obedience is entirely assured. Yet, Orwell keeps hope and faith with the Proles’ potency and ability to cause radical changes that would revolutionize and even uproot the Party, saying, “If there was hope, it MUST lie in the proles” (Orwell, 1980, p. 783).

2.8. Orwell and the Proles

Orwell's ardent faith in the support and advocacy of the Proles is hardly surprising. He places hopes in them and portrays their suffering, the dilemma they face, and his support for them in many of his literary works. He also believes that it is incumbent upon them to overcome their fears and stand united in any predicament they find themselves in. He is also dedicated to exposing the dire consequences of the unjust practices of the middle and upper classes towards the Proles. The characters in most of his literary works, including *Down and Out in Paris and London* (1933), *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937), and *Homage to Catalonia* (1938), are characterized by sharing the suffering of hardship, destitution, war, and dismal life, and by being manipulated by the ruling parties that govern the societies in which they live. In *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* (1936), for example, Gordon Comstock is portrayed as a middle-class person who relinquishes his role as a copywriter for the New Albion Company because he perceives money as an 'overarching dependence' and abandons it. In *Coming Up for Air* (1939), George Bowling, a 45-year-old lower-middle-class insurance salesman, seeks refuge in his birthplace Lower Binfield after reflecting disillusionment with his job and dreary life in order to escape World War II looming on the horizon and recapture his idyllic childhood. Most of the conditions of the personas in Orwell's works resemble each other. What distinguishes some of them is that they are middle class and have no genuine affiliation with the upper class. This indicates how life under the rule of the prejudiced upper class is fraught with challenges and difficulties that keep people under constant fear and conflict.

Similarly, the traits of the characters in the aforementioned works are akin to the character of Winston Smith, who constantly perceives reality with fear and trepidation, lives with the possibility of impending doom and carries self-destructive thoughts that keep him imprisoned and helpless before any action that might lead to his being vaporized. What distinguishes the protagonist of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Smith, from the other protagonists in Orwell's works is not only that he belongs to the middle class and works for the ruling party, but also that he has an invaluable affiliation with the Proles and the destitute. He firmly believes in their rights and just cause and seeks to support their cause, but clandestinely. Despite the apathy of the Proles and the fact that they are deliberately driven to be degenerate, ignorant, thoughtless, and self-

indulgent, Smith twice states, “if there is hope,” “it lies in the proles” (Orwell, 1980, p. 783). His 2-clause subjunctive statement palpably reflects his fervent belief that the Proles someday, albeit after a long time, will rise up against the injustice of the Party and overthrow it, that they will be cognizant of their dire straits and predicaments in which they are held captive, and that the Proles are part and parcel of possible drastic changes on the political level.

Despite the degree of poverty and degradation they have reached, Winston believes that the Proles are still human, unlike Party members, whose lives have turned into machines. Stripped of their human emotions, party members perform their assigned tasks and obey the Party, which triggers a massive dehumanization of society with no possibility of questioning or even think about the status quo. Orwell describes the Proles as follows:

They were not loyal to a party or a country or an idea, they were loyal to one another. For the first time in his life he did not despise the proles or think of them merely as an inert force which would one day spring to life and regenerate the world. The proles stayed human. They had not become hardened inside. (Orwell, 1980, pp. 841–842)

Although Smith appreciates the humanity of the proles and the fact that they are not bereft of their feelings, he is cognizant of that their rising from their slumber is implausible and that their thorny cause is as far-fetched as it is seemingly dead-ended. As Winston wanders the slums, he observes their conditions closely, attempting to find an explanation for the Proles’ sinking into servility and indulgence in trivial matters. He also considers the possibility of rising up against the Party. He notes, “Until they become conscious, they will never rebel, and until after they have rebelled they cannot become conscious” (Orwell, 1980, p. 784). By reflecting on the appalling conditions in which the Proles are kept, Orwell reveals the reasons behind the impossibility of their rebellion as follows:

Left to themselves, they had reverted to a style of life that appeared to be natural to them, a sort of ancestral pattern. They were born, they grew up in the gutters, they went to work at twelve, they passed through a brief blossoming period of beauty and sexual desire, they married at twenty, they were middle-aged at thirty, they died, for the most part, at sixty. Heavy physical work, the care of home and children, petty quarrels with neighbors, films, football, beer, and, above all, gambling filled up the horizon of their minds. To keep them in control was not difficult. (Orwell, 1980, pp. 784–785)

Orwell later notes that:

From the proletarians nothing is to be feared. Left to themselves, they will continue from generation to generation and from century to century, working, breeding, and dying, not only without any impulse to rebel... They could only become dangerous if the advance of industrial technique made it necessary to educate them more highly ...What opinions the masses hold, or do not hold, is looked on as a matter of indifference. They can be granted intellectual liberty because they have no intellect. (Orwell, 1980, pp. 863–864)

Regarding Smith's attitude toward the Proles, his genuine ambivalence toward their political potential is tinged with suspicion. As he once states, "If there is hope," "it lies in the proles" (Orwell, 1980, p. 783) and suspects the Proles' potential for rebellion, a sense of genuine disappointment at the absence of even a slight possibility of their rise lurks underneath his skepticism. The fading spirit of revolution among the Proles, as portrayed among the miners in the northwest of England, may be attributed to the availability of "cheap luxuries," including fish-and-chips, art-silk stockings, tinned salmon, cut-price chocolate, the movies, the radio, strong tea, and the football pools, which the Party exploits as an "astute manoeuvre" (Orwell, 2001, p. 117).

However, the motive behind Smith's ambivalence towards the Proles is that Smith, as a middle-class member of the Inner Party, sets himself from the Proles. Resch argues that "Class prejudices separate Winston from the values of social equality and moral community, and place him, however reluctantly, on the side of elitism" (Resch, 1997, p. 156). The scope of Smith's superiority over others also extends to Syme and Parsons, who belong to the Outer Party. On the other hand, Smith finds his way in O'Brien. Resch claims that "As he is unconsciously repelled by the inferiority of the Proles and other members of the Outer Party, Winston is unconsciously attracted to O'Brien, from whom he seeks recognition as a fellow superior individual" (Resch, 1997, p. 170). Associating Smith's elitism to that of Orwell, Resch argues that Orwell's perception of the potential of the working class is based on human decency and moral community, whereas potential for thought and action is limited only to the middle class, as Orwell believes (Resch, 1997, p. 164).

2.9. Aspects of Technology

When mentioning the conditions of the beginning of the last century, what first comes to mind is the tremendous development on the technological and scientific levels. The prevailing technology and heavy industries harnessed to keep people under control and suppress any possibility of rebellion in World War I and World War II inspired Orwell to depict a future world and speculate about the dire consequences for the rest of the world. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the Party not only attempts to keep the masses occupied with cheap luxuries and manipulate language, but also painstakingly monitors the behaviors and daily activities of individuals around the clock by mounting huge, sophisticated telescreens and microphones that put people, especially Party members, under surveillance. The idea of technology being in the hands of a totalitarian regime terrifies Orwell and leaves nothing but destruction and tyranny. The technologies in Oceania are harnessed to track the movements and activities of Party members and to intrude on their body language, facial expressions, and heartbeats. Thus, privacy is blatantly violated in the Oceanian society. Orwell demonstrates the eyes of the Big Brother and the extent to which privacy is being dismantled as follows:

[O]n the other face of the coin the head of Big Brother. Even from the coin the eyes pursued you. On coins, on stamps, on the covers of books, on banners, on posters, and on the wrappings of a cigarette packet—everywhere. Always the eyes watching you and the voice enveloping you. Asleep or awake, working or eating, indoors or out of doors, in the bath or in bed—no escape. Nothing was your own except the few cubic centimetres inside your skull. (Orwell, 1980, p. 758)

In light of the fact that they are tracked and monitored, Party members must not demonstrate any sign that might arouse suspicion, such as a gesture or an expression of discontent. Otherwise, suspected individuals face interrogation, which usually only ends in imprisonment and execution. Accordingly, the telescreens leave no opportunity for individuals to express their dissatisfaction. Being interrogated in front of the telescreens is reminiscent of the English philosopher and social theorist Jeremy Bentham's panopticon prison, a circular prison in which a control system is implemented to allow prisoners to be watched by a single guard standing in a central watchtower. The panopticon, as a metaphor, serves as the basis of Michael Foucault's social theory of Panopticism presented in his book *Discipline and Punish*. Similarly, the panopticon can serve as a metaphor for the Big Brother, who constantly watches

every single individual living in a virtual prison in Oceania. The purposes for which technology is harnessed in Oceanian society suggest that technology and science are politicized and used for malign intentions, such as the suppression of human rights. Booker claims that “the politicization of science and technology in this society has, in fact had a suffocating effect on science itself” (Booker, 1994b, p. 70).

Apart from the modern technologies employed in telescreens, the level of technology and science in Oceania is underdeveloped. This is probably due to the principles of the Inner Party, which O’Brien holds to be incontrovertibly true. He claims that the Party makes “the laws of Nature” (Orwell, 1980, p. 896). He also claims that the laws of the universe, gravity, and nature are questionable because the Party is the sole authority, by which facts are determined since matters are in the mind. He also claims that “We [the Party] control the matter because we control the mind” and that if the Party deems it appropriate (Orwell, 1980, p. 896), the fact that “the earth is the center of the universe. The sun and the stars go round it” is considered an absolute truth according to the Party (Orwell, 1980, p. 897).

2.9.1. Technology and Birth of Ignorance

One aspect of harnessing technology to the Party’s interests is the utilization of modern technology in the Oceanian Fiction Department, where Julia works on novel-writing machines that produce novels and books that are considered nothing more than “a commodity that had to be produced, like jam or bootlaces” (Orwell, 1980, p. 820). If literature resulting from irrational thinking is produced by people, whose overriding objective is to implement the Party politics, which are the main reason for the sheer ignorance of the masses, it probably means that this literature lacks spirit, innovation, and vision. The novel-writing machines are reminiscent of “the knowledge engine” from Jonathan Swift’s 1726 novel *Gulliver’s Travels*, in which the most ignorant people — referring to the ruling powers — have control over the production of knowledge most easily through their machines and modern technologies. Swift remarks as follows:

Every one knew how laborious the usual method is of attaining to arts and sciences; whereas, by his contrivance, the most ignorant person, at a reasonable

charge, and with a little bodily labour, might write books in philosophy, poetry, politics, laws, mathematics, and theology, without the least assistance from genius or study. (Swift, 2005, p. 171)

Similarly, Oceania's novel-writing machines systematized for knowledge production aim to corrupt people by providing widely-read cheap, purposeless literature.

2.10. Architecture and Hegemony

In addition to the use of technology for espionage and eavesdropping purposes, what is most striking in Oceania is the architectural design of the residential quarters of the Inner Party, the Outer Party, and the Proles. The physical environment plays a crucial role in Orwell's dystopia and is no less important than the psychic environment. Bernstein points out, "Orwell's dehumanized world is not only the psychic environment that oppresses the individual, but the physical environment as well. For the architecture of Orwell's 'future' function as a metaphor of totalitarian repression" (Bernstein, 1985, p. 26). The architectural design of each of the Ministries of Truth, Love, Plenty, and Peace suggests control and superiority over the Outer Party and the Proles, as the appearance and space of the four ministries "dwarf the surrounding architecture that from the roof of Victory Mansions you could see all four of them simultaneously" (Orwell, 1980, p. 745). The Ministry of Truth, which is impregnable to the extent which "a thousand rocket bombs would not batter it down" (Orwell, 1980, p. 758), is described as follows:

Startlingly different from any other object in sight. It was an enormous pyramidal structure of glittering white concrete, soaring up, terrace after terrace, 300 metres into the air. From where Winston stood it was just possible to read, picked out on its white face in elegant lettering, the three slogans of the Party:

WAR IS PEACE

FREEDOM IS SLAVERY

IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH

(Orwell, 1980, pp. 744–745)

Bernstein, in "Architecture of Repression," refers to the Ministry of Truth as "Ledoux-like" and states that "architecture became an analogy of power" (Bernstein, 1985, p. 26). Bearing the shape of the pyramid is recognizable because of the close relationship between the shape of the pyramid and its connotations, as the pyramid symbolizes

individuality, authority, power, superiority, privilege, and transcendence. The description of the Ministry of Truth as “Ledoux-like” is also significantly striking, as Claude Nicolas Ledoux is a French architect known for French Neoclassical architecture.

In the same vein, but far more frightening, there is the Ministry of Love. From the outside, it is “a place impossible to enter except on official business, and then only by penetrating through a maze of barbed-wire entanglements, steel doors, and hidden machine-gun nests” (Orwell, 1980, p. 745). From the inside, it is crammed with “high-ceilinged windowless cell with walls of glittering white porcelain” (Orwell, 1980, p. 872). What sets the Ministry of Love apart is the overwhelming white color, including the white porcelain, the white lights, and the men dressed in white. The white color lends a sense of coldness, starkness, and isolation. However, it can also signify cleanliness, freshness, and blankness. The white color and the name of the Ministry of Love are closely related. Anyone brought into the Ministry of Love for interrogation is either vaporized by having their names removed from the registers and their records expunged, or brainwashed into having a white slate, loving Big Brother, and becoming receptive to every principle established by the Party. “Brainwashing” suggests the obliteration or erasure of someone’s existence, so does “vaporized.” The white color connotes death. The interrogators who are responsible for the dials used to torture citizens in the Ministry of Love wear white coats. To better illustrate how white signifies cleanliness and blankness, one must examine what O’Brien says to Smith in the Ministry of Love. He says, “Nothing will remain of you, not a name in a register, not a memory in a living brain. You will be annihilated in the past as well as in the future. You will never have existed” (Orwell, 1980, p. 890). He goes further to say:

By the time we had finished with them they were only the shells of men. There was nothing left in them except sorrow for what they had done, and the love of Big Brother. It was touching to see how they loved him. They begged to be shot quickly so that they could die while their minds were still clean. (Orwell, 1980, p. 890)

The Inner Party districts, where luxurious, clean houses predominate and the telescreens are turned off far away from the chatter and raving, are characterized by “the whole atmosphere of the huge block of flats, the richness and spaciousness of everything, the unfamiliar smells of good food and good tobacco, the silent and

incredibly rapid lifts sliding up and down,” and “the white-jacketed servants hurrying to and fro” (Orwell, 1980, p. 843). Though he is obsessed with the possibility of being evicted from the neighborhood where O’Brien lives by black-uniformed guards, Winston is astonished at the “softly-carpeted” passageway of O’Brien’s flat, whose “cream papered walls and white wainscoting” are “exquisitely clean” (Orwell, 1980, p. 843). He is also amazed by the “long-shaped and softly lit” room and the “dark-blue carpet” that gives one “the impression of treading on velvet” (Orwell, 1980, p. 843). The obsessions that haunt Smith denigrate his middle-class status and make him feel inferior to O’Brien who belongs to the Inner Party.

In contrast to the conditions of the elite Party, the conditions of the middle class/Outer Party are miserable. The hallways of their buildings smell of “boiled cabbage and old rag mats” (Orwell, 1980, p. 743). Each comrade, trapped by the telescreens, works constantly day and night in cramped cubicles in the “windowless hall, with its double row of cubicles and its endless rustle of papers and hum of voices murmuring into speakwrites” (Orwell, 1980, p. 767). On the other hand, the Proles are considered inferiors. They are also hemmed in and confined to the lousiest, sequestered neighborhoods and “sordid colonies of wooden dwellings like chicken-houses,” which bring to mind the “vistas of rotting nineteenth-century houses, their sides shored up with barks of timber, their windows patched with cardboard, and their roofs with corrugated iron” (Orwell, 1980, p. 744). Their houses are also open to airplane attacks and bombs and are reminiscent of “the corrugated roofed shanty towns on the fringe of today’s Brasilia [favelas]” (Bernstein, 1985, p. 26).

In a world where there is no privacy between individuals, Mr. Charrington’s upstairs rented room, where Winston and Julie clandestinely meet, serves as a motif aligned with Winston’s vain dreams and hopes. The architectural features of that room, which has a fireplace, an armchair, a kettle, a bed, an outdated glass clock, a small bookcase, a carpet, and a picture or two, evoke a kind of nostalgia in Winston and make him think that such a room is “meant to be lived in” (Orwell, 1980, p. 799). What is noticeable is a framed picture that contains a building that used to be a church, which seems to have been repurposed for “a museum used for propaganda displays of various kinds” (Orwell, 1980, p. 801). Similarly, churches and places of worship in Soviet Union have been desecrated, repurposed or converted for museums, cinemas,

entertainment venues, detention centers, prisons, and even headquarters. This suggests that Orwell was cognizant of the assaults against houses of worship and other places during Soviet Union.

2.11. Orwell's Nostalgia for Pre-war Period

Orwell's nostalgia for the pre-war and pre-revolutionary period is one of the predominant themes in Orwell's works, including *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, in which Winston has a growing desire to search for any object that reminds him of the past and the pre-revolutionary period, where his childhood was full of warmth and joie de vivre. In addition, *Coming Up for Air's* George Bowling muses on the pre-war period and attempts to evoke his idyllic childhood innocence. That the theme of nostalgia dominates Orwell's literary works prompted numerous authors, such as Warburg, to claim, "He [Orwell] didn't like progress; he preferred the old ways, the traditional ways" (Coppard et al., 1984, p. 194), attributing this to Orwell's "allegedly backward-looking character" (Brooker, 2006, p. 281).

That Orwell dislikes progress and is not a tech enthusiast, as Warburg and Brooker claim, may seem questionable in relation to Orwell's attitude toward technology and science, since nostalgia is distinctly understood as a sentimental longing for a bygone era. Orwell witnessed the massive changes in technology and science harnessed by world powers in World War I and II. These included the use of atomic bombs as a lethal weapon, scientific racism, and the displacement of millions of people who were made homeless as a result. He also experienced the tremendous changes that took place after World War I and World War II and witnessed the misery and devastation that followed them. Therefore, the longing for the times of peace is reasonable in light of what he experienced, and the allegations made against Orwell may be implausible. In his novel "Charles Dickens," in which he expresses his disappointment at the misuse of technology and progress by totalitarian regimes, Orwell remarks as follows:

Progress is not an illusion, it happens, but it is slow and invariably disappointing. There is always a new tyrant waiting to take over from the old-

generally not quite so bad, but still a tyrant. ...The moralist and the revolutionary are constantly undermining one another. (Orwell, 1940, p. 31)

2.12. ARTSEM and Loneliness

One of the most important methods used by totalitarian regimes to break the bonds of relations between people in Oceania is *ARTSEM*, or the so-called artificial insemination, which dates back to 1790 by the Scottish surgeon John Hunter. The Party, which leads the organization Junior Anti-Sex League, where Julia works, strives to substitute sex with artificial insemination and advocates “complete celibacy for both sexes” (Orwell, 1980, p. 781). The Party’s efforts to replace sex with artificial insemination ensure cutting off communication during sexual intercourse between Party members, who have no single opportunity to communicate with humans and ruminate over social matters. The Party also strives to eradicate pleasure and joy in sexual intercourse and considers sexual intercourse as a once-a-week “duty to the Party” to procreate and produce children, who in turn, when they grow up, join the Party to be indoctrinated to spy on their parents, “report their deviations,” convey the messages of enemies, and detect the rebels (Orwell, 1980, pp. 782, 822). The implementation of *ARTSEM* is nothing but a step towards the dissolution of ties between members of society and the politicization of sexuality, which is understandably a social activity. This in turn prevents individuals from enjoying their relationships. Heinz C. Luegenbiehl claims that *ARTSEM* is “a way of doing away with sexual and, therefore individually human, contact between the sexes” (Luegenbiehl, 1984, p. 292).

