

**Becoming One with the Machine- The Robotic and  
Mechanical Life in Science Fiction:  
A Study Based on Zamyatin's *We* and Orwell's *1984***

*Thesis  
submitted to the University of Calicut  
for the award of the Degree of*

**Doctor of Philosophy  
in  
Comparative Literature**

*Submitted by*

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**DEPARTMENT OF RUSSIAN AND COMPARATIVE LITERATURE  
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2020**

## **DECLARATION**

I, **Ebin Thomas**, do hereby declare that the dissertation entitled **Becoming One with the Machine- The Robotic and Mechanical Life in Science Fiction: A Study Based on Zamyatin's *We* and Orwell's *1984***, submitted to the University of Calicut in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy in Comparative Literature**, is a bonafide work done by me under the guidance of **Dr. S. Nirmala**, Professor (Retd.), Department of Russian and Comparative Literature, University of Calicut, and that I have not submitted it or any part of it for any degree, diploma or title before.

University of Calicut

**Ebin Thomas**

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A literature that is alive does not live by yesterday's clock, nor by today's, but by tomorrow's. It is a sailor sent aloft: from the masthead he can see foundering ships, icebergs, and maelstroms still invisible from the deck... In a storm, you must have a man aloft. We are in the midst of a storm today... What we need in literature today are vast philosophic horizons- horizons seen from mastheads, from airplanes; we need the most ultimate, the most fearsome, the most fearless 'Why?' and 'What next?' (Zamyatin, 1970, p110)

Science fiction is one of the most stimulating and challenging genres of literature ever conceived. For persons who identify science fiction only by spaceships, time travel, and aliens, this prerogative would be an exaggeration. But these themes are rarely used by contemporary science fiction as their primary area of discussion. The area that science fiction covers is immeasurable. Science fiction does not bring down its response only to the changes that take place in the field of science and technology, but any change that affects the world becomes its concern. Even while dealing with worlds beyond, the actual target of science fiction is the world within. This is exactly why writers like David Seed claims for the involvement of an 'extra *intellectual* step' while trying to assimilate a science fiction (Seed, 2008, p.11). Science fiction helps us to envision new realities. The best science fiction extrapolates from known technology and projects a vision of the future against which we can evaluate present technology and its directions.

Science fiction works are usually projected as technophobic. Their concern is the potential danger of using scientific developments and new technologies for the subjugation of people. The usage becoming one with the machine or becoming one with technology in science fiction has two different

meanings. The first one is a hint to the possible future world of transhumanism, where the science seeks for a continuation of human evolution beyond the limitations of the body. This idea seeks for the enhancement of the body with the help of technology. The second meaning is more important. It targets a potential despotic regime turning humans into a machine like beings, without emotions and personal choices. Dystopian science fiction works offer such a warning by extrapolating the current society.

The first major work of fiction to be censored by the new communist regime, the novel *We* by Yevgeny Zamyatin was smuggled to the west, translated into English, and became the ur-text of 20<sup>th</sup>-century science fiction. Zamyatin strongly inculcates that if any writer or any literary work should prevail the test of time, then the writers must be constantly in revolt against today in the name of tomorrow, irrespective of what today may be like. In 1921, during a period when certain freedom was allowed in Soviet Russia, Zamyatin took the liberty to express that Communist Russia would not produce real literature. His reason for thinking so was very typical: “real literature”, he said, “can exist only where it is produced by madmen, hermits, heretics, dreamers, rebels and sceptics and not by painstaking and well - intentioned officials” (Zamyatin, 1970, p57). He was criticizing the government’s interference in the field of art and literature through his works. Zamyatin doesn’t seem to have doubted that science fiction, especially dystopian literature could be a major literary genre. For him, harmful literature is more useful than useful literature. He constantly inculcated that if literature doesn’t raise its voice for tomorrow, it will only be used for covering soap tomorrow.

Apart from being a satirical dystopian novel against the totalitarian political systems in Russia, *We* pose a warning against the impact of the

technological growth and mechanical lifestyles of the human being in the future. The One State in *We* utilizes technology to oppress the people. They live according to a prescribed time table. The citizens are called Numbers, and no one has a name. Family life is abolished and sexual life is regulated by the state. The Numbers venerate an all-powerful dictator, the Benefactor, and they are happy to be controlled and treated like machine parts.

The concept of collectivization in the Soviet society, in the name of achieving socialism deeply influenced Zamyatin. The land was socialized, and the farmers were encouraged to work in large farms to share the work and profit. But Zamyatin saw this concept going wrong, and eventually it ends up as forced labour and persecution. The One State in the novel is found based on this collectivization. Individuality was eradicated, and everyone is 'one of the state. The term 'we' was used for 'I'. The state's intervention in family life after the Revolution became the root in One State's personal and family life. Lenin's acceptance of Taylorism, a scientific management method to improve production, was another provocation for Zamyatin. The extreme form of Taylorism would train people only to behave themselves as fail – free machines. This premonition became the backbone of *We*. The bitterness Zamyatin felt towards the leaders in their manipulation of Socialism and Marxism prompted him to presuppose a dystopia.

George Orwell's novel *1984* was influenced by Zamyatin's *We*. World War II and the Spanish Civil War designed his political thought as well as his writings. He had to witness the pro- Stalin group led by Soviet Russia turning down the Spanish Communist Political Party, stamping them as Trotskyists and traitors. He was shocked to find the hate propaganda directed by the Soviet regime against any groups or people, who stood against Stalin. They were named enemies of the working class or anti- national, working to overthrow the current government. Soviet press and a group of intelligentsia

worked to generate public opinion against these groups by frequently tarnishing them with falsehood and distortion of truths. The character Emmanuel Goldstein, the leader of the Brotherhood, is based on Soviet Bolshevik leader, Leon Trotsky, who had to flee from his homeland and expelled from the Communist Party due to the ideological difference with Stalin.

*1984* creates its world in an imaginary land named Oceania, where the dictator Big Brother and his Party keeps the people brainwashed. They live under blind obedience to the Party. Newspeak, a language devised by the Party curtails the freedom to think. The doctrine of the Party is “War is peace,” “Freedom is slavery,” and “Ignorance is strength.” It wipes out the history and executes rebels. Family life is strictly controlled by the Party, and the children were the property of the state. The Party is dedicated to abolishing anything that threatens the functioning of the totalitarianism.

Zamyatin and Orwell project their future dystopian worlds, where humans are forced to become one with the machines. They sacrifice their freedom to think and all emotions for attaining a machine-like order. They are proud to be called machines. Both these works discuss such a society where machines and technology rule over emotion and imagination and turn the people into cogs in the giant state machine. The major concern of the research is the identification of mechanization or robotic life in a dystopia imposed for sustaining a totalitarian government.

### **Objectives of the Study**

To identify Yevgeny Zamyatin’s influential novel, *We* as the ur-text of dystopian science fiction is one of the aims of this work. Various dystopian works published and gained reputation are analysed to establish the legacy of *We*. Orwell’s *1984* and Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* were treated as

the pioneer works in the field of dystopian literature. Both these works were immensely influenced by Zamyatin's novel, even though the latter is reluctant to admit it. To establish *We* as the forerunner of dystopian or anti-utopian fiction, different works were comparatively studied based on the concept of science fiction mega text.

Science fiction was used as a tool against fascism and totalitarianism. By setting its plot in a distant future, it discussed the problems of the then oppressive world. In Soviet Russia, dystopian science fiction works were used as a mask to criticize the policies of the government. Its plot and settings were used as a mask to escape the severe censorship. Zamyatin penned his work criticizing the Soviet regime, and Orwell was relentlessly writing against Stalin and Nazi Germany. This objective tries to elucidate how the early science fiction writers had used their works as a cover for censuring the then life in the USSR and elsewhere engaging a paradoxical double vision.

The nightmare of technology visible in science fiction is another objective of the study. One of the most vital themes in science fiction literature is the suspicion of technology. Technology in science fiction is generally technophobic. Both Zamyatin and Orwell shared these concepts. But the current work tries to establish that the nightmare of this technology doesn't say that mechanical creations will come to rule over human beings like aliens or Frankenstein's Monster. But rather they warned against a society where the technological impact will completely suppress the imaginations and emotions, turning him /her into a machine-like being.

The imposition of mechanomorphic ideals in the dystopian world is one of the major concerns of the study. Mechanomorphism is the idea that machines will become the measure of all things and the model for man to imitate and emulate. The works studied, discuss such a society where machines and technology rule over emotion and imagination. Both these

novels are a warning against the techno-centric human life. The current work tries to identify the involvement of totalitarian governance in making the people one with the machine to establish and sustain their rule.

### **Research Question**

The research question during the initial stage of the work was ‘how the future worlds in science fiction turned human beings into robots or machines. By reading and exploring widely, the question met with slight variations and focused down to the political aspects of the mechanization of the people.

### **The Methodology of the Study**

The present work follows the inductive methodology, which takes data from multiple sources- both primary as well as secondary. These accumulated data will be analysed in comparative and contrastive in due course to reach a conclusion. Yevgeny Zamyatin’s novel *We* and George Orwell’s *1984* is taken as the primary source materials. Other works written by these writers, especially their essays will be referred to during the process of writing. Books, articles and films related to the subject are consulted to validate the arguments.

### **Sources**

The primary sources for the study were the two novels *We* and *1984*. Secondary sources were collected from various universities. Different articles and discussions handling the themes like the dystopian world, totalitarian governments, suppression of human identity, the imposition of mechanical values, etc. were accessed from various websites. The films mentioned in the studies were taken from the internet along with their detailed scripts.

## Review of Literature

James Connors' work titled *Zamyatin's 'We' and the Genesis of 1984* attempts to find Zamyatin's influence on Orwell. He compares the similarities of the plot and the characters like Big Brother. The One State and Oceania are approached comparatively. The main objective of the study is concerned about the differences in the treatment of history in both novels. The work does not give prominence to the totalitarian regime's attempt to subjugate its people by using technology, which differentiates the dissertation from this prescribed work of James Connor.

Gorman Beauchamp's work *Of Man's Last Disobedience: Zamyatin's 'We' and Orwell's '1984'* analyse these works in the light of the Biblical story of Adam and Eve. D-503 and Winston are portrayed as Adam, the last man of Paradise and I-330 and Julia as Eve. Their disobedience, i.e. the craving for freedom jeopardise their lives.

Jeffrey Steven Carr's article *Zamyatin's We: Persuading the Individual to Sacrifice Self* also analyzes *We* in the light of the Bible. The One State of the work is compared to the Garden of Eden, and the Benefactor is taken as the God. D-503 and I-330 are compared to Adam and Eve.

Richard Freeborn's book *The Russian Revolutionary novel: Turgenev to Pasternak* tries to involve the concept of revolution. His works view Zamyatin and his novel in light of the concept of eternal revolution. How revolutionary ideas affect each character as the work progresses is described in detail.

Gleb Struve wrote a book called *25 Years of Soviet Russian literature (1918-1943)*. The author was concerned about the psychological transformation of the lead character D-503. Gleb Struve also makes a comparative analysis of *We* with Huxley's dystopian novel *Brave New World*.

Dr. Julia Rochtchina's paper, *Zamyatin and Orwell A Comparative Analysis of We and 1984*, pursues to associate the two novels based on the depictions of sex as a revolutionary idea. For I-330 and Julia, sex is a tool of revolution, the symbol of their resistance to the oppression of human lives, especially their love and emotions. Both these works used history as an instrument of control. By manipulating history, the rulers prevent the people from accessing their roots. The rejection of arts and literature and attempt in the novel to name the artists are heretics are discussed in the work.

*Four Utopias*, an article written by D. Richards searches the link among Dostoyevsky's *Legend of the Grand Inquisitor*, Zamyatin's *We*, Huxley's *Brave New World*, and Orwell's *1984*. The Grand Inquisitor and *We* are examined in the light of criticism they posed against religion, especially Christianity. Orwell's and Huxley's works were presented as more alarming since their dystopian worlds do not give hope to its characters.

Jeffrey Meyers' *George Orwell: the Critical Heritage* divulges that the entire climate of *1984* was influenced by Zamyatin's *We*. It takes the plot, main characters, themes and ideas of Orwell's work and juxtaposed it with the work of Zamyatin to find the similarities. It also mentions the potential warning that these works give about a dangerous society and turn down the idea that these books are prophetic in nature, but just a scream of danger.

George Woodcock compares both the novels in a comparative way in his book *The Crystal Spirit: A Study of George Orwell*. He writes that the details and structure of Orwell's work resemble Zamyatin's *We*. He also compares the plot situations and themes. The mechanized people in the One State and Oceania, Big Brother and Benefactor, the suppression of the revolt etc. were detailed in the work to establish the connection between the two.



## Structure of the Study

The study *Becoming One with the Machine- The Robotic and Mechanical Life in Science Fiction: A Study Based on Zamyatin's We and Orwell's 1984* is divided into four chapters along with an introduction and a conclusion. The first problem that anyone will encounter while dealing with science fiction is its definition. The vast area it covers, and ever-changing boundaries of the genre etc. make it difficult to define in a couple of sentences. The present work has also taken this problem of definition as its first area of exploration. Some of the main definitions by science fiction scholars are critically studied. Croatian Science fiction theorist Darko Suvin's concept of cognitive estrangement is taken as the way to identify a science fiction text.

Since the works are taken to study, Zamyatin's *We* and Orwell's *1984*, are from two different areas of the world, the first chapter also deals with a short history of science fiction. While writing about the history of science fiction, people used to point out certain names as the father of science fiction, but this study is concerned about a mother figure of science fiction, Mary Shelley. It is still a bone of contention among the writers and critics whether to consider Mary Shelley as the first modern science fiction writer or not. This work has taken the side of considering Mary Shelley as the pioneer writer of modern science fiction. Under the title 'the history of science fiction' a survey of the Western science fiction is written. A separate area is dedicated to analyse the origin and growth of Russian science fiction is also given.

The second chapter is devoted to the life and works of Zamyatin and Orwell, followed by a critical appreciation of the works *We* and *1984*. The socio-political issues like the repression of the Soviet government, the Spanish Civil War etc. that prompted these writers to pen these works are analysed.

The third chapter tries to present Yevgeny Zamyatin as the inceptor of the Dystopian Science Fiction novel. The concept of science fiction mega text sees the entire science fiction works as a grand single text. Each work and films take part in this mega text creation by contributing something to it and by taking something from it as plot or theme or characters. Several works are analysed to find the pioneering role played by Zamyatin's work in the formation of a dystopian mega text. The genre science fiction has been used by writers as a cover to criticize the then totalitarian attitudes of the governments. They do this by creating an alternative world in the text. This is called the paradoxical double vision of science fiction. This session tries to uncover the political criticisms of the writers against the Soviet regime and Nazi Germany.

The fourth chapter discusses the ways received by a despotic regime to make its citizens machine-like to cling to the power. A life without freedom and the ability to choose, a life without feelings and emotions are led by machines. They work based on pre-set commands. People in a dystopian world live like machines, and the powerful groups impose certain methods to turn these people identical with machines. American cultural anthropologist Ernest Becker's idea of Terror Management Theory, Michel Foucault's concept of panopticism and political theorist Hannah Arendt's works on totalitarianism etc. are used to drive the arguments home.

Different people and works use different terms while talking about science fiction. Some use 'SF', while others resort to 'Sci Fi' or 'Sci-Fi'. This work doesn't use these abbreviated forms and chooses to write 'science fiction'. The present work used the term Oceanians to denote the citizens of Oceania in *1984*.

During his exile in Paris, Zamyatin gave an interview to the French Press and told that the fundamental problem in Soviet Russia was the clash

between the individual personality and the collective one: 'I' do not have value only 'we'. He also claimed that it was his novel *We*, which disclosed this problem for the very first time. Zamyatin further told the fairy tale of the Persian rooster. This rooster used to crow an hour before other roosters crow. This was taken as ill-timed, and the owner was inconvenient to this bad habit. He killed the rooster. For Zamyatin, *We* is a Persian rooster. He raised his voice so early than others, and it was unacceptable to the authority. The Soviet critics were crying for his blood because his voice was prophetic and real. This work tries to identify *We* and *1984* as a Persian rooster, which plays a prophetic role in literature.

**References**

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## Defining Science fiction

The influential author of *The Female Man*, Joanna Russ, began her article “Towards an Aesthetic of Science Fiction” with the following questions:

Is science fiction literature?

Yes.

Can it be judged by the usual literary criteria?

No. (Russ, 1995, p.3)

A science fiction, be it a written work or a film, cannot be approached the same way one approaches other genres. When we call a text science fiction, we mention that the particular text ought to be read with certain protocols associated with science fiction (Rieder, 2010, p.201). To identify and differentiate science fiction from other genres would be the initial trouble that anyone who deals with science fiction would face. He/ she should ask, in what way it is different from other works, especially from its distant relatives like gothic fiction, fantasy, etc. Certain works using the technique of magical realism also tend to be misunderstood as science fiction. The border between all these genres is complex, convoluted and sometimes even problematic.

The use of scientific or hypothetical scientific explanations can be used as a criterion to differentiate between proper science fiction and other works. Adam Roberts analyses certain works to explain this differentiation. Firstly, he compares Franz Kafka's *Metamorphosis* (1915) with Ian Watson's *The Jonah Kit* (1975). In *Metamorphosis*, Gregor Samsa, the protagonist finds himself transformed into a giant insect, waking up one morning. *The Jonah Kit* is inspired by the Cold War experiments of the USSR. In the novel, as part

of an experiment, a whale gets imprinted by a human mind, and it gets human consciousness. Both of these works deal with a kind of metamorphosis and yet the latter is taken as science fiction while the former is not.

Adam Robert says Gregor Samsa's change was sudden and remains unexplained. How and why of this process is mysterious. Kafka was more interested in Samsa's alienation than the process of metamorphosis itself, whereas Ian Watson was concerned about the hypothetical science and technology that might help a whale to get human consciousness. Watson made sure that the change was not natural but scientific. This use of scientific rationalism (hypothetical) becomes the margin that place *Metamorphosis* and *The Jonah Kit* on different sides. (Roberts, 2000,p.5)

The same approach can be useful to differentiate Mikhail Bulgakov's *Heart of a Dog* (1925) and Thomas Mann's *The Transposed Heads* (1940), where the former is a science fiction, and the latter is not. John Updike's novel *Brazil* (1994) tells the love of a nineteen - year black child and eighteen - year - old white girl. While the story progresses, their colour gets interchanged and finally, the girl would become black and the boy white. Their colour change is worked with the assistance of ancient magic; hence the work is treated as magical realism. John Kessel's 1995 novel *Good News From Outer Space* deals with somewhat the same theme. But it uses newly innovated drug to change the skin colour. It has a scientific explanation to all that is happening in the story and hence considered as science fiction.

Ross Murfin and Supriya M Ray define science fiction in their *Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms* as "Science fiction is a type of narrative fiction that is grounded in scientific or pseudoscientific concepts and that, whether set on Earth or in an alternate or parallel world, employs both realistic and fantastic elements in exploring the question 'What if?' ". (Murfin and Ray, 2003, p.480) Almost every definition of science fiction carries its

share of detractors. While discussing the above - mentioned works, we would be drawn easily into the conclusion that science fiction is all about science and scientific discoveries. But that would only be a partial conclusion. If we fully agree with the definition of Murfin and Ray, many of science fiction's subgenres like dystopia, post-apocalyptic, alternative history etc. would be out of the picture. As of the second part, which says about the exploration of the question 'what if', it is not unique to science fiction but could apply to any imaginative literary work.

The very term science fiction itself seems to suggest that the distinguishing factor can be some sort of 'science' or technology formed with the assistance of science. The term science in science fiction has a diverse meaning. It should not be taken into account that the presence of some science or scientific elements does make a work science fiction. Sinclair Lewis' Pulitzer winning novel *Arrowsmith* (1925) is considered as one of the first work, which deals with the culture of science. In the work, a researcher treats a plague-stricken community on an island using a vaccine. *Arrowsmith* is not considered as science fiction. Sinclair Lewis was concerned with the current science of the time. The discovery of an antidote was already on the scene.

The 'science' we find here is not the kind of science that we used to come across in textbooks. Science in science fiction is extrapolated science (Allen, 1973, p.60). The writer may be influenced by the current science and technological progress and envision a possible 'science', that he thinks would be achievable in the future.

Roger Luckhurst defines science fiction as "the literature of technologically saturated societies" (Vint, 2014, p.17). Luckhurst's definition is also not comprehensive. Alternate History or Alternative History is a subgenre of science fiction, and it usually doesn't have to be scientific or technological. It departs from the actual history and creates a new plot, an

entirely different ‘history’. Philip K. Dick’s *The Man in the High Castle* (1962), creates a plot in which Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan win World War II. *The Plot Against America* (2004) by Philip Roth is another example of alternate history, where Franklin D. Roosevelt is defeated in 1940 in his attempt for a third term as President of the United States by Charles Lindbergh. Dystopian literature can be technological as we see in Zamyatin’s *We* or George Orwell’s *1984*, but not a necessity. Even though Ray Bradbury’s *Fahrenheit 451* (1953) foretells a future society, it is neither scientific nor technologically advanced.

Apocalyptic fiction and post-apocalyptic fiction tends to be free from these definitions. Apocalyptic fiction revolves around the end of civilization and the earth, and usually, their theme is scientifically explained. However, the latter, that shares life after the apocalypse, go beyond the boundaries of these definitions. Post-apocalyptic fiction will be about a surviving society, without any technological advancement. Cormac McCarthy’s Pulitzer winning novel *The Road* (2006), Hughes Brothers movie *The Book of Eli* (2010) and George Miller’s *Mad Max Series* (1979-2015) deny the role of technology while dealing with a post-apocalyptic world.

The conventional way of definition in one or two sentences might not be possible in the case of science fiction. This difficulty to define science fiction is brought forth by the ever-changing character of the genre. It does not have a fixed boundary or subject matter. The area that science fiction covers is immeasurable. The writers respond to various perspectives like anti-racism, feminism etc. through this genre. Science fiction does not bring down its response only to the changes that take place in the field of science and technology, but any changes that affect the world becomes its concern. For Brooks Landon “science fiction is the kind of literature that most explicitly and self-consciously takes change as its subject and teleology” (Vint, 2014,



p.135). What should be noted is that it's not just the subject matter that gets changed and proliferated, but the genre itself is always undergoing the process of change since it embraces various vistas unconditionally. The increasing number of subgenres is the testimony for science fiction's expansion, and this expansion takes the genre above the ground paved by any single definition.

Even the term science fiction is an oxymoron. It can easily accept certain contradictions. Raymond Williams, in his article *Science fiction* (1956) never attempts to define the genre, but he opts to talk about three types of science fiction, namely Putropia, Doomsday, and Space Anthropology. Putropia for him is the representation of the future hell, dystopia. Literature with themes like apocalyptic or post-apocalyptic world qualifies under Doomsday (Williams, 1988, p. 356-360).

Another claim that science fiction must have a futuristic quality can also be ruled out. For Adam Roberts, the genres chief concern is not prophecy, but nostalgia. At the peripheral level, it might project an inclination towards the future, but deep down, it carries a fascination towards 'the past'. Adam Roberts takes the *Star Wars* film series as an example. They begin with a caption "A long time ago in a galaxy far away". The courtesy of the film owes to the past than the future (Roberts, 2000, p.45). Zamyatin's *We* is set in the 26<sup>th</sup> century. But it mentions a world beyond the great wall, which seems to be the counterpart of the future world, is better in many ways. Dystopian works point to a society, which is vile and unbearable, and they indirectly fashion a past world, which is acceptable. Many science fictions are grounded in this retro-vision.

Science fiction does not project us into the future, it relates to us stories about our present, and more importantly about the past that has led to this present. Counter intuitively science fiction is

a *historiographic mode*, a means of symbolically writing about history (Roberts, 2000, p.46-47)

The anticipation of the future world is another element of science fiction. But this prediction is always an extrapolation. However, some authors would like to see the predictability in a different shade. Sir Arthur Clarke remarks:

...but let me stress the point that SF isn't usually predictive anyway: it is extrapolative. It says 'what if?' not 'there will be so and so'. In fact, much of SF is anti-predictive; 'I don't try to predict the future, I try to prevent it'. And that is one of the most important roles of SF, to stop some futures happening (Malik, 1980, p.118).

Definitions of science fiction as merely a literature concerned about the future or world beyond would only shrink the immeasurable possibility of the genre. Good science fiction is concerned about worlds within, even when it pictures a world beyond.

It becomes inexorable to discuss the differences in science fiction with fantasy literature and folk tales. The misconceptions about science fiction are still prevailing. The major among them is the identification of science fiction with fantasy literature and works like sword and sorcery, epics etc. Even though there is a general understanding that fantasy literature worked as a platform for science fiction to emanate, it is treated as a separate subgenre of speculative fiction with a considerable amount of differences with science fiction. The main difference is the absence of a scientific element itself. The mere presence of a space or an alien or even a robot is not a criterion to take the work as science fiction. Taking this idea into consideration, we will be forced to rule out many works, including works that are projected as Indian

science fiction and place them as fantasy or satirical work. Rajkumar Hirani's film *PK* (2014) can never be treated as science fiction, just because it has the presence of an alien. Same as different works with fantastic voyages, magic and myth are to be treated as proto-science fiction, not as science fiction.

Flying carpets are not scientific, hero-princess-monster triangle story placed somewhere in the distant planet cannot be scientific in itself. Croatian Science fiction theorist Darko Suvin's concept of Cognition differentiates science fiction from the folk (fairy) tale, myth and fantasy. He uses the term 'cognition' for 'science'. Imagination becomes a tool in science fiction while in fantasy and folktales it acts as an end in itself. Fairy tales would create a world, where a carpet can fly using magic or chants and all you want is a 'suspension of disbelief'. Darko Suvin claims that "anything is possible in a fairy tale because a fairy tale is manifestly impossible" (Suvin,1972, p.375)

Suvin describes science fiction as "the literature of cognitive estrangement" (Suvin, 1977, p.4). At first instance, the definition seems short and simple, but it calls for a detailed description to assimilate the idea comprehensively. The term cognitive has been used as a substitute for the word science. Here, for Suvin, science means not just certain experimental methods. It is this cognition which enables the reader to differentiate science fiction from fantasy and folk tales. The estrangement shifts science fiction from the realistic tradition of literature. The world of the reader and the world discussed in the work would be different, and this will be made possible by a 'rational extrapolation'. Thus the estrangement and cognition work on an 'ideal possibility'. It becomes 'ideal', only when these possibilities and their ramifications are not contradictory (Suvin,1972,p.66).

The effect of cognitive estrangement is made possible by a 'narrative dominance' or a *novum*. As the term denotes, it is a new thing in the text that distinguishes the textual world with the reader's world. It is a point of

difference between these worlds. But this *novum* (novelty or innovation) must be validated by cognitive logic (Suvin,1972,p.66). This cognitive logic makes the previously mentioned rational extrapolation an ideal possibility. Suvin calls the *novum* hegemonic because it acts as a central point and a catalyst and the identification of a work as science fiction becomes possible by the presence of it.

