



“1984” BY GEORGE ORWELL: A VISION OF DYSTOPIA

Baxtiyorova Nozima

Uzbekistan State World Languages University

Foreign language and literature: 3rd English faculty 3rd year student

Karimov Ulugbek Nusratovich

Supervisor: PhD, Associate professor

Abstract: George Orwell’s “1984” is a dystopian novel set in a totalitarian future where the Party, led by the omnipresent Big Brother, controls every aspect of life in Oceania. Through the protagonist Winston Smith, Orwell explores themes of surveillance, propaganda, historical revisionism, and thought control. The novel illustrates the dangers of totalitarianism, the manipulation of truth, and the loss of privacy. Orwell’s introduction of terms like Big Brother, Newspeak, and doublethink has had a lasting impact on modern discourse, particularly in discussions surrounding authoritarianism, censorship, and digital surveillance. The novel remains relevant today, highlighting the ongoing struggle for freedom and truth in an increasingly controlled world.

Keywords: totalitarianism, surveillance, propaganda, thought control, Dystopia, newspeak, doublethink, censorship, historical revisionism, big brother authoritarianism, freedom, manipulation of truth

“1984” by George Orwell: A Vision of Dystopia is published in 1949, this book remains one of the most influential and chilling portrayals of a totalitarian society. Set in a future where individualism is crushed and the state controls every aspect of life, the novel explores themes of surveillance, propaganda, censorship, and the manipulation of truth. Orwell’s dystopian masterpiece continues to resonate in the modern world, reflecting fears about authoritarianism, privacy, and the misuse of power.

The novel is set in Airstrip One (formerly Great Britain), a province of the superstate Oceania, which is in a constant state of war with two other superstates: Eurasia and East Asia. The world of “1984” is ruled by The Party, led by the omnipresent and omnipotent figurehead known as Big Brother. The protagonist, Winston Smith, is a low-ranking member of the Party who works in the Ministry of Truth, where his job is to alter historical records to align with the Party’s ever-changing narratives. Winston secretly harbors a hatred for the Party and longs for rebellion. His life changes when he begins a clandestine affair with Julia, a fellow Party member. Together, they fantasize about overthrowing the oppressive regime, but their rebellion is short-lived. They are eventually caught by the Thought Police and subjected to severe psychological torture. Winston is broken down completely, his will shattered, until he ultimately betrays Julia and accepts the Party’s authority, including his love for Big Brother.

Orwell’s “1984” is a stark warning against the dangers of totalitarian regimes. The Party’s total control over society is maintained through propaganda, constant surveillance, and the brutal suppression of dissent. The government monitors its citizens through telescreens, cameras, and microphones, creating a culture of paranoia where even thoughts are controlled. Orwell’s portrayal of a society where freedom is non-existent and human beings are reduced to mere tools of the state is a chilling reminder of the potential dangers of absolute power. One of the most iconic phrases from the novel is “Big Brother is watching you”. This phrase has come to symbolize the loss of privacy in modern society, where governments and

corporations often collect massive amounts of personal data. In “1984”, the Party uses this surveillance to control the population, ensuring that even private thoughts and desires can be monitored and punished. The novel explores the fear of living in a world where there is no refuge from the gaze of the state, a concept that feels increasingly relevant in today’s age of digital surveillance. In “1984”, the Party controls not just the present but the past as well. The Ministry of Truth, where Winston works, is responsible for altering historical records to fit the Party’s changing version of reality. Orwell coined the term “doublethink” to describe the mental gymnastics required to accept two contradictory beliefs at the same time. This theme of manipulating truth to serve political ends is central to the novel, as it explores how those in power can rewrite history and distort facts to maintain control. Orwell introduces the concept of Newspeak, a language designed by the Party to limit freedom of thought. By reducing the number of words in the language, Newspeak seeks to make subversive thoughts impossible. If there are no words to express rebellion or dissent, the thinking goes, people cannot even conceive of these ideas. Orwell’s exploration of how language shapes thought is a key theme in “1984”, and the novel serves as a warning about the dangers of political control over language.

George Orwell’s “1984” remains a powerful and disturbing exploration of the dangers of unchecked political power and the erosion of personal freedom. Its themes of surveillance, truth manipulation, and totalitarianism continue to resonate today, serving as a cautionary tale for future generations. Orwell’s dystopia is a reminder that the price of liberty is eternal vigilance, and that the struggle for truth and freedom is ongoing.

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