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Shaping Dystopian Visions in Orwell's *1984* and Laredj's *2084: The Tale of the Last Arab*

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# DEDICATIONS

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*To my parents, siblings, family, and friends*

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## Abstract

Speculative fiction has appeared deliberately. Its execution oscillates between fantasy, science fiction, or utopia/dystopia dyads, but its influence is hitherto salutary partly because it expands the horizons of culture, it is at the helm of traveling by probable roads and constantly worries itself about the future, partly also because it has the power to carry a literary work to universality with regards to the laws and lore of identity and aesthetics. The question organizing this project concerns the extent to which Orwell and Laredj were derivative from authors, works of literature, history, politics, and media to amplify the underrepresented voices in a totalitarian discourse. Thus, this research attempts to examine two pieces of literature that are more concerned with the future than any other. Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and Laredj's *2084: The Tale of the Last Arab* are analyzed and compared to highlight not only similarities and differences but also to regard the sci-fi genre from another angle that stands at the periphery in the presence of Western production. It finds that the powerful imagery of Orwell's text still impacts literature that is concerned with the vision of the future. However, the comparison also reveals that Orwell and Laredj were not concerned with expressing adventures and exaggeration for entertainment as much as chronicling the future in a bitter disclosure to warn from totalitarianism and ideological domination. This research also invites readers and researchers to act and react to the turn of comparatists towards Cultural Studies, Woman's Studies, Semiotics, Nationalism, and Postcolonial theory to deconstruct the Western hierarchy in comparative literature.

**Keywords:** Dystopia; Post-Apocalypse; Orwell; Laredj; Totalitarianism; Arabic; English.

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# **General Introduction**

### General Introduction

The utopian project begins with a desire, possibly to say lust or opulence, to move from the quotidian to the unique, to behold its beauty, and to resurrect the image of heaven and virtue that was lost when the two first humans succumbed to temptations. Writing utopia is traced back to the Greeks, with Plato's *Republic* defining a successful polity and prioritising hierarchy and communism. Following the Platonic sample of the virtuous city, Muslim thinkers have received utopia enthusiastically to establish order in their communities. Abu Nasr Alfarabi, the second master after Aristotle, reevaluated the virtuous city in his book *Ara' Ahl al Madina al Fadila (The Opinions of People of the Virtuous City)* practically and conceptually. Ibn Tufayl rejects a collectivist utopia with an individualistic one in the tale of *Hayy Ibn Yaqdhan*. In the Western sphere, Thomas More's *Utopia* projected a vision of an ideal society in a nonexistent isolated place, assuming simultaneously that utopia belongs only to fiction. Yet, satire as part of criticism reveals the sham of socialist political thought and prevents utopia from being.

Examining utopia as a primary premise suggests many keywords: social dream, sensual gratification, human contrivance, virtuous nowhere, bad somewhere, social criticism, and satire. These ideas share some commonality or target to answer the same quest of whether utopia offers success or failure. The verification of utopia discloses its sham. Aristotle's Book II of *Politics* calls for a scrutiny of "ideal" societies. Utopia fails in some way or other because neither authors nor readers take it seriously. Most writers, therefore, do not start with writing dystopia but end up with it either way.

There is an immediate impulse to reject the utopian project whenever we compare it with the present of our society. Its realization is beyond possibility because the whole world cannot be destined to one form or one fate. Hence, the utopian image evokes parody: the

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mocking of the social attitudes that produced instead disturbing images of an unfavored place. The virtuous city, in Al-Farabi's analysis, brought about four rivals: the Ignorant City, the Immoral City, the Inconstant City, and the Erroneous City. In Western thought, dystopia is the delegate of whatever contradicts utopia.

The twentieth century, with all its horrific events, could not spread anything but worries and fear among intellectuals who were aware of their current and coming dystopia. Writers like Yevgeny Zamyatin, Aldous Huxley, and ultimately George Orwell share a common aversion towards totalitarianism, injustice, and excessive technological abuse. They used dystopia to satirize the utopian whims of their governing system. Satirizing utopia offers powerful, alarming visions of man, nature, and society slithering down the abyss. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is the research selected novel in the space of this thesis. It is Orwell's magnum opus that survived to make a connection and illustration to the totalitarian system anywhere, at any time. Orwell passed away, but neither his book nor its crux faded away. Perhaps no prose could connect with the events of the second decade of the twenty-first century as did *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, raising a common sense in world literature.

Waciny Laredj still wrestles with the same inquiry of humankind: What is next? He, thus, in *2084: The Tale of the Last Arab*, attempts to offer an answer or a forewarning for a society not only doomed to failure but to annihilation, ranging from political and social chaos of the Arab world. As no literature is understood without being bound to other events and other literatures, Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and Laredj's *2084: The Tale of the Last Arab*, which will be the sample novels in the space of this thesis, seem to interchangeably respond to the crises of their current time. Yet, the former's novel is traced in the latter's, which brings forth some source materials that draw similarity between the two literatures. From the reciprocity of themes and ideas to the differences of vision and style lies the comparison.

## General Introduction

This thesis aims to define anti-utopia or dystopia in English and Arabic literature. It attempts to locate the contribution of Arabic literary texts to the field of science fiction, which is abundant in notable Western works. It attempts to reiterate *Nineteen Eighty-Four* as the ultimate deception of the desired utopianism, followed by the admonitory nightmare of a post-apocalyptic world that would wipe out a whole race, identity, and culture. This research highlights a thematic analysis of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *2084: The Tale of the Last Arab* to evaluate and interpret the novels' components, including setting, characters, plot, language, ideology, themes, and other stylistic details. It will demonstrate Laredj's intertextual link with Orwell's text and doctrine and how the two texts challenged oppressive regimes with brute sarcasm to confront readers with a bitter reality. It also attempts to linger on historical facts to deconstruct the dominant discourse

This research, thus, serves to explore the vision of both authors, who were primarily interested in weaving the threads of a society fatally divided by the abuse of the dominant party and have, thus, warned of an apocalyptic end by prompting the reader to seek solutions in a dystopian setting.

Having said that, the core of this research is to find relevant answers to the following research questions:

- To which degree were both writers original or derivative of previous writers, in terms of contemporary figures, the cultural and political context of their time?
- How do Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and Laredj's *2084: The Tale of the Last Arab* portray dystopia as a social critique of their societies?
- How do the dystopian sample narratives reshape history and identity?

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- Does the allegory of dystopia connect Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* with Laredj's *2084: The Tale of the Last Arab*?

Hypothetically, Orwell's source material of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* can be traced to study and analyze any work of science fiction that represents a vision of the future, be it utopian, anti-utopian, dystopian, or post-apocalyptic. The Algerian novel Laredj *2084: The Tale of the Last Arab* reflects a modern post-apocalypticism based on the oppressive regime that reigns in Oceania, the fictive society of Orwell. However, the selected narratives provide a solid platform to position individualism amid the chaotic postmodern/postcolonial society. Laredj's society is still under Western hegemony, alluding either to neocolonialism, the continuity of classic colonialism, or the mediocrity of political regimes after independence, which led to the dystopian reality.

The approach that would be used in this research is descriptive and synchronic. This means that the overwhelming narrativity of Orwell and Laredj's texts needs elucidation and description of a bad place where characters contribute vividly to the illustration of the social and political forces that manipulate the status quo. Therefore, this research will rely on a descriptive-analytical method to examine the themes, symbols, and signs of both literary productions.

The first chapter is dedicated to the different concepts that would offer a solid background to this research and define extensively the genre and the themes adumbrated in the following chapters. It gives the research identity and synthesis, starting from the most general ideas to the most specific, to explain how dystopia came into being in the Western tradition and Arabic endeavors.

The second chapter starts by presenting the elements of dystopian literature, including the loss of ideals and the manipulation of genuine notions to explain the failure of the utopian

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project and the declaration of a post-apocalyptic phase. It will also offer a profound analysis of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *2084: The Tale of the Last Arab*. The former serves as a background to analyze the latter as Laredj's indebtedness features his pessimism. Along the analysis, the two novels' structure and components are compared; providing a scholarly investigation of the texts' faults and merits.

The third chapter relies on postmodern and postcolonial theories to deconstruct several aspects of Orwell and Laredj's dark vision. It examines a murky world of machinization and conspiracy that recreates societies and human history. It will attempt to focus, with comparativeness, on the relationship between discourse and context that leads to the manipulation of any kind of truth, i.e. identity, history, culture, politics, belonging, and memory.

The last chapter of this research offers an aesthetic overview of Orwell and Laredj's stylization. It will analyze language as a means of criticism and control used in a satiric mode to deal with a society steeped in confusion and mediocrity and minimize the oppressive power. It discusses myth and symbolism that have become archetypal means of communication to present dystopian/post-apocalyptic imageries. The fourth chapter indicates also the perception of revolution from two different lenses: postmodern/postcolonial.

The main findings of this research will be presented in the general conclusion. It will demonstrate a combination of the four chapters and note that Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* has not been dated as it still serves as a strong platform to denounce totalitarianism. It will also exhibit Laredj's contribution to the canon of Arabic literature and mainly to the science fiction genre written in Arabic.

# **Chapter 1: Theoretical Framework of the Related Literature**

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## **1-1 Introduction**

The first chapter of this research offers an overview of utopia and dystopia. Since the scientific revolution, technology has promised to provide a utopian future through its facilities, but its excessive use has generated dystopian shades, rather. First, a proposal is considered below to approach the concept of dystopia and its approximate traits to utopia in Western and Arabic literature. Second, science fiction is adumbrated as the early mode of visualizing the future to address modern life exclusively. Thus, a considerable section is devoted to discussing its emergence in Western literature and its theory in Arabic literary tradition. The following section suggests the distinctive threads within the dystopian literary genre, and part of this chapter is consigned to twenty-first Arabic dystopia to facilitate the comparison.

## **1-2 The Science Fiction Genre in Western and Arabic Literature**

Science fiction, henceforth sf or sci-fi, is generated from the output of the Industrial Revolution. The terminology of machinery inspired writers to represent the surface of the Industrial Revolution, resulting in narratives that appeared fresh before readers of world literature.

### **1-2.1 Western Estrangement**

Science fiction is a genre that appeared in the late 18th century after an age of reason and logic brought along by the movement of Enlightenment, which gushed to surpass the superstition and bigotry of that time. However, if science conducts a line of reasoning, how can it be fictionalized? Science and fiction: two words that contradict one another and could epistemologically cooperate to form a widespread genre that Csicsery Ronay, J defined as: "SF names not a generic effects engine of literature and simulation arts (the usual sense of the phrase "science fiction"), so much as a mode of awareness, characterized by two linked forms of hesitation, a pair of gaps." (387). In *The World of Science Fiction: 1926- 1976*,

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Lester Del Rey confesses difficulty in defining Science Fiction during his professional career, but finally reached the following: “Science fiction is an attempt to deal rationally with alternate possibilities in a manner which will be entertaining” (5). Just as fiction entertains its readers with a creative plot where characters confront ups and downs but reach, by the end, a satisfactory resolution accepted by readers, so do science fiction writers who attempt to produce, yet with more hypothesized possibilities that readers should embrace and accept.

The designation ‘science fiction’ (also sf) appeared in the nineteenth century in a poetry book by William Wilson. In his 1851 oeuvre *A Little Ernest Book Upon a Great Old Subject*, Wilson puts “Fiction in Poetry is not the reverse of truth, but her soft and enchanting resemblance.” Now, this applies to Science-Fiction, in which “the revealed truths of Science may be given, interwoven with a pleasing story which may itself be poetical and true — thus circulating a knowledge of the Poetry of Science, clothed in a garb of the Poetry of Life.” (139). Even though it was not given much attention back then until the beginning of the twentieth century, when sf was coined and shaped as a literary genre mainly in the 1930s by the American pulp magazine editor Hugo Gernsback, and “since that time, science fiction has grown into a major global cultural phenomenon, impacting popular culture worldwide while breaking new ground in a literary sense as well” noticed Booker (2015, 2). The term Science fiction, according to Suvin, fits best its context for being: “(1) nonliterature, (2) the empiricist literary mainstream, and (3) non- cognitive estrangings such as fantasy; furthermore (4) it should try to add as little as possible to the already prevailing confusion of tongues” (13).

Following the World Wars, a massive technological evolution changed the mainstream of culture, allowing Science fiction to impress the world. Mass media, radio, movies, along

## Chapter 1: Theoretical Framework of the Related Literature

with Gernsback and Burroughs's specialized SF magazines, propelled SF as a genre to popularity.

After the atrocity of the atomic bomb (1945), writers moved from questioning science to dealing with society and its flaws. In the nineteenth century, Jules Verne had made it clear that H.G Wells's science fiction accounts were not a product of pure Newtonian physics when he stated, "I make use of physics. He invents... he constructs... a metal which does away with the law of gravitation ... but show me this metal." (Qtd. in Suvin, 210). Anyhow, sf surpassed Verne's logic in the following decades.

### 1-2.1.1 A Glance at the History

Many stories millennia ago changed the ordinary universe, sometimes with mythical figures and other times with suggested creatures and spaces. Lester Del Rey argues that if we consider "the use of science as we know it is involved, then we are limited to the age of our science" (12). It is evident that ancient epic works like Gilgamesh initiated a different apparatus to fiction - replacing gods with alien beings (check it out)- in an attitude that modern science does not truly accept. Anyhow, it is arguably agreed that the earliest science fiction work is Lucian de Samosata's *The True History* (175 A.D); an account based on Hellenistic astronomy that sent its hero to the Moon to discover a different life and new creatures.

In the seventeenth century, eagerness to reveal life beyond Earth was the main motive of writers who made an effort to demonstrate the Moon and other planets. Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis* (1627), Johannes Kepler's *Somnium* (1634), Bishop Francis Godwin's *The Man in the Moone* (1638), or Cyrano de Bergerac's *Voyage to the Moon* (1650), Margaret Cavendish's *The Blazing World* (1666) share the spirit of the scientific revolution of their time which carries readers outside their planet Earth to learn about lunatic creatures and

## Chapter 1: Theoretical Framework of the Related Literature

anticipate theories in astronomy and physics including the Newton's gravity or an explanation to the orbits of the planet.

Science fiction surfed another wave after the Age of Enlightenment. Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) criticizes human fallacy and folly towards the excessive use and total dependency on science. In the chapter "Voyage to Laputa", Gulliver travels to a flying island in the sky, where he discovers two moons for the planet Mars. Nonetheless, this is a mere "lucky guess, but it has led to all sorts of speculation" (15), suggests Lester Del Rey.

Until the nineteenth century, speculating science became an essential part of literature. This is primarily due to the discovery of electricity, telegraph, or railroads. Scholars like Kevin Alexander Boon and Brian Aldiss agree mostly that Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* or *the Modern Prometheus* (1818) is the first structured novel that gave rise to science fiction narratives through its hybrid creature, which paved the way to artificial life. Shelley's novel was also a tour de force in Romanticism and positioned itself solidly in Gothic literature.

However, Lester del Rey does not thoroughly accept *Frankenstein* as the first true science fiction narrative. The idea of monsters accordingly is "a reworking of the ancient tales of the Golem—a creature raised from dirt or slime by cabalistic use of the Name of God, who then turns on his creators." He agrees that Shelley was the first to use electricity as a powerful device in her novel, but it is a mere "substitute for the spells from the Kabala" (15). In the Americas, Edgar Allan Poe is considered the first writer to produce true science fiction after introducing *The Unparalleled Adventure of One Hans Pfaall* (1855) whose hero goes on a voyage to the Moon.

Jules Verne is probably the most prolific writer whose work established scientific patterns and voyages to the moon, more than any other writer of his age. Accounts like *Journey to the center of the Earth* (1864), *A Trip from the Earth to the Moon* (1865), *Round the Moon*

## Chapter 1: Theoretical Framework of the Related Literature

(1870) and its sequel *Thousand Leagues under the Sea* (1870) introduced in his *voyages extraordinaires* not only general elements to science fiction stories but offered at the same time a scholarship in science *à la Verne*.

Tom Moylan asserts that “the sf of Jules Verne played into the technological logic of his time” (29), while Darko Suvin relates sf with naturalistic literature through the works of Jules Verne in which “SF has historically had one of its roots in the compost heap of such juvenile or popular subliterate, and in order to develop properly it has had to subsume and outgrow it - the quicker the better for its generic affirmation” (22) and the more world literature embraces a finest sf vision

In the late nineteenth century, Herbert George Wells led the convoy of science fiction, and loosened its grip through many paradigmatic accounts, including *The Time Machine* (1895), *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1896), *The Invisible Man* (1897), *The War of the Worlds* (1898), whereas in the beginning of the twentieth century, Wells’s science fiction production advanced but outlined often utopian, sometimes anti-utopian visions like *The First Men in the Moon* (1901) or *Men Like Gods* (1923).

### 1-2.1.2 Novel Repertoire

Be it a “genre of popular culture” (Luckhurst 1257), “a decadent Western form” as regarded Chinese in the 20th century (Booker 65), “al-khayāl al-‘ilmi” or the “scientific imaginary” as used in Arabic (Campbell 47), and even fantasy’s “young empirical stepchild” (Qtd. in Morse 1), scholars agree that science fiction blossoms in literature after Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, and welcomed more works in the genre including those of Edward Bellamy, William Morris, and the father of modern science fiction H.G Wells, who coined back then the term of “scientific romances” for his novels which included *The Time Machine* (1895), *The Island of Dr Moreau* (1896), and *The Invisible Man* (1897). The major element that

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distinguishes SF from realistic or naturalistic literature is estrangement. M. Keith Booker explains Suvin's view of SF as "literature of cognitive estrangement" to be:

the form of literature that functions first and foremost by placing its readers in unfamiliar worlds that differ from theirs in logical and consistent ways, and in ways that the readers are invited to detect and understand through rational cognition. As a result of being encouraged to think about the differences between their world and the worlds of science fiction, readers are (ideally, at least) stimulated to view their own world from a renewed perspective challenge long-held assumptions, and ask seriously why their world is the way it is and how it might be different. (2)

In effect, if myths look beneath the empiric surfaces, "SF sees the norms of any age, including emphatically its own, as unique, changeable, and therefore subject to a *cognitive view*" (Suvin 7). This estrangement represents SF as an opposite to superstition and metaphysics and an alternative to "the author's empirical world". The strength of cognition differentiates even folklore from SF. the former, nevertheless, is also inimical to the empirical rationale (the physical law of gravity absolutely refutes the possibility of a flying carpet) as explained Suvin (8), the distinction between realistic or naturalistic mainstream, fantasy, and SF is elucidated by Robert M. Philmus in his book *Science Fiction: From its Beginning to 1870*. Accordingly, "naturalistic fiction does not require scientific explanation. Fantasy does not allow it, and SF both requires and allows it." (Qtd. in Suvin 65). Thus, science fiction is also a methodical attitude to reflect reality.

Science fiction has also brought a novel repertoire of patterns, features, and techniques that propelled it through literature and cinema. In the *Seven Beauties of Science Fiction*, Csicsery introduced a list of seven elements constructing most SF accounts, though some are not thoroughly vulnerable. He started neologism or "the imaginary new realities",

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Novum or Nova to mean new things, historical extrapolation where the present becomes the prehistory of the future, Oxymoron to create a paradoxical effect, scientific impertinence that criticizes scientific laws to some extent, Sublime Chronotopes; a Greek term for space and time, and Parable which holds that sf tales are moral tales for science and technology. Del Rey praised the idea of extrapolation; demonstrating that “extrapolation proved to be a good way of obtaining the material for satirical novels like that of *The Space Merchants*” (5).

These techniques bring forth the aura of the epoch especially in the twentieth century. In cinema, for instance, the 1985 movie *BRAZIL* is a science fiction based on dystopian classics of the twentieth century. Linda Hutcheon regards the film as a documented assortment of genres and styles that fits perfectly postmodern aura. She claims: “Brazil is an excellent example of a postmodern film that draws a tremendous amount of energy from its parodies of a whole range of predecessors, including not only 1984 but also *A Clockwork Orange*, Japanese epics, *Star Wars*, Eisenstein *Battleship Potemkin*, and Gilliam’s own earlier work in *Time Bandits* and the Monty Python sketches and films” (5). Dystopia is, thus, an all-inclusive genre.

### 1-2.2 Modern Age of Science Fiction

Magazines made SF narratives popular. Wells’ *The Time Machine* was published in magazines, although Wells by that time had genuine fame as an author with many books published. The history of most science fiction narratives is linked to magazines, which act in a way that entertains readers in a time of absolute wretchedness caused by war.

According to Del Rey, pulp magazines “were priced beyond the normal ability of the less-affluent to pay” (21). At this level, there was a third point of view made by the hobbyists “who had found that in the field of technology, there were many areas where they could

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tinker with new ideas, build variations on known devices, and generally turn science and gadgetry into things to be exploited for their personal pleasure” (30). A leading hobbyist is Hugo Gernsback who first used radio to advance the science of radio at a young age. But he thought science must go beyond ether and “could not let his visions go unpublished” (Del Rey 32), so in 1908, he introduced a magazine called *Modern Electrics* which changed into *The Electrical Experimenter* in 1913. However, with a close focus on science and technology, the name of the magazine changed again to *Science and Invention* which was reporting every development of science. In the same magazine he devoted an issue for science fiction stories named “*scientifiction*” and in 1926, he founded the first exclusive magazine of “*scientifiction*”.

Thus far, Del Rey regards that it is “unquestionably, science fiction as a distinct category of literature begins with Hugo Gernsback” and the world of science fiction “owes a permanent debt” to him (35). In 1926, he devoted the magazine of *Amazing Stories* which included stories of Wells, Verne, Poe, Garet P. Serviss, Miles J. Breuer, H.P. Lovecraft, and Edgar Rice Burroughs. Until 1929, the magazines embraced many outstanding stories with new contributors including Edmund Hamilton, Edward Elmer Smith, Lee Hawkins Garby, Philip Nowlan, Stanton A. Coblentz and many others. However, Gernsback’s victory soon evaporated when he announced bankruptcy. Despite the various attempts to preserve science fiction in magazines (Gernsback’s 1929 *Science Wonder Stories* magazine) or the pulps (Harry Bates’ *Astounding Stories of Super-Science*), the Great Depression of 1933 in America evaporated the fame of *Wonder*, yet, *Astounding* could survive with John W. Campbell, Jr along with the juggernauts of science fiction writer Isaac Asimov, Frederic Pohl, Robert A. Heinlein, A. E. Van Vogt who inaugurated the “Golden Age” of science fiction literature; following the year 1950.

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Tom Moylan argues that there was a shift from physical science to social realities “because of the population surges of the baby boom and the changing attitudes toward popular culture (stimulated by street style, comic books, rock and roll, and the mass-market paperback book), the number of readers grew” (30). This persistent criticism oriented science fiction writers to a tempting comeback to utopian writings (that had paused since Wells’s days), but this also led writers to satirize the utopian project with anti-utopian visions loaded with sociopolitical criticism.

### 1-2.2.1 The Shift from 1930s to 1950s

Science fiction expanded vastly while moving toward paperback books and the film industry because it emerges from “a context where technological and scientific changes reach a stage of acceleration sufficient to destabilize traditional conceptions of human identity and theological systems of explanation.” (1257), argues Luckhurst.

In literature, science fiction demonstrated ‘continuity’ and “tradition’ as a literary genre, especially after 1950, with the shift from pulps to ‘publishing phenomenon’ to use the words of Booker. For Darko Suvin, science fiction is a powerful genre that holds political reforms that serve utopian targets through the capacity of technology that promises a better world. But views about science fiction were more skeptical, mainly after the 1950s, a turning point towards postmodernism and pessimism equally. Soon, the heralding world of science fiction became a subject for suspicion when dystopian literature intruded on its private utopian outline and established itself as an interactive alternative. The potential of technology aimed to bring a better world, yet its prosperity was short after the appearance of atomic weapons. To Donald E. Morse, this scientific experiment, which “actualized the potential instant end of humanity” (Luckhurst 1260), “let the atomic genie out of the bottle, and it proved impossible to get it back in.” (Morse 2006, 6). Thus, science could not rectify its errs or fulfill its utopian promise.

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### 1-2.3 Science Fiction in Arabic Literature

Science fiction made its way to the literary canon with enormously prolific writings that intrigued curious minds worldwide. It can be defined as a genre of powerful visions and picturesque discourse derived from the aura of science and technology, which escalated significantly after the Industrial Revolution in Europe. Scholarly studies give considerable importance to SF in explaining the typical inclination toward it, even in Arabic literature.

For Shawqui Badr Youcef, science fiction is known as the “literature of prediction” or “literature of dream industry”, in which its improbable imagination comes true. As a new genre, it has grown out of Wells, Poe, or Verne’s stories in the nineteenth century. In this vein, M. Ashley, in the *History of Science Fiction* magazine, defines their writings as “a charming romance intermingled with scientific fact and prophetic vision... (Jules Verne, E. A Poe, H G. Wells)” (23).

Scholarly studies agree that SF cannot be identified as fantasy, mythology, or gothic literature. First, it is not liberated from the process of logic. Second, it does not attempt to elucidate the relationship between men and other beings. Third, its fascination is not forced, its narration is not intertwined, and it targets neither horror nor fear. According to Shawqui, the most precise definition for sf is that “it’s a thoroughly conscious literary genre which relies on science and its realistic nature through a literature of its own”. At this level, Mohammad ‘Azzam, in his book *Al Khayal al ‘Ilmi fi al Adab* (Science Fiction in Literature), notes that “(literature of science fiction) is a kind of reconciliation between literature and science, or at least joining and appeasing them” (My trans).

#### 1-2.3.1 Theory of Arabic SF

The position of science fiction in Arabic literature remains in a state of flux, oscillating in its output back and forth, particularly in the twentieth century. The Egyptian writer Ahmed

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Khaled Tawfiq seems to be disgruntled by the situation of SF in his native literature when he declares that “science fiction in Arabic literature has been born a loser in an environment that consumes science and does not produce it”. The weak position of SF that some scholars assert in the Arabic literary canon can be explained through the insufficient scientific explorations by Arabs in modern times. Science fiction is the genuine output of the Western Industrial Revolution, and its influence is manifested mainly through SF novels, which are likewise an inspiration to scientists, as were Jules Verne’s travels to the moon. Therefore, the Arab world remained a mere consumer of technology and science, just as was the case with SF genre.

On the other hand, it is remarkable to note that during the so-called Dark Ages in Europe, civilization in the Arab world was flourishing especially in the Middle East and North Africa. The advancement of science, architecture, astronomy, physics, medicine, music, poetry, art, philosophy, and many other fields in the region has remarkably impacted the neighboring Mediterranean part in Europe. In this vein, Susan Bassnett argues that “The great leap forward European societies” (check the book) in many fields “in the twelfth century is undeniable, but what has been denied and all but erased is the enormous influence of the Arab world on that process of development.” (77)

Therefore, it is also unfair to refute the possibility, or even the probability of generating science fiction in Arabic literature because imagination has been the principal aesthetic component of its poetry, belles-lettres, and prevalent culture from which sprang lots of elements of supernatural beings as Jinns and Efrits, talking mirrors and magical alternatives, transcending time and space in an age when traveling was the most exhausting task that took days and months.

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Since creativity is the outcome of neediness, Arab readers or listeners (folkloric stories were oral more than written) could evade reality through the alternative of the imaginative world that reified their dreams of ultimate happiness and a comfortable lifestyle. Arabic literature has never been incapable of foretelling future events, as do most SF narratives, though fantasy was the most dominant genre. The forecast of inventions and events is professed in Arabic popular culture, which can be safely stored in a science-fiction agenda.

Cognitive estrangement, which fuels SF narratives, as Darko Suvin emphasized, is also detected in Medieval Arabic literature. Ada Barbaro in her book *La fantascienza nella letteratura araba* (2013) mentions that the earliest preliminary groundwork of science fiction in Arabic literature is embedded in classical literature, which encompasses Al 'Aja'ib that Barbaro used the Latin *Mirabilia* as its equivalent to mean wonderment, marvel, and curiosity, travel literature which is mainly portrayed in the tales *One Thousand and One Nights*, and Arabic utopia that is symbolized in the philosophical tale of the Abbasid Golden Age Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy Ibn Yaqdhan* (1160 CE).

Writing in the eighth or ninth century, one of the most productive centuries in various spheres, has thoroughly challenged human consciousness. In criticizing extremists, Edward Said argues that people "who produced no mythology, no art, no commerce, no civilization; their consciousness is narrow and rigid one; all in all they represent one combination *inférieure de la nature humaine*". (1978, 142). This was not the case for Arabic culture which introduced the first precursor to science fiction named *al-'Aja'ib* literature to represent an abnormal, strange life that instigates readers' curiosity.

In defining the origins of Arabic SF, Ian Campbell asserts that 'Aja'ib literature includes "human-made and natural monuments, folktales, and descriptions of fantastic animal and humanoid creatures; these last are often presented as tales brought back by mariners,

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reflecting the vast growth in Indian ocean trade during the initial centuries of Islam.”(50). When Barbaro examined its main characteristics, she figured out that ‘Aja’ib literature and SF genre are not thoroughly dissimilar. In quoting Roger Caillois, Barbaro puts "the sense of the miraculous in itself, of the amazement that also belongs to the fantastic: they both share a “privileged kingdom, an uncultivated zone of the imagination” that allows reality to be better lived when facing the excessive progress toward SF” (32).’Aja’ib can be regarded as a preliminary version of science fiction in Arabic literature par excellence.

Wonder, in fact, raises the desire for plausible marvelous scenes that give what the West considers as a fantasy more than SF, but as argued by Campbell, “The mere presence of what is to modern Westerners the clearly fantastic should not prevent us from considering ‘ajā’ib literature a pre-cursor to ARABIC SF” (54). These wonders, though strange, were based on magic or supernatural forces with metaphysical qualities that science does not acknowledge. Magic was the pure knowledge in ancient times, too. Mohammed ‘Azzam explains that “there are other ‘paranormal’ that are made by humans rather than Jinns using )magic( which was the primary alternative of )science(, or the )science( of that early age” (My trans).

The Syrian scholar Kamal Abu Dib in his book *Al-Adab al-‘ajā’ibī wa ‘ālam al-gharā’ibī* asserts that books like *Kitab al-‘Adhama*, *Al Hikayat al ‘Ajiba wal Akbar al Ghariba*, *Risalat al Ghufuran*, *Alf Layla was Layla*, or the *Chronicles of al Hilalis and Sayf Ben Dhi Yazan* are a great heritage worth examining to surpass the ideological prejudices forced on them and still submitted to them in the milieu of authentic heritage in the Arab world and outside of it (10). Still, wonder literature was regarded as confusing for readers because it does not offer a logical flow of events. As Campbell suggests “the link between the fantastic and devotion lies in the pleasure of reading: marvelous tales encourage further reading and contemplation of how the marvelous might have come to pass leads to a greater understanding of creation.” (54)

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The Arabic utopian thoughts are signs that herald the birth of science fiction in Arabic literature. In this respect, Muhammad ‘Azzām mentioned that there are two streams of science fiction embodied in utopian literature which relies more on philosophical thoughts like Plato and Capet which call for social and political reforms, and another one which is based on scientific facts and truth as mentioned Jules Verne in a 1903 interview: “I have always made a point in my romances of basing my so-called inventions upon groundwork of actual fact, and of using in their construction methods and materials which are not entirely without the pale of contemporary engineering skills and knowledge” (cited in Westfabl, 190). Despite that, Arabic SF dodges Verne’s logical agency.

### 1-2.3.2 Mystical Arabic SF

It is agreed that Hugo Gernsback coined the word ‘scientifiction’ (1926) and replaced it after three years with Science-Fiction. The latter provides alternatives *beyond the fields we know*, to use Dunsany’s title, to create utopian cities, often using time machines as Wells predicted. In Arabic, the phrase Al Khayal al ‘Ilmi designates science fiction, although, in English, it is translated to “the scientific imaginary” because translation between Arabic and English is, in many cases, problematic since Arabic is a Semitic language with strong compulsions, unlike the other languages.

It is viewed that “the use of ‘imaginary’ or ‘fiction’ for ‘al-khayāl’ is more or less clear because ‘khayāl’ comes from the root ‘kh-y-l’, which means “to imagine, fancy, suppose,” and thus is a largely accurate and widely accepted gloss for English ‘fiction’, which comes from Latin ‘fingere’, meaning “to fashion, to feign.” Yet the word khayāl itself means “spirit, ghost, apparition, phantasm, fantasy, chimera, vision, trace” in addition to translating the literary term fiction (qtd. in Campbell, 48). These distinctive nuances seem problematic in their implication of being either secular or mystical visions since science fiction offers a rational world that transcends all sorts of spirituality. Thus, Ian Campbell argues that “In

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Arabic and to Arabs, the name of the genre has different linguistic implications than its English counterpart; the gap between it and “science fiction” can be exaggerated by the many readers as yet unfamiliar with the genre or its name, especially during the genre’s formative period” (49).

Muhammad Ahmad Mustafa, in his article Literature of Arabic Science Fiction, believes that as long as SF is also a product of humanities, social science, language, and criticism, which takes into consideration the space and time of its production and prediction, many classics, thus, can be regarded science fiction. He argues that “we can join Pharaonic, Syriac, and Arabic to this type of modern literature as far as it holds too ahead of its time.” However, there is a fundamental accord between the intellect and the divine in seclusion like Nihad Sharif’s *Imra’ fi Tabaq Ta’ir* (1981) or Talib ‘Umran’s *Khalfa Hajiz al-Zaman* (1985) are reminiscent of al-Farabi or Ibn Tufayl in their mystical visions.

### 1-2.3.3 Modern Arabic SF

Until the beginning of the twentieth century, science fiction has remained at the threshold of Arabic literature. The first attention given to the genre was through translation. The first SF novel translated into Arabic was *The Adventure of Telemachus, Son of Ulysses*, written by the French archbishop François Fénelon in 1717. The Egyptian writer and translator Rifa’a al Tahtawi transferred it into Arabic under the rubric of *Mawaqi’ al Aflak fi Waqa’i Telemac* between 1851 and 1854. But this attempt is considered a mere Arabization of literature as any kind of book or genre. In contrast, others regard al Tahtawi’s writing as the ‘harbinger of modernity’, to use Nu’man ‘Ashur’s title, perhaps because of his contribution to Arabic prose and children’s literature along with Ahmed Shawki.

At this level, some studies agree that Salama Moussa’s story *Khaymi* is the first SF in Arabic literature. It was published in 1926, depicting Egypt in a distant future in 3105. The

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last dream or chapter in his story '*Ahlam Al-Falasifa*' is considered as "a philosophical and symbolic novel that implies science fiction elements, which is a strong leap in this field in the age of renaissance" (My trans, Muhammad Ahmed Mustafa)

However, this short story is no more than a utopia that took part in a book, and cannot be regarded as an inauguration to the science fiction genre, notwithstanding the criticism Salama Moussa has received from the most prominent Arab writer 'Abbas Mahmoud Al'Aqqad who regarded him as "a mere reader of some sciences and some literature". While Tawfik al Hakim mockingly added that Salama Moussa "has stopped reading for a quarter century" (qtd. in al Siba'i, 1954).

The attempt to retrace the early endeavors of SF in Arabic literature could only be a precursor of a novel repertoire to escort the West, at least in literature. Regardless of the how, many critics agree that Yusuf 'Azzedin 'Issa is the one, in the 1940s, to launch SF in Arabic literature. His remarkable play '*Ajalat al Ayyam*' published in 1936 is considered as the first literary work of science fiction. Other plays like '*Nuridu al Hayat*' (1954), '*Rajulun min al Madi*' (1950), or '*Attufan*' (1960) are all seen as a product of SF in Arabic. Despite his productive literature, Nabil Zaghbi in his book '*Attafsir al 'Ilmi lil Adab*' mentions that "in the beginning of his life, Yusuf 'Azzedin suffered from the wrong view that considers a man of science sinful if he ever writes a literary work". He added that "whenever his works get published he prays Allah so that none of them will be read or heard!" (351).

Yusuf 'Azzedin followed the path of Gernsback in dealing with science fiction stories through magazines and radio. His literature, deplores Muhammad Ahmad Mustafa, "has been published in summaries on newspapers and magazines in the seventies that it is hard to obtain" (88). Arab writers persevered in the SF genre with diverse attempts, whereas grim moments in the twenty-first century allowed the literature of a bad place to settle.

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### 1-3 Dystopian Worlds in Literature: Definitions and Origins

Scholars investigate the essence of humanity and its fundamental nature. Humanity per se is vulnerable to ideologies and theories that experiment to maintain a desired status quo. Under a similar lens, utopia is claimed to be the seeds scattered in a community to reap perfection. However, utopia's failed harvest brings about dystopian output.

#### 1-3.1 Utopia in Western Tradition

In defining utopia and dystopia, it is necessary to turn back to the etymology of the terms. *Utopia* is the title of More's famous literary work of 1516, which is about an isolated island or "no place" in which prosperity and bliss prevail. Martin G. Plattel is aware of the fact that "the utopian searches of happiness dream of a new earthly paradise, in which an authentic freedom reigns and happiness is sought in unbridled sensuous delight" (47) However, the word is driven from the Greek combination of eu/topos; meaning a good place: no place seems to be good place. Most notably, utopian fiction—sometimes, "eutopian," i.e., *good place* rather than *no place*—critiques the existing order by exemplifying a superior one. Utopias take on hints of SF if they involve long voyages or time travel, doubly so if the framing device for the spatiotemporal voyages has a cognitive base (42) asserts Campbell.