The best way to identify a work as science fiction is to identify the *novum*. It acts as a catalyst to differentiate the work from other genres and subgenres. It is also crucial to assimilate that there are no authoritative sets of *novum* by which one can identify a text. The *novum* constantly undergoes changes and proliferation.

### **History of Science Fiction**

It is still a bone of contention among the scholars about when and where exactly the genre science fiction originated. While some go back to the ancient Greek's mythological tales some others stick on to the eighteenth - century origin of the genre. But generally, it is *Frankenstein* (1818) of Mary Shelly, which is taken as the first major and serious science fiction novel (Ray, 2003, p.431). British Science fiction critic Paul Kincaid stands firm on his ground that there can be unique origin for the genre.

There is no starting point for science fiction. There is no novel that marks the beginning of the genre... We are all wrong. We have to be wrong, because there is no ancestral text that could possibly contain, even in nascent form, all that we have come to identify as science fiction. (Kincaid, 2003, p.409)

British Science fiction novelist Adam Roberts holds an entirely different opinion. He tries to identify the roots of science fiction in the

fantastic voyage, *voyages extraordinaire*, and stories of ancient Greek literature. Roberts says,

I am arguing that the ur-form of the SF text is ‘a story about interplanetary travel’. It still seems to me that stories of journeying through space form the core of the genre, although many critics would disagree. Travels ‘upwards’ through space, or sometimes ‘downwards’ into hollow-earth marvels (distinguished from more conventional ‘ordinary’ travels over the surface of the globe), are the trunk, as it were, from which the various other modes of SF branch off. (Roberts, 2006, p.vii)

*Epic of Gilgamesh*, Lucian’s *True History*, Thomas More’s *Utopia*, Kepler’s *Somnium* etc. are taken as proto-science fiction works, which holds certain elements that can be the origin of the genre science fiction. The fantasy, supernatural elements are taken into account while considering them.

In *Vera Historia* or *True History* (c.AD 150) of Lucian, the hero visits the Moon and Sun and is involved in interplanetary warfare. It was part of the ‘vision literature’ popular in the Middle Ages. They mainly exploited the Christian religious ideas of metaphysical worlds such as heaven, purgatory and hell (Cuddon, 1977, p.839). But those tales were superseded by Utopian literature. During the 16<sup>th</sup> century, many writers had works imagining voyages into space. They were keen to write about the imaginative utopian societies in the alien planets. Thomas Moor’s *Utopia* (1516) is the best example of such a shift. In *Utopia* Raphael Hythlodæus, a sailor describes a fictional land beyond the sea. As an early example of utopian literature, some critics see this work as the one that anticipated Science fiction.

The impact of the Reformation paved the ground for the development of science-based on experiments and observation. The Copernican revolution

displaced the concept that the Earth was the centre of the universe. Galileo's discovery of new planets was also a turning point. All these shook the cosmological concepts of religions, especially that of Christianity. These cosmological concepts, including the existence of new planets, were well received by the then literature. In 1610 Galileo published the map of the moon. The discovery of mountains and other features were accepted as the discovery of a new world. In 1920 Ben Jonson penned *Newes from the New World Discovered in the Moone*, in which he portrayed lunar people. Andy Sawyer and Peter Wright claim that it would perhaps be the first British work to imagine lunar people living in a landscape on the surface of the moon (Sawyer and Wright, 2011, p.22). Influenced by the idea of Millenarianism, that sought for the coming of an ideal society brought forth by revolutionary action, Samuel Gott; an English politician wrote *Nova Solyma, the ideal city, or, Jerusalem regained*. It is treated as one of the first novels that completely set in future (Sawyer and Wright, 2011, p.23).

A rich tradition of traveller's tales was initiated by one of the persons who prompted the scientific method, Francis Bacon. Although technological advancements were recognised for social reform even before Bacon, they were mainly treated secondary to religious and political matters (James and Farah, 2003, p.15). Technological advancement was taken as a premonition to the decline of religious values. Baconian optimism in his *New Atlantis* (1627) helped to rethink such a narrow vision. The unfinished novel depicts an imaginative island, Bensalem, where the future of human knowledge and discoveries are profoundly described.

The extraordinary voyages find a new realm with the introduction of stories that dealt with the expeditions into space. Johannes Kepler's novel *Somnium* (1608) is regarded as the first serious scientific work on lunar astronomy. The plot of the story is set on an island in the Moon. Influenced

by the Copernican theory of the solar system, it contains a description of the Moon; the Earth's view from the Moon etc. had been described. Francis Godwin's *The Man in the Moon: or A discourse of a voyage Thither*, John Wilkin's *Discovery of a New World in the Moon, or a Discourse* (1638), in which he anticipated that men would travel to the moon one day, adventure stories of French writer Cyrano de Bergerac etc. took the readers outside the planet. German Jesuit priest and polymath Athanasius Kircher's *Itinerarium Exstaticum (Ecstatic Journey, 1656)* takes a tour in all the then known planets of the solar system. He fused religious imagery and utopian vision with scientific fantasies, thereby creating a hybrid sub-genre (Clute, 2018).

In 1666, Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle, wrote *A Description of A New World, Called the Blazing-World*. In it, a woman from the earth is kidnapped and transported to a new world. She later becomes the empress of the Blazing World. Dale Spender, in her book *Mothers of the Novel*, argues that the imaginary world constructed by Cavendish contains the kernels of the later science fiction and utopian writing. She was not given sufficient credit for her inception by upholding the scientific inaccuracy in *The New Blazing-World* (Spender, 1986, p.42)

The eighteenth-century brought unprecedented changes in the field of literature. The Enlightenment had a great impact on science fiction, with its insistence and upholding of reason, evidential and experimental science. The Enlightenment or age of reason openly defied the existing religious myths and superstitions and set a space for science and reason to supersede the influence of religion. Jonathan Ree accentuate that:

There might be dozens of alternative histories of the present age, but they all intersected at some point in the 18th century known as the Age of Reason, or more vividly the Enlightenment. Essentially the Enlightenment was taken to be

Europe's concerted effort to cleanse itself of the last residues of barbarism and medieval superstition and replace them with liberalism, science and secular philosophy. (Roberts, 2006, p.65)

The two notable works that precipitated the growth of science fiction in the eighteenth century were *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) by Jonathan Swift and *Micromegas* (written 1730, published 1750) by Voltaire. Both of them are not science fiction *per se*, but they have several elements that science fiction uses. *Gulliver's Travels* is a political satire while *Micromegas* is a philosophical tale. The protagonist Micromegas is from the star Sirius having a height of approximately five km. Along with a friend from the planet Saturn, he travels to the Earth, where they enter into conversation with philosophers. Voltaire used the then existing tool of creating an outsider to highlight the ideas of Western culture.

One of the earliest examples of novels that describe time travel, according to Paul Alkon, is *Memoirs of the Twentieth Century* published in 1733 by an Anglican Clergyman, Samuel Madden. To everyone's dismay, the author destroyed almost all the copies of the print as soon as it came out of the press. Samuel Madden's work remains in the history of speculative fiction without much detail to refer to (Alkon, 1987, p.92). Two other reasons prevented the work, *Memoirs of the Twentieth Century* from being an unavoidable text in the discussion of the trajectory of science fiction. The first reason was, the work was primarily a satire, probably modelled after Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* and the second was, even when describing as one of the early works that portray time travel, it never mentioned how the character had done it.

But these changes could not abate writer's inclination towards the *voyage extraordinaire* works. Norwegian writer Ludvig Holberg creates a



utopian society in his *Journey Beneath the Earth* (1741). Eliza Haywood's *The Unfortunate Princess* (1741) and *The Invisible Spy* (1755) Robert Paltock's novel *The Life and Adventures of Peter Wilkins* published in 1750 etc. had great popularity. Sir Francis Gentleman's *A Trip to the Moon: Containing an Account of the island of Noibla* (1764) William Thompson's *The Man in the Moon: or Travels into the Lunar Regions* (1783), *A Voyage to the Moon, Strongly Recommended to All Lovers of Real Freedom* (1793) by Aratus etc. take the readers again to the Moon to deal with their political writings (Latham, 2014, p. 457).

In 1805 the French writer Jean-Baptiste Cousin de Grainville published his work *The Last Man*, which is now being considered as one of the first modern fictions that depicted the end of the world. Grainville writes about the last couple of the world, Omegarus and Synderia. This work separates the Christian concept of Paradise and utopianism (Wager, 2003, p. 178-180). Ernst Theodor Amadeus Hoffmann's *The Sand Man* (1816) is another influential work in the history of science fiction. It tells the story of an automaton named Olimpia, developed by a mad scientist, Coppelius (Bleiler, 1979, p.183- 214). During the time of the publication of this work, an automaton is used in literature as a symbol of the human regimentation.

Jane Loudon three-volume novel *The Mummy! A Tale of the Twenty-Second Century* (1827) envisions a future society with advanced technology. Set in the year 2126, the author resuscitates an Egyptian Mummy. The theme of Mummy's curse later became a favourite of gothic and science fiction works. Henry Gardiner Adams claims that the ideas of scientific discovery and proliferation in Loudon's work are proved to be prophetic in today's world (Adams, 1857, p. 417). There are works, which initially take the form of science fiction but would later resort to some romantic or fantasy style. For example, Charles Rowcroft's story *The Triumph of Woman* (1848) begins as a

science fiction, where we see the presence of a humanoid alien reach the Earth. But the work takes a romantic plot and ends as a romantic one.

### **Mary Shelley: The Mother of Science Fiction**

Daughter of William Godwin, the famous political philosopher, and Mary Wollstonecraft, the author of the feminist philosophy *A Vindication to the Rights of Women*, Mary Shelley married the romantic poet P.B Shelley in 1816. In 1816 Mary, P.B. Shelley, Lord Byron and a physician Polidori, in their private gathering, decided to write the most frightening story (Whitson, 2004, p.226). Polidori wrote his work in 1819 called *The Vampyre*, P.B. Shelley began a poetic work and Byron a story (Morrison and Stone, 2003, p.157). But Mary's work was *Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus* (1818), which is now regarded by many as the first modern science fiction literature. The 1818 edition of the book was published anonymously. Sir Walter Scott reviewed *Frankenstein* edition and glorified its power and beauty and commented that the work is a "powerful romance". Later, Mary wrote to Walter Scott revealing her authorship (Seed, 2008, p. 459).

Science fiction writer Brian Aldiss questions the traditional way of conferring the 'father figure' of science fiction to different writers. Edgar Allan Poe, Jules Verne, H.G. Wells, Hugo Gernsback were among the writers who received this accolade. Isaac Asimov nominates John W. Campbell for the same role. Aldiss believes that it would be 'an intellectual *coup d'tat!*' to appoint a mother figure instead of a father of science fiction (Aldiss, 1995, p.79). Mary Shelley would be the sole contestant to get such an accolade. Aldiss goes on to criticize H.G. Wells on his comment that *Frankenstein* 'used jiggery pokery magic to animate his artificial monster.

In the novel, the protagonist Victor Frankenstein refutes the use of alchemy and magic and resorts to scientific research. He gets the results by

using these scientific techniques. The science he used might be impossible; it took its stand of anti-alchemy and rejected the 'jiggery pokery magic' that Wells mentioned. She followed the experiments of the Italian physician Luigi Galvani, considered as the pioneer of bioelectromagnetics. Galvani electrified cows, frogs and even dead bodies of human beings to evince his theory that electricity is the life force. Frankenstein was trying to bring the body back to life with this 'spark of life'. Mary Shelley was conferring to both the mythical spark of life brought by Prometheus and the spark of electricity (Kastan, 2006, p. 523).

It should also be noted the introduction Mary Shelley wrote in 1818 to her novel. It had a reference to the famous scientist Dr. Erasmus Darwin. He was one of the first propagandists of evolutionary theory. We read in the introduction that "the event on which this fiction is founded has been supposed, by Dr. Darwin and some of the physiological writers of Germany, as not of impossible occurrence" (Shelley, 1969, p. 13). The primary thing that the author was trying to emphasize was the speculative and scientific aspect of the novel (Aldiss, 1995, p.78-79)

The first edition of the novel appeared anonymous. Mary's dedication of the work to her father William Godwin led to assume Percy Shelley as the author of the work since he is influenced and shared Godwin's concepts. But even after Mary's disclosing of her authorship, the novel continued to be known in the name of Percy Shelley for decades. A woman writing a novel like Frankenstein was unimaginable for the general public. The selection of a blasphemous subject and refusal of all known morality was the main concern of the critics. They thought it was impossible for a woman to write such work that did not inculcate any manners and conduct. So the authorship was ascribed to a man, especially one who followed Godwin.

Mary Shelley went on inventing another category with the publication of her next book *The Last Man*. It is generally considered as the first post-apocalyptic novel of the world (Milam, 2015). Post-apocalyptic works later became one of the major sub-genres of science fiction. It dealt with the extinction of the human race and centred around the last man on the planet. In the initial period, the novel was overlooked by both critics and readers. The work had its impact on the works like *After London* by Richard Jeffries (1885) and *Deluge* by S. Fowler Wright (1927). But the arrival of modern feminist criticism brought out the work into the literary field again (Freedman, 2002, p.257).

### **Edgar Allan Poe, Jules Verne, H.G. Wells**

Generally treated as the father of the modern mystery or detective story (Olney, 1958, P.416), Edgar Allan Poe was a pioneer in the field of introducing scientific details in fantasy works. These details change the way readers look at fantasy works. Medical science, during the time of Poe, was moving away from superstitions. His stories of the expedition were wistfully received when it accompanied by technological details and accounts of the medical field (Fisher, 2008, P.23). Clarke Olney describes

Poe's role in the creation of the modern science-fiction genre was of primary importance. He was the first writer of science-centered fiction to base his stories firmly on a rational kind of extrapolation, avoiding the supernatural. This has proved to be the underlying convention of science-fiction, and Poe may be said to have established it. He also, as in his ratiocinative tales, employed the detailed realism which, as Defoe and Swift had so clearly demonstrated, is necessary to the creation (Olney, 1958, P.417).

“MS. Found in a Bottle”(1833), *The Un- paralleled Adventure of One Hans Pfaal* (1835), *A Descent into the Maelstrom* (1841), *The Balloon Hoax* (1844)), *Mesmeric Revelation* (1844), *A Tale of the Ragged Mountains* (1844), and *The Facts in the case of M. Valdemar* (1845) etc. are some of the works of Poe, where we can observe the earlier elements of science fiction. It should also be noted that he is never taken as a master of science fiction but as a pioneer of the genre.

As far as some critics are concerned science fiction achieved a literary tradition only during the second half of the nineteenth century. And this change was precipitated by Jules Verne (with his *voyages extraordinaires*) and H.G.Wells (with his scientific romances) (Bould, 2009 p.13). The genre of science fiction is still following the vestiges left behind by these writers. Jules Verne was highly influenced by Edgar Allan Poe. In his only written piece of criticism *Edgard Poë and his Works*, Verne says that Allan Poe has devised a distinct literary genre on his own (Bould, 2009, p.16).

With his works like *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Seas: A Tour of the Underwater World*, *Around the World in Eighty Days* Jules Verne devised a hybrid form of literature, i.e. the scientific novel. He is sometimes even called the “Father of Science Fiction”. After the success of his first scientific novel *Five Weeks in a Balloon or, Journeys and Discoveries in Africa by Three Englishmen* (1863), Verne announced to his colleagues of the Paris Stock Market where he worked: “My friends, I bid you adieu. I’ve had an idea . . . an idea that should make me rich. I’ve just written a novel in a new style . . . If it succeeds, it will be a gold mine” (Bould, 2009, p.17)

Unlike many of the science fiction writers, Verne had resorted to his contemporary scientific principles. The technology he used represented the technology of his time. In *From the Earth to the Moon* (1865) Verne used the help of a space gun to shoot three passengers to the Moon. Today, the concept may seem absurd, since a space gun will be insufficient to break the escape

velocity of the Earth. But Verne was more interested in the findings of his contemporaries. The use of Aluminium to make the space capsule, the explosive, guncotton etc. was innovative at his time.

It is interesting to compare the Moon travel work of H G Wells with Verne's version of it. While Verne used the existing scientific ideas, Wells extrapolated from those ideas and devised new technologies. In *The First Men in the Moon* (1901), Wells' version of lunar exploration, the scientist invents a metal to build the spaceship. But Verne was not impressed with these inventions and commented:

I make use of physics. He invents. I go to the moon in a cannon-ball, discharged from a cannon. Here there is no invention. He goes to Mars in an airship, which he constructs of a material which does away with the laws of gravitation. *Ca c'est très joli* [that's all very well]...but show me this metal. Let him produce it. (Roberts, 2000, p. 60)

H G Wells is often regarded as the father of science fiction (O'Brien, 2014, p. vii). For Brian Aldiss he is "the Shakespeare of science fiction (Bloom, 2005,p.1). *The Time Machine* published in 1895, became a breakthrough in the history of science fiction. It was serialized in the *New review* from January to May of 1895 (McLean, 2009, p.1). Patrick Parrinder considers H G Wells as 'the pivotal figure in the evolution of scientific romance into modern science fiction' (Roberts, 2000, p. 61).

Wells had the advantage of being a trained scientist and a teacher while writing his works. The Director of the Natural History Department and Keeper of Zoology at the British Museum, Ray Lankester, reviews that:

Mr. Wells has a thorough knowledge of and considerable training in, the great branches of science- physics, chemistry, astronomy, geology and biology. This course of study operated,

in the case of Mr Wells, upon a mind naturally gifted with an extraordinarily vivid imagination . . . the really wonderful range of knowledge ... the scientific accuracy of the abundant details, the absolute restraint of the weird histories recounted, within the limits of what scientific criticism must admit as possible- nay, even probable, given the one initial miracle of anyone having and recording experience of such things -lend a special charm to Mr Wells's writings wanting in those of all other masters of this kind of literary craft from Swift to Jules Verne. (Haynes, 1980, p.40)

With his works like *The Wonderful visit* (1895), *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1896), *The War of The Worlds* (1898) and *The First men in the Moon* (1901), he introduced different imaginative ‘nova’ into the field of science fiction. His premonition about the atom bomb proved to be a reality in his lifetime itself (Cuddon, 1977, p.843). His creation of a wide array of themes like biological mutation, ecological disaster, the alien invasion, the dystopian world and the collapse of the world are still among the major concerns of the genre.

Technological growth and imperialism paved the way for the imagination and representation of the possibility of future wars. Gen.Sir G T Chesney’s *The Battle of Dorking* (1871), illustrates the invasion of the Germans in England and became the first future history/future war story subgenre. In 1872 Samuel Butler published his utopian novel *Erewhon*, which depicted an anti-technology society, fearing that the machines would evolve beyond human hope and would eventually replace them. Patrick Parrinder calls Butler the ‘first prophet of a cyborg future based on the developing symbiosis between human and machine’ (Parrinder, 2005 p.18). The work is heavily influenced by Butler’s essay *Darwin Among the Machine*, which

states that the machines would undergo an evolution that would culminate in human enslavement.

Edward Bellamy's utopian novel *Looking Backward: 2000–1887* (1888), dealt with a technology-driven future world, created a sensation in America. Bellamy clubs were established everywhere to make the ideas of the novel a reality. Writers like Arthur Conan Doyle, Grand Allen, Edger Rice Burroughs took a deviation from the traditional realistic approach in writing fiction. Conan Doyle wrote *The Lost World* in 1912. Grand Allen wrote about a scientist from the future world in *The British Barbarian* (1895). Edger Rice Burroughs, the creator of *Tarzan*, published several interplanetary travels.

The First World War and its ramifications precipitated the growth of topics like war and apocalyptic fiction. Edger Shank's *People of the Ruins* (1920) depict a series of revolution, causing the destruction of humanity. In J. B. Priestley's *The doomsday men* (1938), a mad scientist almost blows up the entire world (Kyle, 2012, p.185). S.Fowler Wright penned more than a dozen science fiction stories during this period. His trilogy *Beyond the Rim* (1932) *Power*(1933) and *Prelude in Prague*(1935) anticipated the Second World War. The World War and Russian Revolution made the utopian works unfashionable, and their impact replaced dystopian vision. Zamyatin's *We* (1921), Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932), George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty Four* (1949) etc. took this path.

Science fiction magazines became the crucible of growth in the modern age. Hugo Gernsback began a magazine *Modern Electrics* in 1908 in which he serialized his science fiction novel *Ralph 124C 41+*. Considered as one of the pioneering works of science fiction, it foresaw the use of the radar, synthetic food and cloth, video phone, solar energy etc. In 1913 Gernsback began another magazine *The Electrical Experimenter*, which was later



renamed *Science and Invention*. It frequently published science fiction stories. Although the magazine was targeting people of all ages, Gernsback made it clear that it was the young mind that would be more creative and it was their minds that he wants to influence (Seed, 2008, p. 61-62). He called these works as “scientifiction” and dedicated a separate section for it in his magazine. This became a model for the first complete “scientifiction” magazine, *Amazing Stories* (1926).

Gernsback later began publishing other magazines like *Science Wonder Stories*, *Scientific Detective*, *Monthly Science Wonder Quarterly* etc. Since the term “scientifiction” became a trademark of the *Amazing Stories*, he had to coin a new term. The term Gernsback coined was “science fiction” (Seed, 2008, p.63). The success of these magazines attracted other publishers to begin new magazines. William Clayton began publishing *Astounding Stories of Super Science* from 1929. In 1937 John Campbell was invited to work on *Astounding*. Campbell’s vision prompted the growth of science fiction, which powered certain critics to adulate him as the father of “modern” science fiction (Seed, 2008, p. 66).

Horace L. Gold’s magazine *Galaxy* became one of the most international of magazines that promoted science fiction during the 1950s. Magazines like *If* and *Isaac Asimov’s SF Magazine* were influential in the second half of the twentieth century. *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction* (F&SF) and *Galaxy Science Fiction*, emerged during the 1950s. They brought science fiction and fantasy together (*The Macmillan Family Encyclopedia*, 1980, p.143).

Two different periods are considered as the Golden Age Science Fiction 1938-1946 and 1940–1960. It was the period when science fiction magazines were proliferated, and their role was unprecedented. It was also the period when writers like Isaac Asimov, Robert Heinlein and Arthur C. Clarke

published their works. Isaac Asimov is generally hailed as the most famous science fiction author of the twentieth century (Roberts, 2006, p. 210). *Nightfall* (1941), a short story that speaks about a future world that orbits multiple suns, is regarded as the greatest science fiction short story of all time (Clute and Edwards, 2018).

Asimov's *Foundation* series, Galactic Empire series and *Robot series* had laid the foundation for his career. It was in the third story of the *Robot series* that he introduced his influential three laws of robotics. The films like *Alien* (1979), *Robocop* (1987), *Bicentennial Man* (1999), *I, Robot* (2004), *Automata* (2014) etc. followed the concept of robots envisaged by Asimov.

Arthur C. Clarke, like his contemporaries, began his career writing for magazines. But his short story *The Sentinel* (1948) was a breakthrough. Based on this story, he wrote the screenplay for the movie *2001: A Space Odyssey*. Directed by Stanley Kubrick, it became one of the most influential movies of science fiction. Clarke wrote three sequels to *2001: A Space Odyssey*, namely *2010: Odyssey Two* (1982), *2061: Odyssey Three* (1987) and *3001: The Final Odyssey* (1997). *Rendezvous with Rama* (1973), which won both Nebula and Hugo awards, describes a giant alien ship enter the orbit of the earth. Ray Bradbury, with his dystopian novel, *Fahrenheit 451* (1953), contributed to the growth of the genre.

From 1950 onwards the science fiction was more concerned with the Cold War ideology. In the U.S there were campaigns conducted against communism propagated by Senator Joe McCarthy. The idea of an Alien was easily created, and it was science fiction which became a tool for its transpiring (Roberts, 2000, p.80). Jack Finney's novel *Body Snatchers* (1955), which later adopted into the screen, saw an alien invasion destructing the original species of the earth and creating a replica. The production of movies and TV series attracted the people to the genre.

1960s to 1970s is probably famous in the history of science fiction as the time of a 'New Wave'. J. G. Ballard emphasizes to turn down science fiction cliché:

Science fiction should turn its back on space, on interstellar travel, extra-terrestrial life forms, galactic wars and the overlap of these ideas that spreads across the margins of nine-tenths of magazine s-f. Great writer though he was, I'm convinced H. G. Wells has had a disastrous influence on the subsequent course of science fiction ... similarly, I think, science fiction must jettison its present narrative forms and plots. (Roberts, 2000, p.231)

One of the prominent figures of the period is Philip K. Dick. *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968) is the most prominent work of him. Ridley Scott's film *Blade Runner*, (1982), which acquired a cult status, was the screen version of *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*. Steven Spielberg's *Minority Report* (2002), Paul Verhoeven's *Total Recall* (1990), Richard Linklater's *A Scanner Darkly* (2006), George Nolfi's *The Adjustment Bureau* (2011) etc. were films based on the short stories written by Philip K. Dick.

Ursula Le Guin explored gender, religion and sexuality through her novels. Her *The Left Hand of Darkness* (1969) is an example of the use of androgyny, where the humanoid population has no specific gender. American writer Joanna Russ' novel *The Female Man* (1970) was another feminist way of presenting science fiction. The 1970s saw many more women writers attempting Science fiction like Anne McCaffrey, Alice Sheldon, Josephine Saxton and Kit Reed. British novelist Brian Aldiss, American author Frank Herbert etc. wrote their works during the period of 'New Wave'.

But what attracted the people to science fiction after the ‘New wave’ was the production of cinemas and TV series. The release of *Star Wars* (1977) was a shift in the history of science fiction. The effect of *Star Wars* changed the climate of the Hollywood film industry towards science fiction. Over half of the all-time top-grossing films are science fiction (Roberts, 2000, p.84).

Ridley Scott’s *Alien* (1979) was the next sensation. For Birgit Menzel, the alien represents the suppressed unconscious fears, desires and dark sides of man. At least half a dozen prequels and sequels were made based on this movie. The name of Howard Phillips Lovecraft is essential to point while dealing with alien stories. He called his writings cosmic horror. Writers and filmmakers resort to a shared universe of *Cthulhu Mythos*, based on the works of H.P Lovecraft. This shared universe believed in the existence of extraterrestrial life forms in the universe, older than humanity. Somehow they have lost their original living atmosphere. Surviving in a dormant stage, they await a window of opportunity to come back to life. Humans initially show a welcoming attitude towards this organism. The resuscitated creatures exploit the chance and get strength and power from the very person who invited them/ accidentally woke them. The creature gestates inside a living human host and eventually kills them. Having a higher level of adaptation and defence mechanism, they soon adapt remarkably to the given atmosphere. The more it grows, the more invincible it gets. Contemporary science fiction movies like *Alien series* (1979-2017), *Life* (2017), *Species series* (1995- 2007) etc. are depicting aliens, and their invasion to the Earth is strictly following the Lovecraftian horror.

