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**Reflections on George W. Bush's 'War on Terror'
through George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four***

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Declaration

I hereby declare that the substance of this dissertation is entirely the result of my investigation and that due reference or acknowledgement is made, whenever necessary, to the work of other researchers.

Date:

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Dedication

This dissertation is respectfully dedicated to the memory of my late professor Yamina DERAMCHIA who inspired me to pursue this work, and to the memory of my late close friend Tahar FEROUHAT to whom I owe everything.

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Abstract

In this dissertation, I intend to examine George W. Bush's 'war on terrorism' and its resemblance to George Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. The monitoring idea running through this work is that the U.S media, after the 9/11 attacks, launched a series of hysterical coverage overwhelmed by an orientalist rhetoric whose target was to spread fear-mongering in the American public and paint every Arab and Muslim with the same "terrorist" brush. Otherising Middle Easterners facilitated the task for the Bush administration to push their war agenda. Similarly, in Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the totalitarian government, the Party, employs the same tactics of demonising the 'other'. The abuse of language by the media is a major theme in the novel. That is why the comparison between Bush's 'war on terror' policy and the novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is worthwhile dealing with. The present study will be basically divided into three main chapters. The first chapter will focus on George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and analyse it through a postcolonial lens, namely Edward Said's work *Orientalism*. The second chapter will shed light on the background of the 9/11 attacks and the attempts made by the Bush administration to overlook that history for the sake of fighting an obscure enemy labelled as 'terror'. This is all done through a comparison between *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and the 'war on terror'. The third chapter will explore the abuse of language by the media during the war on terror and in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

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Freedom is Slavery, War is Peace and Ignorance is Strength, three powerful slogans from George Orwell's timeless novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) that stood the test of time. The slogans could as well be applied to the United States foreign policy after the September 11th, 2001 attacks. On that day, four coordinated attacks by airplanes were instigated against the United States. The planes hit the World Trade Center's Twin Towers in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, DC. The fourth one was a failed attempt that crashed in Pennsylvania before it reached its target. What came after that was a radical change in the United States' foreign policy towards what it deemed as a threat to its national security. The attacks resembled a breach of an empire that had been for long considered invincible. As Noam Chomsky stated, "[f]or the U.S, it is the first time since the British burned down Washington in 1814 that the national territory has been under serious attack, even threatened," and "[i]t is not surprising, then, that Europe and its offshoots should be shocked by the crimes of September 11, a dramatic breach of the norms of acceptable behavior for hundreds of years."¹

After the attacks, the terrorist group al-Qaeda was considered as the main culprit. Consequently, President George W. Bush declared that a 'war on terror' was in motion against the 'barbarians' who dared threaten the 'might of the American people'². As a retaliation for the attacks, the US launched a full-scale assault on Afghanistan in 2001, and subsequently Iraq in 2003. To this day, both countries still suffer the aftermath of that assault. The chaotic state Iraq has descended into gave

¹ Noam, Chomsky. *Pirates and Emperors: International Terrorism in the Real World*, (London: Pluto Press, 2002), p.147.

² David E., Sanger. Don Van, Natta Jr. "After the Attacks: The Events; In Four Days, a National Crisis Changes Bush's Presidency." *The New York Times*. 16 Sept. 2001. Web. 11 Jan 2018.
www.nytimes.com/2001/09/16/us/after-attacks-events-four-days-national-crisis-changes-bush-s-presidency.html.

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birth to one of the most dangerous contemporary terrorist organisations: ISIS (the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria). The seeds of its growth stem back to the so called ‘liberation’ mission that was launched by the Bush administration against Saddam’s regime.

The Bush government had major public support when it came to the invasion of Iraq. According to a Gallup poll, seventy-two percent of Americans were in favour of the war on Iraq, while only twenty-five percent were opposed to it.³ Several factors led to that support. What paved the way for it, however, was the US propaganda machine. Through the manipulation of mass media, the Bush administration instilled hysteria into people’s minds. The more hysterical the people became, the more irrational decisions they were ready to make in support of their government. The “Us” versus “Them” dichotomy characterised the Bush administration’s whole discourse concerning the war on terror. Orientalist tropes surfaced once again and hyperbolic claims like Huntington’s “Clash of civilisations” were used as a reaffirmation of what the US politicians were doing. Edward Said’s *Orientalism* in this case is paramount to scrutinising US foreign policy discourse after the 9/11 attacks. Several binaries were used either by politicians or the media, such as the “West” vs the “East”, “evil” vs good; even the concept of a crusade was invoked by George Bush himself.⁴

The ‘war on terror’ shares thematic similarities with the dystopian society described in George Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949). Oceania, the fictional world in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* where the events of the novel take place, is controlled

³ Gallup, Inc. “Seventy-Two Percent of Americans Support War Against Iraq.” Gallup.com, 24 Mar. 2003. Web. 11 Jan 2018. news.gallup.com/poll/8038/seventytwo-percent-americans-support-war-against-iraq.aspx.

