George Orwell's 1984 and the surveillance in the contemporary world

By

Somapti Sarkar

ID: 18203011

A thesis submitted to the Department of English and Humanities in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Bachelor of Arts in English

The Department of English and Humanities

Brac University

August 2022

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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.

Student's Full Name & Signature:

Somapti Sarkar, ID: 18203011

Approval

Departmental Head: (Chair)

The thesis titled George Orwell's 1984 and the surveillance in the contemporary world
submitted by Somapti Sarkar ID: 18203011 of Summer 2022 has been accepted as satisfactory in
partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Bachelor of Arts Examining Committee:
Supervisor: (Member)
Anika Saba
Senior Lecturer, Department of English and Humanities
BRAC University

Professor Firdous Azim

Professor and Chairperson, Department of English and Humanities

BRAC University

Abstract

My research paper is based on 1984, it is one of the masterpieces by George Orwell which represents the conditioned and controlled life of the Oceania people. In the mid-20th century, it is first published and gives humans a warning about how their future is going to be in a dystopian society. The fundamental aim of my research is to do a close reading of the incidents that have been narrated in 1984 and to compare those with the context of the usage of modern technology. In addition, the class struggle of this novel is discussed in the light of Marxist criticism, demonstrating the exploitation of general citizens in terms of rules and regulations described in 1984. Moreover, this research paper gives reference to the Digital Security Act 2018 of contemporary Bangladesh which is similar to the surveillance mechanism used in Oceania. The first and foremost goal of this study is to verify the various veracities of Orwell's novel and to uncover the impact of the Digital Security Acts on general people in the modern world including Bangladesh.

Acknowledgement

First and foremost, I want to give thanks to the Almighty for gracing me with patients completing the thesis.

Moreover, I am deeply in debt to Anika Saba ma'am, only for whom I am able to complete this paper. She was always there to help me throughout the procedures. I have done many mistakes in my writing, I hope she will forgive my faults. Besides, I am grateful to one of my favorite faculty members at Brac University Professor Sayed Noman for making all difficult things easy to understand, and for being kind to me.

Finally, I am grateful to my parents Narottam Sarkar and Tripti Rani Sarkar who always support me in pursuing my each and every wish. I wish to extend my special thanks to my friend Asrafun Nahar Asha for taking care of me and boosting my confidence always.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

George Orwell's 1984 is one of the most famous novels written in the twentieth century. It depicts a society that can be compared to a prison. Here the dictatorial ruler, the powerful leader always keeps the common people under surveillance, and determines the conditions of life of all, everyone lives here in fear, and cannot protest against the totalitarian ruler. The novel is read over and over again to analyze Orwell's political perceptions. In the novel, Orwell sheds light on how the communists of the novella enforce their point of views and control the minds and brains of the common people. The novel reflects Orwell's experience of living alone and working with ordinary poor people. George Orwell has been critical of the hatred and strife between the Spanish government and the Communists. The writer took part in the Spanish Civil War, and his emotions are deeply involved in this experience. Undoubtedly, the author feels outraged at the way the dictatorial ruling class exploits the common people. The influence of political context, social domination, and the real experience of the Spanish Civil War is particularly noticeable in the novel. After all, the novel sheds light on how in the age of modern technology man is losing his freedom and the dictatorial ruler is gaining omnipotence through control. However, this twentieth-century novel is proving to be true in the twenty-first century, in the many parts of the world. Through this novel, the novelist portrays the dehumanized experience of the central character in the dictatorial regime which is pushing the central character Winston towards rebellion. The main purpose of this paper is to portray the causes of Winston's psychological agitation and review Winston's political and economic context and make a comparative analysis of contemporary politics and policy-making in our society, and determine what the outcome might be. As a case study we can refer to the Digital Security Act 2018 of Bangladesh.

a. The Background information of writing 1984

First of all, the study presents some excerpts from George Orwell's *Why I Write* that offer reader an explanation of where the author gets the idea of the novel. This essay by the novelist explains the phenomena that inspired the writing of the *1984* novel. Some of the serious work that he wrote during the Spanish Civil War of 1936, was written either directly or indirectly, in opposition to tyranny and in support of democratic socialism. Thus, it is a warning novel against those who support and defend dictatorship and a beginning of a revolution against ruthless dictators. As author E. Fromm in *Afterword to 1984* explains, "George Orwell's *1984* is the expression of a mood, and it is a warning. The mood, it expresses is that of near despair about the future of man, and the warning is that unless the course of history changes, men all over the world will lose their qualities, will become soulless automatons, and will not even be aware of it" (257).

Moreover, the biographer of George Orwell, Michael Shelden in his book *Orwell — The Authorized Biography* notes many literary works that have a significant influence on *1984*.

Firstly, Michael claims that Orwell's childhood in Henley for the urge for a "golden country" influences his writing. Then, Orwell is being harassed at St. Cyprian's and Orwell has a strong feeling as a victim of the tormentors. Besides, he spends some time serving the Indian-Burma Police and he works for the BBC which was wholly devoted to authoritarian power. These experiences of outrage towards the dictatorship thoroughly make the base for *1984*. Moreover, Shelden claims that some specific literary pieces like *Brave New World* by Huxley (focus on the parody of post-war which is called Wallisian Utopia), *Darkness at Noon* and *The Yogi* and *the Commissar* of Arthur Koestler; *The Iron Heel* of Jack London (focus on the Fascist

aggression), *Year Nine* by Cyril Connolly (implies that the subject of the totalitarian dictatorship confesses phony offenses and feels that the execution is reasonable), *We* by the Russian novelist Yevgeny Zamyatin (depicts a character of a mathematician who lives in the totalitarian utopia) influence Orwell's writing.

Again, Orwell's socialistic perception has been depicted in this novella. For example, the publication of 1984 proceeds with Down and Out in Paris (1933), Burmese Days (1934), Keep the Aspidistra Flying (1936), and The Road to Wigan Pier (1936), Homage to Catalonia (1938), and Animal Farm (1945). Before writing 1984, Orwell had expressed his disbelief in the totalitarian system and in the false promises of the revolution by writing Homage to Catalonia and Animal Farm. On the other hand, in Coming Up for the Year, he celebrates the lost freedom of speech of 1984. Also, the context of 1984 is similar to Stalin's Soviet Union. For example, the "Two Minutes Hate" in 1984, reflects Stalin's habitual description of when the enemy arrives. Stalin even bears a striking resemblance to 1984 's character "Big Brother". On the other hand, "Emanuel Goldstein", described in the 1984 novel probably resembles Leon Trotsky, because both are Jewish.