Utopia is a concept, a genre, a place, a community, an atmosphere, or, as More's *Utopia* dictates, it is 'paradise', 'heaven', 'perfection', and 'fantasy'. However, "perfection was a curse, a stultifying finality" (qtd. in Ghosh and Bhattacharyya 89). In point of fact, when the possibility of a utopia seems to dwindle due to "the shock of twentieth-century technology" that, argued Postman, "numbed our brains and we are just beginning to notice the spiritual and social debris that our technology has strewn about us" (129), anti-utopia or "negative utopia" unclogs an arena in literature, surrounded with pessimism, environmental degradation, as well as political issues. In consequence, writers pay less attention to utopian

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writing, which is viewed as highly imaginative and lacks coherence and credibility in the real world. Instead, they focus on its rival or its pessimistic version.

Contrasting yet matching, it is to be mentioned that “within every dystopia there's a little utopia” (Marchese, 2009). Utopia and dystopia are regarded as speculative fiction, which is generally meant to be a broad literary genre encompassing any fiction with supernatural, fantastical, or futuristic elements. Literary critics connect the two genres as dizygotic twins or non-identical twins. They are the same in genre but different in content.

### 1-3.2 The Turn to Dystopian Thoughts in Modern Literature

*‘Too bad to be practicable’*, claimed John Stuart Mill in his 1867 parliament speech. Dystopia, as a term, earned a negative reputation for describing a bad country or corrupt governing system. In literature, dystopia rose to prominence in the twentieth century but occupied a secondary position under the omnipresence of science fiction. According to Claeys, “science fiction swamps dystopia, not uncommonly take the latter to be a sub-genre of the former” (273)

In answer to *Publishing Perspective* magazine, John Joseph Adam stated that dystopia “is a fiction that examines society through a lens. It shows us what society would be like if the rights of people were violated” (quoted by Piesing 2016). It is, hence, for the sake of unheard voices that the extreme outrage of dystopian elements portrays hunted rights and violated humanity, including individuals’ lives. Albeit fictitious in its nature, dystopia embodies silenced realities, ugly facts, a status of total shambles portrayed as quo. The Canadian writer Margaret Atwood states in an interview with the *New Yorker* that “utopias we can only imagine; dystopias we’ve already had” (2017). Indeed, dystopia is the aftermath of utopia; people’s demands are satisfied along the lines of that dreadful piece of narration. That is why this genre received wide resonance from the readership.

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Drawing from Thomas More's *Utopia* and Jeremy Bentham's cacotopia, that would be ultimately a pun for dystopia, two concepts have proved their inevitable omnipresence in the realm of literature. In this vein, Anthony Burgess, in his sequel to Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* points out "I prefer to call Orwell's imaginary society a cacotopia- on the lines of cacophony or cacodeamon. It sounds worse than dystopia" (Burgess ch.5).

Accordingly, utopia and dystopia marked their centenarian eons under the scope of prose throughout their standard structural paradigm of society, no matter how superior or inferior its fiction adopts. As these genres adhere to social, cultural, mostly global, and at times to historical changes in a given community, writers found an impulse to write with a renewed arena to architect in their narratives.

In keeping with the previous assumption, the word dystopia holds the prefix 'dys' which is, according to the *Online Etymology Dictionary*: "bad; ill; hard; difficult; abnormal, imperfect" while 'topos' remains the place. The natural meaning of the word reduces utopia's obverse as anti-utopia, negative, or passive utopia. In regard to the first coinage of the word dystopia, one could consequently link it to John Stuart Mill's parliamentary speeches of 1868. In this vein, Mill states:

I may be permitted, as one who, in common with many of my betters, have [sic] been subjected to the charge of being Utopian, to congratulate the Government on having joined that goodly company. It is, perhaps, too complimentary to call them Utopians, they ought rather to be called dystopians, or cacotopians. What is commonly called Utopian is something too good to be practicable; but what they appear to favour is too bad to be practicable (248).

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While More's optimism promised a flawless utopian outlook, what comes onwards was the outcome of pessimistic ideologies which obliterated a myriad of fine dreams, especially the ones utopia has drawn in print.

### 1-3.2.1 Mapping Hell in Modern Western Literature

Speculative fiction is broad and elastic. It has different divisions if we extend its definition. Under speculative fiction conceals science fiction, fantasy genre, and horror elements. Indeed, the coinage of the genre is credited to Robert A. Heinlein through his essay "On the Writing of Speculative Fiction" (1947). According to *Oxford Research Encyclopedias of Literature*:

Speculative fiction, Heinlein proposed, captures the highest aspiration of science fiction and includes its top-quality works. Defined as narratives concerned not so much with science or technology as with human actions in response to a new situation created by science or technology, speculative fiction highlights a human rather than technological problem.

The space of fiction is continuously expansible because of the myriad descendants that consistently result from it. Thus, the lexicon of speculative fiction embraces gothic genres, dystopias, utopias, post-apocalyptic fiction, magical realism, and fairy tales.

In response to the deprivation of liberty, abolished equality, and obsession with power and control, literature offered a typical kind of fiction that denounced the alleged utopian dream and exposed its dystopian nature. From the Russian novel *We* (1924), dystopia was the new motto to adduce the existing totalitarian truth. While *We* mirrored Stalinism in the fictitious society OneState, Aldous Huxley in *Brave New World* (1932) warned of the consequence of Eugenics and birth control. In the same context, Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* can be considered a dystopia at its best. Booker mentions "(negative) texts like *We*,

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*Brave New World*, and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* have been far more prominent in modern literature than the positive utopias of earlier centuries” (17).

Though anti-utopias are utopia’s derivative and the idea of utopia is frequently intertwined with notions of dystopia, the latter is a sustained world of oppression and limitation of human freedom. The dystopian fiction exhibits a hierarchical system where the power is in the hands of the strongest, and the survival is for the fittest in the society; at the expense of one’s freedom, that is shackled with conditions and laws passed by the authorities in order to keep further control on their living, i.e. Zamyatin’s *One State* is made of glass to enable the government to direct its citizens.

In many instances, the idea of dystopia as dark and suicidal is joined to apocalyptic literature, which may impede its originality. Accordingly, “dystopia is a fiction of resistance” and a “new literature of radical pessimism” (Lepore, 2017). It is, in other words, a converse to paradise, heaven, Eden, or the extremely peaceful world. It aims, by any means, at creating a perfectly imperfect community, where some of its inhabitants, most of the time the ones who hold power, would benefit from it and even like it, while the prosperity of the weak remains condemned. It is, thus, not apocalyptic fiction, for dystopia is a failed attempt or an unsuccessful design of the good place that is not able to be attainable. Apocalypse, however, targets the destruction of the world; often in the form of an event that draws or damages the cosmos through a fatalistic calamity (Meyer 8).

In an attempt to leave the pursuing of reality and to conceptualize new hybrid genres of stories which, through fantasy, could counter the Machiavellian nature of the prevailing regimes, writers like Margaret Atwood believe that the tradition of dystopia, especially in her novels the *Handmaid’s Tale* (1985) and *Oryx and Crake* (2003) is best categorized among speculative fiction rather than science fiction. Accordingly, plots that do not have a chance

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to survive in the real world like H.G Wells' futuristic echronia or his essay "Mind at the End of Its Tether" where he prophesized human extinction, is deemed science fiction. In *The Routledge Companion to Science Fiction* Bould et al argued that:

H.G. Wells has been used to inaugurate "proper" sf because his training under Thomas Huxley at the Normal School of Science ensured that his turn to fiction used real science, and the questions and techniques of science, rather than the pseudo-science of his competitors (409).

From this angle, one must call attention to the literary critic Darko Suvin, whose definition of science fiction finds that "SF should not be seen in terms of science... it should be defined as a fictional tale determined by hegemonic literary device" (viii). He continues: "Basically, SF is a developed oxymoron, a realistic irreality, with humanized nonhumans... validated by the pathos and prestige of the basic cognitive norms of our times" (6). Daunted by the aspects of technology that witnessed a rough wave since its appearance, writers preferred science fiction in order to treat the legacies of the technological massiveness of the twentieth century through their narratives, mainly to elude from reality to a more enormous fanciful scope.

To clarify the classification of utopia and dystopia among the literary genres, the non-identical twins are under the aegis of speculative fiction whenever elements of fantasy, from fairytales to ghosts to horrific stories to any erotic segments in writing, are mentioned, like in Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* (1954) or in Marquez' *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967). However, in looking onward and backward, many dystopian and utopian narratives are ranked as science fiction. On the one hand, many novels express dissatisfaction with systems of governance, which practice all kinds of despotism and discrimination, and consider technology as a curse when it is used inanely, like E.M. Forster's *The Machine*

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*Stops* (1909). On the other hand, there are those writers who wanted to benefit from the limitless power of technology by creating an endless world under no condition of time; like J. Hilton's *Lost Horizon* (1937).

### 1-3.3 Utopia in Arabic Tradition

*Tubawiyya* in Arabic, like utopia in English, refers to the idyllic place which humans are eager to reach. Unlike its English meaning of "no place", "Tuba" is the honorable existing destination for those whose deeds are righteous. Henceforth, utopian tradition in Arabic transmits a mystical experience.

#### 1-3.3.1 Fantasia in Arabic Literature

It is asserted that Arabic literature has emerged centuries before the Islamic period; appeared in classical poetry which was pioneered by Imru' al Qais bin Hujr, al Muhalhil Adi ibn Rabia, and Ka'b ibn Zuhayr; also referred to as Jahiliyya poets (pre-islamic or agnostic poets). Centuries later, Arabic literature extended into other areas, notably during the Abbasid Age or the Islamic Golden Age.

The flourishing of writing in prose as in poetry was notoriously lucrative in the eleventh century. The House of Wisdom in Baghdad was the gate to science and achievements. In contrast, the transactions made in trade allowed translation to occupy a large part of literature to challenge perennial poems of elegy, panegyric, and satire. The Qur'an, as a miraculous sacred book, comes to challenge the best oratory rhetorical ornamented and prosaic Arabic text ever; Arabs stand at its grandeur, which makes a good bulk of literature a source of inspiration to narrate stories.

When tracing back the history of Arabic literature, a fantastic era of orators and poets marked the pre-Islamic time or al-Jahiliyya. The art of oratory in the Islamic era shined with a plethora of oral prose. Most importantly, ancient Arabic literature was constituted by

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proverbs, riddles, idiomatic expressions, and other elements of folkloric type. Another art of standing is known as *Maqamat* built up literature of the time like Badi' al-Zaman al-Hamadani. Additionally, the art of messaging *Fann al-Tarassul* occupied a great deal of literature like *Al-Diwaniyya al-Ikhwaniyya*.

This is a sampling of prose texts in Arabic literature, which kept growing until the Islamic Golden Age in the ninth century, when Abdullah Ibn al-Muqaffa introduced one of the most prominent books of prose under the rubric of *Kalila wa Dimna*. The narrative is sketched on the tongue of animals to bring, by the end, morality and wisdom. Thus far, imagination has become the central theme in prose, whereas the world of fiction adopted utopian ideas to concretize heaven on earth.

### 1-3.3.2 Arabic Utopian Resonance

As long as the ideal is concerned, utopia in Arabic has religious and literary backgrounds. *Tubawiyya* is mystical in nature, and Arab writers were keen on keeping its essence in their literature.

#### 1-3.3.2.1 The Religious Background

The premise of a flawless place is initially anchored in religious contexts. In the Islamic community, verses from the holy Qur'an described an idyllic place named heaven, paradise, or Eden (there is a difference between Eden and Heaven fix this think about it): a fairyland in which the ultimate virtue is reached. However, the attempt to attain utopia was a heavy burden that humans could not carry for long. The way to utopia was full of fatigue and exhaustion leading rather to collapse and corruption. The idea is akin to the story of Adam and Eve's forbidden fruit. The perfect image of the forbidden tree was tempting to approach; however, the tasting from cost them the loss of idealism and, then, the journey in the abyss.

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The interpretation of utopia or the virtuous place is a perennial hope that many ancient civilizations did not squander any chance to seize eagerly. As the Qur'an presents the stories of the whole Umma or nation. The story of the city of Iram of Lofty Pillars is one of the utopias created on earth. The city remains mythical for many or a legend of a bygone time. However, it was indicated in the holy Qur'an as "the residents of Iram, the city of lofty pillars, the like of which had never been built in other cities." (Al Fajr, verses 7-8) 'Ad or 'Ad Iram are an ancient tribe that belongs to the Semitic race and are believed to be the descendants of the prophet Noah (peace be upon him). They had a large wealth and strength that made them incomparable to other nations. Their grandeur ignited a strong sense of pride and arrogance that turned into tyranny.

Shaddad, who is 'Ad's son, ruled after his father's death. He heard and read a lot about paradise in the ancient tales. He ordered his servants to build a land alike. It took him 300 years to finish his paradise on earth that became known as Iram of Lofty Pillars. Everything in this city is measured precisely in length and width with valleys and gates, edifices of gold and silver surrounded by high pillars, and under the palaces, they planted all kinds of fruits one would desire. The city was perfect and never seen before on earth. This Utopianism has soon vanished because of its coercive ruling system « They all transgressed beyond bounds in their cities, and committed great mischief therein » (al Fajr, verse 11-12). Its inhabitants were ruled by injustice and oppression. The utopian dream, thus, became a dystopia or a nightmare, while Iram had been buried and disappeared.

### **1-3.3.2.2 The Literary Background**

Considering utopia in Arabic literature, Abu Nasr Muhammad Al-Farabi or Alfarabius is to the Islamic community what Plato is to the Greeks. Al-Farabi was influenced by Aristotle's ideas. He was nicknamed the second master because of his deep interest in reading Aristotle and analyzing his work. Al-Farabi has also introduced utopian themes in

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two books: *Al Madina al-Fadila* which is also known as *The Views of the People of Utopia*, and *Civil Policy*. He explained how mechanisms of society should operate in order to achieve a virtuous city. Like Plato's *Republic*, Farabi's utopia is based on a hierarchy of elites, Guardians, and workers. Unlike Plato's *Republic*, al Farabi's account is centered on mysticism and the union the individual with the divine. His city "is directed to goodness and happiness and develops the appropriate virtues in the citizenry" (Leaman19)

The other book considered a utopia is the twelfth century's philosophical novel *Ḥayy Ibn Yaqzān*. Lawrence I. Conrad in *The World of Ibn Tufayl: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Ḥayy Ibn Yaqzān* (1996) problematized the case when he called for the issue of gender in the narrative but also characterized Ibn Tufayl's account as a "male utopia". Abdu al-Karim al-Yafi claims that "we can consider *Ḥayy Ibn Yaqdan* as a utopia, but unlike its utopian precursors, it is an individualistic utopia. It does not echo a social humane system, yet it exposes the life of a child who has grown on his own and could create a perfect life leaned on intellect and reason" (my trans). Utopia and its elements became visible in Arabic tales but had to wait until the twentieth century to proclaim recognition.

### 1-3.4 Utopian Fiction in Modern Arabic Literature

Genres acclimate with the writer's era and aura, and so did the utopian genre. Most Arabic utopias were arraigned for being immature enough to change social or political commentary. Reuven Snir asserts that "Arabic SF in general has as yet not generated any serious inquiry into the nature of contemporary social reality and most of the writers, instead of using the genre as medium for social comment, are still too prone to serve amusement or didactic aims" (280). However, during the twentieth century, some writers started to promote socialism for the first time in their writing, like Muṣṭafā Luṭfi al-Manfalūṭi, who made his political opinion clear towards Ismail Pacha's (Khedive) regime. In narratives like *Madīnat*

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al-Sa'āda (1907), which is followed in the same year by Al-Nazarat, al-Manfalūṭi lamented the decadence of religious and social morality caused by ignorance, superstitions, and espousal of alien Westernized civilization. Sālāh Eddin Yūnus states that al-Manfalūṭi “was not acquainted with any form of Islamic communities and its political alternative, however, his opposition was based on “conviction” with no further analyses or alternatives” (My trans)

*The City of Happiness* can be regarded as the first narrative that breathes utopian thoughts, although al-Manfalūṭi concluded his utopian dream with a return back to reality that is disappointing for the narrator and his readers as he states: “ I woke up in my bed, in my house, neither the plain nor the mountain, nor the Sheikh nor the farm, nor the city

nor happiness” (My trans). Ada Barbaro declares that al-Manfalūṭi was “the first to move away from religion as the sole focus of the utopian society, adding to religious rigor a focus on good government and social justice” (qtd. in Campbell 70). To a large extent, Barbaro seemed to be unaware of the Egyptian writer's life and thoughts, yet, we can still agree on the point that his book led a utopian impulse.

Another prominent writer who, like al-Manfalūṭi, fought colonialism and called for social and political reforms is named Sadiq Razgui. In a novel entitled *Al Qarra al Maḥquda* or *Fatat al Bahr* (1930), the Tunisian writer imagines a utopian kingdom called “Anasia” which portrays his vision of the ideal world. It is a city with highly intellectual citizens, firmly fixed security, economically prosperous, governed by a fair system. Similar to Razgui, Mikha'il al-Saqqal's *Latā'if Assumr Fī Sukkāni Zuhra wa-l Qamar* (1907) is another utopian narrative that gained little fame but still accredited for its contribution to the rise of utopia in Arabic literature.

Besides those mentioned above, utopian thoughts that carried social criticism appeared in 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Kawākibi's *Umm al-Qurā* (1903), in which he “describes a conference

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wherein Arab leaders undertake an international effort to overcome the political, moral, and religious decadence of the Arab world.”(Campbell, 69). Al-Kawākibi investigated the ills of the Islamic nations resulted from corrupted religion and in the biased authoritarian regime of the Ottoman Empire back then. He called for social and political reform especially for the role of women and their education.

Moreover, various pieces of literature provided new flavors to modern Arabic prose and poetry like Faraḥ Anṭūn who has introduced a novel named *Al-Dīn wa-l-ʿIlm wa-l-Māl: al-Mudun al-Thalāth* (1903) in which she suggests “utopia in the future and positions it as the result of socialist development.” (Campbell, 70), or the poems of the Iraqi poet Nāzik al-Malāika under the title of *Madinat al Hub* (1946) and the poems of *Al-yutubiya al-Dā'i'a* in which utopia is often a faded dream that the poet fails to accomplish. Yet, the poetess’ utopia is different than the Western one because it is “poetical, non-existent, purely romantic, and bears no relation with Thomas More’s *Utopia*”(My trans), argues Mukhtār Ali Abu Ghali.

Following Marxist thought, along with the industrial expansion and scientific growth, the idea of utopianism raised abundantly in the mid of the twentieth century to remedy humanity’s conflicts and dilemmas which had certainly much sway on Arabic ideals . Anyhow, circumstances of that period required a veer towards an anti-utopia as writers expressed their disguise and lamented the decline of humanity in the slopes of society in a genre known as anti-utopia or dystopia.

### 1-3.5 The Turn towards Dystopia in Arabic Literature

The emergence of novels that expressed rebuke on the failure of utopian societies is categorized in the literature of “bad city” or “corrupted city” which belittles and contradicts the norms of utopianism. Arabic literature joined the trend, with many writers, in a row, addressing social and political calamities in Arabic societies.

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### 1-3.5.1 Heraldizing dystopia in Arabic Literature

Dystopia in Arabic is ديستوبيا *dīstūbiyā* or *al-madīna al-fāsida* (the corrupted city) which opposes al Farabi's *al-madīna al-fādila* (the virtuous city), often recognized as *ālam al-wāqi'* *al-marīr* (the world of bitter reality), *naqīd al-yūtūbiyā* (the antithesis of utopia), and sometime *al-madīna al-Tahdhīriyya* (the city of warning). Novels published in the first decades of the twentieth century were a harbinger of Arabic dystopian literature. Ada Barbaro claims that Muhammad al-Muwaqqit al-Marrakushi's account *Ahl al-Safina* announces the beginning of dystopian genre in Arabic literature. The novel published in 1934, detected the faults in modern Moroccan society as an "exhausted nation" in which Muslims "suffer from heresy, corruption, the debasement of women, and bad habits" whereas "sufis are falsifying the shari'a, 'ulama' are following their passions and violating the law, while kings, governors and judges are addicted to physical pleasures and commit injustice" (Leeuven, 17). Al-Marraqushi, whom Adolphe Faure named "un réformateur Marocain," rejected contemporary Morocco, which embraced European ideals and modes that were alien to the norms of his culture. *Ahl al-Safina* is an imaginary story of a group of Arab voyageurs who sailed for a journey and coincided with a large European ship which, "in its magnificence, is seen as a symbol of power, which throughout history has served as a means to achieve hegemony and superiority"( qtd. in Leeuven 16). Once the two groups were on board together (Muslims and non-Muslims), a clash of civilizations emerged. For al-Marrakushi, European vices would lead to regression and chaos instead of an alleged civilization.

Futuristic imaginary novels in Arabic literature manifested themselves as sinister potent about contemporary Arab societies. According to Campbell, this particular admonition becomes a staple for Arabic novelists in general in later decades: the tension between the clear desire of many Arab writers, themselves educated or acculturated in the West, to

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remake the Arab world in the image of Western democracies, and their own awareness (or lack thereof) of how unrepresentative they are of their countries and the impossibility of this task, characterizes many Arabic novels from the middle of the twentieth century. (71)

The failure to meet utopian expectations led to an anti-utopian look in the media. Mid- and late twentieth century revealed the fallacy of a utopian mindset under the auspice of dystopia. The paucity of research on Arabic dystopia failed to pay sufficient attention to anti-utopian novels, although many extensive works of literature could demonstrate the flaws of totalitarianism and technological abuse. Yet, the escape from a wicked city was inevitably hopeless.

### 1-3.5.2 Post-Colonial Dystopia in Arabic

From 1945 to 1970, the imperialistic empire fell down, and colonial regimes failed to reify the project or their grip on the MENA wealth. What follows colonialism is a period known as post-colonialism, but the term has evolved into a theory that attempts to defy colonial discourses. Postcolonial literature became ideologically and culturally engaged mainly to challenge the binary of “self” and “other,” which allowed a new genre to flourish.

Postcolonial writers, whose main concern is freedom of the body and the mind, found fertile ground in SF, mainly in the dystopian genre, in which individuals strive for fairness and liberty. In postcolonial and dystopian literary works, protagonists seek their identities and free will, which are violated by colonial/authoritarian hegemonies.

“The Fiction of Antiutopia,” in the words of Irving Howe, sustained firmly in Arabic literature in the post-colonial period. Egyptian writers have solemnly engaged in negative utopia, inverted utopia, and anti-utopia through utopia per se. The Egyptian writer Yussuf ‘Azzeddin ‘Issa recorded his play *Al-Tufan* in 1960, in which he imagined a dark future that suffers from overpopulation and poverty ruled by an authoritarian regime. It was a serious

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attempt to express severe bureaucracy, poverty, injustice, and social and political dilemmas. Ahmad Abd al-Salam al Baqqali published his novel *Al-Tufan al Azraq* (1976), “one of the first self-consciously SF novels in Arabic” (Campbell 43). Al Baqqali presented a sinister fringe of the technological mass in the twentieth century that is akin to Huxley’s *Brave New World* in controlling birth.

The narrative is set in an imaginary Mauritanian desert, a place called Jabal Jawdy, in which a tyrant figure controls all aspects of life. Readers raised in a Western culture would probably consider Blue Flood as “a warning: creating an AI is fundamentally blasphemous because it encroaches on god’s domain, and such blasphemy will have disastrous results for humanity” (Campbell 51). So far, the decline of religious beliefs and the tendency towards machine worship have created a pessimistic vision in the Arab world.

Nihad Sharif is also a dedicated Egyptian writer who has abundantly contributed in expanding the limits of Arabic sf. Amongst the estrangement plot he wrote: *Qahir al Zaman* (1972), *Sukkan al ‘Alam al-Tani*, *Al-Shay’*e on which Shar said “its themes are based on prophetic futuristic visions that scientists expect to realize in the time to come” (My trans) *Inhabitants of the Second World* imagine a 2099 future in the seabed where a group of young scientists suffer despair. However, they establish a virtuous city (utopia) that ends up getting destroyed; not fully, though. To Yusuf al-Sharoni this is most optimistic end of Nihad Sharif because, unlike *The Conqueror of Time*, *Inhabitants of the Second World* describes hopefulness studded with warning or more precisely pessimism studded with hope.” (My trans). Besides, there is the collection of narratives *Raq’m Arba’a Ya’emurukum* , and the most notable short story *Imra’a fi Tabaq Ta’ir* (1981) that Reuven Snir describes it as “a rendering into SF of a trope characteristic of classical Arabic literature: the retreat from city life into seclusion, which brings a mystical vision” (Campbell 1).

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The novel of Muhammad Aziz Lahbabi' *Iksir al-Hayat* (1974) also addresses the gap between the upper and lower classes, which distorted the Moroccan community in the 1970s. Scholarly studies consider Lahbabi's novel to hold fragments of cognitive estrangement, whereas the *novum* that exacerbated Morocco is the Elixir. Yet, for Campbell, "The Elixir of Life, by holding Morocco up to the mirror of a potential utopia, reveals the dystopia of intractable class conflict that structures the actual society." (2015, 50)

There is a meaningful commonness between al Baqqali and Lahbabi as their novels parallel a time of economic stagnation and despotic monarchy (after decades of colonialism). In this vein, Campbell examines Moroccan novel during 1970s as "deeply concerned with the reform of society because they were written by modernists who came from a tiny, westernized, largely secular intellectual class that was completely unrepresentative of Morrocans in general" (Labyrinth, 15)

Musa Sabri is one of the most prominent writers in Egypt whose satiric yet classical utopian plot in *Al-Sayyid min Haql al-Sabanikh* (1987) is a rebuke of a techno-scientific society run by a despotic government. Huda Wasfi describes Sabri Musa as the clearest representative of the pessimistic strain of ASF, wherein science comes from without and dominates the Arab world (9). Presumably utopian and democratic, Musa's community is controlled by machines that reduce the novel to a "Subjective Utopia [that] questions the epistemological dilemma in a technologically based dystopia" (234), noticed Marwa al Khayat.

In a similar context, Ian Campbell regards *The Gentleman in the Spinach Field* as a Utopia criticizing Utopia, which dragged it down anti-utopian pitfalls "born of a sense of frustrated and thwarted utopianism" (104) points Kumar.

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On a different note, the first “self-conscious ARABIC SF novels” by Mustafa Mahmud, according to Campbell, are *Al-Ankabut (1965)* that “focuses on the continued quasi-imperial exploitation of the peasantry by the urban élite within Egyptian society, an exploitation that persists into the current century” (Campbell 153), and *Rajul Tahta al-Sifr (1966)* which traces utopian and dystopian aspects in 2067. The narrative “considers a future where Egypt is part of a new world order of scientific utopia, then inverts this and shows how that society is still based on brutal authority and traditional patriarchy” (153).

By the late twentieth century, the Syrian writer Talib Umran introduced a mystical story entitled *Kahlfa Hajiz al-Zaman (1985)*, which addresses the social issues of subjugation, restraints, violence, and abuse wrapped around a euphoric utopia. To ‘Azzam, “Umran represents the bridge between the first generation of ARABIC SF and the next and is, therefore, something of a luminal figure, whose works aren’t truly mature SF” (1994, 79-89). This was indeed the case, for Umran’s narrative was incisively political in discussing despotism in Arab countries, an idea that ripened increasingly in the twenty-first century. Accordingly, Talib ‘Imran, a leader of Arabic sf too, believes that fantasy trend either expresses adventures and exaggeration for the sake of entertainment or chronicles the future in a bitter disclosure with the aim to warn from struggles, problems, and disasters.

### 1-3.5.3 Twenty-First Century Arabic Dystopia

Lina Mounzer asserts that “The general narrative has it that Arab writers, disillusioned by the failures of the Arab Spring and the renewed plunge into disorder and authoritarianism, have spawned a new literary movement of late, turning to speculative fiction - dystopian in particular - to make sense of the nightmarish present.” (2019). In fact, dystopian narratives in Arabic hailed from Egypt and Iraq to chronicle frustration events in the Arab world. Ahmad al- Sa’dawi’s 2013 novel *Frankenchtayn fi Baghdad*, and Ibrahim Nasrallah’s 2016 narrative *Harb al-Kalb al-Taniya* have different backgrounds (Iraqi and Palestinian), yet,

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they both witness similar corrupt politics and postcolonial crisis. Even though Nasrallah's text can be identified as a dystopia, Sa'adawi's *Frankenstein* cannot. In Egypt, pre- and post-revolution marked a plethora of dystopian narratives that developed the canon of Arabic dystopia.

Social and political commentary in post-2011 Egypt is adumbrated in dystopian narratives. Muhammad Rabie seems to be frustrated about future Cairo in his novel *Otared* (2015), and Ahmad Naji's *Istikhdam al-Hayat* (2014) cost him two years in jail. Basma Abdel 'Aziz presented her novel *Al-Tabur* (2013) to allude to authoritarianism, which exerts power over people.

However, some narratives are not dystopia, although they have grim pitfalls. Na'il al-Tukhi Nisa' al-Karantina (2014) is seen from a dystopian angle, though al-Tukhi rejected this view. According to him, Western critics know nothing about Arabic literature except of what has been translated. Second, because they always connect the revolution to dystopia, as though searching for evidence of the revolution's effect on new Egyptian literature, they found what they were looking for in this word 'dystopia': young Egyptian writers are writing dystopia because they're disillusioned by the results of the Arab Spring." (al-Tukhi)

In Algeria, writers engaged in speculative literature and science fiction to examine the future with an alarming tone. Habib Munssi published a novel entitled *Jalalatuhi al-Abb al-A'dam* (1999). In an attempt to establish a utopian city, in 2088 to 2099, ruled by the Greatest Father whose dictatorship failed to maintain perfection, but succeeded in establishing al-yūtūbiyā al-didd. Other Algerian writers attempt to revolutionize science fiction in Algerian literature like Faysal al-Ahmar's futuristic novel *Amine al-'Alawani* (2007), Ahmad Mnawar's *Al Bouhayra al 'Udma* (1999), or 'Azz Eddine Mihoubi's *I'tirafat Askram* (2009) which oscillates history through its flashbacks and prophetic flashforwards. None of these

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novels, however, can be a harbinger of dystopia in Algerian literature, even if the vision of its writers is not heralding.

In the same vein, Wassini Laredj, the most prominent writer in Algerian literature has also attempted to establish a futuristic vision for Arabs in his novel *2084: The Tale of the Last Arab* – the selected research novel- which is an amalgamation of history from the World Wars to the Arab Spring. Laredj's pessimism was at its best as far as his text is meta-fictional allowing, his novel to become the heiress of George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* dystopian universe. The Algerian novel, though, is not enthusiastic towards a utopian future, but it is nostalgic to show evidence of a history that has been long unduly partisan.

### 1-4 Postcolonialism: A Brief Introduction

Postcolonialism commonly referred to postcolonial theory which describes the impact of different issues and effects of exploitation and segregation due to colonialism and imperialism. The political and economic ramifications of abusing colonized people, their lands and their culture led to a conflict with the imperial power. The discipline began to take shape in 1960s following Roland Barthes essay "The Death of the Author" (1968) which changed the reading of eurocentricism and invites to deconstruct the master narrative, whereas, scholars started to emerge from formerly colonized nations and colonialism's remnants, and began publishing and developed a critical theory that examined the language, literature, culture and history of imperial authority which was mostly European. To mention few Franz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* and his earlier *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952), Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978), Gayatri Spivak's *In Other Worlds: Essays on Cultural Politics* (1987), and Homi Bhabha's *The Post-Colonial Critic* (1990).

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### 1-4.1 Postcolonialism after Decolonization

Despite the fact that there were and still are many distinct forms of imperialism and decolonization, two significant periods are underlined in the postcolonial period: first, the British disengagement from its second empire (of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century) and second, the decolonization movements of the 1960s and 1970s in Africa and other places, and these two periods are the most important in postcolonial studies.

In the mid-20th century, Africa, in particular, embraced decolonial ideas and values that were formally declared through its national revolution. Moreover, national self-determination supported strongly liberationist movements in former colonial regions. These conflicts elicited the progression of different cultural, political and economic struggles and sparked their development. It is also important to note that colonization did not only try to control the land and its territorial boundaries, all of which were shaped by imperial powers, but it also claimed authority over their language and history. Bhabha put:

Postcolonial criticism bears witness to the unequal and uneven forces of cultural representation involved in the contest for political and social authority within the modern world order. Postcolonial perspectives emerge from the colonial testimony of Third World countries and the discourses of “minorities” within the geopolitical divisions of East and West, North and South (Bhabha, *The Location* 6).

In the early 21st century, postcolonialism is also used to demonstrate the struggles of indigenous peoples in various regions of the world, however, the term may be less appropriate when referring to the international system and their rules and notions about self-government and self-determination besides the weak people who were denied and constituted a vulnerable category which was highly susceptible even within decolonized entities. The Indian writer Nayantara Sahgal believes that colonialism is still directly related

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to the former colonized people's identity, history, and memory as its experience has become an inseparable part of them. He puts:

First we were colonials, and now we seem to be post-colonials. So is 'post-colonial' the new Anno Domini from which events are to be everlastingly measured? My own awareness as a writer reaches back to x-thousand BC, at the very end of which measureless timeless time the British came, and stayed, and left. And now they're gone, and their residue is simply one more layer added to the layer upon layer of Indian consciousness. Just one more (Sahgal 30)

Therefore, enlightenment still has a crucial influence and an inescapable impact on society, whether it be in Europe or other regions. All intellectuals and activists supported enlightenment ideas because they used it as a backing to promote justice and oppose and criticize imperialism in their societies.

### 1-5 Conclusion

This chapter attempts to explain the general concepts and theories that would help in the analysis of the selected literary works. To decipher the different features of the dystopian tradition, a comparative analysis will help to highlight the parallelism between Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and Laredj's *2084: The Tale of the Last Arab*. The following chapter, thus, will give a considerable extent to societal and political reforms that founded the anti-utopian epoch.

# **Chapter 2: Charting the Social Criticism in the Novels**

## Chapter 2: Charting the Social Criticism in the novels

### 2-1 Introduction

This chapter delves deeper into the elements of dystopian literature and the selected literary corpus of this thesis. The first part discusses the most common themes embedded in dystopian texts which hold the allure of the bad place. These topics, however, are used as tools to explain the failure of the utopian project and the declaration of apocalypse. They serve as an important material to diagnose the case studies. The second part deals with a profound analysis of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *2084: The Tale of the Last Arab*. The introduction of the aspects of the novels is also important to this research to understand the gist of their dystopia. The analysis also provides a comparison carried along with criticism to point out the convergence and divergence of both novels.

### 2-2 Dystopian Literature and Social Criticism

In several respects, dystopia is commonly viewed in parallel with utopia as stated Tom Moylan, it is the “fictive underside of the utopian imagination” (xii). However, if utopia tends to realize a perfect dream, dystopia is an absolute nightmare to be avoided. In *The Dystopian Impulse in Modern Literature*, Keith Booker presented in his introduction how a utopian social project like Disneyworld which combines technology and fictional atmosphere to create enjoyment and ease, has, de facto, dystopian drives. Booker seems to agree with Jean Baudrillard who considers the fictional theme of Disneyland as a negative escapism that is specifically designed to divert attention from social problems in the “real” world. In the line of the same thought, Baudrillard asserts: “Disneyland is there to conceal the fact that it is the “real” country, all of “real” America which is Disneyland (just as prisons are there to conceal the fact that it is the social in its entirety, in its banal omnipresence, which is carceral)” (Cited in Booker 3)

## Chapter 2: Charting the Social Criticism in the novels

Booker explains that “Disneyland is both the idealization of the American dream and the ideal carceral society of consumer capitalism” (3). The utopian premise is an impulse to accentuate political actions as presented Fredric Jameson “the utopian idea... Keep the life the possibility of a world qualitatively distinct from this one and takes the form of a stubborn negation of all that is” (Marxism 111). In the same line of thought, Iris Murdoch in her essay “the idea of perfection” (1964) rightly said:

if we are no strangely separate from the world at moments of choice, are we really choosing at all, are we right' indeed, to identify ourselves wiser this giddy, imply will?... In a reaction of thought which is never far from the minds of more existentialists (Dostoevsky, for instance), one may turn towards total determinism, towards fatalism, towards regarding freedom as a complete illusion. (373)

Scholars argue that there are anti-utopian assumptions or rather a rejection to utopian manifestations in many dystopias. According to George Woodcock, dystopia attempts to give shape to people's fear after four centuries of utopian promises which went in vain because they could not fulfill the long-sought ultimate happiness. Gregory Claeys approached dystopian genre in a chronological order to investigate the extensive spread of dystopia in the twentieth century.

Accordingly, the 1960s onwards were the most prolific years of dystopian literature but these narratives were still recognized mainly as anti-utopias. In quoting Orwell's character in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, a dystopian society like Oceania is “the exact opposite of the hedonistic Utopias that the old reformers imagined” (Chapter 3)

Essentially, there was a difficulty in writing utopias in the twentieth century, due to its enemy which explains that happiness cannot be reached without sorrow and suffering. Thus,

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utopias are enlivened through its opposite dystopia, as Keith Booker expressed “numerous works of modern literature have been suspicious not only of the *possibility* of utopia, but of its very *desirability*, equating conventional utopias with paralysis and stagnation.” (17) And this is the major thesis of dystopian narratives.

In a similar vein, Booker used Alexander Zinoviev’s thought when he argued in *The Yawning Heights* (1976) that utopias are logical contradictions because the positive characteristics they entail cannot exist in reality without their negative opposites (532). In this sense, dystopia communicates a warning against utopian forms. For Gary Saul Morson dystopian literature, which he terms anti-utopia rather, “is in essence a parodic "anti- genre"; by its very nature dystopian literature is intended as a parody of utopian literature.” (Qtd Booker 117). This skeptic outlook prevailed after the horrific events of the twentieth century in which hope and faith lost their abstract meaning; announcing the decline of utopianism as a response to an age of decadence.