The Terminator trilogy (*The Terminator* (1984), *Terminator 2: Judgement Day* (1991), *Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines* (2003) shows an obsolete robot, T – 800, sent back to the present from the future to protect a boy, who would be the saviour of humanity in the battle against machines in

the future. Andy and Larry Wachowski's *The Matrix* Trilogy spans the future war with the artificial intelligent machines. The surrendering of human lives to technology is the major concern of *The Matrix*. It accentuates the superiority of humanity over technological systems and gadgets (Dinello, 2015, p.176).

By the 1980s the role of science fiction fandom became an inevitable fact. There are almost a hundred specialist awards for science fiction organized by this fandom. A countless number of websites already exist to promote and discuss this genre. Adam Robert says: "SF fans are very often articulate and knowledgeable – more knowledgeable, sometimes, than salaried academics studying the genre, such as myself (although I am also, of course, a fan)" (Roberts, 2000, p.300).

Brian Aldiss' *The Helliconia trilogy* (1982-1985), Gene Wolfe's four-volume novel *The Book of the New Sun* (1980-1983) had its impact on the readers. But it was William Gibson's *Neuromancer* (1984), which won science fiction triple crown of awards, The Hugo, Nebula and Philip K. Dick Awards, was the most influential in this period. It launched the subgenre cyberpunk almost single handily (McCaffery and Gibson, 1988, p.217). Pat Cadigan's *Synners* (1991) and Richard Morgan's *Altered Carbon* (2002) followed the model of Gibson.

Canadian novelist Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) depicts a dystopian land governed with extreme Christian rules. The ways through which men enslave women and rule their bodies are one of the major concerns of the work. Her *Oryx and Crake* (2003) focus on a post-apocalyptic character.

Technological singularity is a hypothesis that technology/artificial intelligence would outgrow the humanity and enslave them, with their

upgraded superintelligence. Vernor Vinge believed that the growth of computer intelligence would be rapid and would result in a technological singularity ( Kurzweil, 2005, p.33). His *Hugo Award* winning novels *A Fire Upon the Deep* (1992), *A Deepness in the Sky* (1999), *Rainbows End* (2006) etc. followed the recurring theme of the virtual world after the technological singularity.

British novelist Sir Kazuo Ishiguro's novel *Never Let Me Go* (2005), deals with a dystopian world where human clones are created so that their organs can be donated. There are still discussions that are going on over calling it science fiction. American author Max Brooks wrote a series of apocalyptic works, *The Zombie Survival Guide* (2003), *World War Z: An Oral History of the Zombie War* (2006), on the background of the Zombie outgrowth.

The Canadian- British Science fiction writer Cory Doctorow's *Down and Out in the Magic Kingdom* (2003), *Little Brother* (2008) and *Homeland* (2013) won Prometheus Awards. As a supporter of liberalising copyright norms, he published all his novels on his websites. Russian writer Dmitry Glukhovsky followed the same method of letting everyone read their work free of cost.

The most popular mode of science fiction during the twenty-first century would be films, TV Series and computer games. The growth of graphic novels should also be noted. If we look at the history of the last ten years of science fiction, the role played by science fiction films is ineffable. This shift to the spectacle from the narrative is also made powerful by a continuous homage to the past. Adaptation of science fiction literature, graphic novels and comic books into the screen were proved popular (Geraghty, 2009, p.109). A number of science fiction movies of the past were

remade using the upgraded CGI and graphics. Spin-offs or sidequels are getting made abundantly.

*Planet of the Apes Trilogy* (2011- 2017), *The Hunger Games Series* (2012-2015) *The Maze Runner Series* (2014-2018), new *Star Wars Series* and its spin-offs like *Solo: A Star Wars Story* (2018) were not just a commercial sensation but also were critically acclaimed. Sequels and remakes like *RoboCop* (2014), *Under the Skin* (2013), *Terminator Genisys* (2015), *Star Trek Beyond* (2016), *Blade Runner 2049* (2017), *Alien: Covenant* (2017) were also made into films.

Hughes brothers' *The Book of Eli* (2010) and George Miller's *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015) exploited the post-apocalyptic wasteland and the possible life in the abandoned land. Among them *Mad Max: Fury Road* was highly successful and bagged six academy awards. Highly praised for its vision, it is now being considered as one of the greatest science fiction films of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Director Christopher Nolan's two films *Inception* (2010) and *Interstellar* (2014) created a sensation with its innovative and thought-provoking concepts and visuals.

Certain movies like *Snowpiercer* (2013), *Ex Machina* (2014) and *Arrival* (2016) redefined all conventional way of science fiction and created their paths. Bong Joon-ho's *Snowpiercer* (2013) features a train holding the last few people remaining on earth. Set on the background of a post-apocalyptic world, caused by a failed attempt to reverse global warming, it contemplates modern class warfare, revolution, mechanisation of humans. In Alex Garland's *Ex Machina* Nathan, the CEO of a search engine company builds a humanoid robot with artificial intelligence. He becomes answerless in front of the ethical and philosophical questions raised by the robot, Eva. It paves the way for the discussion of an artificial consciousness along with artificial intelligence. Denis Villeneuve's *Arrival* takes an unprecedented way

of understanding the aliens rather than fighting them. Just like almost all other alien movies, *Arrival* is also about the fear of the unknown. The story exploits the way we should deal with the cultural shocks when we are exposed to the 'other'. These films concrete the concept that the space that science fiction explores is the interior of the human, not the outer space as we might think (Sardar and Cubitt, 2002, p.4).

### **Russian Science Fiction**

Russian literature used the term *nauchnaia fantastika* to denote science fiction, fantasy and horror works. This umbrella term has taken the place of what other westerners called speculative fiction (Forrester, 2016, p.205). Both science fiction and fantasy had been prominent genres in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Russia, but during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, both these genres parted from one another to have their own independent identity. While fantasy had its root in the traditional Russian mythology and folktales, science fiction was influenced by the translations of the western authors. H. G. Wells, Jules Verne, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Arthur Conan Doyle, E.T.A Hoffmann etc. were widely read in Russia (Schwartz, 2013, p.223).

The development of *nauchnaia fantastika* is similar to the development of science fiction in the west. Popular adventure novels and utopias became a strong step for it to proliferate. The translations of the adventure novels fascinated the readers as well as the writers. The first work which holds the status of first proto-science fiction is *A Philosopher Nobleman* (1769) by Fedor Dmitriev - Mamonov. Vasily Levshin's *Newest Voyage* (1784) portrayed lunar flight. Alexander Sumarokov, "A Dream of Happy Society" (1759) and Semyon Bobrov's *Ancient Night of the Universe* (1807) became the initial works of *nauchnaia fantastika*.



Vladimir Odoevsky was deeply influenced by E.T.A. Hoffmann. He wrote fantasy tales for children and adults. Alexander Veltman's *The forebears of Kalimeros: Alexander, son of Philip of Macedon* (1836) used time travel to call on Aristotle and Alexander the Great. The short stories of Edgar Allan Poe were published in *Vremya*, a magazine by Dostoevsky. Dostoevsky himself wrote the forward for these stories.

Nikolai Chernyshevsky's novel *What Is To Be Done* (1863) portrays a perfect utopian world set in the future. The work became a model for the socialist utopias published in Russia. The influential image of glass, which became a part of the Russian science fiction, had its origin in *What Is To Be Done*. Transparent glass stands for the future society, which is free, open and luminous (Gerould, 1983, p.342). In Zamyatin's *We* this symbol is effectively used, where all the buildings are made of glasses. Space travel was still the major area of science fiction during the last decades of 19 the century. Anany Lyakide's *In the Ocean of Stars* (1892), Konstantin Tsiolkovsky's *Voyage to Mars* (1901) explored the outer space. His trilogy *On the Moon* (1893), *Dreams of the Earth and the Sky* (1897) and *Outside the Earth* (1916) was an extensive display of the technological aspects of space travel. The hypothetical progress and their impact were regularly mentioned by authors. Many of them were scientists by profession. Vladimir Chikolev, who was an electrical engineer, wrote *Wonders of Electricity* (1884) Alexander Rodnykh's *Automatic Underground Railway* (1902) dealt with the growing technology.

The role of science magazines in the development of science fiction in Russia is inevitable. In 1889, a new illustrated scientific magazine called *Nature and People* began publishing. Five years later another magazine *Around the World* started publication. These magazines helped people to become familiar with the scientific and technological progress taking place

around the world. They insisted on Russia's role in the technological world of the twentieth century.

Peter the Great wanted to make Russia a Western Style state. The location of Russia between Asia and Europe created an existential anxiety. Ronald Grigor Suny used the term 'dual peripherality' to denote this condition of belonging neither to Asia nor to Europe. For him, Russia remained a blank space between the East and the West (Banerjee. 2012, p.21). Science magazine and science fiction proclaimed this status as Russia's privileged position as an outsider. These works enable the common readers to think of their nation as a 'third realm' beyond the concepts of the East or the West. Science fiction became a tool to generate this outlook of a third way of experiencing (Banerjee. 2012, p.22).

### **Golden age of Russian Science Fiction**

The Soviet era was the golden age of Russian science fiction. Vast industrialization, scientific and technological revolution and unprecedented social changes after the Russian revolution gave birth to Soviet science fiction. The writers like Evgeny Zamyatin, Mikhail Bulgakov, Vladimir Mayakovski, Andrei Platonov, Valery Briusov, Aleksei Tolstoy and Ilya Erenburg became the flag bearers of Soviet science fiction. Most of these works reflected the Soviet ideology of that time.

The rich tradition of pre-revolutionary Russian mainstream literature (including the folktales) and the model of the European science fiction became the two significant impacts on Soviet science fiction. Jules Verne's and H .G. Wells' imaginative world and the innovations portrayed in their works were extensively used along with other Western adventure and mystery novels by the early Soviet authors. Rafail Nudelman in his essay "Soviet

Science Fiction and the Ideology of Soviet Society” (1989) describes the peculiarities of early Soviet science fiction:

The fantastic worlds of early Soviet science fiction were the worlds of planetary revolutions. Their time and space corresponded to the objects of modeling. In contrast to Western science fiction of that period-which, as a rule, took the reader into exotic geographic terrain-early Soviet science fiction placed its worlds in the real political and social space of contemporaneity, but expanded to the limits of the universe. The plot of early Soviet science fiction also experienced a global expansion, bringing into their orbit enormous collectives of people and, some-times, even all of humanity (Nudelman, 1989, p.40).

Nudelman then describes the general outline of the Soviet science fiction,

The heroes of this science fiction are masses and collectives, and the events of the story are episodes in their collective fate. Individual qualities of protagonists are of secondary importance; the main role is attributed to their class status ("engineer," "Red Army soldier," "worker"), exemplifying their social relations with the world. It is the protagonist's class which determines his individual destiny, which, in turn, becomes the symbol of the fate of the whole social group..... The protagonists not only submit to these forces but act on their behalf. Therefore, the relationship of the protagonists within the plot becomes but a reflection of historical processes unfolding in time and space. Often antagonistic forces shed their individualized shells and appear by themselves, impersonally. These forces are almost always "from below," "of the soil," "earth," "barbarism, or

"Asia"- forces opposed to "civilization" or "Europe, "which is in retreat and fore-doomed. Consequently, catastrophe almost always becomes the victory of the collective over the personal, of the masses over the individual (Nudelman, 1989, p.41).

Early Russian science fiction's portrayal of national Bolshevism was dissolute with the emanation of the Soviet anti-utopias by Zamyatin and Bulgakov. They repudiated the then social life and tried to portray its degenerations. But soviet censorship made it impossible to publish as it is. The only solution was to picture the anti-utopias as fascist, capitalist and dictatorial technocratic. The soviet writers, with those dystopias, turned the entire plot against the soviet society. Jacques Lahana says that Soviet writers of science fiction adopt a paradoxical double vision.

On the one hand, they seem to endorse official Soviet "optimistic" ideology in a communist utopia set in a vague and distant future; on the other hand, under the guise of anti-utopias set elsewhere, they give, through Aesopian indirection and allusion, a devastating picture of a corrupt, crushing bureaucracy and police state that exist here and now (Gerould, 1983, p.342).

The earliest period of Soviet science fiction was utilising the conventional adventure and space travel tales. The emergence of new technologies gives them new realms of predictions. But their writings still had the tone of working-class agenda and criticism against capitalist society. Late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup>-century literature replaced Mars with the Moon. The 'Red Planet' became a motif (Wachtel and Vinitsky, 2009, p.461). Alexey N. Tolstoy's *Aelita* (1923) could be taken as one of the most significant works of this type. Los, an engineer, belongs to the Russian intelligentsia, visits Mars and falls in love with Aelita, the princess of Mars. Alexey Tolstoy's *Engineer*

*Garin's Hyperboloid* (1925) portrays another scientist from the intelligentsia, who invents a hyperboloid to accumulate wealth.

Yevgeny Zamyatin and Mikhail Bulgakov were the two influential science fiction authors during the soviet period. Zamyatin's *We* has become the ur-text of dystopian novels. Set in future the plot *We* revolves around a mathematical perfect society, governed by a totalitarian regime. The work invited ire of the government, and he had to flee Russia. Zamyatin could no longer publish his works in the Soviet Union after the publication of this work (Diamond, 2005, p. 461). *Heart of a Dog* (1925), *Fatal Eggs* (1925) and *Ivan Vasilyvich* (1936) were the prominent science fiction of Mikhail Bulgakov. These two writers were not just predicting the future technological advancements, but their major concern was social satire.

The period from 1930 to 1950 was a stagnant period for soviet science fiction. The harsh censorship made it impossible for the writers to go for dystopian settings, and they were strictly ordered to follow the official socialist realistic way in writing. Instead of setting the plot in the distant future, the authors began writing about a close future. Their subjects were limited like scientific innovations, interplanetary travel etc. This kind of science fiction is known as 'close aim'. A new government under Nikita Khrushchev gave certain freedom to the writers. Ivan Yefremov's *Andromeda* (1957) was published due to this liberty. The novel's plot takes again into the distant future. Strugatsky brothers (Arkady and Boris Strugatsky) wrote many science fiction works like *Hard to be a God* (1964) and *Prisoners of Power* (1969) and *Roadside Picnic* (1971). But Strugatsky brothers' criticism of the communist government prompted the authority to rethink the freedom given to art and literature. A strict ban on any attempts to criticise the current reality was implemented. This attempt to make science fiction a tool in the hands of the political regime clipped the wings of the genre (Gerould, 1983, p.342).

Vladimir Voinovich is popular as an anti-authoritarian writer. He was banished from the Russian writers' union and banned to take writing as a

profession for publishing a letter supporting Solzhenitsyn. His novel *Moscow 2042* (*Moskva 2042*- 1986) is considered as one of the best dystopian fictions of literature. In the work, a writer travels to future Russia to write a novel, where he finds that Communism is used to create a single state in Moscow with the assistance of KGB and Orthodox Church of Moscow. Voinovich used a satirical style to present the dystopia. The visitors are not banned from filming anything they want, but the camera should not contain any film. One can write any dissent, but the paper will not be available. It is also seen as a satire on Stalin's concept of 'socialism in one country' as opposed to Lenin's concept of 'world revolution'.

The 1980s and 90s were influenced by western fantasy novels, especially that of George R. R. Martin and J.R.R. Tolkien. With the publication of works such as Alexy pekhov's *Mockingbird* (2009), Gray Green's *Cetopolis* (2012) etc. the subgenre steampunk began to appear. Cotemporary Russian Writer Vladimir Sorokin is famous for his Science fiction works. His *The Ice Trilogy: Bro*(2004), *Ice* (2002)and *23,000* (2005) are science fictions. It talks about a future Russia, where a product from a meteor helps the human heart to speak. Sorokin's *Day of the Oprichnik* (2006) deals with a dystopian Russia of 2028. His *Blue Lard* (1999) explores Science fiction and fantasy. The narrative is set in two different time frames, the last periods of Stalin's rule and the future 21<sup>st</sup> century (Shneidman, 2004, p.104).

Dmitry Glukhovsky's post-apocalyptic Science fiction works novel *Metro 2033* (2005) and *Metro 2034* (2009) set in a metro where the survivors of a nuclear holocaust hide. Another influential contemporary Russian science fiction writer is Victor Pelevin. His *Helmet of Horror* (2006) takes the reader to the cyberspace, where eight persons imprisoned to different rooms with only a screen and a keypad to their company. Pelevin's *S.N.U.F.F* (2011) is a post-apocalyptic novel, where 300 million poor people struggle to survive in

Ukraine while 30 million live in an artificially flying city parked above Ukraine. Among recent literature published in Russia, Science fiction has been able to raise fundamental questions and construct philosophical systems, and Science fiction still remains the most favourite area of Russian literature.

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Yevgeny Zamyatin and his classic science fiction work *We* were never been properly acknowledged by Russian literature. Due to his constant criticism against the government, he was exiled many times. Zamyatin never gave up his freedom of writing. The Soviet repression after the Revolution was unacceptable since he believed it was against the Communist ideology. He directly attacked the Soviet regime and its leaders and as a result, his works were never been allowed to publish in Russia. Since the Russians alleged that the works of Zamyatin were used by the Western nations to criticize Russia, they were denied publication even after the Thaw. His only completed novel *We* can be treated as the pioneer in the field of dystopian science fiction literature.

George Orwell's novel *1984* is one of the most influential science fiction works of the twentieth century. The major ideas of his influential essays get portrayed in this classical work. Historical facts like the Spanish Civil War, repression under Stalin, World War II etc. had a deep impact on Orwell while writing this novel. The work is treated as an antidote to totalitarianism.

The prophetic nature of these authors and their works is evident while juxtaposing the current politics around the globe. The life they led and the socio-political events that moulded their writing career are essential while analysing their works. The historical backgrounds that prompted these writers to create their own dystopian world are also significant. The current chapter deals with these impacts on *We* and *1984*.

### **Yevgeny Zamyatin: Life and Works**

Yevgeny Ivanovich Zamyatin, the inceptor of the dystopian novel, led a dual career as a writer and as a scientist. Due to his constant criticism of the

Soviet government, he was exiled several times. Charles A Moser calls him ‘the most polished and most intellectually stimulating of the Russian prose modernists’ (Moser, 1989, p.451). His work *We* (1924) can be viewed as one of the first anti-utopian novels. Zamyatin was unable to publish the work in Soviet Russia and he had to leave his motherland because of the same novel.

Yevgeny Zamyatin was born in 1884 in a town Lebedeyan, two hundred miles away from Moscow. His father was a Russian Orthodox priest and schoolmaster, and his mother a musician. Since his parents were well educated Zamyatin was exposed to the literary world of Dostoevsky and Turgenev at a very early age. In 1902 he graduated from the progymnasium with a gold medal. After a few months, he pawned the medal for 25 rubles (Diamond, 2005, p.1229). Zamyatin completed naval engineering from Saint Petersburg Polytechnic Institute in 1908. His connection with the Bolshevik party got him into trouble. He was arrested and banished from Saint Petersburg.

The first literary work of Zamyatin was a short story, *Alone*, written in 1908. He was exiled briefly to Lakhta for writing this story. While in exile, he wrote a novella, *A Provincial Tale (Uezdnoe- 1913)*. Written in 1911-1912, this novella is the first important work of Zamyatin that established his writing career. It follows the life of a rough young man called Anfim Baryba. He leaves the house after failing the examination. He leads a life on a farm and later commits an affair with a widow. The story follows different paths, mainly a life of stealing and cheating, of Baryba until he gets the job of a police officer for betraying a friend. The portrayal of the ignorance and backwardness of the Russian provincial life was the target of Zamyatin. His use of language in this work called *skaz*, which used the vernacular styles and usages, became popular in Russian literature. It became a breakthrough in the career of Zamyatin. He wrote in his autobiography:

If I have any place in Russian literature, I owe it entirely to the Saint Petersburg Department of Secret Police: in 1911 they exiled me from Petersburg, and for the next two years I led an extremely isolated life in Lakhta. There, in the white winter silence and the green silence of summer, I wrote *A Provincial Tale* (Zamyatin, 1970, p.4)

His first short story, *Odin* (1908), drew on his experiences in prison. His short story *At the World's End* (*Na Kulichkah*- 1913) was denounced by the Czarist government. Accused of anti-military sentiments, he was questioned and trailed. For the same reason, he was arrested and all the copies of his story were confiscated and later destroyed. He was exiled to Kem. He quit writing for some time (*Merriam-Webster's Encyclopedia of Literature*, 1995, p.1004).

In 1916 he went to England to supervise the making of Russian ice breakers. He came back during the October Revolution. His stay in England prompted him to write *The Islanders* and *Fisher of Men*. *Islanders* (*Ostrovitiane* -1918) was a satirical work on the British middle-class decency. Life according to certain schedules and the craze to keep absolute order etc. were parodied. This work can be considered as the first blueprint of *We* (Brown, 1982, p.51).

He wrote articles in different newspapers under the pseudonym M. Platanov. He joined in *Vsemirnaya Literatura*, a literary journal as an invitee of Maxim Gorky. As an in charge of the American and British literary session, he repeatedly published the translations of H.G Wells' science fiction works. Well's concept of the twentieth century was taken by Zamyatin as an apt example of modernity. Zamyatin calls Wells the most contemporary of writers because he has foreseen the future and taught men to see with "airman's eyes" (Parinder, 1973, p.18)



From 1920 to 1921 he taught in the Polytechnic Institute and gave a course on the contemporary Russian literature at Herten Pedagogical Institute. Zamyatin's first works followed the Russian tradition of Gogol and Leskov. He had developed his own style, a blend of Realism with symbolism and imagism, eventually. He calls his style 'neo realism', which lays light on the brutal aspects of life (Diamond, 2005, p.461). His short stories are more philosophical rather than political. Loneliness and search for love are the two aspects that define the lives in his short stories. He strongly inculcates that life demands continuous revolution irrespective of its ramifications (Moser, 1989, p.402). The short story *The Cave* (1922) explores the survival of an aged couple during a famine. In *The Flood* (1929) the writer uses sexuality both as a cause for murder and reason for redemption.

Zamyatin was arrested in 1919 and 1922 for publishing essays, which took a clear political stand against the government. The government's attempt to curtail free thought was criticized in the essay *I am Afraid* (1921). *On Literature, Revolution, Entropy and Other Matters* (1924) is a classical essay, in which he openly proclaimed that the real hope of Communist Russia is in heretics and rebels not in diligent officials. His role as the mentor of Serapion Brothers along with Maxim Gorky was influential in the field of literature. They were all admirers of E.T.A. Hoffman. The group stood for the protection of freedom of thought in literature (Smith, 1985, p.1056). Zamyatin questioned the Soviet policy of red terror (an age of mass killing and severe political repression by the Bolsheviks) with indomitable courage.

Zamyatin was influential as a dramatist too. *The Fires of St. Dominic* (*Ogni Sviatogo Dominika*- 1922) set during the inquisition of Spain is centred on the cruelty of the inquisitor named Munebraga. Zamyatin's pivotal stand for the protection to dissent is the chief concern of this drama. Even though set in Spain the drama criticized the Bolshevik's, especially Lenin's, attempt

to execute the dissenters after the October Revolution. *The Fires of St. Dominic* was prohibited from performing inside Russia, due to its criticism of the Soviet authority. Later Leskov's story *The Left- Handed Man* was adapted into a drama named *The Flea* (Blokha-1926). *The Flea* was staged in the USSR numerous times (Struve, 1938, p.700). It could be seen as Zamyatin's most optimistic work and a milestone in his career as a dramatist. This drama was concerned about the folktales and traditions of Russia. The lack of political allusions made the play performable and it enjoyed great success in theatres. *The Society of Honorary Bell Ringers*, was performed in the Mikhailovsky Theater in Leningrad, in 1925.

Zamyatin was severely criticized and savagely castigated by the Soviet writers and critics for the path he selected. Since his works do not promote the interest of the regime, he had to leave the membership of the All Writer's Union. As a result, his works were removed from public libraries and copies were confiscated. And he was denied permission to publish his works. *We* was particularly targeted by the critics since it openly condemned the then government. Leon Trotsky in his *Literature and Revolution* coined the term 'internal émigrés of the Revolution' to denote writers whom he thought remained indifferent to the October Revolution. He identifies Zamyatin as a master of such writing. Trotsky criticized Zamyatin's writings resenting that he pictured the English as good while kept a hostile attitude towards the Russians (Trotsky, 2005, p.43). His criticism turns to be somewhat castigation while saying "and even that phlegmatic snob, Zamyatin, discovered an insufficiency of temperature in our Revolution" (Trotsky, 2005, p.31). The term 'our Revolution' places Zamyatin as a writer who doesn't belong to Russia. The criticisms of Zamyatin make him an outsider for Trotsky. And Zamyatin was never snobbish. He was concerned about certain disappointments he felt as a Marxist and the same forced him to be an external emigrant from an internal emigrant.

Victor Shklovsky was a supporter of Zamyatin during the twenties but his attitude changed after the emigration to Germany. Shklovsky got the pardon to come back to Russia and he decided to refrain from politics. His writings later embody a reversal in outlook. In an essay *Evgeny Zamyatin's Ceiling*, he analysed the novel *We*. He called Zamyatin's world, not as a dystopia but a socialist utopia. The negative portrayal of the uniformed world and mechanized life etc. were overlooked by Shklovsky in his reading. He criticized the world created by Zamyatin as boring and bad (Shklovsky, 1988, p.49-50).

Aleksandr Voronsky raised his concern over Zamyatin's negative portrayal of the Revolution. For him it was too early to write a satire on the October Revolution. He pointed that even H.G. Wells, the favourite writer of Zamyatin, saw the positive side of the Russians. The creation of the One State in the model of the USSR and its subjugation of people is seen as an 'untrue' depiction by Voronsky (Eichholz, 2015).

M. N. Kuznetsov took the novel as a weapon written to attack Soviet culture and literature. For him, *We* is more European than Russian since he found it devoid of any Soviet characteristics. Kuznetsov had also come down hard on Zamyatin's creation of the anti-utopia. A dystopian world destroys the hopes and happiness of the people for Kuznetsov (Kuznetsov, p.55).

His uncompromising stand for safeguarding the freedom of writers and room for dissent made him the 'enemy of the working class'. Despite the criticism from the press and certain writers, Zamyatin was respected by his colleagues. His impact is evident among the then young writers like Ayn Rand. Zina Gimpelevich traces that Rand's novella *Anthem* (1938) is immensely influenced by *We* (Saint-Andre, 2003, p.287-288). He was never been properly acknowledged in Russia and the persecution allowed him only to produce two of his dramas inside the Soviet Union.

