

# Power Maintenance in Huxley's Brave New World and Orwell's Nineteen Eighty Four

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## Abstract

This paper presents a literary analysis of two dystopian novels; Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty Four* and Huxley's *Brave New World*. The paper explores the tools and means that are used by the "State" in both novels to maintain power, and control the citizens which eventually the authorities in power oppress everyone to accept a mere ideology. The aim of this paper is to give a literary analysis to focus on those ways and means that are used by authorities in dystopian literature to maintain, keep and hold in to power. The paper discusses three main tools and means in the hand of the "State" to fulfill their political, social and psychological agenda. The oppressive means and tools are mentioned in the paper with making concrete reference to the both texts are the changing of past events, the use of technology for controlling the people, and the use of language to oppress people. This paper consists of three sections: the first section examines that how language is used by the authorities to make people have the same type of thinking, which serves the State. The second section explores how the State organizations use the malleability of the past to create only one accepted truth about the past. The last section focuses on the ill-use of technology by those who are in power to reach their aims and monitor everyone, and how through the products of technology, Soma, the State makes people unaware of the reality of life.

**Key words:** Orwell, Huxley, Power, Technology, Language, Past, Soma, State, Dystopia.

## 1. Introduction

Dystopia is the name used for a community which has become hell-like place to live in. In Dystopian societies, oppressive and negative forces, or events, have become the dominant factor influencing people's lives and experiences. 'The concept of dystopia is often used in the more philosophical kind of science fiction; these fictional works try to explore the real trends operating in the world and genuine future possibilities by exaggerating them, taking them to the extreme end of the spectrum, in order to explore the full range of their implications for our lives.' (Gerhard 9) Although a pure dystopia, like a pure utopia, is probably unlikely to happen, they can predicts the real threats which might be a real part of our lives, as well as to focus on the danger of disaster events that occur.

Generally, the significance of literature is in its impact to make us view the world in new ways, enables us to comprehend new and different perspectives on reality. In this respect, dystopian literature has been a centre to deal with the coming future life to nations in a fictional way, "dystopian fiction can energize the imagination and provide such fresh perspectives." (Booker 176) Dystopian literature tells us things about our own reality. It can criticize the worst parts of the society, or draw our attention to unknown public issues. Power is encompassed within many dystopian novels of the Twentieth century, like in Huxley's *Brave New World* and Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty Four*, which are well-known for their

societies being highly repressed, oppressed and controlled. This paper refers to the two mentioned dystopian novels to show how manipulating language, the malleability of the past, and science and technology are used in the service of the State to stay, keep, and maintain power and eventually control the society.

Power legitimizes laws, regulates and preserves property, and employing force within the community so as to preserve property, it can be said that power is strictly related to a political system. Thus, political power is defined as the power of the State, body politic, or civil government, operating under the forms of law, and compelling, or threatening to subject to its requirements by physical force. It comprehends every description of influence founded on the authority of the State, which either applies or threatens to apply physical coercion. Further, political power is concerned with keeping things as they are and this can be influenced by things such as religion, economy, and social groups. Power represents an aspect of all human behaviour; that is, it is not separate from human behaviour, and therefore, can be seen through displays. Further, power can be structural. By this, it means that the power manifests in relationships that not only operates within settings and domains but also organizes and orchestrates the settings themselves, and that specifies the direction and distinction of energy flows.

In two books *Nineteen Eighty Four* and *Brave New World* the maintenance of power is literally what the New World is. Power is a means to a socially desirable end, the maintenance of this power is the means to keep power perpetually. In *Nineteen Eighty Four* O'Brien sums this up when he says, "If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face — forever" (Orwell 331) Similarly in *Brave New World*, Huxley sets up a society where people are artificially conceived and "programmed" with the intention to maintain indefinite power for the government.