Furthermore, *the Collected Essays* offer readers a broader insight into where the ideas for *1984* have come from. Orwell claims that no society can continue for more than a few generations because the ruling elite, which was primarily concerned with having a "good time," would quickly lose its vigor and credulous. Besides, Irving Howe, author of *Orwell's 1984 – Texts, Sources, Criticism* comments more on the observation of Orwell for *The Iron Heel*:

It is here that Marxist Socialists have usually fallen short. Their interpretation of history has been so mechanistic that they have failed to foresee dangers that were obvious to people who had never heard the name of Marx [...] Hitler had risen to power official Marxism was still proclaiming that Hitler was of no importance and Social Fascism '–i.e. democracy- was the real enemy. (Qtd. in Howe 287)

In the same way, in the recent political context in our society inequality is increasing in society because of corruption. This gives birth to the class struggle. The leaders control the means of production and make a profit. For example, currently, 10% of the rich people hold 38% of the total national income, and most of them are related to politics (Islam *Poverty and Social Inequality: Bangladesh Experience*). That automatically creates a power struggle and leads society to agitation. However, to make this class struggle sustainable monitoring and contorting are crucial. As Gramsci addressed, the widespread strategy of intellectual control and manipulation helped to sustain all oppressive systems. He distinguished two types of political authority: dominance, which pertained to explicit corporeal punishment by police and military forces, and another one is hegemony, which included both ideological control and consent of the people. Here in the novella people of Oceania give consent to every thought of Big Brother. Thus the system is continuing.

b. Surveillance and modern technology around the world

Nonetheless, nowadays in the era of science and technology, people are very fond of expressing their conflicted thought through social media which often cause collision among certain groups/ community. To control that governments all over the world invest in advanced

technologies for monitoring their populations' social networking use (Allie and Shahbaz Freedom on the Net 2019 Key Finding). Once the domain of the global highest intelligence services, this type of mass monitoring has spread to several cultures, from large "authoritarian powers to smaller or poorer ones hoping to seek out dissidents and persecuted minorities" (Allie and Shahbaz Freedom on the Net). That raises a question about the freedom of expression of the citizens.

Further, freedom of expression refers to the ability of an individual or group of individuals to express their beliefs, thoughts, ideas, and emotions about different issues free from government censorship. On that note, we can think about the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution protecting the rights of individuals to freedom of religion, speech, press, petition, and assembly. Some scholars group several of those freedoms under the general term "freedom of expression." Surveillance of citizens is not just a picture of Oceania. On September 11, the US government enacted the "USA / Patriot Act" for the same purpose. By this act, the then Congress government amended the Surveillance Act, and tightened the spying on citizens, while decreasing safeguards on such authorities, including judicial monitoring, greater transparency, and the opportunity to question government inquiries in court.

The government has the unfettered ability to sift through people's bank records, medical histories, Internet usage, bookshop purchases, library usage, travel habits, and any other action that creates a record. In the same way, the IT Act 2000 of India gives the government every authority to monitor civilians' daily activities on the digital platform. By recognizing digital data and electronic signatures, the Act creates a legal foundation for electronic government (*The Gazette of India* 1-34). It also describes cyberbullying and imposes sanctions for it. The Act

called for the establishment of a Controller of Certifying Authorities to oversee the issuing of electronic signatures (*The Gazette of India 1-34*). Though the aim of implementing this Act was to control Cybercrime, the general citizen's freedom and privacy have become a zest. Similarly, the Security Act 2018 was issued by the government under the supervision of the general public and surveillance of Bangladesh. Capturing "real-time information" is essential to control crime, such as intimidation, violence, terrorism, murder, rape, and kidnapping (Ahmed et all 33). Because of this, the authorities have placed great importance on monitoring the technology to monitor the continuous use of the public in the field of technology. For example, "by implementing the social credit score system, authorities can mark the citizen's activities and analyze them. To detect and recognize the actions of a human [...] incorporated the SQL database (SOLite) to record the social credit score. A citizen can visualize their credit score from an HTML-based website" (Ahmed et all 33). To continue this trend, the Security Act 2018 was implemented making provisions for ensuring suppression and trial of offenses committed to digital devices and for matters ancillary. The law brings the digital life of the general public under constant scrutiny and gives the authority the right to arrest any public without any kind of warrant (Gazette of Bangladesh 1). As the Center for Governance Study reported, "The law has severely disrupted the freedom of expression in Bangladesh. Journalists and citizens of various walks of society have been victimized for voicing their opinion online" (1). In this way, the way of controlling crime has become the equivalent of prison without privacy for general citizens. Surprisingly, we the citizen are accepting the surveillance and controlling our behavior. It is quite similar to Foucault's idea of the panopticon that signifies the modern era where the general people become the bearer of their figurative as well as mental imprisonments which reassembles Althussers' point of view of own confinement. To allude, people put CC cameras for security in

all these places that we're constantly living and working and going and visiting, everyone is being monitored that is the physical form of confinement

c. The Thematic Aspects of the Study

Furthermore, the main reason for choosing 1984 as my research subject is that it is universally recognized as a complementary image of the totalitarian political system. The events described in the novel give us a philosophical knowledge of the authoritarian regime which is one of the sources of understanding power struggle and class struggle. Therefore, this paper is focused on studying the past so that we can be aware of the present, and avoid future conflicts. The research paper will also answer the questions about how the modern form of monitoring and controlling represents Orwell's dystopian society, how Big Brother mirrors today's capital society, and how the use of information technology signifies the idea of the panopticon of Michel Foucault. In short, the main the objective of this study is to reconstruct the notions of surveillance in the context of increasing security weapons by different countries of the world including Bangladesh.

Chapter 2: Literature review

The main point of my literature review is to present a comparative similarity of the present day in the light of Orwell's 1984 novel with the depiction of Orwell's inspiration to write this masterpiece. To verify the veracity of the situation described in this novel, reliance has been placed on Karl Marx's revised interpretation of the capitalist theory. The literature review examines the various reprehensible aspects of a dystopian society, and the various social factors described by experts that cause the lower strata of society to be oppressed. In addition, it provides examples, of the causes of class inequality in a dystopian society and its various aspects from the perspective of other scholars.

a. Dystopian society and Orwell

First of all, Orwell's Dystopian Society is a fictional city where people are controlled by the authoritarian ruler. The article named *Utopias and Dystopias: Definitions and Characteristics* asserted that the standard of living in the dystopian society is deplorable because people are victimized poor, oppressed, and sick. This system is maintained by dictatorial bureaucrats. Technology, rules, and regulations are being "used to control the citizens of society" (Utopias and Dystopias 2). Here general people were restricted to stay under constant surveillance. This study evaluates the characteristics of a dystopian society that mirrors the Oceania society's fundamental structure.