⁴ National Archives and Records Administration. 16 Sep 2001. Web. 13 Jan 2018. georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010916-2.html.

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by a totalitarian government called “the Party”. The country is in a perpetual state of war; a battle that does not seem to have an end. Communication about this constant battle is severely limited. All that the citizens need to know is that the Party is protecting them from outer threats. This is fostered by the Party’s manipulation of the media. They rely on several means to ensure that this is accomplished, one of which is the usage of ‘telescreens’. These screens serve a double purpose; as surveillance cameras and as a television broadcasting system for the Party’s propagandist messages. Inhabitants are constantly monitored by the ‘Thought Police’, Oceania’s secret service, to ensure that the Party maintains absolute control over the Oceanian citizens. A ‘telescreen’ contains an extremely sensitive microphone system so that any sound a person makes “above the level of a very low whisper, would be picked up by it...”⁵ They are the means by which the Party spreads its propaganda and controls all information. For instance, the ‘telescreens’ constantly remind the citizens of how the all-seeing leader Big Brother’s anticipations become reality. They also broadcast the “Two Minutes Hate”, a daily demonization of the Party’s current eternal enemies, which allows the people to inflict their hate upon said enemies by expressing both vocal and physical dissatisfaction.

The ‘war on terror’ and Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) are intertwined. Written as a warning against totalitarianism, the novel explores with succinct details the horrendous fate that befalls a society subdued to this regime: “[n]othing was your own except the few cubic centimetres inside your skull. (p.29) A totalitarian state is

⁵ George, Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1992) [First published in 1949 by Martin Secker & Warburg Ltd] p.4. [All future references to this novel will be taken from this edition and page references will be put between parentheses and inserted in the text.]

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usually controlled by a single political party under which social and cultural life, mass communication, politics and economy are all strictly monitored. Hannah Arendt, a German-born American philosopher and political theorist, defines totalitarian regimes as “mass organizations of atomized, isolated individuals....their most conspicuous external characteristic is their demand for total, unrestricted, unconditional and unalterable loyalty of the individual member.”⁶ In other words, what distinguishes a totalitarian regime from other forms of government is that no institution, or individual for that matter, would be granted autonomy from the regime’s all-encompassing authority. In the speech in which he declared the ‘war on terror’, George W. Bush said: “Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists.”⁷ demanding that every American individual, and all their confederate allies worldwide for that matter, comply with the US foreign policy concerning this war; thus, preventing any attempt at opposing the war, and labelling any person who would do so as ‘anti-patriotic’. This is all done in a country that is supposedly democratic and known worldwide for its ‘freedom of speech’ policy.

The ‘war on terror’ points at no particular enemy, save for ‘terror’ per se. Since a war on ‘terror’ cannot be won, an undefined enemy must be created. Similar to the wars waged by Oceania, the war on terror is perpetual. In 2001, the US Vice President at the time, Dick Cheney, said that the war on terror “is different than the Gulf War was, in the sense that it may never end. At least, not in our lifetime.”⁸ Oceania is in a perpetual state of war with the two other world super-states, Eurasia and Eastasia.

⁶ Hannah, Arendt, *The Origin of Totalitarianism*, (Ohio: The World Publishing Company, 1962), p.323

⁷ “President Bush's Speech in Full.” The Telegraph, 22 Sept. 2001. Web. Jan 14 2018. www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/northamerica/usa/1341316/President-Bushs-speech-in-full.html.

⁸ “Eliminate Bin Laden, CIA Told.” BBC News, 21 Oct. 2001. Web. 20 May 2017. news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/1612401.stm.

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Arendt states that, in order for a totalitarian regime to maintain its power, “the masses have to be won by propaganda.”⁹ Footage of Eurasian and Eastasian soldiers is constantly broadcasted in the “Two Minutes Hate”. The Party tells the people that their enemies are attacking them at all times and that therefore, it is everyone’s duty to support the Party in their warfare against Oceania’s invaders. However, the true nature of this war is explained in the novel when the protagonist, Winston Smith, receives a copy of a book titled the *Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism*. “The Book”, as it is referred to by a small group of devotees, was supposedly written by Big Brother’s nemesis, Emmanuel Goldstein, but as the story progresses, it turns out that the Party itself wrote it in an attempt to create the perfect enemy. Although fabricated, the book holds the truth about the world of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. It states that “[t]he war is waged by each ruling group against its own subjects, and the object of the war is not to make or prevent conquests of territory, but to keep the structure of society intact.” (p207). “The Book” also explains that there are no winners, since the three super-states possess equal powers. Thus, the Party’s goal is to keep its power by falsifying the nature of its war.