The limited relationships that result from *ARTSEM* thus lead to loneliness, recalling Arendt’s suggestions about totalitarian regimes’ need for “organized loneliness,” which “threatens to ravage the world as we know it” (Arendt, 1973, p. 478) and is a sine qua non for the creation of totalitarian governments. In *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Arendt also claims that the chief values of totalitarian regimes are “dictated by labor,” that “the relationship with the world as a human artifice is broken,” and that isolated man is therefore “no longer recognized as *homo faber* but

treated as an *animal laborans* whose necessary “metabolism with nature” is of concern to no one” (Arendt, 1973, p. 475).

Since there is a “direct intimate connexion between chastity and political orthodoxy” (Orwell, 1980, p. 822), the sexual impulse is considered perilous to the party and is closely associated with disloyalty and rebellion. Hence, the Party seeks to abolish the possibility of meaningful relationships between Party members in order to gain the sheer obedience of individuals and mobilize their energies rather than waste them in sexual intercourse. “When you make love you’re using up energy, and afterwards you feel happy and don’t give a damn for anything,” states O’Brien (Orwell, 1980, p. 822). Instead, “all this marching up and down and cheering and waving flags” requires bursting energy that can only be mustered by extinguishing the sexual impulse (Orwell, 1980, p. 822).

Winston’s love for Julia and his desire to bond with her are not a coincidence. In addition to her life skills, Julia’s interest in sex matters in that Winston believes deep in his heart that Julia’s desire to date him counts as courage and rebellion against the Party. For Winston, the fact that Julia indulges in promiscuous sex and is “being corrupt to the bones” brings him a great relief because “the more men you’ve had, the more I love you,” Winston tells Julia (Orwell, 1980, p. 817). By having a relationship with Julia through which he finds an outlet, Winston rebels against the Party and achieves political emancipation. Winston picking a large bouquet of bluebells before his first arranged meeting with Julia is a manifestation of his rebellion against the Party, as picking roses and presenting them to a lover is a romantic gesture that is considered a violation of the Party’s policy. Interestingly, Orwell mentions the word “bluebells” 5 times in Part Two, Chapter Two, which is the shortest chapter in the novel. “Bluebells,” a word that symbolizes permanence and gratitude, is made up of “blue” and “bells.” While the former refers to the blue color, the latter could refer to church bells, as Winston and Julie meet in “the belfry of a ruinous church” (Orwell, 1980, p. 819). Whether the “bluebells” motif refers to church bells, this suggests that Orwell desires to indicate that the absence of churches and their bells is deliberately systematized. While churches and their bells call the faithful to worship, the presence of the Big Brother eliminates all other worship. This indicates that worship of the “semi-divine leader” Big Brother is indispensable (Orwell, 1980, p. 858). On the other

hand, Winston and Julie have sexual intercourse “among the fallen bluebells,” indicating that freedom lays beneath them both (Orwell, 1980, p. 817).

In Oceania, Orwell depicts a society in which sexuality is radically repressed. This conjures up what Sigmund Freud claims in *Civilization and Its Discontents*, “It is impossible to overlook the extent to which civilization is built up upon a renunciation of instinct, how much it presupposes precisely the non-satisfaction (by suppression, repression or some other means?) of powerful instincts” (Freud, 1930, p. 24). The party in Oceania does not repress sexuality, but applies the Freudian repressive hypothesis to “deny the fulfillment of sexual desire to its subjects” (Booker, 1994b, p. 75). However, the French Philosopher Foucault challenges the repressive hypothesis and appears to consider sexuality as “a matter of power and thus as a potential tool of oppression” (Booker, 1994b, p. 156). Foucault suggests that modern society does not strive to repress sexuality but to “administer sexuality and turn sexual energies to its own advantage” (Booker, 1994b, p. 12).

In other words, sexuality is not regarded as an enemy or opposition, but as a turning point in favor of the Party. Pleasure and power “do not cancel or turn back against one another; they seek out, overlap, and reinforce one another” (Foucault, 2012, p. 48). For Foucault, the idea that sexuality was repressed in Western society from the seventeenth to the twentieth century due to bourgeois society is questionable. Instead, he argues that the repression of sexuality leads to a “steady proliferation of discourses concerned with sex” in society (Foucault, 2012, p. 18). In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the future of sexual discourse has a bleak outlook. Sexual discourse refers to the kind of knowledge that can be gained about sex, the extent to which sex can be talked about, and by whom it is talked about. As a result of the Party’s practices of suppressing sexuality in Oceania, the population of Oceania is whipped into a hysteria that is tamed for the worship of the Party.

2.13. Religion and Worship of Big Brother

In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the party manifesting divine power seems to be marked by religious undertones. During Winston’s interrogation, O’Brien, who oversees Winston’s torture, declares that “We are the priests of power...God is power...

Power is collective” (Orwell, 1980, p. 896). In the light of O’Brien’s obvious references to religion, this is reminiscent of the rule of a god. In other words, Oceania is ruled by a theocratic state, the Party. In regards to the Big Brother, it seems that his existence is opaque and even questionable, leaving Winston perplexed when he asks O’Brien about the Big Brother’s existence and how he exists as Winston does exist, “of course he exists. The Party exists. Big Brother is the embodiment of the Party ... You do not exist,” O’Brien answers (Orwell, 1980, p. 893). What O’Brien says, along with the Big Brother’s slogans such as “BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU” (Orwell, 1980, p. 744), increases the likelihood that the Big Brother does not exist in the way that other Oceanian people do.

The world of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* consists of 3 super-states, representing three different philosophies, of whose teachings the citizens of these states are “not allowed to know anything of the tenets”: Oceania, where INGSOC rules, Eurasia, where Neo-Bolshevism rules, and Eastasia, where “Death-Worship” rules (Orwell, 1980, p. 858). Most notably, the three super-states whose “lives are dedicated to world conquest” “cannot conquer one another” and “would gain no advantage by doing so” (Orwell, 1980, p. 858). Since the world is dominated by 3 super-states that know that “It is necessary that the war [between them] should continue everlastingly and without victory” (Orwell, 1980, p. 858), the number 3 is reminiscent of “three Abrahamic religions: Islam, Judaism, and Christianity,” which are the three main religions of the world and indulged in a perpetual fierce struggle (Dowty, 2017, p. 2).

It is noteworthy that Jones, Aaronson, and Rutherford, who are convicted of their involvement in treasonous conspiracies and espionage for the benefit of Goldstein, who is considered a counter revolutionist, traitor, and conspirator, bear names whose origins trace to other religions. The name “Emanuel” is of Hebrew origin and means “God is with us,” the name “Jones” is similar to some names that evolved from Hebrew, such as “Johan,” and “Aaronson,” meaning “son of Aaron”, is a Jewish patronymic name. The aforementioned characters are the everlasting non-existent thought criminals through which the Party, during the Two Minutes Hate, provides the Outer Party members an outlet for their hatred, malice, and anguish. During Two Minutes Hate, Winston figures out that the Big Brother is a God-like figure who is regularly worshipped, as he observes a woman whispering, “My Saviour!” she

extended her arms towards the screen. Then she buried her face in her hands. It was apparent that she was uttering a prayer” (Orwell, 1980, p. 752). What is remarkable is how religious rituals, which are reminiscent of Catholicism and Holy Week, are exercised during the Two Minutes Hate.

In Oceania, it is noteworthy that religion, whose main aim is to consolidate the existence of the Big Brother, is exploited to mobilize the masses and form a collective that is employed as a striking force in front of any enemy, even if it is fictitious and non-existent. Following this interpretation, Kumar notes that “the oblique reference to a long-enduring religious collectivity underlines the point that modern dictatorships realize that the greatest power comes from its collective embodiment and exercise,” stating that “individuals are merely the temporary representatives and agents of the Party, which is ‘all-powerful and immortal’” (Kumar, 1991, p. 338-339). When religion is at the helm of a totalitarian state, it means that society, its energies, and the loyalty of the population are devoted exclusively to the Party. O’Brien states that “Power is collective” (Orwell, 1980, p. 896). In consonance with the above interpretations, Winston’s sickening disgust towards the Party and its religious rituals could be portrayed as a man losing his faith in God and finding that religion no longer has any validity in society.

2.14. Crimestop

While *ARTSEM* is a means of preventing sexual relations, *CRIMESTOP* is a form of psychological manipulation and an effective method of ensuring that the Party is immune to any threat to its survival. *CRIMESTOP* is a self-imposed mental process that refers to accepting and adopting contradictory beliefs, attitudes, or ideas and “not seeing or not understanding the arguments” that contradict them (Orwell, 1980, p. 905). In his history book *The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism*, Emmanuel Goldstein defines *CRIMESTOP* from his perspective as follows:

Crimestop means the faculty of stopping short, as though by instinct, at the threshold of any dangerous thought. It includes the power of not grasping analogies, of failing to perceive logical errors, of misunderstanding the simplest arguments if they are inimical to Ingsoc, and of being bored or repelled by any

train of thought which is capable of leading in a heretical direction. *Crimestop*, in short, means protective stupidity. (Orwell, 1980, p. 864)

The Party attaches great emphasis on the necessity of preventing and repressing any subversive personal or political thoughts that might thwart its plans or even harm its unity by implementing *Crimestop*. As a result, children in Oceania are the main victims of *Crimestop*, as they are used to spy on their parents who are inimical to the Party's interests. Parsons, though proud of his young daughter who denounces him, gets arrested after saying "Down with Big Brother!" in his sleep (Orwell, 1980, p. 877). Not to mention its impacts, *Crimestop* is reminiscent of *cognitive dissonance*, which refers to the psychological stress and discomfort that result from holding clashing attitudes or thoughts about something.

Crimestop also recalls the Vladimir Lenin All-Union Pioneer Organization, the Young Pioneers, which targeted children aged 9-15 in the Soviet Union, offering them social cooperative activities and paving the way for a new generation to adopt a collective way of life in order to indoctrinate children into a "selfless new man." A schooling theorist states:

We must make the young into a generation of Communists. Children, like soft wax, are very malleable and they should be moulded into good Communists... We must rescue children from the harmful influence of the family... We must nationalize them. From the earliest days of their little lives, they must find themselves under the beneficent influence of Communist schools... To oblige the mother to give her child to the Soviet state – that is our task. (Figes, 2007, pp. 20–31)

Young generations are educated to collective principles and values that guarantee the loyalty of future generations to the government and ensure compliance with its orders. This is done through summer camps, publicly funded social activities and school curricula so that children come to a high level of systematic awareness and are saturated with good thoughts. Such social activities, through which children are "encouraged to police the teachers for anti-Soviet views" (Figes, 2014, p. 197), are used by governments as a method of capturing the minds of youth. They also aim to recruit children and reinforce their mentalities with benign qualities, such as loyalty, non-rebellion, obedience to laws and orders, and sacrifice for the sake of the state or the ruling party. Similarly, children in Oceania are exposed to "lectures, parades, songs, slogans, martial music," and "rubbish" that is "dinned into them [children] in

the Spies and Youth League” (Orwell, 1980, p. 782). Such systematized activities aim to indoctrinate children and shape their minds for espionage purposes. Winston’s neighbors, the Parsons, have two children who are 2 and 9 years old. Although their children are still very young, they have already been indoctrinated to the point of holding toy guns and uttering phrases that surpass the expectations, including “Up with your hands!” “You’re a traitor!” and “You’re a thought-criminal! You’re are a Eurasian spy! I’ll shoot you, I’ll vaporize you, I’ll send you to the salt mines” (Orwell, 1980, pp. 755–756). The Parsons’ children are also motivated to see the hanging, where some “Eurasian prisoners, guilty of war crimes” are “hanged in the Park” (Orwell, 1980, p. 756). When they are not able to see the hanging, they “do get so noisy” and “disappointed” (Orwell, 1980, p. 756). This is to incite the children to catch enemies and rebels of the Party. It is particularly noticeable that the 2 children are “dressed in the blue shorts, grey shirts, and red neckerchiefs,” which are “the uniform of the Spies” (Orwell, 1980, p. 755). This is reminiscent of the Young Pioneers in the Soviet Union, who used to wear light blue pants and red neckerchiefs as their official uniform.

2.15. Decline of Individuality

Unsurprisingly, the curtailment of individuality is prevalent in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. The decline of individualism is evident in *Newspeak* being introduced to limit the scope of thought, *ArtSem* being implemented to eliminate emotion and pleasure, and *Crimestop* being enforced to discard subversive thoughts that would pose a threat to the existence of the Party. In order to eliminate individuality, the Party ensures that Party members have no spare time and are “never alone except in bed” (Orwell, 1980, p. 791). Therefore, Party members participate in “some kind of communal recreation: to do anything that suggested a taste for solitude, even to go for a walk by yourself was always slightly dangerous” (Orwell, 1980, p. 791). In Oceania, such individuality is referred to as *OWNLIFE*, which considers individualism as eccentricity.

Such communal recreations that involve “the boring, exhausting games, the lectures,” and “the creaking camaraderie oiled by gin” constitute an untenable obstacle for Winston, who always seeks to assert his individuality (Orwell, 1980, p. 791).

Winston's regimented lifestyle drives him to rebel against the Party's collective ideology by keeping a diary that is forbidden to keep, contemplating a new reality that opposes the Party's beliefs, engaging in a sexual relationship with Julia, and refusing to attend Community Center lectures to rebel against the Party, which serves as a threat to his individuality. Instead, he prefers to roam the residential quarters of the Proles alone. What attracts Winston most about Julia is that she tends to rebel against the Party laws by wearing new clothes and makeup. However, what Winston writes in his diary, including "If there is hope," "it lies in the proles" (Orwell, 1980, p. 783), represents the superiority of the Party over Winston's hidden attempts at revolt, as he places his hopes in groups - the Proles - rather than specific individuals.

2.15.1. Individual and Collective Identity

It is worth noting that the theme of individual and collective identity represented by Winston and the Party is pervasive in almost every chapter of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. This reveals how Orwell attempts to demonstrate that the conflict between individualism and collectivism is entrenched in totalitarian society. Unlike Winston and Julia, Oceanian Party members are characterized by internalization conformity, which is the deepest level of conformity. The collective identity of the Party emerges among them and is revered by them. In Oceania, where "a nation of warriors and fanatics, marching forward in perfect unity, all thinking the same thoughts and shouting the same slogans, perpetually working, fighting, triumphing, persecuting — three hundred million people all with the same face" (Orwell, 1980, p. 786), the Party that dominates every aspect of life is called the 'Inner' Party. The word 'Inner' means that the Party is deeply embedded in the inner mind of the Party members. The inner mind is considered to be the main driving force of people and the reservoir of their thoughts, feelings, perceptions, and decisions. According to Isaiah Berlin, "in a society in which the same goals are universally accepted, problems can be only of means, all soluble by technological methods," and "the inner life of man, the moral and spiritual and aesthetic imagination, no longer speaks at all" (Berlin, 2012, p. 15). As a result, when what someone thinks and does is controlled, it is like a process that turns the person into an animal and dehumanizes them. The loss of humanity

prevails and forcing “people into the neat uniforms demanded by dogmatically believed-in schemes is almost always the road to inhumanity” (Berlin, 2012, p. 19).

2.16. Manifestations of Torture

In Oceania, convicted foreign prisoners are considered “a kind of strange animal” and stripped of their humanity (Orwell, 1980, p. 811). On Winston being under brutal torture, Orwell notes as follows:

There were times when he rolled about the floor, as shameless as an animal, writhing his body this way and that in an endless, hopeless effort to dodge the kicks, and simply inviting more and yet more kicks, in his ribs, in his belly, on his elbows, on his shins, in his groin, in his testicles, on the bone at the base of his spine. There were times when it went on and on until the cruel, wicked, unforgivable thing seemed to him not that the guards continued to beat him but that he could not force himself into losing consciousness. There were times when his nerve so forsook him that he began shouting for mercy even before the beating began. (Orwell, 1980, p. 881)

The torture methods utilized by O’Brien to punish and brainwash prisoners, including Winston, are considerably similar to those utilized in the prisons of the Soviet Union, where brutal torture methods were common, especially Sukhanovo Prison (Russian: Сухановская особорежимная тюрьма), Sukhanovo special-regime prison. Sukhanovo Prison was established to torture the deadliest enemies of the Soviet Union. It was also called Comrade Stalin’s Prison, because Stalin’s enemies and opponents were arrested and tortured in it. Forms of torture included sleep deprivation, starvation, and making prisoners stand for weeks in the *kishka*, a kind of high and narrow prison cell so that prisoners could neither sit nor lie down. In *The Gulag Archipelago: An Experiment in Literary Investigation*, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn states that the prisoners of Sukhanovo Prison were consistently tortured, kept in solitary confinement and unheated rooms to freeze, and deprived of sleep. Referring to the harsh conditions of Sukhanovo Prison, Solzhenitsyn notes as follows:

Prisoners were taken to the toilet at 6 A.M. only—i.e., when no one’s stomach needed it. There was no toilet period in the evening. There were two guards for each block of seven cells, so that was why the prisoners could be under almost constant inspection through the peephole, the only interruption being the time it took the guard to step past two doors to a third. And that was the purpose of silent Sukhanovka: to leave the prisoner not a single moment for sleep, not a single stolen moment for privacy. You were always being watched and always in their power. (Solzhenitsyn, 1992, p. 183)

It is noteworthy that Sukhanovka Prison was officially called ‘Special Object 110,’ whose name is quite similar to *Nineteen Eighty-Four*’s accursed interrogation *Room 101*, whose torture conditions are remarkably similar to those of Sukhanovka Prison.

In accordance with the above, it is noteworthy that Orwell’s personal experiences, emotions, authentic imaginations, observations, perceptions, and reflections thoroughly permeated every chapter of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Everything Orwell wrote in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* represents the claustrophobic embodiment of his reactions to the prevailing injustice caused by the ruling powers during his lifetime. His intentions were closely related to the fact that he wanted a “decent and humane world to be created” (Kumar, 1991, p. 293). Most importantly, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is reminiscent of the status quo as it is relevant to the present time and opens the reader’s eyes to how totalitarian regimes operate in the world. Orwell’s meticulous attention to details regarding individual freedom, autonomy, and distortion of truth is evident in every chapter of his novel. This precise attention to such minute details is portrayed in a world that bears a resemblance to the contemporary world where the media censors people’s reality and controls its outputs. Moreover, compared to other dystopias that are replete with science-fiction elements, the setting of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* has no sense of peculiarity and is closely associated with a familiar world. Kumar suggests that by creating such a familiar background of his contemporary time in the novel, Orwell allows readers to capture “a point of contact” or “a sense of familiarity” to warn them of the virulent totalitarian threat to people and states in the mold of a diatribe (Kumar, 1991, p. 297).

In light of the above, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* not only criticizes, questions, and embodies the status quo of totalitarian regimes in the first half of the last century, but also serves as a stern warning to peoples who are apathetic and incapable of resisting the injustices inflicted upon them by totalitarian regimes that relentlessly drain them. Rather than demonstrating utopian societies based on scientific and technological advances, Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and the twentieth-century dystopian fiction that emerged in the 1930s and 1940s attempt to reflect the concerns that arise from the possibility of power falling into the hands of fascist or communist totalitarian regimes. Such totalitarian societies are accompanied by minor, ineffective individual attempts to

change the status quo, which often fail. According to Claeys, the common theme of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is “quasi-omnipotence of a monolithic, totalitarian state demanding and normally exacting complete obedience from its citizens, challenged occasionally but usually ineffectually by vestigial individualism or systemic flaws, and relying upon scientific and technological advances to ensure social control” (Claeys, 2010, p. 109). What perhaps distinguishes *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is the comprehensiveness and relevance of events. It embodies not only the reality of totalitarian regimes of the last century, but also the risks of current totalitarian regimes using numerous methods of harnessing technology and science for malign political purposes in 2021. Such implicit condemnation embodied in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is reminiscent of *The Satires of Horace*, in which Horace says, “Quid rides? Mutato nomine et de te fabula narrator” [Why do you laugh? Just change the name and this story is about you] (Horace, 1848).

