THE REPRESENTATION OF HISTORICAL REVISIONISM AS A POLITICAL PROPAGANDA IN CLASSICAL DYSTOPIAS, *1984* AND *FAHRENHEIT 451*

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my/our own original work while completing degree at BRAC

University.

2. The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except

where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.

3. The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree

or diploma at a university or other institution.

4. I/We have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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Approval:

The thesis/project titled "The Representation of Historical Revisionism as a Political Propaganda in Classical Dystopias, *1984* & and *Fahrenheit 451,"* submitted by Bidita Azad Drohy (17203018) of Summer, 2022 has been accepted as satisfactory in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Bachelor of Arts on 3rdSeptember 2022.

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Abstract:

In a world where gaining power over others is the ultimate motivation and holding that power is the biggest achievement, it is no wonder that a whole nation can be handicapped by a clique of ruling class people. Governance is meant to be an act of supervision from a neutral position to keep the society under regulation, authorize economic activities and ensure both the national and international security of the citizens. However, politics have led the act of governance to the point where it only has negative connotations like fear, dictatorship, oppression, etc. Unless governance is only an umbrella term to satisfy epistemological expectations and hide the real intent of gaining power behind the promises. It is similar to the idea of historical revisionism. Revisionism is an unavoidable academic procedure to fathom various areas in the domain of history and then inspect the wrongs of the past. However, it also hides the deceptions/lies of politicians as well as their ideologues, under these promises. When a tyrannical governance system coincides with an escapist society, it creates a dystopian reality where history is abused for the advantages of the ruling class/state power and the abuse is normalized and even hailed by the majority of population. *1984* by George Orwell and *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury portrays this situation through their imaginary futuristic worlds. This paper seeks to decipher the warnings in Ray Bradbury and George Orwell's representation of historical revisionism in their respective novels. It attempts to examine the state power's objectives to abuse history as a propaganda, with the help of the theories of totalitarianism. Moreover, the position of the society has also been analyzed from the perspective of the Marxist theory of class and Gramsci's theory of hegemony. Even though the totalitarian states in *1984* and *Fahrenheit 451* are imaginary, it is necessary to understand that they are inspired by real historical events. Hence, the possibility of a totalitarian regime's emergence can never be entirely disregarded. Moreover, it does not matter whether it is a totalitarian system or a democratic system. As long as the society treats knowledge only as a source of power and profit, it will keep being used as a political propaganda. Therefore, dystopias warn us against

the manipulation of knowledge to seek power. And also, the escapist mentality of a society which leads them towards destruction instead of eternal pleasure.

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Introduction:

History and collective memory:

In the book Orator, Marcus Tullius Cicero (46 BC) said:

> To be ignorant of what occurred before you were born is to remain always a child. For
>
> what is the worth of human life, unless it is woven into the life of our ancestors by the
>
> records of history?

Cicero used this statement to express the significance of history in every person's life. History is the knowledge of the past, which also provides our memories with sufficient information. It makes us aware of our surroundings and provides us with examples so that we can get an overview of the future possibilities. On the other hand, collective memory refers to the memories that a group of people share together. It shapes up a nation's communal harmony. Moreover, it is influenced by or influences our emotions very easily. Hence, history is represented in such a way so that it can appeal the collective memory and also hold the power to control it. Collective memory is a concept which was first introduced by Maurice Halwachs. He argued that "individual memories are only understood within the context of a group, unifying the nation or community through time and space" (2). It is a social process through which a group of people can transform old memories and construct new ones. It can occur within a family, an ethnic or religious community, a nation or even a group of nations. For instance, the people of China still regard the time span between 1849 to 1949 as "the century of humiliation". During those years, China had to go through the first Opium war as they were defeated by the British. Moreover, they were even controlled by the greatest external forces

of that period which were, England, Japan and France. The effect was so damaging that the people of China still expound modern events in that light. This depicts how a group remembers their past. History on the other hand, supports these memories with well informed and proven evidences. According to the traditional notion, history must be unbiased and objective. For example, an ancient Greek writer and satirist named Lucan said:

> The good historian, then, must be thus described: he must be fearless, uncorrupted, free, the friend of truth and of liberty; one who, to use the words of the comic poet, calls a fig a fig, and a skiff a skiff, neither giving nor withholding from any, from favour or from enmity, not influenced by pity, by shame, or by remorse; a just judge, so far benevolent to all as never to give more than is due to any in his work; a stranger to all, of no country, bound only by his own laws, acknowledging no sovereign, never considering what this or that man may say of him, but relating faithfully everything as it happened.

However, according to the modern perspective, history is regarded as transformable. It is also starting to be acknowledged by many historians and sociologists that there is nothing called historical accuracy. While the aforementioned statement can be considered exemplary for historians, it is deemed as impractical by many contemporary historians. A very prominent historian E.H. Carr said, "In the first place, history never came to us 'pure,' since they do not and cannot exist in a pure form: they are always refracted through the mind of the recorder". For, history must not be misunderstood as the past, whereas it is the mere documentation of past events. These documents are figments of truth which had gone through many changes, interpretations and translations over the decades. There are vast measures of historical information which have never been documented before. What is history then, if not the past? Past is everything that had already been experienced and lost, whereas history is the evidence of its existence. Without history, it is very easy to deny the past since it has no external shape or form. History gives it a form and provides human beings with a perspective to view their ancestors. For example, if we think about the most important

historical event of Bangladesh, the liberation war of 1971; Every Bangladeshi has something to say about it, they all have a perspective. None of the people from this generation existed during that time but they still feel raw emotions swirling inside of them every time they hear the song "Purbo Digonte Shurjo Utheche" by Shadhin Bangla Betar Kendro. The reason for this is, the collective memory of that event has been passed on from generation to generation. And history in the form of textbooks, literature, media and data, helped us relive those memories. Yet, neither history is consistent, nor memory. Their relationship is interdependent in a sense that one cannot remain still if the other is moving. When a generation runs its course of time, the way of perceiving history also starts changing. Therefore, the past looks very different from the way we used to see it before. For example, a study by the *Memory and Cognition* publication showed that both the older and younger Americans of recent time described the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings as 'extremely problematic', 'grotesque', 'sadistic', etc. Whereas, the older Americans used to look at it positively and deemed it as 'necessary' to save America. This example depicts how history changes its form within our collective memories. An act that was considered to be patriarchal by one generation, became 'inhumane' for another generation. Even though the data remained the same, history and collective memory both changed with time. Historical revisionism is one of the many reasons that are responsible for the emergence of this process.

Historical Revisionism:

History is one educational field that is a constant subject of debates and discussions. It is psychologically proven that the human mind is prone to wandering, and history gives that scope to our minds. There are many revisions and reinterpretations of the same historical event in books, media, and the internet. Historiography refers to the study of techniques that historians use to develop history and make it relevant according to the present outlook. It involves studying the people who wrote history, the methods applied, and the factors responsible for using those methods. In the book, *Past in the Making: Historical Revisionism in Central Europe after 1989*, Michal Kopecek noted:

> Historiography is a progressive and innovative discipline composed of various dynamic research programs precisely because it is capable of revising itself, constantly improving itself, expanding knowledge and becoming relevant in new historical context. (Kopecek, 2008)

One such technique of developing history is historical revisionism. Conforming to historiography, this technique can be defined as the practice of re-evaluation, deconstruction, or refutation of any historical record. It can challenge any traditional, established, or accepted viewpoints of academic scholars, philosophers, and professional historians. The general expectation from historical revisionism is to discover new information, complete a historical enigma, get new perspectives and correct the misinformation in records. As history is constantly being challenged, our beliefs are also being revised repeatedly. Historical revisionism is so important because it brings flexibility to the system. The past and our memories are things that have no physical existence and only lives through our minds. Hence, a rigid perception of the past can only offer us a half-truth. Historical revisionism helps to enrich our observation of past events.

Moreover, we can see it from various lenses. Reading a book once gives us an overview of the content. However, reading it repeatedly helps to truly understand the content. The outcome of revisions may be inaccurate, but because of these modifications, we can determine what to believe and what not to believe. Therefore, all historians can also be regarded as revisionists because they must revise history to document the correct information. In the book, *Past in the Making*, Michal Kopecek said, "Had historiography not been subject to constant revision, there would have been little for historians to do beyond transmitting received wisdom to yet another generation," (Kopecek, 2008). Three types of revisions have been identified in historiography. They are evidence driven revision, significance- driven revision, and value-driven revision.

The root of evidence driven revisions is newfound discoveries that support a particular hypothesis. This new information may cause a negative change of perception towards a well-accepted belief in the past. It can even increase the probability of a theory that was previously disregarded. As a result, it motivates a

revision in historiography. When it comes to the academic or public acceptance of a hypothesis, a broader range of evidence is always prioritized over the narrower field of evidence. Moreover, new types of evidence always tend to fetch more attention. For example, during the 19th Century, the discovery of archives was a huge breakthrough. Also, the discovery of 'bureaucratic records' and 'material remains' as new modes of evidence made a significant impact in the case of quantitative historiography. The motivation to revise history can also be driven by new aspects of interest. It can be an issue in the past that was previously ignored. For example, psychology is an aspect that had been completely ignored in the case of the documentation of history. However, in present circumstances, people are starting to acknowledge the importance of seeing history from a psychological standpoint.

Another type of revision is the Significance driven revision. To understand this, it is essential to know about its root causes. When people read about history or hear about it, they mostly view it as a story in their minds. As we travel back through history, nothing about the past seems familiar. We get a sense of disassociation when we consider it part of us. As a result, we separate it from ourselves as "the world of the past." That world seems far away, as if straight out of some fantasy book. Hence, we look at it from the eyes of significant people in history. We view the people of the past as characters in our minds rather than actual human beings. Then we label them as either protagonists or antagonists. As a result, the unmentioned people of the past become like the faceless characters in a story who just exist but have no value. In reality, neither history is fiction nor people from the past are mere characters. Many aspects of the past get mystified over time for the lack of Significance given to them. When an event occurs, it is not the only thing happening in the world. Other small or big occurrences are taking place simultaneously. The importance of these events in historiography mainly depends on the attention it gets from the historians. They choose the ones worth mentioning among the many aspects of the past gathered from the evidence. Also, what they consider significant in history keeps changing with time. It is determined by the elements of the past that historians find more relevant to the present scenario.

Thereby, Significance driven revisions occur. As a result of historical changes, historians search for patterns to better understand the present. Recently, we witnessed many incidents of ethnic cleansing that garnered global media attention. It also had to do with the gravity of the situation and the extreme mistreatment of the people. For example, the extraction of the Rohingya community from Myanmar and the Israel- Palestine conflict in 2021. Even though these conflicts have continued for many years, they have not been considered a "big issue" until now. The harsh truth of the world is that no problem is big enough until people start suffering and when the damage is already done. However, the brutality of these events caused an uprise in public sentiment.

Consequently, social media made people worldwide aware of the term' ethnic cleansing'. This compelled historians to revise history to look at the precedents of this issue more closely. It brought forth many such historical events to public attention. Examples include the genocide in Yugoslavia and Rwanda, The massacre of Armenians in Turkey, the annihilation of Jews in the Holocaust, etc.

Lastly, value-driven revision occurs when historians reevaluate their narration and explanation of historical occurrences. As time moves forward, people's value codes also change. Moreover, the narration of history, derived from ancient value codes, is not well suited to modern values. So, records are revised because of changes in the system of value.

Even though the ideal of historical revisionism is very constructive, in effect, the process cannot be regarded as either positive or negative. One drawback of historical revisionism is the complete shift of focus. Once a new perspective is developed, the older view loses its relevance over time. Therefore, it also causes detachment from the experiences that are associated with it. Since it takes place gradually over time, its effect is not immediate either. Although it can be realized in hindsight that forming a connection with a new aspect of the past can compel us to sever our ties with the older ones. For example, in 1211, the capital of China's Jin empire, Zhongdu, was conquered by Genghis Khan. According to his strategy, the entire city

was starved, resulting in cannibalism all over Zhongdu. With the help of eyewitness accounts, many historians concluded that the number of killings can be estimated at around 40 million. However, in the book *Genghis Khan and the Making of the Modern World*, Jack Weatherford views him in a positive light by highlighting his good deeds. For example, the expansion of trade and communication during his rule, religious tolerance, the introduction of the postal system and international paper currency, etc. This new perspective gave a fresh outlook on the historical event. However, the shift also disengaged people from the lived experience of brutality during his rule. The victims exist only in the form of statistics, and their sufferings have no value or meaning. This is more of a grey area in the Subject of historical revisionism. However, some of its adverse aspects are worse than others. Every historian is a revisionist, but there is a reason why every revisionist cannot be regarded as a historian.

Some revisionists blur the line between "evidence driven probable historical knowledge" and "fiction." To support this approach of revisionism, they also claim that "there can be more than a single true historical narrative." Here, 'true' refers to subjective truth. This term is attributed to Soren Kierkegaard, a Danish philosopher. He interpreted this kind of truth as "inward" and objective truth as "outward." He wrote that "it is an uncertainty that cannot be solved objectively. The uncertainty is developed throughout the course of a lifetime on a journey that develops a passionate inwardness within the individual," (Kierkegaard, 1846). This perception of truth often conflicts with the idea of objective truth. Because while the former is influenced by emotions, the latter is motivated by evidence.

A historical narrative may change only if new evidence is found or historical Significance and the system of value changes. In addition, the concept of "more than a single true historical narrative" is derived from the aim of establishing "convenient truths." They can be considered credible if backed up by genuine evidence. But the problem arises when non-credible historical narratives are favored over proof in the case of historical documentation. In the present world, evidence-driven objective truths or facts are acknowledged by the majority of people. However, the current generation also tends to prioritize personal preferences when they clash with reality. It makes way for evidence distortion, misrepresentation of the

truth, spreading lies, and denialism. As a result, history intermingles with fiction. Here, Holocaust denial can be taken as an example. Over the decades, many historians have presented well-researched evidence to prove the existence of the Holocaust. Yet, some revisionists deny genocide by calling it a myth or fabrication. They question the standards of historiography and accuse historians of political or ethnic bias. These kinds of revisionists are called historical negationists.