Even essayists are very fond of analyzing the inspiration of Gorge Orwell to write 1984. For instance, essayist Maccum in his essay, "The masterpiece that killed George Orwell" explains, that the rise of "dictators like Joseph Stalin of the Soviet Union and Adolf Hitler of

Germany" gave rise to hatred of Orwell's totalitarian politics (1). Orwell has made everyone aware of the misrule of the dictators in this novel sarcastically. In this regard, he first wrote *Animal Farm* in 1947, *and 1984* in 1949. Orwell himself said that in setting the background for *1984*, the meeting of allied leaders at the Tehran conference partially inspired him. Isaac Dutcher, an assistant observer, reported, "Orwell confirmed that Roosevelt and Churchill and Stanley were conspiring to divide the world in Tehran" (Maccum 1). In addition, Maccum shows the novel *1984* resembles the personal life of George Orwell.

b. Social inequality and class struggle in Orwell's 1984

Moreover, class inequality is a socially constructed phenomenon in 1984. Proving that my research paper takes a closer look at Al-Dmour Sufyan's "George Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-Four: A Marxist Study". According to Al-Dmour Sufyan, Orwell's main topic of discussion in 1984 was "class inequality". He discusses, how the lower echelons of the people, are being chained and crushed by the upper echelons of society. He further explained that the first-class people of Oceania enjoy all the benefits, and the lower-class people suffer, the lowers have no self of their own, no freedom, and even their capability of thinking has been blocked. The lower-class people are just puppets in the hand of the upper class. As Sufyan explains, "The Inner Party members make up 2 percent of Oceania's population—yet they are the real owners of Oceania [...] live in luxurious homes, and have good food and drink, having personal servants, use helicopters and automobiles" (121). Hence, Sufyan's comparative analysis has played a leading role in proving the validity of my general "class-discriminatory" statement. Similarly, writer Stephen Trombley and Alf Lawrie's views on Marxist perception in the book named The New Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought explore that there is a class conflict because of

inequality. This book asserts that the ruling class becomes the most powerful group in society, though their number is very few. They assert how the "social upper classes of a society become the ruling class when they are a socially progressive force (the upper class) sufficiently powerful" (236). "Inner Party" in 1984, is that progressive and suppressive force.

Then, Erzal Pratomo Kurnianto in his thesis, "Winston's Alienation and Class Struggle in Orwell's 1984" discussed the alienation of Winston and Class Struggle in George Orwell's 1984. This work portrays the society of Winston Smith, and his life in the modern totalitarian age. Winston works as an editor at the government's Ministry of Truth. Winston dislikes such a regime because he believes it doesn't value history and teaches its citizens to forget their earlier life from the lenses of Marxist class struggle. Erzal elaborates, from the point of view of Marx, that human society can be characterized by conflict or struggle between different human groups (8). Moreover, he acknowledges that any revolution or class struggle does not initiate as a group, community, or class within a society; rather it works as a delegator to a group to present benefits and demands for experts in the group or community.

Next, even scholars are also very fond of researching on surveillance of modern technology as well. For instance, Sadiqa Sattar in her thesis tries to find out similarities between Orwellian and big brother and today's usage of social media. She focuses on surveillance systems mentioning algorithm systems, she discusses that because of the technology human become the prisoner of their own mind (24-36). In addition, her unique focus is on how personal information is being used as a commodity in the capitalist society and describing the notion of self. The same point was also elaborated by one of the Literature students of Gavle university James Inch that

totalitarian leaders rely on the manipulation of thoughts and actions to maintain power across the class boundaries from the perspective of Marxist and socialism (16-18). Most of the literature on George Orwell focuses on surveillance and manipulation.

c. Ideology and Orwell's depiction in 1984

Once again, class discrimination can be vividly understood through the reference to Marxist theory. In Marxism and Literary Criticism, Eagleton evaluates Marxist literature as a whole that shows loss and profit as the foremost driving force of society. In this regard, the doctrines of critics including Trotsky, Lenin, Lukacs, Goldmann, Caudwell, and Benjamin can be followed. The relation of literary history, the form of literature, and the question of political commitment in society are dependent and interrelated on the importance of technology and controlling power. As explained here, the way of life of a large section of society can be understood through the discussion of profit and loss, and that way of life and life experience can be controlled only through the use of technology. As he explains, "[...] capitalism will behave antisocially [...], and that can now mean human devastation on an unimaginable scale. What used to be apocalyptic fantasy is today no more than sober realism [...]". Overall study shows that the fundamental motto of all struggles is related to profit and loss. For instance, the "Inner Party" control others to serve their interest. They even change history to control people lest they should lose their power. Fundamentally, this controlling relationship depends on profit and loss and in 1984, the life of people has been controlled by a "telescreen" (Orwell 1). Therefore, this study explores the relationship between profit and loss, between the general people and the ruling party.

d. George Orwell's 1984 and the contemporary world

However, how safe is it to protest social issues, to point the finger at class discrimination in the world today? As everyone knows, social inequality is, will be, and will continue to be forever. Inferior people will give birth to inferior offspring and, thus propagate their inferiority perpetually and the ruler will rule over them. From that point of view, the basis of society is class discrimination. According to Orwell, this moral decay is seen as a spectator, but cannot be protested by ordinary citizens (Secino 1). Besides, Robert Maccum describes the conditions that Orwell evaluated in 1984, depicting the violence of a dystopian society. In this case, the concept of "Last Man in Europe" was already in Orwell's head (Maccum 1). Existing literature suggested that Orwell had assumed the future "dystopian Europe" where "class conflict" would be an inevitable issue and people would not have any freedom (Maccum 1).