3. CHAPTER TWO: *1984 HERE AND NOW*: CALL A SPADE A SPADE

3.1. Introduction

Throughout the ages, numerous impressive literary works have been produced. Some of them, however, have occupied a prominent place in the world of imagination, depicting the reality of the world and sowing the seeds of inspiration in the future visions, encouraging them to adapt such outstanding works to their contemporary societies. One of such works is *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, one of the most influential works that contributes to the dystopian world by raising the threat of a totalitarianism-laden society in an age characterized by political anxiety. Orwell's vision of the dystopia depicted in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* played a significant role in embodying the Malaysian status quo depicted in the play *1984 Here and Now* by Malaysian actor, poet, journalist, and playwright Kee Thuan Chye, whose main ideas are derived from Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Despite the different historical, cultural, and political contexts of the aforementioned literary works, there are numerous similarities in how they both portray the historical, political and cultural contexts.

1984 Here and Now, based on Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and adapted to the Malaysian society, is set in an unfuturistic society where a totalitarian and racist principle-laden regime usurps the rule of the state, in which the Party members and the Proles take place. Unlike *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the play depicts an unnamed country where the "national culture" is based on the "culture of the Party member culture" and the Proles are considered immigrants (Gilbert, 2001, p. 258). In the play, people are disempowered, discriminated against based on their race, oppressed, under surveillance, unable to express their thoughts, and are not entitled to freedom of speech. The Party members, who wield total power, are considered as rulers, the Proles as marginalized servants, and the Kloots, which means "bastards" in Dutch, as common outsiders, threats, and enemies. Similar to *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the people are ruled by an autocrat called the "Big Brother," whom Party members worship. He frequently appears on giant posters bearing the slogan "Long Live Big Brother" and comes to the fore after every incident belonging to the Proles to reveal the Party's

stance on each situation. The non-corporeal appearance of the despot Big Brother, his intrusiveness, and omnipresence are reminiscent of *Nineteen Eighty-Four's* Big Brother.

The play centers on the close liaison between Wiran, a Party member who works as a journalist at a newspaper, and Yone, Wiran's love-interest, an attractive like-minded Prole woman. The trysts of Wiran and Yone transcend the barriers as to threaten the principles of the Party, which disapproves of the union of Party members and Proles. According to the Party's laws, their racial relationship is forbidden because it is considered "immoral proximity" (Gilbert, 2001, p. 262). When a Party member belonging to a native ethnic group falls in love with a Prole belonging to another ethnic group, it is reminiscent of the situation in Malaysia where inter-ethnic and inter-religious marriages were frowned upon in the twentieth century in order to save the Malay culture which had experienced its gradual erosion. Moreover, the rise and resurgence of Islamic radicalism and communalism precluded the emergence of unity between ethno-religious lines. Such lines signify boundaries that likely represent the society in which Wiran and Yone live, as they are portrayed as individuals living in a society ruled by a fundamentalist regime that seeks to undermine any attempt at cultural and racial integration. Their unconditional love leads them to question the growing divide between their ethnicities and seek salvation from such a regime that excludes their shared existence.

To some extent, the society of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* resembles that of *1984 Here and Now*, which is characterized by an intimidating, totalitarian atmosphere. Brutal, arbitrary, and unlawful arrests are carried out by police officers, media and technology that publish news about the government and the Big Brother are harnessed and under dreaded censorship to soften the tone of statistics and news that are published. Moreover, the rights of other ethnic groups or immigrants, such as freedom of speech, are severely suppressed and marginalized as the ruling regime has a high degree of marginalization, and amendments are made to the "Constitution regarding sedition" to save the face of Party members, including "Kala" (Gilbert, 2001, p. 255). Systemic racism is prevalent as unequal opportunities in employment, education, and political power are blatant and falsification of statistics on population figures is commonplace. Moreover, the Big Brother's racially prejudiced speeches claim the

consolidation of democracy, while he is hostile to such kind of democracy as it is conditional and unfair to the Proles:

The Party is supreme. It will strive for the rights of the Party members, for their place of ascendancy in the nation. Party members must unite, one and all with no exception. As for the Proles who have made their homes in this nation, we welcome them to stay. But they must understand that, above all else, the Party members must be kept happy. The Party members must not feel threatened or deprived in this land that is rightfully theirs. When these conditions are fulfilled, and there is unity among the Party members, there will be stability. Peace be with us, comrades. (Gilbert, 2001, p. 255)

What prods the protagonist Wiran to demur and question the decrees of the Party and Big Brother that stand as a hindrance to the unity of the members of society is that he is brought up in an atmosphere of reprimand, insecurity, and racial discrimination. Thus, Wiran's growing disillusionment with the oppression practiced by the Party and lack of conviction in its ideology leads him to join the "Movement For A New Brotherhood," which revives a glimmer of hope for change and "believes in the idea of a truly integrated nation" (Gilbert, 2001, p. 258).

Unlike *Nineteen Eighty-Four's* "legendary Brotherhood," which Winston questions the credibility of its existence and whose goal is to overthrow the Party (Orwell, 1980, p. 783), the Brotherhood of *1984 Here and Now* seeks unity among Party members and the Proles in an attempt to lay the foundation for an integrated nation, in which equal opportunities are provided to members of society based on the "spirit of meritocracy" (Gilbert, 2001, p. 261). The Brotherhood seeks to eliminate dictatorship, "tokenism," "propaganda," and suppression of free speech, and to democratize the Proles and the Party members (Gilbert, 2001, p. 261). It also organizes seminars on democracy and demonstrations. Although the Brotherhood is perceived as impracticable and even over-imaginative, it reflects efforts that serve as an outlet for the Proles and even numerous Party members in an attempt to enhance opportunities for reducing racist practices imposed on the Proles whose rights are violated in a totalitarian society that seeks to expand its control at the expense of the Proles. It is worth noting that the Proles are portrayed as non-Malay immigrants. Similarly, the growing sense of horror at totalitarianism, extremism, blind obedience, racial discrimination, and conformity to the government policies and decrees, which were an

integral part of their aspects of life and ensure nothing but their disillusionment and frustration, drove indigenous Malays and non-Malays to find an outlet and refuge.

The characters in *1984 Here and Now* are divided into three groups: those whose overwhelming majority represent the absolute subordination to the Big Brother-led Administration, “entrust practically everything to the leadership,” conform to Party-imposed policies, and are “accustomed to unquestioning loyalty” (Gilbert, 2001, p. 271), and those whose endeavors stretch beyond questioning and rebelling against the Party’s ideology, who represent the minority. Most of them are characterized by apathy, insouciance, and wretchedness. In this regard, the play reflects the political, social, and historical circumstances of Malaysian society, where most people conform to the government ideology and others, in contrast, are apathetic and committed to change. On the other hand, a limited spectrum of individuals decide to advocate for change, jeopardize their lives, and take the risk of the repercussions of opposition in order to achieve change. Accordingly, despite all the horrifying psychological and physical torture methods, pain, and ongoing investigations, including deprivation of basic human rights such as sleep and using the toilet, Wiran’s refusal to yield to the demands of the interrogators and Shadrin, the First Minister of Truth and Information, who constantly attempts to manipulate Wiran and revert him to an obedient, is emblematic of a huge potential to advocate for change and obtain liberty and peace through the overthrow of totalitarian regimes.

Tarnishing Yone and Barouk’s image and claiming that they are “planted to trap” Wiran, Shadrin’s cunning devious stratagems to subdue Wiran and force him to surrender by bringing a barrage of odious accusations against him, calling him a “diehard dissident,” “clever doublethinker,” and one of the “subversive elements” prove fruitless. Wiran resists all the physical and psychological constraints placed upon him and he refuses to “toe the Party line” like the overwhelming majority of the Party members (Gilbert, 2001, p. 271). Most interestingly, the play wraps up with Wiran liberating himself of the constraints of dictatorship, refusing to conform, looking for Yone, being hounded by the Party Police, fleeing to the audience, and urging them to stand against oppression for the sake of freedom and democracy. As Wiran flees, attempting to hide among and appeal to the audience, Kee Thuan Chye’s use of pathos by appealing to the audience’s emotions is nothing but an attempt to

release from Wiran's entanglement and transform it into a collective predicament. Simultaneously, "sirens," "whistles," "sound of running feet," and "a search spot surveys the auditorium" permeate the stage (Gilbert, 2001, p. 272). As one of the stage's search spot "picks up Wiran on the auditorium," he urges people to act and intervene immediately stating as follows²:

The hope of this nation lies with you! Are you going to sit here and let it go to the dogs? Stand up! Stand up and unite! Party members, Proles, whoever you are, wherever you are. Speak up for your rights! This is a democracy. Stand up for your freedom, for racial equality and integration, for humanity and justice, for truth, for a nation capable of greatness! We all have a stake in this nation! If you believe in all these, say yes! If you love this nation and feel a sense of belonging say yes! You have the power to bring about changes. Unite! Stand up and say yes! Yes, the future lies with you! Yes, you will rise above fear and complacency! Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes! (Gilbert, 2001, p. 272)

Unlike *Nineteen Eighty-Four's* O'Brien, who succeeds in reverting Winston to a conformist, Shadrin never succeeds in inculcating Wiran with the ideology of the Party. Yet, the love theme in *1984 Here and Now*, to some extent, experiences no betrayal, unlike the love theme of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, which ends with Winston and Julia betraying each other and loving the Big Brother.

By applying the framework of cultural materialism, this chapter aims to analyze *1984 Here and Now* as a product of the dystopian genre that transposes George Orwell's dystopian *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, depict various living conditions within a racist totalitarian society, and examine how the contemporary living conditions experienced by the playwright influenced the content of the play. Furthermore, one of the main aims of this chapter is to examine the common and divergent dystopian characteristics of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *1984 Here and Now* through their historical, social, and cultural contexts and the conditions surrounding their contemporary production period. Regarding the basic premises of cultural materialism, the infrastructure influences the other aspects of culture: structure and superstructure. Put differently, the material, technological, demographic, and economic conditions on which society is based shape and influence its values, beliefs, roles,

² The playwright Kee Thuan Chye leaves the audience an inalienable right to self-determination, saying, "It is up to the audience to react as they wish – whether to betray him or protect him" (Gilbert, 2001, p. 272).

culture, institutions, political and economic power structure, artistic production — including literary works — and relationships. This chapter examines how the employment of dystopia in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *1984 Here and Now* differs according to the changing circumstances of each author.

This chapter includes a literary analysis being conducted in the following order: a synoptic comparison of the content of both *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *1984 Here and Now*, setting, the national culture and New Economic Policy (1970), Kee Thuan Chye and the Proles, language, ethnic disintegration and lack of trust, patriarchy and chauvinism, violence against women, Big Brother and manipulation, gamelan music and Wayang Kulit, the omnipresence of Big Brother, propaganda, Shadrin and manipulation, manifestations of torture, endemic religious extremism, and Kee Thuan Chye and the protagonist Wiran.

3.2. Synoptic Comparison

Before proceeding to detailed comparisons in relation to the above, it is significant to draw a synoptic comparison between *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *1984 Here and Now*. Both works have male protagonists, Winston, who works in the Ministry of Information, and Wiran, who is a journalist at an unnamed newspaper. Both are dissatisfied with their status quo as they advocate for change in their societies. They also cling to the legitimate hope that the proles will stand against the ruling party for a better future. Both characters have love-interests, Julia and Yone, who serve as Winston and Wiran's allies in the struggle against the Big Brother.

Whereas Winston lives in the perpetually warring Oceania where bomb explosions are perpetual, lifts seldom work, buildings are dilapidated, clothing is shoddy, food is synthetic, scarce and rationed out, technology is harnessed for surveillance purposes, and a fabricated enemy is exposed to people to keep them in line, Wiran lives in an unnamed country where institutionalized racism is exercised by a totalitarian regime, bonds of trust between interracial groups are severed, kakistocracy, tokenism and racial agitation are ubiquitous, and a fabricated enemy is exposed to the dominant ethnical group to keep them in line against the immigrants. In both *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *1984 Here and Now*, propagandist slogans are

ubiquitous. While *Nineteen Eighty-Four*'s totalitarian state is based on constant surveillance, preventative detention, espionage, and brutal torture, *1984 Here and Now*'s totalitarian state is based on apartheid, administrative detention, and torture. Above all, both works involve entities which are oppositional to the ruling regime, such as the Brotherhood. While *Nineteen Eighty-Four*'s Brotherhood endeavors to overthrow the Inner Party, *1984 Here and Now*'s Brotherhood aims to integrate the Proles/immigrants with Party members/indigenous people. Remarkably, *1984 Here and Now* addresses institutionalized and systemic racism as one of the main themes and deals with topics that bear a social character.

Similar to *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the impact of loneliness and systemic dehumanization is reflected in the disguise of totalitarianism and bureaucracy in *1984 Here and Now*. Whereas the totalitarian ideology in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is led by the Big Brother and O'Brien, the totalitarian bureaucratic political ideology in *1984 Here and Now* is led by the Big Brother and Shadrin, the Minister of Truth and Information. Although the totalitarian political ideology in *1984 Here and Now* is less intimidating than its counterpart in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, every aspect of life from culture, to language, to thought, to daily life are completely governed and controlled by its bureaucratic apparatus. In *1984 Here and Now*, the Proles are totally dominated by the Big Brother's intrusiveness into their everyday life. The Party members monitor the movements of the Party members and the Proles and seek to interfere in their affairs using religion as a pretext. The impacts of such totalitarian regime led by the Big Brother are depicted in the tiger dance, the demonstrations against detention, and the Big Brother's speeches on the national culture. The following paragraphs furnish a more in-depth analysis of the aforementioned themes.

3.3. Setting

With regard to setting, there are similarities and divergences between *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *1984 Here and Now*. Both works are set in the twentieth century. Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* takes place in a fictionalized portrayal of London in an indeterminate time in the future. Since *Nineteen Eighty-Four* was written in 1948, a considerable number of analysts claim that the title *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is an

inversion of the year 1948 and that the details it contains are about the future. However, John Pfeiffer claims the following:

Nineteen Eighty-Four in 1994 continues to be about 1948. It is not about the future actual, but about the future potential. Moreover, because its warning was heard, some things, potentially bad, did not happen...Most individuals are still free to think as they wish. Though there is indeed less freedom of speech! Furthermore, the dictatorships around the planet in 1994 do not seem to be the threats they represented in 1984. Even so, the rewriting of history by states or official historians continues, and it does change the past. A more subtle, but equally mordant threat to an amity in the world community. (Pfeiffer, 1997, p. 237)

As mentioned previously in Chapter II, the aspects of technology in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* are obsolete except for those devoted to the areas of constant surveillance and espionage. Aspects of technology fail to meet the expectations of readers of the novel, since technology is not harnessed to advance social and economic aspects of society where lifts seldom work and dilapidated buildings are ubiquitous, and the absence of marked economic improvements is a case in point. Orwell's employment of technological aspects in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* may be deliberate in a way that makes readers realize the fact that totalitarian regimes acquire the largest share of technology not to advance economic conditions and improve social aspects of society, but to extend and ascertain their control. Compared to *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, there are no substantial improvements in Kee's play in terms of economic or social progress. Instead, the state apparatus is corrupt as it harnesses its technological capabilities to impose severe censorship on the media apparatus, spying on citizens, and employing methods of torture. Unlike Orwell, Kee locates his play in an unnamed country at an unspecified time. Though an ambiguity surrounds *1984 Here and Now's* setting, the Big Brother's speech on "Woeful Wednesday" bring an indication that the events of the play take place in 2006 since he states, "Remember Woeful Wednesday! We have learned from the lesson of the Woeful Wednesday riots of 37 years ago" (Gilbert, 2001, p. 260). By using an unnamed country, Kee is able to prevent the Malaysian authorities from pressing charges against him, as his play can be considered as public incitement to ethnic or racial hatred, thus avoiding legal accountability. He also leaves readers with the realization that every nation in the world is vulnerable to a totalitarian regime based on systemic racism. Since the name of Kee's play *1984 Here and Now* refers to Orwell's visions depicted in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, *1984 Here and Now*

addresses themes like fear, terror, systematic dehumanization, loneliness, the desire to change, and institutionalized racism.

3.4. The National Culture and NEC (1970)

Regarding the national culture, the playwright Kee attempts to demonstrate his rebellion and express his dissatisfaction with the Party's policies by exhibiting unsuitable elements from other cultures, such as the multiethnic tiger dance performed by a multiracial crowd and observed by the Proles in order to challenge the Big Brother and break his hegemonic totalitarian regime. However, the performance is soon thrown into disarray and is brutally broken up by the Party Police, who intervene to disperse the gathering and ask the crowd to stop performing such a dance under the pretext that it is not permitted to be performed. As the "group disbands shouting abuse," the policeman racial uttering, "These Proles. Sometimes they are too much. They act as if they own this nation," denotes how harsh the party's policy is towards such "suitable elements" from the other cultures (Gilbert, 2001, p. 257). It also denotes the extent to which the Party's policy is based on racial prejudice.

Through the inclusion of such a multicultural element, the tiger dance, and the reaction of the policeman who represents the Party's hegemonic attitude towards multiracialism, Kee promotes the inclusive change he seeks to achieve in an ever-widening thorny cultural issue to integrate with Malaysian National Culture. Moreover, Kee's criticism of the policies of the Party and the Big Brother in the play is nothing but an attempt to criticize Muhammad Mahathir, the 4th and 7th president of Malaysia, and the 1971 National Cultural Policy. Interestingly, the verbal altercation between the policeman and the actor during the tiger dance performance is much more incisive. That is, Kee perhaps sheds light on the phenomenon of rampant oppression exercised by the Malaysian government against immigrants of different races, such as the Chinese and the Indians, as the policeman never gives the performer a chance to express his own opinion when he and the Proles are brutally ordered to stop the performance and leave. Kee suggests that he "decided to adapt that to make it [*Nineteen Eighty-Four*] into a conflict of race because at that time was the new implementation of the New Economic Policy [...]. Of course, the idea Of Big Brother,

the Prime Minister, Mahathir” (Rowland et al., 2017). Kee’s allegory of the tiger dance serves as a response to both the National Cultural Policy and the politics of racial segregation between indigenous Malays and non-Malay immigrants originally from India and China.

Jacqueline Lo, a Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the University of Adelaide, suggests that the tiger dance is a parody employed to demonstrate the obstacles and challenges faced by “immigrant” cultures that struggle to establish any relationships, which contribute to the integration of immigrants, with native societies (Lo, 2004, p. 90). Accordingly, Lo suggests that “such symbolic offers of reconciliation are rejected by the authorities that break up the dance and quell the dancers’ demands for ‘a truly united nation’” (Lo, 2004, p. 90). Moreover, Kee’s depiction of the tiger dance highlights the vexatious disappointment of the subordinate groups, which form the minority of the inhabitants, at the prevailing regime’s immoderate uncompromising policies that determine the legitimacy of incorporating suitable cultural elements and traditions, including but not limited to the tiger dance, to become an integral part of and contribute greatly to the Malaysian national culture.

As *1984 Here and Now*’s Big Brother, who does not stand the existence of the Proles and “any view that questions the policy on national culture,” states that “Administration cannot guarantee the tiger dance a place in the national culture” (Gilbert, 2001, p. 258), it is undoubtedly the dominant narrative, the Inner Party, which excels at marginalizing the subordinate immigrants, not only surpass the silenced narrative of the Proles, whose perspectives are silenced as they represent the oppressed, but also denies their narratives. This denial and marginalization of the Proles’ silenced narrative are reflected throughout the play as each and every incident and conversation that relates to the Proles witnesses the interference of either the Party members or the Big Brother who have no tolerance for any attempt to protest against his Administration’s policies.