Historical Negationism:

Historical negationism is a form of historical revisionism. However, that does not mean every revision of history falls under negationism. The falsification, manipulation, and distortion of historical records are called negationism. It is also referred to as denialism because it denies all the past evidence, memories, and witnesses. As a result, our mind remains in a clouded state for lacking a clear perspective on the past. This technique enables public opinion to be swayed according to the negationist's preferences. Some techniques are used to execute this process. Such as creating questionable reasons for distrusting credible information, fabricating or manipulating statistical records to prove their claim, planting false evidence, presenting false documents as genuine, intended mistranslation, etc. This process is extremely questionable, and the techniques are obviously illegal which is why they are performed secretly. Therefore, in historiography, this practice is considered "illegitimate historical revisionism." It can be argued that the public is aware of these fabrications, so it cannot cause much harmful consequences other than instigating confusion and arguments over the internet. The problem may seem trivial and superficial until we realize that historical negationism is a common political tactic that had been used in the past and is still being used in many countries. Everything seems more beautiful when we look at something with rose-tinted glass. It is also easier to overlook the unpleasant aspects because the tint helps to beautify everything. Filters in our pictures can be used as a relevant example in this case. In the same way, historical negationism is a political attempt to justify the past's bad deeds. It is a process of creating docile partisans. In 1988, a newly appointed bishop named Richard Williamson delivered a sermon, saying, "not a single Jew died in the gas chambers. Those are all lies, lies, lies," (Popowycz, 2022). Later on, when he was interviewed by the Swedish television

station SVT in 2009, he changed his statement a little and said, "I believe there were no gas chambers. I believe that 200, 000 or 300,000 perished in the Nazi concentration camps, but none died in gas chambers," (Popowycz, 2022). Still, many people deny the Holocaust and express their right to "freedom of speech" to this date. In 2004, a "Final report of the International Commission on the Holocaust in Romania" was published, which talked about Holocaust denial and negationism. In this report, historical negationism was divided into three categories. The first one is integral or outright denial. This means the complete rejection or denial of a historical event. For example, Richard Williamson's statement regarding the Holocaust is an example of integral denial. The second category is deflective negationism. In this category, the existence of a historical event is accepted but the guilt and responsibility of that event is imposed upon other factors. For example, the negationists attempt to put the entire blame on Germans and reasoning that Romans were marginalized in their own society. The third category is selective negationism. It is the blended form of both integral and deflective negationism. In this case, the existence of a historical event is accepted, but any involvement of one's own country with that particular event is outright denied. No matter what category, historical negationism can never have any positive utilization. Creating a fabricated past, it makes way for delusional minds. It taints our older memories with new forged information meant to manipulate them. Moreover, in this world, every day, the old leaves to make place for something new and better. Here, people tend to believe that everything new is better. Therefore, it is no wonder that people can find new perspectives to even look at the past. While people's fixation with this idea of 'new and better' has led to some beneficial outcomes in historiography, it can also prove to be very dangerous. It can hide deception with its shine. Furthermore, it is even harder to distinguish between genuine and fake in this digital generation where every person possesses software such as filters and editors in their hands, in the form of mobile phones. Creating fake documents and evidence is only a matter of time and a click away. How technology erases, the distance between genuine and fake with each passing day is terrifying. Hence, one day there might be little to no difference between historical revisionism and negationism. In the article "Historical Negationism: Losing the Human Identity," Dick Hefton expressed his concerns regarding negationism and how people are losing sight of what is real, because of this. He says, "the so-called

Millennial Generation, entering their young adult years, is unduly influenced by a self-centered dependence on what is both "now and new," which completely misses the message and distorts the truth hidden in historical revisionism," (Hefton, 2015). While talking about the Holocaust by Nazis during WW1, he said, "Negation has a latent tendency, however, which someday could invite an attempt to destroy and erase all signs of those protected Concentration Camp museums in Germany, Austria, and other European areas," (Hefton, 2015). Even though Hefton stated this as an assumption, an attempt of erosion has already started with the Holocaust denial. According to present circumstances, it is safe to say that Hefton's words are no more assumptions but a real possibility. Furthermore, Hefton added, "Destruction of artistic antiquities robs society of its identity. And removing historical evidences erases truth." (Hefton, 2015).

Nowadays, people fail to understand anything that requires a different contextual perspective than their own. They tend to completely disregard the context while interpreting a historical event. This tendency works in favor of historical negationism. Because of this self-centeredness, they can negate historical events such as, the Holocaust, American genocide, and Japan's violence during the world war. The people involved with negationism are so blinded that they can easily overlook the sufferings people have gone through because of these events. The fact that it is a common tactic used by the political parties makes the whole situation even worse. It implies that we have given control of our lives to people who care about nothing but their political agendas.

Political propaganda:

Propaganda means the spread of information to influence collective opinion. According to The Theory of Political Propaganda, "propaganda may be classified upon the basis of many possible criteria." There are no specific standards for choosing the objectives. It can be revolutionary, reformist, anti-reformist, or even anti-revolutionary. There are also no limitations to the organizations that run the propaganda or those who perform it. The propagandists may be politicians, entrepreneurs, writers, professionals or even amateurs. It

can be run by one organization, a group of organizations, a singular person, a country, or a group of countries. No matter the source of the propaganda or who runs it, the intention is always to control rather than to inform or educate.

Although the level of control over public opinion that an organization wishes to attain may vary. They may be entirely dependent on the propaganda, or it may be just a helping factor. However, as long as the spread of any information helps with persuasion, its credibility is not considered. As a result, facts are not always presented as they are. To make it more attractive and persuasive, omission, distortion, and selection of points may occur. Symbols such as music, words, gestures, clothing, facial expressions, tone of voice, stamps, and coin designs become meaningful when they are part of a social context. They help people identify their roles within a group. So, propaganda uses these symbols to reach people and their thought processes. According to The Theory of Political Propaganda, the strategy lies in choosing the appropriate "symbol carriers." It also says, "the form in which the significant symbols are embodied to reach the public may be spoken, written, pictorial, or musical, and the number of stimulus carriers is infinite." In the present world, the advertising industry can be considered a great example of this strategy. Some of the most popular tactics that can be identified from the advertising practices are, forming mental images, using the 'bandwagon' technique, generating fear, using false dilemma, using assertion, the testimony of famous personalities, etc.

For instance, the 'fear appeal' is used in anti-smoking ads by showing images of damaged lungs or cancer patients. Also, 'testimony' is used in fair product advertisements while they are endorsed by only fair celebrities. These examples prove that it is a psychological trick to attain voluntary submission. In The Theory of Political propaganda, the role of the propagandists is described in a very articulate manner. It says, "the problem of the propagandist is to intensify the attitudes favorable to his purpose, to reverse the attitudes hostile to it, and to attract the indifferent, or, at worst, to prevent them from assuming a hostile bent." Here, it is necessary to note that propaganda and advertising are not the same, even though they are connected. Whereas propaganda aims to manipulate and alter beliefs, advertising aims to attract and impress

our consumer desires. Propaganda uses advertising strategies to better present the information they wish to deliver. On the other hand, advertisers use the persuasion technique of propaganda as a helping factor to be more popular.

It is not hard to decipher what political propaganda is if one understands the concept of propaganda. It is run by political organizations, such as the government, rival political parties, or other discrete groups with different governmental values. These organizations use various propaganda strategies to gain political interests, win wars, destroy opponents, spread fear and establish dominance. In the journal article named "Political Propaganda," F.C. Bartlett said, "political propaganda aims at influencing opinion and conduct, especially social opinion and conduct, in such a manner that the persons who adopt the opinions and behavior indicated to do so without themselves making any definite search for reasons, i.e., by suggestion rather than by reason or critical thought," (Bartlett, 1940). It implies that political propaganda focuses on the social aspect because gaining access to social behavior and actions is easier and more efficient. Moreover, they like to present it in a way so that their effort remains hidden and the public believe it to be their best and only choice. Hence, often the governments prefer for the mainstream public to remain clueless. In most countries, educational institutes only teach what the government wants them to teach. It leaves a lot of room for twisting and fabricating information. Over the years, political propaganda has been used in various forms in different countries and periods. Dictator propaganda is one form of political propaganda that can be best understood by Adolf Hitler's statement in the book Mein Kampf. In the book, he stated that "the greater the lie, the more effective it is as a weapon,"(Hitler, 1925). Moreover, while talking about the 'target audience' of the propaganda, he said, "It must always and exclusively be directed toward the masses. The teaching ability of the great masses is minimal, their understanding small, and their memory short," (Hitler, 1925). This propaganda was used to create a state of intimidation, control, and murder by Hitler and the Nazi party during the second world war, and it went on till 1945. However, the authoritarian mode of governance is scorned in today's world, and so is the dictator propaganda. Now, most countries identify themselves as democratic nations. For example, Canada. Australia, United Kingdom,

United Nations, Germany, South Korea, etc. Some countries still have authoritarian regimes, for example, Russia, North Korea, China, Saudi Arabia, etc. In democratic nations, the propaganda mode is different because it is expected to be more transparent. In his farewell message, George Washington said, "In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened." In a journal article named "Democratic vs. Enemy Propaganda", it is said that in democratic nations, governments are expected to present truth in their propaganda. Even if certain facts are hidden and distorted, the "free people" can decode them in this system. (Casey, 1944). However, it is questionable whether any person can be truly free in a system where everything is under political control and technological scrutiny. Because of technological advancement, there is a huge abundance of information all over the internet. Whereas accessing all kinds of information got easier, it also got harder to differentiate between the correct and fabricated information. Furthermore, nowadays, there are many mediums to interact with politicians. Leaders such as Donald Triumph and Narendra Modi are very active on social media platforms like Twitter. However, the circulation of multiple versions and interpretations of the same statement all over the internet can make the information non-credible. Moreover, in a competitive platform like media, the main objective is to make news sensational, whether it is accurate or not. Hence, it adds to the public's anxiety and increases their distrust. Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky explained it in detail in their propaganda model. They said, "how cooperate media is structured creates an inherent conflict of interest and therefore acts as propaganda for anti-democratic elements." (Herman, Chomsky. 1988) This is why political propaganda has a very negative connotation in the present world. Because of the speed and availability of the internet, it became elementary for the government or political parties to spread misleading information worldwide. This causes arguments and chaos within society. People start losing control when they do not know what to believe in and stand for. Therefore, the government takes control with the public's "best interest" in mind, or so it is thought. Nevertheless, just because politicians use propaganda does not necessarily mean it has to be harmful. It is not even a new phenomenon. There are historical proofs and documentation regarding the use of propaganda in politics and wars since the

beginning of civilization. For example, in Iran, there was a discovery of a rock wall carved with the face of an emperor named Darius the Great. It is similar to the present trend of billboards with politicians' faces in the center. Propaganda originated during the 17th Century when Pope Gregory, the fifteenth, instructed to create a religious organization named Congregation de Propaganda Fide. Missionaries were sent from this organization to the Western Hemisphere to influence the indigenous people to convert to Catholicism (Guilday, 1922). Propaganda did not have a negative connotation at that time. However, political propaganda started deteriorating in people's imagination after the war propaganda campaigns. During the second world war, the Soviet Union created a war strategy focused on agitation and propaganda. Whereas agitation would work on evoking strong emotions and anxiety within the people, propaganda would spread misinformation about Marxism from a biased perspective. In 1933, when Hitler came into power, he was fascinated by this strategy. He used it heavily to motivate people to participate in the war. There was massive use of posters, slogans, and billboards all over the Soviet Union, Germany, Britain, the US, and Japan to evoke hatred in peoples' minds against the opposing party and to garner support in favor of the war. The negative connotations of political propaganda started after this, and it has only increased since then. One example of propaganda in the democratic system can be seen during the electoral campaigns. Political parties consider this the prime time to convince the public of their efficiency. Rival parties compete not only to win but also to make better promises than the others. William Hard calls it "a race for the best position for flashlights," (O'Neill, 2001). The amount of effort and attention given to the public increases remarkably during this time. Moreover, slogans, billboards, and posters are spread everywhere so that their political symbol gain more support. For instance, the "Hope" poster in Barak Obama's 2008 presidential campaign. The image garnered so much attention that it represented the message of the democratic party all over the world. Its effect lasted even after the election and gave people hope for a better future. It was an example of a successful campaign. The amount of money, time, effort, and manpower to pull off a successful campaign is immense. In the journal article, "Party Campaign Propaganda," Ralph D. Casey said, "they 'sell' themselves and their policies just as the businessman sells goods, commodities, and services-by propaganda," (Casey, 1935). However, the main issue is the lack of transparency in all of this.

During the election, the party members participate in public interactions under the pretense of being interested in their opinions. In these events, whereas they preach about their supposedly 'good intentions' and future plans, they never address fundamental questions. Even if these politicians address the concerns, it is in the manner of refutation or justification. Only the good aspects of their governance are highlighted, whereas the problematic aspects remain hidden by their diplomatic skills. The actual beneficiary in all of

this is the party that finally emerges as the winner. Yet, the masses are manipulated into thinking that their best interests are taken into account as the main objective.

Dystopia:

Speculative Fiction:

In this world, everything functions in a specific order. To maintain order, everything must be under control, along with people's desires and memories. Therefore, human beings feel unsettled when they are not able to make sense of something. There is a desperation to go after everything mysterious, unattainable, or unknown. "What if" is a question that has fascinated mankind ever since the beginning of civilization. Not only does it challenge our imaginative senses but also feeds our need to control. Speculative fiction is a literary genre that involves a diverse set of fiction with fantastical, utopian, dystopian, horror, and science fiction elements. In this genre, the real world is replaced by a fictional one, and specific aspects of the natural world are put into an alternate context. There is always this underlying question within the plot of speculative fiction, 'what if it occurs?'. To gather a definition of speculative fiction, it is necessary to locate similarities within the subgenres. However, "the diverse nature of its fiction" makes the process hard. (Gill. 2013. Pg72). There are a number of controversies and apprehensions surrounding this Subject. In his article, Gill quoted Samuel R. Delany, who questioned whether speculative fiction is just "one of the numerous terms that numerous critics for numerous reasons have decided is inadequate for the numerous things that fall under it" (Gill. 2013. Pg72). Critics and scholars even questioned if it is just a "cover term" for science

fiction. Speculative fictions indeed include science fiction elements. However, they are not necessarily dependent on scientific methods. On the other hand, science fictions are wholly reliant on scientific topics. Just as fantastical elements are part of speculative fiction, scientific elements are also part of it. To define this genre, Gill gathered that in speculative fiction, the events of the alternate world differ from reality, and the logic behind every action is different (Gill. 2013. Pg73). He adds, "Transcendental interventions, idealistic and artistic creations, dreams, and the fulfillment of impossible wishes and fears come within its scope (Gill. 2013. Pg73). Moreover, the alternative worlds in speculative fiction reflect how one engages with the real world or replaces it. These interpretations of various characteristics give a clear view of speculative fiction as a genre. Moreover, in the article, "The Uses of Genre and the Classification of Speculative Fiction," Gill also used the three modes of classification(Aristotelian, fuzzy sets and family resemblances, and graded categories) on speculative fiction. These are essential in locating the underlying similarities between the subgenres, which ultimately brings them together under the umbrella of speculative fiction.