“Newspeak”, which is designed to “narrow the range of thought” (p.55) is the official language of Oceania. It is a simplified form of the English language that limits the vocabulary severely. The Party replaced “Oldspeak”, which is the traditional English language, with “Newspeak” in an effort to restrict the thoughts of the citizens. The Party relies on it to propagate its ideology, thus permeating every fabric of society. In a similar manner, the language used by politicians is referred to as

⁹ Hannah, Arendt, *Op.Cit.*, p.341

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“doublespeak”. William Lutz, an American linguist, defines doublespeak as a “language that avoids or shifts responsibility; language that is at variance with its real or purported meaning. It is language that conceals or prevents thought; rather than extending thought, doublespeak limits it.”¹⁰ The term “doublespeak” is composed of two concepts used by Orwell in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*: “Newspeak” and “doublethink”, which is “to hold simultaneously two opinions which cancelled out, knowing them to be contradictory and believing in both of them.” (p.37). The Party’s three slogans, “WAR IS PEACE, FREEDOM IS SLAVERY, IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH”, are examples of “doublethink”. In addition, the four ministries of Oceania are named ironically. For instance, the “Ministry of Peace” is responsible for warfare and all it entails. The discourse used by American politicians concerning the ‘war on terror’ is full of doublespeak. Bush said in a speech that “when we talk about war, we are really talking about peace,”¹¹ thus rationalising the war as a peaceful “liberation”. He also used the terms “crusade” and “axis of evil” to gain the support of the public. Ironically, the US “Department of *Defense*” is similar to Oceania’s “Ministry of Peace”.

One of the Party’s slogans is “who controls the past controls the future; who controls the present controls the past.” The Party depends largely on the alternation of history, and has full control of all past records. “Everything faded into mist. The past was erased, the erasure was forgotten, [and] the lie became truth.” (p.78) At one point, Oceania is at war with Eastasia and allied with Eurasia, and the Party would declare

¹⁰ William, Lutz, *The New Doublespeak: Why No One Knows What Anyone Is Saying Anymore*, (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc. 1996), p.4

¹¹ "HUD Archives: President George W. Bush Speaks to HUD Employees on National Homeownership Month. 18 June 2002. Web. 03 Feb. 2016. <http://archives.hud.gov/remarks/martinez/speeches/presremarks.cfm>

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that this has always been the case. When their interest changes, the same discourse would be used on who is considered friend or foe. In talking about history change, Noam Chomsky points out that “[i]t is also necessary to completely falsify history. That is another way to overcome these sickly inhibitions, to make it look as if when we attack and destroy somebody we are really protecting and defending ourselves against major aggressors and monsters and so on.”¹² The continuous “rectifying” of history in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is on par with the change of motives of the ‘war on terror’. The group that the US demonises, Al-Qaeda, was originally trained and funded by the CIA during Ronald Reagan presidency. Reagan called them “freedom-fighters”, and in 1982 he dedicated a space shuttle “Columbia” in their honour. He declared: “Just as the Columbia, we think, represents man's finest aspirations in the field of science and technology, so too does the struggle of the Afghan people represent man's highest aspirations for freedom.”¹³ This shift from fighting “terror” that was the Soviet Union, to another “terror” that is Al-Qaeda, puts the US in the position of the “self”; granting them an ideal opportunity to label any opposition that does not conform to their policies as “terrorists”. The ‘Us’ versus ‘Them’ rhetoric used by the Bush administration, and the media coverage of the war intensified what has already been labelled as the ‘Orient’ and the ‘Occident’. In his book, *Orientalism*, Edward Said elaborates on the latter terms. He defines orientalism as a “[W]estern style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient.”¹⁴ Writing on the ‘war on terror’, Said stated that “[w]ithout a well-organised sense that the people

¹² Noam, Chomsky, *Media Control, Second Edition: The Spectacular Achievements of Propaganda*, (Canada: Seven Stories Press, 2002), p. 24

¹³ "Ronald Reagan: Remarks on Signing the Afghanistan Day Proclamation." 10 March 1982. Web. 6 Mar. 2016. <<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=42248>>.

¹⁴ Edward, Said, *Orientalism*, New York: Random House, Inc., 1979 [First published by Pantheon Books in 1978], p.3

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over there were not like "us" and didn't appreciate "our" values - the very core of traditional orientalist dogma - there would have been no war.”¹⁵ Ever since the war has started, anything Middle Eastern was considered ‘other’, which, according to what the media preached, threatened the safety of the American way of life. By stereotyping the Middle East through subtle means of propaganda, the media has succeeded in convincing the public that they were under a constant threat from their ‘enemies’ in the Muslim world.