By abbreviating the conversations of the Proles and the events that relate to them throughout the play, Kee clearly embodies the dominance of the Party and the obscuring of the Proles’ narrative to reflect the consequences of living in a racist totalitarian society where freedom of speech is dead and the rights of minorities are denied, and to expose that such policies and strategies imposed by the Party form the

apparatus of totalitarian ideology and hegemony. Kee's depiction of the hegemony of the Party and its practices is reminiscent of the Italian philosopher Antonio Gramsci's theory of Cultural Hegemony, in which Gramsci states:

[The] previously germinated ideologies become "party", come into confrontation and conflict, until only one of them, or at least a single combination of them, tends to prevail, to gain the upper hand, to propagate itself throughout society—bringing about not only a unison of economic and political aims, but also intellectual and moral unity, posing all the questions around which the struggle rages not on a corporate but on a "universal" plane, and thus creating the hegemony of a fundamental social group over a series of subordinate group. (Gramsci, 1999, pp. 405–406)

Such subordinate group perceives the prevalence of divergent beliefs that are predicated on the 'common sense,' which "Gramsci uses for all those heterogeneous beliefs" that people "encounter as already existing, self-evident truths" (Crehan, 2016, p. x). In the context of *1984 Here and Now*, Kee assumes that the Party's unbridled power and totalitarian race-based ideology empower itself to fulfill its ambitions to shape and later propagate a culture that not only ensures the spread of its constructed culture, but also ensures the systemic marginalization of minor races and cultures by exercising unbridled power over them and depriving them of their fundamental rights. Therefore, the Party guarantees the perpetuation of its racial-cultural hegemony and, in the long run, reinforces the cultural elements imposed upon it, such as values, customs, beliefs, attitudes, and goals. This denotes that the culture, ideology, and language adopted by the Party maintain its dominance, prevent the emergence of other cultures or social, political, and cultural practices that are not part of the dominant culture, and deny their identities and beliefs.

In addition to the tiger dance allegory serving as a cultural element, Kee employs one of the most important socio-cultural elements in the play, the mahjong game. According to *Merriam-Webster* dictionary, mahjong or mah-jongg, of Chinese origin, refers to a tile-based game that has spread around the world since the early 20th century and is usually "played by four persons with 144 tiles that are drawn and discarded until one player secures a winning hand" ("Mahjong," 2021). Being one of the most popular traditional games in East Asia and requiring strategy, skill, and luck, the game of Mahjong is an interactive social game that is rich in numerous profound symbols, such as dragons with the colors white, green, and red, winds, compass,

bamboos, circles, and flowers. While the white dragon signifies blankness “representing the mysterious or the unknown,” the red dragon signifies the “centre or middle, hitting a target and achievement,” and the green one signifies the beginning and plant circle of life (*Mah Jong Symbols*, n.d.). Regarding the bamboos and circles, the pictures bearing the tiles, including but not limited to the Peacock, Duck, Carp, Water, Willow tree, Jade, White Tiger, and Unicorn, represent positive cultural values such as success, peace, progress, diplomacy, lasting partnership, enduring values, authority, and precognition.

The employment of the mahjong game as a cultural element that is full of symbols and carries noble values is not a coincidence, but rather a message that carries a subtle allusion that the cultures of non-Malay immigrants/Proles carry positive values that contribute to the Malay ethnic-national culture. In other words, the point of mentioning such a cultural element is to deal a heavy blow to President Mahathir. Since Kee is of Chinese descent, the employment of such a cultural element, which originally hails from Chinese origins, in his play enables him the opportunity to emphasize his deep desire to impose a different identity and strengthen the bonds of multiracial cultures in an extremist society that only strives for imposing control over its culture and politics.

3.5. Kee Thuan Chye and the Proles

However, the noble values that the Mahjong game holds are not entirely sufficient to express the unity of the Proles among themselves, as their conversations and arguments during the game express the extent of their divergent, intertwined views on the competence of their Prole Party in claiming their usurped rights. The conversations between the 4 mahjong players seem to be marked by desperation, frustration, and political social insecurity. This is evidenced by their conversations, which can be described as ‘gibberish’ or ‘ramblings’ to say the least:

PLAYER 1: Dam bad luck laa. Never get der card I wan. Mus chane place la.

PLAYER 2: Wy you worry? Nex game, der wind will blow your way laa.

PLAYER 1: Wind from your backside la, like der Party.

PLAYER 3: Haiya, doan tok about der Party now la.

PLAYER 4: Ya, bring more bad luck only. I orso cannot game. Look at my card, all split.

PLAYER 2: Like our Prole party lah. Weak like anything. Everything Big Broder say, OK. Like balls shaking in der pants, man. And now, quarrelling some more, der leaders. Wan more power, wan top post. Firs, dey should be more strong to bring our problem to Big Broder. Instead, every time big Prole party meeting, big quarrel. Trow chair some more. No shame la, dese people. Meanwile, our people suffer. Our chiren carn get place in university. Every year, only so many people can go in. Not fair la. Ay, ay, wait, wait! I wan der card. Doan lah play so fas!

PLAYER 3: Ay, doan tok so much la. Chuck your card. Wafor you tok so much? Wa can you do?

PLAYER 4: Cannot do anything lah. Wat to do?

PLAYER 1: Every day, jus come gamble, pass der time, enough lah.

PLAYER 4: Ya, man. Wy boder? We can still do a bit of business, can have mistress, can jolly. Aiya, life is short la, wy worry so much, man?

PLAYER 2: You doan care aah if your son cannot get job in Gahmen office?

PLAYER 4: Cannot get, find oder job lah. Not say cannot get. You got brain, you got arm, you got leg, cannot die one la. Haisay, beautiful card la. Bes in der world! (Gilbert, 2001, p. 257)

During the game, Player 1 and Player 4 ignite the verbal argument between the 4 players by using bad luck as an excuse for their defeat, sarcastically mentioning “der Party [the Administration’s Party]” (Gilbert, 2001, p. 257). Player 1’s response to Player 3 and Player 4’s question of what can be done to gain their educational rights, alleviate their suffering, and represent the Proles in the state due to the inability of the Proles Party, which is “split” and “weak like anything,” suggests that the Proles’ routine is to “jus come gamble, pass der time,” “have mistress,” and “jolly” in coffee shops (Gilbert, 2001, p. 257). Unlike the other players, Player 2 is the only one who spares no effort in expressing the bitterness of suffering and the miserable reality of the Proles in the state. The indifference of the Proles is portrayed in Wiran’s response as he thinks that “the Proles themselves are to blame,” “don’t care enough,” and “won’t do anything to change their situation” (Gilbert, 2001, p. 258).

Kee’s portrayal of the indifference and aloof attitude of the other players, who constitute the overwhelming majority, towards their Party reflects the fact that the vast

majority of non-Malay immigrants are marginalized and lack sufficient unity that can play a significant role in causing tangible change in the disintegrated Malaysian society. The attitudes of the Proles denote that the relations between them and the Proles Party are strained. That is, disintegration of ties between the Proles themselves and their lack of confidence in a party that is unable to meet the Proles' demands and claim their rights prevail. By portraying the majority of the Proles as capable of nothing but ramblings, Kee embodies the fact that the Proles are indifferent to fait accompli and that their political attitudes are circumscribed by the boundaries of a traditional Chinese game, whose symbolic split tiles and complaints of injustice divert their attention from taking a unified stand against the Party and the Big Brother.

The conversations of the 4 players include social and political commentary on state policies imposed on education and opportunity accompanied by superstitions that refer to misfortune and change of place. Such superstitious beliefs lead the 4 players to make irrational decisions and reflect how shallow the mentality of the Proles is in the state, where a simple game can distract them and lead them to use 'bad luck' and change of place as an excuse for loss and victory. Regarding the talks on the fragility of the Proles Party, the consensus of the 4 players on the fragility of their party compared to the ruling Party is tangible evidence of the widening gap between the Proles Party and the Big Brother's Party, which is transcendent and has political clout. Moreover, the 4 player's talks reflect long-standing, unresolved issues, such as inequality in education and work opportunities that enable the Proles to get high-end jobs, such as getting a job in the "Gahmen [government] office" (Gilbert, 2001, p. 257).

The aforementioned issues are reminiscent of the economic, cultural, social, ethnic, and political issues that resulted from the New Economic Policy (NEP) after the May 13, 1969 incident in Malaysia. This policy paved the way for racial segregation and political partisanship under the pretext of improving the status of the Bumiputera³, especially in the areas of education, governance, housing and high-level jobs, and eradicating poverty among the Bumi/Malay population to keep abreast with other races in Malaysian society. However, this policy favored the Malays over the

³ Bumiputera means "son of the soil" and refers to Malay and native indigenous people.

other races, including the Chinese and Indians, who were deprived of their rights as a result of such blatant policies, which were based on patronage politics rather than meritocracy. The reason for favoring the Malays over other races is explained by Ramon Navaratnam, a Malaysian economist and one of those who devised the National Economic Policy (NEP), as follows:

The principle was, have an expanding cake, with more balance and equity provided for Malays or the underprivileged - of all races it was supposed to be... Some politicians got smart about it and wanted to allocate special reservations and shares and stocks and contracts to Malays, and very often it went to the wrong Malays, who had no clue about business. (Brant, 2009)

3.6. Language

In *Here and Now 1984*, the employment of language contributes significantly to Kee's efforts to subvert the significance of the hegemonic authority of the Malaysian national language, or Bahasa Malaysia, which has been recognized as the official language of national culture during the Second Malaysia Plan 1971-1975. Interestingly, Kee raises the cultural socio-political issues prevalent in the society of Malaysian-Chinese by employing the Proles to narrate their constant frustrations in a "broken ME [Malaysian English]" (Baskaran, 1987, p. 53). Although the language of the Proles, who represent the Chinese minority in Malaysian society, is a vernacular, this suggests that Kee's utilization of such a strategy is not a mere coincidence, but rather a method adopted by him to appeal to the emotions of the audience that constitutes Malaysian society. This designates the desire of Kee, who is of Chinese origin, to convey his voice as well as that of the Chinese minority to various segments of society by alluding to their cultural, social, and political issues through their language.

On the other hand, Kee not only presents the disappointments and injustices inflicted on the Proles, but he is also cognizant of the Proles' feebleness of will and their constant indulgence in nugatory activities, such as gambling and grouching, which are not likely to establish a de facto change. Although he is of Chinese origin, he does not refrain from mentioning some of their peculiarities. In other words, criticizing the people of his race is a method to arouse their conscience and highlight

the obstacles that obviate them from standing up to the injustice they face. He also critiques the notion that any denizen of Malaysian society, regardless of race, religion, and language, can be subjected to injustice and deprivation caused by racism and extremism, which do ken neither a time nor a place. Kee portrays his mounting concerns over some aspects of the fear-monger Big Brother's immensely colossal racial politics, which adopt fear-based manipulation strategies that tighten the screws on the state's residents by any means necessary.

While his portrayal of the Proles/Chinese minority may be perceived as conventional, Kee's targeted audience can apperceive the authentic economic, cultural, social, and political dilemmas plagued by the Proles. Through the use of parody and humor in portraying the Proles, Kee fulfills his endeavors to reprehend the Proles/Chinese minority in order to cause change while accentuating their dilemma. On the other hand, such a stereotypical portrayal of the Proles may not be perceived positively by his audience, as it could be perceived as a blatant misrepresentation. If this is the case, it suggests that Kee has "successfully challenged the stereotypical depiction of race among his audience by going against the typical discourse of racial stereotyping" (David, 2016, p. 120).

However, Kee's portrayal of the Proles carries an implicit message that the individuals of the society must be plenary cognizant of their rights, which are indispensable for the improvement of their status, towards a better Malaysian society before an inevitable calamity befalls them. Such a message could imply not only cultural but also socio-political connotations that may designate that they must first rebel against their conditions in society and then realize the extent of the consequent dangers posed to them by the practices of the extremist ruling Party. In other words, Kee seeks to determine the vulnerability of the minorities in the Malaysian society by parodically highlighting their cause in order to advocate for political change that is crucial for eliminating the political power of the state.

In contrast to Orwell, who demonstrates how language is transformed into another form, *Newspeak*, to serve the interests of the Inner Party, Kee, in *1984 Here and Now*, attempts to portray the cultural hegemony of the Big Brother's Party by demonstrating the linguistic distinctions between the Proles and the Party members and highlighting the effect of the linguistic deviations on engendering an

astronomically immense gap between the former and the latter. According to Baskaran, due to linguistic acculturation, Malaysian English consists of three sociolects: “acrolect, mesolect, and basilect” (Baskaran, 1987, as cited in Thirusanku & Yunus, 2012). According to William Stewart (1965), the “acrolect” refers to the most standard, prestigious variety on the continuum, while the “mesolect” refers to “all intermediate varieties” and occupies space in informal situations (Sankoff, 1977, pp. 292, 306). The “basilect,” on the other hand, refers to the most substandard or distinctive variety, which has significant grammatical deviations, is considered “broken ME,” and is characterized by its circumscribed vocabulary and lack of efficiency at the level of communication (Baskaran, 1987, p. 53).

In the context of the Malaysian English language, these sociolects are characterized by their variations in phonology, syntax, and lexis. According to Baskaran’s table of lectal varieties of Malaysian English, the “acrolect,” or standard Malaysian English, is characterized by having “slight variations” and being “internationally intelligible” in terms of phonology, whereas the “mesolect,” or unofficial Malaysian English (dialectal), is characterized by having “more variation - including prosodic features,” especially “stress and intonation” (Baskaran, 1987, p. 53). The “basilect,” or “broken Malaysian English,” on the other hand, has “severe variation” in “both segmental and prosodic” features and is “almost unintelligible internationally” (Baskaran, 1987, p. 53). In terms of syntax, the “acrolect” has “no deviations,” the “mesolect” has “some deviation” which is “acceptable,” and the “basilect” has “substantial variation” (Baskaran, 1987, p. 53). In terms of lexis, an acceptable variation is tolerated in the “acrolect,” whereas “lexicalizations” are “quite prevalent” in the “mesolect,” and “major lexicalization” is “heavily infused with local language items” in the “basilect” (Baskaran, 1987, p. 53).

The sociolect used by the Party members and the Big Brother, according to the above, is called the “acrolect,” as their Malaysian English is utterly standard, is distinguished by its intelligibility, and does not differ far from the British English because it is characterized by inconsiderable variations in phonology and lexis. The “mesolect” mediates between the other sociolects, is characterized by greater variations in linguistic levels, and is perceived as an unofficial Malaysian English that Yone, Wiran’s love-interest, “for a Prole,” speaks “very well” except for her accent

according to Wiran (Gilbert, 2001, p. 260). The Proles' language, on the other hand, is considered "basilect" and is characterized by its unintelligibility, as their language considerably possesses "substantial" variations in most of its linguistic levels — syntax, lexis, and phonology. Thus, by comparing the linguistic distinctions between the Party members and the Proles, Kee succeeds in depicting the cultural gap between the Party members and the Proles and portraying the cultural superiority of the Big Brother's Party, whose members speak the official language, which is the most standard and highest form of Malaysian English language, over the Proles, who speak the broken Malaysian English.

Such a representation of cultural superiority through language enables Kee, in one way or another, to engage the audience of the play in the cultural imagery and the Malaysian domestic political climate, which are tinged with systemic racism and racial segregation embedded in state laws. Such racist acts involve the marginalization of any culture other than Malay and saving the Party members' face by introducing "a new amendment to the Constitution" that grants the Party members immunity from prosecution, as opposed to proles who are subject to administrative detention (Gilbert, 2001, p. 256). Remarkably, the constitutional amendments granted to the Party members are reminiscent of the constitutional privileges granted to the indigenous people of Malaysia under Article 153. Under Article 153 of the Malaysian Constitution, economic and educational opportunities are offered to the indigenous people or the so-called Bumiputera in an attempt to address the economic imbalance between Malaysians and the Chinese minority through the implementation of affirmative action which in turn had subsequently resulted in the marginalization of Chinese, Indian, and other minorities. Moreover, Kee attempts to reflect the cultural hegemony and superiority of the Big Brother's Party to reveal the state policy that prioritizes the so-called national language or Bahasa Malaysia, and the culture of Malays over the language of non-Malays, which is closely associated with Chinese nuances and the cultures of all other ethnicities.

The first meeting between Wiran, a Party member, and Yone, a Prole "member of der Movemen [the Movement for a New Brotherhood]," emphasizes the linguistic differences between two racial groups:

WIRAN: You don't even know me. How can you like me?

PROLE WOMAN: People tok. And I like wat I see.

WIRAN: For a Prole, you speak the language very well. Except for your accent.

PROLE WOMAN: Lots of Proles can speak it well now. (*Awkward silence.*) I wan to work more wit you in der Movemen. (Gilbert, 2001, p. 260)

Yone's English is akin to mesolectal Malaysian English. Apparently, Yone's mesolectal English has slight variations in terms of phonology, has an acceptable range of deviation, and excels in intelligibility as Wiran compliments her linguistic competence, perhaps due to her enlightened mindset and the quality of education she has received. Considering Yone's response to Wiran's compliment, "lots of Proles can speak it well now," Kee perhaps seeks to dispel the prevailing stereotypes about the Proles' level of education and bridge the differences between the two races through language in an attempt to integrate them. On the other hand, Kee probably strives to dispel doubts about the competence of the Proles in mastering the national language, since it is spoken by the Party members as their official language. The character of Yone employed by Kee serves as a definitive response to the Party's systemic racial prejudice, "cultural superiority," and "racial essentialism" (Lo, 2004, p. 87).

By emphasizing the dichotomy of language and the dominance of the standard national language, which refers to Bahasa Malaysia, over colloquial language, which carries Chinese nuances and refers to the Chinese identity, Kee implicitly insinuates that he foregrounds the issues of "cultural superiority" and "racial essentialism" in such a way as to invite the audience representing public opinion to question the concepts of national identity and national language (Lo, 2004, p. 87). Such a fixation and emphasis on the utilization of colloquial English reveal the extent of Kee's intimate knowledge and erudition of the "colourful spectrum of Malaysian English" (Lo, 2004, p. 87). Most notably, the language in *1984 Here and Now* is employed in such a way that the audience's attention is maintained through the extensive use of humor in an attempt to eradicate the orthodox concepts of language, identity, and culture in Malaysian society.

Kee's utilization of the Proles' basilectal Malaysian English and the multi-faceted cultural discourse reflects his endeavors in portraying his contestation over politicized cultural policies imposed by the ruling party, such as National Culture Policy. On the other hand, his portrayal of the acrolectal Malaysian English, spoken by

the Big Brother, high-ranking officials, and the Party members, may suggest that access to educational opportunities as well as senior positions in the “Gahmen office” is tremendously restricted to elite Party members, as they are granted superior constitutional privileges that ensure their superiority over any other race in the state (Gilbert, 2001, p. 257).

The difference in language between Party members and Proles suggests that society in *1984 Here and Now* is stratified into 2 social classes on the basis of culture and race: the Party members, who enjoy high status in the social and class hierarchy of society, and the Proles, who speak a ‘broken’ language that represents the lowest hierarchy. Kee does not highlight the cultural, social, and political issues of the society only in the colonial language, English. Rather, he exploits the use of the Proles’ language to ensure that his audience, who are familiar with that dialect, are familiar with the aforementioned issues in society through critical reflection, questioning the national identity of Malaysia and alluding to what he believes in, “If there is any hope, it lies with you [audience]” and “in you lies the seed of positive change” (Gilbert, 2001, p. 264).