### 1.1 Manipulation of Language to oppress people

Language is one of the most important forms of human communication. Through speaking human beings can interact and express their needs. The language we use influences the way we think. By uttering words in every speech act, everyone can take a place in the community where they live in. It is through language that messages are communicated and people understand each other. The relationship between power and language has a long root in human history. Language gives power to individuals to exercise power over each other. Members of the society in the real world and the authorities in dystopian novels use language as a strategy to dominate the others and implement their ideology.

The control over language is a way of power maintenance in *Nineteen Eighty Four* by George Orwell. The impact of language in controlling people and maintaining power in Orwell's dystopian novel *Nineteen Eighty Four* is quite clear. In *Transformations of Language in Modern Dystopias*, Sisk claims that the "struggle for mastery of the world boils down to the mastery of the word" (180). In Oceania, the government aims at making and progressing Newspeak English language as the spoken and written language within the society purposefully. In Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty Four*, language is explicitly addressed as a primary locus of control and power. Newspeak, the "official language" in Oceania, is devised by the Party for the purpose of attaining pure, unopposed power; it excludes heretical words and restricts vocabulary in order to limit and control individual range of thought.

In Orwell's novel language is a tool in the hand of the Party to serve their aims and fulfil their strategies. Orwell reveals that within power relation; power language and truth is inseparable phenomena. As Syme, a loyal worker to the system says "The Revolution will be complete when the language is perfect, Newspeak is Ingsoc and Ingsoc is Newspeak." (61)

Orwell insists that language is the means through which a totalitarian State can most effectively maintain its own power and reject any disagreement. Newspeak makes one-sided people accepting one truth only. Its purpose of all other modes of thought is impossible. Syme States the aim of Newspeak to Winston, the protagonist of the novel:

“Do you know that Newspeak is the only language in the world whose vocabulary gets smaller every year? Don't you see that the whole aim of Newspeak is to narrow the range of thought? In the end we shall make thought crime literally, because there would be no words in which to express it”. (Orwell 60)

Orwell's experiment with the functions of language in *Nineteen Eighty Four*, uses it as a key instrument for passive oppression, absolute control and diminished capacity of imagination. Utell in an article, *Why We Still Read Orwell*, mentions “the lessons learned in *Nineteen Eighty Four* about the power of language to shape and sustain ideological system are not to be forgotten” (203). The language of the Party creates a certain world-view point and a practice of mental habit with its receptions, which will finally make any other thought impossible in society. 'Newspeak,' is carried out with the intention of making subversive thoughts impossible, since there will be no words with which to oppose the Party's ideology. Those in power can control behaviour by manipulating thought, and they can control thought by regulating language. Thus, if the Party can abolish “Thoughtcrime” completely by imposing a legally-enforced orthodox language, then criminal acts, or any dissent that may challenge the Party's authority, will cease to occur.

In other words, ideology controls technology in *Nineteen Eighty Four*, rather than issuing from it as in, say Huxley's *Brave New World*. In contradistinction to these works, George Woodcock notes:

“Orwell saw the great danger of the future in the ruthless elimination of opposition by means of police dictatorship and by an extension of the deliberate falsification of history and of language which had already begun in modern totalitarian States; thus, *Nineteen Eighty Four* is dominated less by technological factors than by the possibility of man's being turned into a mindless robot by predominantly cultural and political means”. (Woodcock34)

The important thing to remember about the "dystopias" of both Huxley and Orwell is that they posit a perfectly malleable and hence perfectly predictable human nature incapable of experiencing any emotion or exercising any judgment outside of the prevailing and, in Orwell, continuously changing frame of reference. ‘The destruction of personal identity in objective reality is thus complete-or nearly complete, for being romantics at heart, both Huxley and Orwell introduce exceptions.’(Kessler 568)

## 1.2 The Malleability of History to Stand in Power

To control the past for power maintenance is an important way used by the totalitarian powers. It is a useful way to control the society for the sake of the totalitarian State. Another means to maintain power in dystopian literature is manipulating and changing the past events by the totalitarian systems in the service of keeping power. The importance of using or manipulating past events is neatly delineated in the two dystopian novels, George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty Four*, and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. In the former, the Ministry of Truth which its slogan is “who controls the past controls the future, who controls the present controls the past.” (Orwell 40) totally changes the past as needed to justify and lend "truth" to the immediate requirements, actions, and policies of the State. In the latter, the past is blotted out. As the Resident World Controller for Western Europe, Mustafa Mond tells the Savage, “We haven't any use for old things here; we don't want people to be attracted by old things.”