While *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is generally seen as a straightforward critique of communism, George Orwell also had the intention of invoking a warning against any form of totalitarian regimes all over the world. In his essay “Why I write” he stated, “[e]very line of serious work that I have written since 1936 has been written, directly or indirectly, *against* totalitarianism.”¹⁶ To further clarify his position, he added, “[t]he scene of the book [*Nineteen Eighty-Four*] is laid in Britain in order to emphasize that the English-speaking races are not innately better than anyone else and that totalitarianism, if not fought against, could triumph anywhere.”¹⁷ Thus, the present work emphasises the parallelism that occurs between Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and the ‘war on terror’. This will be done through a post-colonial approach, elaborating on Edward Said’s notion of the ‘self’ and the ‘other’ and how the media portrays and maintains cultural stereotypes through a constant and deliberate misuse of language. With the help of carefully selected arguments and examples provided by authorities in the field of totalitarianism and communist regimes, I will use this work

¹⁵ “Edward, Said: Myth and Misinterpretation of 'the Orient'.” *The Guardian*, 2 Aug. 2003. Web. 20 Jun 2016. www.theguardian.com/books/2003/aug/02/alqaida.highereducation.

¹⁶ George, Orwell. “Why I Write. Web. 23 July 2015. http://orwell.ru/library/essays/wiw/english/e_wiw.

¹⁷ J.R, Hammond, *A George Orwell Companion-A Guide to the Novels, Documents, and Essay*, (New York: St. Marin’s Press, 1982), p.172.

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to accentuate the similarities between a totalitarian government such as described in the novel and a typical colonial government.

There are mutual denominators between the ‘war on terror’ and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* that need to be addressed. A remarkable resemblance being that both governments rely on the media to propagate their agenda to the inhabitants. This resemblance is interesting because, while Oceania is clearly a totalitarian state, the United States is looked upon as democratic in every way. The purpose of this dissertation is to provide an in-depth outline of the features that both governments have in common. This work will focus mainly on language and power. It will also investigate the effect that the media has on the public opinion, and try to demonstrate how propaganda has proven to be such a powerful apparatus in the ‘war on terror.’

The study will revolve around the following questions:

1. in what terms is the Bush administration’s ‘war on terror’ similar to the totalitarian regime in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*?
2. to what extent are the addressed issues about the colonial rule in the postcolonial theory, especially the notions of the ‘Self’ and the ‘Other’, applicable to the world described in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, and the atmosphere surrounding the ‘war on terror’?
3. how can the media propagate the state’s agenda through a manipulation of language, and turn it into an effective weapon?

4. does the media serve as a modern way of colonisation: colonising the mind instead of the land?

Edward Said's *Orientalism* is considered to be one of the pillars of the postcolonial theory. The latter mainly deals with the suffering embarked upon countries that were under a colonial regime. Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* will be approached in the light of this theory, and thus compared to the 'war on terror', exposing it as an orientalist war. Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism* is necessary to observe the similarities between the totalitarian government in *Nineteen Eight-Four*, and that of the US foreign policy concerning the 'war on terror'.

Alongside the postcolonial theory, several critical works will be deployed to analyse the media and language elements. In *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*, Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman propose what they call a 'propaganda model'. The latter demonstrates how propaganda works and how the media is biased by it. The model proposes five media filters, ranging from the ownership of the media to censorship. This study is mainly concerned with the fifth filter, which deals with the necessity of existence of an enemy to fight: in the present study "terror". In addition to Noam Chomsky's works, other works will be used among which Norman Fairclough's *Language and Power*, Stephen Poole's *Unspeak*, and Van Dijk's *Discourse and Power*, especially his notion of the 'ideological square': a method by which the media demonises others in favour of making flawless the ideology behind it.

As to the topic of the “war on terror” and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*’s relevance to modern-day global politics, several works have already either discussed them separately or made the link between the two. Derek Gregory, a British academic and geographer, in *The Colonial Present: Afghanistan, Palestine, Iraq* (2004) criticises the ‘war on terror’. He argues that it is nothing but the sustainment of a long history of imperialism practised by the West on the East. Addressing the Congress, George W. Bush stated that "Americans are asking, 'Why do they hate US?'"¹⁸ Gregory argues that this war sets forward the existence of orientalism in our present time. “For what else is the war on terror other than the violent return of the colonial past, with its split geographies of "us" and "them," "civilization" and "barbarism," "Good" and "Evil"?"¹⁹

In a paper titled “Doublespeak and the War on Terrorism”, Timothy Lynch, discusses Orwell’s ‘doublethink’ and ‘Newspeak’ vis-à-vis the distorted language that is used by politicians concerning the ‘war on terror’, namely ‘doublespeak’. He argues that doublespeak “perverts the basic function of language, which is to facilitate a common understanding between human beings.”²⁰ Politicians use doublespeak in order to deceive the law and the public. He concludes the paper by raising a question concerning the toll of death in Afghanistan and Iraq brought about in the name of ‘democracy’ and ‘freedom’, and how by using doublespeak, politicians could avoid any form of legal prosecution.