Apart from the linguistic distinctions between the Party members and the Proles, literature policy is met with criticism by Kee. While *Nineteen Eighty-Four* exemplifies Orwell’s reaction to the impact of the practices of totalitarian regimes on the future of literature and language by illustrating the influence of *Newspeak*, Kee embodies his unequivocal position on literature policy, which recognizes “only literature written in Malay as National Literature,” by publishing his play *1984 Here and Now*, which is written in English. Kee reflects the challenges he experienced when he started writing in the late 1970s as follows:

I felt marginalised. I felt writing in English didn’t count for anything because there was a literature policy that recognised only literature written in Malay as National Literature. That written in other languages was considered Sectional or Communal Literature. This was demeaning. As demeaning as the National Culture Policy which stated that it would be based on Nusantara culture (which embraces Indonesian culture, mindyou!) and ‘suitable elements’ of immigrant culture. What did they mean by ‘suitable elements’? Who would decide what was ‘suitable’? Why go afield to Indonesia to incorporate its culture into ours when what is home-grown, albeit non-Malay, is subject to a test of suitability? I felt alienated as a member of the ‘immigrant’ race. I wasn’t made to feel that my writing counted for much. Such discouragement made me question what I

was doing. I even felt guilty and inadequate writing especially in English, the colonial language, in a time of rising Malay neo-nationalism. I didn't feel Malaysian writing in that language. (Quayum, 2005, pp. 136–137)

By publishing a literary work in English, Kee challenges the Malaysian cultural hegemony exemplified by the policies that emerged in the aftermath of 1969 riots. He also questions the suitability of every cultural element that belongs to the nation. While he criticizes the incorporation of the culture of Indonesia and the kakistocratic system of Malaysia, Kee praises Singapore, which “upholds a meritocratic system,” since it “nominates writers from across the language spectrum for its Cultural Medallion and for the SEA Write Award,” unlike Malaysia where writing in Malay is a necessity “to qualify to become a National Laureate or even be considered for the SEA Write Award” (Quayum, 2005, p. 138). Apparently, Kee is frustrated with the kakistocracy and tokenism, which caused him to lose faith in the ruling regime and are obviously reflected in the events of the play.

3.7. Ethnic Disintegration and Lack of Trust

The effects of the above-mentioned distinctions between the Party members and the Proles on the representation of class differences through language dichotomy are illustrated in the scene of a “Prole mother dragging her young son” as follows:

MOTHER: You doan play widem, hnarh. I doan like. You play wit our kind.

SON: I wan, I wan.

MOTHER: You hear wat I say or I beat you.

SON: Wy I carn play widem?

MOTHER: Dey all Party member.

SON: But dey got nice toy.

MOTHER: I doan care. Dey all Party member. You come back. (Gilbert, 2001, p. 257)

According to the aforementioned dialogue, what Wiran witnesses reflects that fragmentation accompanied by lack of empathy and developed connections between residents: the Party members and the Proles in terms of nationality, race, culture, language, and even religion is deeply entrenched in society. Such fragmentation is depicted in the reaction of the Prole mother when she averts her son from playing with the Party member's children by threatening to beat him and telling him, “You doan play widem” and “You play wit our kind” because “dey all Party member” (Gilbert,

2001, p. 257). Most notably, the child's response, "but dey got nice toy" reflects the extent of the gap between the Proles' children, who do not own "nice" toys, and the children of Party members, who possess a far superior atmosphere of luxury because they own nice toys. All of these disparities stem from the Big Brother's unjust, sustainable policies of power, which play a paramount role in crystallizing the immensely colossal distinctions between the Party members and the Proles.

The distinctions depicted in the above-mentioned dialogue reveal that certain economic and social issues, such as ethnic stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination, are deeply engrained in Malaysian society. Such issues, especially racial stereotyping, contribute significantly to the rise of ignorance and bigotry, which in turn leads to severe social and political disorders, social disintegration, and societal distrust of members of other ethnic groups. The reaction of the Prole mother and her insistence that her son should not play with the Party members indicates her absolute distrust of any social activity involving the Party members. This matter alone may lead future generations in society inexorably into a vicious cycle, where disintegration and dispersion are ubiquitous as a result of the policies of the Big Brother, who always desires to impose his control by pursuing procedures that promote social disintegration between members of different races. The procedures pursued by the Party are reminiscent of Foucault's claim in *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse of Language*:

I am supposing that in every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organized and redistributed according to a certain number of procedures, whose role is to avert its powers and its dangers, to cope with chance event, to evade its ponderous, awesome materiality. (Foucault, 1976, p. 216)

According to the sociologist Lara Lessa, Foucault's definition of discourse in *Archeology of Knowledge* (1972) is summarized as "systems of thoughts composed of ideas, attitudes, courses of action, beliefs and practices that systematically construct the subjects and the worlds of which they speak" (Lessa, 2005, p. 285). By tracing the role of discourse in the legitimation of social power, Foucault accentuates the construction of contemporary truths, their power relations, and the methods by which the truths are maintained. In *1984 Here and Now*, the production of discourse is "controlled, selected, organized and redistributed" on the basis of a "certain number of

procedures” pursued by the Big Brother and his Party (Foucault, 1976, p. 216). Such procedures maintain the Big Brother’s efforts to perpetuate the dissemination of racial differences among the inhabitants of society. As society disintegrates, the Big Brother’s hegemony becomes perpetual.

3.8. Patriarchy and Chauvinism

Kee’s depiction of cultural hegemony and racial prejudice is not limited to the politics of Big Brother, but also to Yone’s racially prejudiced father. Undoubtedly, Kee portrays a microcosm of apolitical sovereignty depicted in Yone’s father, who declares his prejudice against and hatred of the Party, saying, “Dey are bad, dey - Party members! And I doe wan you [Yone] to mix wit dem” (Gilbert, 2001, p. 262). When Yone says that “Dere are Proles who are bad orso,” her father’s racist chauvinism is revealed as he expresses his prejudice by saying, “You doan say bad about Proles, hnarh! You are a Prole” (Gilbert, 2001, p. 262). Here, Kee perhaps attempts to portray that racial prejudice, whether it stems from the Big Brother, who represents the majority, or Yone’s father, who represents the minority in society, has adverse consequences and poses a threat to the unity and cohesion of society. Moreover, Kee highlights the extent of violence against women in the society. He emphasizes the conditions of women, who are in an unenviable position due to the superiority of men over women and also sheds light on patriarchy, which is an integral part of the power structure.

Power abuse and patriarchal dominance are significantly prevalent in *1984 Here and Now*. Kee portrays his heartfelt dislike for the overbearing patriarchal system by highlighting some incidents of violence against women. The violence emanates from Yone’s father, who is the head of the household and the breadwinner. He abuses his family, cuts his wife’s “housekeeping money,” enforces his control and dominance over his family, and exploits the vulnerability of his wife and daughter Yone as they are economically dependent on him.

The economic conditions of Yone and her mother, who are economically dependent on Yone’s father, are reminiscent of what Gramsci proposes in his theory of

cultural hegemony. He suggests that “there is no doubt that although hegemony is ethico-political, it must also be economic, must necessarily be based on the decisive function exercised by the leading group in the decisive nucleus of economic activity” (Gramsci, 1999, p. 373). Gramsci’s proposal means that hegemony is not only ethico-political but also economic. His suggestion also applies to Yone’s father and brother, who take advantage of the condition of women and the fact that women are dependent on men to serve their interests. Such conditions can leave oppressed women, like Yone and her mother, at the mercy of their cruel, dominant breadwinners. These conditions can also push young women, like Yone, to rebel against the status quo in pursuit of deliverance from the overbearing patriarchy by completing her studies and seeking a job that provides financial security and psychological support for her and her mother in their time of need. Yone explains her experiences with her father as follows:

YONE: My broder ah – he like my fader, very bad laa his temper. He also doan like me going out wit Party members. One day, he caught me walking wit a Party member. He punch the man and kick him, den he drag me home, calling me all sorts of names . . . One day, I got fed up. After finish schooling lah. I couldn get a place in university because places for Proles limited. So I wen out to work. Wen I got enough money, I move out of der house. My fader wouldn let me go. He said I had no shame. My moder was very sad but she understood me. She argued for me. My fader beat her, call her moder of a prostitute. She didn know what to do. She run to her cousin’s house, my auntie lah. When my auntie ask wy der blue black, my moder said mosquito bite. After dat, my fader cut her housekeeping money. Gave only harf, you know. But he still expected her to buy der same tings as before. My moder, when she run out of money near end of der mun, she borrow from people, scared my fader complain if he’s not satisfied wit der food and oder tings. Den she’ll pay back next mun wen he give der money. I help her wen I got der money. Wen I carn, I feel all torn up inside. (Gilbert, 2001, pp. 263–264)

By manifesting Yone’s pitiful pleas, which she narrates to Wiran, and dramatizing her painful life experiences, Kee emphasizes the extent of the social, economic, and political pressures suffered by Yone in particular and the Prole women in general. Since Yone “couldn get a place in university because places for Proles limited,” she expresses her frustration, despair, and anger at the enormous injustice inflicted upon her as a Prole and laments the state policies imposed on the Proles, who constitute the minority in society (Gilbert, 2001, p. 263). Obviously, Kee highlights that Yone is stuck between a rock and a hard place as a Prole, pointing out the

oppressive patriarchy and abuse of power by some of the Prole men, such as her father and brother, and the racial hegemony perpetuated by the Big Brother and his policies. Kee also alludes to the Malaysian New Economic Policy (NEP), whose scale is weighted in favor of the Malays over the Chinese and other ethnic groups. Yone's father's reactions and behaviors in imposing his convictions on his family can be interpreted as the result of recurring frustrations after his persistent attempts to distance his daughter from the Party members, as he believes they are the first source of his family's suffering. His daughter's association with the Party members is alarming to him since Party members, according to Yone's experiences, sexually exploit Prole women. Rumin, a political secretary, is among of those who exploit Yone.

What Yone goes through is a representation of what Kee Thuan Chye could not tolerate. That Kee tends to raise the voice of the marginalized is not a coincidence, but a desire that stems from the core of his suffering in his youth when he went to Kuala Lumpur, where he faced numerous dilemmas quite similar to Yone's. Thus, such acrimonious circumstances drove him to write about "racism, unequal opportunities, backwardness," "curbs to freedom of speech and expression," "racial discrimination and extremism, political manipulation, detention," and "Big Brotherism" (Subramaniam & Pillai, 2017, p. 63). It is likely that Kee, as a Malaysian inhabitant of Chinese origin, highlights the marginalization of minority rights. He describes his personal experiences of racism in his early life as follows:

People like me from immigrant backgrounds although born here but not long after Independence have had to struggle to find a sense of belonging, and through the decades, with the formulation of ethnic-biased policies, the struggle has been made harder. We've had to put up with being marginalised and being less privileged than the Bumiputras. We've even had to suffer the insult of being called 'pendatang' (immigrant). I personally experienced the adverse effects of such institutionalised racial discrimination when I was denied a tutorship position after completing my first degree although I was top of my class. That deprived me of the opportunity of pursuing my Masters because I could not afford to continue my studies without a job. (Quayum, 2005, p. 131)

Accordingly, it is noteworthy that Kee was exposed to situations tainted with institutionalized racism, which deprived him of opportunities that would recognize and appreciate his hard work and efforts during his education and also during his

professional life. The mention of the calamities that befall the Proles in his play is not a coincidence. It is the result of the intense pressures he faced during his early life.

3.9. Violence against Women

The sources of violence to which Yone is exposed are not limited to her father and brother, but to those closest to her, including her lover Wiran, with whom she seeks refuge from violence and marginalization. Although he has a noble cause, which is to eliminate racial discrimination, ensure social justice, and condemn demonstrations marked by violence and detention, Wiran, unlike Winston who appreciates Julia for having a copious number of relationships with men, abuses Yone and accuses her of having relationships with Party members in the past. He also asks Yone to count how many love affairs she has had in her past. Obviously, Wiran is inordinately concerned with the number of men Yone has copulated with rather than the act of being with other men and coerces her to recount undesirable full details about her past. In another scene, where Yone is abused by Wiran, Kee's patriarchal society is reflected as follows:

WIRAN: Was it good?...Did you have a great time with him in bed?...Hnarh? Did you?...You bitch! And who was the third? (Blackout. The scene re-opens a little later. YONE is about to finish talking about her past.)

YONE: ...He was der las. He told me he would marry me but he didn. I had an abortion. I regretted de affair. I still do.

WIRAN: What else?

YONE: Dere's nutting more to tell.

WIRAN: You know what your sordid love life is like? Do you? Like a porno book. You have no shame. (Gilbert, 2001, p. 266)

Most remarkably, the violence Yone experiences stems from her father and brother, who belong to the Proles, and from her lover Wiran, who belongs to the Party. This indicates that the plight of women is exacerbated by both the Proles and Party members and that violence is not confined to a party or a particular sect. Kee accentuates that violence must be condemned by all members of the society. Such circumstances faced by women also apply to the reality of Malaysian society. By portraying such conditions in *1984 Here and Now*, Kee highlights the fact that women's voice is marginalized and that men do not tolerate women. Instead, men spare no effort to impose their dominance over women.

Despite that Wiran, who represents the seed of positive change, abuses Yone as her father and brother do, he embodies numerous positive values that a civilized society can have, including freedom, loyalty, humility, love, brotherhood, persistence, peace, and perseverance, and so does Winston. Whereas Orwell's embodiment of Winston falls at the end of the novel, Kee's embodiment of Wiran rises and stands against the dominant force which suppresses such values. In other words, when Winston, who represents civilized society, falls, this means that his values also fall due to the dominant force embodied by the Big Brother and totalitarianism. On the other hand, Wiran challenges the dominant force at the end of the play and the noble values he carries are not devastated by the Big Brother. Kee, here, alludes that the values that Wiran carries are everlasting, suggesting that there is still hope for change in society.

It is worth noting that Kee portrays the fact that the Proles and Party members are united in nothing but violence. This is evident when Yone's father and Wiran both abuse her, claiming that she has "no shame" (Gilbert, 2001, p. 263). Although she suffers in her family home, is subjected to violence outside, is a victim of sexual exploitation by party members, is unable to obtain a place at university, is subjected to various types of persecution and marginalization throughout her life, and represents a large group of marginalized women, Yone is considered as a symbol of struggle. There is no doubt that her joining the "Movement For A New Brotherhood" for the sake of change indicates the extent of her adherence to her lofty goals, which she always seeks to achieve with Wiran, who relieves her concerns and equally endorses her noble cause. Being financially independent, Yone defies the conventions of the patriarchal system and society. However, the power of such a patriarchal system is derived from another overbearing patriarchal system, but on a larger scale. In other words, this power is derived from the Big Brother, whose hegemony is based primarily on manipulation.

3.10. Big Brother and Manipulation

Kee turns from portraying the hardships and dilemmas in Yone's life caused by the Big Brother's policies to highlighting the Big Brother's manipulative policies and speeches that imply his systemic racism, extremism, and malicious intentions aimed at

conferring privileges to the Party members at the expense of the Proles. Like *Nineteen Eighty-Four's Newspeak*, which has a limited range of words and terms that diminish the range of thinking, the meticulously chosen words and terms in the language of Big Brother's speeches suggest overt bias towards Party members. Such language, 'spikbaru' (*Newspeak*), used by the Big Brother to make "outrageous declarations in ostensibly specific terms, as if they were unchallengeable truths, but the ultimate messages are vague, or worse, meaningless," has a hard-hitting political tone that suggests that the Party can hardly accommodate any race other than the Party members/Malays (Lee, 1987, as cited in Lo, 2004, p. 91). Such language also has no tolerance for the Proles/non-Bumiputeras. This is illustrated in one of the Big Brother's speeches on national culture as follows:

Big Brother: The Administration will not entertain any view that questions the policy on national culture. The policy clearly states that the national culture will be based on Party member culture. The people must help speed up the implementation of the national culture with dedication, responsibility and sincerity. The Administration cannot guarantee the tiger dance a place in the national culture. It is not a question of all races being represented but whether the traditions of each race can enrich and contribute greatly to national culture... (Gilbert, 2001, p. 258)

In another example, the Big Brother's speeches demonstrate multiple policies that reflect the ideology of the Inner Party, which seems incontrovertible. Such policies demonstrate the Big Brother justifying the prejudice, discriminatory treatment, and bias of the Party members against the Proles, and heaping praise on the Party members. This is evident in his following speech:

I wish to announce, comrades, a new amendment to the Constitution that has been passed in Parliament today. The Opposition Party has accused the Second Minister of Economy of having invoked racist sentiments in calling for Party members to own 45 percent share of the economy. In leveling such an accusation, the Opposition Party itself is ... pandering to racist sentiments ... To prevent this and to assure the races of this nation that there has not been an encroachment on their rights, Parliament has today amended the Constitution to waive the ruling on sedition on all matters pertaining to the economy provided they do not question the rights and privileges of Party members, as has been guaranteed by the Constitution. (Gilbert, 2001, p. 256)

3.11. Gamelan Music and Wayang Kulit

Notably, the Big Brother's speeches are preceded by gamelan music⁴ in such a way that makes the audience believe that the music is an ingrained ritual of the Big Brother or the Party. Gamelan is a kind of traditional ensemble music of the Javanese people in Indonesia that relies on percussive instruments such as bamboo flutes, drums, and metallophones. "Gamelan" is a Javanese word composed of "gamel," meaning to strike with a mallet, a kind of hammers, and the suffix "an," whose function is to make any root into a noun. According to Javanese mythology, the origin of gamelan dates back to the Saka era when Sang Hyang Guru, a god who "ruled as king of all Java," invented the gong to send a signal to and recall other gods (Weiss, 2008). The Gamelan music plays a crucial role in rituals, especially religious ones, so much so that a Javanese proverb says, "It is not official until the gong is hung" (Broughton et al., 2006, p. 420). Gamelan usually accompanies cultural and religious activities, such as religious rituals, traditional dances, ceremonies, dance-drama performances, festivals, vocal performances, and Wayang puppet performances, including wayang golek, wayang Kulit, and wayang beber. Interestingly, the style of Wayang Kulit is played out in Scene 14, where two Party members whose "physical mannerisms" are "broad, puppet-like" deliver a dialogue "in heightened manner" "behind a large screen" played by a dalang, a puppeteer in a "foreboding" atmosphere (Gilbert, 2001, p. 266). The Party members in particular are portrayed as shadowy characters. In her book *Staging Nation*, Jacqueline Lo observes that gamelan and Wayang Kulit performed in the background in *1984 Here and Now* are employed to "foreground Malay hegemony in state administration" as exemplified below (Lo, 2004, p. 90):

By appropriating the traditional form to depict the workings of the Inner Party, the production makes a strong statement about the use of tradition to perpetuate Malay political and cultural dominance...The *wayang* performance gave the impression of a shadowy realm where manipulation took place and conjured an ambience different from that of the common people. (Lo, 2004, p. 92)

⁴ In the Malaysian context, the Gamelan has become a crucial part of the Malaysian culture, when it was first performed in Kuala Lumpur in 1969.

Accordingly, the “shadowy realm” suggests that Inner Party members are neither more nor less than puppets manipulated by the Big Brother for political purposes, including the propagation of hatred and the preclusion of racial integration in the state. On the employment of Wayang Kulit, Lo emphasizes the following:

The Inner Party members are played by actors behind a shadow screen, which serves to magnify their physical dimensions while also introducing a disjunctive element since traditional wayang characters are not humans but rather mythical beings such as gods and demons. By appropriating the form to portray the workings of the Inner Party, the text suggests ways in which tradition functions to perpetuate the cultural and political power of the Malay community. The use of human figures rather than traditional puppets manipulated by a dalang or master puppeteer also makes the important point that there is no singular villain in the play or, correspondingly, in the wider political context. (Lo, 2004, p. 92)

Most notably, the Wayang Kulit performance confers divinity and mythical qualities on the Big Brother, whose constant wars against the Kloots, his presence on television permeating society, his propagandistic speeches, and his personality suggesting benevolence, charisma, and foreboding are obvious manifestations of his control and overbearing hegemony.

Kee’s employment of music and songs in *1984 Here and Now* is a remarkable, qualitative leap in Malaysian theater. By including music that starts in the background, such as “Somebody’s Watching Me” by Rockwell, a song released in 1984, and “Every Breath You Take,” a song written in 1982 and sung by The Police, an English rock band, Kee embodies that the police and the Big Brother are “Watching You” and that citizens are under constant surveillance. A few lines from the lyrics of the song “Somebody’s Watching Me” introduce the omnipresence of the Big Brother and police as follows:

Who’s watching?
Tell me, who’s watching?
Who’s watching me?
I’m just an average man with an average life
I work from nine to five, hey, hell, I pay the price
All I want is to be left alone in my average home
But why do I always feel like I’m in the Twilight zone and?
I always feel like somebody’s watching me
And I have no privacy (ooh ooh)
I always feel like somebody’s watching me
Tell me is it just a dream?