In addition, technological development mainly caused a powerful turn to dystopia. Robert C. Eliott asserts that what led the possibility of utopia to improbability is the development in the twentieth century because

“to believe in utopia one must believe that through the exercise of their reason men can control and in major ways alter for the better their social environment ... to believe in utopia, one must have faith of a kind that our history has made early inaccessible. This is one major form of the crisis of faith under which Western culture reels” (87)

The very nature of dystopian narratives is satire that contemporary writers often utilize to lampoon alleged ideals in their existent societies. Dystopia was delivered from the womb of tart Russian literature in the banned narrative of Yevegeny Zamyatin *We* (1924), and

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matured in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932) and George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949).

### 2-2.1 The Decline of Ideals

The twentieth century was a time of experimentation and testing. The newly born ideologies were based on a hedonistic premise of suffering and pain. Out of necessity, it is inevitable to pass by the arduous events of the twentieth century. In fact, the pursuit of the ideal that brings ultimate happiness had a fatal outcome because of the misleading route of biological and technological tendencies. Part of the allure is alienation that has become a major element in life and history. Stuart Holroyd (1933) refers to freedom as the fundamental key term of the theory of alienation and places it on both the moral and psychological levels., i.e. freedom is a tension between individual desires and social constraints, besides political or religious ones. And so, divergence has been exclusively experienced in a quagmire playground, marking thus a downturn of utopianism. To keep a reminder of this atrocity, many writers engaged in dystopian genre as the most effective tool to record a deplorable time for the reason that “utopias describe an escape from history, these anti-utopias describe an escape, or attempted escape, to history, which is to say, to the world of contingency, conflicts, and uncertainty” (qtd in Booker 4). Dystopia is likely to refresh the memory with bitterness.

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Fig. 2 - 1 Keep Your Tongue Behind the Teeth! (1941 Soviet poster)

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Totalitarian regimes attempt to conquer the serenity of the world. Their doctrine is based on fear and violence, yet, their creed is often confusing; it is either theocracy lacking piety or a restrained secularism. Dystopian writings found a concrete ground to settle abstractions. The genre that has been introduced in the mid-eighteenth century, thrived in the twentieth century.

In common parlance, dystopian fiction is a peculiar paradigm of a fanciful state that goes amiss towards society, culture, religion, and politics. In theory, dystopian universe espouses the belief that a perfect community can only be attained by tyranny, oppression, political chaos, restriction of norms, laws, as well as individual freedom. Thence, it is remarkable how oblique man went, and plainly endorsed totalitarian intricacies. At this level, Gregory Claeys argued that “whatever we make of these attempts, we clearly cannot understand dystopia (or indeed utopia) without confronting history” (113) which is far-fetched in totalitarian regimes.

The origin of dystopia is ascribed and stemmed basically from the idea of utopia. However, in an attempt to structure an ideal society, the human race went beyond expectations, as the line between the two concepts is slight, and that line has been crossed due to the cataclysms of man especially when paranoids of holding power infused in his mind.

In a ruinous atmosphere, dystopias divulge significant issues related to societal, political, environmental, technological, and individual matters. Common problems like hunger, global warming, suppression of individuals, assaulted liberties through authoritarian sovereign, have, subsequently, daunted authors to address such issues effectively and intentionally. In his study of the nature of dystopia, Claeys stated that “In both history and literature, ‘dystopia’ has been most frequently indentified with the colossal tragedies of

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twentieth-century despotism” (113). Thus, there is a number of elements which nest these dystopian writings in the selected literary works under study, namely Zamyatin’s *We* and Atwood’s *The Handmaid’s Tale*.

### 2-2.1.1 Freedom/ Alienation

In history, the American Revolution, the French Revolution, and the Bolshevik Revolution, marked a wave of vigorous summon for freedom since, as Thomas Jefferson put, “nothing then is unchangeable but the inherent and inalienable rights of man” In fact, man is born free; a tabula rasa without social or cultural shackles. Along the rise of ideologies in the twentieth century, freedom has become both a goal and a threat. While defining freedom, the most compatible words with freedom is liberty, independence, release, autonomy and latitude. In *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Politics and International Relations*, freedom is defined as “absence of interference or impediment”. To Hillel Steiner, “a person is unfree if and only if his action is prevented by another person”. But to which extent are we able to conceptualize freedom of will, political freedom, individual freedom,...? To Macquarrie, “however we try to grasp it, it seems to elude us, However precious we may esteem it, by its very nature it is insubstantial and fleeting” (178)

For French philosopher, the term freedom has become jejune due to its amalgamation in existentialist settings. John Paul Sartre *pour-soi* (for itself) “is free to choose its essence. Its being is its freedom.” However, freedom is also a vice for being, and both freedom and being “stand in inverse ratio to each other” (Macquarrie, 68). This paradox is way more confusing when it comes to defining freedom in German terms which, as well, ties Jaspers’ *Existenz* (potential being) with freedom. Accordingly, “*Existenz* is freedom... a freedom not of its own making, which may fail to appear.”, (qtd in Macquarrie, 68). Even though, pursues Macquarrie, “the German philosophers of existence seek to bridge the gap between the freedom and autonomy of the individual existent and the demands of God or of being” (76).

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In several respect, the democratic zeal encouraged individualistic freedom which may seem troublesome in an epoch of growing political monopoly.

Determining a meaningful usage of 'freedom' in the twentieth century has become very problematic. The increasing tendency towards states of collectivism summoned an anti-utopian hedonistic outset. In a similar context, "the desire for pleasure trumps that for freedom. Freedom implies choice, uncertainty, contingency, all of which involve pain. Unfreedom is a superior guarantor of pleasure." (Claeys, 342) In the caveman's century, Baha declares "freedom is alienation the human dilemma [*ma'ziq*] between science's promise of absolute material happiness and the alienation of individual personal freedom and its dislocation of human and spiritual value" (59) henceforth, the reconciliation between hedonistic pursuit and freedom remains elusive.

### 2-2.1.2 Belonging / Othering

The sense of belonging has become more tangled, albeit Communist esprit of social justice and equality that gained succor from Marxist-utopian arguments. In the twentieth century, belonging has also gained political connotations that are overtly expressed by writers and thinkers who were committed to advocate and promote a particular cause. However, the circle of belonging expands as long as the writer adheres to the laws of conduct, yet, the scope might be confined if the writer is not a law-abiding citizen (i.e. Yevgeny Zamyatin).

The sense of belonging and borders in dystopias is complex and requires further elucidation because people in these societies try to fit in the uniformity system that the government creates. The meaning of belonging, in the first place, is to be owned by or to be in the possession of. Cambridge dictionary offers another definition of the term which can relate acutely to the study of this concept amongst dystopian milieu. It states that to belong

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is to “be in the right place or a suitable place”, and “to feel happy or comfortable in a situation”. So if belonging means affection and affinity for a particular place, how can citizens feel homesickness within their home? And if some regimes restrain the territory that people belong to, what would be the fate of the Other who is not part of the spatial logics established by the government?

Belonging is the preeminent component of identity and individuality. In his manifesto *On Liberty*, John Stuart Mill refutes the idea that living under the rigid rules of social groupings brings development to the whole. Mill believes that “whatever crushes individuality is despotism” (128) whereas belonging is not a only a matter of attachment, but an essential gadget that strengthens individuality. He asserts:

It is not by wearing down into uniformity all that is individual in themselves, but by cultivating it and calling it forth, within the limits imposed by the rights and interests of others, that human beings become a noble and beautiful object of contemplation; and as the works partake the character of those who do them, by the same process human life also becomes rich, diversified, and animating, furnishing more abundant aliment to high thoughts and elevating feelings, and strengthening the tie which binds every individual to the race, by making the race infinitely better worth belonging to. (127)

To belong is to be attached to a certain group separately and independently. Belonging, Joel S. Mingal writes, “has both a formal, instrumental sense attached to it – that is, one’s status – and an informal, affective component – that is, one’s sense of identity.” (15). However, for Abdullah al-Qawiri, “belonging is considered as a sign of consciousness, whereas non-belong hints at the absence of consciousness.” (My trans). Nevertheless, he believes that “the real belonging is the writer’s affiliation to his homeland because it is neither a theory, nor principles established by some members... belonging here is birth,

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upbringing, and self-determination.” (My trans). Al-Qawiri’s draws attention to postcolonial discourse in order to delineate that settlement in a land is also an exploitation of its interests and welfare. Therefore, defending the homeland is also defending the ideologies that pledged solemnly to maintain those interests.

In Arabic dystopia, the Egyptian writer Sabri Musa in his narrative *al-Sayyid min Haql al-Sabānikh* *The Gentleman from the Spinach Field* (1987) lamented modern world that lacks beauty, humanity, and affinity, as he declares: “The modern individual has begun to lose his feelings of belonging, now that the unending distance of the universe has been tangibly confirmed; he’s since become incapable of getting to know himself and his situation.” (64).

This lack of belonging is resultant from the premise of equaling the unequal. Keith Booker in his study of Dostoevsky’s text *Devils* (1872), states that Shigalyov, a pro utopian fellow, established a futuristic vision which “values equality above all else, even at the expense of reducing all citizens to the same level of mediocrity and enslavement” (142), whereas affiliation is seen from a different angle where “Everyone belongs to all the others and the others belong to each one. They’re all slaves and equal in their slavery. . . . Cicero’s tongue will be cut out, Copernicus’s eyes will be gouged out, Shakespeare will be stoned-there’s Shigalyov’s system for you!” (442), mentioned Dostoevsky.

While tackling Groups and Identity, Gregory Claeys asserts that “Our lives are dominated by belonging to groups. Yet how we join and associate with them is often a surprisingly unselfconscious process. Clearly all groups offer cooperation, without which the simplest tasks would defeat us. All promote sociability and provide approval, without which the self cannot function” (47) and therefore, exalting collectivism.

In fact, dystopia features the oppression of governments over individuality, identity, and belonging through ideology “as all ideology has the function (which defines it) of

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'constituting' concrete individuals as subjects" (Lenin 171, Cited in Booker, 15). The social Marxist critic Louis Althusser, whose major theory focuses on interpellation, points out that individuals cannot be separated from their social context, yet there is a hegemony imposed on them to keep control through what Althusser called "Ideological state Apparatuses" (ISAs), including official culture and specific institutions like churches and schools", and religion, as every Marxist would assume.

In a similar context, Wenger introduced three modes of belonging (engagement, imagination, alignment). This notion assumes the active role of individuals to identify to a certain community throughout "participation among multiple communities of practices, such as school, home, and on the street, or between the institutional aspect of work place (e.g. loving the work) and the community of practices of colleagues at the office" (Musha, 157).

However, what if individuals refuse to identify/belong ? There might be various assumptions to deal with this question (i.e. anthropologically, culturally, sociologically,..) which raises the issue of Othering, or those who commit alterity or disavow belonging. Refusing affiliation either means there is a high sense of pride and superiority that refuses to conform, or there are prevailing social forces de facto and de jure (challenging socio-political hegemony). According to Booker, "the opposition between individual identity and social demands deal directly with the individual vs. society opposition that is probably the single most important issue dealt with by dystopian literature" (15). This social demand is neatly tied to conformity shaped by political collectivism. Following the Japanese proverb "the nail that sticks out gets hammered down", the separation from the established social standards threatens not only individuals but a nation as a whole. This doctrine recreates democracy, in a sense of collective, conscious self-government" (Claeys, 385). Thereby, Hell is Other People for totalitarian regimes in dystopias. No doubt, both selected novels reveal the socio-political intricacies and overwhelming challenges, men live to face, which nurture exclusion,

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marginalization, inequality, injustice, yet, individual and collective belonging remains an essential human need.

### 2-2.1.3 Nostalgia (Memory) / Happiness

The word “nostalgia” was coined primarily by the Swiss physician Johannes Hofer to mean despair and sorrow. Besides being regarded as a psychiatric disorder, nostalgia is also associated with homesickness, persons, places, or events. In this context, nostalgia in modern terms, “is sentimental longing for one’s past” (Wildschut, Sedikides, Arndt, & Routledge, 4), or in Mills and Coleman words, it is “the bittersweet recall of emotional past events. Nostalgia is a type of autobiographical memory” (205)

Jean Starobinski argues that nostalgia is “the *work* of memory” (89-90), and Jonathan Steinwand asserts that imagination can be an impulse to nostalgia, as he states “the imagination is encouraged to gloss over forgetfulness in order to fashion a more aesthetically complete and satisfying recollection of what is longed for.”(9). To Franco Ferrarotti, “it involves the group, the collective unconscious, a stream of consciousness which links everything and travels in the interior of everyone at variable speeds and with its own images without, thus, exclusively belonging to anyone”(30). this statement indicates the link between the group and its community, what is common as “collective memory” which is “two things, corporeity and consciousness” carries Ferrarotti (32).

In literary texts, nostalgia is investigated from a psychoanalytical perspective. From narratives that address social and political reforms, there is an overt suppression of the past for it is the most subtle way to force inhibition of unacceptable memories. Tom Moylan argues that “the world in which we all live - the world of a now pervasive capitalist logic - has managed to erase historical memory so that it is almost impossible to see that what is

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going on around us was not always the case, and that what may be coming next is a shift that we cannot grasp by looking directly at it". (26).

In fact, the suppression of history is the suppression of memory that only conscious minds yearn for it, though consciousness is insignia of rebel. In dystopian literature, history is rewritten to change interpellation and reproduce meanings; using chiefly language as in Orwell's dystopia *Nineteen Eighty-Four* on which Raffaella Baccolini utters "new language, Newspeak, is created and history and culture are rewritten". Same in the Atwood's the *Handmaid's Tale* in which information is sieved and "...history and the Book of Genesis are rewritten" (Breaking Boundaries, 143).

Basically, the erasure of memory is a weapon to hold power, or a "hegemonic order ]that[ restricts memory to nostalgia for a fictive golden age that embodies the ideological attributes of its own system". (Moylan, 49). For other totalitarian regimes (like the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, 1967) which criminalized the recalling the past because it leads to nostalgia which is rather a "memory sickness" (Claeys, 292)

Recalling the past and refreshing memory are forces to change the narrative that is often the duty of dystopian protagonists like "Savage's "different" knowledge in *Brave New World*, the alternative histories in the banned books in *Fahrenheit 451*, Offred's recollections of her old life in *The Handmaid's Tale*, Jim's retrieval of Orange County history in *Gold Coast*, and Lauren's and Malkah's dialectical combination of traditional memories and radical visions in *Parable of the Sower* and *He, She, and It*, all demonstrate the place and power of memory in dystopian narrative and counter-narrative"(Moylan, 49-50).

Therefore, nostalgia is a crucial theme to lament the present and lampoon the dark future. Longing for the past in dystopia manifests utopian desires, so "we might suggest that nostalgia is a longing for a utopia" despite the fact that "we think of 'utopia' as referring to

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an imaginary perfect place or condition in the future, yet it does seem to fit with the conceptions of nostalgia” (37) notes Janelle. L Wilson. Nostalgia is thus a kind of mythological past which gives the space to comfort, belonging, easiness, which translates man’s solitude and his sense of not finding his place. Yet, being a powerful emotion, nostalgia can infuse happiness and improve emotional and social well-being.

The common feature between utopia and dystopia is probably the pursuit of freedom and happiness. Krishan Kumar in *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times* states “both conservative and liberal anti-utopian tendencies manage to attack Utopia from the protective perspective of a fundamental pessimism, or at least skepticism, about the capacities of human beings, and the possibility of attaining more than a moderate degree of happiness in human society” (Cited in Moylan 130).

Happiness is always interesting to read about, dream of, and attempt to concretize for its own sake. Unhappiness, however, is way more interesting because misfortune imbues reality variously. The atmosphere of virtue and happiness is seductive enough to afford utopian future that might either summon a turn towards it, or a return from it as anti-utopias demonstrate, since “whoever builds a house for future happiness, builds a prison for the present” (Cited in Moylan, 130). At this level, happiness becomes an ideology or a cult that seeks devotion and adherence.

Happiness in Oxford dictionary refers to “feeling or showing pleasure or contentment”. For others, happiness is either a target to reach, a leading role for well-being, or a mystical philosophy (for the ancient). Following the Industrial Revolution, the world had a greater desire to “a perfect, ideal society which would really ensure universal well-being and happiness” (Claeys, 330).

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This is as much or more a link to the virtuous city (utopia) which “is directed to goodness and happiness and develops the appropriate virtues in the citizenry... Happiness is attainable by the philosophers through their pursuit of intellectual knowledge, and is available to ordinary believers who are not capable of philosophy through their religious and social practices” (Leaman, 19). Happiness, according to various claims, is bliss, lasting satisfaction, success, and takes control of the highest good (Tatatkiewicz, 1976), it is joy, the balance between pleasure and pain, and fulfillment (Nettle, 2005), whereas some relates it to temperament or mood (Telfer, 1980). Feldman Fred has summarized it as follows:

WT1: x is happy= df. x experiences intense bliss joy or rapture.

WT2: x is happy= df. x has lasting satisfaction with life.

WT3: x is happy= df. x is successful.

WT4: x is happy= df. x possesses the highest good.

N1: x is happy= df. x experiences joy or pleasure.

N2: x is happy= df. upon reflection on the balance sheet of x's own pleasures and pains, x believes that the balance of pleasure over pain is reasonably positive.

N3: x is happy= df. x flourishes x fulfills x's true potential.

ET1: x has a happy temperament = df. x is disposed to be cheerful.

ET2 : x he's in a happy mood = df. x is temporarily disposed to look on the bright side.

ET3 : x is happy = df. x is enjoying himself.

ET4 : x is happy = df. x is pleased with x's life as a whole.

(2010, 128)

In philosophy, though, “it is possible to speak of the happiness of a person's life, or of their happy life, even if that person was in fact usually pretty miserable.” (Stanford Encyclopedia of philosophy). Happiness, therefore, has become a theory based on different principles.

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The pursuit of happiness might produce its reverse for “unhappiness is a luxury of the free” mentioned Assimov (154). What establishes happiness? Or as Frederic Harrison put ‘How is it created, maintained, and lost? what pleasures are high, what low?’. John Stuart Mill answered:

The happiness which they meant was not a life of rapture; but moments of such, in an existence made up of few and transitory pains, many and various pleasures, with a decided predominance of the active over the passive, and having as the foundation of the whole, not to expect more from life than it is capable of bestowing. A life thus composed, to those who have been fortunate enough to obtain it, has always appeared worthy of the name of happiness. And such an existence is even now the lot of many, during some considerable portion of their lives. The present wretched education and wretched social arrangements are the only real hindrance to its being attainable by almost all (10: 215, cited in Bromwich, 20).

Still, modern times produced unhappiness than happiness, when machine worship replaced religion, limited individualism, and locked freedom, because, as George Kateb states, “liberty therefore conduces to the increase of happiness: the decrease of suffering and the increase of pleasure.”(46). Recent governments aim to secure these feelings because the level of happiness gauges what the Greek name “Eudaemonism” or well-being.

This idea is generated abundantly in anti-utopian societies led by extreme tyranny who “insists that wisdom may be gained by suffering, that happiness alone is not sufficient to define the good life, that pleasure, indeed, ‘needs difficulty, austerity, contrariety, comparison’ to validate its very nature” (Claeys, 366). George Woodcock in *Utopias in*

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*Negative* argues that these planned societies “brought little marked increase in human happiness” (81). In sum, happiness has various resonances that lead to oppression for its own sake, or excessive hedonism: pain and pleasure.

### 2-2.1.4 Dystopian Truth

The twentieth century was “the caveman’s century” as put by Alexander Solzhenitsyn (113). The dramatic scenes of tyranny and despotism ended the life of millions. In politics, the ruling power was held by Hitler and Stalin. In Russia, after the Bolshevik Revolution, Stalin created the Soviet Union that lasted over seventy years, while Hitler aimed at conquering the globe. However, at that time, Hitler and Stalin were regarded as the epitome of tyrants, whose politics revolutionized and ruled a bulk of the world. Consequently, many have followed the new colossal doctrines of communism and totalitarianism which assessed new sorts of communities conducting to the abyss.

The Russian nation was based on a different understanding of enlightenment. Though Russians were keen on aristocracy and progress, the idea that the power of the state should be limited was not a part of their plans. Accordingly, “this resulted in a bizarre combination of pride in the uniquely Russian traits of the population mysticism, communalism and anti-individualism, Orthodoxy, servility, and ignorance” (Chirot 46).

Stalin is a part of the hereditary dynasty of Russian rulers. Similar to Alexander the Liberator, Russian intelligentsia, or Lenin, who “also made serfdom ever more onerous, crushed peasant protest, and humiliated the most enlightened members of the aristocracy who had reformist ideals” (Chirot 47). Stalin built the Communist Party on these bases.

Zamyatin, like many Russian writers, was greatly influenced by the leader of the “Slavophiles” Dostoevsky who defended peasant commune, and orthodoxy, he criticized the Western rationalism in his *Notes from the Underground*. However, Chirot regards that

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the overwhelming technological superiority of the “white races” over the rest of the world seemed to be explained by a kind of simplified Darwinism (55).

Therefore, the mid nineteenth century witnessed biological revolution. *The Origin of Species* emerged by Charles Darwin (1859) made a global change in Europe. Though Darwin’s book was extremely scientific and had nothing to do with politics or human society, his assumptions were misinterpreted. Thence, when theory blended with scientific advances, white superiority clamped its validity, and social hierarchy shaped new types of societies. The spread of Darwinism continued to be misused deliberately. The idea of Natural selection was adopted by Herbert Spencer who led a liberal capitalistic world and established his “social-Darwinism”. As a result of applying Darwin’s theory of evolution on society, Spencer coined the term “the survival of the fittest” (Spencer 455), which raised the question of which group is to be considered weak and which one is to be considered strong. For Spencer and others, the poor weakens the strong and curses the possibility of a perfect society that is reveled in literature as utopia.

Moreover, Darwin’s scientific theory and the notion of natural selection allowed the emergence of Eugenics which raised ethnical and racial problems. Eugenics introduced birth control as a solution to the excessive inferior families. The movement was embraced by the most powerful nations because it served their interest and was presented as an impetus to their deeds including racism. As put by Chirot “the popularized science of the late 19th and early 20th centuries did not invent imperialism or racism; but it did give them the sense of infallibility and assurance that came with the cachet of « science »” (55). Anyone reading Atwood’s *The Handmaid’s Tale* would directly link images of birth control or her sacred “Ceremony” with the principles of Eugenics.

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Dystopia escapes from freedom to slither down the slopes of history. It discloses facts about man committing incurable madness; moving towards backwardness under technological dictatorial assumptions.

### 2-3 Charting the Novels

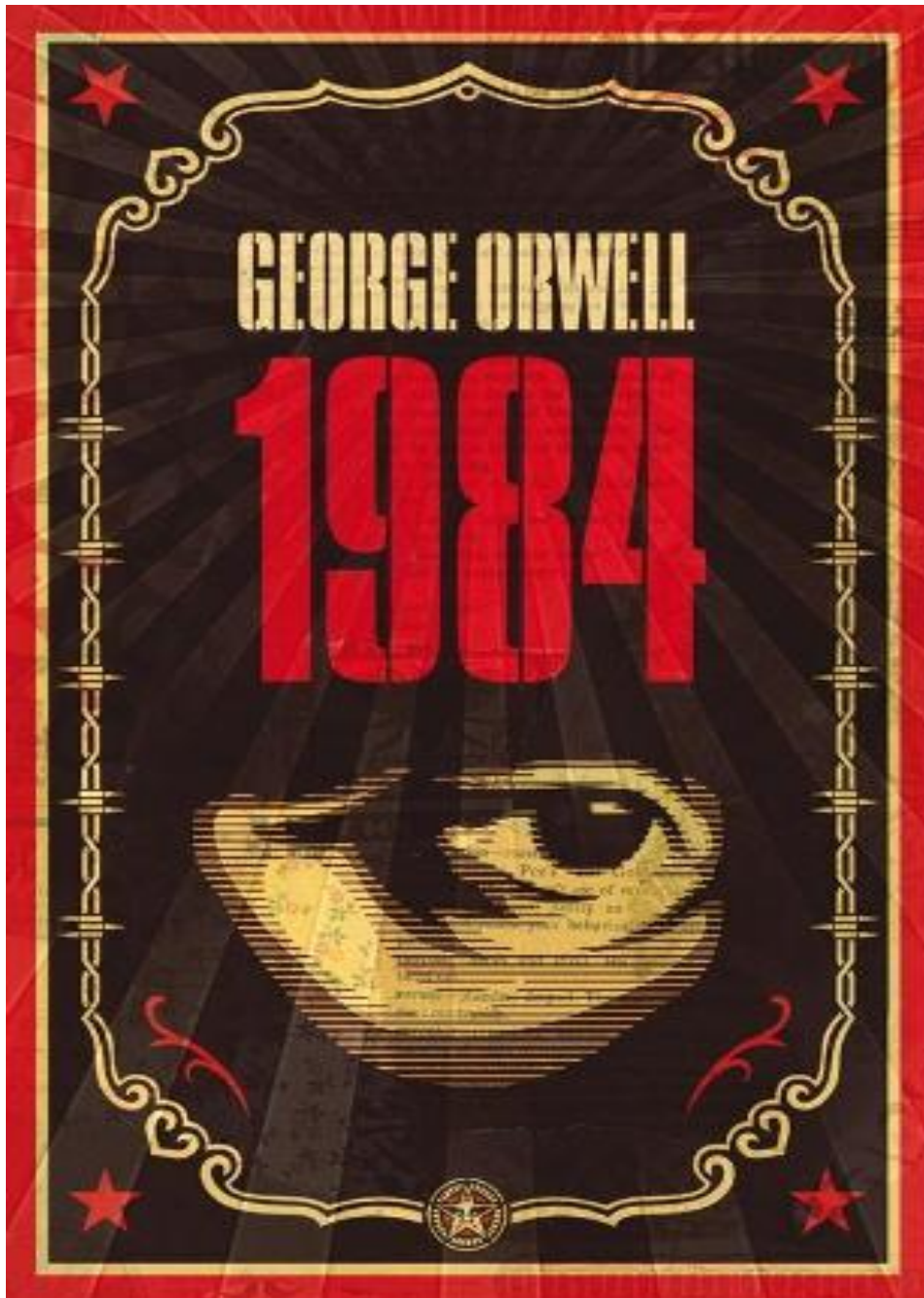


Fig. 2 - 2 Cover Page of Nineteen Eighty-Four (1949)

## Chapter 2: Charting the Social Criticism in the ovels

*Nineteen Eighty-Four* is a twentieth century novel written by George Orwell and first published in 1949. It is a projection of a dark future of perpetual war and destruction. In the words of Claeys, “the power of this book lies chiefly in its ability to entice the reader into a world defined by paranoia, oppression, fear, and pain.” Oceania is one the super states along with Eurasia and Eastasia, based on a hierarchical rule that is constantly in conflicts and perpetual war with the rest of the super states. It is controlled by the Party whose leader is Big Brother; a symbol of extreme totalitarianism who is described as Stalin in appearance and thought, and whose figure is displayed throughout the city London with the slogan of BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU.

The novel’s central character is Winston Smith an ordinary man whose aversion to Big Brother and his system develops through the narrative to become rebellion. Ingsoc is the prevailing ideology. Its principles are taken from English Socialism that rules with power rather than law, yet, classicism is the founding element of the society in which the Proles who represent the majority of the population, belong to the regular Party members deprived of freedom and privacy, and constantly under observation through the advancements of technology i.e. telescreens, and brainwashed through the propaganda of the Newspeak that dominates the language and the Thought Police. The Inner Party, however, is the one that consists of the superior class like O’Brien, who is a dedicated character to the principles of Big Brother who, in the end, arrests Winston and tortures him for compromising with Julia; another Outer Party member, to rebel against the Party’s whims.



Fig. 2 - 3 Cover page of 2084: The Tale of the Last Arab (2015) in Arabic

In 2015, Wassini Laredj published *2084: The Tale of the Last Arab* in Beirut which is one of the most crucial and controversial novels written by him. Critics, like Djamal Eddine Taleb, find that its appearance after the Arab Spring is an intentional coincidence for the writer has overtly burdened the novel with his personal political views and visions towards the destiny of the Arab nations that does not seem to herald a better future in 2084. The novel portrays the failure and destruction of Arabia; a deserted land in the middle of which lays an alien entity called Azaria which is meant to divide Arabs more and more and guarantees the continuance of their misery and sufferings. In Arabia, there is also the Castle of Amereupa which keeps it under surveillance and control. Amereupa is the new American-European

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alliance that keeps exploiting the land of Arabia while oppressing its citizens who, according to Laredj's narrative, are weathered away in the desolation of the sand, devouring one another.

The protagonist Adam Gharib or the last Arab is a renewed scientist in Nuclear Physics who works in one of the American laboratories in the state of Pennsylvania. He aims to develop a new device that can be used to overcome the syndrome of Hiroshima and Nagazaki named the Pocket Bomb PBPU1 and PBPP2 or the Dark Scorpion which is the name of the project that can serve as deterrence against "terrorist" organization. In one of his trips from New York to Paris, Adam is being kidnapped at Roissy airport to find himself a "Guest" in the "Castle of Amereupa"; a place set in the middle of Arabia and headed by the General Malcolm Blair, known as Little Broz (Little Brother); a tyrant personality that appeals much to Orwell's Big Brother, and believed to be one of his descedents. In a watchtower on the senventh floor of the castle, Little Broz, a Mussolini-like figure watched every single detail in Arabia through a dazzlingly white room full of huge screens of surveillance.

Like any dystopian society, the dress-code identifies the role of each individual: white for Doctors, blue for Guests who are also civilians, khaki for Officers and Soldiers, black for Rescue Personnel, and Orange for Residents; the new term for prisoners. Adam is a rare creature as the last living Arab whose ethnic group are living immense suffering and poverty and sinking in a regional war not for a land but for a hunch of bread. Another interesting character in the story is the wolf Ramad, an Arabic name that means ash or cinder, is believed to be the last wolf like Adam the last Arab. The wolf is a legendary figure that symbolizes survival and enduring and this is what links Adam with Ramad. The world in Laredj's novel is discriminated between East and colonial West which invades the Arab region with its soft slogans and exploits its resources; leaving nothing but the crumbs that fall from white man's table, and its everlasting complex relationship.

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After persuading Adam to develop the Pocket Bomb for alleged peaceful reasons mainly to annihilate terrorist organization, the bomb, instead, has destroyed the rest of Arabia which revealed the real intentions of the West, while the survival of Adam remains questioned.

Both Orwell and Laredj envisioned pessimistic views about the future of their communities. Notwithstanding the spatio-temporal dimensions of the novels, the presence of utopia in these fictional in canceled. Indeed, time and space are fundamental elements which play a key-role in these narratives. Bakhtin coined the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships as “chronotope”.

### 2-3.1 A Future in Nowhere

The enmity between utopia and dystopia appears in the quality of their placement. Utopia is the ideal place which presumably attempts to afford a flawless life where justice prevails. Dystopia, the opposite pole, is the bad place that readers share a principled aversion to it. Be it as it may, the common point between them is in their locality that takes readers to somewhere in the nowhere whereby readers are cognitively aware of the existence of such a place. Dystopia s “inscribe future space that retains traces of the past” in which characters are captured, and often “fail to escape from the formal operations that are their source”. (Rosenfeld 5). There is a sense of familiarity or clear allegories in dystopian texts in a form of warning signals to make a direct connection to reality, through the allegory presupposes that there is a difference between appearances (what it seems) and reality (what it is). In fact, individuals refer to veil reality which is rather bitter and therefore switch to illusion.

#### 2-3.1.1 Oceania

In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Orwell divided the world into three parts: Oceania, Eurasia, and Eastasia. Oceania is never geographically located, but its province Airstrip One refers to what used to be known as Great Britain; a military and strategic location. Edward Said in

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*Culture and Imperialism* (1993) asserts that writers like “Kipling, Conrad, Arthur Conan Doyle, Rider Haggard, R.L. Stevenson, George Orwell, Joyce Cary, E.M. Forster, and T.E. Lawrence, the empire is everywhere a crucial setting” (63).

Nevertheless, Oceania is not explicitly depicted as a traditional colonizer in the historical sense. For instance, there is no clear manifestation of economic territorial gain or colonial expansion. Still, it engages in war with other superstates Eurasia and Eastasia, and these conflicts are more about maintaining power and control over domestic population. Its very basic foundation is the Ingsoc (English Socialism) which fuels totalitarianism exerted by the Party.

There are four main ministries in Oceania: the Ministry of Truth (Minitrue) which alters or deletes past documents and erase evidence to give one version of the past, the Ministry of Love (Miniluv) which deals with imprisonment, the Ministry of Peace (Minipax) that believes that war is peace, and the Ministry of Plenty (Miniplenty) which deals with the citizen’s goods. The dominant new language is Newspeak and its mottoes run:

WAR IS PEACE, FREEDOM IS SLAVERY, IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH.

Newspeak is a language that alters rather paradoxes. In the novel, Orwell puts “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 150). The hierarchical structure is headed the Inner Party represented by the British Intelligentsia, the Outer Party or the working-class like Winston, and the Proles the most inferior group and the largest one.

Following the centenarian anniversary of Big Brother, 2084 is set in a fictional world that destructs the current one and builds a new map all over again. Laredj’s imaginative

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predictions narrate a futuristic time of destruction and chaos in the middle of an everlasting conflict between Amereupa and Irochina and the prey of the struggle are Arabia and the Arabian tribes of UTA<sup>1</sup>. The first represents the European-American alliance, the second represents the union of Iran, Russia, and China, whereas the third world in Laredj's narrative are Arabs who struggle to provide a descent life. In the middle of Arabia lays an alien body which is friendly to Amereupa and enemy to the locals of the region, recognized as Asaria. In this sense, Laredj alludes to the occupying Zionist regime of Israel.

The events of the story, however, take place in the citadel of Amereupa which is situated in the mid of nowhere in the desert of the Empty Quarter which occupies the quarter of the Arabian Peninsula, nearby the Marib Dam and the Strait of Hormuz. Laredj's futuristic vision of the region is pessimistic albeit the abundant resources that includes oil, natural gas, and various radioactive minerals, and though the region is, today, home to a number of oil exploration and extraction facilities, as well as solar energy and glass production centers, it is doomed to failure in 2084.

The citadel of Amereupa is surrounded by bared wires to control access and avoid escape. It has four main entrances in the four directions Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western, severely surveilled by the Night's Watch. The main entrance leads to a field that resembles much of a sports track. On the Seventh floor of the citadel, the last and the highest one, lays the white room of Little Broz, from which he watches each and every detail.

In *Utopia Reader*, Claeys and Sargent claim that "a nonexistent society described in considerable detail and "normally" located in time and space that the author intended contemporaneous reader to view as considerably worse than the society in which that reader lived." (1) as for Laredj, he made a plea in the beginning of the novel "I hope this will never

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<sup>1</sup> Union des tribus Arabes

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happen. A mere cry before it's too late" but desperately continued "I already know that who is specifically concerned will never hear it." He is aware that his cry falls on deaf ears.

### 2-3.1.2 The Citadel of Amereupa

The "portmanteau of America and Europe, which is written in French as Améreupa" (Elmiligi 145) The hypothetical society in *2084: The Tale of the Last Arab* can be perceived as a utopia's rival, a negative utopia, or a dystopia of "an enclosed place and its few openings do not lead to anything, not even to the vacuum, the vacuum in this heavy place... Whenever Adam contemplated it, he felt shortcuts in life and heartbreak. But he resists absurd endings" (Laredj, 92). These kinds of societies, anyhow, serve as a scale to gauge the political and social climate that regenerates the world over the long term.

Laredj's citadel of Amereupa "like Tartar Desert in its emptiness" (86) is a place to be avoided in the future. The existence of this citadel which belongs to Western regime inside the desert of Rub' al Khali (Empty Quarter) is a hint to colonization and domination. The regime of the citadel, Little Broz proudly pronounces, seeks power over Arabia, or in the words of Elmeligi "to cannibalize that neighbor they never liked anyway" (143)

According to him, "there are some nations [Arabs] that become useful only when they turn into ashes. We give them the opportunity to get out of their ashes to enter a history on which it existed for long on its edges"(11). Little Broz's speech is a reiteration of the racist incitement of the US state department employee Patrick Syring who expressed his heinous feeling in one sentence "the Only good Arab is a dead Arab." (2007, Abdulrahman Al-Rashed). The official language is Eurolingua which is based on American English and some Latin words.

Adam knows little about the history of the citadel but Laredj provides a glimpse of its history which raises confusion between his fictional citadel of Amereupa and Aleppo's in

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northern Syria that witnessed many occupations and civilizations including the Romans, Armenians, Byzantines, Ayyubids, Mamluks, and Ottomans, but he added the futuristic version of history to include the civil wars in Arabia that took place more than fifty years ago (alluding to the Arab Spring) in which a group under the name of a terrorist organization which conquered the citadel and destroyed its sites, mosques, cathedrals, and temples under the leadership of *Al-Korbo*.