(Huxley 193) In the following quote, Fowler illustrates that the intention of controlling the past by those who are in power for their own interest:

“In cases, control and manipulation of the past or its complete denial is critical to State ideology and purposes. Here, and in virtually all nation-States past and present, the aim of the manipulators is to convince themselves, their citizens/subjects, and the relevant rest of the world, that their right to rule, their dominant of other States or peoples or their cause or mission is “Just” (229).

Power is also portrayed in *Nineteen Eighty Four* through Winston's job; he works for the Ministry of Truth. Every day he must re-write past newspaper articles so that any historical evidence must support the current party doctrine. Winston disappointedly reveals the Party's aim in working on historical events; he says “If the Party could thrust its hand into the past and say of this or that event, it never happened – that, surely, was more terrifying than mere torture and death.” (Orwell 40) In this way the Party, and in particular Big Brother, can never be shown to be wrong. They also maintain complete control over the people under the Party by forcing them to agree with whatever they believe in at any given moment in time.

The government in dystopian literature systematically uses history for maintaining power. It implements every possibility to form the past in a way which strengthens its strategy to control the members of the society. For instance, in *Nineteen Eighty Four*, the Party always possesses the glorious of the nation to a single man, “In the Party histories, of course, Big Brother figured as a leader and guardian of the Revolution since its very earliest days.” (Orwell 41) Moreover, the Party is carrying out a very precise process to control history, it hands in every aspects of life; it gives a new meaning to everything so as to be suit with its ideology:

“The process of continuous alteration was applied not only to newspapers, but to books, periodicals, posters, leaflets, sound-tracks, and cartoons, photographs- to every kind of literature and documentation which might conceivably hold any political or ideological significance.” (Orwell 47)

### 1.3 ill-Use of Technology in Controlling Citizens

Technology in dystopian novels is used as a tool by the State's totalitarian rulers to create a set of values which applied on people. Here, technology can be a force that determines what value and lifestyle must be adopted by citizens.

Using and utilizing science and technology is another tool in the hand of the State in dystopian literature so as to maintain power and force the citizens to accept the authority's ideology. The technological means are used in the totalitarian regimes to develop all aspects to serve their strategy. The only technological use that figures largely in the dystopian novel *Nineteen Eighty Four* is the telescreens by which the securities services censor the members of the Party. The technology of Oceania is clearly the servant and not the master of the Party, “the telescreen is a powerful metaphor for the loss of privacy in a totalitarian State.” (Posner 15) The dictatorship maintains power by continuously watching people and censoring through a type of television found everywhere, even in their own bedrooms:

“The telescreen received and transmitted simultaneously, any sound that Winston made, above the level of a very low whisper, would be picked up it; moreover, so long as he remained within the field of vision which the metal plaque commanded, he could be seen as well as heard.” (Orwell 5)

*Brave New World* warns of the dangers of giving the State Control over new and powerful technologies. One illustration of this theme is the rigid control of reproduction through technological and medical intervention, including the surgical removal of ovaries, the Bokanovsky Process, and hyponopaedic conditioning. On the other hand, the creation of

complicated entertainment machines is another use of technology to generate both harmless leisure and the high levels of consumption and production that are the basis of the World State's stability.