Utopia and Dystopia:

Utopia and dystopia are two subgenres of speculative fiction. They are like a platform for the wondering state of our mind, where we can freely think about the past and the possible future. They have become such essential parts of the fictional world that a distinct culture has arisen. Now it is not just a genre of fiction but also a worldview and lifestyle. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, dystopia is "an imagined world or society in which people lead wretched, dehumanized, fearful lives." This term is also a state of mind where we feel incredibly anxious about everything surrounding us. We feel hopelessness and disappointment regarding our personal and social lives. There is also a sense of distrust toward the system. This state of mind is very relevant in the present context. In this capitalistic world, everything comes with a price. We have to pay a hefty amount even for the bare minimum necessities. Hence, our time has become money and we have become machines. Everyone is lonely as we neither have time for ourselves nor others.

On the other hand, the young adult generation is growing up with a nihilistic worldview. They have lost connection with faith, morality, and authority to some extent. To them, the existence of both the world and life has no real purpose. Nihilism is not a new phenomenon; it has existed in western culture since the 20th Century. However, it is growing within the global culture. Moreover, because of internet exposure, it has almost turned into a global trend. This mode of perception, along with the growing skepticism towards technological advances, has made people apprehensive regarding the future. Furthermore, the rapid climate changes, the covid 19 outbreak, and the recent political unrest between US and Russia have added more to the global anxiety. The biggest concern of the present times, however, is the growing dependency on technology. With the rapid growth in data science, computer network, and artificial intelligence, many fantasies have already become a reality. It is quite prominent that technology is gradually replacing humans and taking control of various sectors of our lives. It is a matter of both fear and fascination whether one day the world will be taken over by technology, if humans would finally give up all their control in the hands of machines. This state of mind is what "dystopia" revolves around. It does not necessarily depict a particular time or event. Instead, it portrays the negative feelings and perceptions surrounding one's personal, social and political circumstances.

On the other hand, Utopia is referred to as the "good place." According to the Meriam Webster dictionary, Utopia is "a place of ideal perfection especially in laws, government, and social conditions: an impractical scheme for social improvement: an imaginary and indefinitely remote place." Utopia is a term that was first created by an English humanist named Thomas More. It was taken from the Greek phrase ou topos which means no place, in his book *The Best State of a Commonwealth and the Island of Utopia: a Truly Golden Handbook. No Less Beneficial than Entertaining*, he created an imaginary perfect world. He compared the conditions of this fictional island with that of Europe. And he concluded that such an ideal world can never exist. Hence, he named it Utopia, which means nowhere.

Scholars have interpreted the distinction between Utopia and dystopia from various perspectives. The most simplistic approach to this discussion is that Utopia and dystopia are complete opposites. Whereas Utopia is an imagined world where everything is in the perfect state, dystopia is an imagined world where everything is in shambles. This is a surface-level explanation because it only points out the difference without expressing the interrelation between the two concepts. Hence, the scholars decided that the field of vision needs to be expanded with a more in-depth analysis of the Subject. According to Fredrick Jameson, "Utopia and Dystopia are false oppositions." (Bedore, 2021). They are two separate ideas with different purposes. The utopian ideas are hopeful, steady, and educational. It is created to be exemplary instead of plot-heavy.

On the other hand, dystopian ideas are plot oriented. For example, even though a nightmare scares us, we still feel the need to see its end. Dystopian visions seek that visceral pleasure.

 In the Chapter "Utopia and Dystopia beyond Space and Time" from the book Utopia/Dystopia, it is said that dystopia is "a utopia that has gone wrong, or a utopia that functions only for a particular segment of society," (Gordin, Tilley, Gyan. 2011). According to this argument, if Utopia is the portrayal of a planned society, its opposite must be an unplanned society. However, dystopia is not arbitrary. In fact, the main issues of a dystopian society emerge from too much planning. This implies that the idea of a "perfectly harmonious world" is problematic. It is unrealistic because conflicts are inevitable when we live in a society. Another argument is that Utopia and dystopia are not two distinct ideas at all. The elements which make an imaginary world utopian for one group might be the factors that make it dystopian for another group. For example, a society with strict religious rules and values can be considered utopian to a group of people. However, some might think it is forceful and a threat to their individuality.

On the other hand, some scholars consider dystopia as a response to Utopia. In an article named "Authority and Utopia: Utopianism in Political Thought," Lyman Tower Sargent stated that "Dystopian thinkers have viewed utopias as 'the sacrifice of real for the ideal" (577). It is impossible to become or maintain a Utopian nation without inflicting political oppression and violence. A society involves diverse people with diverse

thought processes and lifestyles. To bring conformity to a community like this can prove destructive in the real world. Therefore, dystopias take the shape of warnings against Utopian thinkers' rigid and biased ideals.

Dystopian Literature:

Dystopia was only a cursory idea until it started to take shape during the early years of the 20th Century. These were years directly before the two world wars. Historians and sociologists connote this time with "political unrest," "global tension," and an overall sense of impending danger. In the essay, On Dystopia, M.Keith Booker stated:

> "economic depression had bedevilled the capitalist economies of western Europe for some time and colonial misadventures such as the Boer War had contributed to an overall sense of crisis, perhaps most clearly embodied in the turn-of-the-century notion of degeneration: the theory that, far from moving inexorably forward in its social and biological evolution, the human race could quite possibly move backward toward savagery […] Such fears seemed all but confirmed a few years later when World War I, an event without any clear, logical purpose or cause, became the most deadly and destructive occurrence in human history." (Booker, "On Dystopia" 2)

Jack London's novel *Iron Heel* was published in 1908. It was referred to as a prophetic novel, considering the horrors of world war in the following years after its publication. It had oppression, political savagery, civil war, and fascism as its central themes, which were also the core components of the world wars. It is considered a remarkable literary work of the beginning era of dystopian literature. However, the genre gained popularity only after the publication of Yevgeny Zamyatin's novel, *We*. This book is so important in this genre because it created some fictional tropes that became exemplary for dystopian writers. For example, the unresolved endings differ from the "happy endings" in Utopian fiction. The trope of conformity vs. individualism became famous after this. For example, the characters in We were called by

different numbers instead of their names. They were not allowed to grow hair. Everyone was responsible; they performed for the "greater good."

The sacrifice of freedom for the "greater good" is another trope later explored in novels such as *1984*, *The Brave New World*, *Animal Farm*, etc. The "windows" in We represent the theme of surveillance and lack of privacy. In more modern dystopian fiction, these "windows" have been replaced by cameras. Two of the most famous works of the dystopian genre, *1984* by George Orwell and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, were inspired by Yevgeny Zamyatin's, *We*. These are acknowledged as the classics of Dystopian literature. They were both published around the time of the second world war. Therefore, both projected the essence of a war-ravaged world and the threat of a totalitarian regime. However, they were contextually still very different. Neil Postman is an American author and cultural critic who said:

> "What Orwell feared were those who would ban books. What Huxley feared was that there would be no reason to ban a book, for there would be no one who wanted to read one. Orwell feared those who would deprive us of information. Huxley feared those who would give us so much that we would be reduced to passivity and egotism. Orwell feared that the truth would be concealed from us. Huxley feared the truth would be drowned in a sea of irrelevance. Orwell feared we would become a captive culture. Huxley feared we would become a trivial culture, preoccupied with some equivalent of the feelies, the orgy porgy, and the centrifugal bumble puppy. In short, Orwell feared that what we fear will ruin us. Huxley feared that our desire will ruin us." (Postman,1985)

No matter the difference, with this, a tone was already set for the dystopian genre. And many writers followed the route. The end of the second world war paved the way for this genre's new era. It was marked by the possibility of a third world war and distrust of technology. Hence, science fiction elements became an essential part of dystopian fiction. For example, Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*, Anthony Burgess's *A*

Clockwork Orange, Kurt Vonnegut's *Player Piano*, Philip K. Dick's *Do Android's Dream of Electric Sheep?* etc. The period between 1970 and 1990 was an era of experimentation in the realm of dystopia. Even though the fear of war is an underlying theme of most dystopian fiction, it is not the subject matter anymore. Private corporations, media, and environmental hazards became the new subjects of fear.

Handmaid's Tale by Margaret Atwood was not only an outstanding work in dystopian literature but also in feminist literature. It quickly became a sensation in both genres. There is even a Netflix adaption of the book with the same name, further popularizing it among young adults. Moreover, the term "Cyberpunk" was popularized by William Gibson's *Neuromancer* and became a sub-genre of science fiction. Furthermore, with Lois Lowry's 1994 release, *The Giver*, the dystopian novel gained the attention of young adult readers. This started a wave within the young adult culture, expanded even further by Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games* trilogy. After that, works such as *The Divergent* and *Maze Runner* followed suit. In the present age, Dystopian fiction has become an essential part of the young adult genre and pop culture. What makes contemporary dystopian novels different from the classics is the role of the protagonists. They are no longer mere defenders; they are starting to attack in return and in the same language as the offenders, which is the language of "violence" and "brutality" (McFarland, 2012). Nobody can be sure what the future holds for the world. Only time can tell whether we are nearing an impending doom or a world governed by machines. However, it would be fascinating to see how dystopian literature expands and transforms with each step toward the future.

Chapter-2

Rationale for research:

In the introductory chapter, I have delivered detailed discussions on the crucial components of the subject matter. The definitions of collective memory, historical revisionism, historical negationism, political propaganda, and dystopia, have helped this paper in detecting the interplay among these themes. This brought me to the proposition that in dystopian fictions, the representation of historical revisionism warns us about the roles of both the state power and society in the exploitation of history.

This paper attempts to reflect on the picture of historical revisionism that has been portrayed though dystopian fictions. I have chosen classical dystopias, *1984* and *Fahrenheit 451* to locate, analyze and compare the warnings within the plots. The purpose of my thesis is to comprehend Orwell and Bradbury's fear concerning the exploitation of history and revision's role in it. It also aims to demonstrate the interplay between power and knowledge. Moreover, I intend to diagnose the roles of state and society in this context.

While doing my research, I have been left with some underlying questions. What makes historical revisionism necessary? What motivates historical negationism? Are historical revisionism and negationism really distinct? What is the solution of this inconclusiveness or is a solution even

possible? What is the role of history in the state's assertion of control? Where do the public stand in this disposition? How do they react? To seek answers for these questions, I would be utilizing scholarly theories/methods, literature review, and critical analysis of the primary texts. This would gradually develop my claim and bring the paper to its fitting conclusion.

Overview of the texts:

Memory is a system of recollection that takes place inside our minds. We know its existence only through our senses. It is entirely private and subjective for every human being. However, dystopian literature questions, what if one day our memories do not belong to us anymore? What if our memories are eliminated? What if remembrance becomes an offense? And the worst, what if the concept of the past is demolished? *1984* by George Orwell is a classical dystopia that has put this idea into context. It takes the readers to a world authorized by "the party." From the very first chapter, it is insinuated that the form of authorization in this society is absolute control. Not only memories and history but also the notion of time has been mutated here.

Moreover, it is a continuous process that keeps this society in an "endless present" state. History exists in the form of ever-changing records. And its only purpose is to prove the existence of the "convenient" version of the past. In the book, there is a conversation between Winston and O'Brien, where O'Brien states, "we, the party, control all records, and we control all memories and we control the past, do we not?" (Orwell, pp. 251-252). Moreover, the party slogan, "who controls the past, controls the future: who controls the present, controls the past," itself promotes this notion. On the other hand, the character of Winston is portrayed as an idol dystopian protagonist who is "disillusioned", unlike the mass or the party members. He

is curious about the past and constantly tries to remember his memories until the tragic death of his "consciousness" in the last chapter.

> "So now do you see why books are hated and feared? They show the pores in the face of life. The comfortable people want only wax moon faces, pore less, hairless, expressionless" (Bradbury, pp. 79).

Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury projects another dystopian society in the future where "book burning" is a legitimized government policy, and reading or even keeping books is considered a crime. Books are hated in this society because the knowledge of history brings forth guilt and shame. Besides, living in ignorance is much easier, and having a mapped-out belief system takes less effort. This forfeit of books for technology denotes how conscience and liberty are often sacrificed for materialistic needs or "the greater good." It also resembles how factual accuracy is secondary to glamour and popularity in the contemporary world. In this book, the protagonist, Guy Montag, has been placed in the positions of both the offender of history and defender of history. However, the actual offense is committed

by the government, which alters historical information according to their convenience to gain undisputed partisan. An example of the mutation of history in the book can be found in the "History of firemen". It says that in 1790, the firemen were established, "to burn English-influenced books in the Colonies. First Fireman: Benjamin Franklin" (Bradbury, pp. 32). Here, a fictitious character is created to "whitewash" the government's past deeds, similar to politicians' tendency to use propaganda to justify their actions.

Historical context:

To comprehend a writer's dilemma and the issues (cultural, socio-political or personal) represented within his/her literary work, it is needful to

acknowledge the historical context. George Orwell's *1984* and Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* are two of the most influential texts in case of history because they demand perceptual flexibility in the readers. Critics have been using this scope by analyzing the texts through several theoretical lenses. The most common are the twentieth-century political theories, such as totalitarianism, communism, communitarianism, fascism, democratic socialism, etc. Both of these novels were written and published in the 20th Century. There was a spread of fascist ideologies throughout the European colonies during this time. Witnessing these events facilitated both George Orwell and Ray Bradbury to form their own political ideologies. Therefore, *1984* and *Fahrenheit 451* contain themes of the two world wars, social-political unrest, fascist movements, and government systems that dominated the mid-twentieth Century.