### 2-3.2 The Last Men in Dystopia

The last man in Europe and the Last Arab are the protagonists of the futuristic corrupt city in the case studies of this research, whose character traits differ from psychological and mental ones that construct their personalities and ultimately influence their behavior to the visible aspects or the physical characteristics that hint at age, race, and identity. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Orwell elucidates: “all the beliefs, habits, tastes, emotions, mental attitudes that characterize our time are really designed to sustain the mystique of the Party and prevent the true nature of present-day society from being perceived” (146). However, Laredj is more concerned with the colonial monopoly practised on Arabs to wreak havoc their world. The Last Arab is stuck in East/West dyads “The whole Arab body has become a firewood for wars that have nothing to do with it, but it pays its cost with more drowning and underdevelopment.” Laredj proceeds: “In less than half a century, more than a hundred million Arabs have died of terrorist killing at the large level, or with the new weapon of the West, which often burns entire cities in the hunt for one terrorist, that appears in the end to be the wrong one” (271)

The protagonist in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is Winston Smith, a man who belongs to the Outer Party. He lives in conformity with the social and political rules of the London. In the book, Orwell informs that Winston “was thirty-nine and had a varicose ulcer above his right

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ankle... a smallish, frail figure, the meagreness of his body merely emphasized by the blue overalls which were the uniform of the party. His hair was very fair, his face naturally sanguine, his skin roughened by coarse soap and blunt razor blades and the cold of the winter that had just ended.” Orwell’s description allows critics like Claeys to claim that Winston is ”a weak, whimsical, forgetful, unappealing figure [...] he is habitually despondent, and exudes failure. Yet he becomes us and we him.” Winston does not belong to the Proles, but he is not also an elite in Oceania. He works in the records department in the Ministry of Truth which manipulates existing documents from the past or alters new ones. Winston develops a sane consciousness and starts to question the unquestioned, the inevitable, in other words, the forbidden like the past, history, and truth. He claims:

Everything melted into mist. Sometimes, indeed, you could put your finger on a definite lie. It was not true, for example, as was claimed in the Party history books, that the Party had invented aeroplanes. He remembered aeroplanes since his earliest childhood. But you could prove nothing. There was never any evidence. Just once in his whole life he had held in his hands unmistakable documentary proof of the falsification of an historical fact. (Orwell 25).

Therefore, the “very ordinariness” of Winston, Claeys argues, “becomes heroic” (391) to resist the authoritarian state of Big Brother in spite the very strict surveillance of the Thought Police.

The most recognized commonality between dystopian protagonists lies in their effort to resist the toxic ideology of the hegemonic regime in their societies. Be it Zamyatin’s D-503, Huxley’s Savage, Vonnegut’s Paul Proteus, or Bradbury’s Guy Montag, they all paid the price of their non-conformity for the sake of projecting the atrocity of their futuristic epoch. The alleged ‘weak’ Winston Smith is no difference. His first act of disobedience starts with buying a diary and starting recording his daily occurrences. Along the narrative, he develops a political consciousness that is depicted as a kind of awakness from the whims of Big

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Brother that enabled him to be less susceptible to his propaganda. As the original title suggests, Winston is ‘the last man in Europe’ to seek history, to exist independently, and the last one to believe in humanity and that ‘the spirit of man will defeat the Party’ (Claeys, 413).

According to Aaron S. Rosenfeld, characters in the dystopian world are considered “as formal construct, as a set of assumptions about interiority, autonomy, and agency—as novels have taught us to understand it.” (4) But Winston Smith in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is as legible as the novel that is to say his attitudes and actions are predictable including what he fears and what he plans for. As dystopia relies on paranoia to “dismantle its protagonists”, Orwell’s text also relies implicitly and explicitly on paranoia and delusion which “becomes, in effect, the poetic principle governing *Nineteen Eighty-Four*”, it was necessary to represent Winston as weak, fearful, and paranoid, because “if [he] begins as a familiar character, the autonomous individual hero of a quest romance, he ends as environmental fixture. (Rosenfeld 167) But to enable readers to notice the indifference, restraints, and labyrinthine world of dystopia in which the subject is often trapped to become not a character but a quintessential part of the text, readers “get revulsion at character. The dystopia leaves us with the disconcerting spectacle of the modern character imprisoned in what is essentially an epical setting—the fluid subject trapped in completed time, becoming not a human but part of a perfect text.” (Rosenfeld 175). Or simply, the modern character feels the paradoxes in the essence of existence, where perceptions of reality confronts illusions and absurdity in the labyrinth of life.

Laredj’s narrative is reminiscent to Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-four* to a large extent. The point where their paths cross hinges on the exact reality of them being the ‘Last’, the only remaining, the final, or the only one left. According to Ian Watt, “Winston Smith is the last humanist, the last adherent to solid moral values emanating from material existence

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empirically observed, the last to believe in an autonomy which was being everywhere lost” (Watt qtd. In Claeys 441). The irony in naming the Last Arab Adam Gharib opens a discussion on the choice of words. If the first man in humanity is the final one, then humanity is at stake. Gharib, however, in Arabic is strange or odd. In a conversation between Adam and Little Broz, the tyrant figure was not intimidated into thinking aloud: “An Arab and thinks?!” (Laredj 44).

Adam is an Arab scientist in Nuclear Physics, born in America, and leads research on minimizing the size of the nuclear bomb to eliminate its damages on the whole city. When it comes to identifying Adam, he is an intellect-like character belonging to an almost extinct race of Arabs. Like Zamyatin’s D-503, the OneState’s mathematician whose invention is the fundamental success for the future of his society, Adam is a scientist or, more accurately, the last Arab of paramount importance to the whole world, whose Pocket Bomb is the ‘last’ hope to maintain peace and destroy terrorism. He is married to a Japanese woman, Amaya, whose grandfather is the only survivor of the atomic bombing on Hiroshima and Nagasaki (1945) Tsutomu Yamaguchi (1916-2010).

The physical appearance gives strength to his Arab belonging. In a passage, he is described as He is more than forty years old, he has a white thick hair, a full denture, and a strong body. Before getting kidnapped from the airport, he was wearing a black hat a red Keyfiyyeh and holds a little bag. The Keyfiyyeh or the muffler is a sign of his Arab belonging that he insists on putting in a Western countr. The mental a Adam is portrayed as intelligent, wise, and brave “as a Barbary old lion” but at the same time he is absentminded, anxious, and lives constantly in fear “Adam lives in a state of anxiety, fear and confusion of what is happening to him... He laughed and said except for strangling and scare there is nothing weighing down my life” (Laredj 17).

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In a straightforward passage, Wassini Laredj introduces the protagonist in reference to the anecdote of Adam and Eve " I am Adam. Few of you know or heard of me. I reduced everything in my name and path. I carried the ashes of heaven and the debris of a woman I've known but little, and left the place apace. The day when Satan triumphed and seized the throne that he ever wanted since the beginning of creation." (Laredj 57). Laredj allows readers to learn more about Adam through his records and realize that the protagonist is self-reflecting the fact that the race of Arabs has almost vanished "I am Adam. To those who don't know me. From a dynasty destined to cease like the rest of the extinct dynasties or those on their way to evaporating"(95)

### 2-3.3 Antagonism in Dystopia

Antagonism takes a negative categorization and can refer to hostility, enmity, unfriendliness, or bitterness. As a result, its seeds grow nothing but conflict, hatred, or war. Following the tradition of the Novel genre, dystopia gives much space to its antagonists as they fuel its badness. According to Rosenfeld, there is a sort of critical dystopia in humanist utopias "in which a world antagonistic to humans reaffirms the desire for a world better suited to humans than either the dystopian world or the one we currently occupy." (88) thereof, the feeling of dislike or antipathy towards that kind of character is a crucial element to analyze the dystopian poetics.

In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Big Brother is the villainous character whose aversion can never be escapable only by conscious character. Even though, he is "the guise in which the Party chooses to exhibit itself to the world. His function is to act as a focusing point for love, fear, and reverence, emotions which are more easily felt towards an individual than towards an organization." (Orwell 145). Within him lies purity, truth for he is not the problem but the solution per se (Rosenfeld 240). Orwell, however, chooses to keep him as an instrument of

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influence and a symbol of tyranny. Big Brother is the absent-present, everywhere but nowhere, the-must to obey, and the-must to love. He is also the ‘omnipotent’, the ‘infallible’, or as the critics Heller and Nekrich declared “Socialism with a human face”(46) . Big Brother is the leader of the Inner Party in Oceania. His picture is displayed in the whole city of London with the caption of BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU. The portrait is depicted with a Mona Lisa<sup>2</sup> effects which gives the illusion of a gaze following its observer “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.” (18)

The physical appearance afforded to him is a Stalin-like figure with a dark hair and a mustache. However, the term Big Brother has become a synecdoche for excessive misuse of power. According to Anthony Burgess, Orwell’s inspiration of Big Brother comes from an advertising poster for educational courses by Bennett’s company in which the poster portrays the picture of Mr Bennett offering kindly help to students with the slogan of “Let me be your father”. After his death, his son takes over the business and changes the poster in a more stern face of him that runs “Let me be your big brother”. However, other critics like Douglas Kellner argue that it is a representation of Stalin and Hitler. Others speculates that Orwell’s Big Brother is inspired from H.G. Wells novel *Star Begotten* (1937) in which “Big Brother” is the figure that provides a sort of security and direction in life “Most of us to the very end are obsessed by infantile cravings for protection and direction, and out of these cravings come all these impulses towards slavish subjugation towards gods, kings, leaders, heroes, mystical personifications” because “our imaginations hang on to some such Big Brother idea almost to the end” (101-102).

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<sup>2</sup> Mona Lisa effect is famous as it is an optical illusion created deliberately by Italian Leonardo Da Vinci to reinforce the enigmatic expression which probably reflects the inner emotions of the painted woman.

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Other interpretations regard that Big Brother is a reference to Brenden Bracken the minister of information in Britain and the responsible for propaganda during WWII. Orwell worked under the term of the much-feared minister of that time, and he greatly abhorred his authoritarian behavior. Brenden Bracken was known among civilians as BB; the same initials of Orwell's tyrant figure in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.(2016, Jerome O'Reilly).

Be it as it may, Big Brother neither appears in the novel nor speaks. "Nobody heard what Big Brother was saying. It was merely a few words of encouragement, the sort of words that are uttered in the din of battle, not distinguishable individually but restoring confidence by the fact of being spoken. Then the face of Big Brother faded away again." (10). In fact, the character that voices Big Brother is O'Brien "the cold, cruel intelligence behind the smiling icon" (Gottlieb 2006, 57).

If "Napoleon has his dogs; the Party has O'Brien " (162) Anthony Stewart mockingly declares. Besides Big Brother, O'Brien is the flat villain character who worships the Party and regards its immortality as the purest form of decency. He is deeply indoctrinated by its supremacy and power. He is a member of the Inner Party and occupies a crucial position that no one knows exactly what it is. O'Brien , however, is described as "a large, burly man with a thick neck and a coarse, humorous, brutal face" with "a certain charm of manner" (7), though. In a passage, he tells Winston that "the Party seeks power entirely for its own sake. We are not interested in the good of others; we are interested solely in power. Not wealth or luxury or long life or happiness: only power, pure power." (185) He pretends to befriend Winston to gain his trust by pretending to be a fellow rebel to end up by arresting him for thought-crime. He is a clever character, but also intoxicated with power which drives him to madness.

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Winston was deceived by the doubtful 'orthodoxy' that was noticed in O'Brien's figure, probably because of the disparity between his "urbane manner and his prize-fighter's physique" (7) Winston's naive nature enabled O'Brien to eavesdrop on his mind and thoughts and reveal his rebellion. According to Claeys, O'Brien is a revisited version of Dostoevsky's Grand Inquisitor in a more contemporary sense (421). In fact, he is the most ironist character in the novel to represent the spirit of the Party as "he gave an impression of confidence and of an understanding tinged by irony." (Orwell 122). However, Orwell adds "much in earnest he might be, he had nothing of the singlemindedness that belongs to a fanatic." especially "when he spoke of murder, suicide, venereal disease, amputated limbs, and altered faces, it was with a faint air of persiflage." (Orwell 122). Richard Rorty finds him a "terrifying character" through whom Orwell aims "to convince us that O'Brien is a plausible character-type of a possible future society, one in which the intellectuals had accepted the fact that liberal hopes had no chance of realization" (Rorty qtd. In Anthony Stewart 162). Therefore, O'Brien is the most exclusive version of the Totalitarian regime that Orwell warns from mostly.

The dystopian structure of Laredj's novel *2084: The Tale of the Last Arab* prompts inquiries to look for the source that instigates cruelty and indecency in the Citadel of Amereupa. As a fact, Little Broz or General Malcolm Blair is the novel's most intriguing antagonist character. He is believed to be the descendent of George Orwell's Blair family. Therefore, he persuades others that the dictator figure in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* Big Brother is his grandfather to whom he delivers a speech in homage to his centenarian anniversary to express his full dedication to his principles: "It's an exceptional year It's been a century since Big Brother's birth. The whole world celebrates this year that the people of the castle call the Year of the Marshal. My year. My grandfather Big Brother. He is my role model" (Laredj 58) When Adam asked him why he calls himself Little Broz though he's a Blair, he proudly

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answered “Because I am a lover of grand men who realize before others that the world changes only with grandeur and power” (Laredj 59)

‘Little Broz’, transliterated in Arabic to sound like in English, resides on the seventh and the last floor of the citadel. He controls every aspect of Arabia from his ultra-clean white room in the citadel of Amereupa from which his piercing sight never misses a single detail. Like Orwell's Big Brother, Little Broz persists on big screens with a silly smile, but unlike Big Brother “he does not watch you, he is within you” (Laredj 65).

The famous triad of the Party in Oceania WAR IS PEACE, FREEDOM IS SLAVERY, IGNORANCE IS POWER is developed into TOO MANY WARS KILL THE WAR, FREEDOM AGAINST SAVAGERY, WHO IS NOT WITH US IS AGAINST US. Little Broz wants to preserve the genuine of Big Brother’s ideology with some minor changes, but the most controversial slogan that he insists on adding, which carries Laredj’s dystopia into a different dimension, is “THE GOOD ARAB IS THE DEAD ARAB“ (Laredj 48)

In the novel, it is assumed that no one has ever seen Little Broz, but a journalist once stealthily took a picture of him. Laredj, like Orwell, bestows unique traits to draw similitude with real tyrants. Little Broz is portrayed as a short little man with a countenance that appears puerile and an overall physique reminiscent of Benito Mussolini in his youth. During the war in Iraq, he witnessed a track bombing which caused him significant expenses, one of which was the loss of his father. At the same time, he survived after arduous attempts at surgeries; but ended up with a distorted face and a synthetic male organ that exposed him frequently to the risk of urinary obstruction. He is described as “puffy-cheeked”, “Boulahnak”, “face-rounded like an imbecile baby, with a big head like one in the terminal stage of cancer”(14) with ”small eyes like a blind chick“ (373).

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Besides, he is also an amputee, a quasi-cyborg because, in the words of Waseem Elmitigi, “he has a bionic arm and a bionic leg. His missing arm and missing leg are on opposite directions and are replaced by mechanical limbs. He is generally depicted as someone with visible deformities and multiple plastic surgeries and prosthetics that make him seem less human.” (147). The bombing caused the loss of his limb which forced him to move on a wheelchair. Little Broz is a man of war who holds a grudge against Arabs who “[do] not become good only after [this] death. A strange being attached to the waste of history till death and I don't know what he gets from it. He kills himself by cramming it into death.” (Laredj 22). He firmly believes that the Arab must stay under the mercy of Amereupa, and must also believe in the communist slogan of “All with one. And the one is the master of all” (11) because “the one is the protector of all” (113) . In 2028, he is the ironic figure of cruelty and grotesque. Nevertheless, contrary to Big Brother, Little Broz is given audible monologues throughout the story.

Another controversial character in Laredj’s story is El Korbo. Al-Korbo or ‘Corbeau’ is a French word that means the raven in English. It is a terrorist organization described as a “killing machine” that attempted to assassinate Adam in the airport through its secret group named Shadow before getting kidnapped by Little Broz. Laredj again relies on transliteration that the name of ‘Corbeau’ is written in Arabic letters to convey the same sound of the word. Al-Korbo, however, is also “responsible for murdering various scientists from Arabia” (144), especially the ones working on nuclear. Along the narrative we figure out that Al-Korbo is Adam’s friend Seif who works for Asaria. The tribal war in the region creates chaos and austerity in the middle of the desert whose citizens live on the margins.

The struggle for existence pushed many of them to join the organization which persuades them throughout religious discourse. The misused Quranic verses are means to justify their crimes. In a passage we are informed that Al-Korbo is known for signing on the corpses of

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the victims by putting a sign of the cross on their chests under which their name 'Organization' and a Quranic verse: "Prepare against them what you 'believers' can of 'military' power and cavalry to deter Allah's enemies and your enemies as well as other enemies unknown to you but known to Allah." (163). In this vein, Laredj alludes the past and mainly the Arab Spring through which a group of terrorists organization called ISIS (the Islamist State of Iraq and Syria) which attacked Syria and other regions in the Middle East on the behalf of Islam.

The symbolism of the raven carries various interpretations but continues to be a more negative symbol in Western culture as well. The American writer and poet Edgar Allan Poe (1809- 1849) wrote a narrative poem after the death of his wife to express his grief, pessimism, and despair under the rubric of the Raven (1845).<sup>3</sup> According to Kenneth Silverman, the raven is a symbol of "Mournful and Never-ending Remembrance" (240)

In Laredj's cultural background, the raven is a sign of bad omen pessimism as seeing a raven alludes to death. From a religious perspective, the raven is considered a teacher to the Prophet Adam's son Cain who showed him the way to bury his brother Abel. In the Quran, a verse mentions "Then Allah sent a crow digging 'a grave' in the ground 'for a dead crow', in order to show him how to bury the corpse of his brother. He cried, "Alas! Have I 'even' failed to be like this crow and bury the corpse of my brother?" So he became regretful" In spite of that, Waseem Elmeligi doubts the real identity of Al-Korbo as there is no evidence of his existence. He claims that "there is no evidence that Corbeau exists in the novel, and it might, therefore, represent scaremongering tactics that are used to justify the violence of Little Broz." (145) Whether an enemy or a tool of manipulation, readers can neither classify him as O'Brien nor as Goldstein who opposes Big Brother. Anyhow, it is evident, though,

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<sup>3</sup> His most famous poem translated in French by Charles Baudelaire in 1843 and later by Stephane Mallarme (1875).

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that Al-Korbo is the violent blast in the novel who summoned the apocalypse in the citadel of Amereupa.

### 2-3.4 Female Characters in Dystopia

George Orwell is often being criticized for the predominance of the masculine presence in his writings, neglecting a female firm presence like the one in Atwood or Gilman's tales. Daphne Patai argues that he is "trapped by both his manhood and his misogyny, [Orwell] in the end fails to achieve the resonance of a fully human language." (268) In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, besides Winston's wife Katharine whom he could not get rid of, yet "had long ceased to be a painful memory and became merely a distasteful one" (Orwell 91), his mother or his sister, or the women belonging to the Proles, Julia is the most dominant female voice and, even more, the most crucial character that leads Winston to recover the truth. Perhaps, the absence of women is justified by the absence of feminine values such as humanity, nurturance, domesticity, and empathy would, to a large degree, demolish the patriarchal design and reconfigure the political agenda. Therefore, the oligarchal system of Oceania positions the Proles in an age before the French Revolution; an age of darkness, ignorance, and lack of political consciousness.

The reason why they are excluded is because "[i]t was always the women, and above all the young ones, who were the most bigoted adherents of the Party, the swallows of slogans, the amateur spies and nosers-out of unorthodoxy" (Orwell 7). Therefore, the equity between genders is, consequently, absent. And yet, the view of women as inferior, and their simultaneous idealization as reproductive and sexual specialists, forms an essential part of that notion and thus does not conflict with Orwell's implicit values. But as an ideology, it conflicts with his attacks on hierarchy and injustice, which remain woefully incomplete, even hypocritical (Despair 88).

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The presence of independent women is odd and weird. to Winston “ [Julia’s] youth and prettiness had frightened him, he was too much used to living without women” (Orwell 83). Winston, in a passage, had hope in women to start a riot against the Party when he heard more that a hundred voices of women shouting tremendously, he thought that “[t]he proles are breaking loose at last!” (Orwell 48) but once he reached the spot, he figures out that they were only shouting to get saucepans (which is difficult to get in Oceania). For Winston, “[u]ntil [women] become conscious they will never rebel, and until after they have rebelled they cannot become conscious.” (Orwell 49) Once more, the multifaced role of women is a reflection of the patriarchal ideology with its do’s and don’ts which restrict women’s power to challenge the status quo. “Women are at the margins [they] exist as a source of frustration, imitation or temptation” (Bail 215) while men defy their masculinity with rationality logics and strength.

Furthermore, Orwell identifies Julia as a young woman of around twenty-seven years old who lives in a hostel with other girls and works only with women “(“[a]lways in the stink of women! How I hate women!” she said parenthetically)” (Orwell 90). She works in the Fiction Department wherein the Planning Committee produces and directs novels. Julia is also part of the Anti-Sex League that maintains celibacy in Oceania with a strong yet rebellious character; “a bold-looking girl, of about twenty- seven, with thick hair, a freckled face, and swift, athletic movements.” (Orwell 6) according to Anthony Stewart, Julia is “more symbol than character” (154). She symbolizes Winston’s consciousness and memory, yet, she lacks mental capacities and intellect. She declared that she didn’t “much care for reading” because “[b]ooks were just a commodity that had to be produced, like jam or bootlaces.” (Orwell 90). Beatrix Campbell argues that Julia “is not interested in politics as such, even though she’ll lay down her life for her revolt. When Winston finally gets his hands on Goldstein’s bible of dissidence, he tells her urgently that they must read the forbidden text together. What

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does she do? She tells him to read it to her. And when he does? She falls asleep” (qtd. In Stewart 154).

Even though, Julia is a practical person, who “had a practical cunning which Winston lacked” (Orwell 88), she was “adept at speaking without moving her lips.” (89), and she “was 'not clever', but was fond of using her hands and felt at home with machinery” (90), she was also a girl with a leader-spirit with an “excellent character” and “an infallible mark of good reputation” (90). Her aversion towards the Party was often manifested, “she had no interest in Party doctrine” (91) and “she never used Newspeak words except the ones that had passed into everyday use.” (91) She thinks that revolting against the Party is stupid for the real revolt is to be able “to break the rules and stay alive all the same” (Orwell 91). Julia forges a forbidden relationship with Winston and becomes, in the words of Erika Gottlieb, the “primarily phenomenon of [his] mind” only when he “dreams of meeting her in the Golden Country” while this “Eternal Feminine of the Romantic cosmos” is questioned to be “a counterpoint to the protagonist’s dehumanized world of dystopia” (48). All in all, Julia is a symbol of instigation that ignites agitation and riot in Winston’s mind.

Women in *The Tale of the Last Arab* are given more space and dominance to affect the climax and the denouement of events. However, the unexistence of Arab active women remains questioned. Laredj presented, in fact, three Western intellectual female characters: the Swedish Eva, the Finnish Dreams, and the German Merylin who belong to LIDERAFC.

However, the major omnipresent female character in the story is the “Swedish snake” as described by Little Broz, Eva Christofer ”a beautiful woman with a strange charm and a special attraction“(Laredj 29) who makes significant efforts to protect Adam and guarantee his full rights as a Guest. She is a member in LIDERAFC (the league of rights of races exposed to extinction<sup>1</sup>). “like an Italian engraved status from the Baroque era.” (39) Eva is

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portrayed as a beautiful smart lady of a unique charm. She has a husband Larsen in Stockholm who works in the Swedish Royal Palace as a financial expert that she is willing to divorce, and two sons Katty and Anderson.

In the narrative, Eva is the safeguard of Adam, privileged by her Western identity which allows her to be more independent intellectually and professionally, and more knowledgeable than any other individual in Amereupa. Like Julia, she sometimes interferes in the events to become an essential device in the story. Yet, she quickly steps back to become nothing more than a sexual agent. In a re-examination of Gottlieb's theory of the eternal feminine, Keshia Mcclantoc argues that "[t]he female character is the trigger of events in that the entirety of the plot usually develops around the actions she encourages the male character to perform. However, it is too often after she serves this purpose she is simply kept around to be a counterpoint to the male character, or completely disappears." (513) Julia in Orwell and Eva in Laredj's account share one common fact both develop an intimate relationship with the protagonist to become a supportive character who stimulate rebel.

In this vein, Waseem Elmeligi proclaims the intimate relationship between Adam and Eva relates to Adam and Eve. This reference remains confusing as Eva insisted on bringing a pet to Adam; a tortoise called Hawwa' which means Eve in Arabic. Elmeligi finds that "[t]his turns out to be appropriate since Adam and Eva are most probably going to die at the end, as events deteriorate and a nuclear disaster is expected" (145)

Even though, she is also an instigator of Adam's political and social nuances and often reminds him of his value as a great Arab scientist that the whole world seeks. Their relationship is "key to Adam's change" (Elmeligi 149). She clarifies the current situation of Arabs beyond the Citadel as she works in the Green Dam and witnesses the suffering and decadence of its people. According to her friend Marilyn "[Eva] is making great efforts to

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be close to [Arabians], especially women, children and families who were starving for days. She is doing a fabulous job, no one else can do”(361) She filled many petitions to Little Broz to change the situation of Adam and consider him as a real Guest, able to practice his daily life with dignity. Going back and forth through the story, Eva finally meets Adam after the bombing.

In Adam’s reminiscences, there are other female characters like his sister Tala who manages the bakery of their father, his grandmother who informs him that he is a descendent of grey wolves reversing the Darwinian theory that man is the offspring of apes, his daughter Yona who works in an “American channel” as “a social correspondent in the slums.” (Laredj 248). In addition to Katherina, Merilyn, Dreams, Grizelda Sabado, and Suzanne Clipper who hold no grudge toward the last Arab.

Amaya, like Winston’s wife Katharine, is absent. She is present in the novel only through some flashbacks in Adam’s inner monologue. Unlike Katharine, Adam loves Amaya and prays to meet her again and live happily as he ever wished. Amaya “with the softness of her Japanese face that never scratched by age” (43) is a Japanese woman and the wife of Adam, who saved him from the assassination of Al Korbo at the Roissy airport. She is against Adam’s nuclear project as she is the granddaughter of the only survivor from Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombing Tsutomu Yamaguchi. Amaya is first present only in the fainting memory of Adam who, in the beginning of the narrative, did not recognize his own identity. Still, the only reminiscing memories are her perfume, her smile, and the love he keeps for her.

### 2-3.5 Living along the Margins

The class-conscious society is part of the dystopian tradition which creates the disparity under which individualism is shattered. Following Plato’s *Republic*, the mass of people

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represent the most inferior group controlled by multiple devices that can be technology, religion, power worship and propaganda.

The hierarchical structure of Oceania's system ranks the Proles in the bottom echelon of society, although the group represents 85% of the masses. The latter is not restricted and surveilled like members of Outer Party. They are 'free' in a different sense of freedom. Like animals, they're allowed everything because they're not considered human beings. However, they hold the burden of existence, and struggle to secure a humble life.

The Proles in Oxord Languages disctionary is defined as a derogatory/ informal term which means a useless member of the working-class with no job. 'Prole' is shortened from 'proletariat' the lowest social class living under the hegemony of the Party which implies its power because "men in the mass were frail cowardly creatures who could not endure liberty or face the truth, and must be ruled over and systematically deceived by others who were stronger than themselves." (Orwell 184)

Even though, Winston believes they are the only people with dignity and humanity as they 'were not loyal to a party or a country or an idea, they were loyal to each other » (Nineteen Eighty-Four, 135). For Claey, "the proles are the only humans left. The rest of the society are gramophone machines." (418) Winston holds hope and beliefs in its power because it is the only group able to destroy the Party.

Laredj's ficticious society is class-based. The allusion to the West controlling the MENA region manifests the power division in Amereupa that even "[t]he choice of the word Arabia is also interesting as it invokes colonial presence in this specific part of the Arab region" (Elmiligi 146). The upper-class is represented by Little Broz and the ally of Amereupa (America and Europe), mentioning other times "the militant of the Red Sea and the Strait of Hormuz, they're the ultimate decision-makers" (19). Like any dystopian society, the dress-

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code identifies the role of each individual: white for Doctors, blue for Guests who are also civilians, khaki for Officers and Soldiers, black for Rescue Personnel, and Orange for Residents; the new term for prisoners, whereas Arabians live outside the Citadel. Their faces from afar “look burned, peeled, and exhausted, people's stums are curved forward from the intensity of fatigue, the remnants of clothes turned into a rag, revealing a large part of their bodies that in turn turned into shadows and skeletons that resist the wind with difficulty when the remnants of their torn clothes are raised high. They appear and disappear, and vice versa. When the sandstorms blow, they extinguish deep into it” (63)

Arabians represent the majority of the population in the Empty Quarter, yet, the grotesque scenarios in the novel are echoed through the wretched of the earth; Arabs who fight each other for boxes of food that fall from the citadel’s wall, like hunger games, each struggle to afford one, but not everyone is lucky enough to stay alive inside the animalism of the event. To Elmiligi, the scene resembles the “Greco-Roman arenas with slave gladiators facing off each other” (155). Their survival is determined by Little Broz as he explained to Eva:

We are trying to build something fair in this hard sand in which only hatred and animosity grow. Look at Arabs, when oil flowed at their homes and bought what they wanted from Europe, they enslaved and despised all people, what was left for them today but loss and slow death. However, we remain merciful to them because we all belong to the human element. (65)

The meal massacre on the anniversary day of Big Brother is one of the most grotesque scenes which testifies the dystopia Laredj aims to convey whereby he warns against the future of the Arab race. Unlike the Proles in Nineteen Eighty-Four whom Winston believes that change is determined by their awakening, Laredj does not expect a revolution from the Arabians whose last remaining hope, in the novel, is in the nuclear scientist Adam.

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### 2-4 Conclusion

This chapter introduces the main themes of dystopia that will be analyzed in depth in the subsequent chapters. This part analyzes the main elements of Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and Laredj's *2084: The Tale of the Last Arab*. Charting the two novels reveals Laredj's indebtedness to Orwell at certain levels. The context of the two case studies will be further discussed in the third chapter to shape the dystopian visions of both writers.

# **Chapter 3: Postmodern and Postcolonial Aspects in Reshaping History and Identity**

## **Chapter 3: Postmodern and Postcolonial Aspects in Reshaping History and Identity**

### **3-1 Introduction**

This chapter deconstructs the reading of both novels from a postmodern/postcolonial standpoint. It attempts to unravel the complexities of the dystopian society and the layers that linger on both narratives. Orwell and Laredj attempted to defog the blurred lines between the past, present, and future. Their narratives attempt to give sense to the political reality that is fused with conspiracies and confusion. The reading of both literary texts summons a division between discourse and context revealing that the meaning of text hinges on a variety of forces that include history, language, memory, and culture. The novels are also infused with politics and ideology that influenced the historical and identity spectrum, especially in a time of war/post-war.

### **3-2 Deconstructing the Master Narrative**

The act of change with the rise of movements, philosophies, assumptions, and theories brought to the ground Modernism and Postmodernism as signs of a new age that would challenge tradition and orthodoxy. The hegemony of the ones occupying, for long, the top of the hierarchy created a singular discourse known as a master narrative. Its use serves the dominant power to shape people's understanding, and give grounds for its actions.

The idea of challenging the master narrative is essential to realize the postmodern mentality. The aim is to dispose of the hegemony perpetuated by hierarchical systems which subvert the alternative voice of truth. Jean François Lyotard criticized the universal truth in what he calls 'grand narratives', suggesting another approach to knowledge based on language to allow each group to rewrite their own narratives according to what they believe to be valid for their context. In *La condition Postmoderne* (1979), Lyotard relates knowledge to power because of its influence on people's understanding. When knowledge is controlled, so is meaning;

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### 3-2.1 *Nineteen Eighty-Four*: A Transitional Cusp of Conventional Narratives

In an effort to categorize *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) within a conventional literary movement, it is necessary to diagnose the era's literary characteristics which are, in a post-war period, rather difficult and complex. However, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, being published in the mid-twentieth century, is a transitional cusp of the conventions of the modern era.

To define postmodernism is also complex and difficult as the term is hard to fathom. This is, perhaps, "due to its birth from the ashes of wars, or it is due to the severe jolt of the raised ideologies that smothered individuality and inured humans to alienation: the loot of the Second World War." (Serir 206). Anyhow, Frederic Jameson attempted to define the concept of postmodernism as follows:

Postmodernism is explained as a periodizing concept whose function is to correlate the emergence of new formal features in culture with the emergence of a new type of social life and new economic order what is often called ... postindustrial or consumer society, the society, the society of the media, or the spectacle ... this new moment of capitalism can be dated from the post-war boom in the late of 1960s and early 1950s. (Foster 113)

*Nineteen Eighty-Four* in this regard, stands as a break from the norms and traditions for its powerful narrativity that questioned universal truth and challenged the long-prevailing social, cultural, and political spheres. Hence, if postmodernism "challenges many of the fundamental ideas and presumptions that provide the framework for how we make sense of the world. As a result of questioning the previously held truths, life becomes insecure, unorganized, and disintegrated" (Hutcheon 59), then Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is the exact anticipation and illustration of the fragmented postmodern thought and view.

Nevertheless, postmodernism in Oxford Learner's Dictionaries is "a style and movement in art, architecture, literature, etc. in the late twentieth century that reacts against modern

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styles, for example by mixing features from traditional and modern style.” Therefore, postmodernism is also a reaction that rejects old forms and their founding ground, a suspicion of reason, and a marginalization of universal truth and tradition. Dystopia feels at home.

### **3-2.1.1 The Novel in Times of War**

To renew the zest of creative writing, George Orwell was more concerned with introducing new elements and concepts that contribute to the postmodern context, significantly. Orwell, first, following Swift’s satirical spirit, aimed to ridicule the omniscient narrator, that also fatigued the ‘nouveau romancier’ Alain Robbe-Grillet (1963).

Differently and intricately, though, Orwell expressed this idea through the figure of Big Brother as the all-knowing tyrant who monitors and controls all aspects of life in Oceania. Orwell, in this context, engaged in a dystopian world studded with fragmented truth, deconstructed language, propagandist policies, and manipulated memories that reshaped history and promoted a culture of oneness.

Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four* does not only lampoon modernist thought but mainly satirizes utopian thinking and reconceptualizes the meaning of the ideal. As far as utopia/dystopia dyads are concerned, Keith Booker argues with Alexander Zinoviev that utopias are logical contradictions because the positive characteristics they entail cannot exist in reality without their negative opposites (532). In this sense, the dystopia, or the anti-utopia, as Gary Saul Morson prefers to term it, of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* communicates a warning against utopian forms. Orwell’s use of satire is a direct response to the long-lasting utopian whims that contribute largely to the gist of dystopian literature which is “in essence a parodic “anti- genre”; by its very nature dystopian literature is intended as a parody of utopian literature.” (Qtd. in Booker 117).

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Accordingly, the novel in the postwar period has returned rushly to older forms of realism, and the writer, declared Bernard Bergonzi, “has inherited a form whose principal characteristic is novelty, or stylistic dynamism, and yet nearly everything possible to be achieved has already been done” (19). In a similar vein, Malcolm Bradbury argued that the novel in the mid-twentieth century was rather “a return to an older concept of fiction, to realism, materialism, empiricism’, although he thought earlier critics had underestimated the extent to which realism had been a feature of modern British fiction all along” (qtd in MacKay 156)

In addition, technological development mainly caused a powerful turn to dystopia. Robert C. Eliott asserts that what led the possibility of utopia to improbability is the development in the twentieth century because;

to believe in utopia one must believe that through the exercise of their reason men can control and in major ways alter for the better their social environment ... to believe in utopia, one must have faith of a kind that our history has made early inaccessible. This is one major form of the crisis of faith under which Western culture reels (87)

The very nature of dystopian narratives is satire that contemporary writers often utilize to lampoon alleged ideals in their existent societies. Dystopia was delivered from the womb of tart Russian literature in the banned narrative of Yevgeny Zamyatin *We* (1924), and matured in Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* (1932) and George Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949). The latter represented satire through the only real class of the proletarians who are so weak that “no attempt was made to indoctrinate them with the ideology of the party” to avoid any “strong political feelings” (Orwell 49).

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### **3-2.2 An Introduction to Post-Apocalypticism in *The Tale of the Last Arab***

Writing a new genre in Arabic literature is a daunting task. Arabic speculative fiction witnesses a lack of production because writers prefer to reflect the harshness of life in Arab societies with an inclination to realism, rather. Laredj's attempt to visualize the future of his society is not a premiere. However, it is inclusive and pertinent to reality.

*The Tale of the Last Arab* can be regarded as a reflection of the post-truth era; a period of misinformation, doubt, distrust, and chaos. In effect, it envisions the outcome of the Arab Spring which added salt to the injury. The links between the past of the Arab nation and Laredj's vision can be considered causal. The rebellion against the Arab authoritarian regimes was supposed to generate perfection or a utopia, but the unexpected outcomes dragged Arabians to the abyss.

To dismantle the obsolete Arab body, Laredj communicates the truth from a postcolonial lens. Accordingly, the Arab world fell prey to Western hegemony which allegedly chases terrorist organizations to maintain stability and peace in the area, but this is an invented Western hoax to control the masses and exploit the land.