¹⁸ Derek, Gregory, *The Colonial Present: Afghanistan, Palestine, Iraq*, Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2004, p.21

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.11

²⁰ Timothy Lynch, “Doublespeak and the War on Terrorism”, Cato Institute Briefing Paper, 6 September 2006. <http://www.cato.org/publications/briefing-paper/doublespeak-war-terrorism>.

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Erin Steuter and Deborah Wills' book *At War with Metaphor: Media, Propaganda, and Racism in the War on Terror* (2008) deals with the role of the media and language concerning the portrayal of the war against Al-Qaeda. Steuter and Wills scrutinise examples of the obstacles that limit the public perception of the 'war on terror'. In this regard, they argue that "the war on terror depends on our "feelings" more than our "knowing". This is made especially clear when we consider how much misunderstanding and outright error has surrounded the war."²¹ They note that due to the extensive misuse of language, the leading politicians of the war succeed in creating a line which separates the West from the East.

Mass Media Mass Propaganda: Understanding the News in the 'War on Terror' (2008), written by Anthony DiMaggio, an American professor, analyses the US mass media coverage of the 'war on terror'. One of the issues the book deals with is the use of 'doublethink'. According to the author, "doublethink in the "War on Terror" began with the Bush administration's portrayal of the United States as simultaneously committed to peace and permanent war."²² He also gives examples of how the US' administrations resemble the ministries in Oceania, namely "Department of War" and "Department of Defence".

The choice of making this study sprang from the fact that a postcolonial comparison between George W. Bush's 'war on terrorism' and George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* remains largely unapproached in many academic circles. Moreover, the roots of the war on terrorism are usually shrouded in conspiracy

²¹ Erin Steuter, Deborah Wills, *At War with Metaphor: Media, Propaganda, and Racism in the War on Terror*, (United Kingdom: Lexington Books, 2008), p.17

²² Anthony DiMaggio, *Mass Media Mass Propaganda: Understanding the News in the 'War on Terror'*, (London: Lexington Books, 2008), p.156

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theories. This dissertation, therefore, attempts to provide a modest contribution to a basic understanding of the ‘war on terrorism’, hoping to incite more interest in it and encourage further studies. In this regard, this study strives to add to the already existing literature concerning *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and the ‘war on terror’ by taking a postcolonial approach to the elements described in the novel; an approach that was not tackled by the aforementioned works. It will do so by scrutinising all aspects of oppression, and how they can be linked to the war on terror. It will also focus on the media and how misusing it could cast a whole society into a state of despair. In his essay “Politics and the English Language”, Orwell states: “Political language...is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind.”²³ Language is the bridge that permits people to express their thoughts, to share them with society and to act upon them as they deem fit. When denied access to that bridge, the mind is nothing but an insignificant tool that condemns great ideas to a lifelong of imprisonment. Without the ability to act on our ideas, in Orwell’s understanding, we are all slaves.

Thus, to approach the issue under study from these perspectives, we shall rely on the following methodological outline. Our dissertation will be divided into three chapters, each one dealing with the following elements:

Chapter One, “Nineteen Eighty-Four in the Light of Postcolonialism” will start with elucidating Orwell’s position concerning colonial powers in general. The rest of the chapter will focus on the ideology prevailing in the world of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and how it is linked to postcolonialism.

²³ George Orwell, “Politics and the English Language”. Web. 20 May 2015.
http://www.orwell.ru/library/essays/politics/english/e_polit/.

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Chapter Two “War is Peace” will be devoted to the tactics used by the Bush administration in order to convince the citizens of supporting its foreign policy after the 9/11 attacks. The chapter will include a comparison between Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and the US foreign policy and its ‘war on terror’. The two major tactics discussed in this chapter are the alternation of history and the ambiguity of the enemy “terror”, a concept that gives the war a sense of perpetuity.

Chapter Three “Propaganda and the Abuse of Language”, for its part, concerns itself with the propaganda and constant misuse of language by media outlets. It will also shed light on how limiting language leads to the limiting of thought. Finally, it will examine some social issues resulting from the ‘war on terror’.

Chapter One:

Nineteen Eighty-Four in the Light of Postcolonialism

War is the health of the State. It automatically sets in motion throughout society those irresistible forces for uniformity, for passionate cooperation with the Government in coercing into obedience the minority groups and individuals which lack the larger herd sense.

Randolph Bourne in "The State."

Postcolonial theory broadly deals with the impact colonisation had on different societies and cultures. Its focal concern is to scrutinise the literature and the discourses produced vis-à-vis colonial and postcolonial subjects. Postcolonial studies also deal with the experiences of the colonised people under colonial powers. They gained momentum thanks to the works of critics such as Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, Homi Bhabha and many others. According to Robert Young, a postcolonial theorist, Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) "effectively founded postcolonial studies as an academic discipline"¹. In this book, Said explores the binary terms that are demonstrated through a Eurocentric view, the Occident/Self, in regard to the Orient/Other.

