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TO ZEYNEP AND ÖYKÜ;

my beloved daughters …

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A NOTE ON THE TEXT

"To everything, there is a season: a time to be born and a time to die."[1] When the literary tendencies throughout history are considered, they are understood to have flourished in due season and lost their effect after a while. The late eighteenth century was a perfect time for Coleridge's romanticism, but the ideal era for John Donne came much earlier. Dickens's literary understanding impeccably corresponded to the conditions of his time, yet the same approach might not have been so influential in the following century. As for a dystopian worldview, there could not be a better period than the twentieth century with its social, cultural, scientific, and religious decadence.

When I heard the word 'dystopia' for the first time years ago, it made me feel a bit out of place. It was difficult to explain what I felt with loud and clear words. It was a little bit of anxiety and a little bit of gloom. It was like a slap in the face; a kind of being waken up in the sweetest time of a dream. I could not understand the reason that made me feel that way at first, but little by little I came to realise. It was related to knowing or maybe feeling the fact that our time is the very season for dystopia. I was to accept this 'neo-reality' if I wanted to collect my wits.

Some of the strongest friendships start with a fight. This is how I met dystopia: the beginning of a lasting friendship. After this moment, I began to meet the authors who must have felt similar things as I did. One day I met Zamiatin, and the other day I was looking Huxley in the eye. I chatted with Orwell about the potential dangers relating individualism and it was Bradbury who convinced me of not losing my hope even in the most hopeless situations possible. Their ideas were appalling, but there was no fiction. What I was listening from them was the reality of modernity, and I wanted to inhale and internalise every single hint that could guide me.

This process resulted in an irresistible yearning for writing and sharing such feelings; and this work is a product of this innocent urge. The book consists of five parts. The introduction part forms the framework of the historical and social context of dystopian fiction. It also covers the philosophical background of the issue. In this part, the related theories of Freud, Lacan, Althusser, and Foucault are explained in detail.

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[1] Ecclesiastes 3:1-8.

Chapter One analyses George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* with respect to dystopian elements in the novel. Accepted as a benchmark of dystopian fiction, the work comes out as a perfect exemplification of the genre. The fact that it portrays a society oppressed under a totalitarian communistic government makes the novel a successor of the Russian writer Yevgeny Zamiatin. The effect of Zamiatin's *We*, referred to as one of the literary curiosities of the book-burning age by Orwell himself, is obvious because Orwell's plot, characterisation, and idea of using literature as a warning for people seem to be reflections of Zamiatin's work.[2] The warning in question is about the possibility of a totalitarian understanding, which is clarified by Orwell when he argues that what he has written for several years is totally against totalitarianism and for the sake of democratic socialism.

The chapter tries to reflect an image of the bleak worldview that Orwell draws masterfully in his narrative. The physical and psychological oppression of the state is embodied in the character of Big Brother, and the effects of such oppression upon the people are traced over the character of Winston, who ironically works at the Ministry of Truth. The society described in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is a group controlled almost exclusively by punishment and the fear of punishment.[3] The idea behind the working functional society is basically the same: Orwell's society is gradually deprived of all forms of expression of individuality, and the system replaces the individual mind with a mind of the crowd, which is much easier to manipulate. For Orwell, the main impulse for writing his dystopian vision is the situation in Europe before and after the Second World War, when totalitarian governments were being formed, whether it was right-wing or left-wing. From this perspective, though it may seem so, the book is not a direct critique of communist Russia: "My recent novel [1984] is NOT intended as an attack on Socialism or on the British Labour Party . . . but as a show-up of the perversions which have already been partly realised in Communism and Fascism."[4] Orwell does not make a difference between the socialist or fascist state. For him, the danger for humanity is not mainly about being socialist or fascist, but rather about being ruled by totalitarian regimes. Having observed the developments in

[2] William Gordon Browning, "Anti-Utopian Fiction: Definition and Standards for Evaluation," (PhD diss., Louisiana State University, 1966), 45-46.

[3] Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World Revisited* (London: Triad/Panther Books, 1983), 14.

[4] Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus, eds., *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell, Volume 4: In Front of Your Nose, 1945-1950* (London: The Camelot Press Ltd., 1968), 502.

Russia and European countries like Spain, he believes that the possibility of a totalitarian regime for Britain is not as unlikely as generally believed to be, and it may come true sooner than imagined unless the necessary awareness is provided.

Significant as it is for the purpose of this work, the way how history and truth are continuously rewritten in the novel is revealed. Besides, it is emphasized that most people are even not aware of this situation, or at least they are obliged to behave so. The regime's policy of cutting people's connection with history by erasing or changing historical documents plays a central role in the manipulation of the community. In this way, people are left with no option other than believing in whatever they are told, which means the regime can impose anything it wants and can canalise its citizens in accordance with its policy.

In Orwell's world, the state makes use of technology to the point that even the facial expressions of people while they are asleep can be under observation. Accordingly, the idea of being observed all the time and everywhere is handled with reference to Bentham's theory of the Panopticon. Besides, Foucault's idea of discourse and power is openly centralised in the work. The state has control over media, and it creates its own reality and history by using it. Not only what people can do but also what they can think are determined by the state with the help of Ideological and Repressive State Apparatuses such as media and/or the army. It is not surprising that war has a central role in this context. As a man having personally experienced the Spanish Civil War, Orwell is very well cognizant of the purpose of the wars and the way they can be used by the state to silence its subjects.

Remarkably, pleasure comes out to be another way of keeping people, specifically the proletarians, silent in the novel. They are allowed to go to the pub, drink beer, and gamble, which are all recognised by the state and yet tolerated for the sake of maintaining its power and destroying the tiniest possibility of revolution. However, as it is indicated in the book, pleasure without freedom and happiness without individuality can be nothing but an illusion.