Therefore, people do not have the right to even think against authority in many countries in the world in the present day. We have similarities with the citizens of Orwell's Oceania. Just as Winston used to think over and over before writing his diary whether he should write it or not, we have to think about logically the steps that we are taking. We are being monitored all the time by bringing it under digital law, just like Oceania's "Inner Party" with the telescreen, and with the help of this technology, they can banish anyone at night like vapor. If someone's "Double Thought" was marked on the telescreen, he would get his honorable punishment. As Abul Kalam Azad in his article named "Digital Security Act: Enforcement or Misapplication - Why Concerns and Debates?" published in *BBC Bangla*, explains, Bangladesh's recent Security Act has assigned the law of section 43 that has given the law-enforcement forces "unlimited power to search, seize

and detain without a warrant". Another example of that could be, the law enforcement of Turkey, from 2011, the AKP (The Justice and Development Party) administration has imposed restrictions on freedom of expression, freedom of the press, usage of the internet use, television programming, and the ability to assemble freely. It is similar to Oceania's law to some extent. For example, Turkey implemented emergency surveillance decrees, after the 2016 coup, that granted the Turkish government unrestricted access to communications data without a court order—a carte blanche for government spying" (Rodriguez and Temle "Turkey Doubles Down on Violations of Digital Privacy and Free Expression"). Since the citizen all over the world are kept under monitored and surveillance by limiting freedom of expression,

e. Points of departure

To sum up, the main purpose of this brief literature review is to present a brief analysis of the literature that is similar to my research. In this regard, I will analyze social discrimination and surveillance in light of Orwell's 1984 from a different angle with a new idea, which has been reviewed alienate in the earlier literature. To fill the gaps in my thesis, I have tried to analyze how the authority with access to modern technology has turned ordinary people into mental prisoners worldwide and how it has become essential for the perpetuation of capitalist society. That is why the governments of different countries around the world are introducing digital laws which are symbolic of Big Brother of 1984. The primary concern of my writing is to introduce relative comparability of the current social and political circumstances of the modern world in the light of Orwell's 1984 with the portrayal of Orwell's motivation to compose this magnum opus taking the Digital Security Act 2018 of Bangladesh as a case study. The researchers had worked on surveillance of George Orwell's 1984, yet there is no study done for the recently

developed security act of Bangladesh. Thus, my thesis is contributing to comparing the digital security act with 1984.

Chapter 3: Methodology

My thesis has been completed following a qualitative approach. Previous literature and data were reviewed in depth to conduct a constructive analysis of this study. A critical analysis of George Orwell's 1984 is considered as a primary source for a more in-depth textual analysis, and the next chapter discusses the text with the theoretical framework.

a. Panopticism and self-policing:

"Panopticism" is a conceptual idea, introduced by French philosopher Michel Foucault in the late 19th century, where a surveillance policy has been represented and it is similar to Bentham's Panopticon, the observer is the ruler and the observed is always stay under supervision. As Felluga Dino explains, Foucault is prominent as he challenges conventional knowledge, demonstrating the hazards underlying Enlightenment reforms intended to remedy the barbarism of prior eras for example "the elimination of dungeons, the modernization of medicine, the creation of the public university" (Felluga 1). As Foucault demonstrates, each modernization has worrying consequences for individual authority as well as government control. His most prominent work, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, portrays a vision of modern society which is reminiscent of Orwell's *1984*. Michel Foucault also observed how the government was encroaching on the control of people's private lives on a large scale as modernization progressed. Given this, he explains transformation where he reinterprets earlier physical punishment with later inner peace and discipline. Quoting Foucault, Dino Felluga explains,

In particular, Foucault explores the transition from what he terms a "culture of spectacle" to a "Carceral culture." Whereas in the former punishment was effected on the body in

public displays of torture, dismemberment, and obliteration, in the latter punishment and discipline become internalized and directed to the constitution and, when necessary, rehabilitation of social subjects. (Qtd. in Felluga 1).

Jeremy Bentham's idea of the "panopticon" is also significant here. His idea is to monitor and control the huge prison population with the help of centralized observation. The prison is being watched with a watchtower at the center, and the prisoners will not be able to tell whether they are being watched or not, and the prisoners should be extra cautious about their activities, and at the same time, they will start self-policing. "the inmate must never know whether he is being looked at any one moment, but he must be sure that he may always be so" (Foucault 201).

Bentham compared prison administration to social reform. Bentham explores the necessity of exercising surveillance over the private life of any particular individual for the perpetuation of a democratic capitalist society. In Bentham's view, capitalism in time would lead to a system where the people themselves would police themselves "He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his subjection" (Foucault 202-203). Control of personal life is permeating our own culture with the modernization of technology that makes it easy for the government or authority to monitor our movements and behavior with the help of telephones, internet, ATM cards, and CCTV cameras everywhere in the city. Foucault's Carceral culture points to a social system in which the panoptic model is pervasive, and where personal privacy cannot be maintained. And, the reason behind this surveillance ultimately

creates the fear of power among the general people (Sattar 18). This concept of power relation is similar to the ideological control theory of French Marxist Louis Althusser which also refers to the Italian Marxist's concept of cultural hegemony. Gramsci's interpretation of hegemony is that power is fully exercised only when people automatically consent to the exercise of power over themselves. This consent of the individual implements the exercise of power over his mind. People then believe in a certain power and try to conform to the power by following rules and regulations, suppressing consciousness.

b. Marxist criticism and power struggle

Marxist theory is a corpus of perspective created in the mid-nineteenth century by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Karl Marx discusses the structure of the society about major classes of the societies, and he viewed the conflict between the class as the cause of transformation in the certain structure. Marx's notion of class is crucial to understanding his thought. According to him, property ownership defines a class. That ownership of property gives a person the authority of excluding other people from the property as well as exploit it for self-benefit. In terms of property, society is divided into three major classes, first of all, the bourgeoisie, which controls the means of production like machinery and commercial sites and derives their wealth from profit, then landowners who derive their livelihood from rent, then the proletariat, they own only their labor, they sell their labor for an earning. Similarly, in George Orwell's 1984, there are three classes, the Inner Party which controls the means of production of Oceania, Outer Party is the industrious one, and the huge number of proles. Besides, from the point of view of Marx, human society can be characterized by conflict or struggle between different human groups. Then, The Communist Manifesto by Karl Marx mirrors an endeavor to clarify the objectives of communism

and the hypothesis hidden in its development. It contends that class conflict, or the abuse of the poor class by the upper class, is the persuading power behind every verifiable turn of events. The class relationship is characterized by a ruling party that controls the "means of production" (Marx and Engels 375). In any case, ultimately, these connections were made viable with the controlling power of the upper class and the oppression of the lower class. This interaction addresses the walk of history that is driven by bigger financial powers. Moreover, "to maximize profits, business owners have an incentive to get the most work out of their laborers while paying them the lowest possible wages. This creates an unfair imbalance between owners and the laborers whose work they exploit for their gain" ((Marx and Engels 375). In 1984, the "Outer Party" signifies the middle class, members of the "Outer Party" work for the "Inner Party", and the "Proles" signifies the lower class, they are like day laborers and "Inner Party" members can anytime execute the middle class and lower class to serve the party interest. The main protagonist of the novel, Winston Smith works for the "Inner Party" and had a very low wage. Therefore, these thematic approaches form the framework for an in-depth review of George Orwell's 1984 dystopian society, which is a realistic picture of our current modern society. It also creates an opportunity for readers to compare their social status with George Orwell's fictional surveillance.