The use of technological means in Huxley's *Brave New World* is more futuristic than Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty Four*. In *Technology in the dystopian Novel*, Gorman Beauchamp writes "Futuristic technology is a persuasive feature of the society in *Brave New World* and is meticulously described and explained." (60) The novel illustrates that so as to maintain the stability, individuality must be passive as shown in the novel when the Controller States, "There is no civilization without social stability. No social stability without individual stability." (Huxley 31) In *Brave New World* every human is produced in a laboratory and conditioned to have the values of the State from birth through sleep learning the stability requires the production of large numbers of genetically identical individuals because people who are exactly the same are less likely to show revolutionary actions against the power. In *Brave New World*, the scientists have absolute controls who work for the "World State", they bring up and nature humans for specific aim. People are mass produced on assembly lines in five different "models" designed for specific industrial needs. The people have no choice in their future due to the way they are brought up, "natural reproduction has been done away, children are created, decanted and raised in Hatcheries and Conditioning Centre, where they are divided into five castes, designed to fulfil predetermined positions." (Huxley 40)

The scientists use the futuristic idea of having "all children educated via hyponopaedic process", known as sleep-learning, providing each child with "caste-appropriate subconscious message," used to control the child's social outlook and self-image. This results in a lack of competition within or between castes, as "each caste members receive the same food and housing as every other member of that caste. There is no wish to change one's model, largely because a person's sleeping-conditioning teaches that his or her caste is superior to the four." (Huxley 54)

Another innovation of technology in *Brave New World* which can make people to be unaware of the power's actions is eating *Soma*. It has become a normal food for the people whenever they feel distress and bored. *Soma* can be considered as a key way of maintaining power in the novel. It is "hallucinogen that takes users on enjoyable hangover-free holidays." (Priest 97) This government-produced drug is designed to be a comfort mechanism to cure any stress of unhappiness, as well as giving a positive and kindly image of the government for allowing their citizens this privilege.

George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty Four*, novel depicts a dystopia in which an all-powerful State controls the behaviours and actions of its people in order to preserve its own stability and power. But a major difference between the two is that, whereas in *Nineteen Eighty Four* control is maintained by constant government surveillance, secret police, and torture, power in *Brave New World* is maintained through technological interventions that starts before birth and last until death, and that actually change what people want. The government of *Nineteen Eighty Four* maintains power through force and intimidation. The government of *Brave New World* retains control by making its citizens so happy and superficially fulfilled that they don't care about their personal freedom. In *Brave New World* the consequences of State control are a loss of dignity, morals, values, and emotions—in short, a loss of humanity.

Both Aldous Huxley and George Orwell tell us in effect. For, it is the unique feature of the Twentieth century that the material requisites for the "possibility of civilization are at hand. From the moment when the machine first made its appearance, or- well's Goldstein (Trotsky) writes: "it was clear to all thinking people that the need for human drudgery and therefore to a great extent for human inequality had disappeared." (2) And in Huxley's *Brave New World* the Controller informs the Savage that "there isn't any need for a civilized man to

bear anything that is seriously unpleasant.”(3) While Orwell bases the oligarchical collectivism of *Nineteen Eighty Four* on conspicuous production, and Huxley his *Brave New World* on conspicuous consumption, they both start from the same premise, that science has solved the problem of production. Indeed, the means whereby these rulers of the not-so-distant future choose to dispose of the surpluses created by a phenomenally efficient productive machine offer the key to their power. This brings us to the central problem of both *Brave New World* and *Nineteen Eighty Four*: the system works splendidly. And it works so well precisely because stability that is, maintenance of the status quo has become the supreme goal to which all other non-operational values, such as truth, happiness, freedom, must be and are subordinated. In both novels, there is no external value scheme against which either system can be measured. It is against this sort of operational determinism that Huxley and Orwell rebel. Both are pleading for the right of individuals to be aware of and act upon “apolitical ” values. And in *Nineteen Eighty Four* and *Brave New World* they have shown what is likely to happen when that right is destroyed.