Laredj also attempts to deconstruct the master narrative by questioning causal sequences, and knock on the chain of events that caused the decline of morality, identity, and humanity in Arabia. One of the main questions that builds the whole narrative is on terrorism. He puts:

Terrorism did not come down from heaven. Who created it? Who funded it? Who trained it? Who oriented it to kill the greatest scientists and destroy the most beautiful human civilization that was built on his land. Who benefited from it in the end? Terrorism is not destiny. It is manufactured and did not arise from a vacuum. Wherever injustice occurs, terrorism has become the most shortcut. Terrorism is a real disease, but everyone practices it in his own way, sometimes it can fought. Other times it is difficult to confront because it

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possesses the power to exterminate with its planes and capabilities. This deepens extremism. Since the beginning of terrorism, how many terrorists have died and how many ordinary citizens have died? Citizens whose only wish is to live. It's the blind war.”(90)

Laredj attempts to hint at the answers to this dilemma, but, as Winston in Nineteen Eighty-Four puts “there was never any evidence”.(25) Laredj’s tale is also a dystopia because it is also about the “powerlessness, the inability to see, let alone choose, a clearer path, solve problems, or trust anyone, whether fellow sufferers or enforcers, and the inescapable consequences of the draconic dystopian world that have been set in motion, all come together to distress everyone, victim or exploiter alike.”(Elmiligi 9).

Be it as it may, Laredj is more concerned with the outcome of dystopia by asserting the past of the bad cities in Arabia and then sentencing them to loss and misery. Global terrorism and existential crises is also the work of the postmodern condition that accentuates the social and political failure, and deciphers apocalyptic themes. apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic fictions, according to Hyong –Jun Moon are “subgenres of science fiction that deal with themes like the breakdown of societies, economic collapse, environmental disasters, and the end of civilizations. Therefore, the apocalypse is often understood to be the destruction and end of human civilization (1)

Laredj’s post-apocalyptic vision that anticipates the deterioration of the Arab body and its socio-economic structure is, unlike apocalypticism that is caused, often, by natural disasters, a warning or an alert or as he puts it in the beginning: “ Just a cry before it's too late. I already know that the person who is specifically concerned with it will never hear it.” As a post-apocalyptic account, it is a narrative that occurs “in a future lacking advanced technology, with remnants of society and technology being scarce or fragmented.” (Britannica)

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### 3-3 Hybrid Identities and the Culture of Oneness

Identity and culture frame one another. Structuring a national identity is an essential process to underpin national culture. But often, the two are framed by the individual's experiences which are outlined by a certain force.

#### 3-3.1 Positioning the Subject in Postmodern Context

In his analysis of Dickens, George Orwell convincingly pointed out that “there are no rules in novel writing, and for any work of art there is only one test worth bothering about—survival.” (qtd. in Lonoff 47). Writings in the twentieth century infused the concept of survival as which is a human, political, and aesthetic issue that transgresses the limits of existence and extends beyond the physical integration in a social atmosphere.

Orwell permeates the dilemma of citizenship, nation, identity, the self, and the other in many of his writings. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* encapsulates these sets of ideas, suggesting Winston's identity, citizenship, belonging, self, and his interaction with others as the necessary material to address the problem of power relations, and the crisis of individuality in the postmodern context.

According to the postmodern tendency, “the human being is not a unity, not autonomous, but a process, perpetually in construction, perpetually contradictory, perpetually open to change (Belsey 119). In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Winston goes through three steps regarding his perception of his identity. First, he questions his individuality, then he recognizes himself but keeps concealing that fact, in the end, he is forced to lose his identity following the agenda of the Party. “If he survives”, O'Brien said, “we may be obliged to give him a new identity. His face, his movements, the shape of his hands, the colour of his hair -- even his voice would be different” because unless the individual can “escape from his identity if he can merge himself in the Party so that he is the Party, then he is all-powerful and

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immortal.”(120, 186). The Party redefines the truth of history, culture, and identity to make common cause with its interests.

Notwithstanding the above, Orwell had always warned against the concept of collective identity, noting that man only acts morally as an individual, while the collectivist mentality perverts the possibility of a more ethical world. (cited in Claeys, 444) Portis, similarly, argues that “an individual who devotes himself to the realization of his ideals not only has a greater sense of personal identity and a higher degree of self-esteem than one whose direct goal is to establish an identity, he actually is a more substantial 'person' because he 'is more than his mere appearances.”(116)

Yet the case in a dystopia is different. The held premise is that the state of consciousness is considered a threat to the established regime. In other words, if Winston is able to feel and recognize his individuality, then he will disclose the hoax behind Big Brother, and indeed he does “ 'I think I exist,' he said wearily. 'I am conscious of my own identity. I was born and I shall die. I have arms and legs. I occupy a particular point in space. No other solid object can occupy the same point simultaneously. In that sense, does Big Brother exist?' (Orwell 182). For postmodern theorists, the loss of individual identity is the result of the bombardment of fragmented signs and images which erode all sense of continuity between past, present and future, all teleological belief that life is a meaningful project.” (Featherstone 44) From the totalitarian point of view, this meaningful project is a utopian one, a more aesthetic one that renders the individual “like the schizophrenic she/he is unable to chain together the signifiers and instead must focus on particular disconnected experiences or images which provide a sense of intense immersion and immediacy to the exclusion of all wider teleological concerns.” (ibid).

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This postmodern culture is the reservoir from which identity floods. Baudrillard's concept of Simulation and Hyperreality more aptly illustrates the ideology of the Ingsoc. According to him, modernity, media, and technology obfuscates reality. Contemporary societies (Oceania as a sample) "live in a depthless culture of floating signs and images in which 'TV is the world', and all we can do is watch the endless flow of images with an aestheticized fascination and without possible recourse to moral judgments" (Featherstone 44)

The issue of identity is again central in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, not only that of the group which is promoted by the ideology of Big Brother but also that of the self which revives Descartes's cogito, ergo sum. According to the Ingsoc mindset, there is "no obligation other than coming together and being a member of the collective body" (Maffeoli 16). And thus, Featherstone adds, "the movement from considerations of personality, character, individuation and identity towards collective identification leaves behind notions of duty, obligation, asceticism, unity and teleology which are central to the theories of the aesthetic life-order as formulated by Foucault, Weber and Simmel."(47)

As the narrative develops, both Winston and Adam confront the crisis of identity. Both seek recognition as free individuals as both could not fathom the complexities of the social and political order imposed on them. Gregory Claeys asserts that "group identity remains at the core of the dystopian problematic"(489) or "the quintessential dystopian theme."(496). However, according to Claeys, be it in dystopian worlds like Oceania or post-apocalyptic one like Amereupa, the danger lies not in collectivism overpowering individuals, but in the plutocratic system that leverages wealth to influence political and ideological outcomes. In this vein, Claeys put:

The fragmentation of civil society, of voluntary associative groups, was a central element in totalitarianism. Here, the absolute alienation of individuals, to the point of asociality,

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was a key result. This theme is resurgent in the post-apocalyptic scenarios which increasingly populate our own imagination. Yet we no longer fear (it seems) collectivism overwhelming of the individual. What we fear are plutocratic post-statist orders which abandon most of us to crime, disease, hunger, and global warming.(496)

The lack of individuality in Oceania makes all working class identical which declares the upside of identity crisis. This can be only possible if the populace is substantially eager to pursue happiness. The Party makes sure to fulfill the need of everyday life; “the need to eat and drink, to get shelter and clothing, to avoid swallowing poison or stepping out of top-storey windows, and the like. Between life and death, and between physical pleasure and physical pain, there is still a distinction, but that is all.” (Orwell 138). Yet, people are isolated from the rest of the world, from history, from external influences that introduce the possibility for doubt. In this vein, Orwell puts:

Cut off from contact with the outer world, and with the past, the citizen of Oceania is like a man in interstellar space, who has no way of knowing which direction is up and which is down. The rulers of such a state are absolute, as the Pharaohs or the Caesars could not be. They are obliged to prevent their followers from starving to death in numbers large enough to be inconvenient, and they are obliged to remain at the same low level of military technique as their rivals; but once that minimum is achieved, they can twist reality into whatever shape they choose. (139)

And thus, what demolishes identity in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is hedonistic ideology, surveillance, isolation, and the spectrum of the Ministry of Truth that embraces the Records Department that not merely reconstructs the past, but also delicately chooses the delivered discourse of “newspapers, films, textbooks, telescreen programmes, plays, novels -- with every conceivable kind of information, instruction, or entertainment, from a statue to a

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slogan, from a lyric poem to a biological treatise, and from a child's spelling-book to a Newspeak dictionary” (29). Whereas the proles are trapped in the pursuit of pleasure that distracts them to avoid discrepancy in their life.

### **3-3.2 Identity Perception for a Postcolonial Writer**

The discussion of identity and the struggle to recover or to ‘decolonize the mind’ to use Wa Thiongo’s words is the focal point of almost all postcolonial writers. The resurrection of the other (with a small initial) is trapped in ambivalence and hybridity that Bhabha refers to as a ‘doubling’ that means

dissembling image of being in at least two places at once which makes it impossible for the devalued, insatiable evolve to accept the colonizer’s invitation to identity: “You’re a doctor, a writer, a student, you’re different, you’re one of us”. The ambivalent use of “different” that the Unconscious speaks of the form of Otherness. It is not the Colonialist Self or the Colonised Other, but the disturbing distance in between that constitutes the figure of colonial otherness – the White man’s artifice inscribed on the Black man’s body. It is in relation to this impossible object that emerges the liminal problem of colonial identity and its vicissitudes.(Bhabha 117; Loomba 148).

As long as the colonial power failed to thoroughly replace the indiginous identity with its own, deemed superior, one, it is still, at the grip of the writer, to decide whether to reject or tolerate. Or in other terms, to follow Fanon’s perspective on hybridity as a “violated authenticity”, or Bhabha’s ambivalence that also marks the failure of colonialism to replicate itself (Sahed 56).

#### **3-3.2.1 The Self/ Other Spectrum**

In the study of postcolonial theory, the most proactive term to manifest differences is “Otherness” or the “Other”. Bohata in *Post-Colonialism* argues that this premise stems from the Lacanian theory of psychoanalysis. Accordingly, there is a difference between the “Other” and the “other”. The former refers to subjectivity which shapes the individual

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identity i.e. language, societal norms, and unconsciousness, whereas the latter denotes the interpersonal dynamics of that individual. Bachir Sahed asserts that “in postcolonial terms, the Other can be described as the imperial centre of the Empire itself” because it “provides the terms in which the colonized subject gains a sense of his or her identity as somehow ‘other’, [and] it becomes [...] the ideological framework in which the colonized may come to understand the world” (qtd in Sahed 31). In this context, Adam is the ‘other’ person, the ‘other’ Arab, or the ‘other creature shaped by the symbolic order of the “Other” center.

It may well appear that Laredj’s account is much concerned with the issue of identity which accentuates the dystopian world. More than an Arab, Adam is the Last Arab. Yet, his identity is hybrid, fragmented, and permeated. Adam learned that “the scientist has no identity and no homeland. He belongs to all humanity.”(Laredj 33) This makes him feel entrapped again in a state of loss and emptiness because he belongs to “the remnants of human beings without history or identity.” (91) and often questions his belonging “To whom does one without identity belong? Today, I have no identity, and I may not exist, except that I know that I am from Arabia, without a specific land, waiting to be placed like the American Indians in a public camp”.(112). The disjointed sense of self for Adam primarily arises from social, cultural, and political factors.

Adam is not a citizen of Amereupa. He is neither a tourist nor a visitor, not even a resident (a substitution term for prisoner, rather). Adam is a Guest. A term introduced by Little Broz to external persons. This status gives him little but more freedom than ever which allows him some amenities in Amereupa. The rest of the Arabs are the wretched on earth. Their decline had been declared years ago. The possibility for their survival or revival is quasi-unattainable for the main slogan in Amereupa reads: A good Arab is a Dead Arab. The existence of an Arab identity is, thus, contingent on its non-existence.

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As a postcolonial writer, identity crisis can be approached from a postcolonial lens. Adam's hybrid identity invites ... to the ground. .... Feels at home. He is Algerian, Arab with Andalusian ancestors, American education, and an intercultural marriage in which his partner is Japanese. He has worked in international and well-renowned laboratories and speaks Arabic (mother tongue), French (colonial legacy), English (Educated in the USA), and Eurolingua which he learned quickly thanks to his multilingualism. And thus, Adam does not fit into one cultural or social category, and here lies his identity crisis. In a postmodern context, it might be regarded as a challenge to the monolingual discourse, but from the postcolonial layers of the novel, Adam's identity can be approached from the concept of Hybridity, Subalternity, and Otherness.

As has been already pointed out, the identity of Adam is shaped by his different cultural interactions throughout his life. He tries to come to terms with his past. The colonial trauma is inherited in Adam's family. Accordingly, Adam's great-grandfather « belonged to an Andalusian Christian-Muslim family, erased throughout history» (99). The history Adam is referring here to is the beginning of the European colonial expansion in the fifteenth century; mainly when the Spanish monarchy expelled the last Arabs of Andalusia from the kingdom of Granada. In this vein, Adam states "my family was forced by the Catholic kings of Spain to anoint. They were ostensibly anointed, but they remained religious, hiding to death." (99)

In search of his voice, Adam frequently puts forward some flashbacks that readers should carefully collect alongside the narrative development that exposes the colonial past and post-apocalyptic future. In her discussion on Comparative Identities in Post-colonial World, Bassnett argues that some postcolonial works attempt to challenge the cultural hegemony but at the same time, it is ready to tolerate the idea of difference as plurality rather. As Bassnett puts it: "Post-colonialism is quite distinct from anti-colonialism. Reactions against colonialism have manifested themselves in a variety of ways, but always posited on the

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premise of a binary opposition. Where post-colonialism differs, is that although challenging the hegemony of colonizing cultures, it recognizes the plurality of contacts between colonizing and colonized.” (78)

#### **3-3.2.2 Hybridity, Ambivalence, and Otherness**

In Laredj’s tale, there is a difference between Arabia and the ‘Other’ world which is, by all means, Europe (Laredj 49). “The fear from the other” asserts Adam, inaugurates wars and cleanses a whole race. But that ‘other’, continues Adam, is defeated, and has the right to fear, equally. (Laredj 91). The imperialist power of Amereupa is unduly legitimizing itself on the people of Arabia. It destroyed their social, economic, political, cultural, and historical realities. Arabians, thus, are trapped in a vacuum that may only be filled in with a sense of Western morality. The strategy of creating differences is transported into universal and metaphysical realms. And “due to these vast differences, colonial existence would last for long... to dehistoricize and desocialize the colonial world, as well as to present it as a metaphysical “fact of life”, that the colonizer has no hand in, and that he has to alleviate it through the process of civilization” (Sahed 32)

To keep with the same postcolonial theory, it is often familiar in colonial discourse to refer to the oppressed subject as a group rather than a self, or individual. In Laredj’s account, Arabians are often referred to by the person plural pronoun ‘they’. Passages like «Who are they [Arabians ]? » (92) « Where did they come from? »(26), «The Arabs who lived in great prosperity are now in the storms of loss and the sands of fire and death» (57), «When the Arabs revolted like the rest of the peoples, they killed themselves first, and planted knives in the living flesh of their bodies, then they ate the heads of their countries and then they created a vacuum that they thought was democracy, and the day they woke up they found themselves, groups killed by thirst, deserts, and snakes, like a civilization that was built on sand, and in one second everything collapsed»(112). According to Loomba, the Western

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power avoids being on the same wavelength with the oppressed because it would transgress the boundary between 'self' and 'other'(qtd in Sahed 33).

The identity crisis remains a burden in the futuristic vision of Laredj in 2084. Adam has failed to sustain a fixed identity. His hybridity and ambivalence are manifested throughout the Pocket Bomb. "Although his PBPu1 and PBPP2 project was triggering him as a scientific bet, it frightens him, too" (94) The nonlinearity of the narrative takes readers back to the early years of his prosperity when Adam was faithful in the virtue of his invention that would preserve peace and humanity in the world. However, as the situation escalates in the citadel, he starts to have conflicting feelings and ambivalent ideas.

The alienation of Adam from his own identity shaped his hybrid status. Estrangement starts from his dislocation, loss of self-awareness, disconnection from language, desires, and the disorientation of his self that positions him in a dissociative state of the Last Arab, or as his last name denotes Gharib (alien, outsider, stranger, unknown...etc.) Abdul JanMohamed argues that "ambivalence itself implies a Manichean dichotomy between the colonizer 55 and the colonized, and this is what really structures colonial encounters and relations" (qtd in Sahed 54)

Despite Adam's hybridity and ambivalence, he is considered different than other Arabians. In a conversation with Little Broz, he declares "We doubted you at first, but we realized your feelings and your wound. After all, you are a scientist. The scientist has no identity and no homeland. He belongs to all mankind" (33). This statement articulates the position of Adam from the 'Other' gaze. His importance hinges on his knowledge and invention, and again, another exploitation by the colonizer's subject. In this vein, Bhabha puts:

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doubling, dissembling image of being in at least two places at once which makes it impossible for the devalued, insatiable evolve to accept the colonizer's invitation to identity: "You're a doctor, a writer, a student, you're different, you're one of us". The ambivalent use of "different" that the Unconscious speaks of the form of Otherness. It is not the Colonialist Self or the Colonised Other, but the disturbing distance in between that constitutes the figure of colonial otherness – the White man's artifice inscribed on the Black man's body. It is in relation to this impossible object that emerges the liminal problem of colonial identity and its vicissitudes (Bhabha 117; Loomba 148).

Nevertheless, Adam's hybrid identity has never been considered by Little Broz. For him, Adam is an Arab, and like the rest of Arabians, he allows himself to exert superiority over him. He remains the 'other' even if Adam emphasizes his American belonging. In a conversation between the two, Little Broz mockingly suggests that Eva might help Adam for a political asylum which is better than dying in the Arabian wasteland. However, Adam tried to keep calm and replied

"I am an American, and I don't need political asylum or marriage to a foreigner. Look at the castle, how many of its people and stones are in it, and how many religions crossed it? Doesn't that shake you? Yes, I grew up in Arabia. My father, grandparents, and sister Tala from there, but I am something more. Much more."(122)

As the passage demonstrates, Adam rejects his identification as an Arab. He is more than that because it is not enough to face that world with an Arab identity. As if he emphasizes the inferiority of his race. The cross-cultural encounters of the American mindset have reshaped Adam's personality, and who, as a postcolonial character witnesses a conflicting hybrid identity.

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### 3-4 History and Memory

Fiction is history, human history, or it is nothing. But it is also more than that; it stands on firmer ground, being based on the reality of forms and the observation of social phenomena, whereas history is based on documents, and the reading of print and handwriting – on second-hand impression. Thus fiction is nearer truth. But let that pass. A historian may be an artist too, and a novelist is a historian, the preserver, the keeper, the expounder, of human experience (Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* 6).

Jean Starobinski argues that nostalgia is “the *work* of memory” (89-90), and Jonathan Steinwand asserts that imagination can be an impulse to nostalgia, as he states “the imagination is encouraged to gloss over forgetfulness in order to fashion a more aesthetically complete and satisfying recollection of what is longed for.”(9). To Franco Ferrarotti, “it involves the group, the collective unconscious, a stream of consciousness which links everything and travels in the interior of everyone at variable speeds and with its own images without, thus, exclusively belonging to anyone” (30). This statement indicates the link between the group and its community, what is common as “collective memory” which is “two things, corporeity and consciousness” carries Ferrarotti (32).

Recalling the past and refreshing memory are forces to change the narrative that is often the duty of dystopian protagonists like “Savage’s “different” knowledge in *Brave New World*, the alternative histories in the banned books in *Fahrenheit 451*, Offred’s recollections of her old life in *The Handmaid’s Tale*, Jim’s retrieval of Orange County history in *Gold Coast*, and Lauren's and Malkah's dialectical combination of traditional memories and radical visions in *Parable of the Sower* and *He, She, and It*, all demonstrate the place and power of memory in dystopian narrative and counter-narrative”(Moylan, 49-50).

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### 3-4.1 Fragmentary memory

Memory has become more fragmentary and ambiguous in modern times. Orwell invites citizens in Oceania, and readers likewise, to a historical revisionism that foregrounds a new setting and articulates new sociopolitical viewpoint of the past and the present. Jane Donawerth asserts that “Fredric Jameson argues that science fiction (and, by extension, dystopia) lets us apprehend the present as history”(29) Orwell described the corruption of truths that he per se had witnessed in the work of journalism in which he expressed his aversion towards propaganda that circled rapidly in a society bent on totalitarianism.

This is represented in the poor memory of the rebellious characters in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* who failed to provoke a certain response on the most mundane things like the date or their birth years. In a similar vein, the knowledge of the present is rooted in a limited version of the past but the latter is alterable in structure and content which generates merely abstract ideas dissipated whenever the process of memory attempts to reconcile or articulates that history.

Adam has a fragmentary memory as he barely remembers how life was and how it came to such terms. “The memory of humanity, Adam mumbled again, only a handful of ashes scattered by the first wind.” (Laredj 283). According to Laredj, the memory of Arabs and their history was dispersed by the Western winds; basically by the authoritarian system established by little Broz who controls even the existing ideas in the mind beneath consciousness like “the new generation to surveil dreams and perhaps divert them off their paths, to the point that the idea of inventing the police of dreams is welcomed, because there are some minds that are impossible to observe” as far as “the most dangerous dreams are those we have not allowed” (239). The technological advancement in Amereupa facilitates the process of control. Besides the varied tools of supervision, “Adam knows very well that

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he is being surveilled and that he is not the master of himself since they inserted the chip under his skin, and they amplified it with what they wanted” (244). Laredj reiterates Orwell’s concept of thoughtcrime which signifies disloyalty to the established regime.

Adam is a person who, unlike other Arabs, is used to freedom. The first chapter of the book shows that he could not at any ways adapt to the fact that he is locked in a white room while his memory records nothing from the past events; how did he get there? What is he doing? Where is he? Who are the people around him? What time of day is it? And many other worrying questions. This, however, caused him panic attacks that Little Broz and his staff effectively managed by obliterating his memory. In a dialogue with the medical staff, Little Broz admits “If I had to, I would have resorted to radical solutions, but it goes beyond me. For the first time, I feel paralyzed by someone who is supposed to be an enemy, who must be resisted by all means. I intended to rid him of a naughty memory, to become in tune with a rapidly changing present.” (6) To align with his political agenda, Little Broz obliterates Adam’s past.

The cognitive process of recalling things menaces the stability of the authoritarian system because it facilitates the retrieval of information, and therefore, the monopoly of the system turns out to be a mere hoax. When former experiences and eventual dimensions are restored, different narratives and discourses are constructed and thus identity revives from the ashes of memory. Nicola King argues that memory contributes to identity by enabling the reconstruction of the self through narratives, allowing individuals to integrate past and present experiences in a continuous process of ‘remembering’. (2000) The interplay between memory and identity also links individuals to the past and the community to its history. In this case, history is either altered or destroyed in totalitarian regimes to reshape the collective memory.

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Dystopia escapes from freedom to slither down the slopes of history. It discloses facts about man committing incurable madness; moving towards backwardness under technological dictatorial assumptions. Orwell in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* describes the major totalitarian methods resumed in the destruction of history, memory, knowledge, consciousness, individuality, and thus identity, as stated in the following passage:

But where did that knowledge exist? Only in his own consciousness, which in any case must soon be annihilated. And if all others accepted the lie which the Party imposed -if all records told the same tale -- then the lie passed into history and became truth. 'Who controls the past,' ran the Party slogan, 'controls the future: who controls the present controls the past.' And yet the past, though of its nature alterable, never had been altered. Whatever was true now was true from everlasting to everlasting. It was quite simple. All that was needed was an unending series of victories over your own memory. 'Reality control', they called it: in Newspeak, 'doublethink' (24)

The demolition of memory leaves history open to multiple interpretations. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the inferior class in Oceania that is the proles share nothing but the love of Big Brother. Bernard Crick points out the impossibility of another alternative in their life except for the commands of the totalitarian state. Orwell explained that "history had already been rewritten, but fragments of the literature of the past survived here and there, imperfectly censored" (216). Therefore, the idea of sharing one memory is banned because the power to recall puts the regime in a perilous state. Crick records Orwell's notes that outlined *Nineteen Eighty-Four* which accentuate the "impossibility of detecting similar memories in anyone else" (585)

According to Claeys, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is preoccupied with wavering memories as "the Party constantly rewrites the past so that no points of comparison betray whether life

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had ever been better or worse (413). The accuracy of a collective memory means a sound state of mind that is able to think consciously enough to question the past that contradicts the current. This, however, allows to become self-aware as Winston's inner discourse demonstrates: " 'I think I exist,' he said wearily. 'I am conscious of my own identity. I was born and I shall die. I have arms and legs. I occupy a particular point in space. No other solid object can occupy the same point simultaneously. In that sense, does Big Brother exist?'"(Orwell 182).

The reason why the Party insists on controlling memory is to impede questioning what is allegedly sacred or purely factual as Big Brother. The destruction of the past also contributes to the demolition of identity. Claeys finds that "individual identity is tentative, fragile, and contingent on memory. This is why the Party expends so much effort reinventing it. The Party has learned from past regimes. Even the Russian purges, we learn, left 'rebellion locked up' in the victim's skull as he walked down the passage waiting for the bullet. The Thought Police go further. Now 'Everyone is washed clean.' Complete, sincere inner penitence is required."(419-20). Orwell mostly concerned himself with the fragility of memory that has further political and social dimensions.

#### **3-4.2 Diary and Records**

In the world of dystopia, protagonists often challenge the authorities by recording their daily lives or keeping a diary that registers events and experiences. This is, however, not only an act of resistance against the oppressive regimes that often restrain the circulation of knowledge but also acts against the government's erasure of history, and thereby, they preserve their narratives and identities. In the beginning of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Winston's attempt to write a diary raised a sense of helplessness as "he did not know with any certainty that this was 1984. It must be round about that date, since he was fairly sure that his age was

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thirty-nine, and he believed that he had been born in 1944 or 1945; but it was never possible nowadays to pin down any date within a year or two.”(5).

With a complete obliteration of the present and the past, is Winston able to write a diary for a future reader? Orwell also questions “How could you communicate with the future?” and directly answered that “it was of its nature impossible” because “either the future would resemble the present, in which case it would not listen to him: or it would be different from it, and his predicament would be meaningless.” (5). Be it as it may, Winston’s attempt to record his daily life is according to Ian Watt “a literary *acte gratuit* of a heroic kind, since endangering his life merely to give an objective testimony to his view of the truth about himself and his time surely bespeaks Winston’s deep need for self-expression”(220). To chronicle the time in his life is also an act of autonomy that strengthens his individuality and provides him with a sense of connection between the past and the regime’s manipulated present.

In a similar vein, recording a diary was the right that Eva struggled to provide to Adam the right to write was given to me by your device, which gave me another life as I no longer have to write and use my fingers. My words are enough to write everything I say to it. (112) A small device in which he articulates his suffering and throttled life. However, it can be also a means to highlight the absurdity of the situation. According to Tom Boland, the act of documenting experiences can also highlight the absurdity of their situations, prompting critical reflection on societal norms and values. (2023). Adam lives an absurd life. A life of absence as he describes “Earthquakes and their tremors fill my brain. What did I eat? Which poison did they put in my memory? I contemplate the dry hills where this fear is erect, I don't see anything. I only see an atrocious vacuum, a black hole in which all life is absent.” (19). Yet, writing is the only way through which he is unleashed as he put “in this yellow void we do nothing to continue living except writing” (17). The recording device has become his

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living memory that he is willing to give to his wife and daughter when he goes back home. Recording therefore is not a mere act of resistance or autonomy, but also a way that raises hope and urges survival. In this vein, Laredj put

His occasional absence in the depth of writing, or the recording of his passion, gave him some comfort and a desire to continue, especially when Little Pitch closed everything in his face. His small device attached to his chest became amiable and swallowed paper. It became recorded in small and large. His second great social right after the tortoise Eve, which he obtained after much rigor and protests from Eva, who said to Adam while holding the tape recorder in his hands: She is your lover from now, put her in your eyes before your Heat.

(31)

The act of recording is omnipresent in the dystopian genre. Whether by protagonists from early classics such as Zamyatin's D-503, Bradbury's Guy Montag, Orwell's Winston, or contemporary ones like Atwood's Offred, Collins's Katniss, or Laredj's Adam all attempt to reclaim identity and agency and offer a direct commentary on dystopias with a first-person narration.

#### **3-5 The Potential of Knowledge/ Power in Generating History**

The topic of history is of considerable interest in itself. Orwell and Laredj attempted to patently blend fiction with history referring to the period of great wars (to Orwell), or Arab Spring and the rise of extremist terrorist groups (as for Laredj). In spite of the great gap of time between the two novels and their historical processes, there is a striking similarity in the use of history as a device that provides material to the analytic, as well as aesthetic treatment of their times to prefigure the ills of modern and contemporary societies under totalitarianism.

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Michel Foucault put emphasis on the capacity of knowledge/power nexus to extend to the realm of history that is, according to Foucault, a significant domain exploited by those in power (41). The knowledge of history depends on the freshness of memory which is a critical issue in Orwell and Laredj's novels. Winton and Adam failed to recover history but at least stimulated an investigation of its validity.

Both protagonists' memory is obliterated because according to the utopian mindset, "utopia is a way to free humanity from the constraints of time" at the same time, it is also "a product of history and of the periods in which it has been created." Therefore, utopia can be regarded as "an alternative to the problems of a specific time and space. And yet, by its very nature, it is "forward-looking", thus contributing to the notion that it may sound paradoxical to speak of history and Utopia." (Moylan and Baccolini 114).

In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the movement of history can be comprehended as "the new doctrines arose partly because of the accumulation of historical knowledge, and the growth of the historical sense, which had hardly existed before the nineteenth century."(Orwell 142). But this knowledge has also permitted the historical vessel to be alterable.

Knowledge is the work of memory, the reason why less remembrance regenerates a different kind of knowledge. Winston Smith has often some flashbacks, some vivid events stuck somewhere in his memory. For instance, he remembers that aeroplanes existed long before the Party. Yet, the latter's history books distort this fact, claiming rather that "the Party had invented aeroplanes" but in Oceania, puts Orwell, "you could prove nothing" because "there was never any evidence."(25)Therefore, totalitarian regimes imposed their culture, knowledge, and history as the purest and fundamental version.

Laredj established a similar system of Amereupa that remains indebted to Orwell's structure of his dystopia. The novel starts with a small description of the citadel which quite

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resembles in its aura Oceania. Telescreens with the face of Big Brother to celebrate his centenary birthday of him. The three slogans: WAR IS PEACE, FREEDOM IS SLAVERY, IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH, were slightly changed with respect to their essence:

Lots of war kills the war.

Freedom against savagery.

Whoever is not with us, is against us.

On the same mechanism, Laredj crafted the Arab apocalypse, although the narrative focuses on the post-apocalyptic future of Arabia, the configuration of Amereupa follows the path of its ancestor dystopian worlds. “We are all yours and yours. 100 years since the birth of Big Brother, the first grandfather who taught everyone what they didn't know. Either to be or to be. No other choice...”(Laredj 19). It is necessary to point out that the manipulation of knowledge generates power. The way to tame the savage Arabs is to destroy their civilization, identity, and history. According to Elmiligi, knowledge is a means of power and control (9), and “without knowledge, meaning is impossible”(qtd. in Elmiligi 9).

Life under the reign of Little Broz is based on nihilism as he rejects all forms of knowledge or meaning and even morality. Adam ‘cannot live in meaninglessness. Nihilism killed him’ (49) this happens, he thought, when “logic evaporates, madness replaces, and then nihilism. The man, whose state has vanished, runs towards the sect. When the latter disintegrates, he turns towards the tribe. If it collapses, he finds serenity in the large family, which, when absent, returns to himself, either entering isolation or becoming a prisoner of misery, selfishness and animalism. Man is a being who ceaselessly searches for safety.” (ibid). Therefore, Amereupa is another model to gauge a life quality under the new totalitarian system of belief for the sake of idealism which “parallels nihilism.” Yet, “idealism [also] needs to be armed with some reality.”(Laredj 62)

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Concepts as power, knowledge, history, and survival are critical, contentious, and often affect the social and political structure. Be them as vast to define as they may, they intertwine to reproduce one another epistemologically or politically. Dystopia, in this vein, is a mediator of the dark realm which shapes the dynamics of power and knowledge to explore other versions of history and other possibilities of survival. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* suggests a history shaped by Foucauldian power/knowledge duo “one political and one epistemological or perhaps pedagogical having to do with teaching and education” (Fruhling). Orwell’s historical forces are easily identified in his prose fiction as Blair or Orwell had never felt intimidated to declare his aversion towards tyranny and war at any rate; warning of the potential of history to repeat itself.

To understand the dynamics of power, it is crucial to question the yearning for submission regardless cultural or social factors. The power drives upon which such authoritarian societies are based include the control of knowledge that overtly refute the motto of enlightenment “Sapere aude - dare to know” and move rather straightforward to a Kantian philosophy that forbids the obedience of oneself which ultimately results the cancelation of consciousness and denial of autonomy. The motto turns, thus, into a Calvinistic theology that places self-reliance with self-humiliation and “only he who despises this world can devote himself to the preparation for the future world” (Fromm 103). This leads to: “ita unicus est salutis portis nihil nec sapere, nec velle per se ipsum” to mean “to place no independence on our knowledge or will”

#### **3-5.1 Historical Verification in *Nineteen Eighty-Four***

This idea has become an Orwellian tradition abundantly generated in anti-utopian societies led by extreme tyranny which “insists that wisdom may be gained by suffering, that happiness alone is not sufficient to define the good life, that pleasure, indeed, ‘needs

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difficulty, austerity, contrariety, comparison 'to validate its very nature" (Claeys 366), and that survival is consciousness which contradicts the norms of perfection.

As Orwell established his disdain for the dramatic scenes of tyranny and despotism in the twentieth century, the ruling power of Nazism, Communism, and even Capitalism were regarded as the founding mechanisms of tyranny whose politics revolutionized and ruled a bulk of the world. Consequently, this led to new colossal doctrines that promoted the totalitarian plan which assessed new sorts of communities conducting to the abyss.

Power is knowledge, and vice versa, asserts Foucault who insists that both concepts should be defined cooperatively. This idea is overtly expressed in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in the Party's slogan "Ignorance is Strength".

"The more the middle class succeeded in breaking down the power of the former political or religious rulers, the more men succeeded in mastering nature, and the more millions of individuals became economically independent, the more did one come to believe in a rational world and in man as an essentially rational being" (Fascism, Power, and Individual Rights, Erich Fromm)

In the postmodern context, philosophers like Lyotards started questioning the established narratives, especially the ones formed by the Christian church, interrupting, eventually, religious, political, and social discourses. Among the most criticized topics that deconstructed the master narratives is history.

The structure of society or the mechanism that shapes the social character is straightforwardly tied with the system of knowledge that qualifies individuals to a certain rank in their societies. In modern thought, knowledge is defined through educational processes, techniques, and methods "by which the individual is molded into the required shape" (Fromm 314). And so, Fromm adds "the knowledge and understanding of educational methods is an important part of the total analysis of a functioning society" (314) Orwell put

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the concept of power/knowledge in perspective to create the authoritarian apparatus. The hegemony over thought besieges freedom by means of language and culture. In Oceania, Syme the language engineer proudly asserts:

Don't you see that the whole aim of Newspeak is to narrow the range of thought? In the end we shall make thoughtcrime literally impossible, because there will be no words to express it. Every concept that can ever be needed, will be expressed by exactly one word, with its meaning rigidly defined and all its subsidiary meanings rubbed out and forgotten... the Revolution will be complete when the language is perfect. (48-9)

The arrest of Winston in the end of the novel is due to thoughtcrime which started after he attempted to write a diary in Old Speak. Laredj, however, places Adam as an Arab physicist whose knowledge articulates the whole future of the supposed "utopian" world. The scientific work of Adam to create the bomb privileges him from the rest of Arabians, but it does not cancel the fact that he must succumb to the rules of the citadel. Knowledge is power in Amereupa because and thanks to Adam's invention, the regime of Little Broz will strengthen its grip and hegemony in the Arabian region.

Knowledge is controlled indeed in Laredj's world, however, in a way reminiscent of Zamyatin's D-503 than Orwell's Winston. Adam Gharib like D-503 has the required knowledge that offers power to the authoritarian system of Little Broz and his allies. He is thus kidnapped for the sake of protecting him from terrorist organizations as he asserts "I am neither a criminal nor a murderer, but a victim of all sides, I've found myself on the verge of Arabia that has completely perished" (Laredj 102). Adam's freedom becomes the cost of the pocket bomb. Therefore, the former is restricted to ensure the realization of the latter which, on the other hand, allows the Western clan to strengthen its grip in the region.

Here we come to confirm the knowledge/power nexus. Power dynamics shape the spheres of thought and societal convictions that integrate individuals in all aspects of the community upon which they remain dependent. In dystopias, knowledge is severely constrained because

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of its ability to reformulate the social formations and the capacity it put forward to allow individuals or groups to act upon their choices, as far as “the ideal citizen of dystopia is fully integrated with the social formation and has no self to express. The regimes of power in these classic dystopias understand free agency as based on individuality, and they use every means available to destroy any kind of identity that is separable from and potentially at odds with the collective” (Moynan and Baccolini 92). The dystopian discourse thus confirms that power produces knowledge, or at least the apparatuses of knowledge, and knowledge becomes power; the two are bound (Clark 104).

To Orwell, survival is consciousness, awareness, and effective contribution to the social structure. Unlike the numb minds in Oceania, Winston attempts to gush out his individuality in a totalitarian milieu, but the parody in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* challenged even the conventions of such genre. In this vein, Lahoff puts “*Nineteen Eighty-Four* concludes by satirizing the conventions of the comic ending: love, reunion, happiness. Winston is no longer “a flaw in the pattern.” Big Brother has won out, and Winston loves him. There is a terrible rightness about the conversion scene, a rightness about the whole last chapter” (46) Orwell breaks out of the conventional narrative to reformulate the novel structure while satirizing the ending of dystopia by offering alternative meanings which manipulate the whole understanding of the genre. The survival of the last man in Europe is also doomed to failure.