Due to his dissents with the Soviet government, Zamyatin was always under the radar of the officials. In 1929, he wrote an open letter to Stalin, asking for permission to emigrate. All ways to earn livelihoods were blocked until he reached a stage of depression. The intervention of Maxim Gorky led Zamyatin to get permission to leave Russia for good with his wife Lyudmila Usova in 1931. In Paris, he led a secluded life contacting only Bulgakov and Ivan Bunin. Jean Renoir approached him to write the script for his film *The Lower Depth*, which was based on Gorky's work *Les Bas-fonds*. It was released in 1936. During the final years of his life, he was busy with a novel *The Scourge of God*, on Attila and Rome. But he was unable to complete the work. On March 10, 1937, he died of a heart attack and was buried in Paris (Diamond, p.461). The novel *We* could be published in Russia only in 1988.

One of the characteristics of the writing style of Zamyatin is that his narrations are very expressive. For him this style, followed by the then generation of writers, is Neorealism. These writers have to face and reproduce a world which is fast and composite. Zamyatin's dialogues and even the entire stories are comparatively brief. Their concept was to write and express in some sentences, what the Realists would accomplish in one page (May, 2001). Zamyatin used to recognize his characters using different physical traits, colours and objects. The repressed feelings of each character and their ramifications etc. are represented using these symbols. In *The Islanders*, Mrs. Campbell's lips are described to thin worms and another character is labelled as pink and blue.

His short stories are highly philosophical. The conflict between the primitive and altruistic nature within human beings makes life painful for Zamyatin as described in his different short stories. The life demands constant revolution and sometimes these revolutions might end up in disaster. He took sexuality as one of his fundamental topics of discussion. In the short story

*Flood (Navodnenie-* 1929) sexuality becomes the reason for murder and redemption (Bristol, 1992, p.452).

Zamyatin uses colours to denote different attitudes and characteristics in *We*. The colour yellow becomes the icon of the Number's quest for freedom. His dreams, which are seen as a disease in One State, are dominated by the colour yellow. I-330, who becomes the catalyst for change wear a yellow dress while she is with D-503. The sexual relationship between them also is described with the assistance of the colour yellow. One State is described in blue. The identical dress imposed by the state is blue in colour. The sun in One State always trails in blue and the offenders are tortured by a blue spark of current (Proffer p.98).

Anything beyond the wall is described in green. The wall itself is green. In the old house and museum, anything that relates to the ancients is labeled as green. We can find green books and green furniture and green alcohol. Revolutionary organization MEPHI is "poisonously green" for the state. The Green for the Numbers thus denotes order less and illogical.

To identify the confusion that the characters undergo, Zamyatin uses numerous incomplete sentences. The dialogues of D-503 are always written in fragments. Since the One State is a mathematical perfect and technologically saturated society, mathematical terminologies like  $\sqrt{-1}$  is used throughout the work.

Zamyatin was treated as the most original prose writer comparing to his predecessors. His essays carry a high revolutionary spirit. He was never hesitated to write against the ruling party. This is exactly why Solzhenitsyn considers Zamyatin as his mentor in prose writing (Etkind, 1992, p.604).

***We* (1920)**

*We* (1920) was the only full-length novel of Zamyatin. He never saw the proper publication of it in Soviet Russia. The book was circulated in *Zamisdat* (secret circulation). It can be regarded as the pioneering work in the dystopian tradition of fiction. Set in the twenty-sixth century A.D. this masterpiece work draws life in a totalitarian society of the fictional One State. The plot of *We* became an archetype of the modern anti-utopian novels. In 1921 *We* became the first book to be banned by the Censorship board of the Soviet Union (Zamyatin, 1993, p. xi). The novel was later published in New York.

The One State is governed by an all-powerful person known in the name of 'Benefactor'. The citizen of the state, called Numbers, have no freedom and act always according to a prescribed time table given by the state. They all wear grey-blue uniforms with badges having their numbers. The history of the state inculcates that the One State has emerged after continuous revolutions. The state is protected with a colossus Green Wall. No one comes from outside and no one goes outside. There was a Two Hundred Years war, which wiped large populations out and the One State was able to survive. The first task of the government was to eliminate hunger as the resources were scarce. But they were 'successful' in eliminating love and desire gradually. The concept of privacy was removed from society. Hence the members of the One State live in glass apartments where everyone can watch each other as no citizen has anything to conceal. They were only allowed to close their blinders only on the pre-approved sexual days. Any Number can have sexual relations with anyone they wish as long as they get approval from the government. This is introduced to reduce jealousy and competition among the Numbers.

The novel is written in the form of a diary of the protagonist, D – 503, an engineer in charge of constructing the first manned spacecraft targeting to send a message to non-terrestrial creatures. The diary begins with a report from the *State Gazette*, the newspaper of the One State, reporting that within 120 days the building of the Integral will be completed:

In the name of the Benefactor, all Numbers of One State are hereby informed of the following. Everyone who feels himself capable of doing so is required to compose treatises, epic poems, manifestos, odes, or rather compositions dealing with the beauty and grandeur of One State. This will be the first cargo transported by the Integral. (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 3-4)

To the narrator, D – 503 (the builder of the Integral) this is a divine command. He undertakes literary composition as a duty to the One State but chooses to write a simple record of his day-to-day impressions. Thus the novel is in a diary format that D – 503 writes.

D – 503, like all other citizens of the One State, live in a glass apartment building and are carefully observed by the secret police, or Bureau of Guardians. D – 503's lover, who has been assigned by the One State to visit him on certain nights using a pink card, is O-90. O-90, who is considered too short to bear children, is deeply grieved by her state in life. Her other lover and D-503's best friend is R-13, a state poet who reads his verses at public executions. D-503's life turns upside down when he comes across a woman, I-330, who ignores the orders that have been established in One State. I-330 smokes cigarettes, drinks alcohol. She chose to flirt with D-503 instead of going for an approved sex visit. These are crimes according to the laws of the One State. And yet D-503 struggles to overcome his attraction to her.

I-330 takes him to the Ancient House. It was a building where objects of aesthetical and historical importance are stored, which are collected from different places of the city. A corrupt doctor in the Ancient House makes D-503, a fake certificate to explain his absence from the duty. Leaving in horror, D-503 vows to denounce her to the Bureau of Guardians but finds that he cannot. I-330 takes control over D-503. He couldn't resist doing whatever she says. She sends him letters skipping the proper channels. He begins to have dreams at night, which disturbs him, as dreams are thought to be symptom of mental illness. The doctor diagnoses the diseased growth known as 'soul'. The disease is epidemic in the State, and universal 'fantasiectomy' is ordained to wipe out. Superficially D-503 develops a soul as a result of falling in love with I-330, but really it is the result of the act of writing (Parrinder, 1973, p.23)

Day of Unanimity is the annual election of the Benefactor. D-503 thinks that they once more will place the keys to the unshakable fortress of their happiness into the hands of the Benefactor. They were given new uniforms as the custom. The voting system was open. The Numbers were asked to raise their hands either to support or to oppose the Benefactor. Thus everybody votes for the Benefactor and everybody sees how one votes for him. To everybody's surprise, the Numbers saw a thousand hands shoot up opposing the Benefactor. They include I-330, R-13 etc. The Guardians start to oppress the unexpected rebellion. D-503 takes I-330 to his place safely. The next day the State Gazette called the protesters "the enemies of happiness". From the next morning onwards, papers printing "Mephi" in it appeared all over the One State.

I-330 reveals to D-503 that she is part of an underground revolutionary movement called the Mephi, determines to destroy the One State. She talks him through secret tunnels inside the Ancient House to the world outside the



Green Wall: humans whose bodies are covered with animal fur. The aims of the Mephi were to destroy the Green Wall and reunite the citizens of the One State with the outside world. I-330 addresses the revolutionaries.

Brothers! All of you know that the day has come when we will demolish this Wall, all walls so that a green wind may sweep across the earth, from one end to the other. But the Integral is going to carry these walls aloft, up there; to the thousands of other earths whose lights will rustle for you tonight through black nocturnal foliage...The Integral must be ours. On that day when it launches out into the heavens for the first time- we will be on board. Because the Builder of the Integral is with us. He has left walls behind; he has come here with mw, to be among you. Long live the Builder (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 150-151)

I-330 lured D-503 for the sake of the Integral. What motivates her was the revolution not the love for D-503. She makes a plan to seize control of the Integral. But the Mephi's attempt to possess it was a failure. Despite the recent rift between them, O-90 pleads with D-503 to impregnate her illegally. After O-90 insists that she will obey the law by turning over their children to be raised by the One State, D-503 obliges. However, as her pregnancy progresses, O-90 realizes that she cannot bear to be parted from her child under any circumstances. At D-503's request, I-330 arranges for O-90 to be smuggled outside of the Green Wall.

One State announces that the citizens have developed a deadly disease, 'imagination'. To cure this disease and to protect the 'happiness', they invited every citizen to undergo a great operation, in which the imagination would be removed using X-rays. The suspense of *We* arises partly from D-503's gradual awakening to his genuine situation. In his last journal entry, D-503 indifferently relates that he has been forcibly tied to a table and subjected to

the Great Operation. After this operation D-503 couldn't believe that the diary was written by him. He was reported to the Benefactor and told him all he knew about the 'enemies of happiness'.

In the last part, D-503 as a perfect One State citizen describes, without emotion or distress, the execution of his lover, I-330. The Guardian brought I-330 to the Gas Room. She was supposed to give her testimony in D-503's presence. However, he expresses surprise that even torture couldn't induce I-330 to denounce her comrades. Despite her refusal, I-330 and those arrested with her are sentenced to death, under the 'Machine of the Benefactor'.

Meanwhile, the Mephi uprising gathers strength; parts of the Green Wall have been breached, birds are repopulating the city and people start committing rebellion. But D-503 expresses his hope that the Benefactor shall restore 'reason'.

But on Fortieth Avenue, which runs cross-town, they've managed to build a temporary wall of high voltage waves. And I hope we'll win. More – I'm certain we'll win. Because reason has to win. (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 225)

### **George Orwell: Life and Work**

Eric Arthur Blair (George Orwell) was born on June 25, 1903, in Bengal, India. His father, Richard Walmesley Blair was working for Indian Civil Service in the Opium Department. Orwell was taken back to England by his mother and they settled in Henley-on-Thames. Even though the income of his father was meagre, Orwell was admitted to St Cyprian's, a snobbish private boarding school.

St. Cyprian was not a pleasant experience for Orwell. Strict discipline, acceptance of moral code, the teaching of traditional English values etc. were

difficult for him. Apart from those he was constantly humiliated for his family's economic status. His status as a boy who was admitted for reduced fees made him an outsider (Bounds, 2009, p.16). He painfully remembers that the greatest crime that he committed at Cyprian was bedwetting. It was taken as a crime that the child committed on purpose. The cure for this crime was beating with a cane. He wrote:

It was possible, therefore, to commit a sin without knowing that you committed it, without wanting to commit it, and without being able to avoid it. Sin was not necessarily something that you did: it might be something that happened to you. (Bounds, 2009, p.16)

This humiliation was one of the traumas he carried from the school for the rest of his life. Orwell didn't write much about his parents. One of the references to his parents can be seen in his essay *Such, Such Were the Joys*.

It was equally clear that one ought to love one's father, but I knew very well that I merely disliked my own father, whom I had barely seen before I was eight and who appeared to me simply as a gruff-voiced elderly man forever saying 'Don't'. It was not that one did not want to possess the right qualities or feel the correct emotions, but that one could not. The good and the possible never seemed to coincide (Davison, 1996, p.4).

Orwell spent most of his childhood days away from his parents. His father was in India. He was later admitted to the Cyprian away from his mother and hence he admits that he never felt much connection with his parents. In *Such, Such Were the Joys* he talks about his mother:

Looking back on my own childhood, after the infant years were over, I do not believe that I ever felt love for any mature person,

except my mother, and even her I did not trust, in the sense that shyness made me conceal most of my real feelings from her (Davison, 1996, p.4).

His first literary attempt was a patriotic poem, *Awake! Young Men of England* (1914). The work had no literary merit but his next poetic attempt, *Kitchener*, published in 1916 was more promising (Hammond, 2009, p.8). Winning a scholarship, he was admitted at Eton. Being a King's Scholar, he had his own room, while the majority, known by the name Oppidans, had lived in dormitories. A King's Scholar, considered as a privileged group of students, considered others are philistines. Orwell enjoyed this hierarchical structure during his stay at Eton from 1917 to 1921 (Hammond, 2009, p.11).

After the initial training at the police academy, Orwell was posted in Burma. In Burma, he was exposed to the brutal sides of British racism. He called his fellow imperialist officers as a 'blight on Asian Civilization' (Bounds, 2009, p.17). his essays *A Hanging* (1931) and *Shooting an Elephant* (1936) and the novel *Burmese Days* (1934) were the outcomes of his explorations in Burma. Philip Bounds adds that:

The distinctive feature of Orwell's analysis was his belief that imperialism nearly always ends up dehumanizing the colonizers themselves. Since one nation can only colonize another by ceaselessly projecting an air of high authoritarian menace, or so the argument went, it follows that the colonizers will often feel obliged to behave brutally even when there is no good reason to do so. The humanity of the colonizing nation seeps away simply because certain impressions have to be maintained (Bounds, 2009, p.17).

In 1927, he resigned from the job with an aspiration to become a writer. His parents were unhappy to see their son leaving a secure job for a somewhat insecure career. Between 1927 and 1932 he spent most of his time with the homeless, unemployed and 'low-class' people. He wore torn dresses, begged in the streets and slept in Trafalgar Square. He worked as a dishwasher to gain money. Orwell claimed that he chose this life because of the immeasurable guilt he faced due to his working with an imperialist class. He took it as a penance for the crimes he became part of.

In 1928 he moved to Paris since he thought he could leave cheaply. His writings didn't earn him any money. So he had to pursue his writing career on the savings he had from Burma. He remained in a small room leading a recluse life for two years and contributed all his energy to writing. While in Paris he penned several short stories and two novels. It contained the first draft of the novel *Burmese Days*, even though these writings were unpublished. From 1930 to 1935 he wrote book reviews and articles in *Adelphi*. After *Down and Out in Paris and London* was rejected by two publishers, he joined as a teacher in a private school at Middlesex. The publisher Victor Gollancz was ready to publish this work provided that the writer should make certain changes. The book was published in 1933 under the pseudonym 'George Orwell'. The pen-name was suggested by his father while he and Orwell were passing by the River Orwell (Davison, 1996, p.33)

Orwell wrote to his literary agent Leonard Moore: "I think if it is all the same to everybody I would prefer the book to be published pseudonymously. I have no reputation that is lost by doing this and if the book has any kind of success I can always use the same pseudonym again." (Hammond, 1982, p.18). He finished *Burmese Days* by December 1934. *Clergyman's Daughter* and *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* were finished in 1934.

*A Clergyman's Daughter* (1935) was not successful at all. It was criticized for its weak structure and plot.

Victor Gollancz sent Orwell to Northern England to study and make a report on poverty and unemployment. This trip was one of the crucial episodes in the career of Orwell. He was exposed to the slum life, unemployment and decays of the capitalist society. He was fascinated to see the qualities of tolerance and indefatigability in the working-class people. He was called as 'comrade' during those days. His attachment to the working class had not transformed into a commitment to the left even though Marxist ideologies were influencing him (Bounds, 2009, p.20). He constantly criticized the left's obsession with science and technology. His experiences in North England helped him to write one of his best works, *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937).

Orwell also participated in the Spanish civil war. He was part of the Workers' Party of Marxist Unification. It was a watershed in his life and literary career. Orwell proclaims the significance of this incident clearly: "The Spanish Civil War and other events in 1936-37 turned the scale and thereafter I knew where I stood" (Das, 1996, p.5). During the Spanish Civil War, he came to realize that the faction he was working with was denounced by its Communist partners. The Soviet intelligence spied on him naming Orwell as a 'rabid Trotskyist'. The Soviets planned to arrest him, but he fled the Hotel Continental with his wife Eileen. He always opposed the Soviet Communism, especially Stalin and his ideologies. He believed that capitalism would soon be finished but he also feared the replacement of Capitalism with an intense version of Stalinism instead of capitalism (Bounds, 2009, p. 24-27).

*Animal Farm* (1945) is one of the most powerful political satires of literature. The story was heavily influenced by Orwell's experiences in the Spanish Civil War. It was written as an allegory on the Russian revolution. On August 7, 1936, *Pravda*, the Communist Party paper in Soviet Russia, declared "So as Catalonia is concerned, the cleaning up of the Trotskyites and Anarchists has begun and it will be carried out with the same energy as in the USSR" (Bounds, 2009, p.66). It was a warning that Stalin's political opponents in Spain will face the same fate that they had faced within Russia. The infallibility of Stalin was never to be questioned, it stated.

This news points to the way the character Snowball (representing Trotsky) is ousted from the Animal Farm by Napoleon (Stalin). The reign of terror followed targeted either the ones who supported Snowball or were the critics of Napoleon. Orwell says about the situations during the Spanish Civil War:

I saw troops, who had fought bravely denounced as cowards and traitors, and others who had never seen a shot fired hailed as heroes of imaginary victories; and I saw newspapers in London retailing these lies and eager intellectuals building emotional superstructures over events that never happened. I saw, in fact, history being written not in terms of what happened but of what ought to have happened according to various "party lines." (Shoham and Rosenstiel, 1985, p.84).

*Coming Up for Air* (1936) was entirely different from all the novels that Orwell had written. Its peculiarity lies in the fact that the novel is written in the first-person narrative, from the beginning to the end, and the protagonist all along speaks only in monologues. In 1941 he joined the BBC and began working in the area of educational broadcasting to India. After two years he left BBC for the literary editorship in *Tribune*. His regular columns

known as *As I Please* were a major shift in his writing career. He was given the freedom to write on any literary or political issues. Later in 1945, he became a war correspondent for the observer.

Orwell was busy with *Nineteen Eighty-Four* during the final years of his life. He was admitted to the London hospital to treat his tuberculosis in 1949. At hospital, he married Sonia Bronwell, who was Orwell's assistant. On January 21, 1950, Orwell passed away.

### ***Nineteen Eighty- Four (1949)***

George Orwell's *1984* (1949) is a dystopian novel, which is acclaimed as a chilling warning against a totalitarian danger that lies in any form of political systems and in ourselves. It is also a satire on hierarchical societies in general (Rodden, 2007, p.149). The novel emphasizes the significance of free thought and speech. The Second World War, The Spanish Civil War, governments in the Soviet Union and Germany etc. motivated Orwell to pen *1984*. The government designed by Orwell takes fear as the fundamental tool to manipulate and control its citizens. Reading the novel as only an anti-communist one would only result in reducing its scope, it should also be treated as an anti-capitalist.

The title *1984* has often interpreted as the reversal of the last two digits of the year in which the author finished writing the book, 1948. But the original manuscript of the work shows that the year of the plot was not 1984 but 1980. But since it took more years to complete the work the year was changed to 1982 and finally to 1984 (Davison, 1996, p.134-135).

It was a bright day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen.

Orwell's *1984* begins with this sentence. Clocks striking thirteen would seem like an absurd event since a clock only go up to twelve. By this



very first sentence itself, the author reminds the reader that the tale that he/she is going to read is not a common one. To survive in *1984*'s world, a dystopian, one doesn't need reason or logic. Blind loyalty towards the state would make one qualify. It can also be a reference to the military time since the state is heavily militarized. The phrase 'thirteenth stroke of the clock' indicates that the previous events must be called into question. By striking thirteen the credibility of all the previous twelve strikes will be questioned. It is not 'a clock' that the writer talks about but 'clocks'. Clocks striking thirteen in Oceania are common.

The world in *1948* is split into three super-states. Europe absorbed by Russia became Eurasia. British Empire and the United States make Oceania. The third one is Eastasia. These three powers are constantly in war with each other. Winston Smith, the main protagonist lives in London, the main city of Airstrip One, a province of Oceania. He was previously married to a woman called Catherine. They are living separately since unable to bear children. Winston works in the Record Department of the Ministry of Truth. This department is responsible to manipulate history and remove dissents from any records. The history written by them makes sure that Oceania is always at war. Winston alters weather forecasts so that the predictions of the Big Brother stay correct.

The Ministry of truth is rewriting history since the Ingsoc (a type of English Socialism practiced in Oceania) believes that the one who controls the past controls the future. It also believes that the past is 'mutable' and it exists only in records and human memory. Orwell might have had in his mind the Soviet treatment of Leon Trotsky while designing the Ministry of Truth. *The Soviet Encyclopaedia* had portrayed Trotsky as the hero of the Civil War, but they soon rewrite it and made him a spy of the British Intelligence. Later he was removed from this historical record. In Orwell's language, Trotsky was made an unperson (Rodden, 2007, p.155). Party places a lie into history

and it becomes truth later. The party slogan says: “Who controls the past, controls the future: who controls the present controls the past”.

The citizen of the state is always under strict surveillance. Party officials watch them through telescreens everywhere they go. Their conversations are recorded always. The face of Big Brother with the caption BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU is seen everywhere.

He took a twenty-five cent piece out of his pocket...on the other face of the coin the head of Big Brother. Even from the coin the eyes pursued you. On coins, on stamps, on the covers of books, on banners, on posters, and on the wrappings of a cigarette packet — everywhere. Always the eyes watching you and the voice enveloping you. Asleep or awake, working or eating, indoors or out of doors, in the bath or in bed — no escape. Nothing was your own except the few cubic centimetres inside your skull (Orwell, 2011, p.29).

By limiting language, the government tries to suppress free thought. The restriction of language leads to restriction of thought. The party created language, Newspeak, which promotes only words that uphold party doctrines. The word doublethink in Newspeak means belief in contradictory concepts at the same time, and stands for the slogans of the party: “War is peace,” “Freedom is slavery,” and “Ignorance is strength.” Any thought against the government of Big Brother is considered sedition. They are considered as Thought Crime, an unpardonable crime.

Winston’s crave for truth makes him a dissent. He purchases a diary and began writing his thoughts, which is prohibited. He wrote “they’ll shoot me I don’t care they’ll shoot me in the back of the neck I don’t care. Down with the Big Brother they always shoot you in the back of the neck I don’t care down with big brother”. He also falls in love with a woman, Julia. They both rent a room in the prole (proletariats) district. They both knew that they

will be arrested one day, but they thought their love and loyalty to each other would be unbreakable. Their clandestine visit took place in a room above the antique shop, from where Winston purchased illegal things, including the diary. His interest in the Brotherhood, a group of dissenters and in O'Brien, a party member, whom Winston thought a member of the Brotherhood, increases.

At last, Winston gets the chance to meet O'Brien. He indoctrinates Winston and Julia into the Brotherhood. They were given the book *The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism*, written by Emmanuel Goldstein, the head of the Brotherhood. But they were arrested in their room. Mr. Charrington, the proprietor of the antique shop was a spy and O'Brien has been watching Winston for the past seven years. O'Brien tortures Winston for months to brainwash him. Then he was taken to the Room 101, which is notorious for having 'the worst thing in the world'. Winston used to have nightmares about rats and rats are one of his worst fears. A cage was connected to his face with rats ready to carve his face. He shouted "Do it to Julia! Not me! Julia! I don't care what you do to her. Tear her face off, strip her to the bones. Not me! Julia..." (Orwell, 2011, p. 236).

By betraying Julia, Winston loses his faith in love and his humanity. Winston is purged so is Julia. He sees her later but does not feel anything for her. He was conditioned to love Big Brother and by erasing free thought the state had won over Winston. During the torture O'Brien, said that, "if you are a man, Winston, you are the last man. Your kind is extinct; we are the inheritors" (Orwell, 2011, p. 256). Like Adam, the last man in Paradise, Winston becomes the last man of the One State, who would raise his voice against the state.

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The genre science fiction has got multiple sub-genres. Dystopian science fiction is one of the prominent sub-genres among them. After analysing different classical dystopian works, we can induct that Zamyatin's work can be treated as the pioneering work in the field of dystopian literature. Orwell's *1984* effectively followed the path created by Zamyatin. The present chapter attempts to establish *We* as the model text of dystopian fiction.

Dystopian works are highly political. They respond to the ideology of the time. The ideologies of the Soviet Union and the then Germany, which provoked the writing of these works need to be uncovered. The connection with the then historical and political events are helpful to understand the warning raised by these writers.

## **Dystopia**

Dystopian literature is one of the major sub-genres of science fiction. The etymological root of the term can be traced back to the ancient Greek terms *dus* and *topos*, where it means 'a bad place'. The term stands for a hell like future filled with chaos but the word dystopia has been used as a synonym of dystopian literature due to the worldwide acceptance of this sub-genre. Dystopia is also called anti-utopia, reverse utopia, negative utopia, cacotopia, roman-preduprezdenie (novel warning) etc. The society depicted by a dystopia would be a frightening one, characterized by totalitarianism, dehumanization of the characters, environmental disaster etc. It is a kind of premonition to the readers about the potential course of a society that must conceivably take one day (Murphin and Ray, 2003, p.122).

Dystopian literature became a part of the mainstream science fiction world during the early period of the twentieth century. World War 1 and the Bolshevik Revolution had escalated the growth of this genre. The failure of

utopia in the modern world also prompted the inception of dystopian literature. The utopian dream of a perfect society has been seemed realizable with scientific and technological development, but it also carried its fair share of disillusionment and foreboding. When the chances of achieving a model society have increased so did the fear of its negative aspects. Karl Popper criticized that an” implemented utopia would be the model totalitarian state, that every utopian dream contains a nucleus of totalitarianism”. (Hayes and Karen, 1995, p.201) Dystopian literature, in most case, also creates a future society, but in an entirely different vantage point. World War II, the rise of Nazism and Fascism etc. cleared the way for the genre to root deep in the literary field.

Compared to hard science fiction work, dystopian worlds are less technologically saturated. Even if there are scientifically as well as technologically elevated groups in a story, there will be a group devoid of these privileges. *Mad Max Series* (1979-2015), *Children of Men* (2006), *V for Vendetta* (2006), *I am Legend* (2007), *Wall – E* (2008), *District 9* (2009), *Book of Eli* (2010) etc. portrays societies lacking any technological backups. Those are mainly post-apocalyptic, brought forth by the defects of the technological boom. Novels like Anthony Burgess’ *A Clock Work Orange* (1962), Cormac McCarthy’s *The Road* (2006) etc. follow the same path. The societies in films like *Metropolis* (1927), *Snowpiercer* (2013), and *Elysium* (2013) are twofold; there is a modern group with all technical assistance and a group without those. The former exists by enslaving or exploiting the latter. Because of these formats, dystopian works used to be called social science fiction since it works on society and socio-cultural aspects of the people.

E.M. Forster’s short story *The Machine Stops*, published in 1909, can be taken as the first work carrying the dystopian elements. The people in Forster’s world live underground and taken care of by an all-powerful



Machine. Forster's story stands a prototype of dystopian social hell (Moylan, 2000, p.112). The influence of this plot is visible in the future dystopian works, where a machine or a robot with Artificial Intelligence tries to overcome humanity.