When I come home at night
I bolt the door real tight
People call me on the phone, I'm trying to avoid
But can the people on TV see me or am I just paranoid?
When I'm in the shower I'm afraid to wash my hair
'Cause I might open my eyes and find someone standing there
People say I'm crazy, just a little touched
But maybe showers remind me of Psycho too much.

The following are a few lines of “Every Breath You Take” song’s lyrics:

Every move you make
Every vow you break
Every smile you fake
Every claim you stake
I'll be watching you
Every move you make
Every step you take
I'll be watching you.

By sifting through the lyrics of each song, one finds that the totalitarian society is based on constant surveillance by the secret police and the state intelligence that monitor the movements of each individual in order to curb any attempt that might destabilize the security of the ruling Party.

3.12. Omnipresence of Big Brother

The Big Brother’s endless televised speeches on every incident concerning the Proles and his encroachments on their rights suggest his omnipresence. The Big Brother instills a sense of terror and loyalty in the Party members, the Proles, and even the audience of the play through his constant oppressive surveillance, as a giant picture of him is hanged on the stage from the beginning till the end of the play. Although he does not appear physically in the play, the Big Brother succeeds in exerting an influence on the audience and society. Whereas the absence of his physical appearance portrayed as a shadowy figure conveys a sense of deliberate separation and detachment, his ubiquitous influence through interference and speeches on incidents concerning the Proles, including the tiger dance and national culture, indicates his omnipresence and invincibility. Moreover, the “use of televisual images rather than a live actor on stage also displaces the tendency to assume that the supreme villain in the play is the Malaysian Prime Minister” (Lo, 2004, p. 91). In his final speech, the Big

Brother, whose “shadow looming larger than the rest, towering over all,” raises the emergency level by reminding Party members of the Woeful Wednesday riots and their dire consequences. He also appeals to their emotions by assuming the possibility of re-experiencing such disruptive events that disturb the national peace and ingeminate “the responsibility of every citizen to contribute to the continuation of peace and security and to ensure that the nation is free of trouble so that the enemy cannot exploit the situation” (Gilbert, 2001, p. 267).

Thus, that the Big Brother excites the Party members into hatred and that he loathes for the Kloots is perhaps sufficient to destabilize internal security, create internal and external conflict among Party members, foster a desire for vindictiveness, strengthen unity among them, and confront an enemy that is nothing less than fictitious. Rather, it is a means of propaganda that is employed to keep the populace in line and prevent any forms of rebellion and riots. What fuels the conflict is the Big Brother’s reiterating of the phrase “The nation must survive,” which Party members repeatedly chant, suggesting that the nation is in a deeply entrenched dilemma:

IPM 1: The nation must survive!

IPM 2: The nation must survive!

IPM 3: The nation must survive! (Gilbert, 2001, p. 267)

The Big Brother’s exposition of the menaces surrounding the state and the main enemy, the Kloots, is reminiscent of the first scene in which pandemonium and the state of frenzy dominate the atmosphere of the scene as he launches into a speech about the Kloots. The pandemonium that prevails on the stage before the Big Brother’s speech is caused by the blatant provocations televised by the state-controlled media that inflame the national and religious sentiments of the audience to keep them in line. Such provocations are depicted in 3 scenes followed by the Big Brother’s speech. The first scene involves “disco-rock music” and “human dancers” provoking the audience, whose “social backgrounds are distinguished by characteristic embellishments” (Gilbert, 2001, p. 254). They unleash a barrage of denunciations, such as “It is against our religion,” “immoral,” “obscene,” “Ban the Western programmes,” “a sin to watch,” “bad influence on our young,” and “the work of the Devil,” against what is shown on television (Gilbert, 2001, p. 254). The second scene, modelled after a “Western soap opera,” shows 2 actors that “embrace in a torrid kiss and physical groping” (Gilbert, 2001, p. 254). It is worth noting that Scene 1 and Scene 2 portray

Western programs as “obscene” and “immoral,” and the reactions of the audience, who are Party members, indicate how extremist the Party’s ideology is.

In fact, the Party aims to expose the Party members to immoral scenes from Western/communist culture in an attempt to distance them from any external affiliations that might threaten the Party’s stability and unity in one way or another. Such external affiliations and foreign interferences might refer to the communist insurgency in Malaysia (1968-1989) between the Malaysian Federal Security Forces and Malayan Communist Party (MCP). Remarkably, some of the Party members seek God’s help by saying, “God have mercy on our children’s morals” and “pointing upwards in supplication, presumably to God,” while others cry out, “The party must prevail, put a stop to all this,” and implore the Big Brother to save their “souls from this immoral display” (Gilbert, 2001, p. 254). The third scene, on the other hand, depicts an enemy Klot and a “threat to our society” in the form of a “soldier in jungle green, carrying a rifle” (alluding to communist insurgents and guerrillas in the Malayan Jungles in Borneo’s town) (Gilbert, 2001, p. 254).

Consequently, the appearance of the Big Brother in the guise of the savior after all the controversial scenes that offend the national, religious sentiments of the populace is a must. This would strengthen their attachment and allegiance to the Party and to the Big Brother, whose appearance transforms hatred into veneration. The manifestations of blind obedience to the Big Brother are reflected in the reactions of the Party members who chant “Long Live Big Brother” (Gilbert, 2001, p. 254). On the contrary, the manifestations of rejection, aversion, and rebellion are evident on Wiran who refuses to “join the fray” and engage in the frenzy (Gilbert, 2001, p. 254). Instead, he “breaks away and runs off stage,” suggesting his attitude towards all activities belonging to the Party. Such practices and activities are reminiscent of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*’s Two Minutes Hate, during which the enemies of Oceania, especially Goldstein, are exposed to the Party members to vent their anguish and express their hatred.

Although the Big Brother is omnipresent in the play, Kee’s portrayal of him is likely to be parodic. The fact that the Big Brother’s shadowy, puppet-like appearance and authoritative, ceremonial speeches give him an attribute that is far from human but closer to spirits and gods, suggests the extent of the political tyranny he enjoys.

However, Kee's melodramatic description of the Big Brother and the pageantry, grandiloquence, and pomposity permeating him overemphasizes his omnipresence, which is considered authoritative in a way that makes him seem supremely peculiar and nonsensical. Such authoritative speeches and the dominant non-corporeal appearance, accompanied by fanfare and ostentatious flourishes are intermingled with rear-projected shadow puppets (Wayang Kulit performance) that bear no resemblance to humans.

By limiting the role of the Big Brother to making pronouncements against the Proles, seeking any method that would limit their existence in the state, and maintaining a stranglehold over the Proles, Kee raises a complex issue that casts doubt on the authenticity of Big Brother's existence and presence in the state. Moreover, Kee does not make the figure of the Big Brother realistic but rather shadowy, surrounded by drums, brass instruments, national and military music, reverence, and glorification through Wayang Kulit's performance. Thus, if one were to question the validity of the Big Brother's existence, one might think that the Big Brother's power is nothing but an illusory power based on distracting people with racist issues that disintegrate the social cohesion of the populace. Furthermore, had it not been for the Party members' unconditional adherence and blind obedience, which grant the Big Brother the political momentum, to the Big Brother and his manipulative policies, he would not have been able to impose his control over the state. Kee's representation of the Big Brother denotes that the validity of his existence is questionable to the audience due to his absolute ambiguity. Kee's depiction of the Big Brother through Wayang Kulit's performance and his authoritarian, racist pronouncements reflects that the Big Brother is drowning in and overtaken by delusions of grandeur. Remarkably, Kee's portrayal of the Big Brother's speeches points to the corruption of his Administration, whose functions are limited to adopting xenophobic, anti-immigrant positions and disregarding social, economic, and political issues. In this regard, Kee reflects the consequences of living under a repressive, oppressive, totalitarian, extremist, and racist regime, where systematic manipulation prevails and injustice is perpetuated, and provides the imperatives to confront such an authoritarian regime that aims only to serve its supreme interests at the expense of the populace.

3.13. Propaganda and Ethnic Disintegration

All scenes shown on television resembling Orwell's *Two Minutes Hate*, including the Western programs and the Kloots, are recurring scenes displayed from time to time to unify the nation and are carefully tailored by the mass media under the direction of Shadrin, the First Minister of the Ministry of Truth and Information. Such programs tailored by the Party highlight the essential role of the media in burnishing the Party's image and reflecting its policies through propaganda aimed at creating a cultural and social divide between the Proles and the Party members and burnishing the Party's public image to gain greater public confidence. The use of the power of state media and information technology is a manifestation of totalitarian regimes that seek to demonstrate dominance and prepotency over the populace in order to deceive public opinion. An example of this is the Party's Statistics Department, which seeks to "change der [the Party members'] latest population figures" because "dere are more Proles than Party members so der Administration tole dem to make look like as dough dere are more Party members" (Gilbert, 2001, p. 262).

Most notably, Kee also portrays the fractured relations and deep-seated divisions between the Proles and the Party members by highlighting the pivotal role of the mass media in promoting this perennial conflict through slogans and posters that cause a deep rift between the opposing parties in society. Such slogans and posters promoted by the mass media reveal that the dispute between the Proles and the Party members is long lasting and ingrained. The newspaper posters Wiran encounters as he walks down the street include "Newsmen detained for threat to peace," "Students abroad recalled for violating Party policies," "Party members nabbed for desecrating Prole place of worship," and "Infighting among top leaders of Prole party" (Gilbert, 2001, p. 257).

What distinguishes the aforementioned headlines is that they carry political, religious, and cultural tones that fuel ethnic conflict and threaten internal peace and security. The headline "Newsmen detained for threat to peace" is a contradiction to the Party's policy as such a headline that instills fear of arrest among residents threatens the peace of the society. The headline "Students abroad recalled for violating Party policies" depicts that the opportunities afforded to students are contingent on their

commitment to the Party's policy. Otherwise, they run the risk of being deprived of education and other opportunities. It also indicates that the Party's policies are strict and far-reaching. Whereas the headline "Party members nabbed for desecrating Prole place of worship" triggers religious differences between the Party members/Malays and the Proles/Chinese, the other headline "Infighting among top leaders of Prole party" exacerbates the state of division and frustration experienced by the Proles Party (Gilbert, 2001, p. 257). Such headlines would intensify the political, cultural, social, and religious conflict and cause permanent tension to serve the interests of the Big Brother to expand his influence and control the reins of power.

According to the foregoing, it seems that the institutions of the Party, represented by its departments such as Statistics Department and the media, contribute significantly to the falsification of facts and statistics of population in order to deceive public opinion and show the extent of the domination of the Party members over the Proles. The falsification of reports also includes the concealment of economic corruption through the use of euphemistic terms such as "economic slowdown" instead of "economic recession" (Gilbert, 2001, p. 262). What highlights the Party's control and supremacy over the media is the policy that the front-page lead of every newspaper should be devoted only to news about Party members or condemnation of the practices of the Proles. The refusal of the editor-in-chief to publish a story about "Leek [a Prole] accusing Kala [a Party member] of making a seditious statement" on the front-page lead of the newspaper is an example of such a policy (Gilbert, 2001, p. 255). Such a policy, which harnesses all state institutions at the service of its superior interests, is a striking manifestation of totalitarian regimes and a harbinger of a bleak future for the state/Malaysia.

The incident of the chief editor's objection to the publication of that news item is undoubtedly one of the instances that Kee has encountered during his work in the media, and here Kee sheds light on bread-and-butter journalists who do not prefer to "call a spade a spade" (Gilbert, 2001, p. 255), preferring instead to burnish the Party's image, "pushing buttons," earning their "daily bread," and having no "goals left" (Gilbert, 2001, p. 258). Undoubtedly, the austere grandeur of Big Brother, who "masks a complex network of political interests and collusions," is symbolic of the hegemony of the state and the ruling party's power over the media, since he threatens freedom of

the press. By deliberately fostering an atmosphere of racism and ensuring the loyalty of the Party members, the media apparatus owned by state power ensures the perpetuation of the ruling party's ideology for a prolonged period of time. Such a role of the media apparatus is observed by Lo as follows:

The foregrounding of the role of visual media in a country that still has a high rate of illiteracy points to a more sophisticated critique of information networks and their dissemination of state propaganda. Historically, the media had been a powerful institution for mobilising support for the dominant ideology, as shown in the opening video depicting the Kloots as the national enemy. (Lo, 2004, p. 91)

3.14. Shadrin and Manipulation

The systematic manipulation that characterizes the Party and its members, especially Shadrin, the Minister of Truth and Information who tortures Wiran at the end of the play, is rooted in the Party's ideology and is an integral part of the Party's repressive nature, which aims to destabilize trust among residents and exercise total power over them. This is evident in Wiran's interrogation, during which Shadrin, much like *Nineteen Eighty-Four's* O'Brien, who is duplicitous and cunning, attempts to force Wiran to confess his anti-Party positions and his complicity with the "Movement For A New Brotherhood" by nefariously manipulating him, specifically accusing Barouk and Yone of being renegades and turncoats who betray that movement. Not only does he accuse Yone of being an "agent for the Administration," calling her a "slut," "promiscuous" who dates the Party members in "the line of duty" and stating that she is "planted to trap subversive elements" like Barouk, he also fuels Wiran's psychological inner conflict by showing a "videotape" of Yone enjoying the act in bed with a Prole (Gilbert, 2001, p. 271). Apparently, Shadrin's manipulative behaviors reveal that the ruling totalitarian regime shrouded in manipulation, systematic deception, and falsification of facts aims to harness its power to subjugate the inhabitants who are considered rebellious.

Shadrin's manipulation of the truth before and during the investigations reflects his elusive character and his cunning methods of seduction and manipulation, as he can distort the truth through double standards to the point of making Wiran to question the credibility and reliability of any initiative, including "The Movement For A New

Brotherhood.” Shadrin’s behaviors depict that he is always determined to dismantle Wiran’s determination and overpower his will to the point of tormenting him both physically and psychologically. Such deceptions and manipulations are evident earlier when Shadrin meets with Wiran to reassure him of achieving the just demands of people, claiming that those who work in the Ministry “provide the truth and the information,” promising that “there are going to be changes in the Ministry,” and emphasizing the role of democracy in the state. However, it later turns out that the truth and information provided by the Ministry are nothing but falsehood and misleading of the truth. This is not surprising since the Minister is primarily responsible for the entire deception and propaganda apparatus in the state. During the interrogation and torture of Wiran, Shadrin himself admits the Big Brother’s autocratic rule over the populace as follows:

The Party has succeeded in imposing its views and its policies because the people can be made to accept the most flagrant violations of reality. That is because they are not sufficiently interested in public events to notice what is happening. By lack of understanding, they remain safe. They simply swallow everything, and what they swallow does them no actual harm. (Gilbert, 2001, p. 270)

The authority of the Administration and the Party is thus distinguished by its ultimacy for what the Party, which is “collective and immortal,” “holds to be truth is truth. The Administration, which controls the Party, controls reality” (Gilbert, 2001, p. 271). Most notably, as mentioned above, Kee quotes verbatim from Orwell’s *Nineteen Eight-Four*, portraying the antagonist O’Brien, who highlights the effects of the Party’s totalitarian ideology and the regime’s oppression on the populace. That is, Kee was deeply influenced by Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, which drove him to compose *1984 Here and Now*, whose name may be attributed to the fact that the events characterizing Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four* are significantly correlated with the 1984 Malaysian reality.

3.15. Manifestations of Torture

Similar to *Nineteen Eighty-Four*’s Inner Party, *1984 Here and Now*’s Party seeks to demoralize each prisoner by summoning one of the people who has been subjected to torture and has a relationship with newly arrived arrestees to sow terror in

their hearts and break their spirit before interrogation. Such practices are evident when Jumon, a member of the Brotherhood, is brought into Wiran's cell after being tortured to the point that "it takes a while before Wiran recognises him [Jumon]" (Gilbert, 2001, p. 268). Such violence and torture lead a party to betray another and coerce them to confess to things that never happened in order to avoid being tortured by the interrogators. Jumon who is not hesitant about confessing that he is a "Kloot" and signing "a confession and read it on television," saying that he will "eat shit" and go out to "kill the Proles" (Gilbert, 2001, p. 268). Although Jumon expresses what he has been through by saying that "they are trying to break me, and they are succeeding," Wiran does not give up, but rather his attitude remains unchanged despite all the attempts of the investigators, including Shadrin, to instill fear into him. He keeps repeating the phrases "you mustn't give up," "you can't give up," "they can't get inside you," and "they can't change the way you feel" throughout the play (Gilbert, 2001, pp. 267-268). By portraying the extent of the torment in prison cells, Kee seeks to embody the magnitude of the danger posed to members of society, who are considered an "epidemic" that must be cured. He also seeks positive change and national unity away from acts of sabotage in a police state, where political power is maintained and enforced through violent means and where propaganda manipulates people by claiming that it is a liberal state while manifesting its totalitarianism and extremism (Gilbert, 2001, p. 267).

The play witnesses numerous manifestations of violence, torture, and bullying against prisoners and detainees. This suggests that the prevailing regime in the country embodies a police state, where administrative detention, violence, manipulation, and accusations of prisoners with fabricated allegations and false accusations prevail. The manifestations of violence are evident in the dispersal of gatherings around the tiger dance and the brutal arrest of the editor-in-chief, who is unable to call a lawyer, and the cartoonist, who is convicted for being "sympathetic towards the Kloots" (Gilbert, 2001, p. 256). The commonality between the arrest of the cartoonist and the editor-in-chief, who is convicted for his criticism of the Big Brother's Administration, is the fact that they have no single clue about the reason for their arrest and that from the first moment of their arrest they vanished and "vaporized" like prisoners of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

Above all, the manifestations of torture, the harsh conditions of the torture cells, and the methods of torture are identical to those in Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*'s prisons, where there are Room 101 and electric rods. In *1984 Here and Now*'s prisons, "illumination is not very bright," confessions are videotaped and obtained under torture, and tortured individuals are barely recognized due to the after-effects of torture. In addition, detainees are deprived of food, sleep, and toilet. They have no idea about their fate and how long they have been in prison, and are exposed to endless, groundless accusations. They are also subjected to various kinds of humiliation and torture to the extent that they lose their minds and feel ready to betray their principles and other comrades to avoid torture. What Wiran has been through during his interrogation reflects the reality of the police state and its abusive practices. He is humiliated as the foot of Interrogator 1 rests on "Wiran's [his] lap" (Gilbert, 2001, p. 269).

Concurrently, a barrage of false allegations heaps upon Wiran, as he is accused of a list of fabricated charges that aim to undermine his physical energy and torment him psychologically. Such false allegations, which are groundless, accuse Wiran of belonging to a "subversive organization," "spreading lies about the Administrations," disgracing his own race, being a "threat to the nation's security," having "links with the Kloots," and "spreading Kloot propaganda among the people" (Gilbert, 2001, p. 269). It is worth noting that denying the accusations against Wiran is conditional on his confession on television, because if he repents, he "will be released" (Gilbert, 2001, p. 269). When interrogator 1 claims that Wiran does not believe that "the culture of your race should prevail over the cultures of other races" and that Wiran gives up what is "rightfully" theirs, such a response denotes that the culture of racism and hegemony permeates Party members (Gilbert, 2001, p. 269). Interrogator 2 aims to exploit Wiran's psychological vulnerabilities by reminding him of all the privileges he used to enjoy and holding him responsible for Yone's suffering in order to break him mentally and emotionally. Interrogator 3 becomes disillusioned by Wiran's irrelevant answers and insane responses when the latter says that he is a "spy for Papua New Guinea," and "a sexual pervert," that he sells "drugs to police inspectors," and suffers from "herpes," and thinks that interrogator 3 has "a beautiful body," and that "two plus two make four," which *Nineteen Eighty-Four*'s Winston believes in (Gilbert, 2001, p.