George Orwell did not directly document history but drew clear parallels to different historical events reminiscent of Stalin and Hitler’s regimes, the World Wars, the Cold War, the spread of ideologies that echo Marx’s Communism, Spencer’s Social Darwinism, Capitalism, Socialism.. etc. Claeys asserts that “we clearly cannot understand dystopia (or indeed utopia) without confronting this history” (113). Indeed, we cannot understand

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Orwell's pessimism and agitations without a deep knowledge of the past events that shaped his dystopia.

The novel in the post-war period substantially articulated anxieties about history. Marina MacKay in dealing with Ian Watt's *The Novel and the Wartime Critic* (2018) claims that "[t]he mid-century re-energizing of realism obviously touches on matters of primarily literary-historical interest such as the relationship between mid-century writing and the end of modernism, but it had considerable moral and political as well as literary urgency in its own time" (157). History, thereafter, has been significantly adumbrated in the novel of that time, abundantly diffused in Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

Dystopia, nevertheless, is an escape to, and not from, history. George Orwell suggested a new historical process susceptible to alteration, revision, and sometimes erasure. "The new doctrines arose partly because of the accumulation of historical knowledge, and the growth of the historical sense, which had hardly existed before the nineteenth century. The cyclical movement of history was now intelligible, or appeared to be so; and if it was intelligible, then it was alterable" (Orwell 142). This statement goes along, again, with Moylan and Baccolini's idea that dystopia is "located in a negatively deformed future of our own world" but also, paradoxically even, "depends on and denies history" to show "how our present may negatively evolve, while by showing a regression of our present it also suggests that history may not be progressive." (115) Orwell in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* invites the reader to foresee the possible outcomes of the present events that form future societies.

#### **3-5.2 Historical Dimensions in *The Tale of the Last Arab***

"The historiography of the novel is bound to the historical events of the mid-century" in other words "to show how our contemporary political and moral paradigms are bound to historical perspectives that are both slipping from living memory and yet too recent to have

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bee, examined with the sustained attention that would allow us to recognize the origins of our own ideas”(2-3) expressed Marina MacKay *Ian Watt The Novel and the Wartime* (2018). The historical dimensions in Laredj’s novel are derived from past events the writer recalls from the archives of history. Laredj documents the setting, characters, and facts from the life of Arabs, the conflict of the Arab Spring, and Terrorism and their aftermaths.

Laredj uses footnotes as a means to document history and establish a solid ground for an argumentative and historical discourse. In the following passage, Laredj reports the various Arab and Persian scientists and physicists who had been assassinated. He writes:

One of those, Dr. Sari Radwan Reda, a doctor of nuclear physics, who was working on a secret project in his own country, was assassinated in Algiers ..... Some time ago, Chief Inspector Hans Blix, one of the American intelligence officers and head of the inspection teams operating under the umbrella of the United Nations, stated: Even if we destroy everything, we are facing an army of scientists except experts and engineers working in the fields of nuclear and biological engineering, chemical engineering and physics. They pose a real threat to peace. Security Council Resolution 1441 was issued on the need to interrogate all 3,500 Iraqi scholars and researchers..... Mohamed ElBaradei, director of the International Energy Agency at the time, officially confirmed the theft of Iraqi nuclear and industrial equipment and its transfer outside Iraq to be used in foreign reactors. Special teams were trained for assassinations and the liquidation of scientists called the shadow or shado. I began by filtering the most prominent minds working in the field of chemical engineering, physics, specializations and advanced research. On 16-03-2004, Dr. Ghayeb Al-Hiti, the most prominent Iraqi scientist, Dr. Majeed Hussein Ali, a nuclear physicist and atomic centrifuge, which is the basis of atomic science, Muhannad Al-Dulaimi from the University of Technology College and Dr. Shaker Al-Khafaji, Director General of the Central Agency for Inspection and Quality Control, were assassinated. Except for those who were interrogated and tortured. At Camp Cooper at Baghdad airport and the Sujood Palace in the Green Zone, 730 Iraqi scientists and academics are present. Before all of them were Jaafar Zia Jaafar, the owner of the Iraqi nuclear bomb project, and the physicist Dr. Salman Rashid Salman al-

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Lami, who died in Geneva of a mysterious illness in 1981..... Dr. Ziad Hanna al-Haddad is a heavy water reactor engineer who fled to Russia. James Baker's threat to Tariq Aziz in Geneva in 1999 came true: If you don't cooperate with us, we take you back to pre-medieval times. The last batch are Iranian scientists whom Shadow is likely killed. Burani's fame was next to her husband Dariush Rezaei. on July 23, 2011, with their daughter. I heard a dry shot. She thought he was coming from afar and from outside, but suddenly she noticed the motorcycle that shot him and then flew down the streets. He was only forty years old. During the year Dariush became part of Iran's nuclear program, he received numerous threats. And tempted to work outside his homeland. Massoud Ali Mohammadi was assassinated in 2010 in an explosion near his home in the capital Tehran. He was assassinated by Majid Jamali, who confessed to having received training from the Mossad. Majid Shahriari, one of those responsible for major projects in Tehran's nuclear program, was killed in a bombing on the day the head of the Atomic Energy Commission was targeted Fereydoon Abbasi, who miraculously survived. The second bombing killed Shahriari. The same hand assassinated Mustafa Hamdi Roshan. He was a shiny young man of 32 years. Very intelligent. Of the scientists who change everything with their superhuman intelligence. He is one of the officials in charge of the Natanz uranium enrichment site near Isfahan. Unknown assailants attached an explosive device to his engine. He was on UN Security Council sanctions lists and personally met with IAEA inspectors. (119)

Therefore, Laredj's text cannot be void of historical reading and interpretations that are either pronounced by his characters or by his third-person voice as a documentary voice which highlights his interference in the novel's discourse as asserted Elmiligi "the progress of the plot in *2084: The Tale of the Last Arab* relies on narrative interruptions. The narratorial voice varies from third person narration as a narrative voice to third person narration as a documentary voice, simply recounting documents such as diaries or newspaper headlines and articles." (151) this enables Laredj to interrogate historical truths and collective memory while challenging the biases in the representation of history.

The stream of history is regarded from the gaze of the most powerful who controls the amount of knowledge provided to inferior nations like Arabs to fill in the skeletal structure of their memory, identity, and history. "To be deep in the philosophy of Big Brother or Little

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Broz, you have to pay attention to everything, even the details in the pump of the eye through which the history of the individual is read today” (Laredj 110) The Algerian writer uses time to recall the past and predict the future. The latter is turned upside down and heralds a tragic end for Arabs whose culture, civilization, fortune, and land would perish gradually, and they will be bound to live in misery and hunger to become an extinct group from which the protagonist of the story Adam “the most intelligent representative sample that grew up inside our universities” (Laredj 13). He is the only survivor as he grew up and lived in America, and his invention gives him some privilege.

The first historical truth that galvanizes the reader in the debut of the novel lies in the statement of the American diplomat Patrick Syring “The only good Arab is a dead Arab”. This provocative and offensive declaration was also adopted by Israeli extremists in 2022 following a march that called for the myth of Jerusalem’s unification. Laredj also attempts to call back past events partly to analyze them, and partly also to seek for their causality that remained obscured and marginalized.

The rereading of history simulates an investigation of vague and inchoate records like the assassination of various Arab nuclear physicists in Iraq (quote 346-348). Then Laredj switches to a more contemporary history to recall the rise of terrorist groups referring overtly to the Islamist states in the Middle East (Al-Qaeda, Daech) “the organization grew and became an independent force trained in conventional weapons that no longer frightened them, as death itself does not frighten them. It is merely a legal travel ticket to another world that is more beautiful, more splendid, and more delicious as well” (365). The terrorist group in Laredj’s fiction aims to create a utopian world by spreading a dystopian aura of despotism and fear. It is set as the sole threat in the region that targets the Citadel of Améreupa and the wretched Arabs on that land.

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Laredj's text can be regarded as a thought-provoking inquiry into the philosophy of history that was first adumbrated in Orwell's text of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* as a fundamental issue of oppressed societies and their destiny. The kindred spirit or, as Laredj's tyrant proclaims, the blood connection between Orwell and Laredj's tyrant figures allows similar historical patterns to weave the threads of their dystopia.

At least in terms of Oceania, however, history has no importance as it keeps changing. While explaining the political and military situation of Oceania, Eurasia, and Eastasia, Orwell declares "Very likely the confessions had been rewritten and rewritten until the original facts and dates no longer had the smallest significance. The past not only changed, but changed continuously" (54). History, be it past, present, or future, remains an empty process that oscillates between knowledge and power because "all truths are false: the essence of the dialectical process is that today's truths become errors tomorrow" (Quoted in Csicsery-Ronay, Jr 243). Orwell sorts the truth according to the prevailing circumstances whereas Laredj exposes history to orient readers towards the truth.

#### **3-6 Collision of the Political Spheres**

The symptoms of lust for power were determined by the diabolic forces of certain regimes (Fascism, Nazism, Stalinism, Socialism to Orwell, or excessive Capitalism to Marx). Erich Fromm asserts that some claims conceited "Italian people, or Germans, were lacking in a sufficiently long period of training in democracy; and that therefore one could wait complacently until they had reached the political maturity of the Western democracies" (18) and so, their authoritarian regimes triumphed.

##### **3-6.1 Orwell's Political Visions**

George Orwell epitomized authoritarianism in Oceania's slogan which reads "Freedom is Slavery" and along the overt criticism of corrupt politics and social injustices, he qualifies

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the British Empire to an authoritarian apparatus. Fromm argues that authoritarianism is not a peculiarity of Italians or Germans only “but one confronting every modern state” that can include Britain per se as Airstrip one in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

Ultimately, “freedom is not less endangered if attacked in the name is anti-Fascism than is that of outright Fascism” (Fromm 19). The fear of living in Oceania is generated primarily from the political control that totalizes the character by creating a prison under the name of the nation-state isolated from the outside world and closely watched and ward. (Claeys 13)

Scholars came to terms with categorizing *Nineteen Eighty-Four* within the “political utopia” that disciplines and punishes. Michel Foucault argues that the idea of establishing ideals is bound on surveillance and punishment in order to relinquish immorality and improve lifestyle. the political utopian vision, according to Foucault, is rooted back to Jeremy Bentham’s Panopticon proposals (see fig.1).

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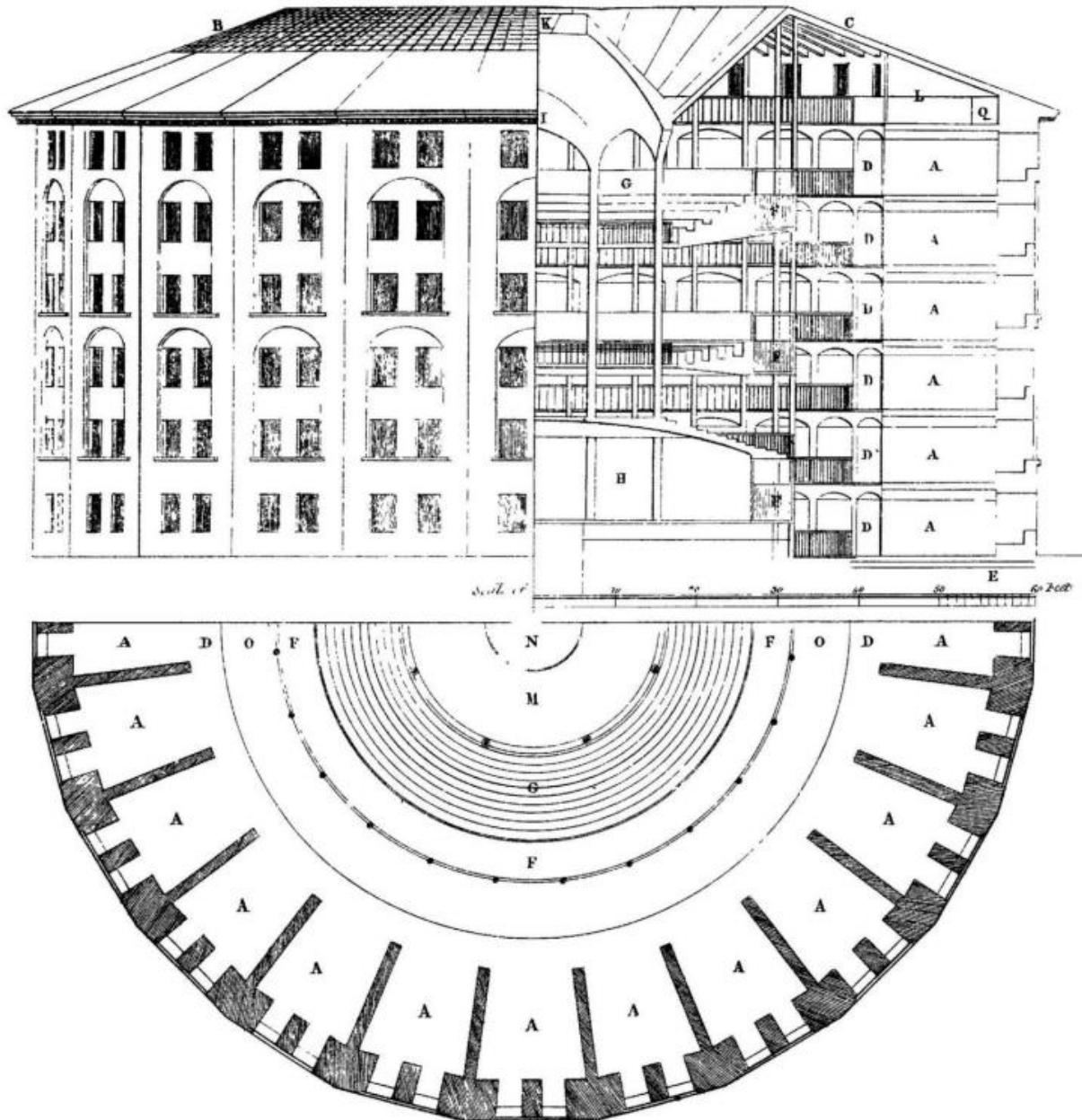


Fig. 3 - 1 "Panopticon." Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 1 Oct. 2024, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panopticon. Accessed 2 Oct. 2024.

Foucault explains that the Panopticon design is a “Utopia of a universally and publicly punitive society in which ceaselessly active penal mechanisms would function without delay, mediation or uncertainty; one law, doubly ideal because perfect in its calculations and engraven on the minds of each citizen would stop, at their very origin, all practices of illegality.” (qtd. in Claeys 13)

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Orwell founded Oceania from a Foucauldian stance that political reforms and the creation of a modern society based on sovereignty precede punishment and confinement against one's own will. In the following passage from *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Orwell overtly utters:

In more primitive ages, when a just and peaceful society was in fact not possible, it had been fairly easy to believe it. The idea of an earthly paradise in which men should live together in a state of brotherhood, without laws and without brute labour, had haunted the human imagination for thousands of years. And this vision had had a certain hold even on the groups who actually profited by each historical change. The heirs of the French, English, and American revolutions had partly believed in their own phrases about the rights of man, freedom of speech, equality before the law, and the like, and have even allowed their conduct to be influenced by them to some extent. But by the fourth decade of the twentieth century all the main currents of political thought were authoritarian. The earthly paradise had been discredited at exactly the moment when it became realizable. Every new political theory, by whatever name it called itself, led back to hierarchy and regimentation. And in the general hardening of outlook that set in round about 1930, practices which had been long abandoned, in some cases for hundreds of years -- imprisonment without trial, the use of war prisoners as slaves, public executions, torture to extract confessions, the use of hostages, and the deportation of whole populations-not only became common again, but were tolerated and even defended by people who considered themselves enlightened and progressive. (142)

According to Gregory Claeys, Orwell would never have projected this pessimistic outlook if he, himself, did not see himself, as a writer, a journalist, and a citizen, being politicized (443), and this is due to what he experienced since his military serving in Burma, to his experience in Spain. He writes "What I saw in Spain, and what I have seen since of the inner workings of left-wing political parties, have given me a horror of politics . . . I believe that a writer can only remain honest if he keeps free of party labels."(XII 148)

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The most frightening truth about Nineteen Eighty-Four is that what Orwell described was not only fiction but reality itself. The book reflects Orwell's political vision and mostly what he experienced in the third and fourth decades of the twentieth century which includes British imperialism, Stalinism, and Nazism.

#### **3-6.2 Laredj's Political Chaos**

In the Algerian novel of Wassini Laredj, two types of totalitarianism were portrayed. One is under the rule of Little Brother in Amereupa; a more sophisticated and modern type of authoritarianism that joins two Western, deemed democratic, states (America and Europe). The other one represents a brutal terrorist organization which represents the ISIS that appeared in contemporary times. Be it as it may, Laredj follows the dystopian tradition to reveal the lust of power of both tyrants. Little brother is "obsessed with power and considers Big Brother as a role model" he "does not only want power, but risks everything for it, and dreams of being a Marshal. He has a lot of Mussolini's madness" (159)

Social, political, cultural, and religious layers linger in Laredj's text. The falsification and eradication of Arab history shows that there is an estrangement between identity and history and to dismantle the former, the latter must be demolished.

The political situation in Laredj's *Tale of the Last Arab* witnesses a huge disorder where two forces wreak havoc on the Arab world embodied in the Western domination of the citadel of Amereupa and the terrorist organization of El Korbo. Be it as it may, Laredj is also alluding to factual events that have had tangible and critical outcomes in the Arab region, the top of which is the Arab Spring.

The Arab Spring sprung out of the accumulation of many years of inequality and exploitation from the long-lasting governing systems. However, Laredj also suggests that his apocalyptic anticipation of the future of the Arab region is the result of the tribal system,

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especially in North African countries such as Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya mainly between Arabs and Amazigh. In the twentieth century, the groups unified against European colonialism to secure freedom and sovereignty. Yet, in post-independence, the ruling system oppressed the groups that rejected to live under the umbrella of Arab nationalism which created a regional conflict as the case of Libya presents. In this context, Thomson and Bouandel argue:

the rule of Mu'ammār Qaddafi, who actively oppressed those who did not agree with his homogenous concept of Libya's Arab identity, drove Amazigh activists away from their erstwhile rapprochement with Arab nationalism. As a result, Amazigh activists in Libya have sided with the forces of revolution and actively opposed movements that might be deemed counter-revolutionary, even to the extent of fighting alongside Islamists. (47)

The reconciliation of minorities and the variety of ethnic groups is also one of the greatest issues in the Middle East which incited a riot in the region. Albert Hourani in *Minorities in the Arab World* declares that "majorities and minorities do not fully form communities with one another." (109) The Armenian Christian minority, the Kurds, the Druze, the Alawites, the Suni, the Shia, and the sectarian ideology in general, created a fractured political scenery. Their rapprochement has become nearly hopeless.

In a similar vein, ethnicity and religion are the basic laid down mechanisms to elucidate part of the critical situation between minorities. This has also incurred fanatic ideologies that has quickly and largely spread in the region including movements of Salafism or Jihadism. According to Habib C. Malik:

The minorities' problem in the Middle East including that of the region's indigenous Christians has come to prominence of late as a function of the meteoric rise of Salafism. Whether one calls it Salafism, or Jihadism, or Takfirism, in the end it all boils down to

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versions of militant fanatic Sunni Islamism that rejects the other including moderate Sunnis and condones violent attacks on anyone or any group that does not espouse its extremist intolerant ideology. (178)

Each group, however, aims to sustain its identity and deepen its roots in a society that threatens its existence. Laredj also refers to these conflicts through the fanatic group of El Korbo and anticipates a dark future as the situation escalates in the political landscape. According to Parker and Nasrallah, “while non-Muslims and minority Muslims could be part of Pan-Arabism, this was not the case for ethnic and linguistic minorities such as Kurds, Berbers, and Armenians, and Arab regimes often sought to curtail their community identities.” (4) Wassini Laredj in *The Tale of the Last Arab* attempts to anticipate the outcome of this rupture and to what extent it has become heavy to involve the whole groups in one community or to position them effectively in society.

Arabia also has fierce wars that have torn it apart and killed it. It began with a limited ethnic, tribal, racial or linguistic rupture before turning into an endless absurd war. Within the structure of Arabia, there are Arabians, Shiites and Sunnis. Druze, Armenians, Kurds and Amazighs, who haven't been granted any rights, the rest stand on fragile ground. The difference between Arabia and the other world is that the latter, despite the violence it witnesses, listens to solve dilemmas, as in Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, Canada, India, Pakistan, France, and America, China, Russia, and others. But Arabia was not given a chance to reflect on its situation because of the madness, greed and failure of its rulers. The more intense the wars and the more extensive the poverty, the faster the disintegration becomes, and the more difficult it is to control. (Laredj 49)

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That is, the Arab persona is caught in the chaos of expectations and mainly in the unknown. According to Laredj's vision, the Arab Spring has proven ineffectual towards the project of democracy. On the contrary, authoritarianism has disguised itself in a way that allows it to implement new reforms and strengthen its grip.

In that sense, much of what escalates the intellectual, social, and political regression in the Arab world is neo-colonialism. Amereupa is a Western citadel with European and American agents and military members who exploit the Arab land. In the text, nuclear experimentations are tested on Arabs who are the lab rats of some biological fields that maintain their subordinated situation.

#### **3-7 Asocial Ideas in Dystopia**

Sociability is a suppressed quality in dystopia. Asociability has become the first principle to constitute human happiness and become the luxury of the group. An ideal perfect society reduces all citizens to one rank, and thus, creates a vacuum of belonging that only the political agenda can fill in.

##### **3-7.1 Belonging *en Masse***

This lack of belonging is resultant from the premise of equaling the unequal. Keith Booker in his study of Dostoevsky's text *Devils (1872)*, states that Shigalyov, a pro utopian fellow, established a futuristic vision which "values equality above all else, even at the expense of reducing all citizens to the same level of mediocrity and enslavement" (142), whereas affiliation is seen from a different angle where "Everyone belongs to all the others and the others belong to each one. They're all slaves and equal in their slavery. . . . Cicero's tongue will be cut out, Copernicus's eyes will be gouged out, Shakespeare will be stoned-there's Shigalyov's system for you!" (442), mentioned Dostoevsky.

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In a similar context, Wenger introduced three modes of belonging (engagement, imagination, alignment). This notion assumes the active role of individuals to identify to a certain community throughout “participation among multiple communities of practices, such as school, home, and on the street, or between the institutional aspect of work place (e.g. loving the work) and the community of practices of colleagues at the office” (Musha, 157).

In quoting Orwell’s character in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, a dystopian society like Oceania is “the exact opposite of the hedonistic Utopias that the old reformers imagined” (Chapter 3). In *2084: The Tale of the Last Arab*, the historical background of Amereupa, which was not overtly mentioned in the beginning of the tale, leads to a utopia of an ancient time. What Laredj revealed about its history alludes to the citadel of Aleppo during Hamdanid rule (10th century) who aimed to create a utopian society.

The future of the citadel contradicts its past. In 2084, Amereupa is controlled by western powers whose anti-utopian and totalitarian regime made Arabia an unbearable place, difficult to survive in. Arabs in this vision fail to share a common consciousness or a pool of information held in their memories. Their collective memory is absent and from which they recognize nothing but wars and sectarian conflicts. The case of Adam represents the whole Arabians “Earthquakes and their tremors fill my brain. What did I eat? Which poison did they put in my memory? I contemplate the dry hills where this fear is erect, I don't see anything. I only see an atrocious vacuum, a black hole in which all life is absent.” (19).

The absence of life parallels the absence of consciousness. The two main factors of the Arab crisis is the Western hegemony at first hand, and the extremist terrorist organization of El Korbo next in order. In this vein, Adam asserts “Arabia was broken because of Western greed first, and the terrorism (the organization) that “erased all the human past permanently, so it destroyed the tablets of Gilgamesh or what was left of them, and erased the Babylonian,

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Roman and even Islamic cities, in full view of the free society? Today we are human remains without history and identity. And far more serious than that, without memory except the memory of the tribal sect that never resists time and its winds” (274). The lack of a collective memory also declares the failure to reconstruct the past and therefore the group. In this context, Michael G. Kenny argues that personal and collective identities are intertwined, suggesting that without a shared memory, individuals may struggle to form coherent identities (1999). This means the absence of an inherent behaviors and perception.

### 3-7.2 Promising Happiness

Happiness, according to various definitions, is bliss, lasting satisfaction, success, and takes control of the highest good (Tatatkiewicz, 1976), it is joy, the balance between pleasure and pain, and fulfillment (Nettle, 2005), whereas some relates it to temperament or mood (Telfer, 1980). Feldman Fred has summarized it as follows:

WT1: x is happy= df. x experiences intense bliss joy or rapture.

WT2: x is happy= df. x has lasting satisfaction with life.

WT3: x is happy= df. x is successful.

WT4: x is happy= df. x possesses the highest good.

N1: x is happy= df. x experiences joy or pleasure.

N2: x is happy= df. upon reflection on the balance sheet of x's own pleasures and pains, x believes that the balance of pleasure over pain is reasonably positive.

N3: x is happy= df. x flourishes x fulfills x's true potential.

ET1: x has a happy temperament = df. x is disposed to be cheerful.

ET2 : x he's in a happy mood = df. x is temporarily disposed to look on the bright side.

ET3 : x is happy = df. x is enjoying himself.

ET4 : x is happy = df. x is pleased with x's life as a whole.

(2010, 128)

Be it Oceania or Amereupa, the jackboot of their regimes redefines the meaning of happiness. In Orwell's world, machine worship is embraced at the expense of individualism.

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This, according to Orwell, intensifies when religious beliefs have been dropped, resulting a power /machine worship that leads to hedonism which undermines individual autonomy under the premise of happiness. In *Homage to Catalonia*, Orwell observed that the real problem “is how to restore the religious attitude while accepting death as final. Men can only be happy when they do not assume that the object of life is happiness.”(245)

In philosophy, though, “it is possible to speak of the happiness of a person’s life, or of their happy life, even if that person was in fact usually pretty miserable.” (Stanford Encyclopedia of philosophy). Happiness, therefore, has become a theory based on different principles. In *The Road to Wigan Pier*, Orwell firmly asserts: “A human being is not eating, drinking, sleeping, making love, talking, playing games or merely lounging about—and these things will not fill up a lifetime—he needs work and usually looks for it . . . man is not, as the vulgarer hedonists seem to suppose, a kind of walking stomach; he has also got a hand, an eye and a brain.” (196) That is to say, the appearance presented to the world that makes one a distinct individual; productive, conscious, and happy. This, however, is interrupted by the hedonistic mindset which frames vulnerable and more penetrable personalities.

The pursuit of happiness might produce its reverse for “unhappiness is a luxury of the free” mentioned Assimov (154). What establishes happiness? Or as Frederic Harrison put ‘How is it created, maintained, and lost? what pleasures are high, what low?’. John Stuart Mill answered:

The happiness which they meant was not a life of rapture; but moments of such, in an existence made up of few and transitory pains, many and various pleasures, with a decided predominance of the active over the passive, and having as the foundation of the whole, not to expect more from life than it is capable of bestowing. A life thus composed, to those who have been fortunate enough to obtain it, has always appeared worthy of the name of

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happiness. And such an existence is even now the lot of many, during some considerable portion of their lives. The present wretched education and wretched social arrangements are the only real hindrance to its being attainable by almost all (10: 215, cited in Bromwich, 20).

Modern times produced unhappiness more than happiness, when machine worship replaced religion, limited individualism, and locked freedom, because, as George Kateb states, “liberty therefore conduces to the increase of happiness: the decrease of suffering and the increase of pleasure.”(46). Winston Smith is locked, surveilled, and restricted in Oceania, and therefore, he only finds happiness when he rebels against these constraints, and when he tries to transgress the frontiers. Happiness in this case becomes the outcome of liberty. Recent governments aim to secure these feelings because the level of happiness gauges what the Greek name “Eudaemonism” or well-being. In a similar vein, Featherstone argues:

The first image of modernity is one of order and entails the progressive control, domination and regulation of the natural and social worlds through the application of rational knowledge. In this image the Enlightenment faith in science and technology is seen as flawed, for instead of delivering the good society and human happiness, the secret inner logic of history is a narrative of the fall, one which points to the realization of a dystopia rather than a utopia.(147)

In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, The Ministry of Plenty announces its triumph in the battle for production which raised the standard of living, and people remain grateful to “Big Brother for the new, happy life which his wise leadership has bestowed upon us”. To live happily in Oceania hinges on Big Brother and his achievements because “If you're happy inside yourself” claims Julia, “why should you get excited about Big Brother and the Three-Year Plans and the Two Minutes Hate and all the rest of their bloody rot?”(92) For authoritarian

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regimes, even feelings and emotions must be controlled to make sure nothing blurs the lines between the leader and the herd.

Arab writers have long discussed the theme of happiness as the Arab world witnessed but little prosperity since the last century. The idea to create an ideal society recurrent since Al Farabi's *al Madina al Fadila* (The Virtuous City), or more contemporarily, Al Manfaluti's *Madinat al-Saada* (The City of Happiness). Wassini Laredj, by way of contrast, cannot, anyhow, visualize a happy Arab world. The last Arab, or the last man to resurrect Arabians states "I haven't felt happy to be a husband, father, lover, winner or loser? In a world where I don't know if I'm free, imprisoned, or threatened with something that I only know is assassination and death, as if you don't have the right to be a scientist, an artist, or anyone whom God has given some power to be unique."(Laredj 143). What makes Adam happy in *Amereupa* are the ordinary things that are considered rights more than privileges. He is happy when he "got rid of the orange outfit"(9) when Eva handed him the recording device (29) when he knew he can "use of the wide garden road or the old amphitheater for sports."(40), or when he was first allowed to talk to his wife (82). And so, happiness in Laredj's tale is also conditioned by the dose of freedom decided by the totalitarian party.

It is imperative to stress that Adam and Winston are both confined to a cruel and complex configuration of the system of happiness. From a postmodern or postcolonial perspective, human relations, feelings, and social orders have all become labyrinthine as far as the sense of belonging, beliefs, and values is lost.

#### **3-8 Conclusion**

Totalitarianism proved ineffectual towards creating a utopian project. George Orwell and Wassini Laredj can be regarded as humanist writers pervaded their writings with serious issues including fragmented identities, paucity of individuality, decline of ideals, sanctity of

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the group, falsification of history along the manipulation of truth. Both writers, also, attempted to examine the politics that shape their epoch; highlighting the remnants of individuality (the case of Orwell), and that of a whole race (the case of Laredj), fragmented and anarchic.

# **Chapter 4: The Stylistic and Aesthetic System in Orwell and Laredj's Narratives**

## Chapter 4: The Stylistic and Aesthetic System in Orwell and Laredj's Narratives

### 4-1 Introduction

This chapter aims at introducing the stylistic and aesthetic parts in the narratives under scrutiny: *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *2084: The Tale of the Last Arab*. Archetypal images linger on the depiction of the fragmented world which gives birth to tyrants, conspiracies, spirits, and revolution. This chapter, thus, attempts to discuss the stylization used in dystopian literary texts including the use of myth as an archetypal means of communication, satire as a means of belittling the oppressed agenda, and the way revolution is approached from a postmodern writer seeking the autonomy of individuals, and a postcolonial one advocating survival of a whole race.

### 4-2 Dystopian Stylization

Revealing the absurd in the totalitarian agenda is the motive behind Orwell and Laredj's writing. Like Zamyatin's *We*, they rely on different forms such as satire, irony, and parody to critique societal and political norms and behaviors and affect the readers' understanding and perception of the issue being addressed.

Dystopia is charged with frankness and irony, which exploits the sham of utopian projects through parody. Writers of dystopia often use irony to stress the invalidity of the truth. According to Gary Kern, "This is a standard ploy of irony: by stressing the truth of what is patently false, the author makes the false appear ludicrous." (121) Gary, here, was referring to the Russian writer Zamyatin who used irony as a powerful device to expose social and political commentaries. In conjunction with the Russian stylistics, dystopian texts embraced that tradition allowing discourse to echo notes of irony and parody that overtly distinguishes between the sharp and the hazy.

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the analysis of both texts offers a solid ground on which intertextual elements interplay as every descriptive part becomes a sign or motif that redirects the reader's attention. Northrop Frye argues that there are two ways to get the lie of the land. "One direction is outward or centrifugal, in which we keep going outside our reading, from the individual words to the things they mean, or, in practice, to our memory of the conventional association between them." Whereas "The other direction is inward or centripetal, in which we try to develop from the words a sense of larger verbal pattern they make." (73) In this sense, Frye is referring to the symbol with its different forms and layers of meaning. Orwell mastered the art of symbolism through irony and thereby ridiculing the regime of Big Brother.

### 4-2.1 Bold Satire

Orwell's dystopia primarily satirizes modernity and technology. With all the technological backwardness and banal inferiority in Oceania, the Party still considers itself the purest form of utopia, and here lies the satire. It is necessary to note that Orwell per se did not consider his book a prophecy, but rather, "a satire which says, 'Don't let the future be like this...'" (qtd. In Lynskey 241) It is reminiscent of Swift's satire of Enlightenment in *Gulliver's Travels* "where the flying island of Laputa demonstrates some of the perils in combining human mechanical ingenuity with human folly and greed." (Frye 40). The book is, thus, a "product of modern technological society, its growing sense that the whole world is destined to the same social fate with no place to hide, and its increasing realization that technology moves towards the control not merely of nature but of the operations of the mind." (24-49).

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There is a sense of mockery in O'Brien's discourse when he mentions the old regimes. Orwell expressed the sham in the myth of the tyrants by ridiculing their mindset which "set out to eradicate heresy, and ended by perpetuating it. For every heretic it burned at the stake, thousands of others rose up." (Orwell 178). Northrop Frye puts forward that *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is not a straight utopia but rather "the utopian satire or parody, which presents the same kind of social goal as terms of slavery, tyranny, or anarchy." (28)

In the following passages, Orwell criticizes the elimination of the primary role of the machine, asserting that from the very beginning, "it was clear to all thinking people that the need for human drudgery, and therefore to a great extent for human inequality, had disappeared. If the machine were used deliberately for that end, hunger, overwork, dirt, illiteracy, and disease could be eliminated within a few generations" (132) however, this was impossible because "a hierarchical society was only possible on a basis of poverty and ignorance." (133) In the totalitarian ideology, Orwell proceeds, "technological progress only happens when its products can in some way be used for the diminution of human liberty. In all the useful arts the world is either standing still or going backwards. The fields are cultivated with horse-ploughs while books are written by machinery." (134) It is, therefore, the invention of printing machines that "made it easier to manipulate public opinion, and the film and the radio carried the process further. With the development of television, and the technical advance which made it possible to receive and transmit simultaneously on the same instrument, private life came to an end." (143) Orwell satirizes a modern time moving backward where the empirical approach is only tolerated for war and espionage.

Even exaggeration is a form of irony, argues Frye. Orwell, in the first parts of the narrative, explained what had happened in Europe and followed that part with the expectations of what would happen if the situation escalated. In this vein, Lynskey declares that "Orwell's motive for making such an extreme scenario at least imaginable was not

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despair, but not exactly hope either.” Quoting Orwell’s statement to the press after the appearance of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Lynskey carries, “The moral to be drawn from this dangerous nightmare situation is a simple one,” ... “*Don’t let it happen. It depends on you.*” (196)

Irony is again manifested in the misnomers of ministries and the paradoxical contextualization of the slogans. There are four main ministries in Oceania: the Ministry of Truth (Minitrue) which manipulates historical truth and erases evidence to give one version of the past, Ministry of Love (Miniluv) which deals anything but love, the Ministry of Peace (Minipax) that instigates wars, and the Ministry of Plenty (Miniplenty) which deals with the citizen’s goods. Whereas the slogans read WAR IS PEACE, FREEDOM IS SLAVERY, IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH. This kind of language creates a double understanding known as ‘doublethought’ in Orwell’s terminology. The only thing that Orwell held faith in was the potential of language (Lonoff 33) that is able to convey the extreme experience of living in Oceania, with a pinch of dark humor.

### 4-2.2 Satirizing Darwinism in the Algerian Folklore

Frank E. Manuel asserts that “the word utopian is beginning to be divested of an overtone of derision.”(x) Laredj’s tone expresses mockery to lessen the intensity of a horrific life. Interestingly, he relies on folkloric elements to lampoon the Western thought. He laid out the foregrounding concept of the nature of the species by referring to the Algerian folktale.

Europe in the mid-nineteenth century witnessed a biological revolution. *The Origin of Species* emerged by Charles Darwin (1859) made a global change in Europe. Though Darwin’s book was extremely scientific and had nothing to do with politics or human society, his assumptions were misinterpreted. Thence, when theory blended with scientific advances, white superiority clamped its validity, and social hierarchy shaped new types of societies.

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Chirot regards that the overwhelming technological superiority of the “white races” over the rest of the world seemed to be explained by a kind of simplified Darwinism (55).

The spread of Darwinism continued to be misused deliberately. The idea of Natural selection was adopted by Herbert Spencer who led a liberal capitalistic world and established his “social-Darwinism”. As a result of applying Darwin’s theory of evolution on society, Spencer coined the term “the survival of the fittest” (Spencer 455), which raised the question of which group is to be considered weak and which one is to be considered strong. According to the theory, the poor weaken the strong and curse the possibility of a perfect society that is exulted in literature as Utopia.