As the characterisation of Winston reveals, the self and individuality of people are totally controlled and shaped by the state in the direction of its aims. At this point, Lacan's theories on language and the construction of identity help to analyse the problem better. As far as individual ways of treatment of language in dystopian novels are concerned, the authors propose several scenarios of how it can be used to limit individual knowledge and freedom. Orwell's fear of misusing the language as a tool of propaganda is evident as he not only places a great focus on the concept

of Newspeak throughout the novel, but also adds a separate, several-pages-long appendix that deals with this issue and clarifies the fundamental purpose of it: "The purpose of Newspeak was not only to provide a medium of expression for the world-view and mental habits proper to the devotees of Ingsoc, but to make all other modes of thought impossible."[5] The mentioned version of the language, which is only in the earlier stages of development in the novel, will in its final form not allow its users to commit a 'thoughtcrime,' since it will not contain words that could express the thoughts that the Party would not approve. Moreover, the meanings of the remaining words will be so narrowed that they will not make it possible to describe forbidden concepts in any way. The work appears to provide a valid warning about the power of language. It demonstrates how language may be used to alter people's perception of reality, to obscure realities, and even to control history: "Language is one of the key instruments of political dominations, the necessary and insidious means of the 'totalitarian' control of reality."[6] In this direction, the state's idea of creating a new language, Newspeak, which contains fewer words, is a manifestation of the idea of using language to control people's ideas and identities. The underlying purpose of such an attempt is to avoid the possibility of sophisticated thinking and the idea of rebellion, and to ensure the uniformity of people as they would behave like robots that have the same range of linguistic data and so the same range of intellectual capacity. Browning draws attention to the issue when he claims that the success of the totalitarian regimes mostly arises from leaders' ability in rewriting history, obscuring facts, and manipulating language in general to fit their own objectives.[7]

The state in the novel maintains such a systematic process of dehumanisation that the citizens lose their sense of identity and become subjectified in an atmosphere where people are under incessant physical and psychological oppression by means of media, army, and language. The work reveals the probable dangers of absolute power in the hands of the minority. The basic and inner weakness of humankind detected by Orwell is the same as the one detected by Huxley, which is an inability of handling power without being corrupted.[8]

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[5] George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four: The Annotated Edition* (London: Penguin Books, 2013), 343.
[6] Alok Rai, *Orwell and the politics of despair: A critical study of the writings of George Orwell* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 122.
[7] Browning, "Anti-Utopian Fiction: Definition and Standards for Evaluation," 108.
[8] Browning, "Anti-Utopian Fiction: Definition and Standards for Evaluation," 95.

The main preoccupation of Chapter Two is the repression of intellectualism and the excess of popular culture in *Fahrenheit 451*. The chapter follows the development of the protagonist, Montag, from an ignorant adherent of the state to a fierce critic of it. It could be argued that Bradbury was affected by Aldous Huxley and especially his 1932 work *Brave New World* about the idea of giving the citizens all sorts of pleasure together with a drug, called soma, so that people would not be awake in the real sense, could not access information, and so they would be unable to question the ongoing oppression. From this aspect, the Foucauldian idea of 'knowledge is power' is a prevalent theme in the work. In this futuristic society of Bradbury, people are forbidden not only to read but also to keep books. The reason for this can easily be explained by the fact that literature is often taken as a danger for the state and as something to be kept out for the sake of perfect stability:

> Literature is incompatible with a lot of other local features besides your climate – incompatible with human integrity, incompatible with philosophic truth, incompatible with individual sanity and a decent social system, incompatible with everything except dualism, criminal lunacy, impossible inspiration, and unnecessary guilt.[9]

Because of its characteristics displayed above, literature is almost always taken as a danger for the authority; a danger that cannot be disregarded or tolerated. The fundamental reason for this is generally literature's potential of creating suspicions in the minds of the readers about the existent life standards and imposed ideologies. In this direction, it is not surprising that the regime's main occupation in Bradbury's society is literature itself. Books are burnt, people who keep books are arrested and so any chance of contact with literature is tried to be destroyed. However, the absence of literature must be compensated, because people with no dilatory engagement may be dangerous, as well.

After having guaranteed the decline of literature, the state uses technology to keep its people as occupied and uneducated as possible. In this way, it creates a group of people who are devoid of thinking or questioning. The people under this regime watch TV all the time and their connection with reality and emotions is totally cut with the fictional world of the huge TV screens, which function as a kind of opiate. The television screens in the novel appear to be as much of an opiate as the sleeping pills Mildred uses or the soma in *Brave New World*. Another way the regime employs to keep people away from economic or political issues is the so-

[9] Aldous Huxley, *Island* (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), 181.

called freedom. Young people are free to do anything, even killing one another, as long as they do not read anything and interrupt the politics of the state. 'Ignorance is bliss' policy is at the core of this kind of understanding as the state believes that destroying literature and philosophy helps the peace of mind of the people since they do not need to question or think anymore. The state has an apparent antipathy for philosophy, thinking, and individualism as these are the qualities that pave the way for questioning the status quo:

> Since the ideal totalitarian state functions most efficiently when there is a lack of personal and philosophical disagreement of any kind, Bradbury's world has almost achieved this political ideal; it is a society totally dominated by its upper echelon to the point where reading has become a state crime and conversation is discouraged.[10]

In the absence of literature and philosophy, such feelings as love, affection, and friendship have long been eradicated, and the people with such feelings, like Clarisse McClellan, are vaporised the moment they are detected. Based on this context, the chapter mostly focalises on the state's struggle to do away with such humane feelings and its use of knowledge as power, of which the majority are kept devoid, to turn the individuals into 'free subjects.'