Chapter 4: Analysis

Nineteen Eighty-Four by George Orwell is a great prophetic novel which has been written in 1949 and it vividly demonstrates a totalitarian society of a city called Oceania. The dictatorship of totalitarian leaders like Joseph Stalin in the Soviet Union and Hitler in Germany inspires George Orwell to write 1984. This novel captures the image of future Great Britain as well as the whole world. Also, the preface of Orwell certifies the contemporary socio-political conditions of our society. In this novel "Big Brother" is a symbolic character who signifies a leader of a dystopian system. The novel portrays three social classes: the ruling class, the middle class, and the working class. In the novel, the Inner Party represents the ruling class or the upper, the Outer Party who works for different ministries represents the middle class, and the Proles who are most like second-hand shopkeepers or day laborers represent the working class. However, people are unaware and unmindful, though their privacy, and freedom become a myth. The contemporary context of the 21st-century world is similar, there is a similar class struggle, sarcastic privacy, and namely freedom. In addition, the context of the Digital Security Act 2018 of Bangladesh and Orwell 1984 represent a dystopian system where privacy is a myth, war is peace, freedom is imprisoned and this system only serves the interest of the capitalists, the upper class of the society.

a. 1984 reflects Orwell's personal life

Furthermore, Orwell's personal life influences significantly to write this novel. These factors are indirectly or directly related to his personal experiences. As is described in the article named "The Influences of George Orwell's 1984" Orwell first becomes aware of class discrimination when he is "studying at Crossgate," where he witnesses that "millionaire" student is respected by

everyone and is given less punishment by teachers. Moreover, his work experience with the Burmese police gives him a long-term shocking experience about the futility of conflict and the social caste system. This hatred of anything close to the caste system manifests itself in *Nineteen Eighty-Fou*r as a whole. In Oceania, society has been divided into three different classes: "proles, the Outer Party, and the Inner party". In this system, he learned in Crossgate that what one can achieve and how well one is, depend on "not only for what one did but for who the one is" (Orwell 545). For example, Inner Party members, like the children of the "millionaires Crossgate" student are allowed to behave much more forgiving than the lower background student (Secino). Party members enjoy "good food, comfortable living conditions, and the ability to turn off their telescreens - a luxury no one else can afford" even if they can turn off the "telescreen" (Secino).

Then, Orwell's participation in the Spanish War and his experience of the futility of the war also have a profound effect on the setting of the 1984 novel. As he writes in his novel Homage to Catalonia "neither army can -or is willing to defeat the other" (Qtd. in Secino). These states neither want to inform another state about their hostility nor can defeat anyone. In 1984, we see the Inner Party controlling the common people, maintaining power by reminding them of the inevitable conflict, the Inner Party is letting know the general public that if they overthrow the government, they are attacked by an outside enemy. Orwell gains the idea of a divided world from the Tehran Conference of Prime Minister Churchill, Marshall Stalin, and President Roosevelt in 1943. In this context, the author D. Antonovich in his essay, "1984: George Orwell's Read to Dystopia" published in the BBC News Magazine, says, Prime Minister Churchill, Stalin and Roosevelt met in Tehran, Kyiv after World War II, to discuss what work

should be done. Besides, from this meeting, Orwell gets the idea of a world-splitting conspiracy that inspires him to write 1984.

Once he goes on to say that the 1945s atomic bombing strengthened Orwell's view that destruction and threat would rule the future. Perhaps he will have not written down his observations without a direct connection to the war. From Homage to Catalonia, we learn more about Orwell's experience in Spain. He joins the Socialist Militia during the Spanish Civil War. Its members are imprisoned, and someone is killed strategically (Qtd. in Secino). The militias stand on the front lines and performed military duties, then the political leaders feel that the militias are a threat to their power. Therefore, the leaders think the militia has to be eliminated to keep them in power. This experience is a real reflection of the 1984 novel. In this novel, we see that the super states, "Oceania, Eurasia, and Eastasia" are allying with each other to satisfy their interests, again being divided (Orwell 9). As Orwell 1984 explains, "Eurasia or Eastasia, since when Oceania was at war with one of these Powers it was generally at peace with the other" (9). In the article of Jutta Paczulla, ""Talking to India": George Orwell's work at the BBC, 1941-1943", we learn that Orwell works in the Ministry of Information during World War II (55). The influence of Orwell's work experience can be seen in the description of the "Ministry of Truth" in Oceania. Working for the BBC, MOI, Orwell offers the opportunity to gain first-hand experience in controlling thought and propaganda. He encounters a kind of thought-police "while working in the Ministry of Information" (Paczulla 55). "BBC colleagues are tasked with censoring each other, monitoring each other's actions and blocking". It is difficult to imagine that the ruling party does not get such self-policing from their predecessors. In addition, Winston, the central character in the novel, works for the "Ministry of Truth" (Orwell 207) and Orwell works for the

"Eastern Service Committee" and is tortured in Room 101 (Paczulla 55). In "Room 101" of the novel, Winston is taught to love "Big Brother" (Orwell 181). Here Orwell's personal life draws parallels with the novel's "Ministry of Information." These two organizations distort the truth and present it to the general public, and only present what satisfies the interests of the political leaders. Through these solid associations between significant occasions in Orwell's day-to-day existence and focal subjects in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, it tends to be seen that Orwell takes a lot of his motivation from occasions encompassing him. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, at that point, can be viewed as a sort of coordinated collection of his memoirs, where George Orwell recounts the tale of his life to make his political statements and rail against authoritarianism.