Darwin’s scientific theory and the notion of natural selection allowed the emergence of Eugenics which raised ethnic and racial problems. Eugenics introduced birth control as a solution to excessively inferior families. The movement was embraced by the most powerful nations because it served their interest and was presented as an impetus to their deeds including racism. As put by Chirot “the popularized science of the late 19th and early 20th centuries did not invent imperialism or racism; but it did give them the sense of infallibility and assurance that came with the cachet of « science »” (55). Anyone reading Atwood’s *The Handmaid’s Tale* would directly link images of birth control or her sacred “Ceremony” with the principles of Eugenics. Reading Laredj’s *Tale of the Last Arab* also illustrates Darwinism in the annihilation of Arabs, but also mocks it in the Algerian Folklore.

In the narrative, Adam’s grandmother reiterates that he is the descendant of the wolf Ramad. In the following passage, Laredj writes “His grandmother persuaded him that Ramad was their first grandfather. Standing at the head of the dynasty. Everyone dies and he remains a fierce guard on the high hills.”(30)

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In similar vein, Ramad belongs to the dynasty of wolves that challenged the hardest circumstances and kept running endlessly. Adam said

My grandmother used to say that when the wolf Ramad runs, he does not glimpse behind. He learns by heart the words of his ancestors: Ramad do not turn behind you, we are destined to run only. We're followed by the songs of the American Indians whom we are now approaching at a rapid pace. For Amerindians, the Apache, Cheyenne, Sioux. (75)

This wolf portrays the persistence and endurance that Adam tries to attain in the middle of nowhere. The second part of the passage, however, illustrates Laredj's vision of Arabs whose destiny seems reminiscent of the American Indians who have been violated by the Western powers. Yet, Laredj is also challenging Darwin's origins of the species through the Algerian folklore.

The use of folkloric elements reinforces the cultural starting point of the narrative. This allows readers to have access to the Arabic, often Algerian, mindset. According to Patricia Waugh, wedding the novel to folklore is a common technique of the metafictional novel. Laredj's use of Algerian folktales in an "explicit intertextual reminder" as the "Ostentatious use of literary and mythic allusion reinforces the notion of fictionality, and the reader's awareness of the construction of alternative worlds" (113). In similar vein, Susan Stewart in *Aspects of Intertextuality in Folklore and Literature* asserts that "the ongoingness of tradition – of social process – makes a 'finite' province of meaning impossible, for the boundaries of universes of discourse are constantly merging into one another and reemerging as transformed fields of meaning." (48)

The meaning of Darwinism in the *Tale of Last Arab* fuses parody. According to the Algerian folktales, the origin of humans is not apes but wolves, Laredj states: "Whenever he remembers his grandmother's words and their certainty, he laughs at Darwin's theory with

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which she agreed only in terms of the animalistic origin of humans, but pulled behind it a wolf and not an ape? (30). The grandmother explains that there is a disparity between wolves and apes. The latter is a cursed human being. Laredj elaborates in the footnote:

The source of this idea is a popular tale, in the far west of Algeria, it is said that the monkey was originally a good, rich but eccentric human being. He was fond of experimenting with things until he was convinced of their usefulness. One day he could not find water to perform ablution with, so he performed ablution with milk, and God turned him into a monkey, because he corrupted God's grace.

The perception of Darwinism in reverse is probably the first of its kind, regardless of the opinions that refute the theory. However, the Algerian woman also presented her arguments, as she asked Adam: "Have you ever heard of a wolf made a spectacle of himself and turned into ridicule? This is the monkey's job, to imitate and be laughed at. Then your grandfather is Ramad that people fear from afar, and who knows his destiny, he knows exactly the moment when he has to withdraw"(30). The Algerian theory sounds reasonable to the Western characters in the novel. Professor William agrees with Adam in terms of selecting the animal that humans belong to, arguing that there is " a monkey that remains in its circle to reproduce itself and waits for its death, and a wolf that designs every day a trick to avoid his killer or those who threaten his life. He fights desperately for his rights and freedom. (104). In a wise semantic play, Laredj reaffirms the dignity of Arabs and how solid its grounds are which, like Ramad, stands still and challenges the world.

### **4-2.3 The Linguistic Instrument**

To break down the narrative's style, the safest way is to analyze its language. The latter is a linguistic instrument employed to guide, mislead, mock, sympathize, or gloat. To describe the immorality of the future we hope not to come, Orwell and Laredj opted for an

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experimental language to leave an exceptional reading experience that requires quick-witted debaters.

### 4-2.3.1 The Monopoly of the Newspeak

As a political novel, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* was the first of a kind to be read as fact and fantasy in a parallel way. It unpacks political prophecies that came true decades after its publication. But what characterized this book the most is its ability to trace its roots as a new genre.

Orwell made usage of different levels of language, the top of which as an instrument of challenge against the oppressive regime, first, and second to expose the absurdity of life under that regime. The process of selecting a limited but specific semantic register that forbids some words, but tolerates others is, according to Roger Fowler, a novel's fallacy that imposes orthodoxy and the tone of that language is as satirical as Jonathan Swift's style. (93)

There is a sort of absurdity in the use of words to convey a certain meaning. At this level, language controls the thought intended by the orthodoxy of despotic government. The intended speech does not in any way spring out of consciousness but rather from dictated, imposed, and often repeated phrases elaborated by a prefabricated language. Therefore, language and thought are separated since the process of thinking is hindered and consequently truth is fabricated. In a conversation with Syme, Winston gets to know how the Newspeak language functions:

The Eleventh Edition is the definitive edition,' he said. 'We're getting the language into its final shape -- the shape it's going to have when nobody speaks anything else. When we've finished with it, people like you will have to learn it all over again. You think, I dare say, that our chief job is inventing new words. But not a bit of it! We're destroying words -- scores of them, hundreds of them, every day. We're cutting the language down to the bone. The

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Eleventh Edition won't contain a single word that will become obsolete before the year 2050.

(35)

Syme enthusiastically continues to boast about the candidness of the Newspeak that limits the fallacy of thought. He proceeds:

Don't you see that the whole aim of Newspeak is to narrow the range of thought? In the end we shall make thoughtcrime literally impossible, because there will be no words in which to express it. Every concept that can ever be needed, will be expressed by exactly one word, with its meaning rigidly defined and all its subsidiary meanings rubbed out and forgotten. Already, in the Eleventh Edition, we're not far from that point. But the process will still be continuing long after you and I are dead. Every year fewer and fewer words, and the range of consciousness always a little smaller. Even now, of course, there's no reason or excuse for committing thoughtcrime. It's merely a question of self-discipline, reality-control. But in the end there won't be any need even for that. The Revolution will be complete when the language is perfect. (36)

Such conversation demonstrates that Newspeak is the gist of the Ingsoc ideology through which surveillance and control are granted. Orwell responds to the prevailing ideologies of the twentieth century to advocate rebellion and summon the need to survive politically, socially, spiritually, and physically. The narrative of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is founded on the mechanism of language as a hegemonic means that empowers Big Brother's ideology Ingsoc which is meant for the 'Obliteration of the Self'. The real implication of such systems is 'political conformity' as Orwell explained in *Politics and the English Language*.

### 4-2.3.2 The Reign of Eurolingua

As long as language is concerned, Laredj introduced a new language in his dystopia. A combination of old and modern English in which other languages evaporate. Eurolingua is the new register of communication in Amereupa. In this vein, the Algerian writer asserts:

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Everything new was written in Eurolingua, a mixture of European languages that were slowly vanishing, or large parts of them were dead. It depends on American English as the basis and some Latin vocabulary that no one could resist its authority. Even some European federations, which showed some zeal for what remained of their old national languages, quickly bowed to Eurolingua. It tried hard to pass resistance laws and regulate counter-dictionaries, but all these efforts were futile, and it was eventually reluctantly adopted as an official language in all European federations. Germanic federalism was the most adamant in this refusal, but it also did not resist for long its isolation. (18)

Accordingly, Eurolingua has taken over all the linguistic registers to become a universal language of pragmatic use that controls behavior and social dynamics as put in the novel "Eurolingua and the American language have become the languages of pragmatic usage, both military and civilian, devoid of all beautiful human sense." Yona carried sarcastically, "I think if Shakespeare came back, he would commit suicide" (120). The authoritarian regime targets linguistic nationalism to build a surface on which any agenda can be labeled following the same concept of Newspeak with fewer restraints.

As Adam knows English, it was easy for him to learn Eurolingua, however, he insists on writing in his mother tongue Arabic asserting that "I enjoy writing these volcanoes with their ashes. Language is no longer a problem." (9) Arabic and many other languages have thus become the old speak which is barely used in the new world order sed by Amereupa. Laredj writes "On the phone screen appeared some writings in Arabic which has become the language of minorities, hardly used after it has been removed from many international institutions." (105)

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### 4-2.3.3 Language as a Means of Awakening

The usage of Arabic by Adam is also a means to verify identity. Adam knows very little about his current life except for the narrative delivered by Little Broz and his staff. When he was finally allowed to talk remotely to his wife, he used a phrase in Arabic that only she who knew how to respond to it in Japanese, but at that moment, “she returned to the same movements of confusion. He understood nothing. She seemed to have lost all life inside her. She turned her head right, then north, like a robot. Suddenly, he felt as if the flame of intelligence that was filling her eyes suddenly withdrew from her. (Laredj 83) Through language, Adam was able to disclose the conspiracy set against him. According to Elmiligi, “This shakes his inflexible faith in the good bomb, and accelerates his decision to stop the bomb he helped invent.” (149) The situation starts to escalate when some simple words in Arabic revealed the true identity of Yona which creates self-doubt in Adam's inner thoughts that changed the whole narrative process.

Unlike Orwell's Winston, Adam is privileged to record and write in his mother tongue, and the difference lies in the position each character occupies in society. Winston is an ordinary citizen in Oceania raised by the founding ideas of liberal democracy that created "men without chests," composed of “desire and reason but lacking *thymos*, clever at finding new ways to satisfy a host of petty wants through the calculation of long-term self-interest.” (Fukuyama xxii), Adam is a renowned nuclear physicist, accustomed to freedom, hunted by many to exploit his Pocket Bomb or destroy it, and the last significant person of his race.

### 4-2.4 Last but not Least

Winston is the last man in Europe to succumb to the lobotomy of Big Brother “with no desire to be recognized as greater than others, and without such desire no excellence or achievement was possible.” (Fukuyama xxii) and no individualism thereof. In discussing the

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work of Ian Watt and his criticism of the novel in wartime, Marina MacKay reflects upon his vision towards Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, who argued that

Winston Smith is not the last man in Europe, nor is he the last human being of his torturer O'Brien's taunts, but, rather, he is 'the last humanist', because his diary 'is a literary *acte gratuit* of a heroic kind, since endangering his life merely to give an objective testimony to his view of the truth about himself and his time surely bespeaks Winston's deep need for self-expression'(49)

In this context, Winton is presented as Europe's last hope to establish moral values and democracy.

In a similar vein, Adam is the last Arab to keep his ego at bay and serve humanity with his knowledge. while " more than 400 million Arabians are waiting for you, of whom more than a quarter have died in the last half-century. They fought until they annihilated themselves. Cultivate hope in them. Consider yourself the last Arab with the responsibility of resurrecting them again."(83)

### 4-3 Mythic Aspects

It is natural in literature to turn to myth either religious, historical, or political. Be it as it may, it remains a means that to transform what Frank E. Manuel calls "dynamic realities", or "expressions of authentic desires" (x). Orwell and Laredj relied on myth, symbols, and signs to define the obtrusive mediocrity of the world in 1984 and 2084.

#### 4-3.1 The Myth of the Future

Myths of the future are generally portrayed through the foresight of fiction. Authors tend to anticipate the future of their societies, but they are often bound to interpret the present to foretell the time to come. The imagined potential future is contingent on the "STEEP (social,

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technological, economic, environmental, and political) framework”(Boschetti et al. 76). Yet, there are common archetypes shared by groups from different cultural backgrounds. In this vein, Boschetti et al put “there is a set of future archetypes that are (i) culturally shared, and consensually understood; (ii) fairly general and transcend situations, that is, they are not context dependent; and (iii) easily recognized and identifiable in the general public (i.e., outside futures study workshops).” (77)

The myth of utopia is one of the common expectations of various cultures. The first chapter of this research explained how men sought to reach the new, the marvelous, and the ideal. The myth of Eden haunted the human mind, which strived to reconcile truth with fiction. On the other hand, there is the reality of failure. The first human beings were cast from heaven, and here, the suffering takes place.

A social study has been conducted to analyze people's perspectives on the future of society of human nature. To describe how worldviews shape our understanding, Boschetti et al. suggest folkloric nuances and unconscious images of the future, following Dator's proposal (1978).

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**Table 2**

Folk images of the future as proposed in (Dator, 1978) (first column). Interpretation as proposed in (Bezold, 2009) (second column). Related worldviews from the cultural theory literature (third column).

Line	Explanation	Worldview
<i>Que sera, sera</i>	Whether because it's in God's hands or there's no discernible pattern	Fatalistic
<i>As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without change, Amen</i>	Traditionally people don't concern themselves with the future as change comes slowly	Individualistic
<i>If winter comes, can spring be far behind?</i>	Everything has its season, to predict the future, all you need to know is what cycle we're in.	Hierarchical
<i>Why don't you make something of yourself?</i>	An industrial society view that posit that we have permanently broken out of the traditional cycle and are 'developing', growing forever, led by the appropriate elites	Hierarchical
<i>After the revolution...!</i>	A Marxist view that the revolution is needed for development to continue	Egalitarian
<i>We are entering a new dark ages</i>	We will soon reach, or have already passed, our limits to growth. We face an immediate future of wars, famines, internal strife, followed by a new and lengthy Dark Ages	Fatalistic
<i>Toward a steady-state for spaceship earth</i>	Stop growth now, create more decentralized, ecologically balanced, more human and stable communities	Egalitarian
<i>Let's return to the garden of Eden</i>	Back-to-nature, reversing industrial society	Egalitarian
<i>I think I'm going out of my head</i>	The future has no reality beyond the images in our consciousness: prayer, meditation, and consciousness are necessary for self-realization	Unclear
<i>Machines of loving grace</i>	Where ever enhancing social and physical technologies are put to effective use	Individualistic

Fig. 4 - 1 Table in the research paper of Fabio Boschetti et al. (79)

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In this table, Boschetti et al. argue that "people's views of the future can be captured by 10 visions or images. To highlight the cultural or 'folk' nature of these visions, each was labeled with a line from a song, a movie, or a popular saying."(77) Analyzing the table from a philosophical and literary perspective allows a close interpretation of the meaning of each line and the motives behind each choice.

The archetypal myths of Boschetti et al. can be illustrated in Orwell and Laredj's futures are founded on these bases. The two literary texts can probably confirm the possibility of these futures on a more concrete ground.

### 4-3.1.1 Stoic Future

Faith is the fundamental element in visualizing the future. The Latin sentence " Que Sera, Sera » invites stoicism, leading to the fatalistic idea of accepting a pointless and insignificant life. This is where dystopia starts to come into play. Stoicism is also based on absent-mindedness by means that the future is abstract, the past shall be forgotten, and the present is the material world. This is where the Ingsoc feels at home.

The idea of the future and visions of a time to come are dependent on the present: the Carpe Diem premise. In other words, "don't demand that things happen as you wish, but wish that they happen as they do happen, and you will go on well."(Epictetus, tran. Elizabeth Carter 8) Citizens in every corrupt society are duty-bound to live unconsciously, endure pain, and approve impassivity as the key to happiness. Hedonism also feels quite welcome.

The other myth extracted from the table is that of revolution. Humans are rebellious by nature and constantly in search of change to reach perfection. It is easy to detect the flaws in each governing system, but it is a daunting task to combine these imperfections and reconstruct a better version. The scientific revolution history witnessed was, first, littered with utopian ideals before straying off the map, as parodied by Jonathan Swift in *Gulliver's*

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*Travels* (1729). However, with every revolution, there is an awakening from whims and empty commitments. Winton and Adam are revolutionary characters who refuse to surrender to the myth of perfection and resist for the sake of survival rather than restoration.

The expectations for another revival of the Dark Ages also lead to the dystopia portrayed in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* or Laredj's *2084: The Tale of the Last Arab*, and mainly through the vice of war. In this vein, Claeys asserts, "War is glorified as the testing ground of virtue and manhood and (in Schmitt's phrase) 'the existential negation of the enemy.'" (28) The human fallacy has extended the limits, perpetual wars with continuously changing allies and enemies, destructive wars to chase one man alleged to be dangerous, and internal strife of the conscious minds (Winston and Julia/ Adam and Eva). While looking for utopian enlightenment, dystopia has cheerfully blown out the flame.

The archetypal myth anticipated by the majority of people is the wrath of nature. The excessive technological advancement brought depression and ecological and social collapse. Claeys argues that dystopia suggests similar alarming scenes as that of natural catastrophes. He puts:

We recall ancient myths of the Flood, that universal inundation induced by Divine wrath, and of the Apocalypse of Judgement Day. We see landscapes defined by ruin, death, destruction. We see swollen corpses, derelict buildings, submerged monuments, decaying cities, wastelands, the rubble of collapsed civilizations. We see cataclysm, war, lawlessness, disorder, pain, and suffering. Mountains of uncollected rubbish tower over abandoned cars. Flies buzz over animal carcasses. Useless banknotes flutter in the wind. Our symbols of species power stand starkly useless: decay is universal

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The universal decay described in the passage above is more reminiscent of Laredj's vision than Orwell's. The myth of the apocalypse is an expected vision that announces the decline of the Arab region. According to Laredj, famine and misery are inevitable in the Arab region as the situation continuously escalates in his narrative.

Last but foremost, Boschetti et al.'s study shows that technological advancement is supposed to provide a firm anchor to utopian ideals. Orwell and Laredj echo the opposite. To the former, machinery worship eliminates natural instinct, numbs the minds, and becomes the master. Huxley, who heavily criticized the age of mechanization, puts "the machine is our enemy; for it deprives the overwhelming majority of men and women of the possibility, the very hope, of even the most modest creative activity" (qtd. in Claeys 372). For the latter, technology is the protagonist's virtue, as Adam is a nuclear physicist whose invention tends to resurrect humanity but found to be a vice that would abolish a whole race (the Arab race).

### **4-3.2 The Myth of the Tyrant**

In the world of mythology, the archetype of evilness and tyranny is Satan. It is the figure that hindered the tranquility of human beings on earth. "Satanism, the spirit which hates the World Order wherever it exists"(qtd. in Hughes 126) asserts Gilbert Murray. To Merritt Y. Hughes, Satan is "a mysteriously wanton adversary of man in "the great pilgrimage of the spirit [which] from the beginnings of history onward has been on the whole not only a movement from ignorance to knowledge, from collective impotence to collective power, from poverty of life to richness of life, but also in some profound sense a pilgrimage from lower to higher."(126) When Hughes dealt with Milton's analysis of the *Christian Doctrine*, he cited other names to describe the devil like Beelzebub, the prince of the devils, the enemy or adversary of Job, Abaddon, Apollyon, destroyer of Revelation. (ibid) Without any reluctance, Hughes confirms that all names allude to the identity of a detrimental character.

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### 4-3.2.1 Tyrants are Satan

From the several descriptions that can be referenced to the archetype of Satan, figures of tyranny like Stalin, Napoleon, Hitler, the British Empire, Pharaoh, and Mussolini, to mention a few, or fictional characters like Mustapha Mond, the Benefactor, Prince Karl "Charles" von Waldron, Sauron, Lord Voldemort, President Coriolanus Snow, and ultimately Big Brother can be adumbrated to the list evil figure. Coleridge confirmed this in a lecture on *Paradise Lost*, and put "the character of Satan is pride and sensual indulgence, finding in self the sole motive of action. It is the character so often seen *in little* on the political stage. It exhibits all the restlessness, temerity, and cunning which have marked the mighty hunters of mankind from Nimrod to Napoleon."(qtd. in Hughes 131)

In "Two Myth: the Ruler and the Aides", Fouad Zakariya explains that he used 'myth' for an authoritarian system because it is "nothing more than a big illusion that dominates minds and distorts their view of the ruling process and the relationship of the ruler with his aides and the society under his rule" (1993, 16) and here, Zakariya is referring to the tyrants who mythologize themselves to grant acceptance and fidelity of the populace.

### 4-3.2.2 The Evil Spirit in Religion

Satan in the Quran is referred to as Iblis and in Arabic he has the name "Shaytan". He is a character mentioned in the Quran who was expelled from heaven because he refused to obey the orders of Allah. He begrudged Adam for being a special creature, and when Allah commanded him and angels to prostrate before Adam, he refused. "and then We said unto the angels, "Prostrate yourselves before Adam!" - whereupon they [all] prostrated themselves, save Iblis: he was not among those who prostrated themselves". In the following verse, Iblis made it clear he is envious of Adam, when Allah said: "What has kept thee from prostrating thyself when I commanded thee?" Answered [Iblis]: "I am better than he: Thou

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hast created me out of fire, whereas him Thou hast created out of clay." Arrogance, in effect, was the reason that threw Iblis out of heaven. "Down with thee, then, from this [state] - for it is not meet for thee to show arrogance here! Go forth, then: verily, among the humiliated shalt thou be!" (Al A'raf verses 11-12-13. trans. Asad). Abdullah Yusuf Ali explained in a footnote this verse that "the incident marks the externment of Iblis from the Garden owing to his rebelliousness born of arrogance"(999), causing him to lose his erstwhile position among angels.

It is important to note that Adam in the above Quranic verses does not mean one man, but the whole human race. Mohamed Asad, in this regard, notes "the reference to all mankind which precedes the story of Adam in this surah makes it clear that his name symbolizes, in this context, the whole human race."(10). Iblis's evilness started with envy, then arrogance, and ended by vowing "I shall most certainly lie in ambush for them [human beings] all along Thy straight way, and shall most certainly fall upon them openly as well as in a manner beyond their ken,<sup>12</sup> and from their right and from their left: and most of them Thou wilt find ungrateful." (Al A'raf verses 16,17. trans. Asad). Iblis promised that with all possible means and from all directions, he would decoy human beings into the snares of evil.

However, it is important to note that Iblis or Satan is not fiction in Islamic beliefs. In the time of the prophet Muhammad peace be upon him, Ibn Masud Ibn 'Abbas and other companions of the prophets said that Iblis was one of the most honorable, most learned, and most pious among angels. His name was Azazil; one of the four famous possessors of wings, before Allah cursed him into Satan. Still, in our world, that only admits materialism, Iblis is the evil spirit that incites corruption, fatal division, immorality, and arrogance. The latter is the crux of the totalitarian conception, thus, whoever holds this quality works hand in glove with Iblis's track.

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### 4-3.2.2.1 Adam and Satan

Wassini Laredj in introducing Adam refers to the story of Iblis and reiterates the same story that positions Adam as the representative of human race, and Shaytan as the destroyer.

In the Tale, Adam says:

I am Adam, few of you know me or have heard of me. I reduced everything to my name and my path. I carried the ashes of Paradise and the wreckage of a woman whom I knew little and left the place at a rapid pace the day Shaytan triumphed and seized the whole throne he wanted from the beginning of creation. I didn't need to be expelled, I threw myself out of the top and left me to fall like a paper that had been dried up by time and weighed down by raindrops. Alone in the void of a universe that has no one to manage. (20)

Laredj is probably a secular writer whose relation to religion is complex. But the writer cannot escape the cultural and religious upbringing that prepared him for the perception of good and evil. And so, Laredj is also aware of the myth of the tyrant that emerges from the character of Satan, and this is how he founded a hierarchy on the top of which Little Brother lusts after power.

### 4-3.2.2.2 Another Product of Evil

To Orwell, evil is the Party, O'Brien, Ingsoc, and Oceania as a whole, but, they only represent part of the evilness. In other words, they are the product of Evil, of Big Brother. When the myth of Satan is examined in the novel, the parallel between Satan and O'Brien, as an evil character, cannot escape notice. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Malcolm Pittock says, "The regime is in some sense Satanic has, of course, been widely perceived. O'Brien has been compared to

Mephistopheles the celebrant in his flat of a kind of Black Mass with wine, wafer and ritual."(112)

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However, it is more important to note that Big Brother is also a satanic leader who has become the 'savior', the 'worshipped', the 'child hero', 'the guardian of Revolution', a prophet of "mistaken prophecies" (28), and the frontispiece of history book, and whose figure gazed sharply "as though some huge force were pressing down upon you -- something that penetrated inside your skull, battering against your brain, frightening you out of your beliefs, persuading you, almost, to deny the evidence of your senses"(55). Big Brother, thus, is Satan who destroys, corrupts, controls, incites, and rules with lust for power, arrogance, and no remorse.

In literary criticism, scholars agree on the myth of Orwell, which is known as the Orwellian tradition; this part is discussed deeply in the second chapter. Yet, the tradition generated the myth of Big Brother as the archetype of tyranny

### **4-3.3 The Myth of Big Brother in the Algerian Novel**

In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, George Orwell allowed Winston to question the truth about Big Brother. Consciousness gave him a faint edge of doubt that suggests many hypotheses which he can neither confirm nor refute. Orwell writes:

Big Brother figured as the leader and guardian of the Revolution since its very earliest days. His exploits had been gradually pushed backwards in time until already they extended into the fabulous world of the forties and the thirties, when the capitalists in their strange cylindrical hats still rode through the streets of London in great gleaming motor-cars or horse carriages with glass sides. There was no knowing how much of this legend was true and how much invented.(25)

According to Frye, "One of the central themes of demonic imagery is parody, the mocking of the exuberant play of art by suggesting its imitation in terms of "real life."" (147). In

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*Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Orwell attempts to belittle the legend of tyranny by revealing the sham beyond the myth of Big Brother.

In the second chapter of this study, it was discussed that Big Brother is not merely the government's power but also an allusion to Brendan Bracken; the minister of Information in England in the twentieth century's war, as he shares the same initials with Big Brother, and whom Orwell had aversion to. At this point, a hypothesis can be formed that Orwell made use of myth, in essence, to dismiss another. In Frye's conception, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* represents the "demonic human world" that "is a society held together by a kind of molecular tension of egos, a loyalty to the group or the leader which diminishes the individual, or, at best, contrasts his pleasure with his duty or honor." (ibid). and thus, the myth of evil in Oceania highlights the absurdities of the tragedy of the epoch and its invincible remote tyrants i.e. Bracken, Western hegemony (including imperialism and colonialism), or other more famous figures such as Stalin or Mussolini.

However, the myth of the tyrant transcends space and time to impact the vision of contemporary writers who used Big Brother as the archetype of totalitarianism and whose name speaks for himself. *The Tale of the Last Arab* is associated with Orwellian tradition not only in terms of its pessimism but also in creating a metafiction that invites a fidel successor of Big Brother to exorcise peace from the Arab region.

It is easy to detect the mimesis between Big Brother, Little Broz, and other tyrants from the 'real world' in the work of Orwell and Laredj. The two writers, however, are connected through the myth of tyranny that even an inexperienced reader would be aware of the common metafictional dimensions that Laredj self-consciously and intentionally used. Little Broz considers himself the grandson of Big Brother and therefore he allows himself authority and superiority because he is a descendant of a legend.

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Laredj celebrates the tyrant of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in 2084 as said Little Broz: "It's an exceptional year. One century has passed since the birth of Big Brother. The whole world celebrates this year, which the inhabitants of the citadel call the Year of the Marshal. My year. My grandfather Big Brother. He is my idol in life" (21). Even though, Laredj ascribes the little tyrant to the Blair family which is Orwell's real name (ibid). Yet, Little Broz often attributes himself to Big Brother he is one of the "great people who realize before others that the world doesn't change except with greatness and strength"(ibid).

Little Broz is obsessed with the myth of the tyrant and adopts the tactics of Big Brother to create his own legend. Elmiligi puts: "He is looking like Mussolini, he is a high-ranking military, Dr. Strangelove, bomb-loving maniacal figure with delusions of grandeur" and "He even claims as ancestry none other than Big Brother himself."(144) citizens of Amereupa also believe that Little Broz is a Big Brother breed, they have the same signs of a circular face, the same behavior, and the same reactions, and there are even those who exaggerate and swear that Little Broz is the natural son of Big Brother. And they weave many tales around it, including this one. (7)

Little Broz overtly bears the marks of totalitarianism and convinced of the superiority of his path. He said: "A human must become a legend, only then he has nothing to lose, but if he remains a human being, he becomes nothing. Today, everyone weaves a satirical tale, which reaches me daily with centaurs, and if most of it does not make me happy, it does not worry me either, because it feeds the legend." (Laredj 14) In this passage, Little Broz is also referring to the mockery he receives from allies and enemies because of his appearance. Laredj's satire is represented differently through Little Broz who lost his male organ in an accident, while the only way to assume masculinity is by implanting an Arab human penile. The irony is that "Little Broz can only claim manhood, with all its baggage of egotism,

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through the very Arabs he abhors enough to write "The only good Arab is a dead Arab" (Elmeligi 147).

Northrop Frye in the 'Theory of Symbols' argues that any form of literature cannot exist outside literature, by means that, "Poetry can only be made out of other poems; novels out of other novels." A creative writer, no matter who, can sketch nothing new on a blank paper because he/she is a human being. Laredj shaped his dystopia from an external fiction and another admonitory Nightmare predicted in Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

### 4-4 Symbolism in Dystopia/ Post-Apocalypse

Irony can be only felt when the symbolic elements are assessed. Orwell and Laredj's texts utilize an emblematic system that functions as an awakening of consciousness. Readers rely on these symbols to create the images intended to be seen; hazy but sharp.

#### 4-4.1 The symbol of 84

Following the satiric utopia of Orwell, the number 84 has become an ominous sign for writers and readers as well. The negative perception of the number is primarily due to the admonitory nightmare of the future of 1984 that Orwell anticipated. In literary studies, at least, 84 is no longer the natural number that follows 83 and precedes 85, it has become, in the words of Frye, a "communicable symbol" to mean "a typical or recurring image"(99). And thus, the repetition of the number 84 in the literary experience can no longer be called 'coincidence' because it, now, bears the marks of dystopia.

Thirty-five years after the publication of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, everyone expected Orwellian prophecies to strike in 1984. In the Bibliography of George Orwell, Dorian Lynskey reported a series of events that happened in 1984 and how the novel "almost as much impact on the eve of 1984 as it did when it was published in 1949."(qtd. in Lynskey 246) and "during 1983 and 1984, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* sold almost four million copies in

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sixty-two languages.” (247). On the 31st December 1983, Apple computers launched its first Macintosh with a striking commercial of Big Brother's face promising: “And you'll see why 1984 won't be like *1984*.” (qtd. in Lynskey 244). It was a twister to Orwell's warning to introduce a more promising age. The invention was, indeed, a premiere, but the fame of the ad is ascribed to the year 1984. In short, Lynskey argues “The “1984” commercial also demonstrated that the iconography of dystopia was now so well-established that it could be distilled into a sixty-second spot: the passive uniformed drones, the militarised police, the television screens, the generic totalitarian rhetoric, the lone rebel, the looming face” (246)

The number also inspired writers of world literature mainly those who were mostly concerned with the faults in their societal and political behavior. In 1978, Anthony Burgess paid tribute to George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, introducing a novel entitled *Nineteen Eighty-Five* that “the first half of the book is an idiosyncratic critique of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, driven by Burgess's conviction that the novel was fundamentally a black comedy about post-war Britain” (Lynskey 242). The number still inspired contemporary authors, including Harumi Murakami, who, in 2009, published the dystopia of 1Q84. The Japanese writer readapted Orwell's title using the Japanese Q instead of 9, whereas the former in Japanese is the homophone of the latter. In the novel, Murakami “set the action in 1984, beginning in April; and made noisy reference to Orwell in the context of parallel universes and religious cults.”(Lynskey 268)

The repetition of 84 in the dystopian genre creates a systematic mental training that expands the dark image of the number into a conventional archetype that takes place unconsciously in the reading (Frye 100). The Algerian writer made great use of Orwell's titles. Besides the imitative techniques from *Nineteen Eighty-Four* to reshape his book, and as far as “the forms of literature can no more exist outside literature than the forms of sonata and fugue and rondo can exist outside music”(Frye 97), Laredj's literature is no exception

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as the Algerian writer could not ignore the influence of the Orwellian tradition on his post-apocalypse.

The first part of Laredj's title reads 2084. A centenarian celebration of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and its dictator in the citadel of Améreupa. Laredj narrates, "On the occasion of the centenary of the birth of Big Brother, twenty million copies of George Orwell's novel *1984* were distributed around the world, and this blessing touched the citadel, of course. Although his real birth was before that, in the forties, when Orwell created it at the height of his crisis with the British Labour Party." (19) Therefore, the date in Laredj's title is an overt reference to Orwell.

### 4-4.2 Room 101: A Symbol of Torture

Room 101 is a chamber occupied for torture. "...anything! Not room 101 !"(165) screamed a detained prisoner. The room represents the decay of human beings as prisoners within it are exposed to their worst fear, i.e., Winston finds himself facing a cage full of the most loathed creatures: vicious rodents. A room that takes one "as deep down as it was possible to go"(Orwell 199)

The inspiration of the room is the outcome of Orwell's personal experience as a journalist and policeman. The previous totalitarian regimes inspired his vision of a torture room that also embodies the complete loss of personal identity. Orwell, as a journalist, worked for the BBC during World War II. There was a conference room called room 101 and it is assumed that it was a source of inspiration that brought a similar ominous place in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Nevertheless, Orwell relied on his previous literary readings to create a psychological terror, including Franz Kafka's *The Trial* (1925), Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Notes from the Underground* (1864) which explores existential suffering that is at the core of room 101, and

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Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We* where the protagonist's last words ruin individualism, and celebrate "antiness."(Mikhailov 54)

The rat torture in room 101 leads Winston to undergo a reprogramming to purify his mind from thoughtcrime. He is expected "though never told so directly, to break his emotional bond with Julia: To "love" Big Brother, to become one with him, is tantamount to betraying any human bond."(Gottlieb 55) O'Brien is a déjà vu totalitarian figure and one of the representatives of historical cruelty with a touch of modern psychiatry. According to Pittock "the torture in Room 101 stretches from Imperial China to the late twentieth century."(111) yet, the originality of Room 101, or the dystopia of Oceania in general is the product of Orwell's experiences, ideas his sadism, his imperial guilt, his sexual encounters (some of them clearly sordid), his fear of atomic war, his Cold War hysteria,<sup>18</sup> and his experience of Communist tactics in Spain and of censorship at the BBC; his revulsion at rats; his previous support for non- democratic socialist revolution; his war-time suppression of his own previous anti-war position" and his health malaise while writing *Nineteen Eighty-Four*; "all these disparate experiences not only help to form a coherent whole but give to the novel a complex resonance unique both in Orwell's own fiction and in Utopian or Dystopian literature generally."(112) argues Pittock.

Room 101 also represents the ultimate power of the totalitarian regime over the citizens as it eavesdrops on their internal feebleness: 'Sometimes,' she said, 'they threaten you with something something you can't stand up to, can't even think about. And then you say, "Don't do it to me, do it to somebody else, do it to So-and-so."'(Orwell 205). Although Harold Bloom finds Room 101 a schoolboy's fantasy, it still represents one of the stage of acceptance as O'Brien calls it, which seems, to scholars like Gottlieb, as the mystic stage of knowing God, "My *me* is God: nor do I know my selfhood except in God"(55).

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### 4-4.3 Animalistic Symbolism

Animals have long been used as a source of inspiration in folkloric tales, fiction, and poetry thanks to the pivotal role it plays in the understanding of the hierarchy and in proving once more that survival is for the fittest. In literature, narratives like *Kalila wa Dimna* or *Les Fables of le Fontaine* educated readers through their metaphors. In the twentieth-century, Orwell's use of animalistic images goes, of course, without saying. *Animal Farm* (1944) is the tour de force of the wartime period to symbolize tyrants as pigs, and the imagery developed in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* to other mysterious tyrants, while keeping the symbol of some animals to flow forth. Laredj as well is aware of the powerful metaphor of animals, and thus, a fair share of the novel's characterization is attributed to them.

#### 4-4.3.1 The Grey Wolf Ramad

From the beginning of the novel, Adam refers to himself as the descendant of a wolf called Ramad. This idea is prone to various interpretations as the writer is using myth and symbolism, respectively. Adam throughout the narrative hails, celebrates, glorifies, and pays tribute to the wolf that, in the middle of the desert, fades in and out like a mirage. Ramad, it is called, an Arabic name that means ash. The latter summons another myth that is recurrent in the Arab culture which is the Phoenix. The novel is loaded with signs that approves the probability of this analysis.

The choice of the wolf is intentionally selected and its name Ramad also suggests the colour grey that is in Arabic Ramadi. Laredj made it clear that he is referring to this kind of wolves. In the following passage Adam said:

You are Ramad and you only resemble yourself. You are not the blue wolf behind which Genghis Khan's dynasty came. Nor the wolf of the Chinese and Japanese who see you as their protector from the dominion of fear and from other animals. Nor you are the wolf that

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destroyed the world to rebuild it as the Northern Europeans have. You will not be the wolf Fenrir who kills many gods, including Odin in the twilight of powers, while his sons devour the sun and the moon before another real and human world grows up. You are not the guardian of the dead as that of the Sioux tribes. You're my grandfather. My model and my path in the narrow time. My freedom that I don't want to be stolen from me. A glimmer of light deep into the darkness. Run and I'll keep tracing you, even if it's blood, smell, or breath. You are my master in the highlands. and my idol (75)

Grey wolves, however, are known to be the most surviving species that are able to adapt to different ecological areas: forests, deserts, or mountains. Today, scientific studies find that Gray wolves live in some parts of the world as their inhabitants have been destroyed by humans who intrude to their areas. Their eradication was due to the contact with humans who found them threatening and killed the majority of them. However, they are still not considered endangered according to the IUCN. These wolves are known for their endurance and protection of one another. They are furious, defensive, and resist all circumstances.