270). Such responses suggest Wiran's mockery of the Party members and his insanity arising from being deprived of adequate sleep, food, and toilet.

Although Wiran is alone in the cell while the interrogators take turns interrogating him, he seems steadfast rather than languishing. Here, Kee manages to sarcastically trivialize the fact that the protagonist is alone and being interrogated, highlighting the utter inability of the Party members and interrogators to undermine him to the point that Interrogator 3 asks the guards to take him to *Room 101* for brainwashing, where the Minister of Truth and Information, Shadrin, awaits him. Like *Nineteen Eighty-Four's* Room 101, *1984 Here and Now's* Room 101 is specifically for brainwashing and inculcating the Party's thoughts and policies in those who have "false ideas" that need to be cured and those who have "failed in self-discipline" to make them "become part of the collective mind" of the Party through *Doublethink*, philosophy, cunning, exploitation of emotions, and psychological manipulation of minds (Gilbert, 2001, pp. 270-271). Such rooms need masterminds who can manipulate the minds of prisoners. It is noticeable that the investigation passes through many phases, with many investigators taking turns. Each investigator gradually uses a different method of dealing with the prisoners until the prisoner reaches the top of the pyramid, where Shadrin is at the apex. In Wiran's case, the process of brainwashing begins with a diagnosis that he is failing at self-discipline and has misconceptions. He is then presented with a list of "home truths" to isolate him, including the following:

The Proles are not political enough. The middle-class Proles are satisfied as long as they have their distractions. Those who are not satisfied simply migrate to other countries. The so-called intellectuals are apathetic. The Party members generally are accustomed to unquestioning loyalty... If there is going to be any radical change in any policy, it must come from the Administration. It won't come from you or any so-called social reform movement... But reality exists in the human mind. Not in the individual mind, which can make mistakes, but only in the mind of the Party, which is collective and immortal. Whatever the Party holds to be truth is truth. The Administration, which controls the Party, controls reality. (Gilbert, 2001, pp. 270-271)

By revealing the so-called truths, claiming that freedom is limited to those who "have chosen to toe the Party line," and presenting Yone as a spy, a traitor, and a renegade (Gilbert, 2001, p. 271), Shadrin attempts to mislead Wiran by comparing the individual to a single cell that has no power unless it becomes a part and parcel of the collective entity of the Party. Wiran, however, resists all attempts aimed at eliminating

his love for the nation, for Yone, and for his just cause. Thus, unlike Winston and Julia's love, Wiran and Yone's love survives despite all attempts to disperse and eliminate it. Here, Kee embodies that love for the nation and efforts to change it for the sake of national unity and integration are eternal, inviolable and impregnable, despite all the efforts of the ruling totalitarian regime to reinforce national division and dismantle society for malevolent purposes.

3.16. Endemic Religious Extremism

Most notably, during Wiran's interrogation, the 3 interrogators and Shadrin urge Wiran to repent of his sins by appearing on television and asking the Big Brother for forgiveness, explaining that his release from prison is contingent on his repentance. The interrogators' call for repentance suggests that the Big Brother has the status of a deity, as repentance to him leads to salvation from the torment Wiran faces in prison. Remarkably, Shadrin bears resemblance to clerics when he says to Wiran, "Now the turning point has come. I shall save you" (Gilbert, 2001, p. 270). Shadrin here plays the role of the extremist clerics who pretend to be the saviors. Wiran's failure in self-discipline implies that he is an apostate since religion helps to maintain self-control and self-discipline. Moreover, Wiran's preference to be "in the minority" implies that he, according to the Party/Malaysian Federal Constitution, is such a pervert that prefers to be anything other than Bumiputera, a Muslim Malay, in relation to the majority of the Malaysian society (Gilbert, 2001, p. 270).

Kee's foregrounding of the issue of religion is not accidental, but reflects the reality of the Malaysian Administration and the Party, which is characterized by the highest levels of racist and religious extremism. The appearance of the Big Brother accompanied by gamelan music and the reactions of the Party members during the frenzy in the first scene of the play is some of the manifestations of extremism that Kee addresses. Moreover, extremism pervades when a Party member, who always interferes in the affairs of others in the name of religion, enters a bar and interferes in the affairs of Wiran and Jumon, who are met with condemnation and cursing from him saying, "Sinners! Sinners! You will pay for your sins! May you die painful deaths" (Gilbert, 2001, p. 258). Concurrently, Kee portrays the issue of hypocrisy of the

clergy. This is evident when Jumon states that he knows “Ministers who drink liquor in private” and that the Administration “started out making religion into a political issue” (Gilbert, 2001, p. 258). The manifestations of religious hypocrisy, immorality, and double standards that Kee reveals are embodied in an incident of “a religious head,” who is “caught wit a 14-year-old girl” and claims that “he was giving her advice” even though “he didn’t have his pants on” (Gilbert, 2001, p. 262). In another scene, Wiran witnesses 3 Party members, who crouch “stealthily behind a hedge,” dragging out a “courting couple” and shouting, “Sinners! Sinners! Catch them!” even though one of the women is “covered from head to toe except that her shawl has come down” (Gilbert, 2001, p. 258).

3.17. Kee Thuan Chye and Wiran

What distinguishes Wiran, whose name originally means ‘hero’ in Bahasa Indonesia, is his steadfast stance on clinging to the hope of achieving the desired change he seeks from the beginning of the play when he refuses to join the pandemonium that breaks out until its end in the scene of his interrogation and torture. Despite the psychological, political pressures, the internal conflicts, and the physical and psychological torture, his steadfastness in the face of adversities represents a leading figure who is worthy of appreciation in a totalitarian, extremist, and autocratic society. Undoubtedly, the portrayal of Wiran’s fortitude is attributed to Kee, whose reactions to the practices of the Malaysian regime and his positions that he cannot express in public are reflected in the reactions and responses of Wiran, who epitomizes the human spirit seeking love and life, attempting to overcome his fears and fighting against gross injustice and oppression. Such reactions are portrayed when Wiran rises up in anger against Shadrin and says, “Life will defeat you. As long as there are others like me out there, there is a chance you will be defeated. The human spirit will defeat you. Love will defeat you. Love for life, for humanity (Gilbert, 2001, p. 271).

Despite being alone in the cell, tortured by the investigators, and unable to defeat the Party’s regime, Wiran firmly believes that he does not stand alone in his just cause. He also believes that he stands firm in his position for his cause, which aims to cause a social, political change that would guarantee peaceful living in an integrated

democratic state and empower the role of oppressed individuals of different ethnicities. Such a state, which Wiran dreams of and desires, must be based on justice and equality, not intimidation, injustice, and racism. It must also have a system that aims to promote the aspirations of the populace and devise strategies to elevate national integration rather than implement policies that serve as hotbeds of corruption. Similar to the playwright Kee, Wiran dreams of a nation that can “rise above racial considerations to embrace all its denizens and observe the time-honoured values of justice and fairness” (Quayum, 2005, pp. 131–132).

Remarkably, what Wiran strives for is akin to Kee’s cherished hopes and reflects Kee’s certitude and conviction that having the courage to standing up to oppression and political corruption is imperative in a state, where institutionalized racism, extremism, and corruption are rampant. Regarding Wiran’s stance on the role of the human spirit in resisting injustice, Kee’s account of such a notion is reasserted in Wiran and Yone’s conversation prior to arrest and interrogation by the Party police as follows:

YONE: Dey carn do that. It’s der one thing dey carn do. Dey can make you say anything but dey carn make you believe it. Dey carn get inside you.

WIRAN: That’s true. They can’t get inside you. If you can feel that staying human is worthwhile. Even when it’s futile, you’ve beaten them. They cannot alter your feelings. They can lay bare everything you have done or said, but they cannot change your heart. (*WIRAN laughs an assured, triumphant laugh.*) They cannot change your heart! (Gilbert, 2001, pp. 267–268)

What distinguishes Wiran and Yone is that they share a unified attitude towards everything that emanates from the Party and form a complete national unit consisting of a Party member and a Prole, a person who speaks the colloquial language and the other who speaks the official language, and a person descending from an indigenous origin and an immigrant. By uniting their positions, despite their different ideological, political, social, and cultural affiliations, Kee sends a solid message that unity among the Party members and the Proles is possible and integration among them is not an obstacle to the revival of the state and national security. Instead, such message is considered a fundamental pillar of the renaissance and progress of the nation. He also emphasizes that the real motive behind the unification of their positions is to stand against racial discrimination and the oppressive totalitarian regime that inhibits them from achieving their goals and fulfilling their potential. It is noteworthy that although

she is not the protagonist of the play and is humiliated by numerous Party members, including her lover Wiran, Yone, who has a considerable degree of endurance, spares no effort to reassure Wiran of his plight when he learns that Jumon and Barouk have disappeared.

By emphasizing the attitudes of Wiran and Yone, who speak different dialects, belong to different parties and cultures, and have different social and political backgrounds, Kee seeks to clarify that the struggle for freedom and political change requires only a human spirit, regardless of religion, race, culture, blood, or political affiliation. However, Kee believes in the old adage “Actions speak louder than words,” and this is evident at the end of the play when Wiran urges the audience to stand against persecution and terror. Thus, Kee obviously portrays his personal stance in Wiran’s reactions, aiming at twitching the conscience of the audience, who represent the actual Malaysian society, and raising their political consciousness and will in order to intervene in such calamity that affects their state. Kee concludes his play with Wiran’s last comprehensible speech, which is replete with human values and democracy, in a way that involves Malaysian inhabitants in such a change and appeals to their emotions as follows:

WIRAN: Are you all going to sit here and do nothing? The hope of this nation lies with you! Are you going to sit here and let it go to the dogs? Stand up! Stand up and unite! Party members, Proles, whoever you are, wherever you are. Speak up for your rights! This is a democracy. Stand up for your freedom, for racial equality and integration, for humanity and justice, for truth, for a nation capable of greatness! We all have a stake in this nation! If you believe in all these, say yes! You have the power to bring about changes. Unite! Stand up and say yes! Yes, the future lies with you! Yes, you will rise above fear and complacency! Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes! (Gilbert, 2001, pp. 272)

Obviously, Kee’s holistic approach in his play seems to be pervaded by social discourse to demonstrate the autocracy and totalitarian regime of the Big Brother, who pursues policies shrouded in cultural, intellectual, and racial supremacy. Kee criticizes not only Big Brother’s Administration and abuse of power, but also the patriarchal system that permeates Malaysian society, undermines women’s rights, and places an unbearable burden on women. Moreover, Kee utilizes satire and comedic commentary to mimic, exaggerate, and disparage the Big Brother and his Administration in order to

sarcastically diagnose the ills of Malaysian society in a way that amuses and appeals to the audience who reflect the actual Malaysian society. Through the use of satire, Kee amuses the audience, draws attention to the cultural, political, and social issues of Malaysian society and raises public awareness of their rights. Moreover, during Wiran's interrogation, Kee's satire provides a greater sense of relief to the audience before exposing them to the stark reality of Big Brother's policies and his oppressive administration. Kee's satire also serves as an outlet for the calamities that will befall the audience when they, at the end of the play, discover that all the calamities that befall Wiran and other characters in the play are an embodiment of what they experience in their society.

CONCLUSION

Williams uses the concepts of “Dominant, Residual, and Emergent,” elucidating the complexity of culture (Williams, 1977, p. 127). These concepts illustrate the relationship between various aspects of culture. Whereas the ‘Dominant’ is the most prolific shaping force within society, the “Emergent” connotes the “new relationships and kinds of relationship” that “are continually being created” and are considered “substantially alternative or oppositional” to the dominant perspectives (Williams, 1977, p. 123). What distinguishes the emergent elements is that they challenge the dominant and may become dominant since they usually develop from the margins of society. They also aid absorbing what occurs “outside or against the dominant mode” (Williams, 1977, p. 125). Thus, according to Raymond Williams, ‘Dominant,’ ‘Residual,’ and ‘Emergent’ elements are the prerequisites before comprehending any text.

‘Dominant’ elements of culture are inherently demonstrated and criticized by dystopias, albeit in an extravagant manner. By criticizing the dominant elements of culture, dystopias may offer the probability of any oppositional or alternative elements. Thus, dystopias provide the possibility of the emergence of emergent elements of culture. Since emergent elements represent the ideas or practices of individuals or groups, these elements are employed by authors in their dystopias for the purpose of critically reflecting on their contemporary societies, offering a harbinger of the fate of readers’ societies and urging readers to consider alternative elements. Providing readers with familiar details relevant to their contemporary reality as well as leaving the setting of dystopias indeterminate provides an ample room for dystopian authors to critique and even satirize the forces controlling society represented by the ‘Dominant’ elements. The impetus for writing their dystopias and utopias is their contemporary conditions inspiring them to create another world tainted by their desires and imaginations. Both George Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and Kee Thuan Chye’s *1984 Here and Now* considerably bear familiar circumstances, details, and settings belonging to their respective contemporaries. Suggesting that social change and social structures are a must to make a change, Orwell and Chye’s works seek to critique their respective authors’ societies and expose the shortcomings of their contemporary societies.

It was the aspirations of Soviet Union and Nazism, led by Stalin and Hitler respectively, and their dreams of creating a version of a utopia on Earth that prompted Orwell to embody the fiasco of Soviet Union and Nazism in his novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, in which he highlights the fact that the utopian societies pursued by both Stalin and Hitler are nothing but dystopias for oppressed peoples. Thematically, the persecution of human rights, political propaganda, totalitarianism, subversion of reality, loss of identity, lack of individualism, class system, human destruction, abuse of language, and manipulation of technology and science distinguish both *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and the twentieth century. Not to mention the experience Orwell gained while serving in the Spanish Civil War and the harsh conditions that befell his country England in the aftermath of World War I and World War II transformed his writings into prestigious literary works and aided him in writing *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

Although Oceania is not comparable to England, Orwell deliberately chose England as the epicenter of totalitarian socialist regimes, fascism, Nazism, and Soviet Communism in an attempt to warn Western governments of the dangers of the spread of such totalitarian regimes because of its dire consequences for people, language, and particularly for systematic censorship. Orwell states that *Nineteen Eighty-Four* mirrors “the direction in which the world is going at the present time” and that “the trend lies deep in the political, social and economic foundations of the contemporary world situation” (Orwell, as cited in Jensen, 1984, p. 14). Remarkably, Orwell, who was a proponent of democratic socialism and the British Labor Party, was particularly critical of them due to their reflection of the dominance of the economic and social structure in Orwell’s time. The prevailing planned economy was the production mode for the forthcoming period of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*’s contemporaneous time. Orwell’s method of narrating the centrality of individualism under totalitarian regimes reveals his endeavors to construct an emergent, alternative or oppositional form of culture.

The fact that planned economies and left-wing politics would not be an alternative or oppositional in the second half of the twentieth century was not well foreseen by Orwell, despite his advocacy of democratic socialism and leftism. Numerous predictions of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* supposedly had no precision, since Stalin died, the Soviet Union has collapsed, the Neo-conservative ideology has triumphed, the Post-World War II economy has rapidly expanded, and the Golden Age

of Capitalism has prevailed at the expense of the planned economies. Thus, such events precluded the possibility of the emergence of a totalitarian regime similar to the one prevailing in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. The enormous repercussions that *Nineteen Eighty-Four* has on the political arena are attributed to the fact that the novel is amalgamated with the 'Dominant' form of culture. Orwell states, "It [*Nineteen Eighty-Four*] was based chiefly on communism, because that is the dominant form of totalitarianism" (as cited in Sheldon, 2006, p. 213). The relationship between the 'Dominant,' 'Residual,' and 'Emergent' phases of culture is dynamic and "constantly repeated, an always renewable move beyond a phase of practical incorporation" (Williams, 1977, p. 124). Regarding incorporation, the dominant phase, if necessary, is likely to adopt or incorporate alternative forms of culture, and thus incorporation "looks like recognition, acknowledgment, and this a form of *acceptance*" (Williams, 1977, p. 124).

Regarding *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, numerous anti-socialists claim that the novel was written as an attack on state control and socialism. It is also claimed that Orwell's novel manifests the transition from democratic socialism to totalitarianism. However, Orwell refuted all the allegations clarifying the purpose of writing *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and insisting that the "novel is NOT intended as an attack on Socialism or on the British Labour Party (of which I am [he is] 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" (Orwell, 2002, p. 502). *Nineteen Eighty-Four* can be distinguished and perceived in terms of contemporary totalitarian practices, such as the employment of mass destruction technologies, manipulation of language, political propaganda, military expenditure, armaments race, and subjugation of individual liberty.

For Kee Thuan Chye, Kee touches on many of the sensitive themes that Orwell addressed in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Those themes were related to the aftermath of World War II and the resulting wars and global upheavals that placed their burden on the shoulders of many countries in the world, especially Malaysia, which was then under British colonialism. Thematically, Kee is concerned with the decay of individuality, authoritarianism, totalitarianism, and ethnic, cultural discrimination. Yet Kee's perspective is highly influenced by numerous contemporary concerns, such as

patriarchy, as well as his modestly positive attitude toward the potential of change. Born during the aftermath of World War II and the Malayan Emergency (1948–1960) and raised during the communist insurgency or the Second Malayan Emergency (1968-1989) with its aftermath in Malaysia and 13 May incident, Kee has experienced many horrendous conditions as a citizen of Chinese descent, was exposed to racism during his educational and professional life due to racial segregation, racial prejudice, and Bumiputera special privileges, and influenced by *Sejarah Melayu* or the *Malay Annals*, some Absurdists, such as Ionesco, Pinter and Beckett, and Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Kee Thuan Chye figures out that the framework of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is consistent with his emergent cultural forms, and thus he adapts it to *1984 Here and Now*, in which the totalitarian regime is less intimidating than *Nineteen Eighty-Four*'s. Yet, the play represents a cultural hegemony aimed at fueling ethnic conflict between the ethnic groups.

Kee Thuan Chye fails to “examine class as a category that in contemporary Malaysia cuts across racial barriers, further complicating societal analyses” (Gilbert, 2001, p. 252). Yet, his professional representation of the events of the play through the use of alternative and dominant cultural elements, such as the wayang kulit and the tiger dance, reinforces the play's ability to warn against the emergence of an authoritarian police state based on the suppression of freedoms and the absolute tyranny of the ruling political oligarchy. Although he highly portrays the dominant narrative, he highlights the emergent narrative as a possible alternative with a positive outlook. What Kee examines in *1984 Here and Now* is not a coincidence. Rather, he blatantly embodies his first-hand experiences and realities of the world he lived in. The successive disappointments caused by the rule of British capitalism and the effects of the laws that came into effect after the Communist insurgency in Malaysia contributed to the production of such a literary work, *1984 Here and Now*, that embodies the suffering of the sects and races ‘*Here and Now*’ in Malaysia. Whereas the communist insurgency aided the emergence of an authoritarian state, the draconian laws promulgated by Britain, such as the Sedition Act, the Societies Act, the Internal Security Act, and the Essential Regulations, contributed to the formation of the nucleus of the ethnic conflict in Malaysia. What fueled the conflict was that the proponent of the Communist insurgency in Malaysia was the Communist Party of Malaya (CPM), whose members were mostly of Chinese origin. Thus, the Chinese were seen as

communists and not as citizens within the borders of the state. What Kee attempts to reveal is that the attitude of the ruling regime towards immigrants and other races is completely fixed throughout the play, and that the failure of people to find an oppositional or alternative form to the prevailing regime, as well as their indifference and preference to complain rather than take measures, are the reasons for their disintegration and lack of unity.