In addition, in 1938, George Orwell contracts tuberculosis. Yet there is no proper treatment for tuberculosis in the society of that time. So, one has to try to heal Orwell through normal rest and good quality food. Orwell is released after spending several months in a hospital bed. But tuberculosis still does not leave him behind. About 6 years later, he is devastated by the death of his beloved wife. At this point in his life, he capitalizes on these bitter feelings and picks up the pen again. Leaving the city, he moves to a cottage on a Scottish island. His health collapses during the first draft of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. He becomes weak due to frequent fever, weight loss, and insomnia. He is sent back to the hospital for treatment. There he is treated with a special method called Collapse Therapy. Surprising as it may be, the painful experience of applying this therapy is described in his novel as the brutal torture of a prisoner. The novel bears a striking resemblance to the description of Winston's slender body and George Orwell's ill physique.

b. Ocenian fictional dystopian society of Orwell

First of all, Oceania can be an ideal example of a dystopian society. In the name of authority, the Inner party controls Oceania's people (Utopias and Dystopias: Definitions and Characteristics 2). Their independent thought, as well as freedom are made limited by Big Brother. An unknown figure called Big Brother is worshipped by the citizens of Oceania. The citizens stayed under constant surveillance lest the Outer Party or the proles should raise voices against Inner Party. The protagonist of 1984 is afraid "of the outside world" (Utopias and Dystopias: Definitions and Characteristics 2). Therefore, the people of Oceania are bound to live in a dehumanized state. The natural life and world have been banished for them, and information and life have been made for them by Big Brother. Though Oceania's society seems "an illusion of a perfect utopian world", the reality is the opposite (Utopias and Dystopias: Definitions and Characteristics 2). One or more of the following sorts of controls are used in most dystopian societies to maintain repressive societal control and the appearance of a flawless society. The business incompetents, government employees, and mindless bureaucracy rule society. Technological control like computers, robotics, and/or scientific methods are used to govern society. "A dictatorship or theocratic government" can "enforce philosophical or religious" ideologies on a society (Utopias and Dystopias: Definitions and Characteristics 2). This idea resembles Big Brother's law enforcement where People often feel trapped and are struggling to escape like Winston.

Secondly, 1984 is set in London, the city is renamed Oceania, and the text challenges the government's overbearing authority along with suppressive rule, and regulations imposed upon the citizens. This is Michel Foucault's idea of "surveillance". According to Foucault, people start

internalizing the punishments and discipline themselves accordingly. In this system, authority regulates the people through different laws, and regulate rules, and at one moment people will behave the way authority wants them to do. The concept of "Panopticon" by Jeremy Bentham is equally relevant here. His idea is to use centralized observation to monitor and govern the prisoners. The prisoner is being observed using a watchtower in the middle, and the prisoners are unable to know if they are being watched or not, and the convicts should be more vigilant about their actions. It is translated in 1984 as Big brother is watching everyone here. As Orwell demonstrates, "Big Brother is watching you [...] you were being watched at any given moment. How often, or on what system, the Thought Police plugged in on any individual wire was guesswork. It was even conceivable that they watched everybody all the time" (Orwell 1-2). Thus, the fictional society of Orwell resembles a perfect dystopian society.

c. Orwell's Oceania and law enforcement in our contemporary society

Once again, Oceania resembles the law enforcement of our contemporary modern society. Firstly, in 1984, George Orwell gives the description of "Thought Police" in newspeak which is known as "Thinkpol", they are the secret police of Oceania, they discover and punish the people who dare to think against the "Inner Party", those people are accused to "thoughtcrime", and political and individual thoughts of Oceania's has been unapproved by "Ingsoc's regime." For instance, Winston had written "DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER" now whether he prevents himself to rewrite it or not, it has not made any difference. Thought Police must be caught him and punished him by observing him through a telescreen. Telescreen can monitor the slightest movement or facial expression of an individual. Through telescreen, Big Brother and his party members keep track of every moment of an Oceanian citizen. Winston's main crime has been

committed — and will have been done, even if he has not put pen to paper — and it is the crime that includes the other crime as well. They dub it as thoughtcrime. The narrator explains, how the "thought police" arrested people

It was always at night -- the arrests invariably happened at night. The sudden jerk out of sleep, the rough hand shaking your shoulder, the lights glaring in your eyes, the ring of hard faces around the bed. In the vast majority of cases, there was no trial, no report of the arrest. People simply disappeared, always during the night. Your name was removed from the registers, every record of everything you had ever done was wiped out, and your one-time existence was denied and then forgotten. You were abolished, annihilated: vaporized was the usual word. (Orwell 13)

Similarly, according to Human Rights Groups, 800 people have been forcibly disappeared since 2009, much like Winston's description. For example, the BBC's report titled "Disappearance: 86 Forced Disappearances in Our Country Still Unaccounted for - Human Rights Watch" has described several disappearances. "one leader named Abdul Quader Bhuiyan has been missing since 2013. His mother, Ayesha Ali, claims he has been taken away by law enforcement at night, there was no warrant for him (*BBC*). He is accused of sharing sensitive news on social media against authority. In our social context, Md. Didarul Islam Bail is arrested under the Digital Security Act 2018 and has been jailed for about five months for speaking out against the authority on social media" (Qtd. in Azad). In the context of India, a businessman in south India was arrested for tweeting that a politician had amassed much wealth. A professor at Jadavpur University in Kolkata was arrested for forwarding a cartoon about West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. Both were charged under Section 66A which is also another Digital

Security Act of India ("India's section 66A"). The committed crime is comparable to the "thought crime" of Oceania. In the light of 1984, it can be said that like the thought criminals, he disappeared in the darkness of night. Oceania's ruling party, the Inner Party, fears that if the opposition is allowed to develop, their power will be lost, and their fears will disappear from the brain of the people. The current context of the modern world is similar to Oceania's "Inner Party". Dictatorship is going on in the name of democracy. Hence, we have no privacy and freedom.

Moreover, privacy is a myth in the contemporary world because of the usage of modern technologies and implementation of digital security acts similar to the telescreen of 1984. In this case, the Digital Security Act 2018 of Bangladesh could be considered a case study. This Act gives the authority the power to monitor us always. For example, Tohur Ahmed a reporter of the Jugantar reports that "ICT act 24, 25, 28, says, no one can think, do, telecast the thought, work, and news that goes against the law enforcement of the country, and these acts give the defense every right to monitor our data". Same as India's digital security Act, Information Technology Act, 2000 empowers Indian Defense to monitor and access citizens' digital platforms. That is, because of this law, all citizens are forced to undergo digital surveillance. Therefore, these modern states are large prisons, and the citizens are state prisoners. Here everyone uses a national id card, and most people have a phone number, and most people use social media sites, many use credit cards, with those digital equipment authorities always follow citizen's browser behavior, it mirrors how Big Brother and his Inner Party members monitors the general citizens of Oceania with the telescreen.