In the narrative, Ramad howls inside Adam. he lives within him as his grandmother explained: "As you stretch your gaze away, you see him running non-stop, and whenever night falls, you hear him howling as he crosses the boundaries of the place. Whenever you close your eyes, you feel that He dwells in you." (Laredj 31) He is eternal, immortal, and the guardian of the high hills who "remained authentic and master of himself." (Laredj 30).

The Algerian writer also attributes some supernatural abilities to Adam as he is the offspring of a wolf. Laredj puts From is overwhelming ability to smell, Adam knew everything, including the smell of deadly substances, such as chemical weapons, and their quality with precision. He is sure that this ability is not human, he inherited it from his first grandfather the wolf Ramad."(Laredj 31)Everyone in the citadel believes that Adam is,

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unlike the wretched Arabs special, and probably this is due to the belonging he claims. Little Broz finds this attribute mysterious and questions: "I don't know from where he got this wolf that he calls Ramad, and ascribes his belonging to him as his descendant, and feels his strange closeness. In this, also, he is different from the rest of the inhabitants of Arabia who saw in the camel and the horse their model."(7)

While explaining this, the survival of Adam seems reasonable and clarifies his quality to be the last Arab. The wolf is a symbol associated with positive and negative qualities. Yet, Laredj labels him with loyalty and courage. That being said, Adam's belonging to a wolf named Ramad is a remarkable concurrence especially that from ash comes rebirth.

### **4-4.3.2 The Phoenix**

In the following passage, Adam states "I fetch the ashes for one ember that finally reassures me that something in life is still alive."(14). Ash is a word frequently used in the novel sometimes as the given name to the wolf, other times its literal meaning triumphs. Be it as it may, Adam seeks life in ash which refreshes the mythological register, again. To Waugh, the use of myth is one of the ways to reinforce literary fiction, and argues that "the use of literary and mythical allusion which reminds the reader of the existence of this world outside everyday time and space, of its thoroughgoing textuality and intertextuality."(112)

Adam's faith in life from ash uncovers the myth of the Phoenix. The latter is a mythological bird believed to be immortal and constantly regenerates. In Arabic, the Phoenix is known as Al 'Anqa'e because of its long white 'Onq or neck. The myth also tells that there is only one phoenix in the world that lived in the Arabian peninsula for over 500 years and when it is close to death, it went to Phoenicia (Lebanon today) and built a nest at the top of the tallest palm and fell in flames. The myth, however, tells that from his ashes appears a worm that turns into a cocoon and from there a new phoenix is born again.

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Of course, it is a daunting task to determine the primarily source of mythologies, and the myth of the phoenix is no exception. Classical studies report that the supernatural bird is originated in Egypt known under the name of Benu meaning "to rise radiantly" whereas "death and resurrection form the core of the phoenix myth: the old phoenix dies and the young phoenix generates itself from its decaying body, or the old bird burns itself and the young one arises from its ashes" (Broek 16, 20) The act of the phoenix survival is reminiscent to Christ's resurrection and according to the Catholic belief, asserts R. Van den Broek, the phoenix "symbolizes renewal in general as well as the sun, time, the Roman Empire, metempsychosis, consecration, resurrection, life in the heavenly Paradise, Christ, Mary, virginity, the exceptional man, and certain aspects of the Christian life"(9).

Laredj used the mythic archetype of the phoenix by referring to its symbol which is ash to delve into the core of human psychology and the collective unconscious. In this vein, John Barth puts:

Since myths themselves are among other things poetic distillations of our ordinary psychic experience and therefore point always to daily reality, to write realistic fictions which point always to mythic archetypes is in my opinion to take the wrong end of the mythopoeic stick. . . . Better to address the archetypes directly. (qtd in. Waugh 72)

And thus, the Algerian writer responded to John Barth's call to engage directly with the archetype instead of the myth. Adam is the Arab's only phoenix, the last hope for resurrection, with his rare, eccentric, and strong character. This also mirrors Laredj's interest in Arabic folklore and myth along the whole narrative process, which also hints at the writer's pride in his cultural background.

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### 4-4.3.3 The Tortoise Hawwa'

The symbol of animals dominates the novel. Again, Laredj uses the animal as the symbol and the name as the archetype. Adam is allowed to have a pet in Amereupa as part of human rights. He has, thus, a tortoise that he called Hawwa' meaning Eve in Arabic. In the Algerian culture, the presence of a tortoise in the house brings protection from evil. In other cultures, the turtle is regarded as a symbol of knowledge, wisdom, and longevity. The latter was probably Laredj's use of a turtle as Adam's pet because turtles are among the shelled animals resistant to all sorts of disasters including nuclear.

To Elmiligi "the satire of the survival of the tortoise can be seen within the context of the Darwinism that runs through the motif of animal symbolism in the novel."(155) This idea also hints at survival and evolution. The use of the turtle as a symbol of endurance refutes the law of the jungle which believes that the most able or the most powerful will survive. The longevity of turtles relies on their endurance and adaptability in the face of struggles. And so is the survival of the last Arab.

Of course, the name of the tortoise adds more parodic elements to the narrative. One Adam and two Eves: Eva and Hawwa'. The inspiration, again, come from the religious story of the first humans of earth that Laredj incorporated in his post-apocalyptic perverted totalitarian world. the Algerian writer dropped hints at the story of Adam and Eve through the name of the Last Arab, first, then that of the humanitarian agent Eva: the archetypal Eve, compassionate, curious, strong, and rebellious. The latter serves the needs of the former protects his rights, and becomes his sole female companion in the deserted land. Just as God created Eve for Adam to accompany him, so is the relationship between Adam and Eva in Laredj's account. Yet, Adam's sin lies not in Eva's temptation but in his invention: the Pocket Bomb.

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The second Eve Hawwa' underlines another relationship between Adam and Eve unlike the one with Eva. Hawwa' is the fidele female, the one that Adam named, and "From that day, he owned her heart and understood its isolation and mystery. From time to time he pours what is in his heart to her. They even thought he was talking to dangerous parties" or is driven to madness, but they realized that he is only having long conversations with the tortoise that he cannot share with anybody else.(33) When he is asked whether Hawwa' understands what he is saying, Adam answers "Language is not only words but movements, sensations, breaths and touches, she certainly sees and feels. Tenderness, like violence, reaches her, seperately. I think that like all of us, she hears with one ear to others and with the other ear only to her heart. In the end, she decides."(96)

The presence of two Eves in the life of Adam has two significances. First, his sexual involvement with Eva discloses his infidelity to his wife Amaya who is supposed to be the love of his life. Next, there is the ease he finds only with Hawwa' which reduces his loneliness and anxieties, yet, her death alerts Adam that he might be next.

### 4-4.3.4 Rodents

"Rats!" murmured Winston. "They're all over the place" answered Julia (100). Geroge Orwell also loaded *Nineteen Eighty-Four* with communicable symbols, what Frye called an archetype. Rats, throughout history, have become a sign of pandemics, pollution, diseases, corruption, and evil. Orwell had always abhorred rodents, and before *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, he wrote, "If there is one thing I hate more than another it is a rat running over me in the darkness"(qtd. in Lynskey 27) In the novel, however, he puts "always away, away, away from the rats"(202)

Rats are associated with pests diseases that devastated Europe in the 17th and 18th century, and then lately in the Twentieth century. In Orwell's dystopia, they represent

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Winston's biggest fear and the Party's misconduct. Room 101 is the place where the person's worst fear exists. Winston knew that his trial would include beastlike creatures and rodents. If we consider rats to be beasts as opposed to human creatures, then O'Brien is reminiscent of the rage rats who were also ready to tear Winston's face. "They are a form of pressure that you cannot withstand." (200) asserts O'Brien, who knows that he can only defeat Winston's free spirit and love for Julia with nasty rodents.

In the scene of torturing Winston, O'Brien mocks Winston's fear of rats, but also brags about its power to tear a face or attack babies. He said

'The rat, ... although a rodent, is carnivorous. You are aware of that. You will have heard of the things that happen in the poor quarters of this town. In some streets a woman dare not leave her baby alone in the house, even for five minutes. The rats are certain to attack it. Within quite a small time they will strip it to the bones. They also attack sick or dying people. They show astonishing intelligence in knowing when a human being is helpless.' (201)

And thus, rodents become associated not only with disease but also with evil, self-betrayal, and betrayal of others as Winston frantically screams and begs, "Do it to Julia! Do it to Julia! Not me! Julia! I don't care what you do to her. Tear her face off, strip her to the bones. Not me! Julia! Not me!" (202) In addition, the rats can also symbolize colonies as they multiply rapidly and take over the place with plague. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, however, they were a means of hegemony used by the oppressor to colonize the mind, rather.

### 4-4.3.5 Thrush Birds

In the earliest dystopia of Zamyatin's *We*, nature, animal trees, and birds represent the irrational world. This is because the former cannot be controlled or manipulated. Nature and its elements are the master of themselves; they are out of control, which is considered obtrusive to the totalitarian ideology.

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Birds are a mode of communication. In the past, they were a means of correspondence, and their nature symbolizes free spirit, hope and peace who pass on “from body to body the vitality which the Party did not share and could not kill.”(153). In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Orwell fascinated his protagonist with the singing of the thrush bird in the woods, a source of originality with a considerable performance of virtuosity.

According to Randi Minetor, the thrush is “the symbol of courage in a storm” and “the bird that will sing even in the face of wind and rain”(208). Winston, in the woods with Julia, admired not only the musical variations of the thrush but also its freedom, courage, and self-destruction. In the woods, Winston transgresses the Party's laws by having a love affair with Julia. Thus, the symbol of the thrush, again, hints at Desiderius Erasmus's Latin saying *Turdus malum sibi ipse cacat* to mean “the thrush himself excretes his own trouble”(Minetor 208). This has become a universal metaphor for self-destruction. The thrush is known for its fondness for mistletoe and holly berries. It consumes the berries and excretes its seeds onto tree branches, allowing the mistletoe to thrive in the forest. However, Erasmus's saying refers to the sticky nature of the mistletoe berries used by hunters to make birdlimes to trap birds. Thus, the thrush inadvertently drives itself to destruction.(Minetor ibid)

Similarly, Winston's love for Julia, or probably not even this, his loathing of Big Brother, the Party, and the Ingsoc ideology excretes his extermination as he is ready to do anything to contradict them, and “Anything that hinted at corruption always filled him with a wild hope” and “If he could have infected the whole lot of them with leprosy or syphilis, how gladly he would have done so! Anything to rot, to weaken, to undermine!”(87)

Orwell never liked the noisy urban life. He always appreciated the calm life of the gardens and detested the machine worship. In an essay written in 1946, he puts

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I think that by retaining one's childhood love of such things as trees, fishes, butterflies and . . . toads, one makes a peaceful and decent future a little more probable, and that by preaching the doctrine that nothing is to be admired except steel and concrete, one merely makes it a little surer that human beings will have no outlet for their surplus energy except in hatred and leader-worship. (240)

For Claeys, Orwell's utopia is a piece of land to 'muck about' with his hands, to listen to bird calls, to go fishing. He liked to watch clouds. He did not like crowds. He liked isolation."(442) This exposes the writer's admiration for the thrush as one of the rare, beautiful elements in the corrupt, materialistic life of Oceania.

### 4-5 The Protagonist Trial

the most conspicuous theme in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is the punishment of its protagonist Winston which takes a large share of the narrative. According to Erika Gottlieb, the trial is a common theme in previous dystopian protagonists in Zamyatin's *We*, as the first dystopian text to assess the tradition, Huxley's *Brave New World*, Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*, or Vaunnegut's *Piano Player* which revealed the absurdity of the postmodern epoch. The trial, however, is a symbol of the deconstruction of individualism that juxtaposes the totalitarian ideology. It is, thus a sign of annihilation of "selfhood, consciousness, loyalty, and memory" (Gottlieb 20)

As far as *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is concerned, the novel ends with the protagonist under rigid examination of O'Brien to decide guilt, or more precisely, to rectify the errors in Winston's thoughts, purify his mind, and ensure he is one of them. A mythical ending of anyone opposes communism in dystopia.

Orwell, like Zamyatin, opposes the archetypal triumphant ending of myths. The hero is defeated and evil triumphs. Christopher Collins, in his analysis of myth in the primary

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dystopia of *We*, argues that the dystopian context undermines the rebellious character; the savior of the hoi polloi to a 'banally inferior' situation. Winston in Oceania is the "flaw in the pattern" and "a strain that must be wiped out"(Orwell 179) that shall be converted, captured, and reshaped. Like Zamyatin's *We*, Orwell's dystopia also conducts a topsy-turvy myth with Winston whose heroism, tantamount to D-503's, was a fiasco. This draws an archetypal ending for dystopian narratives of the twentieth century. Collins puts:

[ The ]myth is peopled with strong, serious figures engaged in a deadly archetypal struggle. But the myth does not have the ending we expect—the maternal monster survives, the *anima* dies, Perseus does not slay the Medusa and save Andromeda, and a false Self triumphs. Not only does psychic wholeness remain unachieved, but the protagonist, a representative of modern man, loses what little human qualities and possibilities he possessed in the beginning. (78)

Orwell not only refutes the myth of heroism but also spreads the nitric acid of irony in the protracted execution of Winston. Behind the mockery, Orwell was making a telling point that the ideology of the Party is different than the old systems. Winston's retribution does not mean his destruction but a healing process. In the beginning of Winston's trial, O'Brien explained to him that he is detained because he is unwell. He said:

Shall I tell you why we have brought you here? To cure you ! To make you sane ! Will you understand, Winston, that no one whom we bring to this place ever leaves our hands uncured? We are not interested in those stupid crimes that you have committed. The Party is not interested in the overt act: the thought is all we care about. We do not merely destroy our enemies, we change them.(Orwell 177)

The trial, in this vein, seeks to change the heresy rather than persecute it, and so, victory is for the Party and shame for the disobedient. Unlike "the command of the old despotisms was "Thou shalt not". The command of the totalitarians was "Thou shalt". Our command is "Thou art"" (179) asserts O'Brien .

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The trial of the old days, he elucidates, was erroneous, because the punished persons, despite the public torture and humiliation before getting shot, restored dignity through martyrdom because their confessions were “extorted and untrue”. The Party is more cautious about this fact, and thus, asserts O’Brien “We do not make mistakes of that kind. All the confessions that are uttered here are true. We make them true. And above all we do not allow the dead to rise up against us” and promised Winston that “Posterity will never hear of you. You will be lifted clean out from the stream of history. We shall turn you into gas and pour you into the stratosphere. 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.”(178)

### **4-5.1 The Absurdity of Punishment**

In a post-apocalyptic world, the novel’s protagonist is not punished but is destined to nihilism. Living in Amereupa (which is the vision of America in 2084) means to be, like Adam’s tortoise, “lost in a space full of uselessness” (33). It was previously mentioned in the third chapter of this research that nihilism is part of the fundamental themes of the post-apocalyptic vision. America, according to Anthony Harrigan, is a nihilistic society that denies “any meaning or purpose in existence-or, more exactly, the triumph of nihilism in societies of the Western world. It is a phenomenon identical with atheism as it denies the existence of any permanent ethical order” (qtd. in Nouioua 39). Living in the meaningless and uselessness kills the free spirit. Adam “cannot live in meaninglessness. Nihilism killed him”(49). He resists it by engaging in sport activities. In the following passage, he shows gratitude to his friend Smith who saved him from “the isolation of nihilism that [he has] resisted until now with sports and confinement within memory.”(48)

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“On Nihilism” Baudrillard suggests description of today's nihilism as “one of transparency”. He put:

Nihilism no longer wears the dark, Wagnerian, Spenglerian, fuliginous colors of the end of the century. It no longer comes from a Weltanschauung of decadence nor from a metaphysical radicalism born of the death of God and of all the consequences that must be taken from this death. Today's nihilism is one of transparency. (159)

This is accurate in the citadel of Amereupa. The lines between the imagined and the real are more and more obscured. In Laredj's tale, “Idealism is paralleled with nihilism.” While the latter is desperate about traditional beliefs and truths and summons for a reevaluation of life, the former seeks significance and value in life by pushing individuals to shape their meanings and standards. Therefore Adam suggests “Idealism needs to be armed with a some reality” this statement is directly answered by Yona, his Japanese wife, who opposes his project of the Pocket Bom, “When Idealism is armed, it loses its nobility, and becomes fatal”(62)

Be it dystopia, postcolonial, or post-apocalyptic narrative, the subjects who live under oppressive regimes often seek collusion with revolutionary groups. This does not mean that their attitudes toward the revolution is the same but, be it it Winston or Adam, none of them succumbs without resistance.

### **4-6 Resisting Dystopia**

Resistance in dystopia rises from minorities, often from underground groups. According to Alexander Voronsky, these kinds of rebellions are merely “a narrowly individualistic protest, as a result of which the foundations will not be shaken” because writers of dystopia only aim to “juxtapose to thoroughly regulated life moments of individual rebellion, small

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and insignificant and intimate, which the author nonetheless values and remembers most of all”(35)

Dystopia, according to Lepore, “is a fiction of resistance” and a “new literature of radical pessimism” (2017). Throughout the rebellion that Winston tries to perform while deliberately unleashing the power of consciousness, he is, to a large extent, refusing to acquiesce to the Party's rules and ideology. His rebellion is firm and rooted, especially after meeting Julia. The latter is one of the forms of political defiance with whom Winston adamantly embraced the incriminating thing called love. Laurence Lerner in “Totalitarianism: A New Story? An Old Story?” asserts that “It is essential to have, protagonists who commit sex as an act of political defiance, who, drink coffee, buy antiques, and build a human microcosm that we then see destroyed.” (77) in other words, that it is necessary to satisfy readers' zeal by offering a hero or a heroine who stands against inhumanity. However, he also suggests two readings:

First, that this is a technical matter concerning the writing of fiction: There are certain prerequisites for the creation of a convincing hero and heroine, and Orwell was a competent enough craftsman to realise this. Or second, that literature is the test of theory, that a vision of society which cannot produce a convincing hero is no longer describing a recognisable human situation. Without Winston and Julia, Ingsoc is just an anthill. (ibid)

Orwell's dystopia, in this vein, anticipates a societal vision that can only produce deficient heroes, small and insignificant.

The triumph of individualism in dystopias is doomed to failure. It starts with small groups, the majority of which belong to the proles, whom Orwell still keeps hope; “If there is hope, wrote Winston, it lies in the proles” (48), who represent 85% of the population in Oceania, but, they are unfortunately unaware of their strength. All they need, Orwell puts, is “to rise

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up and shake themselves like a horse shaking off flies. If they chose, they could blow the Party to pieces tomorrow morning. Surely sooner or later it must occur to them to do it? And yet-!" (ibid)

Resistance fails in dystopia because it rises from the top and not from the roots. Orwell argues that "Revolutions would 'only effect a radical improvement when the masses are alert and know how to chuck out their leaders as soon as the latter have done their job.'" (qtd in. Claeys 407). In Oceania, the Party aims at dehumanizing its citizens and dismissing them from real humanity. Room 101 is the best concrete example in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* to illustrate this idea. Being humane in these societies threatens the stability of such regimes because humanity involves emotions of compassion, benevolence, clemency, and understanding that may grow the serious sense of rebellion and resistance. The elimination of such emotions guarantees the existence of inert states and destroys any attempts that contradict its monopoly.

Nevertheless, to rebel against the totalitarian system is different than resisting the colonial forces, but this is, according to Raymon Williams, the flaw of Orwell's thinking about resistance in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. He argues that "there is an even larger error in the exclusion of new forces of resistance: most notably the national- liberation and revolutionary movements of what he knew as the colonial world." (18). It means that the failure to consider other forms of resistance as the ones in the previously colonized areas, especially for a profile like that of Orwell, who spent much of his life in Burma, is a substantial error.

### 4-6.1 Resistance from a Postcolonial Perspective

In Laredj's account, there is a uniqueness in the resistance discourse which, unlike Orwell's Winston who is concerned about individualism and autonomy, Adam targets the liberation of a whole nation. His resistance is against the Western hegemony and its

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manipulation of history. Adam resists the deserted place, the loss of identity and the prescribed one, and inferiority. As a postcolonial text, it is important to approach resistance from that angle. Laredj is among the writers to use language as a medium to replace the colonizer's discourse. In this vein, the Algerian writer relies on folkloric tales and dialect.

Adam is born in Algeria. At least, this is what he remembers. He grew up and studied in Western high institutions, and he has become, by virtue of his work, an American physicist. Nevertheless, Laredj loaded his protagonist with nationalist virtues, albeit not patriot. Adam shares culture, history, language, and other things thereof. This is illustrated through his perseverance in writing Arabic and documenting history from his own viewpoint. Following Spivak's theory that "the subaltern cannot speak," as far as representation has not withered away" (308). This means that the last Arab remains the subaltern unless he changes the predominant colonial discourse.

Unlike Winston, who is compelled to use Newspeak, Adam's resistance is shaped by the recovery of his voice and agency by writing in a language that almost died. Laredj writes "On the phone screen appeared some writings in Arabic which has become the language of minorities, hardly used after it has been removed from many international institutions." (105). This puzzled Little Broz, who "[wonders] how an American insists on writing in a language that died a long time ago"(9). Adam, however, resists the mockery and puts forward, "I enjoy writing these volcanoes with their ashes. Language is no longer a problem." (ibid). however; Ashcroft et al. "view writing as an act of resistance that assumes the existence of a center and margin(s)."(qtd. in Sahed 71)

Parts of the novel's discourse are derived from regional folktales and oral tradition, which, to a certain extent, justifies Laredj's choice to use the word Hikaya, which means a Tale. The narrative incorporates traditional proverbs like "nuftar bīh qabl mā yata' ashā biya" to mean

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"Make hay while the sun shines", or "wāsh ydīr ālmiyyet qadām ghasālu" that means "There is nothing to be done". Ballads like the one that children sing when it rains:

Dialectal Arabic	English Version
yaḥ nuwww. ṣabī ṣabī maṭṣabīsh 'aliya ḥatā yjī khūyā Hamū wa yghatīnī ba zerbiyā yaḥ nuwww	Rain, rain, go away, Come again another day. Little Johnny wants to play, Rain, rain, go away!

*Tab. 4 - 1 An Algerian Popular Ballad*

Tales like the one narrated by his grandmother prove Darwin wrong in his homo sapiens theory that ascribes human beings to apes. These elements, however, reflect Laredj's values and traditions of culture to convey a deeper meaning of Adam's identity strengthen a deeper connection with his readers. Ultimately, this enriches the narrative texture and defies the colonial discourse.

Even though, Adam's identity is still ambivalent. His hybrid upbringing affected, to a certain extent, his identity. In Amereupa, he is considered American whenever his Pocket Bomb is debated. But an Arab, when his belonging is being wretched.

In the narrative, we either find this: "The American researcher Adam Gharib is still working rigorously on his project, which the American military institution adopts."(94) While we also encounter this: "I am Adam. For those who don't know me. From a dynasty destined to come to an end like extinct species or endangered ones. He spent years in laboratories, isolation, and fear, until the day he came across writing verbally, in a language that is now dead, and a tortoise lost in a space full of uselessness."(33). The self-identity crisis and the feeling of inadequacy in Adam's persona is a sort of resistance as far as Adam

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assumes ambivalence. Homi Bhabha, in his essay "Signs Taken for Wonders" defined resistance in the following terms:

Resistance is not necessarily an oppositional act of political intention, nor is it the simple negation or the exclusion of the "content" of another culture, as difference once perceived ... [but] the effect of an ambivalence produced within the rules of recognition of dominating discourses as they articulate the signs of cultural difference (149).

Adam attempts to understand the cultural differences imposed on him, especially the rules and norms of the citadel of Amereupa. His consciousness of these differences is a key point in his resistance.

### **4-7 Conclusion**

In the middle of crisis born legends. In the making of utopian societies born dystopia. Both Orwell and Laredj's works reflect an existential crisis that proves the socialist society wrong. Both, however, were much concerned about the free spirit of the individual in an erroneous world. This chapter finds that from myth and history stems the stylization of the two narrative texts under scrutiny. The tension of their signs, images, symbols, and approach to the revolution enables both texts to generate a dark vision. Satiric language contributes to the play the irony in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* which allows the reader to understand the mockery behind the utopian project. Whereas Laredj's use of popular language and the mimicry of his local dialect within the literary text is part of the postcolonial narrativity that empowers the analysis of history, the subject, and the concept of dominant.

# **General Conclusion**

### General Conclusion

This research has discussed the emergence of dystopian and post-apocalyptic texts in two periods of time and by two authors whose language is enough to determine the difference and the position of their literature. While George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* contributed to the foundation of the genre in the twentieth century, Waciny Laredj's *2084: The Tale of the Last Arab* has become a gift bestowed to Arabic literature, contributing to the science-fiction genre written in Arabic.

The analysis of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *2084: The Tale of the Last Arab* confirms that the fissures in the political and social systems have become visible enough to anticipate the deterioration of a whole society. A deeper scrutiny of the novels revealed the link between the two texts and confirmed the imitated components from Orwell in Laredj's account. This does not, however, attribute originality to Orwell, who his predecessors well influenced, but it confirms that literature shapes literature and novels shape novels.

Nearly nine decades since its publication, Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* still fits the discussion on political manipulation, propaganda, paucity of individualism, control of thought, and the myth of the leader. On the other hand, it is a daunting duty for postcolonial writers like Waciny Laredj to engage in such debates due to the few attempts primarily made in science fiction. Also, the complexities of postcolonial societies, culture, language, literature, and politics ultimately have an impact on comparative literary studies. Nevertheless, the two narratives interrogate the validity of the totalitarian state.

This research finds that Orwell is derivative of the Russian novel *We* by Yevgeny Zamyatin, of his personal experience while serving imperialism in Burma, of the spread of propaganda that he criticized heavily as a journalist, most importantly, of the political dilemma and the lust for power that was witnessed in Orwell's epoch including Stalin's

## General Conclusion

regime, Hitler's conquests, communism and socialism's fainting of the human soul, and of the excessive mechanization that changed the world drastically.

From the other hand, this research proved Laredj's *Tale of the Last Arab* as a metafictional narrative, deriving its protagonist from Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and its protagonist from Zamyatin's *We*. However, the Algerian novel stands by itself with a different vision that has not been predicted before for the future of the Arab world. It has been concluded, thus, that *2084: The Tale of the Last Arab* can become a standard reading for modern Arabic literary texts and courses on Arabic science fiction, historical accounts, post-apocalyptic narratives, and mainly, postcolonial studies as the text offers exciting stimulus for a postcolonial discussion.

This research has also shown that both imagery and philosophy influence the literary world equally, for Orwell's artistry and philosophical depth remain fresh and include a totalitarian view that is still valid for the analysis of despotism even in contemporary times. Consequently, Laredj works on dark imagery and reflects upon the different philosophies that fuel his pessimistic vision. The discussion of the future in the Arab region seems to be reminiscent of its colonial past, which summons an urgent consideration of intricate topics, some of which are identity, Self/Other dichotomy, and history, and explores a nihilistic crisis which draws the link between post-apocalyptic outcome and passed events in the MENA region in the last decade. On that account, Laredj successfully deconstructed the dominant colonial discourse by challenging its truth and doubting its validity while simultaneously admonishing readers against the possibility of a disastrous end.

Nevertheless, there is a need for research on science fiction, dystopia, utopia, or post-apocalyptic literature in Arabic. As far as fiction about the future is concerned, and following the knowledge I've developed during my research on that topic, the lack of Arabic literary

## General Conclusion

works in the field cannot escape notice. There is an underscored gap in the literary canon of Arabic literature compared to the Western one. The vision of the future can be foretold from multiple perspectives, and an Eastern outlook would offer new alternatives that enrich the imagery and the philosophy of such visions. In this vein, this research will rely on various sources by Western and Arab scholars to offer various standpoints and positions and contribute significantly to the comparison.

Susan Bassnett's *Comparative Literature: A Critical Introduction* served as a tool to approach two texts that meet at some points and diverge at many. Gregory Claeys's *Dystopia: A Natural History*, Ian Campbell's *Arabic Science Fiction*, Wessam Elmiligi's *Dystopia in Arabic Speculative Fiction*, and Kamal Abu Dib's *Al-Adab al-'ajā'ibī wa 'ālam al-gharā'ibī* (*The Imagination Unbound*) were the most used in the conceptualization of speculative fiction, science fiction, and the emergence of the bad city in both Arabic and English literature. Other books, MA and PhD dissertations, and articles support this research to move from a mere simple analysis toward deeper disciplines such as history and politics. Francis Fukuyama's *The End of History and the Last Man* exposed what he calls "the logic of modern science" and "the struggle for recognition" as the forces that determined human history, which also seems visible in the conceptualization of history in Orwell and Laredj's texts. Part of the discussion allows historical events to intervene as strong mechanisms that led to deterioration, i.e. World Wars, totalitarian regimes, communism and socialism, imperialism, and, moving to the twenty-first century, the phenomenon of the Arab Spring. The latter will rely on the chapters of *Middle Eastern Minorities and the Arab Spring: Identity and Community in the Twenty-First Century* that provide a causal connection between past events and the future vision of Laredj.

## General Conclusion

The first chapter detected the gap between Western literature and Arabic literature at the level of science-fiction productions. It accentuated the causes that led to such disparity and finds that Arab writers do not imagine dystopia because they already have a real one. It also found that there are various disregarded Arabic science-fiction stories. Yet, there is a hierarchy in literature on the top of which Western literary works reign. In contrast, Arabic literature is anchored at the periphery, waiting in hope for translation to have mercy on it.

The second chapter discussed the dystopian elements and analyzed the two selected texts with comparison and criticism. It found that the struggle between the two pessimistic views concerns primarily the future of individualism and the downfall of virtue in the omnipresence of fallacy and vice. This consequently declares the decline of ideals and escorts readers with evidence to engage with complex themes such as history, identity, memory, trial, and survival. At this level, this part of the research underscored the similarity between Orwell and Laredj's protagonists.

The third chapter revealed Orwell and Laredj's attempts to deconstruct the master/colonial narrative that allegedly promised utopia at the expense of freedom and autonomy. Again, Orwell and Laredj shared a principled aversion toward propaganda, manipulation of history, and obliteration that affect identity and belonging. The latter is the most worrying matter that occupies a large share in both texts. The two last men in Orwell and Laredj's fiction go through an identity crisis caused primarily by the knowledge/power nexus that generates history and thus affects who they truly are. It concluded that when society is in the grip of a totalitarian system, fragmentation feels at home.

The last chapter examined the stylization of Orwell and Laredj that seamlessly blend mythical aspects and symbols that have become archetypal tools of communication and served as inexhaustible material for the process of 'reading' and 'understanding'. This

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allowed readers to reflect upon their own reality, question the foreground and the background, and link the past with a future that is redolent with everything that is dystopian. This chapter also revealed that revolution is an important element in dystopian worlds, as human nature can never acclimate to despotism forever. Still, it also found that revolution and rebellion are stronger in the narrative of postcolonial writers. The end of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* annihilated the existence of the last man in Europe; however, Laredj kept ounces of hope through an open ending for the last Arab. The failure of revolution means the failure of utopia in Oceania, but in the Arab region, the potential of survival is utopia per se.

Comparative literature as a discipline has never been enough to lead comparativeness adequately, as the practical work relies on other levels of Nationalism, Culture, Women's studies, Semiotics, and Postcolonial theory, which changes the perception of general literature. Every literature today strives for its own existence. Laredj's text does not need to be annexed to Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* to give it more value. It is a literature that can stand on its own with no suggestions to be worth more. At this point, the Algerian novel is regarded from the umbrella of nationalism and postcolonial perspective. Otherwise, Laredj's *2084: The Tale of the Last Arab* would be a mirage in the omnipresence of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

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**Abstract:** Speculative fiction deliberately appeared, not by chance. Though its execution oscillates between fantasy, science fiction, or utopia/dystopia dyads, its influence is hitherto salutary partly because it expands the horizons of culture, partly because it is at the helm of traveling by probable roads and constantly worries itself about the future, partly also because it has the power to carry a literary work to universality with regards to the laws and lore of identity and aesthetics. The question organizing this project concerns the extent to which Orwell and Laredj were derivative from authors, works of literature, history, politics, and media to amplify the underrepresented voices in a totalitarian discourse. Thus, this research attempts to examine two pieces of literature that are more concerned with the future than any other. Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and Laredj's *2084: The Tale of the Last Arab* are analyzed and compared to highlight not only similarities and differences but also to regard the sci-fi genre from another angle that stands at the periphery in the presence of Western production. It finds that the powerful imagery of Orwell's text still impacts literature that is concerned with the vision of the future. However, the comparison also reveals that Orwell and Laredj were not concerned with expressing adventures and exaggeration for entertainment as much as chronicling the future in a bitter disclosure to warn from totalitarianism and ideological domination. This research also invites readers and researchers to act and react to the turn of comparatists towards Cultural Studies, Woman's Studies, Semiotics, Nationalism, and Postcolonial theory to deconstruct the Western hierarchy in comparative literature.

**Keywords :** Dystopia; Post-Apocalypse; Orwell; Laredj; Totalitarianism; Arabic; English.

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**المخلص:** ظهر الخيال التأملي عمدا ، وليس عن طريق الصدفة . على الرغم من أن تنفيذه يتأرجح بين الخيال أو الخيال العلمي أو اليوتوبيا /ديستوبيا ، إلا أن تأثيره مفيد حتى الآن جزئيا لأنه يوسع الأفق أو الثقافة ، من جهة لأنه على رأس السفر عبر طرق محتملة ويقلق نفسه باستمرار بشأن المستقبل ، ومن جهة أخرى لأن لديه القدرة على حمل عمل أدبي إلى العالمية فيما يتعلق بقوانين وتقاليد الهوية والجماليات . تتعلق مسألة تنظيم هذا المشروع بمدى اشتقاق أورويل والأعرج من المؤلفين والأعمال الأدبية والتاريخ والسياسة والإعلام لتضخيم الأصوات الممثلة تمثيلا ناقصا في خطاب شمولي . وهكذا، يحاول هذا البحث دراسة عمليين أدبيين أكثر اهتماما بالمستقبل من أي أدب آخر . يتم تحليل ومقارنة رواية أورويل "ألف وتسع مئة وأربعة وثمانون" ورواية الأعرج " 2084: حكاية العربي الأخير" لتسليط الضوء ليس فقط على أوجه التشابه والاختلاف ولكن أيضا للنظر إلى نوع الخيال العلمي من زاوية أخرى تقف على الهامش في وجود الإنتاج الغربي . ووجد أن الصور القوية لنص أورويل لا تزال تؤثر على الأدب الذي يهتم برؤية المستقبل . لكن المقارنة تكشف أيضا أن أورويل الأعرج لم يهتموا بالتعبير عن المغامرات والمبالغة في الترفيه بقدر ما كانوا مهتمين بتاريخ المستقبل في كشف مرير التحذير من الشمولية والهيمنة الأيديولوجية . يدعو هذا البحث أيضا القراء والباحثين إلى التصرف والتفاعل مع تحول المقارنين نحو الدراسات الثقافية ودراسات المرأة والسياسية والقومية ونظرية ما بعد الاستعمار لتفكيك التسلسل الهرمي الغربي في الأدب المقارن

**كلمات مفتاحية:** ديستوبيا، بعد القيامة، أورويل، الأعرج، الشمولية، عربية، انجليزية

**Résumé:** La fiction spéculative est apparue délibérément, ce n'est pas par hasard. Bien que son exécution oscille entre la fantasy, la science-fiction ou les dyades utopie/dystopie, son influence est jusqu'ici salutaire en partie parce qu'elle élargit les horizons de la culture, en partie parce qu'elle est à la barre du voyage par des routes probables et s'inquiète constamment de l'avenir, en partie aussi parce qu'elle a le pouvoir de porter une œuvre littéraire à l'universalité en ce qui concerne les lois et les traditions de l'identité et de l'esthétique. La question qui anime ce projet est de savoir dans quelle mesure Orwell et Laredj étaient des dérivés d'auteurs, d'œuvres de littérature, d'histoire, de politique et de médias pour amplifier les voix sous-représentées dans un discours totalitaire. Ainsi, cette recherche tente d'examiner deux œuvres littéraires qui sont plus préoccupées par l'avenir que toute autre. 1984 d'Orwell et 2084 : le conte du dernier Arabe de Laredj sont analysés et comparés pour mettre en évidence non seulement les similitudes et les différences, mais aussi pour considérer le genre de la science-fiction sous un autre angle qui se trouve à la périphérie en présence de la production occidentale. Il constate que l'imagerie puissante du texte d'Orwell a toujours un impact sur la littérature qui s'intéresse à la vision de l'avenir. Cependant, la comparaison révèle également qu'Orwell et Laredj ne se souciaient pas tant d'exprimer des aventures et des exagérations pour le divertissement que de faire la chronique de l'avenir dans une divulgation amère pour mettre en garde contre le totalitarisme et la domination idéologique. Cette recherche invite également les lecteurs et les chercheurs à agir et à réagir au tournant des comparatistes vers les études culturelles, les études féminines, la sémiotique, le nationalisme et la théorie postcoloniale pour déconstruire la hiérarchie occidentale dans la littérature comparée.

**Mots Clés :** Dystopie; Post-Apocalypse ; Orwell; Laredj ; Totalitarisme; Arabe; Anglais.

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