### Conclusion

At least but not last, Power maintenance is explored in dystopian literature through different means. One significant comparison between both novels that has not been made concerns their relative aesthetic qualities. In both novels, fascist elements use common means to gain and retain power. However, in each of the both novels, technology is the most effective agents for the public's acceptance of the subsequent encroachments on their freedoms. The governments use many ways to maintain power over the citizens, firstly, such as manipulation of language, as it is seen in Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty Four*, the Party creates a new language, Newspeak, to control people's mind and narrow the range of their thoughts in the service of the Party's purpose. Secondly, the change and using past is another tool in the hand of the State to implement and fulfil its strategy. The State changes and re-writes history in a way to enforce the people accept the only truth from the government. In *Nineteen Eighty Four*, the Party which is in power has a slogan “who controls the past controls the future, who controls the present controls the past.” In Huxley's *Brave New World*, the power opposes whatever which is seems to be old. Thirdly, power can be maintained in dystopian literature throughout the ill-uses of technology and science. In *Brave New World*, a group of scientists control everything; they produce and bring up children. They condition everyone to fulfil the power's aim. In *Nineteen Eighty Four* the Party via widespread telescreens censors everywhere in the Oceania.

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## پوخته‌ی باسه‌که

ئەم تووژینه‌وه‌یه تاییه‌ته به شیکردنه‌وه‌ی ئەده‌بی بۆ دوو رۆمانی (دیس‌توپیا)، که ئەوانیش رۆمانه‌کانی (هه‌زار و نۆ سه‌د و هه‌شتا و چوار)ی (جۆرج ئورویل)ه، له‌گه‌ڵ رۆمانی (جیهانیکی نوێ)، که (ئۆلډس هه‌کسلی) نووسیبویه‌تی، ئامانج له‌ تووژینه‌وه‌که تیشک خسته‌ته‌ سه‌ر ئەو ریگایانه‌یه، که له‌لایه‌ن ده‌سته‌لاتدارانه‌وه له جیهانی دیستوپیدا بۆ پیاوانکردن و پاراستنی ده‌سه‌لات به‌کارهاتوون، که‌وايه بابه‌تی سه‌ره‌کی تووژینه‌وه‌که تاییه‌ت به‌و ئامراز و هۆکارانه‌یه، که رژیمة ده‌سته‌لاتداره‌کان بۆ پاراستن و دریزه‌دان به‌ ده‌سته‌لاتیان، له‌گه‌ڵ چۆنیه‌تی سه‌رکوکردن و چه‌وساندنه‌وه‌ی هاو‌نیشتمانیان به‌ مه‌به‌ستی سه‌پاندن و زالکردنی تاکه ئایدۆلۆژیا و بیرکردنه‌وه‌ی ته‌سک به‌سه‌ریاندا به‌کاریانیه‌تاون.

به‌ شێوه‌یه‌کی گشتی تووژینه‌وه‌که باس له‌ سێ ئامرازی سه‌ره‌کی ده‌کات، که ده‌سته‌لاتداره‌ سه‌ته‌مکاره‌کان بۆ هینانه‌دی ئامانجه‌کانیان له‌ کارنامه‌ی سیاسی و سایکۆلۆژی و کۆمه‌لایه‌تییاندا پێرهبویان کردوون. نیوه‌رۆکی تووژینه‌وه‌که جگه له‌ پێشه‌کی و سێ به‌ش پیکدیت:

له‌ پێشه‌کیدا وه‌ک ده‌روازه‌یه‌ک بۆ چوونه‌ نیو تووژینه‌وه‌که ناویشان و هۆی هه‌لبژاردن و گرنگی و پێناز و سنووری تووژینه‌وه‌که باسکراون.

به‌شی یه‌که‌م: ئەم به‌شه له‌ تووژینه‌وه‌که جه‌خت له‌سه‌ر خراب به‌کارهینانی زمان له‌ لایه‌ن ده‌سته‌لاتدارانه‌وه بۆ به‌رژه‌وه‌ندی تاییه‌تی خۆیان ده‌کاته‌وه، که وا له‌ خه‌لک بکه‌ن هه‌مان بیرکردنه‌وه‌ی ئەوانیان هه‌بیت.