The third chapter focuses on Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* and the internal and external experiences of Offred, the protagonist, in a male-oriented dystopian world. In the novel, the author addresses the implications of undoing women's rights. A party of religiously conservative fundamentalists has seized control in the nightmarish world of Gilead and completely ignored the hard-won sexual liberation: Gilead is a state based on the idea of a return to the conventional values, and thereby it makes the way for the repression of women. The main concentration of the chapter is on the elements of oppression in this dystopic world in which Offred struggles to survive as an individual.

Atwood's is a kind of theocratic state and this state benefits from every type of apparatus from education to religion to keep its 'subjects' under surveillance. Women are educated to obey their masters and to serve their desires, and this is supported by a distorted understanding of religion. Importantly, the ones who help the silencing of women are women again, who are called 'Aunts' in the novel. Offred, like other Handmaids, is given to different patriarchs with the only function of giving birth to a child, and

[10] Edward Ritter, "The Dystopian Vision: A Study of the Modern Dystopian Novel," (Master's Thesis, Carleton University, 1973), 36.

she is subject to whatever the patriarch wants her to do. For this reason, the dystopian elements in the novel and the way they function to create endless surveillance are scrutinised from a feminist perspective: What Offred experiences is as much about her being a woman as its being totalitarianism.

Language has a central function in this work as well. Gilead's official language includes numerous religious terms and biblical allusions because it is a theocracy, a regime wherein state and religion are not distinguished. In this parallel, the state brings language and religion together to control and subjectify people more easily. In this society, domestic servants are called 'Marthas' in reference to a domestic character in the New Testament, the local police are 'Guardians of the Faith,' and soldiers are 'Angels.' All the stores have biblical names such as 'Loaves and Fishes,' 'All Flesh,' and 'Milk and Honey.' Apparently, using religious terminology to describe everything in society helps to whitewash the political intrigues with a pious language. This functions as a constant reminder that the rulers of Gilead rely on the Bible's authority. The state's officialising a religious discourse that ignores and warps reality serves the needs of the new society's elite. Gilead develops a system of titles after making it prohibited for women to have jobs: Women are identified entirely by their gender roles as Wives, Handmaids, or Marthas while males are characterised by their military positions. By taking away women's individual names, the system attacks their individuality. Feminists and defective infants are referred to as 'Unwomen' and 'Unbabies,' respectively. Furthermore, Blacks and Jews are labelled as 'Children of Ham' and 'Sons of Jacob,' and thus are distinguished from the rest of the society.

Within this context, the ways how the state uses religion and language are handled with an Althusserian and Lacanian approach. Religion's becoming a patriarchal ideology and functioning as a promoter of male dominance and female oppression is manifested in this direction. Besides, knowledge once more appears to be an important element in the novel, which is openly shown through the fact that the exercise of reading is allowed only for the ones in power. Accordingly, the chapter makes references to Foucault and his approach to knowledge-power connection. His idea of the importance of discourse in creating reality and rewriting history as a means of power appears to be one of the central points in the work.

The conclusion part of the book provides the final interpretations and deductions on the issues of self and subjectivity in the selected novels. The way people living in these totalitarian regimes experience lifelong surveillance and the fact that it becomes impossible for them to preserve

their ‘real’ identities are disclosed. The malfunction of every single institution within totalitarianisms is proven by showing how these institutions turn into biased apparatuses in time. This necessarily helps such states to impose their ideologies and create free subjects.

I hope the information provided about the historical and social context of this tradition will help you to appreciate why our time is the high time for dystopian fiction. Furthermore, the links between the theories of such groundbreaking figures as Althusser and Foucault and the central issues of the genre are revealed with the intention of framing the arguments in the work. I started to write this work with an eye to making other people get acquainted with this eerie but awesome world. In the course of reading this work, I have no doubt that you will often find yourself comparing what you read with what you experience every day. For better or worse, this is my world, your world, our world…

INTRODUCTION

The social and cultural factors have always been determinative on literary tendencies. It would not have been possible to witness the unique worlds of Metaphysical poets without the upheavals of the 17th century. People would be deprived of the sublimity of the Romantics if it were not for the dramatic changes of the 18th century. In a similar vein, Victorian literature was a direct reflection of the social conditions of the age. The same approach applies to the 20th century, as well. The world wars and cultural fluctuations of the period had an unprecedented influence over the philosophy and literature of the time.

From the very first years, the 20th century proved itself to be one of the most unstable and chaotic periods in history. The concept of humanity, civilisation, and longstanding values began to be deconstructed. The reflection of the occurrences of the time on literature, as it was on other fields of life, came out to be a highly pessimistic view of the world. Unsurprisingly, this view of the century echoed in the works of the prominent literati: *The Waste Land* (1922) was a product of the Great War and its devastating implications as much as that of Eliot's; the psychological breakdowns in Woolf's narratives were more about the disruption of her time than her imagination; Samuel Beckett's characterisation of his 'characterless' characters was nothing but a requirement of the prevailing feeling of hopelessness at the time. From this point of view, it can be claimed that modernism was a must rather than an intellectual preference.

For a world and humanity that had been unable to recover from the wrecks of the first one yet, the period after World War II was even more turbulent. Anything that had helped people to hold on to life from religion to philosophy until that time began to lose its validity. The dark atmosphere of the period necessitated radical reforms in the understanding of almost every area of life. The intellectuals were once more to face this hopeless vision and find an alternative way of thinking and living. However, this would be much more difficult than the previous occasions because literature had its share of the context and had already started to decline.