Roughly speaking there can be three types of dystopias, which are sometimes interrelated: the political dystopia; the environmental dystopia; and the technological dystopia (Claeys, 2017, p.5). Political dystopia concentrates mainly on the failure of utopian views and anticipates totalitarian reign in the future. Environmental dystopia forebodes possible environmental disaster, both natural and man-made, and the life after that incident. In a technological dystopia, the fully developed technology becomes a threat to the existence of humanity.

Dystopian works used to have some qualities that get repeated as motifs, icons, themes, character build-ups etc. These repetitions can be viewed as part of the shared universe of science fiction. Even when having an independent identity, each writer and his works contribute to a larger and comprehensive text or a world of science fiction. Zamyatin's work *We* can be considered as one such work, which can be termed as a megatext in dystopian science fiction tradition.

### **The Dystopian Master Plot in Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We***

There is an exhaustive self-reflexivity in science fiction. Damien Broderick uses the term 'science fiction mega text' to identify this self-reflexivity. For him, science fiction undeniably refers back to previous details of itself. "Each text adding to and playing with the larger body of signs, images and scenarios those makeup science fiction's shared world (Vint, 2014, p.57). These shared images, plots or themes belong to a larger text and thereby opening new vistas, which invites the reader to have an

interconnected web of meanings over what he or she has experienced in a particular text.

Sherryl Vint, Prof. of Science fiction at the University of California, claims that some influential works act as centres of gravity, which pull the meaning of icons towards their influential formulations. She gives the examples of *Frankenstein* (Mary Shelley), and *The War of the Worlds* (H.G. Wells). The trace of Frankenstein's monster can be seen in any creation of life forms and every alien invasion has been formulated by the relationship between alien invasion and colonial establishment pictured by *The War of the Worlds* (Vint, 2014, p.57). This idea of a shared universe or the possibility of a mega text becomes more evident when it comes to the subgenre of dystopian literature. Juxtaposing the classic dystopian works and films, we could identify numerous similarities in plot, character developments etc. They all lead to the idea of a dystopian master plot.

Alexander Zholkovsky makes a comparative study of the six dystopian classics; Zamyatin's *We*, Huxley's *Brave New World*, Nabokov's *Invitation to a Beheading*, Orwell's *1984*, Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*, Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange* and lists a lot of similarities, which he adds to the idea of dystopian master plot. He describes:

The action of a dystopia takes place in a "rational" society, which, having traded God and the freedom of will for universal harmony and happiness, decrees total uniformity of thinking and abolishes privacy, repressing all that is unpredictable and rooted outside the spatial, temporal or epistemological boundaries of the system. This dictatorship of the political superego results not in the promised harmony but in a personality split, which reveals itself as the Protagonist embarks on his dissident Quest. Gradually abandoning his allegiance to the system, he comes

within the reach of a perfect synthesis of the traditional opposites - Nature/ Culture, Reason/ Emotion, Man/ Woman, Child/ Adult- all in one way or another suppressed by the system and therefore united in resisting it. But the quest ends in the defeat of the Protagonist or even his reverse metamorphosis into a confirming vegetable. (Zholkovsky, 1994, p.250)

In most of the works the protagonist, at the initial stage would be a part of the dictatorship, either as an intellectual functionary or as a workman. In Zamyatin's *We*, the protagonist is a top-class engineer, in *1984*, he is a technician working for the Big Brother to manipulate the history, in *Fahrenheit 451*, he burns forbidden books, Huxley made his protagonist a technician in the department of hypnopaedia. In the dystopian movie *Equilibrium* (2002) the protagonist is an enforcement officer. But they later turn 'rough' and start revolting against the system they were once part of.

The protagonist lives in a place, which is transparent to the state. They are aware of this fact that they are being watched every second, but they are used to it and believe that it is essential for them to be watched to lead a good life. But he is taken to the Old House by his quest and a Woman. The Old House goes back to the pastoral Hut might be an abandoned house or a cursed region. This place becomes a repository of Culture and the antipode of dystopian community.

In the Old House or elsewhere, the protagonist comes into contact with the Outside World, Nature, the Past, it's forbidden Culture (including God), and the Book. The reading/ Writing and hiding of the book (often the protagonist's diary) form a core element of the master plot. The antonym of the book is the obligatory official Anti-Book and various brainwashing media. (Zholkovsky, 1994, p.252)

Alexander Zholkovsky believes that the dreaming motif is one of the nerve centres of the dystopian plot. The archetypal nightmare of dystopian literature about a dream is the ‘nationalisation’ of dreams. Dreaming has been seen as a disease that must be cured or else he or she should pose a threat to society. In a dystopian society, dreams are either prohibited or sufficient methods are used to assure that the citizens are not dreaming. To pacify their emotions and to keep them ‘perfect’, the state introduces multiple techniques. Zamyatin uses lobotomy, Huxley and Burges use hypnopaedia, Orwell and Burges introduce certain psychological treatments. In *Equilibrium*, a pill stands as the way to control the people’s emotions.

The character who invents dreams behaves in an authorial way or, to put it the other way around, serves as the author's excuse for his or her fictions. Indeed the attempts to deliberate control, manipulation, and counter manipulation of dreams have their roots not only in the desirability of traditional idyllic visions but also in the arbitrariness, sanctioned by the literary convention, with which authors ascribe to their characters whatever dreams they need for narrative or thematic reasons. (Zholkovsky, 1994, p.256)

It is interesting to know that the characteristics of this master plot are first seen in Yevgeny Zamyatin’s classic dystopian novel *We*. Prior to the inception of the sub-genre dystopian literature, science fiction was circling around limited themes like space exploration, time travelling etc. Zamyatin’s novel broke all the conventional paths of science fiction. His work could be treated as the forerunner of dystopian or anti-utopian fiction.

Dystopian writers are always sceptical of scientific progress, anticipating a distant future world that uses scientific innovations and technology as tools of oppression. In Zamyatin’s *We*, the One State utilizes

technology to assist in establishing and maintaining their oppressive societies. The state has turned human beings into cogs in a giant machine. It is identifiable that the entire plot of *We* becoming the part of the master plot.

Strangling of personal freedom for the benefit of society and upholding reason and intellect in place of emotion and feeling is a recurring theme that always interested dystopian literature. Zamyatin's work pioneered in this realm too. The concept of Paradise in the novel poses the clash between freedom and happiness. Adam and Eve were offered a choice: happiness without freedom or freedom without happiness. They choose freedom. Because of this choice D-503, the protagonist considers them as idiots since he thinks that, the choice they made is the reason why the world was so miserable. It was the Devil who tempted them to choose freedom. Thus by eliminating freedom, the One State not only bring back the happiness or paradise but also helped God finally to overcome the Devil (Zamyatin, 1993, p.61).

Panopticon- like surveillance as part of the master-plot has its significant role in *We*. One State planned a life without privacy and individuality so the state was constructed entirely of glass, which allows the secret police or spies to inform on and supervise the public more easily

We get to use the blinds only on Sex Day. Otherwise we live in broad day light inside these walls that seem to have been fashioned out of bright air, always on view. We have nothing to hide from one another. Besides, this makes it easier for the Guardians to carry out their burdensome, noble task. (Zamyatin, 1993, p.19)

The personal letters of numbers were censored by the Bureau of Guardians and the front officer of each building before distributing it to the

numbers. All numbers were familiar with this natural process of the state. The activities of the numbers are closely watched by the guardians. D-503 knew that he is always followed by a guardian, S-4711. He says that the guardian's presence strengthens him. 'it is nice to feel that someone's keeping a sharp eye on you, kindly protecting you from making the slightest mistake, the slightest misstep' (Zamyatin, 1993, p.65).

Zamyatin creates a dictator, 'Benefactor', who is all-powerful, offer the citizens, called Numbers, security and material affluence but not freedom. The antagonist in dystopia would use to be an all-powerful dictator. In certain cases it would be an inanimate character. E.M. Forster's short story *The Machine Stops* and South Korean dystopian film *Snowpiercer* (2013) portray a machine as the omniscient antagonist. We see these dictators in different names like Big Brother (1984), Father (*Equilibrium*), Adam Sutler (*V for Vendetta*- Alan Moore's graphic novel) etc. in multiple fictions, which are following the prototype of Zamyatin's Benefactor.

D-503's life is shaken up when he meets a woman, I-330, who ignores the order that has been painstakingly established in One State. D-503 struggles to overcome his attraction to her. I-330 invites him to visit the Ancient House (part of the master plot), notable for being the only opaque building in the One State, objects of aesthetical and historical importance, dug up from around the city, are stored there. This old house acts as the gateway to the past culture, which is forbidden by the state. The women and the Ancient House taking the steps for the protagonist's realisation that we saw in Orwell's *1984* (Julia, Antiques Shop), Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* (Maria, Machine Room) Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* (Clarisse McClellan, Books), Kurt Wimmer's *Equilibrium* (Mary O'Brien) etc. has its beginning in Zamyatin.

The dreaming motif has played a decisive role in *We*. Towards the end of the novel we hear that the One State is now able to perform an operation, a ‘fantasiectomy’, which removes the part of the brain that is responsible for the imagination and dreaming, since they were all under a grave illness, developing a soul. By submitting oneself to the operation, he/she becomes perfect and equal to the machine. It is the path to 100 percentage happiness. Like scanning a system to protect from malware the numbers are operated to remove the threat, soul or imagination. After the great operation, we witness a new advanced mechanical species, some kind of robo sapience. (Dinello, 2005, p.4) This fate of the reverse metamorphosis of the protagonist has been shared by Winston Smith and Alex DeLarge (*A Clock Work Orange*) along with D-503.

Prof. Sheryl Vint calls for an attempt to approach science fiction as a network of linked texts, themes and images. This network enables the reader or viewer to create novel connections and also possible to link previously unconnected material (Vint, 2014, p.14). This concept of a mega text or a master plot is not limiting the scope of a work or negating its independency. It is a brand new addition to the shared world.

“A large part of the pleasure of reading science fiction comes from the interplay between familiarity and novelty that is created by interactions between individual texts and science fiction’s large history” (Vint, 2014, p.58). The dystopian master plot or mega text insinuates the larger history of science fiction. Almost all the ideas and fears shared by Zamyatin are still the favourite subjects of science fiction. Anticipating the future possible society and life in those technologically saturated worlds, which introduced by him is still the backbone of Dystopian literature.

### **The paradoxical double vision in *We* and *1984***

Science fiction has always been closely linked to the ideology of its time, even closer in some respects, than mainstream literature. Russian literature is known for its connection to the then politics and ideology, comparing to the other Western literature. The early Soviet works had a predisposition towards National Bolshevism. Science fiction writers like Zamyatin and Bulgakov were concerned about the serious flaws of the government and wrote against the degeneration of the party. Due to the acute censorship to writing they were forced to create their anti- utopias as fascist and dictatorial-technocratic. But these writers were successful in turning the criticism against the corrupt police state of the Soviet era.

Bolshevik state eagerly supported science popularizing societies. Earlier, it was the Commissariat of Enlightenment's Scientific Department (*Glavnauka*) that donated funds. But after the war, the Bolsheviks used these societies as a tool to proliferate the concept of rational, irreligious social order (Andrews, 2003, p.35). The Scientific Department of Narkompros (the Commissariat of Enlightenment) and the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD) unfurled severe auditing in writing. All societies had to send their statutes, list of members and their plans to the NKVD. Failures to do so would result in stopping all the funds (Andrews, 2003, p.51)

The decree passed by the VTsIK (All-Russian Central Executive Committee) in 1919 was a strong blow to the writers. It declared that all writings, scholarly and literary, and publishing houses had to submit to the regulations of the state. The state publishing house of the Soviet Union, Gosizdat would have the sole right to buy all the copies of any books privately published, anywhere in Russia, at wholesale price (Andrews, 2003, p.64). By this decree, the soviet government began pressuring the writers to create characters in accordance with the ideology of the state. One such



example was the 'Red Pinkertonism' movement in adventure and detective fiction. This movement forced the writers to create class struggles in their works and the victory of the Revolution (Nevins, 2012). As a result, the detective fiction became communist. The next target was science fiction. A huge number of pulp science fiction works were produced in the following years.

Comparing to other genres, science fiction in the Soviet Union enjoyed certain freedom, since the officials thought it could be used as a propaganda tool to take Soviet achievement in science and technology across the world. The writers were somewhat free to determine the plot and could choose any style, even though not too far from the boundaries of Socialist Realism. Zamyatin, Bulgakov and Strugatskii brothers were thrilled to create dystopian plots. But they were keen to portray an alternative mode in their imaginative world that of the criticism against the political world (Forrester, 2013, p.120). They showed how the technologically saturated society preyed on the less advanced in their works. But those suppressions were the picturization of the contemporary socio-political realities.

Soviet science fiction is obliged to two major sources: the traditions of Russian pre-revolutionary mainstream literature and the devices of earlier European science fiction. Jules Verne and H .G. Wells were the models for the early Russian science fiction writers. But the Russian works were political. Rafail Nudelman in his essay *Soviet Science Fiction and the Ideology of Soviet Society* (1989) describes the peculiarities of early Soviet science fiction:

The fantastic worlds of early Soviet science fiction were the worlds of planetary revolutions. Their time and space corresponded to the objects of modelling. In contrast to Western science fiction of that period-which, as a rule, took the reader

into exotic geographic terrain-early Soviet science fiction placed its worlds in the real political and social space of contemporaneity, but expanded to the limits of the universe. The plot of early Soviet science fiction also experienced a global expansion, bringing into their orbit enormous collectives of people and, some-times, even all of humanity (Nudleman, 1989, p39).

Nudelman then describes the general outline of the Soviet science fiction,

The heroes of this science fiction are masses and collectives, and the events of the story are episodes in their collective fate. Individual qualities of protagonists are of secondary importance; the main role is attributed to their class status ("engineer," "Red Army soldier," "worker"), exemplifying their social relations with the world. It is the protagonist's class which determines his individual destiny, which, in turn, becomes the symbol of the fate of the whole social group..... The protagonists not only submit to these forces but act on their behalf. Therefore, the relationship of the protagonists within the plot becomes but a reflection of historical processes unfolding in time and space. Often antagonistic forces shed their individualized shells and appear by themselves, impersonally. These forces are almost always "from below," "of the soil," "earth," "barbarism, or "Asia"- forces opposed to "civilization" or "Europe, "which is in retreat and fore-doomed. Consequently, catastrophe almost always becomes the victory of the collective over the personal, of the masses over the individual (Nudleman, 1989, 39).

Zamyatin was quick to realise the possible horrors of the Stalin era. His predictions that he divulged through his novel soon turned out to be a reality.

The concept of collectivization in the Soviet society deeply influenced Zamyatin at first. It was received as the initial step to attain socialism in the state. The land was socialized and the farmers were encouraged to work in large farms to share the work and profit. The One State in *We* is designed by using this idea of collectivization. The term 'mine' is taken as a savage usage. Zamyatin along with other communists believed that it could wipe out the bourgeois and elevate the social status of the proletariat. But he saw the Soviet leaders misusing the concept and the government of the One State is created using the persecution and forced labour under the Communist regime.

After the Revolution, members of the Soviet government advocated the "the active destruction of the family and its replacement with the collectivized upbringing of children through state-run homes and boarding institutions" (Glass, 1987, p. 893). The state's intervention in family life during the Soviet era became the root in One State's personal and family life. The family was abolished and everyone is available to everyone else with a pink card issued by the state. A child is the property of the state and they are produced like something produced in a factory and raised in a factory-like atmosphere. The bitterness Zamyatin felt towards the leaders in their manipulation of Socialism and Marxism prompted him to presuppose a dystopia (Smith, 2017).

It becomes clear that science fiction was primarily led by the ideology of that time. Science fiction emerged as a prominent genre in the Soviet Era when the political repression was in its zenith. Any criticism of the state or political leaders was considered sedition. It was punishable often by death or by exile (which is practically in most cases death by exile). The political oppression of that period was thus terrifying. Writers who were not opportunists were vulnerable to such laws and many suffered and even perished. Zamyatin was twice exiled because of the uncompromising stand he took. Soviet authors intelligently used science fiction as a mask to criticize

the government. Jacques Lahana says that Soviet writers of science fiction adopt a paradoxical double vision. On the one hand, they seem to endorse official Soviet "optimistic" ideology in a communist utopia set in a vague and distant future; on the other hand, under the guise of anti-utopias set elsewhere, they give, through Aesopian indirection and allusion, a devastating picture of a corrupt, crushing bureaucracy and police state that exists here and now (Gerould, 1983, 342).

George Orwell had a strong political vision. Political events such as World War II and the Spanish Civil War designed his political ideology and this is evident in his works especially in *1984*. He had to witness pro- Stalin group led by Soviet Russia turning down the Spanish Communist Political Party, stamping them as Trotskyists and traitors. The hierarchical structure of *1984* with aristocracy ruling over people and three superpowers of Oceania, Eurasia and Eastasia were influenced by James Burnham's book *The Managerial Revolution* (1941). In his essay, *James Burnham and The Managerial Revolution* Orwell wrote:

Capitalism is disappearing, but Socialism is not replacing it. What is now arising is a new kind of planned, centralised society which will be neither capitalist nor, in any accepted sense of the word, democratic. The rulers of this new society will be the people who effectively control the means of production: that is, business executives, technicians, bureaucrats and soldiers, lumped together by Burnham, under the name of "managers". These people will eliminate the old capitalist class, crush the working class, and so organise society that all power and economic privilege remain in their own hands (Orwell, 2014).

Orwell believed that the future government will be controlled by powerful businessmen and the rulers will be toys in their hands. These governments will use force and fraud to cling in power. They will be ready to rewrite history in favour of them and remove parts of it that might question their past. What the Soviet government did to Trotsky and his supporters concreted his concepts. Hence in *1984*, we see Ministry Truth working hard to evaporate people and incidents and replace them with fake history. He goes on;

The English Puritans, the Jacobins, the Bolsheviks, were in each case simply power seekers using the hopes of the masses in order to win a privileged position for themselves. Power can sometimes be won or maintained without violence, but never without fraud, because it is necessary to make use of the masses, and the masses would not co-operate if they knew that they were simply serving the purposes of a minority. In each great revolutionary struggle the masses are led on by vague dreams of human brotherhood, and then, when the new ruling class is well established in power, they are thrust back into servitude (Orwell, 2014).

The Tehran Conference in 1943 attended by Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill, the Big Three and the United States' dropping of atom bombs in Japan urged Orwell to strongly believe in the coming of totalitarian Super states. He was dissatisfied that the Communist Party's abandoning of socialism when coming to power. One of his super states, Oceania resembles Soviet Russia and the rule of Joseph Stalin in particular.

The policy of iron curtain and strict surveillance in Russia was portrayed in the form of Thought Police in *1984*. Any kind of dissent was suppressed in both states. Big Brother is always watching everyone. The

citizen lives their everyday lives thinking that each and every activity they do and comments they make are seen and heard. Newspeak reduced the chance to express dissents. It might seem unbelievable that the Modern Russian language lacks an apt word to express the term 'privacy'. One of the most comprehensive English-Russian dictionaries edited by Professor I. Galperin explains the term 'privacy' as 'loneliness, intimacy, or secrecy'. It is silent about the individual freedom from unauthorized interference. The people in 1984 are incapable to express the absence of private and political freedom since the state removed all such words from the official dictionary. The Soviets were unable to speak meaningfully about the absence of privacy in their personal life (Messerer, 1984, p.132).

We see that in Oceania the term 'science' is no longer used. The empirical method of thought, the base of almost all scientific innovations, is directly opposed to the current principles of the Ingsoc. Another example is the limited use of the term 'free'. It couldn't be used like 'politically free' or 'intellectually free', since those two freedoms were annihilated years before.

Being an industrially developed area that consists of a politically organized group of working-class, the Catalonian political sector in Spain was attracted to the special concern of the Soviets. But *Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxists* (Workers Party of Marxist Unity, commonly called the POUM) had immense influence in Catalonia. They severely opposed Stalin and followed Trotsky. Andreas Nin, the leader of POUM was previously connected with Stalin, but he was arrested in 1928 followed by a speech supporting Trotsky. He was expelled from the Soviet Union without any documents and money (Dewar, 1951). Nin, along with his family had fled to Spain. In Spain he rose to the front of POUM with his activities among the workers and uncompromising criticism of Stalin.

A circular passed among the leaders of *Partit Socialista Unificat de Catalunya* (Unified Socialist Party of Catalonia, PSUC) in 1937 says:

The POUM occupies a counter-revolutionary position; the line taken by the POUM is identical with the provocative policy of international Fascism. All members of the PSUC must realise the criminal role played by the POUM. The leaders of the POUM must be unmasked as *agents provocateurs* introduced into the working class to destroy it, and they must be presented as such to the workers (Dewar, 1951).

Before the suppression of any groups or people, who stood against Stalin, they were made enemies of the working class or anti-nationals working to overthrow the current government. Soviet press and a group of intelligentsia worked to generate a public opinion against these groups by frequently tarnishing them with falsehood and distortion of truths. These campaigns helped the ruling class to hunt down the dissents since they were made enemies. Orwell used the Two Minutes Hate in the novel to portray the hate propaganda of the Soviets. The principal target of The Hate was Goldstein, the chief renegade and the primal traitor. The renegade's crimes against the party, their heresies and actions were repeatedly screened every day to augment hatred by the citizen. The state made those rebels persons to be hated and killed.

During the Plenum of the Spanish Central Committee in 1937, the leaders declared that the POUM must be 'eliminated from the political life of the country' (Dewar, 1951). Stalin's deputy Miguel Valdés openly wrote in a newspaper that Andreas Nin and his followers should be exterminated (Dewar, 1951). It was the sign from the party to begin the hunt for the destruction of POUM. Nin was arrested and the other prominent leaders were either assassinated or disappeared without any trace. They were all evaporated

or made 'unperson' in the terminology of Orwell. Orwell describes the arrests of the POUM leaders that he witnessed while in Catalonia:

...and the same evening had raided the Hotel Falcón and arrested all the people in it, mostly militiamen on leave. The place was converted immediately into a prison, and in a very little while it was filled to the brim with prisoners of all kinds. Next day the P.O.U.M. was declared an illegal organization and all its offices, book-stalls, sanatoria, Red Aid centres, and so forth were seized. Meanwhile the police were arresting everyone they could lay hands on who was known to have any connection with the P.O.U.M. Within a day or two all or almost all of the forty members of the Executive Committee were in prison. Possibly one or two had escaped into hiding, but the police were adopting the trick of seizing a man's wife as a hostage if he disappeared (Orwell, 1977).

John Simkin quotes about the brutality of the tortures Nin had to endure in the custody of the Soviet officers as divulged by Jesus Hernandez, a member of the Communist Party, and Minister of Education in the Popular Front government:

Nin was not giving in. He was resisting until he fainted. His inquisitors were getting impatient. They decided to abandon the dry method. Then the blood flowed, the skin peeled off, muscles torn, physical suffering pushed to the limits of human endurance. Nin resisted the cruel pain of the most refined tortures. In a few days his face was a shapeless mass of flesh (Simkin, 1977).



One morning Andreas Nin's shapeless body was found in a gutter of a street in Madrid. The arrest and disappearance of people that Orwell had witnessed became a strong political propaganda of Oceania. Whoever stands against or even think against the party or the Big Brother would be found and annihilated eventually. That had become an unwritten rule. Thought Crimes are seriously dealt with. The Thought Police would find you at the moment when a thought against the party germinates in your mind. Orwell writes:

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 round 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, your one-time existence was denied and then forgotten. You were abolished, annihilated: VAPORIZED was the usual word (Orwell, 2011, p.21).

In another event, a character named Syme had vanished one day. His colleagues talked about him for two days and nobody mentioned him afterward. Syme had ceased to exist: he had never existed (Orwell, 2011, p.154). Winston also witnessed the disappearance of his mother and sister and he never saw them or knew what happened to them. The torture that Andreas Nin had faced created Room 101 in Orwell's novel. It is a room where the prisoners will face their worst fears. O'Brien leads the torturing. He says that Winston had lost twenty-five kilos since the beginning of his stay in Room 101 and lost almost all his teeth. His hair was coming out in handfuls. He ended up a bag of filth.

The character Emmanuel Goldstein, the leader of the Brotherhood, is based on Soviet Bolshevik leader, Leon Trotsky. Trotsky had to flee from his homeland and expelled from the Communist Party due to the ideological difference with Stalin. Goldstein is believed to be one of the founders of the party along with Big Brother. He was portrayed as a potential threat waiting to over through the government with a huge underground army. Big Brother is so keen to ignite hate in the masses against Goldstein and his Brotherhood by commemorating 'Two Minutes Hate' every day. This was how Trotsky was portrayed in the Soviet Union. Stalin's NKVD used 'Trotskyism' to arrest and represses the dissenters as the 'Thought Police' used 'Brotherhood' in Oceania.

The appointment of criminals to manage political prisoners, the removal of books from the library which is published or written before the revolution, the special benefits given to the Soviet *nomenklatura*, the corruption prevailed in the labour camp etc. are visualized with minute details in *1984*.

This depiction and extrapolation of reality is made possible by the paradoxical double vision chosen by science fiction writers. By using the then political systems, power-hungry leaders and their corruption, Orwell and Zamyatin create a warning against a potential totalitarian system, where individual freedom will diminish eventually and people will become machine-like.

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## **Becoming One with the Machine**

The world is kept alive only by heretics: the heretic Christ, the heretic Copernicus, the heretic Tolstoy. Our symbol of faith is heresy: tomorrow is inevitably heresy to today, which has turned into a pillar of salt, and to yesterday, which has scattered to dust. Today denies yesterday, but is a denial of denial tomorrow... Yesterday there was a tsar, and there were slaves; today there is no tsar, but the slaves remain; tomorrow there will be only tsars. We march in the name of tomorrow's free man- the royal man. We have lived through the epoch of suppression of the masses; we are living in an epoch of suppression of the individual in the name of the masses; tomorrow will bring the liberation of the individual- in the name of man. (Zamyatin, 1970, p.51-52)

It has always been the objective of science fiction writers to envisage what scientific progress may bring in the future. Dystopian novels are often observed as cynical towards technological advancements. Their extrapolation of possible future worlds seemed to use these scientific developments as tools of oppression. The negative shade of a society that uses these innovations for the subjugation of its citizens to stay in absolute power is the area dystopian science fiction mostly covers. This nightmare of technology and the fear of mechnomorphism - the idea that the machine will become the measure of all things and the model for man to emulate - and its consequences have been portrayed most effectively in Yevgeny Zamyatin's brilliant dystopian novel, *We* and George Orwell's *1984*.

In Kurt Vonnegut's *Player Piano* and E.M. Forster's *The Machine Stops* and science fiction films such as *Blade Runner*, *Equilibrium*, and *Matrix*..., the technology itself represses human beings, steals their humanity, and leads to a dystopian condition. The result of these different societies is the imposition of machine-like values onto human beings, making them more efficient or easier to control. This process of mechanization, that force people to live like robots (a life without freedom and emotions) is identified by the title 'becoming one with the machine'. Once the state is successful in subjugating the people and allows them only to live in a predetermined way, the margin between machine and human gets blurred.