During 1929-1949, two of the most ruthless regimes came into existence. One of them is Adolf Hitler's Nazi party which officially came into power in 1933. However, they had been controlling Germany by spreading Nazism through its propaganda of extreme nationalism, Jew-hatred, and racial superiority of Arians since 1920. Nazism refers to the totalitarian ideologies merged with Adolf Hitler's policies. During the chancellor period, before gaining absolute dictatorship over Germany, Hitler used the "synchronization" policy (Holocaust Encyclopedia) to impose the Nazi goals on the political parties, state governments, and organizations to bring them under Nazi rule. Workers, employees, and employers were forced to work for these organizations. Therefore, culture, education, economy, and law aligned with Nazi ideology. Another notorious totalitarian government of 20th-century history was Joseph Stalin's government in the Soviet Union which came into power in 1929. Stalin supported Marxist-Leninist ideology that advocated for communism: no privatization of property, a rise of the proletariat, and working for the state. However, after gaining power, he failed to uphold these values. He introduced the agriculture collectivism policy to develop industrialization and centralize properties. However, it increased their suffering instead of increasing the

proletariat's power. Not only did the peasants lose their capital of economy, but they also faced oppression and violence.

Moreover, the slave labor camps of the Soviet Union housed thousands and millions of people who were deemed "enemies of the people." Many among them were executed and exiled in these camps. These two events inspired many of the themes that Orwell and Bradbury used in *1984* and *Fahrenheit 451*.

In *1984*, Orwell projected the figures of "Goldstein," "Eurasia," and "Eastasia" as the "objects" of hatred for the Oceania citizens. I have chosen to address them as "objects" in this paper because they do not have any existence or purpose outside of the citizen's zealous declaration of hatred towards them. While describing this fanatical hatred, Winston said:

> The horrible thing about the two minutes hate was not that one was obliged to act a part but that it was impossible to avoid joining in. Within thirty seconds any pretence was always A hideous ecstasy of fear and vindictiveness, a desire to kill, to torture, to smash faces in with a sledge-hammer, seemed to flow through the whole group of people like an electric current, turning one even against one's will into a grimacing, screaming lunatic. (Orwell, p. 11)

In the novel, Goldstein has been introduced as the "enemy of the nation" who betrayed "Oceania" and "big brother" by conspiring against them with the enemy nation. However, the name of this enemy nation keeps alternating between "Eurasia" and "Eastasia." For instance, Winston says that during one of the hate weeks, "when the general hatred of Eurasia" reached its peak, suddenly it was announced that "Oceania was not after all at war with Eurasia. Oceania was at war with it Eastasia, Eurasia was an ally". With this, Orwell indicates the abnormality in Oceania's history documentation because it is odd for such pivotal information to be altered frequently and without any public backlash. It implies that people in this society are not sure who their actual enemy is and do not even care. Even though their expressions and words are crude, violent,

and pervasive during the "two minutes hate," their emotions are not directed towards someone specific. Instead, their hatred is channeled towards an abstract idea; the idea of the nation's and big brother's enemy whom they have been "programmed" to hate. This scapegoating theme is based on the Nazi and Stalin governments' idea of "nation's enemy." For example, the Nazis blamed the Jews for the economic decline in Germany and for contaminating their society. The Soviet government of Stalin also directed the society's hatred towards the people who refused to accept their policies and the leftists. Leon Trotsky was Stalin's political rival who was "expelled from the Bolshevik party" in 1927. Later, he was exiled and banished like the other "nation enemies." According to many literary critics, in *1984,* Orwell projected "Goldstein" in the light of Leon Trotsky. The societies under these government systems were conditioned to hate whoever the party wanted them to hate. Propagandas such as old myths, ww2 propaganda films, posters, and speeches were used to brainwash people and plant the seeds of communal hatred. Another similarity is the revision of history.

In *1984*, the protagonist, Winston Smith, works in the records department in the "Ministry of Truth." His job is to alter the old information in the records to align it with the new information so that the "party" and "Big brother" never look bad in front of the public. Winston says, "every record has been destroyed or falsified, every book rewritten, every picture has been repainted, every statue and street building has been renamed, every date has been altered. And the process is continuing day by day and minute by minute. History has stopped". It insinuates that history has been altered to such an extent that the past cannot be found anymore. It has already been extinct in the documents of Oceania, and it is blurry inside the mind. During Stalin's rule, he used a group of "photo editors" to remove pictures of some USSR party members who were "removed" from the party during the "great purge." Moreover, the members who were banished from the pictures were also expelled from the country (Blakemore, 2022).

> It was almost normal for people over thirty to be frightened
> of their own children. (Orwell, p. 24)

In the book, Orwell showed how the party trained children as spies in the "junior spy training center" to detect "thought crime" within their parents. Moreover, it is a Strategy of the party to indoctrinate the new generation into their socialist ideology. Their main objective was to create an unorthodox slave generation with spying skills and violent tendencies so that they would grow up to be highly loyal and valuable to the party. An organization like this existed during the Nazi rule, which inspired Orwell to use this plot device in his novel. The school curriculum was changed to spread the Nazi ideology among the young generation. And all the children in the German states were expected to join a Nazi youth organization named "Hitler youth." Adolf Hitler said, "when an opponent declares, "I will not come over to your side,' I calmly say, 'your child belongs to us already. You will pass on. Your descendants, however, now stand in the new camp. In a short time, they will know nothing else but this new community" (Shirer, 1990).

> The important thing for you to remember, Montag, is we're the Happiness Boys, the
>
> Dixie Duo, you and I and the others. We stand against the small tide of those who want
>
> to make everyone unhappy with conflicting theory and thought. (Bradbury, p. 62)

Like *1984, Fahrenheit 451* does not showcase a "Goldstein" who can be used as a scapegoat. However, this book also has an "object" of hatred that the government promotes as the enemy of happiness and pleasure. This "enemy" is books and history. Hence, they are burned at the temperature of 451°. Unlike the society of "Oceania" in *1984,* the community in *Fahrenheit 451* is not forced to hate books. People turned away from knowledge even before the firemen started using "book burning" as a policy to keep the citizens ignorant. For example, while explaining the reason to ban books to Montag, Captain Beatty says, "So now do you see why books are hated and feared? They show the pores in the face of life. The comfortable people want only wax moon faces, pore less, hairless, expressionless." The rulers used society's hatred against them, a strategy that Hitler used during Nazi rule. The Jews have been hated in the European continent for many years. It was not a new phenomenon that occurred during Nazi rule. Religious persecution of the Jews

and anti-Semitic myths had already been engraved in the European culture. When Hitler came into power in Germany, he saw it as a reasonable scope.

Moreover, his belief in Aryan superiority also played a significant role. Therefore, Jews were used as a scapegoat for every negative occurrence in Germany. It was one of the reasons why Hitler had and still has so many supporters all over the world. However, the "hatred" in *Fahrenheit 451* is much more voluntary than in *1984*. Moreover, the theme of "burning" is also symbolic of the German gas chambers of the Holocaust. History distortion is the most dominant theme in *Fahrenheit 451*, attained by censorship and revision in this book. The whole story revolves around the idea of censoring knowledge that bothers people and creates debate within society. This theme of censorship was practiced under the Nazi government. According to historical accounts, groups of people who worked for the Nazi organization and even students burned books deemed as "non-German." This practice was carried out in thirty-four cities in Germany, and many works by liberal, Jewish, and leftist authors were burned at that time. Historical revisions like photo fabrication, history book revision, and negation were standard practices in both the Nazi and Stalin governments. Bradbury used this idea in his book. For instance, when the protagonist, Guy Montag, fled from his country to save his own life, another pedestrian was shot in his place to hold the face of the government. During the Stalin regime, Stalin implemented a campaign named "the great purge," when he expelled and exiled any member of the communist party who refused to agree with him. This expresses the extent of the Stalin government's dismay at individual thoughts. In Fahrenheit 451, Bradbury uses this idea. For instance, Clarisse and her family were banished from their home for having "weird symptoms," as in individual thoughts. And later on, Guy Montag was also targeted for showing symptoms of individual thinking.

Chapter-3

3.1: Power and fear: Totalitarianism:

Totalitarianism is a form of government that practices absolute control of the citizens' private, social, and economic lives. The ideology behind this political system is focused on creating and promoting nationalism. It does not condone any kind of external or internal opposition. Moreover, individual freedom is considered a threat to one's loyalty to the nation. Therefore, private properties are non-existent in a totalitarian regime. Everything is owned by the political elites, which provide for the citizens in return for absolute submission. An article named "Understanding Types of Government" says, "totalitarianism, authoritarianism and fascism are all forms of government characterized by a strong central rule that attempts to control and direct all aspects of individual life through coercion and repression," (Longley, 2022). Even though they are often used synonymously, there are some differences. The distinctive feature of a totalitarian state is its nationalist ideology. Benito Mussolini, an Italian prime minister, describes it as, "Everything within the state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state" (Longley, 2022).

On the other hand, an authoritarian state also has a central government system. However, what makes it different from a totalitarian system is that it allows a "limited degree of political freedom" to the citizens. Fascism, on the other hand, adopts the extremities of each ideology. It prioritizes military planning over economic planning. Moreover, instead of fear and manipulation, it seeks public corporations by "promoting the idea of necessity for national rebirth," (Longley, 2022). We are confronted by the most notorious form of the totalitarian regime when we look back at the history of Nazi Germany and Stalinist Russia. Their goal was to create "a perfect society" to replace the existing one, even if that required annihilation and genocide. Even though the practice of unbridled authorization has been moderated in the contemporary world, the threat of its recurrence can never be entirely denied. In Hannah Arendt's book, *The Origin of Totalitarianism*, many of its aspects has been theorized.

> "On each landing, opposite the lift shaft, the poster with the enormous face gazed from
> the wall. It was one of those pictures which are so contrived that the eyes follow you
> about when you move. Big Brother is Watching You, the caption beneath it ran."
> (Orwell, pp. 3).

In *1984*, George Orwell created a timeless entity with the "big brother" character. Throughout the whole novel, he never makes any public appearances. Moreover, Orwell never provided the readers his name. Not only the readers but also the people of Oceania just see him through the posters and through the speeches during the campaigns. All that is known about him is that he is "always watching" the citizens of Oceania. Nothing can escape the ever-following eyes of "big brother." This impression is very similar to the idea of a god. And he is feared and adored like a god by the citizens of "Oceania" because they have no other choice, Or so it is thought. Orwell deliberately presented Big Brother as an ominous presence that symbolizes fear and seeks submission. Besides, he was not given a name because names make a presence less intimidating and more humane. However, big brother is not meant to be one of many. Instead, he is meant to be above everyone and "out of grasp." Orwell tried and succeeded in mirroring the totalitarian government through his portrayal of "Big brother." Analyzing the timeline of the publication of *1984*, many

literary critics have gathered that the inspiration for this was drawn from the ruthless governance of Adolf Hitler in Nazi Germany and Stalin's rule in Soviet Union. (Gleason, 1984).

> Terrorism is the best political weapon for nothing drives people harder than a fear of sudden death – Adolf Hitler.

In the book *The Origin of Totalitarianism*, Hannah Arendt said that the goal of totalitarian government is not "the welfare of the state," "social advancement," or "economic prosperity." Instead, it is to solidify its continuance. To accentuate power upon society, the best mode of action is to inflict fear (Arendt, 1951). She said, "The fear is a requirement; the fear is what keeps the movement going." Hence, "random prosecutions" are executed to keep society in a permanent state of terror. For instance, In *1984,* the imaginary state of "Oceania" was at continuous war with its rival states "Eurasia" and "Eastasia." Random bombings and shootings are common occurrences that nobody cares about. This society is strangely apathetic towards violence because they believe "war is peace." However, what scares them the most is the "thought police."

"Thoughts" and "memories" are the main enemies of the party. Hence, expressions are scrutinized, and tone of voice is checked to detect any kind of "unorthodoxy." Winston said, "it was terribly dangerous to let your thoughts wander when you were in a public place or within range of a telescreen" because the result of being caught is absolute "banishment." Power is indispensable to engrave fear within society like second nature. To explain how this power is obtained and materialized, Hannah Arendt emphasized propaganda. The mass leaders believe that truth and legitimacy of a fact depend on the fabricator's ability. Hence, propaganda is used to gain the power to "fit reality to their lies."

Facing the truth can be challenging, so people in our society often make up lies or avoid reality to live a simple life without any emotional complexities. This fear of truth is used against society. They are assured by the state power that:

> Gigantic lies and monstrous falsehoods can eventually be established as unquestioned facts, that man may be free to change his own past at will, and that the difference between truth and falsehood may cease to be objective and become a mere matter of power and cleverness, of pressure and infinite repetition (Arendt, 1951).

Arendt adds that propaganda is directed towards the individuals who are not part of the movement. However, once the propaganda succeeds in pulling them inside, all that is left is, "breaking down the individuality of the citizens until there is nothing but a "subdued population." Ray Bradbury represents this idea of a "subdued population" in *Fahrenheit 451*. It projects a society that had already turned away from knowledge, where feelings like fear and anxiety do not exist. They live within a false utopia, where they do not understand the gravity of war; they are not even sure what war is. Here, people are expected to live an "unbothered" life where all they need is excitement. They truly believe that "ignorance is bliss." The totalitarian government in *Fahrenheit 451* uses society's fears against them. It is human nature to dislike feelings of discomfort, guilt, and shame. Hence, behind the pretense of helping the society, the government burns all the books so that they have no more reasons to "worry" or "think."