Although modernism had been the primary literary understanding for many years, it could not meet the philosophical needs anymore. This situation called for a new perspective and it was a partial return to Victorianism. Nonetheless, the realities of this society and those of the

Victorian period were different from each other as black and white. Therefore, men of letters sought new forms and narratives that could answer the neo-reality of this interregnum. The result of this process was postmodernism that corresponded to the current situation of post-war society. Within this context, it is easy to see the reasons why dystopian fiction, which can be handled within a relatively large span of time covering modernism and postmodernism, found the necessary ground to flourish during this period.

In general terms, dystopia, also known as anti-utopia, can be explained as a futuristic and fictional worldview where repressive social control and the pretence of an ideal society are maintained through an authoritarian understanding. The works of this genre have functioned as mirrors for people because they have shown them the dangers of the kind of society they were personally living in or could live in the future.

On the other hand, dystopian fiction must not be considered as a necessarily pessimistic way of writing or thinking. Although the genre is usually accepted to present a bleak view of the future, Woodcock draws attention to another aspect of such works and claims that dystopian novels are indeed warnings rather than prophecies because they raise awareness of the probable dangers inherent in modern societies.[1]

As to the framework the writers of dystopian fiction mostly adopt, it has a long tradition that precedes the emergence of the genre. Ritter argues this structure as dating back to Plato, who uses a 'three-tiered' society model which consists of a small group of leaders at the top, followed by a larger governing class and finally the common people, its largest but least powerful group.[2] Indeed, it is possible to see a similar social formation in many dystopic works as most of them deal with a totalitarian regime and such regimes usually employ this kind of structure: A few people seize power and oppress the rest of the society as they want. However, dystopian writers believe in the inner power of the common people. Although they mostly lack education and social consciousness, their ability to feel makes them the only hope for a more humane life. Eugen Weber explains the issue as follows:

> Insofar as the anti-utopian allows us a glimmer of hope, it lies in the instincts, in fantasy, in the irrational, in the peculiarly individualistic and egoistical characteristics most likely to shatter any system or order. This accounts for the importance of basic feelings--sex, love, selfishness,

[1] George Woodcock, "Five Who Fear the Future," *New Republic*, Vol. 134 (April 1956): 18.
[2] Ritter, "The Dystopian Vision: A Study of the Modern Dystopian Novel," 8.

> fantasy – which all utopian planners try to control and in which all anti-utopians seem to put their faith, insofar as they have any faith.[3]

At this point, a structuralist approach may help to understand Weber's ideas better. Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) puts forward that binary oppositions are crucial to see the dynamics of language and thinking. According to him, such oppositions determine not only linguistic but also intellectual borders of people because the meaning of something is only possible in comparison to its contrast. In the 20th century, the binary system was begun to be questioned and developed. Jacques Derrida (1930-2004) brought a new dimension to the idea of oppositions and tried to deconstruct the binaries to reveal the artificiality and invalidity of this mechanism. He showed that the societies and cultures, especially the Western ones, had been using oppositions in their discourses for centuries and the underlying reason had always been showing themselves as the better side while marginalising the others. In the light of this information, Weber's argument makes more sense as it explains why most regimes need such oppositions first to gain and then maintain their authority. The so-called superiority of reason over emotion and rational over irrational are some of the norms that are continuously injected into people in dystopian regimes. Such regimes otherise anything related to the emotional aspect of people in a systematic way and thus easily oppress them. In this parallel, many dystopian authors put faith in the disadvantaged groups and appreciate their instinctive behaviours.

Dystopian fiction is usually considered as a recent phenomenon because it does not have a long history as a genre. However, it is possible to find works featuring dystopian themes in the distant past. An analysis of the works that can be categorised as 'utopian' reveals that dystopian fiction has its roots from the same origin. This makes the study of utopia the first step of understanding dystopia. As Browning puts forward, ever since Sir Thomas More coined the term 'Utopia' in 1516, it has been assumed to be referring to an imaginary and perfect society.[4] However, a close reading of the work together with the title, which literally means 'nowhere land,' reveals that it is as much about dystopia as utopia. The title is of Greek origin, and it consists of the Greek for 'not' (οὐ) and 'place' (τόπος); therefore, it could be translated as 'nowhere land' or 'no

[3] Eugene Weber, "The Anti-Utopia of the Twentieth Century," *South Atlantic Quarterly*, Vol. 58 (1959): 446.
[4] Browning, "Anti-Utopian Fiction: Definition and Standards for Evaluation," 1.

place.'[5] In this parallel, Bertrand de Jouvenel explains that what the term 'utopia' meant for Thomas More must have been something between 'outopia' (no place) and 'eutopia' (the good place); and the resulting implication might be that the society could become 'eutopian' if ever realised, yet no such place is possible on earth.[6] This point of view supports the argument *Utopia* is about the impossibility of a utopian world in this world, and so an implication of a dystopian world view from a broader perspective.

Although utopia is presented as the opposite of dystopia, the line between the two is often too blurred to make an exact difference. There are almost no distinctive features relating the form or content since both genres have similar approaches in terms of these constituents. For example, many utopian works include socialist elements, just as several dystopian works do. In fact, the connection between socialist elements and utopian works dates back to *The Republic*, which puts the mutual or group needs above those of the individual. Likewise, what Thomas More tries to do in his *Utopia* is to create a society where the citizen comes before the individual:

> More believed in the possibility of constructing a res publica – neither Society nor State but what links the two, the submission of each person to laws, and, above all, the absolute triumph of the citizen over the individual, translated into the holding in common of all goods, according to the principle enunciated by Plato.[7]

Furthermore, there is the problem of how to define a utopia. While the imaginary worlds portrayed in the utopian works may be the ideal worldviews for their authors, they may seem as rather undesirable societies for others. In other words, "what may be utopia to one person might seem its opposite to another, and vice versa."[8] In this context, what separates dystopian from utopian is the tone of the works. Ritter shows Campanella's *City of the Sun* and Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* as examples and claims that both works employ the same means, such as flogging and torture, for the same ends, to force the inhabitants to be good

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[5] Margaret Drabble, ed., *The Oxford Companion to English Literature* (5th edition) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 1019.