In *The Empire Writes Back*, Bill Ashcroft and Griffiths Gareth maintain that as a discourse, "post-colonialism is more than a body of texts produced within post-colonial societies....the post-coloniality of a text resides in its discursive features"² In this prospect, George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is an apt work that demonstrates how malice prevails when power is abused. The setting of George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is located in Airstrip One, a province of Oceania, an imaginary country in the year 1984. The novel revolves around the life of Winston Smith, a thirty-nine year old Oceanian citizen, and his attempts to rebel against the Party, the totalitarian regime that controls Oceania. The totalitarian government in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is the embodiment of an archetypal colonial power. It alienates and distorts the image of whoever opposes it for the sake of having total control over the people. The novel shows how the Party is able to keep a firm grip on every single aspect of the

¹ Robert, Young. *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction*, (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 2001), p.383.

² Bill, Ashcroft and Griffiths, Gareth. *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-colonial Literatures*, (London: Routledge, 1989), p.191.

individuals' life: "[n]othing was your own except the few cubic centimetres inside your skull." (p.29). In other words, the citizens are completely stripped of any freedom, since the latter is at the mercy of the Party.

George Orwell (1903-1950) was an English novelist, critic and political satirist. In *Why Orwell Matters* (2002), Christopher Hitchens, an author and a literary critic, notes, "Orwell can be read as one of the founders of the discipline of post-colonialism"³. His strong opposition to Stalin's communism and any regime akin to it champions him as an icon of struggle for human freedom. Furthermore, he wanted to write novels that would reflect reality as it is, challenging the prevalent imperialist narrative at his time. As the American literary critic Harold Bloom remarks, "Orwell's early ambition was to write a neat shelf of realistic novels."⁴ He is primarily known for his two memorable novels *Animal Farm* (1945) and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949). The latter was so successful that it turned his pen name 'Orwell' into 'Orwellian', a term that is used to describe any totalitarian potential peril. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* was based on Orwell's personal experiences. The years he spent as an officer in Burma were more of a wake-up call for him. Although he served as an officer, he still despised the brutality of British imperialism. According to Edward Quinn, an Irish author and photographer, Orwell "eventually came to see British colonialism as hypocritical—the white man's burden lie—and mutually corrupting for both colonizers and colonized."⁵ The more inhuman situations he witnessed in the wars waged by his country, the more he loathed oppression and wanted to oppose it in a way he was good at, which was

³ Christopher, Hitchens. *Why Orwell Matters*, New York: Basic, 2002, p.37.

⁴ Harold, Bloom, *Bloom's Guides: George Orwell's 1984*, (New York: Infobase Publishing, 2004), p.09.

⁵ Edward, Quinn, *Critical Companion to George Orwell: A Literary Reference to his Life and Work*, (New York: Facts on File, 2009), p.08.

writing. He deployed some of what he learnt in Burma in his writings. For instance, “the tactics of police restraint and combat that appear in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* were tactics that he learned in police training and employed during his time in Burma.”⁶ Another major experience Orwell faced was censorship. During the time he worked for the BBC, he witnessed all kinds of censorship. He eventually used his past experiences in the novel.

In this chapter, I will explore the postcolonial aspects of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. I will concentrate mainly on the elements that make the Party a postcolonial government. I will rely on two theoretical books; the first one is Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (1978) and the second is Hannah Arendt’s *The Origin of Totalitarianism* (1962). I will then attempt to establish a link between the two and demonstrate how postcolonialism is related to totalitarianism.

1. The Self and the Other in Oceania.

Edward Said is credited for being the head of the ‘holy trinity’ of postcolonialism, alongside Gayatri Spivak and Homi Bhabha. *Orientalism* (1978) is necessary if we are to explore the abuse of discourse by the totalitarian government in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Both Spivak and Bhabha regard Said’s *Orientalism* as the foundation of postcolonial theory. Spivak states that “Said is a groundbreaker in [their] discipline.”⁷ In *Orientalism*, Said makes explorations into the Eurocentric view in the field of postcolonial theory in terms of the self and the other. The identity issue sparks the interest of Said as a postcolonialist. According to him:

⁶ Harold, Bloom, Op.Cit., p.13.

⁷ Gayatri, Spivak, “Race before Racism: The Disappearance of the American” , in Paul A. Bové, *Edward Said and the Work of the Critic: Speaking Truth to Power*, (North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2000), p.60.

Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient-dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring and having authority over the Orient.⁸

The premise of Said's *Orientalism* is that the West has deployed an unfathomable misrepresentation of the Orient, in that it demeaned its culture to something unworthy of life itself. This misrepresentation denies the Orient its individuality, and any agency for that matter, thus rendering it as a counterpart that in a way or another defines the Occident's superiority. In this prospect, colonial discourse is hegemonic; hence the projection of all negativity on the other by the self from a position of unchecked power.