3.2: The people:

3.2.1: Marxist theory of class and Hannah Arendt's theory of mass:

In every capitalist society, there is a distinct class structure. These social classes cater to different aspects of culture and lead distinct economic, social, and cultural lives. They are supposed to serve society's stereotypical expectations, whether they like it or not. This distinction of each class is determined based on the "mode of production." It depends on factors like the nature of the technology used in production and how the labor is divided. In this system, one class plays a dominant role. They are the administrators of the production system. On the other hand, another class plays the role of producers or workers. The founders of this school of thought were Karl Marx and Friedrich Engles. In Marxism, the ruling class in a society is

identified as the "bourgeoisie," and the working class is identified as the "proletariats". According to Karl Marks's class conflict theory, "the relationships of production and exchange are the basis for all other relationships. More specifically, political relationships are ultimately rooted in class relationships,"(Siegel, 1984). Karl Marx grew up in a moderate household. After finishing his studies in law and philosophy, he started to view the world differently. He became aware of the mistreatment of the working class. Hence, he advocated for their right through his writings. He believed that the proletariat class should "seize political power." He was very critical of capitalist societies and believed that no matter what governance system, every community with a capitalist economy suffers from class conflict. It arises from the fact that the

bourgeoisie class leads privileged lives with no financial or social struggles. On the other hand, the proletariat works for the upper class in return for wages. Their lives are entirely under the control of their employers, and most of the time, they are not even paid enough, whereas the ruling class gets most of the profit just for investing capital.

If a totalitarian government system is viewed from a Marxist perspective, it can be realized that there is no distinction between a government and a bourgeoisie class in a totalitarian system. Here, only the government can possess all the properties and central power. Everyone else who works for the nation is recognized as one big " mass group." In George Orwell's *1984*, there are three distinct groups. They are the "inner party," "outer party," and "proles." The "inner party" includes "Big Brother," along with a few members who operate the nation of "Oceania." This privileged group enjoys more advantages, freedom, and access to crucial information than the "outer party" members or "proles." For example, they can have "real coffee" instead of the "victory coffee" provided to the outer party members. Also, they are allowed to turn off the telescreen for a selected amount of time. For instance, during the secret meeting between O'Brien, Winston, and Julia, O'Brien turned off the telescreen, and he was also seen having Wine instead of the "cheap gin." The outer party members were neither part of the ruling class nor the "mass." These people performed particular tasks that helped the party to function smoothly. They were under the constant scrutiny of the "thought police," so none of them could have any deceiving thoughts.

On the other hand, the "mass" was the unpolitical, ignorant people who only lived to work, provide and enjoy cheap entertainment. Winston describes the proles as "eight-five percent of the population. In terms of our earlier classification, the proles are the low, for the slave population of the equatorial lands, who pass constantly from conqueror to conqueror, are not a necessary part of the structure" (Orwell, 208). On the other hand, in *Fahrenheit 251*, the three distinct classes are the bourgeoisie class, the "mass" and the "intellectuals." The bourgeoisie class includes the government and other high authorities, such as Beatty, the firemen's captain. These people have full access to the history and crucial information regarding government activities. They are the rule makers and controllers of the "mass". The "mass" class includes the more significant part of the population, which consists of the protagonist Guy Montage, Mildred, etc. These are the group of people who are ignorant and believes whatever the authorities tell them. However, the "intellectual" class are the people who can see through the lies that the government tells them, values the books, and try to protect them. Characters such as Clarisse and Faber are part of the Intellectual class. As the story progresses, we see Montag's journey from being part of a "mass" to becoming an "intellectual."

> But the proles, if only they could somehow become conscious of their own strength, would have no need to conspire. They needed only to rise up and shake themselves like a horse shaking 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......!(Orwell, pp.72-73)

George Orwell expressed his faith in the potential of the proletariat through Winston. He believed that the proles could break through the system if they paid attention to their surroundings. It resembles Karl Marx's expectations of the proletariat class. However. In *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Hannah Arendt argued that the emergence of the totalitarianism system puts an end to the class walls with their "clashing social interests." She says that with totalitarianism, "The motor forces for social change and development present in non-totalitarian society disappear, as the class structure of society is replaced by an atomized, structure less, declassed, irrationally manipulated mass of people," (Arendt, 1951). Hence, even after the differences

in economical positions, there are no common interests among the different social classes. Even if there are common interests, the "mass" has no consciousness about it. Arendt refers to them as a big "mass" of apathetic and "subdued" individuals. She adds that this kind of mental state is achieved from "isolation". The mass society of a totalitarian state feel isolated because they are already disconnected from the system and their leaders. They are under the impression that their "votes" or their opinions do not matter which makes them even further detached from the society. A totalitarian government uses this feeling of "isolation". Hannah Arendt says, "demands total, unrestricted, unconditional, and unalterable loyalty of the individual member. Such loyalty can be expected only from the completely isolated human being who, without any other social ties to family, friends, comrades, or even mere acquaintances, derives his sense of having a place in the world only from his belonging to a movement" (Arendt, 1951). For example, in *1984*, we see how the prole members are the most active during the party parades even though they have no connection with the party. Also, in *Fahrenheit 451*, the mass is cheering the most while burning the books. According to Hannah Arendt's theory of mass, the success of totalitarianism lies in the "true selflessness" of its mass society.

3.2.2: Gramsci's theory of Hegemony:

Antonio Gramsci is an Italian Marxist intellectual and politician. Even though he was a Marxist intellectual, he had different views regarding the solution than Karl Marx. He believed the transition from capitalism to communism was impossible based on economic forces. Instead, changes in the ideologies of the members of a society may bring the necessary changes. His idea of hegemony is created in the context of a capitalistic society. However, a totalitarian government also uses these techniques to obtain the public's hegemony. According to Gramsci's hegemony theory, the bourgeoisie class (Ruling class/ central government) maintains its authority over the proletariat class or the mass by using both coercion and consent. They use

coercion to inflict a sense of fear on society. For example, the use of law, police, army, prisons, courts, etc. (Orellana, 2015)

On the other hand, public consent is used by spreading the party values among the public through slogans, posters, campaigns, etc. These values are created in a way so that it gives the public a sense of security or some kind of benefit. For example, in George Orwell's *1984*, the outer party members of Oceania are coerced by the thought police, the telescreens, and the threat of 'banishment". Even their families were turned against them. For instance, Mr. Parsons, the most loyal supporter of the party, was turned over to the thought police by his daughter as she was part of the children's spy organization. On the other hand, they gain the consent of the mass by spreading the values, "war is peace, freedom is slavery and ignorance is strength," (p. 4). In the novel, it has been pointed out by Winston that the proles watch the television continuously for their own entertainment, without any force or coercion, whereas the party members are bound to watch it because of the telescreens. This proves that the party has the "consent" of the proles. On the other hand, in *Fahrenheit 451*, coercion is used differently than that in *1984*. Society is manipulated to fear books instead of the government or any other medium of authority. Their value is to remove the source of the public's worries and doubts, which means burning all the books from the face of the earth. Hence, they already have the mass's consent as people want to remain ignorant. These examples confirm Gramsci's ideas even more. The mass society needs to change its ideas. Gramsci believes that it is the only scope for society to transit from capitalism to communism.

3.3: Foucault's theory of power/knowledge:

Michel Foucault was a French philosopher, historian, literary critic, and political activist. He was associated with the structuralist, post- structuralist movements and had great influence not only in philosophy but also in a wide range of humanistic and social scientific disciplines (Gutting, 2022). His theory of

power/knowledge is considered to be revolutionary in disciplines like sociology and political studies. According to Foucault, "there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations," (Foucault, 1975). To understand this theory, it is necessary to know what Foucault defines as power. According to the liberal conception, power is a right that can be "transferred," "exchanged" or "contracted."

On the other hand, according to Marxism, "power stems from the division between the capitalists and the workers," (Wright, 2000). However, Foucault's definition of power is different from theirs. He suggests that it is a misconception that power is a tool for human beings to use and exercise. Instead, human beings are the devices that power uses according to its convenience. He adds that, "there is no outside to power" and that we are always encapsulated within the web of power.

On the other hand, according to the power/knowledge theory, knowledge is made possible by a "will to power," (Foucault, 1975). This is a Nietzsche term that means the conscious or unconscious desire to have authority over others. Foucault argues that power and knowledge are interlinked concepts, but it does not mean that they are the same thing. They are linked in a way that one cannot be determined without the other. To explain Foucault's power/knowledge, Zachary Fruhling said, "all knowledge is possible and takes place only within a vast network or system of power relationships that allow that knowledge to come to be, in order for statements accepted as "true" in any context to be uttered, and in order for what counts as knowledge to be generated in the first place," (Fruhling, 2020). These power relationships express the agenda of the organization that they are part of. They also express which "utterances" are allowed, which type of language is allowed and which perspectives are accepted within the organization. Moreover, these power relationships define which agendas must be excluded from or included in the "domain of truth and knowledge" within a particular context. Furthermore, Foucault says these power relationships do not always follow the stereotypical notion of superior-inferior dynamics.

These dynamics can be "overlapping", "bidirectional," or "lateral." In this theory, Foucault also emphasizes consent. In that sense, it is similar to Gramsci's idea of "hegemony" and Althusser's theory of "ideology."

Foucault's concept of "power" "derives its strength from the fact that the subjects deeply believe in what it tells them, for it gives a sense of belonging and contributes to their well-being" (Mambrol, 2016). Foucault had done archaeological and genealogical research and found some contradictory and non-linear accounts on sexuality, morality, madness, etc. It proves how in ruling power structures; selective knowledge is presented to the public so that they can hold power over the marginal group of people. For example, in George Orwell's *1984*, the party does not allow any kind of information to be elapsed as the "truth" or as "knowledge" unless it caters to their benefit. The character, Syme works at the Ministry of Truth in the Newspeak department. He is working on the 11th edition of the dictionary, which would have no such words that are not part of the newspeak. Cutting off words means nobody would have the ability to speak unless in favor of the party. It would take away their power to even think opposing thoughts. In another instance, Winston observes how Mrs. Parsons is scared of her children. The party created a children's association where they were trained to become spies. The party gave them power over their parents by providing children with this knowledge. Children grow up under the supervision of their parents. Hence, along with the natural bond, a parent and child also develop a bond of respect between them. It also builds up a sense of loyalty towards their family inside children. However, by giving them the knowledge of spying and the power to exercise it on their own parents, the party diminishes the sense of respect from their bond. Moreover, these children grow up to distrust their own family and channel all their loyalty to Big Brother.

Moreover, the protagonists Winston from *1984* and Guy Montag from *Fahrenheit 451* try to gain knowledge in their own ways. Whereas Montag stole books from the houses he burned, Winston tried writing a journal, talked to a prole member, and communicated with O'Brien even with so many risks. This need to know about history derives from their desire to recover the authority over their own life from the government's clutches. The essence of both of these novels, lies in the state power's immense control over knowledge. This automatically puts them at an advantageous position from the rest of the society. Human minds develop by utilizing the knowledge and it gives them the power to think. However, as the authority

puts constraint over public knowledge, it also limits people's power over their minds. This is the reason why both Winston and Montag seem so desperate to gain some knowledge about history and search for the truth within Knowledge. Since, the restriction over knowledge took away their power, only freeing the flow of knowledge can return it (power) to them.

Chapter – 4

Literature Review:

The ambiguous nature of historical revisionism:

Studying history can be very complicated. Gaining knowledge about the order of different historical events and the process of their occurrence can provide a perspective. However, to understand a historical event, it is necessary to look at it from various perspectives. The study of a historical event involves the understanding of people, their thought process, lifestyle, culture, economy, politics, religion and international relations of the corresponding time. Hence, historians may need a whole lifetime to truly comprehend one historical event. In that case, the best a researcher can do is to reduce the area of ignorance about the subject by pushing back the frontiers of knowledge. To attain this, historians make use of Historical revisionism, which is a well-established technique of historiographic epistemology. Revisions are so important in the study of history because of the huge scope for ignorance in its knowledge domain. Therefore, history needs to be under repeated scrutiny so that the area of ignorance can be reduced.

Murray N. Rothbard is an American economist, political theorist and activist. He was the founder of anarcho-capitalism and also a central figure in the 20th century American libertarian movement (Kagan, 2022). He expressed the necessity of historical revisionism, in the article, "Revisionism and Libertarianism." He said that every state is "governed by a ruling class that is a minority of the population,"(Rothbard, 2018). Their rule is like an "exploitative" and "parasitic" burden upon rest of the society. Hence, they form alliance with a group of "court intellectuals" who enjoy the power, prestige and riches extracted by the state machinery, as their "junior partners". And in exchange, these "court intellectuals" deceive the public into "accepting and celebrating the rule of its particular state," (Rothbard, 2018). Rothbard deemed historical revisionism as a necessary discipline to help the "deluded" public come to realization. He further added:

> The noble task of Revisionism is to de-bamboozle: to penetrate the fog of lies and deception of the State and its Court Intellectuals, and to present to the public the true history of the motivation, the nature, and the consequences of State activity. By working past the fog of State deception to penetrate to the truth, to the reality behind the false appearances, the Revisionist works to delegitimate, to de-sanctify, the State in the eyes of the previously deceived public. (Rothbard, 2018).

Without historical revisionism, the backward notions of one generation would be continuously passed on to the future generations, without any developments. There would be no way of exposing and revealing the lies and deceptions of the state powers in the history.

Historical revisionism has several layers to it. Its efficiency in studying history is undeniable because of its achievements in the field. However, this is still inadequate to whitewash its negative implications. According to a research gate article named "Politics of Memory, Historical Revisionism, and Negationism in Post Socialist Serbia,":

There are certain more subtle (or seemingly more subtle

and serious) pseudo histories which are not products of blatant fabrication

of facts and evidence, but rather, they are illegitimate revisions of the exist-

ting theories and facts. Revisions do not have to be bad per se, since they are

necessary means for improving the adequacy and exactness of our knowledge

about the past; however, there are some revisions which are not (primarily)

intellectual by nature, but rather politically or ideologically motivated. The

most radical versions of illegitimate revisionism are labelled as negationism. (Skoric,

Beslin, 2017)

Historical negationism can leave long lasting effects on the socio-political life of an entire nation and even worldwide. It does not only control the past but also holds the power to shape the future in a specific structure. Therefore, to stay cautious of this process, it is essential to be informed about the motivations behind it.