[6] Bertrand de Jouvenel, "Utopia for Practical Purposes," *Daedalus*, Vol. 94/2 (1965): 437.

[7] Schaer, Roland. "Utopia, Space, Time, History". In *Utopia: The Search for the Ideal Society in the Western World*, eds. Gregory Claeys and Lyman Tower Sargent (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 19.

[8] Krishan Kumar, "The Ends of Utopia," *New Literary History* Vol. 41, No. 3 (2010): 555.

citizens.[9] In spite of the similarity concerning the authors' literary techniques, the tone of the novels renders Campanella's narrative a utopia of the Renaissance and Orwell's a modern dystopia. From this perspective, it can be argued that dystopia has a much longer history than it is often assumed to have. As Manuel points out, "[a] literary tradition satirizing utopian idealism has existed as long as the tradition picturing ideal societies."[10] He supports this argument with the example of Aristophanes's *A Parliament of Women* (B.C. 391), which he takes as a negative parallel for Plato's *Republic* (B.C. 375). Nevertheless, despite its historical implications, dystopian fiction could not establish itself as a genre until the period between 1920 and 1949: "When one thinks of anti-utopian fiction, though, he ordinarily thinks of the period between 1920, the year when Eugene Zamiatin's *We* was published, and 1949, the publication of George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*."[11]

When the social and cultural context is taken into consideration, the period seems to be the brilliant moment for the development of the genre: The wars, economic upheavals, loss of belief in everything from God to science were among the most significant factors of the time, and these made it the perfect time for the outbreak of the genre. However, there was another central parameter: Karl Marx (1818-1883). His ideas began to replace traditional utopian philosophy as a practical and achievable solution to the social problems that arose in the 19th century. Nonetheless, the first realisation of communism, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics turned into a dictatorship in a short time. This led people to question the principles of communism, as well. The authors began to manifest the possible results of such an ideology, and *We* appeared as one of the best products of this process. This was in part the spark that ignited the change from utopian to dystopian futuristic outlooks; and as a result, the dystopian literature became more popular than the traditional forms of utopianism at the turn of the century. In this sense, dystopian fiction was not a simple reaction to the unrealistic ideals of utopia: It was rather an attempt to question the dominant ideology under which it had flourished.

On the other hand, it is a must to consider the philosophical tendencies of the period to understand the underlying meaning and theoretical basis of many themes dystopian authors frequently study in their works. In this regard, the arguments of Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan, Louis Althusser, and Michel Foucault, together with the feminist approach specific to the

[9] Ritter, "The Dystopian Vision: A Study of the Modern Dystopian Novel," 2.
[10] Frank E. Manuel, "Toward s Psychological History of Utopias," *Daedalus* Vol. 94, No. 2 (1965): 295.
[11] Manuel, "Toward s Psychological History of Utopias," 311.

analysis of *The Handmaid's Tale*, are of vital importance. The context of the 19th century had led to a sceptical opinion of the self. Unlike the rationalists such as Kant in the 18th century, who took the conscious mind as the determinative feature of the human's relationship with the world, 19th century fiction frequently portrayed the rational as attracted towards the dark and ambiguous urges it had been previously thought to govern. From this point of view, the appearance of Sigmund Freud's writings at the end of the 19th and in the early years of the 20th century seems to systematise a form of the self that had been developing for a while.

Freud (1856-1939) was interested in various fields from biology to physiology; however, he is best known for the new perspective he brought to the understanding of human personality and the structure of the self. According to Freudian theory, the human mind is divided into three layers. The conscious mind comprises all the things that people are aware of and can quickly bring to consciousness. In this direction, he coins the term 'pre-consciousness,' which refers to the memory of anything that can easily be made conscious: The memories that one is not thinking about at the very moment, but still can quickly recall. The unconscious, on the other hand, refers to the realm that is held outside of consciousness, but still continues to influence people's behaviours. It mostly functions with the principle of repression because it tries to withhold the undesired or unacceptable urges from becoming conscious.[12] It encompasses everything that is not immediately available to awareness, including many elements such as urges or instincts as well as items that are buried there because they are too painful to remember. Whether they are basic impulses for food or sex or the motives of an artist or scientist, the unconscious, according to Freud, is the root of human motivations. However, people are always motivated to deny or avoid being aware of these motivations, and so they are available only in disguised forms.