Aspects of the 'self' and the 'other' can be traced in Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. The world of said novel is totalitarian in every sense of the word. In order for a totalitarian regime to keep its complete control over a country, the population has to submit to what the government dictates without opposition. Totalitarianism refers to any form of government that exercises absolute monopoly on all aspects of life in a country. Hannah Arendt states that "compared with all other parties and movements, their [totalitarian regime] most conspicuous external characteristic is their demand for total, unrestricted, unconditional, and unalterable loyalty of the individual member"⁹. In other words, what distinguishes a totalitarian regime from other forms of government is that no institution, or individuals for that matter, would be granted autonomy from the regime's all-encompassing authority. Thus, the individual's

⁸ Edward, Said. *Orientalism*, Op.Cit., p.03.

⁹ *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Op.Cit., p.323.

complete submission to this hegemonic regime is inevitable. Arendt further adds, “Totalitarian domination, however, aims at abolishing freedom, even at eliminating human spontaneity in general, and by no means at a restriction of freedom no matter how tyrannical.”¹⁰ A totalitarian state is usually controlled by a single political party under which social and cultural life, mass communication, politics and economy are all strictly monitored. This party is generally controlled by a leader known as dictator. A totalitarian regime stretches beyond merely seizing complete power to controlling a whole population for the sake of fulfilling a certain ideology.

The suffering of large masses of people from poverty makes them vulnerable to any leader who would offer them feasible solutions. Their desperate need for change to a better situation could contribute to the rise of totalitarian regimes. For example, after World War I, the feeling that the Weimar government in Germany was weak, and its constant failures to solve the economic issue resulted in Hitler gaining power in 1933. The latter preached the necessity of sacrifice, hard work and serving the state. Likewise, Italy and the Soviet Union both suffered tremendous disasters after World War I; therefore, given the lack of choice, Mussolini and Stalin rose to power. The common factor between these cases is that each one of them was his country’s only choice. A totalitarian regime tends to give promises to people, such as ridding the country of its current problems and eventually leading it to a prosperous future. This indicates that a potential totalitarian political party does not necessarily impose itself upon the population, but it feasts on their frustration and takes advantages of their fears to seize power.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, p.405

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In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the Party adopts the political ideology of Ingsoc (Newspeak for English Socialism) to ensure the social structure it once built will never be shaken. Ingsoc is a hierarchical, hegemonic system that reinforces the Party's claim to power. The protagonist Winston Smith receives a book that is supposedly written by Emmanuel Goldstein, titled *The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism*. Goldstein is assumed to be Big Brother's nemesis, but as it transpires, he is a fabrication of the Party. However, Goldstein's book still holds the truth about the reality of the Party. As it states,

[a]t the apex of the pyramid comes 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. Nobody has ever seen Big Brother. He is a face on the hoardings, a voice on the telescreen. We may be reasonably sure that he will never die, and there is already considerable uncertainty as to when he was born. Big Brother is the guise in which the Party chooses to exhibit itself to the world. His function is to act as a focusing point for love, fear, and reverence, emotions which are more easily felt towards an individual than towards an organization. (p.216)

The structure of the Oceanian regime is pyramidal. At its top is Big Brother. The latter is the godlike leader of Oceania. It is unclear in the novel whether Big Brother is merely a mythical figure the Party uses as its embodiment to safeguard its position as the ultimate government, or an actual leader at a given time. What is evident, however, is that every citizen must love Big Brother, for he is the benevolent leader of the country. Extensive posters with the caption "BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU" are posted everywhere as a reminder to the citizens that they are watched. The Party

constantly reminds the citizens of their glorious victory against capitalists. Apart from using oppression, a fascination with the leader plays an important role in a totalitarian state. As Arendt argues, “society is always prone to accept a person offhand for what he pretends to be, so that a crackpot posing as a genius always has a certain chance to be believed”.¹¹ This is illustrated in the novel in the way the citizens enthusiastically chant Big Brother’s name whenever his face is shown on *telescreens*.

Telescreens function as both surveillance cameras and televisions. They are monitored by the *Thought Police* to maintain control over the Oceanian citizens. As it is stated in the novel,

[i]nside the flat a fruity voice was reading out a list of figures which had something to do with the production of pig-iron. The voice came from an oblong metal plaque like a dulled mirror which formed part of the surface of the right-hand wall. Winston turned a switch and the voice sank somewhat, though the words were still distinguishable. The instrument (the telescreen, it was called) could be dimmed, but there was no way of shutting it off completely.
(p.03)

The *telescreens* are placed in the living rooms of both the Inner Party and Outer Party members in all the four ministries, and even outside. Since the Party considers the existence of the *proles* irrelevant, they are not obliged to obtain *telescreens*. *Telescreens* are normally placed in a position where they can dominate the whole room. However, the *telescreen* in Winston’s room was placed in the longer wall, which gave him a kind of privilege to start his diary, an act punishable by death. Yet, despite his capacity to keep out of the range of the *telescreen*, Winston was still afraid.