In broad terms, the totalitarian ideology of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, which is based on class, Big Brotherism, obscurantism, and historical negationism, is substituted by a totalitarian ideology that is based on racial segregation and institutionalized discrimination rather than class in *1984 Here and Now*. Although the dominant regime in *1984 Here and Now* is less intimidating than its counterpart in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, it is considered as a great threat to the existence of organized ethnic groups since their rights are denied due to the draconic racial laws which grant privileges to the so-called rightful indigenous people. In this respect, dealing with such regimes is complicated. Remarkably, the atmosphere of *1984 Here and Now* is considerably tainted by political discourse. The state of division that befalls the people is reinforced by hate speech, double standards, and direct intervention in the affairs of minorities. Thus, feelings of distrust, superiority, vulnerability, injustice, and attitudinal inconsistency dominate people. Unlike the inhabitants of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, people enjoy a variety of freedoms on a limited scale in *1984 Here and Now*. Unlike the Party members, the Proles are frequently prone to interference, intimidation, and harassment by the Party members and the ubiquitous Big Brother. Moreover, those who demonstrate or incite any act that would undermine the security of the state are called 'dissidents.' While Orwell's novel is a warning to governments against totalitarian tyranny, Kee's play is a vivid embodiment of what Orwell warned against, as well as a didactic message that totalitarianism may take various forms, encompassing apartheid as a clearly defined ideology.

According to Raymond Williams' categorization of cultural elements, the dominant refers to the totalitarian Inner Party and Big Brother's policies over the inhabitants of Oceania. The Inner Party is considered the dominant culture since it represents the oligarchy that dominates every detail in Oceania. As for the residual element, Emmanuel Goldstein, who is referred to as a renegade and the principal

enemy of Ingsoc and Big Brother, plays an active role in the existence of the current dominant culture; he is portrayed as the main renegade according to the Inner Party and is used to prevent rebellion and keep the Outer Party members in line. Thus, he is instrumental in maintaining the policies of the Inner Party. Although his fictional book *The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism* and his Brotherhood are introduced in the novel, there is no concrete proof that he exists or not due to the Inner Party's constant erasure of history and distortion of truth. Thus, the survival or elimination of such a residual element is entirely determined by the Party. On the other hand, the emergent element of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is represented in Winston, Julia, and to some extent Goldstein in the company of his Brotherhood. Although Winston's and Julia's forms of rebellion differ from each other, their trysts, secret membership in the Brotherhood, illicit relationship, and commission of numerous crimes are embodied as oppositional emergent elements throughout the novel. On the other hand, due to the implausibility of the existence of both Emmanuel Goldstein and the Brotherhood oppositional movement, the reader can hardly determine whether Goldstein and the Brotherhood are genuine oppositional emergent elements. Although Winston and Julia, who form an oppositional emergent culture, attempt to undermine Big Brother and his totalitarian Inner Party, their attempts embody a fruitless emergent culture and are considered as inefficacious when they lose their individuality at the end of the novel.

Considering the 'Dominant,' 'Residual,' and 'Emergent' elements of culture, *1984 Here and Now* is tellingly replete with Raymond Williams' notions of the 'Dominant,' 'Residual,' and 'Emergent.' The dominant refers to Big Brother and his totalitarian, xenophobic Party's policies over the immigrants/non-Malays. The Big Brother's Party embodies the dominant culture as it represents the vast majority of the population, in contrast to *Nineteen Eighty-Four*'s Inner Party which suppresses the freedoms of the subordinate narratives. The residual element that resonates throughout the play is embodied by the memory of the "Woeful Wednesday riots," which is used as a pretext to suppress the rights of ethnic minorities and disintegrate ethnic unity between the Party members and the Proles. On the other hand, Wiran's efforts to cause positive change and achieve racial integration, his love-interest in Yone, his joining the Movement for a New Brotherhood, and his work for the Brotherhood's newspaper embody an oppositional emergent culture. Winston is a representation of the main

emergent in *1984 Here and Now*; he valiantly expresses his ideas, supports authentic earnest attempts to cause positive change in society, and strives for freedom and dignity. The character Yone is also a representative of the multi-phase oppositional emergent. Her joining of the Brotherhood movement and her support of Winston are considered as oppositional to the dominant Big Brother. Moreover, she represents an oppositional emergent culture as she challenges the patriarchal system represented by her father and brother by working to help her mother afford her needs, attempting to get enrolled in college, and getting involved with Party members whom her father detests. Thus, Yone embodies a multi-phased emergent culture that opposes Big Brother and the patriarchal system. Remarkably, there is no indication of whether Yone is genuinely in opposition to Big Brother's Party, as she is revealed at the end of the play to be a traitor and a spy working for the Party. While the emergent (Winston and the Brotherhood) in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* fails to become dominant as Winston and Julia separate and end up loving the Big Brother, the emergent (Wiran and the Brotherhood) is partially personified as dominant since the Big Brother and Shadrin (the current dominant) fail to manipulate and brainwash Wiran (the emergent). The other main emergent (Yone) succeeds in defying the barriers of the dominant (Yone's father and brother). However, the ambiguity of the play's ending, which is intentionally left up to the audience to determine through interference, makes it difficult to determine whether Yone is already dominant (working as a spy for the Party, as stated by Shadrin), pretending to be an oppositional emergent. Remarkably, the emergent (Winston and Julia) in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* are two characters belonging to the same class (the Outer Party), while the emergent (Wiran and Yone) are two characters belonging to different classes (a Party member and a Prole). Thus, Kee attempts to integrate a Party member with a Prole to unite an oppositional emergent who sows a seed of positive change in society.

This thesis deals with *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *1984 Here and Now* as cultural products of their contemporaneous times, analyzing them by considering their authors' perceptions in their respective contexts. It also compares and contrasts both of the works since George Orwell and Kee Thuan Chye's dystopian visions are highly influenced by their contemporary political, economic, social, and cultural conditions. Such dystopian visions are studied to comprehend the impact of historical changes and their reflection on these works. This thesis asserts the importance of the meticulous

analysis, comparison, and contrast as they aid the comprehension of the author's contemporary political, economic, social, and cultural conditions. This thesis is also a contributory factor for the emergence of forthcoming dystopian studies in the 21st century, which are tainted by contemporary themes such as survival, technological control, environmental destruction, nuclear disasters, and post humanism. Applying the cultural materialist framework on dystopian works such as *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *1984 Here and Now* could aid readers' comprehension of the political, cultural, and historical implications and subtexts of the aforementioned works.

REFERENCES

PRIMARY SOURCES

Gilbert, H. (2001). *Postcolonial Plays: An Anthology* (1st ed.). Routledge.

<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315006147>

Orwell, G. (1980). *George Orwell: Animal Farm, Burmese Days, A Clergyman's Daughter, Coming Up for Air, Keep the Aspidistra Flying, Nineteen Eighty-Four: Complete & Unabridged*. Octopus/Heinemann.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Arendt, H. (1973). *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Astore, W. J. (2016, April 15). All the Euphemisms We Use for 'War.' *The Nation*.

<https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/all-the-euphemisms-we-use-for-war/>

Barry, P. (1995). *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*. Manchester University Press.

Baskaran, L. (1987). *Aspects of Malaysian English syntax* (PhD dissertation).

University of London. <https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/1317756>

Bentham, J. (2007). *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation (Dover Philosophical Classics)*. Dover Publications.

Berlin, I. (2012). *The Crooked Timber Of Humanity*. Penguin Random House.

Berlin, I., Hardy, H., & Banville, J. (2013). *The Crooked Timber of Humanity: Chapters in the History of Ideas - Second Edition* (2nd ed.). Princeton University Press.

- Bernstein, G. S. (1985). The Architecture of Repression: The Built Environment of George Orwell's 1984. *Journal of Architectural Education (1984-)*, 38(2), 26–28. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1424815>
- Booker, K. M. (1994a). *Dystopian Literature: A Theory and Research Guide* (First Edition). Greenwood.
- Booker, K. M. (1994b). *The Dystopian Impulse in Modern Literature: Fiction as Social Criticism*. Greenwood Press.
- Bradbury, R. (2012). *Fahrenheit 451* (1st ed.). Simon & Schuster.
- Brant, R. (2009, July 23). *BBC News - Malaysia questions ethnic preferences*. BBC. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/8165746.stm>
- Brooker, J. (2006). Forbidden To Dream Again: Orwell and Nostalgia. *English*, 55(213), 281–297. <https://doi.org/10.1093/english/55.213.281>
- Broughton, S., Ellingham, M., & Lusk, J. (2006). *The Rough Guide to World Music*. Rough Guides.
- Burgess, A. (2013). *1985*. Profile.
- Burnham, J. (1941). *The Managerial Revolution: What is Happening in the World*. John Day Company.
- Claeys, G. (2010). The origins of dystopia: Wells, Huxley and Orwell. *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, 107–132. <https://doi.org/10.1017/ccol9780521886659.005>
- Concentration camp. (n.d.). In *Merriam-Webster*. Merriam-Webster. Retrieved May 27, 2021, from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/concentration%20camp>
- Coppard, A., Crick, B., & British Broadcasting Corporation. (1984). *Orwell Remembered*. Facts on File.

- Crehan, K. (2016). *Gramsci's Common Sense: Inequality and Its Narratives* (Reprint ed.). Duke University Press Books. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv11318dq>
- Crick, B. (1981). *George Orwell: A Life* (1st American ed). Little Brown & Co.
- David, T. C. E. (2016). *THE POLITICAL PLAYS OF ARTHUR MILLER AND KEE THUAN CHYE: RESISTING THE HEGEMONIC STATE* (PhD's dissertation). University of Malaya. <http://studentsrepo.um.edu.my/6696/>
- Derrida, J., & Bass, A. (1982). *Positions* (1st ed.). University of Chicago Press.
- Dowty, L. (2017). *1984 as a Religious Critique*. Trinity College Digital Repository. <https://digitalrepository.trincoll.edu/fypapers/72/>
- Duncan, S. (2009, March 11). *Thomas Hobbes* (*Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*). Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/hobbes/>
- Eagleton, T. (1991). *The Ideology of the Aesthetic*. Blackwell Publishers.
- Eliot, T. S. (2014). *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture* (First American ed.). Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Figes, O. (2007). *The Whisperers: Private Life in Stalin's Russia* (1st ed.). Metropolitan Books.
- Figes, O. (2014). *Revolutionary Russia, 1891–1991*. Adfo Books.
- Firchow, P. E. (1984). *The End of Utopia: A Study of Aldous Huxley's Brave New World*. UNKNO.
- Foucault, M. (1976). *The Archaeology of Knowledge & The Discourse on Language* (0 ed.). Harper Colophon.
- Foucault, M. (2012). *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*. Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group.
- Freud, S. (1930). *Civilization and Its Discontents*. Leonard & Virginia Woolf at The Hogarth Press & the Institute of Psycho-analysis.

- Gottlieb, E. (2001). *Dystopian Fiction East and West: Universe of Terror and Trial* (1st ed.). McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Gramsci, A. (1999). *Essential Classics in Politics*. ElecBook, The Electric Book Company.
- Grossmann, G. (1977). The Second Economy in the USSR. *Problems of Communism*, 25–40.
- Higgins, J. (2013). *Raymond Williams: Literature, Marxism and Cultural Materialism*. Routledge.
- Hillegas, M. R. (1974). *The Future as Nightmare: H. G. Wells and the Anti-Utopians (Lost American Fiction)* (1st ed.). Southern Illinois University Press.
- Hitchens, C. (2002). *Why Orwell Matters* (1st ed.). Basic Books.
- Hobbes, T. (1981). *Computatio sive logica: Logic De Corpore, Part 1*. Abaris Books.
- Hopkins, C. (2007). *English Fiction in the 1930s: Language, Genre, History (Continuum Literary Studies)* (1st ed.). Continuum.
- Horace. (1848). *The Satires and Epistles of Horace, with notes and excursus*. Whittaker.
- Horkheimer, M., & Adorno, T. W. (2002). *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (S. G. Noerr, Ed.; 1st ed.). Stanford University Press.
- Howard, J. E. (1986). The New Historicism in Renaissance Studies. *English Literary Renaissance*, 16(1), 13–43. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43447342>
- Jensen, E. J. (Ed.). (1984). *The Future of Nineteen Eighty-four* (2nd ed.). University of Michigan Press.
- Judt, T. (2011). *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945*. Penguin Random House.
- Kumar, K. (1991). *Utopia and Anti-utopia in Modern Times*. Blackwell.

- Lessa, I. (2005). Discursive Struggles Within Social Welfare: Restaging Teen Motherhood. *British Journal of Social Work*, 36(2), 283–298.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bch256>
- Lo, J. (2004). *Staging Nation: English Language Theatre in Malaysia and Singapore*. Hong Kong University Press. <https://muse.jhu.edu/book/5762>
- Loh, C. Y., & Ong, I. K. (1993). *Skoob Pacifica Anthology No. 1: S.E. Asia Writes Back! (Skoob Pacifica Series)*. Skoob Books Pub Ltd.
- Luegenbiehl, H. C. (1984). 1984 and the Power of Technology. *Social Theory and Practice*, 10(3), 289–300. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23556567>
- Mah Jong Symbols*. (n.d.). Mah Jong Sets. <https://www.mahjongsets.co.uk/symbols-mahjong.html>
- Mahjong. (2021). In *Merriam-Webster*. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/mah-jongg>
- Malreddy, P. K. (2019). Imperialist shame and indigenous guilt: George Orwell's writings on Burma. *European Journal of English Studies*, 23(3), 311–325.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13825577.2019.1655249>
- Marx, K., & Engels, F. (1970). *The German Ideology* (C. J. Arthur, Ed.). Macmillan Publishers.
- Mazower, M. (2000). *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (1st ed.). Vintage.
- McFadden, S. (2015, October 26). Dystopian stories used to reflect our anxieties. Now they reflect our reality. *The Guardian*.
<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/oct/26/dystopian-stories-margaret-atwood-walking-dead-zombies>
- Meyers, J. (1997). *George Orwell: The Critical Heritage* (1st ed.). Routledge.
- Meyers, J. (2010). *Orwell: Life and Art* (1st ed.). University of Illinois Press.

- Mill, J. S., & Collini, S. (1989). *J. S. Mill: "On Liberty" and Other Writings* (Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought). Cambridge University Press.
- Milner, A. J. (2002). *Re-imagining Cultural Studies: The Promise of Cultural Materialism* (1st ed.). SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Olander, J. D., Rabkin, E. S., & Greenberg, M. H. (1983). *No Place Else: Explorations in Utopian and Dystopian Fiction (Alternatives)* (1st ed.). Southern Illinois University Press.
- Orwell, G. (1940). *Inside the Whale, and Other Essays*. V. Gollancz Limited.
- Orwell, G. (1956). *Orwell Reader: Fiction, Essays, Reportage* (First ed.). Harcourt, Brace.
- Orwell, G. (1968). *The Collected Essays, Journalism, and Letters of George Orwell: My country right or left, 1940–1943* (S. Orwell, I. Angus, & J. A. Mackay, Eds.). Harcourt, Brace & World.
- Orwell, G. (1998). *Smothered Under Journalism: 1946* (I. Angus & S. Davison, Eds.). Secker & Warburg.
- Orwell, G. (2000). *Essays* (B. Crick, Ed.). Penguin UK.
- Orwell, G. (2001). *Orwell's England: The Road to Wigan Pier in the Context of Essays, Reviews, Letters and Poems Selected from the Complete Works of George Orwell* (P. H. Davison, Ed.). Penguin Books Limited.
- Orwell, G. (2002). *The Collected Essays, Journalism, and Letters of George Orwell* (S. Orwell & I. Angus, Eds.; First Paperback Edition. ed.). Nonpareil Books.
- Orwell, G. (2003). *Homage to Catalonia*. Penguin.
- Orwell, G. (2010). *The Orwell Diaries* (P. Davison, Ed.). Penguin.
- Orwell, G., & Davison, P. (2000). *A Patriot After All, 1940–1941*. Secker & Warburg.

- Oxford University Press (OUP). (n.d.). Dystopia. In *LEXICO*. Retrieved May 22, 2021, from <https://www.lexico.com/definition/dystopian>
- Pfeiffer, J. R. (1997). [Review of the book *Nineteen Eighty-Four Ten Years Later*, by Peter Stansky]. *Utopian Studies*, 8(1), 236–238.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/20719668>
- Quayum, M. (2005). Confessions of a liminal writer: An interview with Kee Thuan Chye. *Kunapipi: Journal of Postcolonial Writing and Culture*, 27(1), 130–139.
<https://ro.uow.edu.au/kunapipi/vol27/iss1/15>
- Resch, R. P. (1997). Utopia, Dystopia, and the Middle Class in George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. *Boundary 2*, 24(1), 137–176.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/303755>
- Rodden, J. (2007). *The Cambridge Companion to George Orwell*. Cambridge University Press.
- Sankoff, G. (1977). Derek Bickerton, Dynamics of a creole system. London: Cambridge University Press, 1975. Pp. viii + 224. *Journal of Linguistics*, 13(2), 292–306. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0022226700005454>
- Sargent, L. T. (1994). The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited. *Utopian Studies*, 5(1), 1–37. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20719246>
- Saunders, F. S. (2000). *Who Paid the Piper? : CIA and the Cultural Cold War*. Granta Books.
- Sheldon, S. (2006). *The Other Side of Me*. Hachette.
- Sisk, D. W. (1997). *Transformations of Language in Modern Dystopias (Contributions to the Study of Science Fiction & Fantasy)*. Praeger.
- Solzhenit̂SYn, A. I. (1992). *The Gulag Archipelago, 1918–1956: An Experiment in Literary Investigation* (Vol. 1). Harper & Row.

- Subramaniam, G., & Pillai, S. (2017). Reconciling Malaysian Chinese Identity: Multiple Passages to Nationhood. *SARE: SOUTHEAST ASIAN REVIEW OF ENGLISH*, 48(1), 56–74.
- Suvin, D. (1979). *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction: On the Poetics and History of a Literary Genre*. Yale University Press.
- Swift, J. (2005). *Gulliver's Travels*. Oxford University Press.
- Symons, J. (1963, September). Orwell, a Reminiscence. *London Magazine*, 35–49.
- Vieira, F. (2010). The concept of utopia. *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, 3–27. <https://doi.org/10.1017/ccol9780521886659.001>
- Walsh, C. (1962). *From Utopia to Nightmare* (1st Ed). Harper & Row.
- Wan, J. (2010, August 6). *Kee Thuan Chye Unmasked*. Malaysiakini. <https://www.malaysiakini.com/news/139332>
- Watts, P. (2015, September 2). Blitzed, rebuilt and built again: what became of London's bomb sites? *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2015/sep/02/blitz-london-bomb-sites-redevelopment>
- Weiss, S. (2008). *Yale Gamelan*. Yale University Javanese Gamelan Ensemble. <https://yalegamelan.yale.edu/brief-introduction-gamelan-music>
- Wellerstein, A. (2015, August 7). *Nagasaki: The Last Bomb*. The New Yorker. <https://www.newyorker.com/tech/annals-of-technology/nagasaki-the-last-bomb>
- Wells, D. (1981). *Marxism and the Modern State: An Analysis of Fetishism in Capitalist Society*. Harvester Press.
- Wheatcroft, G. (2000, February). *St George's Shroud*. Prospect Magazine. <https://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/magazine/stgeorgesshroud>
- Williams, R. (1960). *Culture and Society 1780–1950*. Doubleday.

- Williams, R. (1966). *Reading and Criticism*. Muller.
- Williams, R. (1976). *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. Oxford University Press.
- Williams, R. (1977). *Marxism and Literature*. Oxford University Press.
- Williams, R. (1980). *Problems in materialism and culture: Selected essays*. Verso.
- Williams, R. (1983). *Writing in Society*. Verso.
- Williams, R. (2005). *Culture and Materialism*. Verso.
- Yeo, R. (1999). The Writer as Activist: An Interview with Kee Thuan Chye. *World Literature Written in English*, 38(1), 5–20.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17449859908589308>

RESUME

Mohammad Waleed TALALWEH, an independent and self-motivated polyglot, musician, English, Turkish, and Spanish teacher, and translator with 11+ years of experience in teaching. Graduated from the Arab-American University-Palestine (AAUP) with a Bachelor of Arts in English Language. Recent university graduate from Karabük University with a Master of Arts in English Language and Literature.