Further, the freedom of expression of people has been made limited in a prescribed manner in our society as well as in Oceania. In the novella, there is the portrayal of different ministries, "Minitrue Minipax, Miniluv, and Miniplen" (Orwell 212). The four Ministries between which the entire apartheid apparatus of government is divided. "Ministry of Truth" is concerned itself with news "entertainment education, and the fine arts," this ministry also works for changing the history or changing any fact to fit the fact to the party doctrine, and then "The Ministry of Peace" concerns with "war", and then "The Ministry of Love" maintains "law and order" through "punishment" (Orwell 12). This is the power of Orwell's satire; he makes readers understand that Oceanian people are speechless. This is ironic, in Oceania, there is the "Ministry of Plenty" and this is concerned about the economic affairs in Oceania. These ministries are terminalized in newspeak, in the new language it is called "Minitrue, Minipax, Miniluv, and Miniplen". However, this newspeak is chosen by Big Brother. Orwell in his essay titled "Politics and the English Language" writes, "if thought corrupts language, language can also corrupt thought," he continues. "Newspeak" has been born from this hegemony of Orwell. Newspeak is the favored language of the "Inner Party" that has "designed to diminish the range of thought," and has confirmed his pervasive control (Raikar).

In this "Newspeak" of Orwell's 1984, certain terms are eliminated or their unorthodox connotations are removed, while others are substituted the parts of speech so that any term of the language can be written or spoken as an adjective or noun or verb, or adverb. For example,

Uncold meant 'warm', while pluscold and doublepluscold meant, respectively, 'very cold' and 'superlatively cold'. It was also possible, as in present-day English, to modify the meaning of almost any word by prepositional affixes such as ante-, post-, up-, down-, etc.

[...] Dark, for example, could be replaced by unlight, or light by undark, according to preference. (Orwell 217)

All these changes are for "political purposes, *goodthink*, meaning orthodoxy or to think in an orthodox manner" (Raikar). In a nutshell, this new language signifies that Oceanian people even cannot speak without the preference of Big Brother. Their language is also manipulated by authority.

Comparing our world, we can refer to the current social situation in North Korea where the authority has a great influence over the freedom of speech of ordinary people. Even the North Korean authorities changed the history of the book. That is, people can say and do what the authority allows them to do. Here Kenneth Roth adds, "The government does not tolerate pluralism, bans independent media, civil society organizations, and trade unions, and systematically denies all basic liberties, including freedom of expression, public assembly, association, and religion. Fear of collective punishment is used to silence dissent" (Human Rights Watch). Even cleansing the past is peculiar to North Korea and has caused the public to conclude that history somehow does not exist. North Korean officials have the authority to alter or modify facts of history and realities at their discretion. To allude to the case study of Lee, "Lee Young Ho after he was purged last summer. Lee was the most powerful man in the North Korean military before being purged. Soon after he was removed from his position in July 2012, any mention of him was deleted from the North Korean media and history textbooks" (Lankav). People cannot speak about Lee; their freedom of speech is limited by N. Korean authority. Thus, the situation is the same all over the world, general citizens have no privacy, and no freedom of speech like the fictional Oceanian citizen. Freedom of expression is the most important right.

This right has been constrained by digital security acts in our modern world. To maintain the stability of the capitalist system monitoring is mandatory where people themselves are being a commodity, which ultimately creates a power struggle.

d. Class struggle in 1984 and in our contemporary society in the light of Marxist criticism

Once again, in 1984, we find a vivid image of class discrimination provided by Orwell. According to Karl Marx, Capitalist society's two classes are—the bourgeoisie, or business owners, who control the means of production, and the proletariat, or workers. Here the main protagonist of the novel is Winston Smith, who lives under the authority of the Inner Party. Here, no one is free, everything is in the control of the Inner Party and the head of authority is Big Brother, he and his party member control the means of production. Oceania's absolute authority is in the hand of Big Brother and everyone is watched by him, here he is representing the ruling class, the Bourgeoisies. Winston's works represent the middle class. Then, Mar Cherrington signifies the proletariat. Here are three classes of people number one the upper class--- big brother, and his closed circle people, inner-party members; then the Outer members--the middle class, and finally people like Mar Cherrington who work in the proles in the neighborhoods, they are the proletariat, the lower-class people. The critics like Alan Bullock, Stephen Trombley, and Alf Lawrie in the book named *The New Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought* paraphrase Marxist theory, "one of the social classes of a society becomes the ruling class when they are a socially progressive force and sufficiently powerful" (236). Here few people who worked for the Inner Party become the ruler of Oceania, they are the ultimate authority of the state and enjoy all

the luxuries and facilities of the state. For instance, essayist Sufyan Al-Dmour in his essay, "George Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-Four: A Marxist Study" explains,

The Inner Party members make up 2 percent of Oceania's population—yet they are the real owners of Oceania. They make policies, and decisions and run the whole city. The Inner Party is commonly known as the Party and they are the upper class. They have rights different than any other such as being capable of momentarily switching off their telescreens, living in luxurious homes, and have good food and drink, having personal servants, use helicopters and automobiles. It is not too easy for anyone to enter their buildings without a clear reason. (121)

Moreover, very few people are a member of the Inner Party and do administrative services, and enjoy their lives. As Karl Marx explains, few capitalists in the society enjoy all the luxury (Marx and Engel 347). The central character, Winston Smith does service in the Ministry of Truth. He works for the ruling class. Winston is an Outer Party member and represents the middle class who has "no voices other than cigarettes and Victory Gin" (Orwell 23). He is not supposed to eat luxurious food or drinks; he is allowed to buy only necessary goods from Proles markets. On the other hand, general people like "Winston wrenched his body out of bed – naked, for a member of the Outer Party, received only three thousand clothing coupons annually, and a suite of pajamas was six hundred – and seized a dingy singlet and a pair of shorts that were lying across a chair" (Orwell 33). His income is too poor to treat the sore of his leg, it's pain like hell. He has hardly any time to sleep as he had to do a lot of work, it seems like he is like a robot to the Inner Party who has no tiredness. According to Marx, to a capitalist, labor is also a commodity for making a profit (Marx and Engels 353). And "to maximize profits, business

owners have an incentive to get the most work out of their laborers while paying them the lowest possible wages. This creates an unfair imbalance between owners and the laborers whose work they exploit for their own gain" (Works of Karl Marx 1). The majority of Oceania's people are proles. The Inner Party members treat the lower-class people very submissively. "They serve them with alcohol, gambling, sports, fabricated novels, and pornography" (Sufyan 122). As Orwell describes, "[...] there was bribery, favoritism, and racketeering of every kind, there was homosexuality and prostitution, there was even illicit alcohol distilled from potatoes" (158). The lower class has been treated like a parasite by the upper class.