Zamyatin writes what the authority hates most is a person who dares to think differently from the ideology of the authority. He further adds that a rebel, a Scythian, will not be subjected to anyone or anything. He values his freedom more than anything. A rebel's way is a way to Golgotha, and his fate is to be crucified. The fundamental need for a human being for Zamyatin is the freedom to think and act the way he/ she wants to. This is why he said that a true piece of literature can only be created by heretics and Scythians. Zamyatin described his novel as "a warning against the twofold danger which threatens humanity: the hypertrophic power of the machines and the hypertrophic power of the State." (McCarthy, 1984, p.123). Repression followed by the October Revolution forced Zamyatin to forebode a condition of dystopia. The growing obsession of the authority towards the technology was also prompted him to think of a future world of despotism, where science and technology is a mere tool in the hands of the powerful to oppress the people.

Political theorist, Hannah Arendt's concept of totalitarianism can be applied to the discussion to elucidate the ways taken by a despotic regime to

mechanize its people. She writes in her book *The Origins of Totalitarianism* that:

the totalitarian regimes, so long as they are in power, and the totalitarian leaders, so long as they are alive, "command and rest upon mass support" up to the end. Hitler's rise to power was legal in terms of majority rule and neither he nor Stalin could have maintained the leadership of large populations, survived many interior and exterior crises, and braved the numerous dangers of relentless intra-party struggles if they had not had the confidence of the masses. The disturbing factor in the success of totalitarianism is rather the true selflessness of its adherents (Arendt, 1985, p.306-307).

George Orwell strongly believed that the authoritarian regimes in Germany and Russia are different from the previous despotic governments. What made the difference, for Orwell, was the former's capacity to invade the inner lives of its own citizen. Without using direct force, these states successfully used different ways of mind control, so that the people won't question the official ideology (Bounds, 2009, p.35). These regimes were successful in accumulating the unconditional support from the ordinary people through their propagandas. These propagandas can turn a lie into truth and truth into a lie. Getting the consent of the people is the first phase of the modern despotic regime.

Orwell wasn't commenting that the people in such a state have a natural temperament to be passive supporters of totalitarianism, but he was concerned with the state's ability to create circumstances with their strong ideology to convince people the lies that they serve. Their ideologies help them to establish their reign by manipulating and moulding people. Hannah Arendt's fundamental concept is that any totalitarian government needs mass



support, at least a passive sanction from the people, to carry on with its ideologies. This mass society is led by superfluous people, led by extreme nationalism and race-thinking (McGowan, 1998, p.15).

This creation of superfluous people, who are willing to capitulate to the regime in a dystopian world, can be addressed as the mechanization of people. They ceased to be humans and act like robots, without the ability to descend. Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We* and George Orwell's *1984* show the ways such a world would receive to turn rational beings into programmed machine-like beings. Their examples especially that of Zamyatin's are still followed in dystopian science fiction novels and movies. The steps used for this mechanization are inflicting terror, constant surveillance, replacing intelligence over emotions, obliteration of plurality, destruction of personal life and freedom, promotion of robotic values of production etc.

The propaganda machine works indefatigably, and the statement they feed the people does not have any connection with the truth. Since the past might haunt the party, one of the first attempts would be to rewrite the history and create fake events and heroes to support the party ideology. The injection of fear by projecting a potential enemy is another step. The threats pose by a nation, or a group permits the state to be the watchful guardian of its people. It also allows them to cover up the poor living conditions and atrocities that exist under their governance. This threat and war against them serve as an economic reason for the state. The same fear opens a window of constant surveillance of the people. Philip Bound writes that "The genius of the totalitarian mind is its ability to persuade millions of people that 'pure fantasy' is gospel truth (Bounds, 2009, p.146).

Orwell argues that the religious beliefs repressed in a secular period are exploited in an authoritarian state (Bounds, 2009, p.146). To attract people to the ideology, a particular person is singled out and elevated as a saviour of the

people. He is entitled to save the nation from the threats from outside and emancipate the people from the mistakes committed by his predecessors. Orwell infers that this process of singling out and granting him quasi-divine character charms the ordinary people. This is evident from the description of Big Brother: “Big Brother is infallible and all-powerful. Every success, every achievement, every victory, every scientific discovery, all knowledge, all wisdom, all happiness, all virtue, are held to issue directly from his leadership and inspiration” (Orwell, 2011, p.216). The Benefactor also possesses this divinity. D-503 says “He (the Benefactor) was descending from the heavens in His aero to be among us, the new Jehovah (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 135). Both rules have the attributes of a Christian God. Zamyatin was conscious while writing about the Benefactor. He uses capital letter ‘H’ (He, Him) while writing about the One State’s ruler, the way we write about the Christian God. Philip Bounds adds the majority in a despotic world becomes gullible, willing to accept anything the leaders feed them, is because of the belief that the gods never lie (Bounds, 2009, p.146). Big Brother and Benefactor, thus become infallible.

The elimination of the rebels is necessary for the existence of the rulers. But a despotic government cannot risk the eradication of all the dissenters since the existence of them provides total power to the government. Destroying the rebels gives more power to the rulers, and it prompts them to create dissidence (Joshbehrens, 2015). Oceania draws its strength mainly from the creation of war with other states and the dissidence of Goldstein. One State frequently writes about the enemies of happiness and the potential havoc that the group Mephi could bring forth. Since both the states control the thinking process of its members, the creation of rebels is an easy task for them to execute.

Total subjugation and rule by terror are possible only over people who are isolated against each other. The state brings forth this isolation by destroying the trust between people. They use total surveillance and destruction of family life and personal feelings to extinguish the space between people. But even in this isolation, the plurality is destroyed. Everyone is the same and equal. Plurality in lifestyle and thought becomes a crime because only by establishing homogeneity in all fields, the machine values can be successfully introduced.

### **Fear/terror as a political weapon**

political fear is... an instrument of elite rule or insurgent advance, created and sustained by political leaders or activists who stand to gain something from it, either because fear helps them pursue a specific political goal, or because it reflects or lends support to their moral and political beliefs—or both. (Robin, 2004, p.16)

Fear, according to Corey Robin, is the best political tool a state can adopt to bring the people into trust and to cover up its detractors. The rulers inflict this fear by exaggerating any threat raised against them. American cultural anthropologist Ernest Becker's idea of Terror Management Theory (TMT) helps us to understand the role of inflicting fear or terror on people. The insecurities and anxieties in people are easily manipulated. For Becker, it's the 'mortality anxiety' that helps terror to take root in us. The fear of death is unique to human beings. Since it tends to weak us, everyone tries to repress this anxiety. Anything repressed, according to Freud, gets buried in our unconscious minds and begins to influence our thoughts and behaviour.

This anxiety, according to Becker, feeds back into our psyche and influences everything we think and do. Our social practices

and institutions—from politics to religion to art—are systematic attempts to explain away and allay this fear, which is why we can lash out so viciously at those who seem to threaten or undermine our beliefs. We can't let their existence weaken our psychological armour against the ultimate enemy, Death itself (Reynolds, 2012).

By projecting imaginary enemies and potential threats, the ruling party dictates what truth is. By influencing the perception of the people, by infusing and igniting these anxieties, the party can make people trust anything that the party wants them to (Thorp, 1984, p.11). French historian and political scientist Alexis de Tocqueville argues that to overcome the insecurities, the mass wish for a strong disciplinarian, who can stand firm to lead the society into a better future. They will long for a more powerful state that interferes with every aspect of life than its predecessors. Such a leader and his strong decisions will eventually lead to a form of despotism (Robin, 2004, p.29). The 'strong' leader becomes an idol, a god-like character and the despotism he adopts, is welcomed to lead the society in the age of crises.

The state inflicted political fear is two dimensional, fear of an enemy and fear of the ruling class itself. While the first fear is introduced by the ruling class to gain the trust of its citizens, the second one is used to cling to the power. Identifying enemy/ enemies become the initial step in this process. The concept of the enemy turns out to be more crucial than the enemy itself. Joseph Stalin believed that the hatred of the enemy is the strongest idea since it paves the way to an ambience of general fear (Claeys, 2017, p.17). Throughout history, Jews, Muslims, Left ideologists, Blacks and foreigners have played their roles as enemies. When the ruling class upholds a religion, people from other religions take the role of the enemies. For Gregory Claeys, the best enemy is always the imaginary enemy (Claeys, 2017, p.17). The

hatred towards the other works as a tool to unite the group, and this group is easily manipulative.

The second dimension of fear targets everyone willing to dissent. The ruling class once established itself, wears a mask of a sacred group. One of the criticisms against Lenin and the then Communist Party is that they lingered on the idea of the party with 'ecclesiastical wolf-pack fervor' (Claeys, 2017, p.129). The wolf pack mentality refers to the concept of all for one and one for all. A wolf pack works in strict order with an Alpha male/female to lead. The pack works and moves as per ranking from Alpha wolf to Omega wolf. Ecclesiastical refers to the Church like structure and activity of the party. The Communist Party was influenced by the Church in creating its cadre system and the Church's notion of infallibility was taking root at the party. The next stage is the elimination of the opponents, by which the party or the ruling class can impose terror among the citizen. The message is created that whoever opposes the party will be treated as the enemy of the entire state. The policies taken by the party is promoted as infallible. To stay as a sacred group, it will be necessary to create terror and resort to violence.

Dissenters and critics are identified and stigmatized as anti-nationals/enemies of the state. When Leon Trotsky became an 'enemy of the state', all the dissenters are called Trotskyists. In *Homage to Catalonia* George Orwell gives three things by which the word Trotskyist can be attached; they are:

1. One who, like Trotsky, advocates 'world revolution' as against 'Socialism in a single country'. More loosely, a revolutionary extremist.
2. A member of the actual organization of which Trotsky is head.
3. A disguised Fascist posing as a revolutionary who acts especially by sabotage in the U.S.S.R., but, in general, by splitting and undermining the Left-wing forces (Orwell, 1977).

And as we have seen, Trotskyists were hunted and executed both inside and outside the Soviet Union.

Both *1984* and *We* are the result of the Soviet repression, witnessed by the authors. The agency responsible for the repression was CHEKA (Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution and Sabotage). Established by Lenin in 1917, the members of the CHEKA were former prisoners of the Tsarist regime. The leader of it, Felix Dzerzhinsky, was also a prisoner and called his work ‘organized terror’ (Claeys, 2017, p.132). The Soviet Constitution of 1918 marked a line between exploited people and the exploiters. But things became acute when the latter’s offspring were treated as impure blood and denied many rights. Thousands were executed as they were in the possessing classes. This was a way to instil intimidation and terror.

The opening chapter of *1984* deals with the hate propaganda of the state. It was called ‘Two Minutes Hate’ or the Hate. It is a wild display of enmity to produce anger and fear (Reynolds, 2012). The face of Emmanuel Goldstein, the principal enemy of the state and his followers, would appear on the telescreen. He was the object of hate. On the screen, he would denounce the dictatorship and advocate freedom of speech and thought; all which are crimes according to the party. People show their hatred by shouting and throwing objects at him during these two minutes. To participate in the function and to hate the enemy of the state is obligatory. The Hate at the climax elevates Big Brother as the fearless protector of the state and promotes the slogan of the Ingsoc:

WAR IS PEACE,

FREEDOM IS SLAVERY

IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH

For the people of Oceania, the hate is an instinct conditioned by the authority. Their hate, as well as their love, is learned (Reynolds, 2012). The citizen of the One State doesn't get to choose whom to love and whom to hate. In the annual election in One State, we could observe this lack of choice. It is not just an election the name itself says the annual election of the Benefactor. There are no other candidates and no other choices. The decision has already been taken by the state in favour of you. "I see how everybody votes for the Benefactor and everybody sees how I vote for the Benefactor", the diary of D-503 says. The citizen takes pride in casting their vote publically. It becomes the fundamental property of a despotic regime. The Hate uses the method of mass psychology. The effective stage construction and the response of the people mesmerize everyone, including Winston (Thorp, 1984, p.10).

Sigmund Freud, in his *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, explores Gustave Le Bon's concept of crowd psychology. Crowd psychology effectively executes primarily by establishing binaries. The group is created with an individual's race, caste, nation, profession etc. They are forced to identify 'the other', existing outside their group. And this group is vulnerable since they are gullible and easily manipulative. Their feeling is identified as simple and exaggerated (Freud, 1990, p.15). For Le Bon, in order to influence these groups one does not require logical arguments but rather "he must paint in the most forcible colours, he must exaggerate, and he must repeat the same thing again and again" (Freud, 1990, p.16-17). The group demands its leaders to be powerful and violent. Any form of tolerance and kindness is regarded as mere weakness. Freud quotes Le Bon "when individuals come together in a group all their individual inhibitions fall away and all the cruel, brutal and destructive instincts, which lie dormant in individuals as relics of a primitive epoch, are stirred up to find free gratification" (Freud, 1990, p.17).

The need for such a strong disciplinarian, who can act mercilessly, is fulfilled by the two leaders of the novels, Big Brother and Benefactor. For the people of Oceania, Big Brother is a 'fearless protector', whose 'eyes always watching you and voice enveloping you'. The citizen puts their trust entirely upon him and justifies that it was his surveillance and control keeps them safe against the threats of 'the enemy', Goldstein. One State moves a step further and recognizes the Benefactor as a god-like figure. D-503 writes "It was He. He was descending from the heavens in His aero to be among us, the new Jehovah, as wise and cruel in his love as the Jehovah of the ancients" (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 135). While writing about Benefactor, D-503 is conscious to keep the capital letter (He, His etc.) like while writing about God. D-503 is also aware that his love is cruel but stays with the opinion that the cruelty of the leader keeps them secure.

Oceania identifies a vast number of imaginary enemies to create an unsecured group. All the other states, Brotherhood and even the *proles* take the turn to be enemies of the people and the state. In the beginning, Oceania was at war with Eurasia, but then they were recorded as an ally and proclaimed that Eastasia is the fundamental enemy to be defeated. The party was also successful in creating binaries between the *proles* and the other citizens. "the Party taught that the *proles* were natural inferiors who must be kept in subjugation, like animals, by the application of a few simple rules" (Orwell, 2011, p. 74). In *We*, this binary is made possible with the existence of people beyond the Wall. They are seen uncivilized and enemies of happiness. In short, the existence of governments in both the novels is explained with the exaggeration of enmity with the other group.

A conversation with Julia enables Winston to contemplate on different ways the state had to take to keep the fear and insecurities alive. He thinks:



There was a direct, intimate connection between chastity and political orthodoxy. For how could the fear, the hatred, and the lunatic credulity which the Party needed in its members be kept at the right pitch except by bottling down some powerful instinct and using it as a driving force? The sex impulse was dangerous to the Party, and the Party had turned it to account (Orwell, 2011, p. 139-140)

Julia adds that if we are happy inside, no one will get excited about Big Brother or Two Minutes Hate. Thus the best way for the state is to remove all the feelings from the people except fear and insecurity. Thus at the end of the novel O'Brien discloses that the state is dedicated to destroy all emotions except rage, fear and self-abasement

But in the future there will be no wives and no friends. Children will be taken from their mothers at birth, as one takes eggs from a hen. The sex instinct will be eradicated. Procreation will be an annual formality like the renewal of a ration card. We shall abolish the orgasm. Our neurologists are at work upon it now. There will be no loyalty, except loyalty towards the Party. There will be no love, except the love of Big Brother. There will be no laughter, except the laugh of triumph over a defeated enemy . . . But always . . . there will be the intoxication of power, constantly increasing and constantly growing subtler. Always, at every moment, there will be the thrill of victory, the sensation of trampling on an enemy who is helpless. If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face—for ever (Orwell, 2011, p. 280)

The One State was also successful in eliminating all the feelings that may force the citizen to rebel against the totalitarian governance. “Love and hunger rule the world...To rule the world, man has got to rule the rulers of the world” (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 21). The state thus conquers hunger and eliminates love. The feelings were mathematized. What remained was fear for the enemies of happiness and unconditional devotion towards the Benefactor.

The methods of terror used in these novels are typical to the methods of a totalitarian regime. One who doesn't fear is treated as the enemy, and they became examples for the rest. The punishment they had to endure increases the terror among the people. Disappearances and ‘vaporizations’ of persons in the novel work as a way to manage the internal dissidents and to sustain the terror.

In record 28, D-503 writes how the Guardians hunt people, who the state thinks connected with the revolutionary organization MEPHI. They have just vanished, and people stop talking about them after a couple of days. “Later that evening I learned they'd taken away three Numbers. Not that anyone talks about this, or anything that's going on. The talk is mostly about how barometer is falling and the weather changing” (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 162). Orwell writes about a similar incident in which one of his co-workers went missing. Some people commented on his absence, but the next day they all stopped worrying about him. Winston later found that all records regarding the missing person were wiped out: “Syme had ceased to exist: he had never existed” (Orwell, 2011, p. 154). People who are alleged to commit thought crime was arrested and they are vapourized in Orwell's terminology:

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 round 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, your one-time existence was denied and then forgotten. You were abolished, annihilated: VAPORIZED was the usual word (Orwell, 2011, p. 21).

The disappearance of people was directly connected with Winston. His entire family was vapourized. His father was disappeared, and Winston believed that his mother was expecting the same fate. She knew that it was only a matter of time. The despotic state never leaves any traces behind, and they never tolerate. Later Winston loses his mother and sister.

When he came back his mother had disappeared. This was already becoming normal at that time. Nothing was gone from the room except his mother and his sister. They had not taken any clothes, not even his mother's overcoat. To this day he did not know with any certainty that his mother was dead (Orwell, 2011, p. 170-171).

The persons who were arrested were not just vanished, but even their existence was removed from history. Their memories were erased. Each vanishing ignited the fear in people, and it became a warning for everyone, who has any intention to rebel. This constant terror, according to Hannah Arendt, keeps a totalitarian regime along with its spread of ideologies. She writes that during Mussolini's dictatorship thousands were arrested but the court acquitted most of the arrested. But when it comes to Nazi Germany, the arrested were convicted, and they were 'vapourized' from the surface of the Earth (Joshbehrens, 2015).

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn writes how the fear worked in Soviet Russia. A district Party Conference had been held in Moscow. The meeting was under a newly appointed secretary, who got the chance since the previous secretary was *arrested*. At the end of the meeting, a tribute to Stalin was staged, and everyone stood up and started applauding. It continued for minutes everyone was afraid to stop since the NKVD members are observing. Even the secretary was afraid to stop first. After a long eleven minutes, the director of the paper factory stopped the applause and sat down. Everyone else was relieved and stopped. Solzhenitsyn writes:

And that was how they went about eliminating them. That same night the factory director was arrested. They easily pasted ten years on him on the pretext of something quite different. But after he had signed Form 206, the final document of the interrogation, his interrogator reminded him: "Don't ever be the first 'to stop applauding!'" (Solzhenitsyn, 2007, p.69-70)

The objects that people should be afraid of are selected by the state. These 'dangers' are then magnified and exaggerated by constantly reminding the people about the potential dangers. This state injected hate or fear flows "like an electric current" in a group, according to Winston. *1984* and *We* take a further step and explain the next level of political fear, in which the citizen had to fear the state itself. And this fear of the state gives an easy passage for the despotic regime to establish and nourish itself.

### **Manipulating Past to Control the History**

From the totalitarian point of view history is something to be created rather than learned. A totalitarian state is in effect a theocracy, and its ruling caste, in order to keep its position, has to be thought of as infallible. But since, in practice, no one is

infallible, it is frequently necessary to rearrange past events in order to show that this or that mistake was not made, or that this or that imaginary triumph actually happened. Then again, every major change in policy demands a corresponding change of doctrine and a revelation of prominent historical figure (Orwell, 1970, p.330)

One of the first steps that a despotic regime will take is the rewriting of history. Its leaders will consciously falsify historical events and uphold certain figures or events as the true history. Any records that spread lights on the negative sides of the party will be wiped out and replaced with new a one. The best way to implement this change is to replace the entire educational system and teach the newly created history to the children. Gregory Claeys writes that during the Stalin period, the party began steps to rewrite history. The primary target for manipulation was the revolution itself. Everything that could give any hints about the history of the revolution, like books, artefacts etc., were disappeared (Claeys, 2017, p.142).

A nation dedicated to be a superpower will try to create headlines all over the world and will cover up any news that might tarnish its face and the newly created (falsified) history. Any protest against the state will be suppressed. P.Sachidanadan (Anand) in his book *Sthaanam Thettiya Vasthu (Misplaced Object)* shares such an incident that took place in Soviet Russia. When Édouard Herriot, a French socialist leader, visited the Soviet Union, the government staged multiple events and faked the real status of the then Russia so Herriot would make a report in favour of the government. To examine the freedom of religion granted in the Soviet Union Herriot had to visit Saint Sophia Cathedral in Kiev. But it was turned into a beer brewery by then. But it was soon changed into a 'practicing church'. The local party leader acted as the priest. The members of the cultural brigade of the party, who are

dedicated to staging plays against religion, and religious believers, became believers. Herriot could even see beggars around the church. Anand writes that the ability of the propagandists to create, fake and change sets is greater than that of an art director. They can rewrite history, wipe out real incidents, and make common people anti-nationals ( Anand, 2012,p. 91-93).

The state, Oceania is built and exists by continuous revision of history. In Oceania, all the records since the Revolution undergo constant changes. Most of the generation who witnessed it was killed during the great purge. The others were threatened to keep their mouths shut. For Orwell, they were forced into intellectual surrender (Orwell, 2011, p. 90). Any buildings or products, which are useful, is claimed to be built after the Revolution, while all the other remains were ascribed to a period before revolution.

Winston Smith works in the records department of the Ministry of Truth and entitled to destruct all documents, including newspapers and photographs that did not match the party's ideology. He also removes all the pieces of evidence of the existence of persons, whom the party had 'taken care of', to make them unperson. Winston agrees on the fact that if the party can interfere with the past and control, it is more petrifying than death or torture. Yet, he has to do the job as if it were the duty to Oceania. The party slogan reads "Who controls the past controls the future: who controls the present controls the past" (Orwell, 2011, p. 37). The lie introduced by the party pass into the people and becomes the truth.

The existence of thousands of openings in the wall called memory holes is a symbol of the manipulation of documents. All documents, ready for destruction, is thrown into this hole and it will be burned into ashes by a furnace located somewhere in the building. Memory holes burn Oceania's history into ashes. The people are forced to destroy their history with their own hands. And it is an everlasting process. Winston writes:

Day by day and almost minute by minute the past was brought up to date. In this way every prediction made by the Party could be shown by documentary evidence to have been correct, nor was any item of news, or any expression of opinion, which conflicted with the needs of the moment, ever allowed to remain on record. All history was a palimpsest, scraped clean and reinscribed exactly as often as was necessary...Books, also, were recalled and rewritten again and again, and were invariably reissued without any admission that any alteration had been made (Orwell, 2011, p. 42-43)

Emmanuel Goldstein explains in his book why Oceania repeatedly tampers with history. For him, it has two purposes: precautionary and safeguarding the infallibility of the party. The first purpose is to deny the citizen any possibility to compare their life with that of the past. Since he or she is denied any opportunity to know the outside world and the past, they tolerate the present. The second purpose is the pivotal one. The party is infallible, and any change in policy or any mistake in its prediction is a symbol of weakness, which the Ingsoc can never afford. If the party says the Eastasia is the enemy, the historians had to create that Oceania has always been at war with Eastasia. The facts, which say the opposite, must be rewritten. Thus the Ministry of Truth manipulates history every day to preserve the god-like character of the party and Big Brother.

To continue in rule, the party must be capable to ‘dislocate the sense of reality’. The party must learn from past mistakes, but these mistakes must be wiped out from the texts in order to protect its infallibility. In *1984*, history is mutable; it can be silenced. This mutability is the significant precept of the Ingsoc. History exists in records and memories of the people. “The past is whatever the records and the memories agree upon” (Orwell, 2011, p. 222).

By controlling the records as well as the minds of its people, party always acts as the custodian of the absolute truth.

To control the minds of its citizen, Oceania invented doublethink. “Doublethink means the power of holding two contradictory beliefs in one’s mind simultaneously, and accepting both of them” (Orwell, 2011, p. 222). The practice of doublethink is conscious and unconscious at the same time. It should be conscious to attain precision and unconscious to avoid guilt feeling for falsification. It helps one to tell lies consciously while frankly believing in them and to erase the past events while knowing the real history. The citizen gives passive permission to tamper even with their memory. This passiveness is the silent nod to the mechanisation of life.

Apart from rewriting the past, a despotic regime will also create its own heroes. Certain personalities will be either promoted or invented in the course of history. These heroes will be an ideal example of how a citizen should live in the regime. Winston shares the example of Comrade Ogilvy. Comrade Ogilvy is a model every party member should emulate. His childhood stories and struggles are popular. He denied toys at the age of three and accepted the model of a machine gun and joined the spies at six. He, at the age of eleven, reported his uncle to the Thought Police. Comrade Ogilvy was a non-smoker and spent most of his recreation time in the gymnasium. He never married, since he is devoted to serving the state. Since an employee of the Ministry of Truth, Winston knows that the character Comrade Ogilvy is an imaginary person created by the state. The forgery made to establish him in the past will be forgotten, and Comrade Ogilvy will be a real person, with records and history.

Winston tells Julia the story of Jones, Aaronson and Rutherford, who were the leaders of the Revolution. When Big Brother came into force, they were arrested. The party published their confession, and they were released



only to be arrested later. All three were executed by imposing new charges. Winston had the records in his hand before eliminating it, which proves that all their confessions were lies created by the party. Winston admits that not even a single true record exists about the Revolution or about the years before Revolution:

Every record has been destroyed or falsified, every book has been rewritten, every picture has been repainted, every statue and street and building has been renamed, every date has been altered. And that process is continuing day by day and minute by minute. History has stopped. Nothing exists except an endless present in which the Party is always right (Orwell, 2011, p. 162).

Winston is aware of the prominence of history. Oceania, by denying history to its citizens, denies its roots. He believes that to regain the past is more important than the death of Big Brother. When O' Brien asks him to toast the glass, Winston toast for the past, not for the future or even humanity.

In *We*, the One State uses a propaganda war to distort the past. Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell use the term anachronistic artefacts to explain the effect of propaganda. To understand One State's projection of the past to its citizens, this concept is useful. Even after decades of the brutalities of the Second World War, certain artefacts remain and being circulated in the form of films, posters etc. Hollywood films like *Saving Private Ryan* (1998), *Pearl Harbor* (2001) *Captain America* (2011) etc. portray enemies always in the limelight with a negative shade. During the Cold War, the Communist is perceived as enemies. The spy and war movies produced during these days have communists as the villains (e.g. James Bond movies). But in recent movies, the Russians are pictured in the form of a dangerous mafia, who are dangerous to the safety of the entire world (Jowett and O'Donnell, 2015,

p.236). Films such as *Eastern Promises* (2007), *John Wick* (2014), *The Equalizer* (2014) etc. follow this path. The use of such artefacts is called anachronistic artefacts, they are out of place, but the impact it creates through different popular cultures is immeasurable. In *One State*, the Ancient House is being kept as a storehouse of such anachronistic artefacts. The remains retained in this house shed light on the past, which is already manipulated by the state.