In the article, "Politics of Memory, Historical Revisionism, and Negationism in Post Socialist Serbia," Keith Jenkins mentioned that "objective truth" was starting to be disregarded with the emergence and growing popularity of "post modernism," "deconstructionism," and similar schools of thought. He said:

Since deconstructionism, postmodernism and similar schools of thought claim that

every experience is relative and that there are no fixed truths, an atmosphere arose in

which it was appropriate to bring into question the meanings of historical events and

practically everything was allowed, since there was no historical reality (Jenkins 1995)

This Research gate article further adds that the motivations behind illegitimate revisions (negation and denial) are influenced by factors like "nationalism", "racism", "sexism", "ethnocentrism", "xenophobia", "religion", etc. According to Aviezer Tucker:

These reinventions of the past serve the purpose of fulfilling some current personal

or political interests, needs, motives and the like, guided by the so-called

therapeutic values (Tucker 2008) which offer their followers psychological

peace, satisfaction and basis for the uniting of like-minded individuals. These

values in historiography usually include: the denial of historical guilt (the

Holocaust), the promotion of self-respect (national myths) and the elimination

of a sense of alienation and absurdity (conspiracy theories). (Tucker,2008)

To state the differences between historical revisionism and negationism or denialism, Luis Zuriel Domingo, a google scholar and lecturer at the University of Philippines Baguio, described the methodology for revisions in historiography. According to Domingo:

Newly found historical data would have to undergo "a long and rigorous process" before

they are accepted as "facts," Domingo says. For starters, historians must establish

consensus among their peers. Various theories are also considered before ultimately

choosing the most viable one for rewriting narratives. (Catienza, 2022)

He further adds,

"Unlike fiction writing, historians don't just invent narratives out of pure imagination.

We cannot come up with sound narratives without the help of historical facts."

(Catienza,2022)

Denying historical facts or fabricating information to match a fictional narrative has a different term: "negationism" or "denialism." Revisionism does not serve the same purpose as theirs. To emphasize the importance of revisionism in history, Domingo says, "A good and pragmatic example of historical revisionism is the emergence of the "history from below" approach where historians "provide more space for the often-overlooked figures in history—women, the masses, and the marginalized." (Catienza, 2022). In "Making history: The Storytellers Who Shaped the Past," Richard Cohen said, "If historiography was not open to revisions, that would mean that it has reached the final truths about the past, which is impossible; however, at the same time, if all kinds of revisions were accepted, there would be chaos" (Cohen, 1952).

Referring to this ambiguity between revisionism and negationism, Karl Popper said:

"History as a science is plagued by the problem of defining the boundaries

between history (what truly happened in the past), revision and

denial/negation."(Popper 1945/1947)

According to Beslin and Skoric,

This weakness is frequently exploited by the authors who, for various reasons, wish to

revise the official versions of history in numerous ways, since sometimes it is indeed

rather difficult to differentiate between history and pseudohistory, or between legitimate

revision and untruthful negation (Skoric-Beslin, 2017).

For the gap of research in solving this issue in historiography, they blamed historians' "lack of effort in developing a paradigm, a research program or a research tradition. All of the above makes it hard to reach

a consensus in historiography, which further makes any linear model of the development of history as a science rather unsatisfactory" (Skoric, Beslin, 2017).

Marine Hughes Warrington is an Australian History professor at the University of South Australia who emphasized on this dubious nature of revisionism and said:

> Revisions are not inherent to historical evidence, which is why they can hardly be encompassed by the historiographical logic and why they mostly emerge due to individual and collective motivations which do not rely on archival discoveries, but are based on external dispositions, beliefs, and values (Hughes-Warrington 2013).

From these discussions and arguments by various critics and historians, it can be gathered; although the concepts of historical revisionism and historical negationism is distinct, in effect the difference between them is quite ambiguous. Researchers have acknowledged and addressed this ambiguity time and again. However, there has not been any prominent research in regards to its solution or whether a solution is plausible. This research gap is one of the reasons behind the prevalence of historical negationism. All kinds of history distortions remain hidden behind this ambivalence and function freely in the name of revisions. To solve this issue, primarily, there should be separate names for revisionists and negationists. The culture of addressing negationists as revisionist historians needs to be changed because it further adds to the confusion. Appointing them with separate names would help to establish the difference in people's minds. If the division is prominent enough, it would lead to more questions and discussions among the people.

The politics of history:

Politics and history are intermingled in many ways and they often effect one other. History includes the study and documentation of all aspects of society in the past. Hence, politics falls under its field of study. On the other hand, historically influenced perceptions can form a person's or sometimes a whole nation's political ideologies. Moreover, it is a worldwide issue that some historians' narrative of the past tends to be

influenced by their political bias. Also, nowadays most of the national and international political debates include or revolve around historical events. Thus, it is safe to say that history/politics can control or be controlled by one another. There have been many researches regarding the concern that where should a line be drawn in all this dependency. For this paper, one among the research questions revolve around this idea; the role of history in the state's assertion of control.

In the book *Politics of History: The Use and Abuse of History,* Swoboda and Wiersma pondered, "To what extent should historians play a role in the political debate? What limits should be imposed on politicians when they invoke historical facts?" (Wiersma, 2009).

Wiersma quoted Polish historian, Andrzej Friszke who pointed to the dual use of history in this regard. He said:

> By its very nature, history, and especially recent history, is a very particular branch of learning. It exists in an uneasy relationship with the memories of those involved in the events concerned. It can play an important role in either legitimizing or challenging a contemporary state, its regime and ruling class (Wiersma, 2009).

Thus, politicians often use history's ability to legitimize a state, its regime and ruling class to their advantage. Martin Sabrow warns against this possibility and tendency of politicians' abuse of history. He said:

> I do not wish to recommend a diminution of political interest in the past. However, the relationship between history and politics can develop into a fatal friendship offering the reward of public attention and moral esteem whilst destroying the radical independence of historical research and its disposition to rethink history (Wiersma, 2009)

Wim Van Meurs is a Dutch Historian who commented in this regard:

Debates on the use and abuse of history in politics and the separation of objectionable partisan views from historical interpretations that are expected to promote values of democracy, individual freedom and national identification are inherently political. (Wiersma, 2009)

Historical narratives that are expected to promote democracy, individual freedom and national identification are efforts to garner acceptance for a specific political ideology. In the same way, when a historical narrative promotes communism or extreme nationalism, it is a political strategy to legitimize a particular ideology. It has no academic purpose whatsoever. This kind of biased historical narratives may be the result of illegitimate historical revisionism. In the article, "Historical Revisionism: The Reinterpretation of History in Contemporary Political Debate," Giovanni C. Cattini said:

The word revisionism takes on a pejorative because it is associated with a vulgar use of certain historical events manipulated for political ends and with a complete lack of scientific foundation. The political battle for the present has to do precisely with the fact that very often the ideological and political debate presents a distorted view of past events---------boundaries between the worlds of historians and politicians that have more in common than it seems (Cattini, 2008).

M. Keith Booker regarded this tendency of abusing historical revisionism for political control as "an attempt to manipulate language and the perception of reality for the sake of attaining reprehensible goals," (Booker, 36). These goals have been mentioned in a research gate article named, "Revisions of the Past and Present: Editing Reality and Fiction in Classical and Contemporary Dystopias":

Abusive mechanisms employed by real totalitarian state for playing the past and present alike by rewriting or repressing it to manipulate and control their populations by

eradicating any reference to personal heritage or history, incessantly repurposing the historical archive and editing key moments in accordance with current needs. (Opreanu, 2018)

To understand how Historical revisionism/negationism is executed, it is necessary to examine the reaction of the society in regards to its application. For such a political strategy to function in a society where science and technology is developing with each passing year, where people with diverse lifestyles and perceptions coexist; it opens a huge area of study. The state power and public both play essential roles in the execution of this propaganda. Historical negationism cannot function unless the majority of public accept or consume the distorted information. Whereas the intentions and goals of state power in this regard, is a constant subject of debates and researches, the public reception is not given enough importance. Although, there are some documents and critical discussions regarding the public acceptance of the Holocaust denial; which is one of the most common examples of historical negationism

Historians acknowledge the Holocaust as the most "well-documented" genocide in history. According to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, "Holocaust denial is an attempt to negate the established facts of the Nazi genocide of European Jews." Deborah E. Lipstadt, a professor of Modern Jewish History and Holocaust Studies at Emory University, regards this denial as "a form of anti-Semitism." She divided it into two forms, which are "hard-core" holocaust denial and

"soft-core" holocaust denial. She explains that the "hard-core" denial of the holocaust refers to the "arguments made by deniers that there were no planned centralized programs of annihilation of the Jews by the Nazis, that this whole idea of the elimination of the Jews from the European continents and beyond, never happened" They claimed that the Jews made up this "myth" for "financial gain" and to garner "sympathy of the world to get a state." Lipstadt said that it is a proof that a holocaust denial is a form of anti-Semitism because this, the rationale is "at the center of the stereotypes associated with anti-Semitism." On the other hand, she regards the arguments such as, "was it really six million people who were annihilated," or "were there really gas chambers," as "soft-core" denial. According to Lipstadt:

The audience often are anti-Semites who are looking to have their feelings confirmed or people who might not be overt anti-Semites but somehow are discomforted with the idea of Jew as victim. This is an attack on society at large. In almost every society where they've gone after Jews first, they've gone after other people after that. Prejudice has to be fought and amongst those prejudices, anti-Semitism has to be fought. (Morson, 1983)

In the article "Deniers in different countries," by the Auschwitz- Birkenau memorial, the symptoms of the deniers have been explained. It says:

This is a symptom of refusal to come to terms with history, to use the popular expression, or to overcome the past. In inter-generational terms, these people are passing on their views and attitudes to their biological and spiritual successors. (Auschwitz- Birkenau Memorial authors)

Moreover, the people who do not have much knowledge of history or have partial knowledge are also vulnerable to this propaganda.

This article says that the acceptance of the revisionists or revisionist views is responsible for the "glorification of people and institutions responsible for genocide. In Slovakia, the president of the wartime Slovak Republic, who shared responsibility for the deportation of the Jews, their killing, and later went on to clear paths for the Holocaust criminals, is adored," (Paulovicova, 2018).

The victims and families faced and are still facing double persecution through holocaust denial. The first persecution happened in the form of physical oppression and dehumanization during the holocaust. And the second persecution occurred when their experiences were negated. It is the persecution of their "memories" and their right to "remembrance."

Chapter-5

Critical Analysis:

5.1: Winston and Montag:

From a reader's point of view, Winston Smith and Guy Montag do not fit into the category of a "conventional hero." Their characters do not have that "larger than life" presence that makes a hero stand out within a crowd of endless grey or the extravagant traits that muffle every character flaw in the reader's eye. Moreover, they cannot be referred to as ideal human beings because the term "ideal" is synonymous with perfection in the human mind. On the contrary, the characters of Winston and Montag seem very plausible and relatable. This is what makes them the perfect dystopian heroes. They are people like us with ordinary thoughts and ordinary flaws. However, their ability to think makes them unique in their respective uniformed worlds. After all, thoughts are dangerous in a dystopian world, especially if they are rebellious and curious in nature. Both Winston and Montag represent the dystopian state of mind. Firstly, they constantly feel anxious about their personal and social lives. For instance, Winston is dissatisfied with his identity, lack of human connection, and the party regulations over individual lifestyle since the very

beginning of the novel. He is critical of his role as a revisionist, even though he is good at it. He also feels disconnected from his peers for their lack of concern. For example, he criticizes Mr. Parsons several times throughout the novel, for his enthusiasm over party activities. On the other hand, Montag starts to feel uneasy about the nature of his job as a fireman after Clarisse informs him about the actual history of firemen and how their job was not to set the fire but to put off the fire. He starts questioning his identity and connection with other people. He feels disturbed about the people's tendency to submit to superficial pleasure. It deeply bothers him that the society does not know what real happiness means, how to enjoy the nature or even how to have a conversation. Secondly, both Winston and Montag experience distrust towards the system. These characters express the dilemma of people who feel the need to defy an authority that controls their life in every way. For example, Winston works at the records department in the "Ministry of Truth", where every lie becomes truth and every pore in the party's credibility is entombed. Since his job is to revise the history, he is well aware of the fabrications unlike the other people of Oceania. It makes him increasingly suspicious of the party's questionable intentions of tampering with the past. Montag's job does not involve revisions or editing like Winston's. His job is to destroy the history by burning the books. However, once he is enlightened with unadulterated knowledge, he gains control of his own thoughts. As a result, he starts doubting every word of Captain Beatty. The awareness and resistance that Winston and Montag possess, is a sharp contrast to the self-centeredness and rigidity of the history negationists in the real world. Although Montag and Winston have many similarities due to their role as dystopian protagonists, their character arcs are opposite. Whereas the plot of *1984* takes Winston from consciousness to unconsciousness, in *Fahrenheit 451*, Montag's character journeys in the opposite direction.

Winston and Montag have similar positions in their respective worlds, and their roles are directly associated with the theme of historical revisionism. They are both used as tools by the higher authorities so that the government can gain complete control over collective opinion with their negations. Their characters represent the part of society who are intellectuals but do not hold an authoritative position in society. Comparing Winston and Montag's characters would help identify this group's role in political propaganda.

From the very first chapter of *1984*, Winston is introduced as a character who is unhappy. His character exhibits the kind of restlessness that comes from conflicting internal thoughts but seems calm from the outside perspective. He views his surroundings with the kind of boredom that screams desperation. As he looks outside the window of his flat, he thinks that the world seems "cold," full of "dust," and "torn paper," which symbolizes poor living conditions. Moreover, even though the "sun is shining and the sky a harsh blue," Winston cannot find any color in nature. It indicates that Winston longs for happiness and the little joys of life. It also tells us that Winston has a critical outlook on his surroundings, and he does not accept things just because they are daily occurrences. Moreover, when he looks into the mirror, he views himself as a "smallish, frail figure", and describes how the "meagerness of his body is merely emphasized by the blue overalls which were the uniform of the party," (Orwell, p. 2). This expresses Winston's low self-esteem and how he feels powerless and pressured under the all-encompassing presence of the party.