In the same way, class discrimination in our society is also similar to in Oceania. Based on property ownership and control of the means of production we can classify people in our society into three categories as well—the upper-class people who are in power and own control of infrastructures, general people who cannot talk or visit them without permission, the middle class who work for the upper class, and the lower class laborers who earn livelihood selling their labor. To allude, we can consider the recent wages of the laborers in the tea garden in our social context, they earn only 120 takes working the whole day, on the other hand, exporting that tea the garden owner made significant profits, even the owner is increasing their wealth in multiple rates, they can buy more cars, can make property in developed countries, they can lead a luxurious life. Besides, tea laborers often need to work without any rest, their condition in the capitalist social structure also like Winston, with these low wages they could not manage proper meals three times a day let alone luxury. As a result, "inequality between rich and poor in our society has increased at a record rate" (Qtd. in Record inequality between rich and poor in the country). According to the World Bank's 2016 report, we rank "fifth" in terms of "rich-poor

inequality" (Qtd. in Record inequality). According to the report, the number of people living below the extreme poverty line in Bangladesh is 24.1 million, they cannot enjoy any kind of luxury like the people who are uplifted in society, and their condition is like the general people of Oceania, these poor people are dependent on others for one meal. Out of a total of 160 million people, people living below the extreme poverty line earn less than 1.9\$ a day (Qtd. in Record inequality). In this context, Anu Mohammad, a professor of economics at Jahangirnagar University, tells an international media, *BBC News* that the distribution of resources is not transparent here and inequality is still very high. And most of the resources belong to the upper class. Nevertheless, the salaries of the workers have not increased in that proportion. In addition, Jiban De Das, regional director of Caritas, a Catholic charity in Khulna, believes that using economic and political power to criminally enrich the rich are getting richer, while the poor are inequitable. Moreover, in such social conditions, the people who earned very low are involved in corruption, irregularities, drugs, smuggling, etc. The situation of general people in our capital social structure is the same like Oceania.

e. Why surveillance is needed?

In this case, capitalists need to keep the lower class, or common people under constant surveillance as the inequalities can call up agitation ultimately according to Marx. To illustrate, in 1984, readers can find, Winston writing about his inner conflict "DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER" and he unconsciously feels hostile toward Big Brother during a two-minute hate program that symbolically denotes Winston's agitation against the ruling party. As Orwell in his essay called "Why, I joined the Independent Labor Party" explains, capitalism should be abolished by "immediate appropriation of factories and other means of production, collectivized

planning of the economy and confiscation of all land from the rich "(337). Therefore, Orwell's position regarding capitalism is clear. The class differences in Oceania are used to give the party and its supporters more authority, and the people under the party's rule are suppressed and monitored physically and mentally to listen to the authority. The monitored system forced the lower class people to submit themselves to the ruling party's power and control. In this way, living in such a reality people unconsciously become aware. People know that they are being monitored. Thus, from a very early stage of their life, they try to regulate not necessarily what they do but what they think. The authority's control is an invisible watching over people, and people try to regulate their life following a particular prescribed pattern, and that pattern sometimes is manifested in organized religions, sometimes in other ideologies it can be a political ideology, and sometimes these patterns can be repressive. Similarly, citizens in our modern world are habituated to controlling their thought, control their actions like the citizens of Oceania. They become aware that someone is watching them. That means people are forced to follow these patterns even if people do not want to, and at one stage what happens people willingly consent to be regulated by the system. In this way people become a sustainable commodity for a capitalist society,

However, Karl Marx considers proletariats as the most threatful class for the capitalist society, and one day they will raise against the capitalist system, against the oppression, and the communist era will start. In the reflection of Winston's thoughts in his dairy it is visible, he writes, "if there is any hope, it lies with the Proles" (Orwell 72). Again, Sufyan insists that "the Proles make a great part of Oceania's population and they could fight with the Party and make the change" (122). This description is clear from the portrayal of the very ordinary life of the

people in the novel 1984. For example, the "two-minute hate" program, the "weekly hate" activity, is where people gather and shout anti-Goldenstein slogans against opposition party leaders. Nonetheless, Winston thinks that even though Goldenstein tortures him, he is his friend, because he hates Big Brother in his mind. What a predicted agitation! Here author warns capitalists in the novel because there is a silent revolution against capitalist society. Although the proletariat does not have enough intelligence experience to suppress the capitalists. Yet the author shows direct evidence of this hatred through Winston, which indicates a future conflict. Miller again claims that George Orwell has a belief, independently, that the power of particular "social circumstances in which it is realized, is governed by a logic that inevitably leads to corruption and exploitation" (Miller 6). In Marx's thought, capitalist exploits labor to maximize their profits. What is even more evident in 1984 is, that the poor class is unduly controlled by Political propaganda. To control the hate of mind and probability of large agitation, the upper class used the weapon of surveillance as a strategy in the name of rules and regulations.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

The dystopian novel that my research paper has analyzed, depicts an outline of the social system of our current world including Bangladesh. When Orwell wrote the novel there was no version of such modern technology, so this is the author's prediction in the history of human civilization. The novel mentioned in this research paper throws the veil of perfection of capitalist society which is very important for the explanation of surveillance theory. Thus, the novella provides an opportunity to analyze capitalist society in a new way. Yet, in this paper my main objective was to analyze comparatively, how Orwell's personal life experience is reflected in this novel, and how the technological legislation of the present world is used to increase surveillance and perpetuate the capitalist society. Because of this, personal freedom is eroded like the ruling system of Big Brother described by Orwell. The purpose of this research is to understand the modern period in which surveillance techniques are taking new shape. To conclude, by considering all the scenarios described in Orwell's novel, we can understand the reality of our modern society where people themselves have become objects, and we can only hope that the present condition will change before it takes the form of a drastic movement against repression.

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