In almost all of Freud's theories, the idea of the unconscious plays a vital role, and he takes dreams as one of the main ways to see what lies outside people's consciousness. Accordingly, he considers the interpretation of dreams as "the royal road to a knowledge of the unconscious activities of the mind" and claims that by analysing dreams, one can see both how the unconscious mind functions and what it tries to conceal from consciousness.[13] He divides dream material into two categories, manifest and latent, and claims that it is the latent content which preserves the

[12] Sigmund Freud, *General Psychological Theory: Papers on Metapsychology* (New York: Collier Books, 1963), 116.
[13] Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Trans. James Strachey (New York: Basic Books, 2010), 604.

dream's hidden and symbolic meanings. Dreams are a form of wish fulfilment. By taking unconscious thoughts, impulses, and desires and transforming them into less damaging ways, people are able to reduce the insecurity of the ego. In this sense, dreams appear as the instances when defence mechanisms are activated. As people attempt to remove the undesired or inappropriate thoughts and memories, they hide behind various defence mechanisms. In order to prevent people from facing unpleasant or disappointing circumstances, these mechanisms operate on the unconscious level and thus echo in dreams. As such, the analysis of the defence mechanisms, which are "a kind of mental shortcuts one uses for the preservation of self-esteem" becomes indispensable for understanding the latent content of the dreams and thus disclosing the mechanisms of the unconscious.[14] For Freud, dreams are the most effective moments that disclose the things hidden in the unconsciousness about people's identities. Offering significant implications for a wide range of areas from psychology to semiotics, Freud's views on the psyche, dreams, and defence mechanisms have proven to be highly influential. His theories challenge the preceding arguments and reveal the importance and dominance of the unconscious over the conscious. With this theory, he suggests that a person's public personality is not reflective of his true self in the literal sense and that everything he masks reveals more about his true character. The effects of his vision and the almost inexhaustibility of his intellectual legacy are largely responsible for the concept of 'psychological man,' which replaced the previous conceptions such as political, religious, or economic man and became the dominant self-image of the 20th century.

It can be alleged that modern psychoanalysis developed as an interpretation of and as a reaction to Freudian psychoanalysis. For Freud, the object of psychoanalysis was simply the unconscious and he mostly tried to observe it through dreams and free association. Importantly, what he studied was not exactly the patients' dreams but the patients' reports of their dreams. It was for this reason that he spent a lot of time analysing linguistic aspects of the patients' accounts of dreams, such as puns and slips of the tongue. However, modern linguistics had not been invented then – Saussure's lectures were not published until 1916, seventeen years after *The Interpretation of Dreams* – and so, he had to "invent his own categories and terminology to describe what he found."[15] Therefore, his ideas have undergone fundamental changes in time, and Jacques Lacan

[14] Phebe Cramer, *Protecting the Self: Defense Mechanisms in Action* (New York: Guilford Press, 2006), 4.
[15] Jan Miel, "Jacques Lacan and the Structure of the Unconscious," *Yale French Studies* Vol. 36/37 (1966): 107.

(1901-1981) reidentified many of his theories: Freud's superego, ego, and id were renamed as the symbolic order, the imaginary order, and the real, respectively.

Lacan became acquainted with the structuralism of Ferdinand de Saussure and his contemporaries, such as Claude Lévi-Strauss and Roman Jakobson, in the late 1940s and early 1950s. He could be accurately described as restructuring Freudian psychoanalysis in the way Louis Althusser did for the Marxist theory. He strongly believed that a Saussurean-assisted reconstruction of the essential nature of language was the secret to the continuation of Freud's groundbreaking approach to psychic subjectivity for both clinical and metapsychological studies.

Like many other theories of Freud, the concept of the unconscious gains a new meaning and dimension with Lacan who claims that most of Freud's adherents misunderstood the idea of the unconscious and reduced it to being merely the seat of the instincts.[16] Against this biologistic mode of thought, he argues that the unconscious is essentially linguistic, not instinctual.[17] The idea behind this argument is that the urge as it informs us through the unconscious is no longer the organic mechanism that can be observed and accounted for by the biologist: It is verbalised and, as a result, its nature is completely different and requires different analytical methods. One of the pioneers of this new linguistic approach, Lacan presents a reworking of Freudian principles with a focus on the human subject and its relationship to language. He demonstrates that Freud's terminology may be directly converted into the line with modern structural linguistics and that there is a very close correspondence between Freud's terms and the concepts found by modern linguistics. In this parallel, 'the unconscious is structured like a language,' as his most renowned maxim has it, is more than a simple aphorism in understanding Lacan's perception of the unconscious and language from a Freudian point of view. In a 1953 article titled "The Function and The Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis," he particularises his declaration for the project of psychoanalysis as a return to Freud. When he tries to explain the unconscious, he refers to three qualities, the most significant of which is its depending on language; the other two being its going unnoticed and its validity only for the speaking beings.[18] He emphasises the centrality of language as a constitutive of the unconscious and tries to integrate

[16] Jacques Lacan, *Écrits: A Selection*. Trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Tavistock Publications, 1977), 147.
[17] Lacan, *Écrits*, 170.
[18] John Gasperoni, "The Unconscious is Structured like a Language," *Qui Parle* Vol. 9, No. 2 (1996): 78.

language analysis into psychoanalytic theory. In this new formulation, the unconscious is not only constructed like a language but it is language itself in the sense that the unconscious is constituted by language. Nonetheless, this necessitates reconsidering what is implied by language. Lacan claims that language appoints not only to verbal speech or written text but to any signifying system that is built on variable relations. As it is a signifying process that involves coding and decoding, the unconscious is structured like a language. By means of the sliding of the signified underneath the signifier and the inability of meaning to be established, the unconscious emerges in the symbolic order in the space between signifier and signified.

The relationship between language and consciousness is also an important issue in the fields of science related to the mind and language. The question of whether language defines thoughts and behaviours, or vice versa, has been studied by psychologists and linguists for a long time. However, it is not possible to give a single and definite answer to this question because the answer is directly related to another question: Does language precede thought or the opposite? Traditionally, the opinion has been in favour of the latter. In this understanding, the idea is that thought, or consciousness, exists before language and so language is shaped and determined by consciousness. From this perspective, language has an expressive function as people use it to express their already existing thoughts.