On the other hand, in *Fahrenheit 451*, Guy Montag is introduced with the opening line, "it was a pleasure to burn." The introspective narrator describes Montag's inner feelings. The narrator showcases Montag's "pleasure to see things eaten, to see things blackened and changed," (Bradbury, p. 1). This foreshadows how Montag's life would be changed, and his previous motivations would be burned by the same books he is enjoying burning. The narrator further adds:

> with the brass nozzle in his fists, with this great python spitting its venomous kerosene
> upon the world, the blood pounded in his head, and his hands were the hands of some
> amazing conductor playing all the symphonies of blazing and burning to bring down
> the tatters and charcoal ruins of history. (Bradbury, p. 1)

With this description, we realize Montag feels great passion for his job because of his pyromaniac tendencies. He realizes that he is destroying history with fire, and it is fun to see things ablaze. However, Montag does not comprehend the gravity of his actions. This insinuates that Montag is ignorant because he is not thinking about his actions or why he is doing them. This is a significant difference between Winston

and Montag which projects Winston's individuality and Montag's conformity before the "rebirth" of the characters.

Winston and Montag resisted the political propaganda imposed on them by keeping their conscience alive. Winston had the upper hand over Montag in this case because he already had vague memories of his mother and sister. He remembers loving his family and being happy and sad with them. The revolution took place when he was very young, so he recalls when the past existed, when memories were allowed, and when history mirrored the truth, no matter how unclear the images were. For example, in chapter three of *1984*, Winston remembers a memory of him and his mother, even though "uncalled." In the memory, "he saw a candle-lit room with a vast white counterpane bed, and himself, a boy of nine or ten, sitting on the floor, shaking a dice-box, and laughing excitedly. His mother was sitting opposite him and also laughing." Even though he does not want to accept these memories at first and calls them "false memories," his subconscious acknowledges the existence of the past. Although he tries suppressing his thoughts, he cannot suppress the dreams. However, Winston starts to believe and confide in his own memory when he finds a picture of the nation traitors, "Jones," "Aaronson," and "Rutherford" in New York at the exact time when they were accused of being in Eurasia by the party. He tries remembering his memories in many instances throughout the novel, no matter how hard it is. He does not allow his senses to become dulled like his "comrades." For example, the instance when he tried to remember the time, he "first heard the mention of big brother," or the instance when he tries to remember a time when the country was not at war and concludes that there was three years long "interval of peace during his childhood". Meanwhile, he tries to gain knowledge about history. He is curious to know what life was like before big brother existed. For example, during one of his usual strolls at the prole area, he asks an elderly prole man:

> You must have been a grown man before I was born. You can remember what it was
>
> like in the old days, before the Revolution. People of my age don't really know anything
>
> about those times. We can only read about them in books, and what it says in the books
>
> may not be true. I should like your opinion on that. (Orwell, p. 39)

Here, Winston is tries to form an idea about the past through collective memories of the proles. He knows he cannot rely on books because just like historical records, books have also been revised to the point that accurate history cannot be traced back.

On the other hand, Guy Montag's resistance was different from Winston's. Unlike Winston, Montag has no recollection of any memories and cannot feel anything. He asks his wife Mildred about the time "they first met," and they both cannot remember. The way collective memories help spread harmony within a society, it also helps in forming mutual connection between two people. However, Montag and Mildred's relationship lacks collective memories and connection. When Mildred is on the verge of dying, Montag realizes with great clarity that he "does not feel anything for his wife" and that he "would not have cried if she was dead." This realization troubled him to a great extent. After being ignorant his whole life, a passion for learning history was ignited inside him by Clarisse's unbridled questions. Montag had to unlearn his lifelong conformist beliefs to resist Beatty's propaganda of shunning books and all the thoughts and experiences they contained. For example, in the book's first chapter, it is said that Montag always has a smile on his face, and "it never goes away." To Montag and the people of his society, it is what they call "happiness,"; A state of permanent pleasure. They have no idea how forced it is, and they do not even know what real happiness is. Hence, when Clarisse pointed out to Montag that he was "not happy," he questioned himself, which was the first step towards his enlightenment. The second step was his acceptance that "he was not happy and that was the true state of affairs."

Moreover, he resisted by starting to think and talk about the books. At first, he did not understand what these books implied as he was unfamiliar with critical historical events. Nevertheless, he found his way to Faber and got the necessary help. Therefore, Montag's resistance consisted of unlearning and then learning. We realize that Montag has genuinely changed when he says,

> And I thought about books. And for the first time I realized that a man was behind each
>
> one of the books. A man had to think them up. A man had to take a long time to put
>
> them down on paper. And I'd never even thought that thought before. (Bradbury, p. 49)

Montag's character expresses empathy towards the lived experiences of people who existed in the past. Whereas, negationists lack this empathy as they selfishly try to establish their convenient truth.

> He picked up the children's history book and looked at the portrait of Big Brother which formed its frontispiece. The hypnotic eyes gazed into his own. It was as though some huge forces 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. (Orwell, p. 59)

Winston had always known and speculated that the party would eventually overpower him. No matter how clear his conscience was, how much knowledge he gathered, or how rebellious his thoughts were, he had always known that his truths were meaningless to the party's lies. He had access to the information of party secrets and historical documents that nobody else had the chance to know. Hence, he knew that "comrade Ogilvy" who was hailed as Oceania's "war hero," was only a fictitious character invented by the party. This kind of revision is a propaganda strategy named testimony. Its purpose is to gain voluntary submission by showcasing a heroic figure as an example of loyalty to the nation. Winston also knew that from "newspaper, to books, periodic, pamphlets, posters, leaflets, films. Soundtracks, cartoons and photograph", everything was subjected to alteration. According to the party, he had the picture of "Jones, Aaronson, and Rutherford in New York" when they were supposed to be in Eurasia. However, he destroyed it even though he had the chance to keep it, just as he suppressed every other knowledge. It depicts how numerous revisions of historical events gradually blurs the line between objective truth and fiction. Hence, knowledge loses its power due to confusions. It also expresses the extent of Winston's fear of the party. Whereas he has faith in the existence of a past, he does not really believe in the strength of knowledge. Therefore, even while committing small acts of rebellion to feel empowered, he still succumbs to his fatalism. For example, when he starts writing in the journal that he secretly gathered from a "prole book shop," he thinks that whether he writes in this journal or not, he has still committed a "thought crime," and for that, he would eventually be punished. When he indulged in illicit affairs with the prostitutes, he knew he was "the dead." When he

grew accustomed to the idea of death, he started taking bigger risks, such as beginning an affair with Julia, renting a room at Mr. Charrington's shop, and blindly trusting O'Brien with his thoughts. All the while, he felt empowered, thinking that he would ultimately gain freedom with death, whether the party caught him or not. However, he was even denied this freedom by O'Brien. He is psychologically and physically tortured in the "prison cell" until he is left with no consciousness and an obsession for big brother. Meanwhile, we realize that death can come in many forms, and some deaths are worse than others.

Guy Montag's character can be analyzed by his search for identity through his efforts to connect with the books and the people around him. Even after Montag's uniformed activities, he is a naturally curious person. In the first chapter, on his way home after work, Montag feels a presence near his house. He described it as "the air seemed changed with a special calm as if someone had waited there, quietly, and only a moment before he came, simply turned to a shadow and let him through," (p. 2). Here, he felt the presence of Clarisse. However, this is important because we realize what piqued Montag's interest was just a human presence. He had been so devoid of human interaction and connection that a sign of life made him curious. Because of this lack of connection, Montag feels very empty. He has no materials or knowledge inside of him to form a relationship with himself or others. He often questions himself, "How do you get so empty? He wondered. Who takes it out of you?". Hence, in his mind, he tries to form an image of himself through his bonding with Clarisse.

> Montag: Why is it, I feel I've known you so many years?
>
> Clarisse: Because I like you and I don't want anything from you. (Bradbury, p. 26)

He tries to form a connection with Mildred as well. He knew he did not love her but still wanted to reclaim his identity as a husband and lover. For example, he tries to engage her in a conversation in the only way he knows, which is by communicating his thoughts. He tries to read her verses from different books, but Mildred feels agitated by it and keeps talking about "her family," which is only a TV show. After the

disappearance of Clarisse, Montag finds Faber, who was at first suspicious of him. However, he warms up to Montag when he expresses guilt for burning the books. Hence, Faber becomes Montag's alter ego, who tries to guide him in his quest of creating his own identity from the ashes of the old Montag. He also tries to understand the people behind each book. He was fascinated by how a person can transform his/her thoughts and experiences into words. He is intrigued by their ability to leave a piece of themselves even after death. After an old woman voluntarily stays in the fire with her books, Montag wonders. "There must be something in books, something we can't imagine, to make a woman stay in a burning house." Montag rebelled to find out what it is about the past and the books written by dead people that makes a person give up all the "pleasure" and "fun" that the present has to offer. Montag wants to think freely instead of blindly following O'Brien. Although, at times, he wondered if it was wrong to ignore the present and go behind the past. He felt guilty for hiding the books in the "ventilator grill" and lashing out at Mildred's friends for their ignorance. He saw himself inside them and realized what a fool he had been for destroying history and taking pleasure in it. Even after taking impulsive risks and having self-doubts, Montag never wavered from his conviction to learn about the world and the people who made it the way it is. Being on the verge of being killed only made him want to survive more. He viewed it as a rebirth symbolized by the "phoenix" in the novel.

Beatty and O'Brien:

For historical revisionism to successfully take place in any government system, there needs to be acceptance from society along with mindless ignorance and absolute control. There are people in every totalitarian society who are not necessarily the monarch themselves but hold a superior position and enjoy better facilities than the others in the community. Although these authoritarian figures are not outside of the control system, unlike others, they can exercise power on behalf of the monarch. They are well aware of the system, they have more access to government secrets, and their knowledge is not limited by anyone. Nevertheless, they choose to accept the system for what it is and stay loyal to the nation. Captain Beatty and O'Brien represent this part of society in *Fahrenheit 451* and *1984*. They work for the state, and

both are ideologues of their respective movements. Their role is to closely monitor society for any sign of rebels, liberals, or individuals. Their antagonistic intentions have been made clear through their actions, even though we are not presented with their thoughts. Till the very end, we do not really know them any better than we know the "telescreens," the "memory hole," or the "mechanical hound."

In *1984*, O'Brien was seen from the eyes of Winston Smith. Orwell represented him to symbolize the dubious nature of Winston's hope. We see the gradual rise of his hope as he makes eye contact with the "large," "burly" inner party member with an intimidating aura. The man is named O'Brien, and this is the first and only inner party member we view throughout the novel. However, his presence does not give us much of an answer to protect the mystery surrounding the inner party. We see that O'Brien mirrors Winston's imagination of an ideal rebel. According to his desperate mind and observant eyes, O'Brien gives an impression of "intelligence," "unorthodoxy," and geniality.

Moreover, it is obvious that Winston idealizes O'Brien for the sheer fact that he possesses all the qualities that Winston feels lacking inside of him. For example, Winston sees himself as "smallish" and "frail," whereas he describes O'Brien as "urbane" and "Prizefighter physique." Therefore, as readers, we want to trust Winston's observant eyes and designate O'Brien as a positive character. Yet, Winston's self-deprecating and desperate mind makes us doubt O'Brien's true intentions. Next, his character appears when he finally talks to Winston. Contrary to his intimidating aura and authoritative position, he amicably talks to Winston. Moreover, he gives Winston two grave signs of his "rebellion." The first sign was his effort to speak with him, a mere outer party member, which is uncharacteristic of any inner-party member. Moreover, any kind of fruitless conversation was suspicious in the eyes of the party. Hence, for a person of O'Brien's stature to put so much effort only to appreciate someone's work, meant something to Winston. It also made him more believable in the readers' eyes, as this step is risky on his end as well. Another sign was him mentioning an "unperson"(Syme) who Winston knew was abolished. This step not only confirms O'Brien's thoughtcrime but also proves Winston's thought crime to an inner party member for not denying the existence of Syme. Winston sees this as the greatest opportunity of being part of the

"brotherhood," and his hope of freedom and death develops to its peak. Both of which were destroyed by O'Brien in the last chapter of *1984.* When Winston is arrested and taken to the "prison cell," O'Brien discloses that he is not part of any "brotherhood" and that the party "got him a long time ago." It is the biggest twist in the whole book. Readers, along with Winston, realize that there was never any hope to begin with. As O'Brien says, "reality only exists inside our consciousness", we realize that hope is also a mere fragment of our consciousness that is controllable and destroyable.

In *Fahrenheit 451*, Captain Beatty's role is not presented in a dubious manner like O'Brien's. His role is relatively straight forward, and from the very first chapter, we understand that he is an ideologue of the party slogan; "Monday burn Millay, Wednesday Whitman, Friday Faulkner, burn 'em to ashes, then burn the ashes" (Bradbury, 19). However, there is layers to his character because some of his actions deviate from his role; so much so that it can even be considered ironical. He has knowledge about the movement, the history of firemen, and other things his junior colleagues do not know about. He always has an answer to every question and knows how to use his words to persuade others. Moreover, everything he says, expresses extreme loyalty towards the movement. For example, in chapter one, in the fire station, when Montag tries to touch the "mechanical hound," and it growls at him, Montag wonders what the hound is thinking. To which Beatty replies,

> Come off it. It doesn't like or dislike. It just 'functions.' It's like a lesson in ballistics. It
>
> has a trajectory we decide on for it. It follows through. It targets itself, homes itself, and
>
> cuts off. It's only copper wire, storage batteries, and electricity. (P. 24)

It makes the readers wonder who gave Captain Beatty all this information and why no government is mentioned in the novel despite mentioning so many regulations and an organized system on practice. However, it is not needed because Beatty is their spokesperson, automatically making him knowledgeable regarding the secret state affairs. Moreover, at times Beatty mirrors the mechanical hound. His wordings

and explanations sound almost automated and devoid of any emotions. However, he does show emotions when he talks about literature. It is shocking because it implies that he had read or maybe still reads books, whereas his role is to burn them. For example:

- "Master Ridley," said Montag a last.

- "What?" said Beatty. "She said, 'Master Ridley.' She said some crazy thing when we came in the door. 'Play - the man,' she said, 'Master Ridley.' Something, something, something."

- "'We shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out,'" said - Beatty. Stoneman glanced over at the captain, as did Montag, startled. (Bradbury, p. 23)

Later on, Beatty's character takes an even more complex turn when he uses his knowledge of literature to manipulate Montag. He quotes writers such as Sir Philip Sydney, Alexander Pope, Mr. Vallery, Dr. Johnson, etc., to prove his point that knowledge is confusing and that individual thoughts only make things difficult. When he says these quotes and how he uses each poem, it is self-explanatory that Beatty comprehends each word he is uttering. Literature reveals the passionate side of his character that he tries to repress because of his role as a fireman.