به‌شی دووهمی تووژینه‌وه‌که‌شمان له‌ دامه‌زراوه‌ ده‌وله‌تییه‌کان ده‌توویته‌وه، که چۆن پروداوه‌ میژووبییه‌کانیان بۆ به‌رژه‌وه‌ندی خۆیان گۆریوه، ئەویش بۆ خاتری ئەوه‌ی ته‌نیا یه‌ک راستی ده‌رباره‌ی رابردو و قبول بکریه‌ت.

هه‌رچی به‌شی سێهه‌م و کۆتاییه‌شه له‌ تووژینه‌وه‌که، ئەوا تیشک ده‌خاته‌ سه‌ر خراب به‌کارهینانی ته‌کنه‌لۆژیا له‌لایه‌ن ده‌سته‌لاتدارانه‌وه بۆ گه‌یشتن به‌ مه‌رامه‌کانیان، وه‌کو چاودیریکردنی هاوولاتیان و پێدانی ده‌رمانی (سۆما)، به‌مه‌ش ده‌وله‌ت وا له‌ هاوولاتیانی ده‌کات که بی ئاگابن له‌ ژبانی راسته‌قینه‌.

له‌ کۆتایی تووژینه‌وه‌که‌شدا گرنگترین ئەنجامه‌ به‌ده‌سته‌هاتووه‌کان، له‌گه‌ڵ لیستی سه‌رچاوه‌کان و کورته‌ی تووژینه‌وه‌که به‌ هه‌ر سێ زمانی کوردی و عه‌ره‌بی و ئینگلیزی خراونه‌ته‌پرو.

## ملخص البحث

هذا البحث مخصص لتحليل أدبي لروايتي (ديستوپيا) اللتان هما : رواية ( ألف و تسعمائة وأربع وثمانين) لجورج أوريل مع رواية (العالم الجديد) ل (ئۆلډس هه‌كسلي) والهدف من البحث هو تسليط الضوء على الأساليب والطرق الذي استخدمت من قبل السلطات المستبدة في (ديستوپيا)، للحفاظ على السلطة واحتكارها، إذا الموضوع الرئيسي للجهد هو ذكر الوسائل والأسباب والأساليب والأدوات التي أدت إلى تطويل الطغاة السلاطين لمدة حكمهم بالقمع والإستهانة بالشعب واضطهاد جميع أفراد المجتمع وفرض أدولوجية معينة عليهم بأبشع الصورة الممكنة لهم وبالشكل العام ركز البحث على ذكر ثلاثة أساليب المستخدمة من قبل الطغاة المستبدين من منهجهم السياسية و النفسية والإجتماعية. والبحث تكون من مقدمة و ثلاثة أقسام، وفي المقدمة ذكرنا شيئاً عن أسباب الإختيار و العنوان وأهمية المنهج وحدود البحث.

القسم الأول من البحث يؤكد على سوء استخدام اللغة من قبل المستبدين لمصالحهم ويحاولون من خلالها أن يجبروا الناس على ان يفكروا مثل تفكيرهم

والقسم الثاني يبحث عن موقف المؤسسات والدوائر الحكومية وكيف حاولوا تغيير الأحداث التاريخية وتدويرها لمصالحهم ووفقاً لأهوائهم ومزاجهم.

والقسم الثالث يسلط الضوء على سوء استخدام التكنولوجيا من أجل الوصول إلى مآربهم وإغفال المواطنين وإعطائهم بعض الأدوية لإلهائهم عن الحقائق والحياة الحقيقية.

وفي النهاية أهم الإستنتاجات التي حصلنا عليه مع قائمة المصادر والمراجع وذكر ملخص البحث باللغات الثلاثة الكوردية والعربية والإنجليزية.