In *We*, the One State doesn't have to change the past frequently. The Numbers were already brainwashed about the history. The revolution took place before a few centuries, and the existence of anyone who witnessed it was impossible. The state purportedly kept certain artefacts and pieces of information that might shed light to the past. These artefacts have stories, stories devised by the state historians, which belittle the ancients. The One State exists outside the restraints of memory (Rochtchina, 2012, p.6). The ancients were considered to be absurd and led a life without order and reason. D-503 is shocked while learning that the ancients followed Kant over Taylor.

D-503 writes in his diary that "all human history, as far back as we know it, is the history of moving from nomadic life to a more settled way of life" (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 11). He proposes that life the Numbers live is the perfect one. The historians of the One State were successful in creating a past, which is even unimaginable for the Numbers. The elections of the past were disorderly and unorganized (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 132), sexual life was totally unscientific, and childbearing was compared to that of animals (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 14). Watching the small beds at the Ancient House D-503 realizes with a shock that the children were private property for the ancient people. For him, family life in the past was 'idiotic and wasteful expense of energy' (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 28).

The One State has only a single paper, the State Gazette, which is owned and operated by the state. The Numbers had to believe whatever the news the State Gazette serves them every day. No one has access to any other news. Even though the process of rewriting history is not mentioned in the book, in the end, Zamyatin leaves a clue. When the glimpses of a revolution had begun in the One State by the Mephi, the State Gazette reported, “The historians of One State are seeking to resign rather than record certain shameful events (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 172). Thus events that are considered shameful were not recorded. All the movements in the past against the Benefactor and the records of the heretics and Scythians were overlooked by the historians.

To cover up the incapability of the governance, the leaders in a despotic state would blame the past, leaders from the past or certain group, who stood against them in the past. The foundation of Nazi propaganda was Anti- Semitism. The Nazi’s indicted the Jews for everything that was wrong with Germany (Jowett and O’Donnell, 2015, p.270). To justify these allegations, they transformed the education policy of the state. The children were taught pseudo history, which demoralize certain events and personalities and elevated or created a certain part of the past, which can fit the current propaganda campaign. These selected historical facts take away the opportunities in knowing the real history of the state. The thought process of a child is designed and monitored by the state. To eradicate the possibility of subjective thoughts while teaching, the One State uses robotic teachers in the classroom (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 37).

In Oceania, an organisation called the Spies is formed to chain the behaviour of the children. Their brain is programmed incompatible with the party’s propaganda so that they can remain and live like an obedient robot. The Spies “produced in them no tendency whatever to rebel against the

discipline of the Party. On the contrary, they adored the Party and everything connected with it” (Orwell, 2011, p. 27). Winton writes that the parents are always afraid of their children since they knew that education had turned their children to be a mere machine, awaiting an order from the master to execute.

Cicero argued that “to remain ignorant of what occurred before you were born is to remain always a child” (McCartney, 2011). It is believed that the history of an individual or a society or a nation is the story of identity. To deny history is to deny the identity. This elimination of history is a way of dehumanization in both novels. By writing a diary and by trying to make contact with the history of their world, the characters are resisting the state-sanctioned dehumanization (Lacroix, 2018). History also provides alternatives in thinking, which leads to debates and dissents. The better way to stop such creation of ideas is to deny the past and to make the people homogeneous. Any attempt to seek the past in Oceania is made impossible by Doublethink, Newspeak.

D-503’s and Winston’s entrance into dissent is assisted by their contact with the past. Both of them embrace their identity and the plurality of the world by this contact with the ‘real history’. The discovery of the people beyond the Green Wall is literally D-503’s discovery of his own individuality other than ascribed by the One State. The identification of their uniqueness in the world prompted them to break the yoke of dehumanization inflicted upon them for ages.

### **Taylorism as a Tool to impose Mechanization**

Taylorism is the scientific management method advocated by Frederick Winslow Taylor to promote assembly line production, expanding the idea of updating machines to the body of the workers (Banerjee, 2012, p.64). To increase productivity, he planned to break the manufacturing

process into different parts. Jobs of the workers are assigned by the management and he or she should follow the exact method of work planned by the management. His concept then becomes more problematic. For him to do certain manual works, people with intelligence should be avoided. A worker who can blindly follow the instructions given is the best option. He writes in *The Principles of Scientific Management*:

Now one of the very first requirements for a man who is fit to handle pig iron as a regular occupation is that he shall be so stupid and so phlegmatic that he more nearly resembles in his mental make-up the ox than any other type. The man who is mentally alert and intelligent is for this very reason entirely unsuited to what would, for him, be the grinding monotony of work of this character...and he must consequently be trained by a man more intelligent than himself into the habit of working in accordance with the laws of this science before he can be successful (Taylor, 1911).

Vladimir Lenin in his article *Taylor's System: The Enslavement of Man to the Machine* (1914) came down heavily on Taylorism saying it is the last word of capitalism (Sochor, 1981, p. 248). However, after four years, in his *The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government* (1918), he showed a positive approach to it.

The possibility of building socialism depends exactly upon our success in combining the Soviet power and the Soviet organisation of administration with the up-to-date achievements of capitalism. We must organise in Russia the study and teaching of the Taylor system and systematically try it out and adapt it to our own ends (Lenin, 1918).

H. G. Wells commented after an interview with Lenin that “Lenin, who like an orthodox Marxist denounces all Utopians, has at last succumbed to a Utopia, the Utopia of the electricians” (Khayati, 2013). The Soviets saw technology as the progressive source and modelled America as the emblem of modernity. The Soviets believed that this technology would transform their nation into a modern culture (Andrews, 2003, p.79). Lenin got the support from Trotsky and Taylorism blended with Fordism was eventually introduced in Russia. This management system, according to Taylor, could also be introduced into any form of human activity.

For Zamyatin, the adoption of Taylorism in Russia precipitated the mechanisation of human beings. He took it as the fundamental principle of the One State in *We*. The Benefactor and Big Brother efficiently adopt such management systems to control the people. It is also believed that the title of the work, *We*, and its main theme of mechanomorphism (the idea that machines will become the measure of all things and the model for man to imitate and emulate) is influenced from Aleksei Gastev, the chief proponent of Taylorism in the Soviet Union. As the director of the Central Institute of Labour, Gastev planned to bring workers acting like a machine. The workers were given identical uniforms, and they were forced to march in columns. Their orders were given by machines. To get used to the mechanical rhythm of the machine, the tools were attached to the worker and the machine together. He even proposed to address the workers such as A, B, C or O, 325. 075 etc. These workers thus would shrink into ‘proletarian units’ of mechanized collectivism replacing individuality (Figs, 1996, p. 744).

The title of Zamyatin’s novel refers to this collectivism. The citizens are called ‘we’ instead of ‘I’. Not even a single citizen holds a name, except Big Brother. The citizens have numbers to identify like O-90, R-13 etc. The

title of the diary of D-503 is *We*. He knows that there is no role for 'I' in the One State. He writes ' I shall attempt nothing more than to note down what I see, what I think- or to be more exact, what we think' (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 4). He once says to I-330 “you see? Even thoughts. That is because no one is one but only one of. We are so identical...” (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 8). Ten numbers are viewed as one hundred-millionth part of the mass of the One State, not just as ten individual numbers. So there is no individuality. Every number is part of the One State. No one has got a personal identity or value apart from being part of a member of the state. Their value is always connected to the whole value of the entire state. Numbers are parts and the One State is the whole.

One state views Taylor as a prophet, who foreseen centuries ahead. Each and every second of a day is planned, and the Numbers follow The Table, which is the pulse of the state. The Table is dedicated to turning human beings into Numbers. A Number is always proud to be called a machine. They live like a machine since their thoughts and movements are pre-planned and executed by the Table. The mechanical way of life of a Number is written by D-503 as:

Every morning, with six-wheeled precision, at the very same hour and the very same minute, we get up, millions of us, as though we are one. At the very same hour, millions of us as one, we start to work. Later millions of us as one, we stop. And like one body with million hands, at one and the same second according to the Table, we lift the spoon to our lips. And at one and the same second we leave for a stroll and go to the auditorium, to the hall for the Taylor exercise, and then to bed. (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 13)

No one is authorized to break away from these set schedules. The approved number of chews while taking food is fifty. The Numbers are not worried about their lack of freedom to choose, and they wonder how life is possible without the strict rules of the Table of Hours.

The Table of Hours calculates that one day consists of 86,4000 seconds. All of these seconds of a single day should be planned. D-503 finds that this lack of planning made the life of primitive human beings a failure. A life without obligatory walks, without precisely established mealtimes, getting up and going to bed whenever it pleased them...is unbelievable and irrational for the Numbers. For D-503 living like this without the guidance of the Table, is a murder, a capital crime. The rooms of every Numbers are prefixed. D-503 observes the room of R-13:

To look at it, you'd think everything was just exactly my place. Same Table on the wall, and the armchairs, table, chest, bed all made with the same glass. But R had hardly entered before he moved one of the easy chairs, then the other, and the planes were dislocated, everything slipped out of the prescribed correlation and became non – Euclidian. R will never change, never. In Taylor and in math he is always at the bottom of the class. (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 41)

Extreme productive proficiency is the goal for the promotion of life in *We*. While building the Integral a comment made by D-503 encapsulates the entire idea of mechanomorphism, the urge for becoming one with the machine:

I watched the men below, how they would bent over, straighten up, turn around, all in accordance with Taylor, smoothly and quickly, keeping in time, like the levers of a single immense



machine...I watched the gigantic cranes, made of clear glass, slowly rolling along glass rails and, just like the men, obediently turn, bend, and insert cargo into the innards of the Integral. They were the same, all one: humanized, perfect men (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 81).

The margin between people and machines has vanished, and they are seen as one. The only thing that separates them will be the difference in productivity. It is the value system promoted by Taylor and mechanomorphism in dystopian science fiction works.

To promote mechanization, the authority will promote human artifice. Such an artificial observation would extinguish creativity in human beings. This lack of creativity, according to Hannah Arendt, will result in uprootedness and creation of a superfluous community. The foremost standards in such a society are valued by labour. Labouring turns out to be the epitome of life. The value system which encourages human beings to compare themselves with machine denies them the status of *homo faber* (concept elevates the capacity of persons to decide their future). They are tagged as an *animal laborans* (Arendt, 1958, p.475). *Animal laborans* see labour as an end in itself ( Sennett, 2009, p.6). They are not concerned about any questions that might emanate during their work. By suppressing questions and blindly performing assigned works, they become perfect machines or programmed robots.

At the end of *We*, the One State takes measures to wipe out the creativity in Numbers. Imagination is identified as sickness, and all Numbers are ordered to submit themselves for the operation to remove it. The writing of D-503 is a proof of this sickness. And the great operation will elevate them to the status of a machine. By becoming like a machine, they attain perfection (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 173). This is a nightmare Zamyatin always had. He was

afraid that the extreme form of Taylorism would make people ‘fail-safe pieces of hardware’ (Zamyatin, 1993, p. xviii).

The abolition of individuality for the sake of collectivism as seen in *We* is also evident in *1984*. During the torture, O’Brien whispers to Winston that he can save Winston and make him perfect (Orwell, 2011, p. 256). The perfection that O’Brien offers is achievable only by the destruction of free thought and complete submission to the state machine. The concept of perfection is similar in both One State and Oceania. Perfection here means mechanical perfection, life on the path drawn by the state. Any misstep caused by personal choice is a lack of perfection. Such mistakes will never happen in a programmed machine. They are fail-proof and perfect. Winston, along with the citizen of Oceania, is invited into this machine perfection.

One of the primary steps that the One State adopted to dehumanize the people is removing their names. Oceania also had this approach, although the people had names in it. Everyone is stigmatized with a number, by which the state identifies them. 6079 is the number Winston possessed. The telescreen addresses him by this number. Oceanians are mere numbers, cogs in the giant machine of Big Brother. To remove individuality, private property is abolished. No one should possess anything. Everything belongs to the Party since it controls everything. Individual ownership is obliterated for the sake of collective ownership.

O’Brien inculcates Winston that an individual has power. “The individual only has power in so far as he ceases to be an individual” (Orwell, 2011, p. 276). The fundamental dictum of the Party is that “Freedom is Slavery”. The need for freedom is an attempt to satisfy the individuality in people and all individuals die. To avoid this curse i.e. death, the Party offers a solution, the destruction of individuality. By submitting completely to the

Party, everyone lives through the Party, since it is eternal as Big Brother professes. O'Brien adds:

You are thinking that I talk of power, and yet I am not even able to prevent the decay of my own body. Can you not understand, Winston, that the individual is only a cell? The weariness of the cell is the vigour of the organism. Do you die when you cut your fingernails? (Orwell, 2011, p. 276).

To stay submitted to the Party is what keeps the people alive according to this conversation. Everyone is destined to be a small destructible piece of the machine, not an independent one.

For O'Brien, the reason why Winston had to be in Room 101 is that he chooses to be insane. The expense of sanity in Oceania is total submission to the Party. But by trying to be an independent individual with his own thoughts and wishes, he opted to embrace the insanity. O'Brien negates Winston's search for reality because reality can be achieved only by being a part of the Party, since reality is what the Party holds. What Winston needs to do to achieve sanity or perfection is a complete self-destruction.

In One State when an explosion from the Integral kills a dozen Numbers, no one feels any pain. When the Thought Police arrest and vaporize Oceanians, their friends and co-workers are indifferent to it. No one is important; everyone is just replaceable parts. This is how mechanization works in both worlds. People are forced to submit themselves to the powerful, and this submission would take away their ability to descend and even raise their voices when persons around them are vaporized for failing to be 'perfect machines'.

## **Destruction of Personal life**

Totalitarian government, like all tyrannies, certainly could not exist without destroying the public realm of life, that is, without destroying, by isolating men, their political capacities. But totalitarian domination as a form of government is new in that it is not content with this isolation and destroys private life as well. It bases itself on loneliness, on the experience of not belonging to the world at all, which is among the most radical and desperate experiences of man. (Arendt, 1985, p.475)

Hannah Arendt observes that psychological capitulation can be inflicted only upon persons who are isolated in society. The state brings forth isolation by destroying the roots of relationships. People approach the world artificially due to this isolation. This artificiality terminates human creativity, which, according to Arendt, is the force that helps people to add something to the world. Human creativity finds them a unique place in the universe. But by denying this opportunity to be creative, to be human and cursed to be machine-like, isolation becomes insufferable. A regime dedicated to turning its people machine-like denies the room for private life.

One of the crucial ways to mechanize the Numbers is the eradication of personal love and abolition of the family. The sexual lives of the Numbers are controlled by the state machinery. The principle behind the relationship between a male and a female number is 'any number has the right to access to any other number as sexual product' (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 22). Personal love is not promoted since no Numbers have individuality and everyone is treated alike, like identical machines produced in a single factory.

Any Number has the right of access to any other Number as sexual product. The rest is a purely technical matter. They give

you a careful going over in the Sexual Bureau labs and determine the exact content of the sexual hormones in your blood and work out your correct Table of Sex Days. Then you fill out a declaration that on your days you'd like to make use of Number (or Numbers) so-and-so and they hand you the corresponding book of tickets (pink). And that's it. (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 22)

Since every Number is accessible to any other Number, the state believes that there is no room for jealousy. Instead of developing the personal emotions, these prefixed Table of Sex Days wiped out every chance of personal feelings or emotions.

The concept of family does not exist in the One state, because every single family is a 'whole' in itself. To dehumanize and impersonalize the Numbers, the family is taken out of the state. One state was afraid that the formation that a family gives to its children might mislead the entire society. The children were not the property of the Numbers. They belong to the state. While visiting the Ancient House with I-330, they walked through a room containing small beds for children. D-503 exclaims then that "children were also private property in that era" ((Zamyatin, 1993, p. 28). The children were trained and nourished under the guidance of the state law.

This is probably like what a women feels when she first senses in her the pulse of a new little person, still tiny and blind. It's me, and at the same time it's not me. And for long months to come she will have to nourish it with her own juice, her own blood, and then – tear it painfully out of herself and lay it at the feet of One state (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 4)

Decided to rebel against these subjugations, O-90 went out of the One

state to deliver her child. She chooses to live outside the Green Wall with her child. D-503, at the end of the novel realizes that the State or the Numbers do not care about his feelings and emotions and he desperately wishes to have a mother.

If only I had a mother, the way the ancients had. I mean *my own* mother. And if for her I could be – not the builder of the Integral, and not Number D -503, and not a molecule of One State, but just a piece of humanity, a piece of her own self – trampled, crushed, outcast... And suppose I do the nailing or they nail me – maybe that's all the same – but she would hear me, she would hear what no one else hears, and her old lips, her old wrinkled lips (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 208-209)

D-503 recognizes at last that Numbers are not just machines. They have feelings and emotions. He finds that there is no one in his society, to lend an ear to his feelings. Thus he needs a personal mother to hear and love him. He was crying while thinking about it. Yet he could not but opt for the Great Operation, which would again make him a machine.

In 1984, sexual life itself is perceived as a form of rebellion. “Their embrace had been a battle, the climax a victory. It was a blow struck against the Party. It was a political act” (Orwell, 2011, p. 116). For Julia, it's a weapon against the totalitarian regime. Oceanians can marry only with the permission of the state and they will deny the permission if the partners were seemed attracted to one another. Love or physical pleasures in marriage had to be forbidden. In Oceania, the sole purpose of marriage is procreation. The state-controlled relationship prevented families from developing loyalties and trust. Winston had a wife, Katherine. From the memories of Winston, it is evident that they were never really attracted to each other and never loved each other. The sexual act between them was called their duty to the party

(Orwell, 2011, p. 71). This was the condition of marriage in Oceania. By joining such indifferent couples, the party eradicates pleasures from sexual affairs. If someone decides to go to a prostitute, the punishment was five-year imprisonment in a labour camp.

Artificial insemination has to be used to produce children, and they shall be admitted to the institution governed by the Party. Children's growth and development was planned by the state. This was not always successful. To tackle the situation, the Party played another trick. Children stayed with the parents, but they were trained to spy on the parents. They were encouraged to report the mistakes done by their parents. Each family in Oceania was turned into prison since the Party was successful in destroying the trust between the family members.

Two terms related to sex in Newspeak conveys the status of sexual life in Oceania, they are SEXCRIME and GOODSEX. The former includes adultery and homosexuality. But even normal intercourse was labelled as SEXCRIME. The sexual relationship between approved members only for procreation is GOODSEX. It is also called chastity. The state was so keen on denying physical pleasures to women (Orwell, 2011, p. 319). Julia's rebellion gains importance in this context.

In both novels, suppression of sexual traits is an inevitable tool of mechanization. The lead women characters in the novels, I-330 and Julia, leads the rebellion against this subjugation. They do this by engaging in relationships denied by the regime. Winston says that "The sexual act, successfully performed, was rebellion". The relationships between Winston and Julia in *1984* and between D-503 and I-330 in *We*, thus had to be seen as a revolution against their respective governments. By destructing family and personal life, both the states create people with uprootedness and superfluousness. This superfluousness, for Arendt, is the boon for

imperialism. She adds that “To be uprooted means to have no place in the world, recognized and guaranteed by others; to be superfluous means not to belong to the world at all” (Arendt, 1985, p.475).

### **Non Freedom = Happiness**

What the priest in the purple cassock hates most of all is the heretic who does not recognize his exclusive right to bind and to permit.... And what every philistine hate most of all is the rebel who dares to think differently from him. Hatred of freedom is the surest symptom of this deadly disease, philistinism (Zamyatin, 1970, p.23)

One state is a mathematical perfect society that does not give freedom to its members. Numbers venerate the idea of nonfreedom. For D-503 nonfreedom creates happiness and freedom loses it. He asks why the dance is beautiful, and the answer is "because it is nonfree movement". The fundamental significance of dance lies precisely in its aesthetic subjugation, its ideal nonfreedom. He adds that from ancient days itself, the instinct of nonfreedom has been an organic part of man. Liberation is a crime, and freedom and criminality are closely connected as the movement of an aero and its velocity (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 36). When the velocity of an aero is reduced to 0, it is not in motion. Thus when a man's freedom is reduced to 0, he commits no crimes. As far as the One State is concerned to eliminate the crimes in a community, you have to take away their freedom.

The concept of paradise in the novel poses the clash between freedom and happiness. Adam and Eve were offered a choice: happiness without freedom or freedom without happiness. They choose freedom. Because of this choice, D-503 considers them as idiots since he thinks that, the choice they made is the reason why the world was so miserable. It was the Devil who



tempted them to choose freedom. Thus by eliminating freedom, One State not only bring back the happiness or paradise but also helped God finally to overcome the Devil (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 61). The Benefactor explains to D-503 that the One State is dedicated to removing all the unwanted elements from the people. "Remember in paradise they lost all knowledge of desires, pity, love - they are the blessed, with their imaginations surgically removed (the only reason why they are blessed)—angels, the slaves of God," he says (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 207). Oceania is also aiming for such a state, where loyalty between people, their laughter, love, arts and literature etc. are eliminated to create a paradise. There will be no enjoyment of life but only the imposition of power by the Party (Orwell, 2011, p. 280)

In Oceania, the choice for the people was between freedom and happiness. Since the state had already suppressed the need for freedom, people opted for happiness (Orwell, 2011, p. 276). But Winston was well aware that the most valuable option was freedom. If the freedom to say two and two makes four is granted, all other things would follow, he wrote in his diary. The primary motive of the rebellion of Julia was also the denial of freedom. The introduction of Newspeak is primarily for the suppression of the freedom of thought. These words curtailed people's freedom to express their ideas. It also imposed the power of the state in the thinking process and communication.

The Newspeak word 'blackwhite' can be taken as an example. Just like all other Newspeak words, it holds a contradiction. The word explains the disposition of the members to accept the party order that black is white, even while knowing that black is black. The people in Oceania had to compromise their freedom to believe in anything because happiness can only be enjoyed by sacrificing their freedom.

"The Three on Leave" is a popular story in the One State. This story

tells how three Numbers, as an experiment, were given leave from work for a whole month. They were allowed to do as they like and go where they like to go. So freedom is given to the Numbers. The Numbers hung around the place where they usually worked and kept on looking inside with starved eyes. They would dawdle around the square and for hours... After ten days of this, they finally could not take it any longer. They all joined hands, went into the water and in step with the march, went in deep and deeper until the water put an end to their torment...( Zamyatin, 1993, p. 190). This might be a created story to convince the Numbers that freedom always leads to disaster and mechanical life guided by the Table of Hours gives happiness.

The mechanical life prevailed in One State is sanctioned by the Number's attraction to the nonfreedom. Throughout the book, D-503 is almost always conscious of a desire to support the heavily regimented or mechanical structure of life in the United State, on the grounds that the life developed there is most consistent with reason and economy (Mccarthy, 1984, p.123). D-503's response to the machine and its preordained process give insight into the success of the state in infiltrating the minds of the people:

Just this morning I was at the hangar where the Integral is being built – and suddenly I caught sight of the equipment: the regulator globes, their eyes closed, oblivious, were twirling around; the cranks were glistening and bending to the left and right; the balance beam was proudly heaving its shoulders; the bit of the router was squatting athletically to the beat of some unheard music. I suddenly saw the whole beauty of this grandiose mechanical ballet, flooded with the light of the lovely blue-eyed sun. (Zamyatin, 1993, p .5-6)

This leaning towards modern technology designates D-503's relationship to the One State. The promotion of nonfreedom is received by the entire state. There are some outbreaks and glimpses of a revolution demanding individual

freedom, but this "is only a case of small parts breaking; these may easily be repaired without stopping the eternal great march of the whole machine".

This nonfreedom is imposed in Oceania in the name of discipline. Winston and Julia were arrested by O'Brien because they lack self-discipline. The remedy is the act of submission to the Party. O'Brien begins the torture. Winston had to admit to the ideology of the Party. If the Party says two plus two is five, the citizen would have to admit it. O'Brien says: " Sometimes they are five. Sometimes they are three. Sometimes they are all of them at once. You must try harder. It is not easy to become sane" (Orwell, 2011, p. 268). The price of sanity in Oceania is the acceptance of nonfreedom.

During the torture, O'Brien divulges that all these subjugations, destruction of freedom and individuality etc. are for the Party. And the Party is interested only in power. Individuals do not have power; they can be part of the power if they decided to stick together with the Party. The slogan of the Ingsoc is " Freedom is Slavery". It holds another meaning that slavery is freedom. By becoming slaves to the Party, the individuals get 'freedom'. O'Brien mentions that if anyone has decided to stand alone, upholding their freedom, they are doomed to fail. Only by total submission and obliteration of individuality, he/she can be powerful.

In *We*, the people of the One state used to identify themselves with the part of the machine. The preordained acts of the machine are taken as freedom. The individuality and differences in thought and acts were considered as the enemy of happiness. For Oceanians, the concept of freedom itself is equal to slavery. Total denial of individuality and submission to the Party brings them the 'freedom'. All other attempts are offences demanding torture. All of them in both the novels are willing to accept the machine qualities. Happiness can be brought only by blindly following the sets of rules already decided by the states. The nonfreedom programmed in a machine

brings its perfection. And the denial of individuality is the price for the perfection of humanity in dystopian worlds.

### **Surveillance**

Trust—the chief factor in a calm and satisfying life, the definitive quality of utopia— was almost entirely eradicated. ‘The loss of mutual trust is the first sign of the atomization of society in dictatorships of our type, and that is just what our leaders wanted’ (Nadezhda Mandelstam) (Claeys, 2017, p.165)

The mechanization of society can be successfully introduced only by the destruction of trust. This loss of trust paves the way for constant surveillance of the people. The state views everyone, including its citizens as potential threats. Russian writer Nadezhda Mandelstam writes that people in Soviet Russia had learned to control even their private talks since they were aware that they were being watched and heard by the state. British historian Orlando Figes called Soviet Russia ‘a nation of whisperers’ (Claeys, 2017, p167). This surveillance eventually led to the loss of trust between people. Everyone was suspicious about their friends and neighbours, hoping that anyone would be an informer of the state in disguise.

Michel Foucault, in his *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, explains Jeremy Bentham’s concept of Panopticon. Panopticon is a type of building in which prisoners are kept under strict surveillance. Each prisoner is kept in separate cells with walls dividing one another. The prisoners are seen by the guard who is placed at a centre tower, but he is not seen. It acts as a laboratory of power. This state of panopticism is made possible by modern society through constant surveillance. Without any prison, the modern despotic regime, impose sets of behaviour by making them feel that they are always under the radar of those who have the power. This surveillance gives

‘power of mind over mind (Foucault, 1995, p.206). For Bentham, the power in this situation is both visible and unverifiable.

Visible: the inmate will constantly have before his eyes the tall outline of the central tower from which he is spied upon.