O'Brien and Captain Beatty use different approaches to manipulate society. O'Brien uses mental and physical degradation to inflict fear and pain, eventually killing the conscience. For example, in the prison cell, O'Brien orders the guards to beat Winston, and he only watches him (Winston) writhe in pain. Later on, he (O'Brien) says, "the second thing for you (Winston) to realize is that power is power over human beings. Over the body- but above all, over the mind". Captain Beatty's idea of power is the same as O'Brien's because he also intends to control people's minds. However, his ways are different. He uses people's obsession with eternal happiness and pleasure to control their minds. For example, he tries to reason with Montag by saying:

> We must all be alike. Not everyone born free and equal, as the Constitution says, but
> everyone made equal. Each man the image of every other; then all are happy, for there
> are no mountains to make them cower, to judge themselves against. So! A book is a
> loaded gun in the house next door. Burn it. Take the shot from the weapon. (Bradbury,
> p. 58)

On the other hand, we are also hinted that it is not their own idea. For example, when Montag calls in sick, Beatty empathizes with him that "every fireman" goes through this melancholic feeling in their profession. On the other hand, during his capture, when Winston asks O'Brien with a mild shock if they "got him too", he points out the "mild", "regretful irony", in O' Brien's tone when he says, "they got me a long time ago," (p. 238). Therefore, it is indicated that both Captain Beatty and O' Brien have accepted their roles, despite their evil purpose. They are far from being ignorant about the history and well aware of the state's propaganda of historical revisionism; however, they choose to accept it. It is plausible that they may have voluntarily chosen it for the advantages they gain from their significant role in the function of propaganda. They may also be forced to choose it by their higher authorities like they are bullying others. Nevertheless, one thing is clear, they are far from being happy. Either O'Brien and Beatty do not realize their (O'Brien and Beatty) deep-rooted discontentment, or they know it but choose to suppress it. This acceptance has turned them into human propaganda machines. Both of them have mastered the act of "double think". On one hand, they know that history is not being presented to the citizens in its pure form and on the other hand, they also believe that there cannot be a single true historical narrative. A totalitarian government does not accept multiple narratives or perceptions of history. In this system, the only true historical narrative is their convenient narrative. Hence, history is revised and promoted through ideologues like O'Brien and Beatty so that only lies exist in people's mind. When negationists advocate for the notion that there can be more than one true historical narrative, they are following the ideal of totalitarianism, which is to blur the line between truth and lies. Therefore, notions like this make scope for the rise of totalitarian regimes.

Mildred and Katherine:

The female characters that Orwell and Bradbury showcased in *1984* and *Fahrenheit 451* are superficial. They are primarily symbolic and lack character growth compared to the male characters. Although, their projection of society's treatment of women is identical to reality. Given that both of these novels were written during the 20th century when the feminist movements started to rise, Orwell and Bradbury's representation of women as either ignorant or repressed tells us how society expects women to be. Moreover, if we compare their vision of women's role in a futuristic world with today's world, we realize how much women have developed their societal role.

On the other hand, people's attitude towards them largely remains the same. The only female characters who project sensibility in *Fahrenheit 451* are Clarisse and the "old lady" who died in the fire along with her books. Even though Clarisse is sensible, she is more like a symbolization of Montag's conscience rather than an actual human. Despite her character's potential, she dies relatively early, which is a plot device for Montag's character growth. On the other hand, in *1984*, Julia plays the role of Winston's love interest. She is projected as a woman different from Oceania's women. She is free-spirited and a rebel like Winston. However, unlike Winston, who desires a change, she defies the party only for her personal pleasures. At first, she symbolizes Winston's paranoia. However, after they fall in love, she represents Winston's freedom. No matter how strong their characters are to the plot or their great potential, Clarisse and Julia do not have any other purpose except to make scope for the male protagonist's character growth.

On the other hand, Mildred and Katherine are projected as a sharp contrast to Clarisse and Julia. Whereas Julia is the free-spirited Individual, Katherine is the "repressed" and "selfless" mass. While Clarisse is an intellectual individual, Mildred is the "ignorant" and "subdued" mass. In *1984*, Katherine appeared in the novel only through Winston's thoughts and memories. She is Winston's wife, and she had been in the relationship with Winston only for her duty towards the party. As soon as they realized that they could not get pregnant, they were separated. On the other hand, Mildred and Montag stayed married even though they

lacked any kind of connection or love. They never communicate because Mildred is obsessed with her "tv family."

Repression has been shown as an essential characteristic of the "mass" in both *1984* and *Fahrenheit 451*. Julia once theorizes the party's agenda of controlling people's sexual activities. She tells Winston that it might be the party's way of repressing people's feelings by giving them no way of an outlet. So that the party can use people's pent-up aggression to their advantage. According to Winston, Katherine had been a repressed woman. He describes his relationship with her as "rigid," "embarrassing," and "horrible." Since we learn about her from Winston's perspective, it is impossible to form a clear opinion about her. The reason is that Winston expresses his hatred for his wife and women, in general, several times throughout the novel. However, the impression we get about her is that Katherine was uncomfortable in her marriage with Winston. She "winced" and "flinched" whenever they made any physical contact. However, she forced herself and Winston to stay married and "routinely" consummated their marriage because of "their duty towards the party." This expresses her ignorance towards her own feelings and selfless devotion towards the party; This is what the "antisex" league aims at. It is an organization by the party that promotes celibacy and creates contempt for sex in women's minds. On the other hand, in *Fahrenheit 451*, to describe Mildred, Montag says:

> His wife stretched on the bed, uncovered and cold, like a dead body displayed on the
>
> lid of a tomb, her eyes fixed to the ceiling by invisible threads of steel, immovable. And
>
> in her ears the little Seashells, the thimble radios tamped tight, and an electronic ocean
>
> of sound, of music and talk and music and talk coming in, coming in on the shore of her
>
> unsleeping mind. The room was indeed empty. (Bradbury, 76)

This particular instance in the novel implies that Mildred has no soul inside of her. Even when she indulges in her favorite TV family, "her family," she does not express any joy or excitement. She only lies on the

bed with the "seashells" plugged in. She never has any thoughts in her mind. As it is a daily occurrence, Montag does not realize that she has tried to commit suicide when he sees her lying on the bed "unflinchingly." Her attempt to take her own life expresses her repressed sadness.

Moreover, she is so forgetful that she cannot even remember taking so many sleeping pills. This means she is ignorant and does not care about anything other than her superficial pleasure. This ignorance had dulled her senses to such an extent that she does not even feel bothered for forgetting when she and Montag first met.

> She laughed an odd little laugh that went up and up. "Funny, how funny, not to remember where or when you met your husband and wife". (Bradbury, pp. 39-40)

This represents Hannah Arendt's theory that the mass's complete "selflessness" paves the way for a totalitarian government's prevalence. Both Mildred and Katherine have no sense of self. They have no character outside their uniformed identity. Their representation as the mass also demonstrates how this group wants to stay ignorant. They are so habituated to forgetting and not thinking that the task of remembrance makes them distressed. Even though the government's propaganda and lies are responsible for their subdued state, they are in no position to think about it; since they do not know how to think.

Censoring individual thought:

> Power is in tearing human minds to pieces and putting them together again in new shapes of your own choosing. (Orwell, pp. 219-220)

Thoughts are the basis of a person's ideas, perception, and analytical prowess. This is where the journey of creating our own identity starts from. And thoughts borrow the necessary elements for their refinement

from history and memories. On the other hand, memories cannot exist unless in our thoughts. Both of these concepts are intermingled. Similarly, for a nation's collective memory to live, that memory must reside in individual thoughts. However, totalitarian governments use various tools to censor our thoughts and memories. So, when historical information is distorted or negated by authoritative figures, it is easier to get confused. If individual thoughts are distorted, it is only a matter of time before a nation's collective memories become extinct. And if that happens, history becomes a propaganda machine which is only used to produce a series of revisions. This propaganda is carried out within the society though a number of symbol carriers. To turn a revised history into the ultimate truth, it is necessary to spread it and engrave it into the minds of the people. In *1984,* these symbol carriers are language, slogans, templates, telescreens, etc. And in *Fahrenheit 451*, mass media and technology are used as the symbol carriers.

Language distortion:

> When it is necessary to manipulate with history and your own memory it is equally
> necessary to forget that you have done so. This is accomplished with a mental technique,
> which in newspeak is called doublethink. (Orwell, p. 35)

Ideas are formulated inside our minds through language. Moreover, thoughts can be expressed and understood through language. The whole communication cycle among human beings is dependent on it. Hence, Orwell supposes there is no better way of establishing control over people than controlling their language. Not only would it make it impossible to express and understand rebellious ideas, but also make it impossible to form such thoughts. Orwell puts this idea into context in *1984*. The party has centralized language revision. They created a new language system to replace the "old speak" and named it "newspeak." It is constantly revised by language specialists to make it more efficient for party activities. Syme, a language specialist in the party, tells Winston, "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" (Orwell, p. 35). This is the ultimate tool for censoring individual thoughts. If people cannot form thoughts, it would be impossible to resist lies and deception in the form of history revisions. Moreover, they will not be called lies because it would not be a word anymore.

Mass media and sensations:

> Speed up the film, Montag, quick... Uh! Bang! Smack! Wallop, Bing, Bong, Boom! Digest-digests, digest-digest-digests. Politics? One column, two sentences, a headline!... Whirl man's mind around about so fast under the pumping hands of publishers, exploiters, broadcasters that the centrifuge flings off all unnecessary, time-wasting thought!" (Bradbury, p. 55)

During the era of black and white television, Bradbury envisioned a generation that immerses itself in a room with a vast television wall to escape "evil" thoughts. Nobody really expected that escapism would actually become such a huge phenomenon. It has almost become an ordinary course of action to indulge ourselves in various entertainment modes to hide from the complexities of life. It is possible to spend the whole day looking at the screens and feeling ecstasy for the time being. Reality is harsh, real families are complicated, real people are flawed, and human beings detest flaws. Therefore, we consider the mass media our savior as it takes the mass further away from their thoughts with artificial sensations. Bradbury projects how it can be used as a weapon to censor a whole nation's thought process. Mass media can indeed be beneficial in spreading knowledge. However, in a world where artificial ecstasy has replaced thoughts, it is plausible that people would take in any information that serves more sensations. Faber reflects on this with Montag and says:

> It isn't books you need, it's some of the things that once were in books.... The same
>
> infinite detail and awareness could be projected through the radios and televisors, but
>
> are not. (Bradbury, p. 78)

The dubious nature of technology:

The advantages and efficiency of technology are undeniable. It can enhance a person's creative prowess, speed, and efficiency. However, it also has another side to it. Because of its effect on the human mind, it also possesses the ability to control thoughts. One of the main objectives of technology is to make human life more accessible and comfortable. However, it is hard to specify when or if this comfort would lead us to become nugatory. This dubious nature of technology is often used by the government to manipulate. In *1984*, Orwell projected his fear of technology. For example, the memory hole and tele screens. Whereas the "memory holes" symbolize the destruction of history. The telescreens surveil people for any kind of individual thought. Bradbury uses this theme in *Fahrenheit 451* as well. For example, when Beatty tries to manipulate Montag by using literary verses, Faber also keeps giving his opinion through the "bullet." This makes Montag confused, and he is not able to think straight. This depicts how technology sometimes makes it hard for us to think independently, especially in the present world, where we can get millions of opinions on any subject with a single press.

Chapter-6

Conclusion:

The place where there is no darkness:

> Years ago—how long was it? Seven years it must be—he had dreamed of walking
>
> through a pitch-dark room. And someone sitting to one side of him had said as he
>
> passed: "We shall meet in the place where there is no darkness. (Orwell, p. 18)

Winston's vision of "a place where there is no darkness" is a recurring theme throughout 1984. It adds an ironical sense to the dystopian theme of the novel. Darkness can have several connotations in this case. The

most obvious connotation would be the fear and oppression of the party. It might mean that Winston desires a world that would free everyone. However, Winston's "pessimism" and "fatalism" contradict his hope for a world where darkness would not exist. His dreams are the embodiment of the juxtaposition of his fear and hope. Sometimes he dreams of a wall of darkness hiding something hideous behind it, and he knows if the darkness goes away, he would meet his doom. However, he still hopes for the darkness to go away. This symbolizes Winston deceiving himself because he wishes to run away from his own darkness. This also indicates human beings' effort to reject everything that invokes negative feelings and their desire to recreate a place of permanent bliss. This idea of "eternal happiness" gives rise to the notion of "a perfect world," "a harmonious society" with a "perfect government system". Orwell sees this as a scope for the rise of a totalitarian government, which according to him pushes people into the state of permanent unconsciousness. Orwell tries to warn people about the "place with no darkness" because it is a deception.

There can never be a place where problems would not occur, conflicts would not arise, and diverse thoughts would not clash. No matter how perfect a place is, human beings cannot escape darkness because it is part of their being. Bradbury also exhibits this idea through his novel. Through the speeches of Faber and Granger, he expresses that acknowledgment of the darkness's existence is absolute for the growth of identity and thoughts. Books and history showcase all human civilization's failures, brutality, and struggles. Its knowledge paves the way for the development of future generations. Avoiding it would only make us blinded by the light.

> Do you know why books such as this are so important? Because they have quality. And what does the word quality mean? To me it means texture. This book has pores. It has features. This book can go under the microscope. You'd find life under the glass, streaming past in infinite profusion. The more pores, the more truthfully recorded details of life per square inch you can get on a sheet of paper, the more `literary' you are. (Bradbury, p. 26)

Historical negationism stems from the tendency to deny the problematic historical events. It disassociates a society from national guilt and frees the political parties from responsibility. The purpose of historical revisionism is not to filter out the mistakes, struggles and brutality of the past, but to look for perspectives that have been missed out earlier. However, the line between historical revisionism and negationism can be blurred very easily if people only focus on creating a perfect society instead of learning from past mistakes. George Orwell and Ray Bradbury warns us that historical revisionism hides the possibility of negationism behind it which stays latent; until politicians use it as propaganda. And the society mindlessly consumes it because they want a perfectly harmonious society with no complex history, diverse ideologies and flawed thoughts.

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