Lacan, however, has a different theory about the issue. For him, language does not simply express thought; on the contrary, it constitutes thought because consciousness can only begin with language by means of the signifying system. In this view, language exists before consciousness, which means consciousness is shaped and limited by language. He is of the opinion that language is already there when people are born, and in order to take part in the human world, people need to situate themselves in the field of language. As the post-structuralist philosopher Jacques Derrida (1930-2004) highlights in his *Of Grammatology* (1967), it is impossible to pinpoint a single moment that may be referred to as the beginning of language.

It is easy to notice a linguistic determinism in Lacan's approach to language-consciousness relevance. Linguistic determinism is the belief that language and its components define and restrict human experience and perception. Although he had lived before 'the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis' was formulated as the primal form of linguistic determinism, Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) can be argued to show the first signs of this proposition. To explain his conception of language, Nietzsche uses the metaphor of prison. In his opinion, language is like a prison because it sets

borders for people's intellectual sphere. He also uses this argument for cultural studies, showing this aspect of language as the main reason for cultural differences: Since the language is different, the thought process is also and naturally different among different cultures.

One of Lacan's radical contributions to 20th century psychoanalysis is surely his redefining some Freudian theories within the realm of structural linguistics. It was mostly thanks to him that language gained more and more importance and it was understood that language has a more central role in human life than historically thought to have. According to this new perspective on the function of language, nothing can be made present except through language. Or to put it differently, the problems, values, and differences in our everyday experiences are the outcomes of our using language and playing the language game.[19]

When the point in question is the 20th century, it is not possible not to refer to Louis Pierre Althusser (1918-1990). Generally referred to as a structuralist Marxist, he developed theories that posed a new perspective and understanding of Marx's ideas particularly in the second half of the century. Most of his arguments were formed against the dangers he felt about the theoretical foundations of Marxism which fundamentally embodied the problem of ideology. In this direction, his theories on the formation and maintenance of ideology have made a lasting effect on philosophical and literary circles since he first introduced his arguments.

Althusser formed a completely different approach towards the concept of ideology from the previous and traditional Marxist thinkers. He varied from former Marxist understandings of ideology by depending on the theories of Jacques Lacan to explain how ideology operates in a society. In the previous approach, ideology was thought to cause what was referred to as 'false consciousness,' or an erroneous understanding of how the world functioned. Althusser explains that for Marx "ideology is thought as an imaginary construction whose status is exactly like the theoretical status of the dream."[20] He indicates this aspect of the Marxist approach to highlight the fact that it was an understanding that embraced the imaginary and moved away from reality. By pointing to the actual world veiled by ideology, the conventional way of thinking about ideology caused Marxists to illustrate how ideologies were false. By contrast, according to Althusser, it is not possible to access the real by unveiling ideology because what it represents is not the real world but the imaginary

[19] Guan-Hua Huang, "Reading Lacan: Structure, Ideology, and Identity," (PhD diss., University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2003), 8.
[20] Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. Trans. Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2001), 108.

relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence, which means the thing ideology stands for is already one step away from the reality. This approach definitely corresponds to Lacan's theories on the Imaginary and the Real, and thus puts forward the link between language and ideology. He refers to Lacanian theory of language-identity connection and reveals the fact that individuals are caught up in ideology because they depend on language to set up reality: Different ideologies are merely different projections of social and invented reality, not the Real itself. This ever-presence and eternality of ideology can also be associated with the Freudian idea of the unconscious.

Althusser also differs from the former conceptions of ideology by claiming that ideology has a material existence and thus, unlike the previous arguments, it is more practical than theoretical. He supports this theory by claiming that ideology is always present in an apparatus and its practice: "Ideology exists in institutions and the practices specific to them. We are even tempted to say, more precisely: ideology exists *in apparatuses* and *the practices specific to them*."[21] He elaborates his conceptualisation of ideology in his 1970 essay, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses: Notes Toward an Investigation." The essay has a central role in understanding Althusser's approach to the issue in that it brings forth the latent connection between the state and the individual. It investigates the state, its various mechanisms, and the psychological interaction that occurs between the state and the citizen under the veil of ideology. The main idea in the essay is that the regimes, especially the totalitarian ones, use ideology to maintain their control over the citizens by producing subjects, the people who believe in the naturality of their role and position within the social structure. According to Althusser, the fundamental purpose of ideology is, in fact, to develop concrete individuals as subjects. He believes that it is not possible to evade ideology or avoid being subjected to it. As a result, man always lives in a world of 'doxas' (ideologies) and is incapable of understanding the truth, as in Plato's cave metaphor. Furthermore, as he argues, because man is an 'ideological animal' in essence, he is confined to the cave of doxas eternally. Therefore, one can never be a free individual because he is bound to remain a subject of some ideology by his nature.[22] Moving from this understanding, he asserts that all individuals are nothing but subjects, which is the primary purpose

[21] Louis Althusser, *On the Reproduction of Capitalism: Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*. Trans. G. M. Goshgarian (London: Verso, 2014), 156.
[22] Aslı Daldal, "Power and Ideology in Michel Foucault and Antonio Gramsci: A Comparative Analysis," *Review of History and Political Science* Vol. 2, No. 2 (2014): 159.

of all ideologies: "All ideology hails or interpellates concrete individuals as concrete subjects."[23]

What Althusser means by 'subject' may be confusing as he uses both 'free subjectivity' and 'subjected being' when he refers to the issue, and thus it is important to recognise the difference between the two. He uses the term 'free subjectivity' to refer to an individual who is responsible for his actions. On the other hand, when individuals are exposed to ideology and behave in accordance with its doctrines, they turn into subjected beings, people who submit to an authority and are therefore deprived of all freedom but that of freely accepting submission. In this direction, Althusser claims that all types of ideologies, from religious to political ones, are functional in the full sense since they are necessary to produce and secure the social system.[24] Ideology is the primary source of power for the rulers to control the physical and mental behaviours of the citizens, and hence to subjectify them. He finds the power of ideology mostly in its being 'invisible' in a sense; that is, its ability to hide itself so that people do not realise the direct connection between the dominant ideology and subjectivation of a citizen: "That is why those who are in ideology believe themselves by definition outside ideology: one of the effects of ideology is the practical denegation of the ideological character of ideology by ideology: ideology never says, 'I am ideological.'"[25]