Unverifiable: 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, 1995, p.201)

Bentham’s concept of surveillance finds its best place in *1984*. Entire Oceania is a prison, a panopticon. The posters with Big Brother’s face is pasted everywhere with the caption BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU, beneath it. The people feel they are always under the eyes of Big Brother. They are all visible, always. And Big brother and his power are unverifiable since nobody is aware when they are getting watched and listened. The rooms of the people are observed with a telescreen mounted on the wall. It can never be switched off. Any sound made in the room is picked up by the telescreen.

There was of course no way of knowing whether 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. But at any rate they could plug in your wire whenever they wanted to. You had to live -- did live, from habit that became instinct -- in the assumption that every sound you made was overheard, and, except in darkness, every movement scrutinized (Orwell, 2011, p. 4-5).

The surveillance gives the state psychological dominance over the people. ‘The watched’ always have to pretend to live the way the state wants them to live. And this pretending gradually takes away all the freedom and

spontaneity. The life in Oceania, as we can observe, becomes mechanical and they live like robots since they all 'act' even in their private space, in front of the telescreen. The face of Big Brother and the party slogan is imprinted everywhere, on coins, stamps, books, on cigarette packs etc. It doesn't matter whether one is working or sleeping, outside or indoor, there is no escape from the eyes of the power.

A party member of Ingsoc lives and dies subjected to this mass surveillance. This is justified saying that it would help the party members to prevent crimes that they might commit in the future (Orwell, 2011, p. 220). The only place which is surveillance-free is that of the *proles* because the party believes that they are not capable of organizing a rebellion. In *The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism*, it is written that the *proles* can be given intellectual freedom since they do not have intellect. But the case of a party member is different they do not have freedom. They shall be subjected to inspection at any time.

His friendships, his relaxations, his behaviour towards his wife and children, the expression of his face when he is alone, the words he mutters in sleep, even the characteristic movements of his body, are all jealously scrutinized. Not only any actual misdemeanour, but any eccentricity, however small, any change of habits, any nervous mannerism that could possibly be the symptom of an inner struggle, is certain to be detected. He has no freedom of choice in any direction whatever (Orwell, 2011, p. 219).

To their shock, Winston and Julia discover that even the room they had above the antique shop had a telescreen behind the wall. Thus even the area of *proles* was being observed by the thought police. Winston later realizes that people surrounding him were also part of the Thought Police. Mr.

Charrington, the owner of the second-hand shop, who gave Winston the blank book and the glass paperweight, was an agent entrusted to watch Winston and Julia. Even their sexual life was spied and reported by him.

O'Brien, whom Winston thought as a powerful leader of the Brotherhood, turns out to be an inner party member. He leads the torturing of Winston and admits that he was pretending to be on his side only to closely observe him. The historian Thomas Childers writes about the existence of *Blockwart* (monitor) in Nazi Germany. They were entitled to spy on the residents to know whether they are hearing the radio program of Hitler and giving funds to Nazi charities etc. If the family members were speaking against Hitler or his regime or any policies adopted by the state, the children were encouraged to report. Family members and neighbours were persuaded to spy each other (Childers, 2017). Oceania created families as an easy place for surveillance. Parenting was promoted, and they were allowed to be fond of their children.

The children, on the other hand, were systematically turned against their parents and taught to spy on them and report their deviations. The family had become in effect an extension of the Thought Police. It was a device by means of which everyone could be surrounded night and day by informers who knew him intimately (Orwell, 2011, p. 139-140).

There is an organisation for children called the Spies, to scout the family members. Children, who denounced their parents to the Thought Police are celebrated as 'child hero' (Orwell, 2011, p. 26). Winston's neighbour Parsons was arrested for saying "Down with the Big Brother" in his sleep. His daughter reported it to the authority, and he was arrested, and he is proud of her daughter for spying and nipping him. The basic value of trust is easily shattered among the family members to make them mere cogs in the

giant state machine. Oceania was successful in creating *Blockwarts* in every family. And it was more effective surveillance than what the thought police and telescreen did.

The surveillance condition in *We* is quite different. In One State the Numbers are enjoying the strict observations as if it is necessary for their happiness and protection. They have already brainwashed that the surveillance keeps them away from any potential dangers. The personal letters to the Numbers are read by the staff at the front desk of every apartment. This letter then will be handed over to the Bureau of Guardians. Any Number would get the letter only after these repeated screening.

The Bureau of Guardians has the duty of surveillance in the One State. Besides the duty of the security of the One State, they are allotted to each Number. D-503 has a Guardian, S-4711, and he always follows him. D-503 is aware that S-4711 is with him even though he will not see him always. He compares the Guardians to the Christian concept of archangels, who were believed to be assigned to everyone from birth to death. The eternal surveillance of these agents strengthens the Numbers. D-503 writes “It’s so nice to feel that someone’s keeping a sharp eye on you, kindly protecting you from making the slightest mistake, the slightest misstep” (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 65) and accepts that the guardians are the shadows of the numbers, who see you all the time and no one can run away from them (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 84).

The annual election of the One State takes place under the surveillance of the state. But the Numbers are proud to vote publically, and even the idea of secret voting in the past is unimaginable for them. They believe that in the past, the elections were related to some superstitious or criminal rites. D-503 notes “But we have nothing to hide or be ashamed of; we celebrate our elections openly, honestly, in the daylight. I see how everybody votes for the benefactor and everybody sees how I vote for the benefactor” (Zamyatin,



1993, p. 132). Unlike the members of Oceania, the Numbers are trained to tolerate this eternal scanning. The state was successful in establishing that privacy is a kind of sin, practised only by savages (Record four of the diary reports that the ancient people were referred to as savages).

The Numbers live in glass houses, which make their everyday life visible to everyone. D-503 explains in many parts of his diary about what his neighbours on both sides of his walls were doing. D-503's life can be observed by his neighbours and the Guardians at the same time. They were supposed to report any activities done by the people who reside on both sides of the wall. Thus each and every Number acts as a potential Guardian for the state.

### **Mechanization as a cure**

All the rebellious activities of D-503 raise questions in his mind. He felt a lack of reasoning in the activities. The state doctors diagnosed him and found that D-503 was vulnerable and opened to a dangerous disease, a growth known as a soul (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 87). It was contagious and incurable. The irrational number  $\sqrt{-1}$  (the square root of negative one) in mathematics is taken by Zamyatin to define this state since it is totally irrational (Russel, 1973, p.45).  $\sqrt{-1}$  is an equation without a proper answer in mathematics; it is irrational. It is D-503's fear that the possible destruction of the mathematically perfect society. He strongly inculcates the rational existence of the One State, and his belief in the logicity of life is being threatened. The rationally oriented thought and life of D-503 are questioned by I-330. The world in which he lived like a machine is now out of his control.  $\sqrt{-1}$  represents the battle with his previous superego.

D-503's relationship with I-330 was irrational for him. He never got the sanction from the government. He failed to report that she belonged to a

revolutionary organization. He had to take part in a gathering outside the Green Wall, plotting to overthrow the government.  $\sqrt{-1}$ , the irrational behaviour was developing in himself. It becomes a symbol of his deviation from rationality, inflicted by the state (White, 1966, p.198). Like all Numbers, D-503 is taught to work like a machine, in a pre-ordained rational method. The presence of irrationality is an imperfection in a mechanically perfect society. The goal of every Numbers is to attain machine perfection, to become one with the machine.  $\sqrt{-1}$  stands as a hindrance in achieving this goal.

Towards the end of the novel we hear that the One State is now able to perform an operation, a ‘fantasiectomy’, which removes the part of the brain that is responsible for the imagination or any manifestation of the irrational. The State Gazette publish the news about the operation:

....The beauty of the mechanism is in the precise and invariable rhythm, like that of the pendulum. But you – sustained as you were from infancy on the Taylorian system – are you any less pendulum – perfect?

But think of this:

The mechanism has no imagination.

When you were at work did you ever happen to see a distinct, idiotic, dreamy smile spread across the physiognomy of a cylindrical pump?...

NO!

But – you should be ashamed of yourself! – the Guardians more and more frequently not that you yourselves smile and sigh in just this way. And – cover your eyes for very shame! – the historians of One State are seeking to resign rather than record

certain shameful events. But you are not to be blame. You are sick. The name of your illness is:

IMAGINATION.

...This is the fever that drives you to run farther and farther, even though that “farther” began I the place where happiness ends. This is the last barrier on the path to happiness (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 172-173).

The One State now introduces the Great Operation as the latest discovery of the State Science. By submitting oneself to the operation, he/she becomes perfect and equal to the machine (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 173). It is the path to 100 per cent happiness. Like scanning a system to protect from malware, the numbers are operated to remove the threat, soul or imagination. After the great operation, we witness a new advanced mechanical species, some kind of robo sapience (Dinello, 2005, p.4). (Transferring human minds into death-free robots, according to artificial intelligence experts, will produce the next stage of evolution—an immortal machine/man synthesis: Robo sapiens.). Daniel Dinello in his book *Technophobia! : Science Fiction visions of posthuman technology* express the idea of such species:

At the transhuman stage—a temporary step on the way to a new post human species—human bodies will become synthetic. Life will be prolonged and enhanced through cyborgization—body-improving prosthetic technology that will replace deteriorating body parts. The distinction between us and robots is going to disappear. In fact, many have already become cyborgs—machine-organic fusions—as science currently provides replacements for damaged skin, arteries, veins, jaws, teeth, eyes, ears, hips, knees, shoulders, arms, elbows, wrists, fingers, and

toes. Soon we will have new hearts and even brains. “In the end, we will find ways to replace every part of the body and brain, and thus repair all the defects that make our lives so brief,” says techno-priest and artificial intelligence pioneer Marvin Minsky. “Needless to say, in doing so, we will be making ourselves into machines” (Dinello, 2005, p.19).

Zamyatin, through his hero D – 503, expresses his fear of dehumanization in an image blurs the line between animate and inanimate. After the fantasiectomy operation, citizens of the One State come out of the operation theatre on wheels in place of their legs.

The door of the auditorium at the corner is wide open and out of it is coming a slow, heavy column of about fifty men. Or rather, not “men” – that isn’t the word. Those weren’t feet but some kind of heavy, forged wheels, drawn by some invisible drive mechanism. Not men but some kind of tractors in human form (Zamyatin, 1993, p. 182).

The Numbers after the operation became some sort of humanoid tractors, a machine – man synthesis, a robo sapien. By replacing their ‘affected’ area of the brain, the Numbers were upgraded into new versions, as software.

The machine values, as demanded by Big Brother, include the denial of free-thinking and individuality. One who submits themselves to the party is named perfect, and others are stigmatized as lunatic. O’Brien proclaims the need for self-destruction to be a perfect citizen. Winston and Julia had to undergo the tortures in Room 101 to destruct their individuality. Their venture to find reality was termed a disease since reality can be understood only by being a part of the party. Just like imagination becomes a contagious disease

in one state, the demand for freedom takes the form of a flaw in Oceania. Winston becomes a stain which must be wiped out for the preservation of a perfect society. O'Brien tells:

Shall I tell you why we have brought you here? To cure you! To make you sane! Will you understand, Winston, that no one whom we bring to this place ever leaves our hands uncured? We are not interested in those stupid crimes that you have committed. The Party is not interested in the overt act: the thought is all we care about. We do not merely destroy our enemies, we change them (Orwell, 2011, p. 265)

The 'change' that O'Brien mentioned is the mechanization, total self-destruction. The party does not want anyone to form ideas on their own. All of them have to follow the traditions created by the party. Any attempts to deviate from these practising traditions, prescribed way of living is taken as a threat to the perfection of the society, and these threats must be taken care of. Oceania was not just eliminating the heretics, but they capture them and convert them. These heretics would be forced to confess their sins publically. The State makes the heretics an example to all the Oceanians before destroying them. "We make him one of ourselves before we kill him" (Orwell, 2011, p. 266).

What remains after the torture was the unconditional love for the Big Brother and repentance for their thought crimes. O'Brien says that their intention during the torture was to turn the rebels into a mere shell of humans (Orwell, 2011, p. 267). All things that define individuality like freedom of thought, trust, and love would be removed. The State could fill this empty shell with whatever they want. O'Brien shares the aftereffect of the 'cure':

Never again will you be capable of ordinary human feeling. Everything will be dead inside you. Never again will you be capable of love, or friendship, or joy of living, or laughter, or curiosity, or courage, or integrity. You will be hollow. We shall squeeze you empty, and then we shall fill you with ourselves (Orwell, 2011, p. 269).

We see at the end a completely mechanized Winston. The torture, the cure for the rebellion, had converted him into a mere machine-like being, who is willing to obey everything the authority serves. He writes that FREEDOM IS SLAVERY and TWO AND TWO MAKE FIVE. He was trained to accept everything and live the way the Party wants him to live.

The heretics in both novels were subjected to undergo a kind of brainwashing. The states restore the order by reconstructing the Green Wall and capturing the rebels. A machine-like psyche is enforced on the heretics by these states and thereby making them friends of happiness. Irrationality caused by imagination was surgically removed from D-503. Winston was converted into a mere shell, deprived of all human feelings. They were all seemed to enjoy their present status, an enjoyment only a robot could have. The Great Operation and Room 101 cured all the ‘imperfections’ from the people. They were redesigned to fit to a perfect clockwork mechanism.

Science fiction is generally technophobic in nature. Cyborgs, Artificial intelligence creatures, supercomputers, robots, cloning, genetics etc. are presented in a negative shade in most of the cases, especially in dystopias. The technophobia shared by science fiction was mainly aimed at the anxiety of losing human identity. The fear that technology and scientific innovations in the wrong hands can be dangerous to humans is the main concern of these works. The possibility of a totalitarian government in the future is always anticipated in these works. Many science fiction works are written as a

warning to such a possibility. In such a society, human freedom, feelings and emotions would be subjugated to control the people. The best way is to impose strict discipline among people is to force them to emulate a machine or a robot, which acts only according to its programmer. It does not dissent and rebel. It doesnot choose unless it is commanded. An external force determines its life. To make people like machines or robot means to take away all that is human from them. Becoming one with the machine, thus, is the negation of self and individuality.

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Yevgeny Zamyatin's only completed novel *We* broke all the conventional paths of science fiction. Science fiction was circling around limited themes like space exploration and time travelling and mad scientists even during the beginning of the twentieth century. Zamyatin's treatment of anti-utopia through his novel opened a new realm in the history of science fiction.

*We* had the eligibility to be treated as the forerunner of dystopian or anti-utopian fiction. George Orwell's novel *1984* and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* were given prominence as the pioneer works in the field of dystopian fiction for decades. However, later it was discussed that Zamyatin's work became the foundation for these two works and Orwell openly admitted that he was influenced by *We* while writing *1984*. He also wrote that Huxley's work is partially derived from *We*, even though Huxley was reluctant to divulge it. Almost all the characteristics that are still being followed by the contemporary dystopian works, which were also followed by Orwell and Huxley, can be observed in Zamyatin's work.

Zamyatin's *We* is identified as the ur-text of the dystopian mega text. The research attempted to see science fiction works as a mega text, a large reservoir in which each text plays its role. Science fiction works have a self-reflexivity, an interconnected web of meanings and people can connect these images, plots or themes of a text with other texts. Such an opening exists even while each text has independence and its own existence. There can also be seen a master plot in dystopian science fiction, certain features in plot and characters are followed by works in this genre. The possibility of a potential totalitarian world is always anticipated by science fiction. Many recurring themes support this futuristic world. The surveillance sanctioned by the

government and strict censorship to control the people are common themes that can be identified in these works. The antagonist is always an all-powerful dictator. The Benefactor in *We* and Big Brother in *1984* plays this part. These leaders are bestowed with extraordinary abilities, and sometimes they assume a god-like figure. They are projected as the saviour of the people, who are elected to emancipate the society from the faults of the previous governments and from the external enemies. The origin of different themes of the mega text, still followed by the writers and filmmakers of science fiction can be easily traced back to Zamyatin's *We* and it could be easily identified as the ur-text, the model work, of dystopian mega text.

Anyone who tries to deal with science fiction has to address the question of definition. Unlike other genres, it is difficult to define. The work used the concept of cognitive estrangement by the critic Darko Suvin to explain it. Cognition here stands for the ability to differentiate science fiction from its distant relative genres like fantasy and folk tales. Estrangement projects science fiction from the realistic tradition of literature. And this capacity to differentiate science fiction from all other genres and traditions is achieved by a rational extrapolation and the identification of a *novum* in work. *Novum* is a peculiar thing in the work that separates the fictional world from that of the readers. This point of difference has to be corroborated by cognitive logic. The present work sticks to the concept that science fiction, be it a written work or a film, cannot be approached the same way one approaches other genres.

Both these novels are analysed considering the dystopian character of these works. Popular science fiction works especially dystopian works, still follow the ways identified by *We* and *1984*. By analysing different works and films of this nature, it became evident that the societies in these works are always twofold; there is a modern group with all technical assistance and a

group without such privileges. The former exists by enslaving or exploiting the latter with the help of these technologies. This subjugated society and people from it lead a movement against the oppression. They take charge of the technology, which was a tool of oppression for long. People outside the Green Wall in *We* and the proles in *1984* represents these controlled groups. The attempt of the Mephi to take control of the Integral is the attempt to break away from the chains of oppression. Winston always believed that revolution would come only from the proles. Big Brother is keen to deny all the basic needs to the proles to prevent them from rising against the Party. Just like these two novel dystopian worlds in other works also follow these divisions of society based on the accessibility to technology and scientific development. Dystopia's connection with society and socio-cultural aspects of the people enables them to be called social science fiction.

*1984* and *We* should not be treated only as anti-communist but also as anti-capitalist. Both these works are prophetic in nature, extrapolating a dystopian world due to the accumulation of power, wealth and technology by a few. Orwell believed that the future government would be controlled by powerful businessmen, and the rulers will be mere toys in their hands. These governments will use force and fraud to cling in power. He calls them "managers", a group led by business class with the assistance of bureaucrats and soldiers. They will get hold of the means of production and will destruct the old capitalist ways. By analysing these novels merely as a critic against the then Communist governments would only help to reduce the scope of the text.

It should also be understood that both Zamyatin's and Orwell's concern for the freedom of thought and writing, which they thought was jeopardised in the modern age, gets portrayed through their works. A writer who is denied the freedom to express his ideas is forcefully mechanized.

Zamyatin was never in a position to accept the ban on his writings. To stay in Russia for him was like being a robot. He presented D-503 and I-330 as Scythians, heretics who do not subject to any forces. A Scythian for Zamyatin was a freedom-loving individual, who does not bend his knee to any forces. They don't serve any masters and won't follow any victors. A Scythian was the symbol of a free man, a model for Zamyatin to give to his readers. He himself was a Scythian by resisting the regime several times, irrespective of continuous expulsions. All the Scythians in the novel resemble him and his actions. He wrote to Stalin personally asking to let him leave the country since he held that staying in Russia, selling his opinions was worse than death.

D-503 begins his journey to be a Scythian from a machine by writing a diary. I-330, who is a perfect Scythian, turned down all the pre-set rules and wished to be free. Everything that they did together was for freedom. Zamyatin criticized his fellow writers for submitting themselves to the ruling party and for writing the way the state wants to write. The creation of literature in the One State has to be seen in connection with it. Poems and music are produced by machines, and the Numbers despise the old art and literature since they were the products of individual imagination and emotions. The greatest threat that the authority of the One State faces was the growing of imagination in people. It is a sickness that had to be treated. The authority asks the 'affected' Numbers to admit themselves to the Great Operation, where their imagination would be removed and stuffed with discipline. As a result of this operation, the Numbers can enjoy 'peaceful organized dreams'. Even imagination and dreams had to be organized.

Orwell was afraid of the intervention of the economic powers in the individuality of the writer. The oppressors would seek to control the imagination for the sake of the robotic discipline that they intend to

implement. A writer who is not willing to sell his imagination is taken as a potential danger. Like Zamyatin's Scythian, Orwell writes about a heretic-writer, who refuses to pen for the powerful. And he quotes the following lines to uphold the position taken by such writers.

Dare to be a Daniel,  
Dare to stand alone:  
Dare to have a purpose firm,  
Dare to make it known.

Orwell warns the dangers of standing alone and claims that it is practically difficult. But a Scythian or a heretic does it. D-503 and I-330 did it. Winston Smith and Julia followed it, irrespective of the fate they had to endure. Intellectuals and artists are a threat to a despotic regime, an illness that had to be eradicated. These books act as a vindication to the freedom of thinking and writing. A despotic regime would create their own history and literature with the help of persons, who are willing to submit themselves to the rulers. They get hold of all the media. Any writer, who stands against the injustices without caring about the restrictions and possible ramifications from the government, is a Scythian. When a writer compromises with his/her freedom of opinion and creativity, they all become one with the machine, more like robots.

In *1984*, Orwell writes a conversation between Winston and O'Brien.

Winston Smith: Does Big Brother exist?

O'Brien: Of course he exists.

Winston Smith: Does he exist like you or me?

O'Brien: You do not exist.



“Becoming one with the machine” is all about this obliteration of common people. They are converted into mere objects and Numbers and exist only to keep the powerful alive. Big Brother and Benefactor exist, and they have individuality and freedom, but their citizens are denied all these. Their sole purpose is to act according to their master’s order. The conditions in *1984* and *We* is constantly endorsed in the present political scenario across the globe. The people are afraid of their government, and they are being surveilled secretly, facts are manipulated, and history is deprecated. The possibility of a totalitarian government in the future is always anticipated in these works.

The dystopian world predicted by these works can be identified in present societies where social regimentation and totalitarian values are upheld. The imposition of various forms hierarchy (based on religion, caste, place of birth, gender, etc.) is seen as a step to attain this dystopian world. Oceania and the One State is the model of a ‘perfect society’. The establishment of a mathematical perfect world brings mayhem. Like a bright light creates dark shade, such a bright society carries havoc to certain people. A ruling party cannot risk anyone and anything to pass beyond the state in its attempt to build the perfect society. Different opinions are banned, and people are controlled and taught to accept anything the powerful says. By turning the people machine-like, a state can impose its despotism, just like shown in *1984* and *We*.

They also require a class of leaders, entirely different from the previous ones. The Benefactor and Big Brother embody all the qualities of this new class of leaders. By deploying propaganda and inflicting state terror to maintain the power, this class would turn the rest into machine-like beings.

The mechanical or robotic life in science fiction is identified as an imposition by the state to develop a totalitarian form of government. Being a

machine or a robot is not taken literally as some science fiction may present, but it is explained as a state when an individual loses his self and individuality.

Zamyatin's novel is seen as a caution against the two-fold threat that might harm the society: the supremacy of technology and absolute power of the state. The second one is the main concern of this particular work, but the impact of technology in human life was also the concern of Zamyatin. For Orwell, *We* deals with the impact of machines. He perceives it as a spirit that humanity freed and failed to put back. The apprehension of the people that personal relationship is at stake due to the intervention of technology and the subjugation of emotion to intellect etc. finds its place in the work. The ascendancy of technology over the feelings and imagination also makes people machine-like. Both these threats dealt with by Zamyatin elevate the work to a prophetic nature.

Orwell's prophecy has a pessimistic line. The authority made its citizen machine-like in *1984*. A total suppression was inevitable for him while creating his dystopia. But Zamyatin's dystopia was not entirely pessimistic. Unlike the usual technophobia perceived in science fiction, Zamyatin's insight on technology paves an alternative vision that technology can also be a tool of liberation. For the Benefactor, technology is a tool of oppression while for the Mephis it opens a path to their freedom. Even inside a controlled society, the characters that we meet are revolutionaries. They are willing to stand up against the ascendancy of technology and power over them.

The title 'becoming one with the machine' is developed due to the technophobia shared by science fiction works. These novels and films create an age of singularity, a time when machines and artificial intelligence robots would defeat the humans and enslave them. They also portray new kind of breeds, like machine-human synthesized beings. This creation of robots from

human beings and enslaving humanity has to be understood differently. Zamyatin's nightmare of the technology does not say that mechanical creations will come to rule over human beings like aliens. He warned against a society where the technological impact will completely suppress people's imaginations and emotions, turning them into machine-like being. Writers like Orwell feared that technology and scientific innovations in the wrong hands could be dangerous to humanity. A possible totalitarian regime, a political dystopia, is the main concern of their works. These governments would impose machine-like values onto human beings, making them more efficient or easier to control. This process of mechanization, that force people to live like robots (a life without freedom and emotions) is identified by the title 'becoming one with the machine'.

The title, mechanic and robotic life envisage the life gets portrayed in dystopian novels, where the individual distinctiveness and the plurality are lost, and the society tends to be a mathematical perfect one. The state or those who are at the top of the power structure views itself as a giant machine that keeps the life intact and reduces the people into cogs of the machine. The biggest threat to this mechanical life is the plurality itself. The primary function of the state is thus the obliteration of the kaleidoscopic nature of the society. Everything that defines the uniqueness of a group, its culture, language, food and even thoughts would be policed. We see in these novels a single state, which promotes 'one' over 'many', eventually turns out to be totalitarian. Single states like the One State in Zamyatin *We* and Oceania in Orwell's *1984*, keep their totalitarianism with the consent of its citizens. Science fiction novels, especially political dystopias, use this mechanical life of the people as a premonition to the imminent despotic regime.

The works of Zamyatin and Orwell are not against the machines themselves, but against the ascendancy of technology over the imagination

and emotion. Humans are beings of reason, but at the same time, we are beings of emotion. To separate a human being from emotion is to separate him from his soul, which is to separate him from the transcendental qualities that make him more than an animal. A human being is unique; a machine is not. Machines can be created on an assembly line by the thousands. To suggest that a human being is like a machine or to use technology to control and evaluate him is to put a human being on the same level as a machine. Such a mechanomorphic tendency is the threat that the future society is going to confront. *We* and *1984* thus act as an antidote against the mechanomorphic behaviour of a society imposed by a despotic regime.

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## **Films**

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*Armageddon*. Directed by Michael Bay, Touchstone Pictures, 1998.

*Book of Eli*. Directed by Albert Hughes and Allen Hughes, Warner Bros. 2010.

*Children of Men*. Directed by Alfonso Cuarón, Universal Pictures, 2006.

*Deep Impact*. Directed by Mimi Leder, Paramount, 1998.

*District 9*. Directed by Neill Blomkamp, Tristar Pictures, 2009.

*Elysium*. Directed by Neill Blomkamp, Tristar Pictures, 2013.

*I am Legend*. Directed by Francis Lawrence, Warner Bros. 2007.

*Mad Max Series*. Directed by George Miller, Warner Bros, 1979-2015.

*Metropolis*. Directed by Fritz Lang, UFA, 1927.

*Snowpiercer*. Directed by Bong Joon Ho, Opus Pictures, 2003.

*V for Vendetta*. Directed by James McTeigue, Warner Bros. 2006.

*Wall – E*. Directed by Andrew Stanton, Walt Disney Pictures, 2008.