Althusser's account of ideology is as much about Marxism as psychoanalysis. His arguments have notable implications for not only the theories of Marx but also those of Freud and Lacan, which can be shown as the basic reason for the depth of his intellectual legacy. When the most efficacious theories developed by Althusser are considered, however, Gramsci is worth special mention, as well. A principal scholar in the evolution of Western Marxism, Gramsci's idea of the relative independence of ideology and its determining influences on man's political consciousness had a great effect on Althusser, who later handled and detailed this conception. As Daldal puts forward, "Althusser, in a way, systematized what was implicit in Gramsci: He based ideology on social formations and the dissemination of the particular bourgeois ideology on the Ideological State Apparatuses (a more broadened and massive conception of civil society)."[26]

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[23] Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, 115.
[24] Huang, "Reading Lacan: Structure, Ideology, and Identity," 62.
[25] Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, 118.
[26] Daldal, "Power and Ideology in Michel Foucault and Antonio Gramsci: A Comparative Analysis," 158.

Since Althusser believed that the interests, preferences, and judgments of an individual are the results of social practices, he found it important to understand how society creates the person in its own image. The human within capitalist societies is commonly considered as a subject bestowed with the attribute of being a self-conscious and responsible agent whose actions can be explained by his/her beliefs and ideas. For Althusser, though, the ability of a person to evaluate himself/herself in this way is not inherent or granted. Rather, it is obtained within the structure of existing social practices that exercise on individuals the role (forme) of a subject. Individual qualities are determined by social practices, which also offer the individual a notion of the range of characteristics that he or she can acquire; that is, these practices determine the limits of the self and in a way mould the individuals. What Althusser claims is that most people's roles and activities are given to them by social practices. For instance, what the builders do is a part of economic practice while the production of lawyers is part of the legal practice. The problem, however, is that other characteristics of individuals, such as their beliefs and ideas, do not fit into any of these categories. At this point, the concept of ideology intercedes. Our values, desires, and preferences are indoctrinated in us by ideological practice, which has the basic function of turning individuals into subjects.

The ideological practice consists of a set of institutions that are named 'Ideological State Apparatuses' (ISAs), which include such institutions as family, religion, and education system. The point with Ideological State Apparatuses is that they use non-violent methods and they are part of civil society; that is, they are ostensibly apolitical. Rather than asserting and enforcing order by physical repression, they propagate ideas that support the dominant group's authority, and thus people are frequently driven with fear of social disapproval such as marginalisation, humiliation, and seclusion. Althusser's argument here strongly draws from Jacques Lacan's concept of the mirror stage: "We acquire our identities by seeing ourselves somehow mirrored in ideologies."[27] The other side of the coin, the term 'Repressive State Apparatuses' (RSAs) is generally used as a synonym of 'hard power,' which means, unlike the type of power used by Ideological State Apparatuses, a form of power that operates by means of violence and uses force to obtain compliance in the society. The Repressive State Apparatuses fundamentally consist of the army, the police, the judiciary, and the prison system and they function mainly by violence, which does

[27] Althusser, Louis. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses". In *Lenin and Philosophy and other Essays*, ed. Louis Althusser (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 162.

not always take place in the physical form. These apparatuses are designed to punish anybody who rejects the dominant ideology and in this direction, they function predominantly by physical repression. However, the fact that they are almost always ideological in the second place is an important point within this context as it proves that there is no such thing as a purely Repressive Apparatus. For example, the Army is a type of Repressive Apparatus in the first place, yet it is always ideological as it maintains its existence by forcing the subjects to obey the principles of the predominant ideology. Similarly, one may argue that the Ideological State Apparatuses are primarily motivated by ideology, but they are also driven by repression even if this occurs in an attenuated and concealed, even symbolic way. In this sense, every State Apparatus, irrespective of being repressive or ideological, works on the principle of both violence and ideology. The only difference is about priority. While Ideological Apparatuses prioritise ideology and put violence to the second rank, Repressive ones do the opposite and thus, it is not possible to name an apparatus purely as ideological or repressive.

One way or another, apparatuses have a significant place in Althusserian theory as they form the mechanism that, physically and/or psychologically, imposes ideology to people and thereby subjectifies them under the control of the dominant discourse. Thus, they help the powerful group to keep power and control people by creating a world that is surrounded by ideology. Althusser's theories about ideology, subjected beings, and the role of State Apparatuses in this process are of vital importance to understand the working of social practices in the societies. These arguments shed light on the mechanism that first interpellates and then subjectifies the citizens. Within this framework, his conception of 'free subject' as a person who internalises and naturalises ideology under the mask of reality is a principal proposition.

The role and design of ideology have remained unchanged all through history in spite of its numerous institutional forms: Ideology has no history. All ideologies constitute a subject, and furthermore, the transformation of an individual into a subject begins even before birth. At this point, Althusser refers to Spinoza's theory of immanence. To emphasise this, he presents the example of Christianity which instructs a person on what his position in the universe is and what he must do to be reconciled with Christ, and he draws the point that in order for that person to identify himself as a Christian, he has to become a subject first.[28] In this way, the State Apparatuses utilise ideological power to compel individuals

[28] Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses", 166.