¹¹ *The Origins of Totalitarianism, Op.Cit.*, p.305.

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As he says, “[t]o keep your face expressionless was not difficult, and even your breathing could be controlled, with an effort: but you could not control the beating of your heart, and the telescreen was quite delicate enough to pick it up.” (p.82). A *telescreen* is extremely sensitive that any sound a person makes “above the level of a very low whisper, would be picked up by it...” (p.04) The Inner Party members are the only ones allowed to turn the *telescreens* off, but only for a short while. The *telescreens* are very efficient tools that help the Party keep the citizens under constant surveillance. As explained in the novel, “It was terribly dangerous to let your thoughts wander when you were in any public place or within range of a telescreen. The smallest thing could give you away.” (p.65) *Telescreens* are so dreadful that a facial expression could condemn a person as a criminal. The *Newspeak* term for this crime is *facecrime*. This shows the extent of control the totalitarian regime of Oceania could reach.

The members of the Inner Party are the upper class citizens of the Oceanian society. They are the minority that controls everything in Oceania, including keeping the Outer Party members under constant surveillance. As Winston reads,

[b]elow Big Brother comes the Inner Party. Its numbers limited to six millions, or something less than 2 per cent of the population of Oceania. Below the Inner Party comes the Outer Party, which, if the Inner Party is described as the brain of the State, may be justly likened to the hands. Below that come the dumb masses whom we habitually refer to as “the proles”, numbering perhaps 85 per cent of the population. (p.217)

In a sense, the Inner Party members are the self, and the Outer Party are the other. The *proles*, or ‘the herd’, who are the lower class of Oceania, are free of any Party

regulations because they are not considered a threat. In fact, the Party considers them as mere animals. Unlike the Outer Party, the Inner Party members enjoy various privileges. For example, their living standards are luxurious compared to the other classes. According to Edward Said, “[t]he relationship between Occident and Orient is a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony”.¹² The Occident in Oceania is the Party, the self that casts a total control over the country, whereas the Orient/other are the citizens, Outer Party members whose submission is crucial to the existence of the totalitarian government. The hegemonic aspect of this regime is demonstrated through sheer power as well as through a propagandist discourse (the latter will be discussed in the second section of this chapter.)

Edward Said uses Antonio Gramsci’s notion of hegemony to describe how the West usually makes inferior the Orient. For Gramsci, hegemony is “characterised by the combination of force and consent, which balance each other reciprocally”¹³. Oceania is in a perpetual war with Eurasia and Eastasia. This makes the citizens live in a continuous state of fear that distracts them from their horrendous living conditions. Unsurprisingly, they turn to the Party for their salvation. Hannah Arendt explains this by saying 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”.¹⁴ Through excessive use of propaganda and coercion, the Party feasts on the citizens’ frustration and takes advantage of their fear to seize power. Thus, the

¹² *Orientalism*, Op.Cit., p.05.

¹³ Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* [1950], edited and translated by Q. Hoare and G. Nowell Smith (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1971), p.248.

¹⁴ *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Op.Cit, p.306.

citizens are cast into a Stockholm syndrome-like state where the oppressed turn to the oppressor for assistance.

Said denotes that “it is hegemony, or rather the result of cultural hegemony at work, that gives Orientalism the durability and the strength.”¹⁵ The government legitimises its oppression by enforcing its ideology on the people. As a result, the citizens are stripped of their individuality; they become a collective ‘other’, inferior beings whose sole purpose is to support their superiors. When Winston and Julia visited O’Brien, who is an Inner Party member, they were surprised at the luxury they saw. O’Brien could even turn off the *telescreens* for a short period of time, which is something Winston never thought was possible. As it is stated,

[i]t was only on very rare occasions that one saw inside the dwelling-places of the Inner Party...the unfamiliar smells of good food and good tobacco, the silent and incredibly rapid lifts sliding up and down, the white-jacketed servants hurrying to and fro -everything was intimidating. (p.175).

The citizens have to believe that they live in decent conditions compared to others. If they “were allowed contact with foreigners [they] would discover that they [foreigners] are creatures similar to [themselves] and that most of what [they have] been told about them is lies,” Goldstein claims in his book. (p.204). Outer Party members are not allowed to visit Inner Party buildings unless there is a valid reason. Party members are selected at a young age after being submitted to a series of tests. There is no family heritage. Goldstein further adds, “the child of Inner Party parents is in theory not born into the Inner Party. Admission to either branch of the Party is

¹⁵ *Orientalism*, Op.Cit., p.07.

by examination...” (p.217) Even racial discrimination is out of the equation. What matters to the Party is a person’s loyalty to Big Brother, and their determination to serve the principles of Ingsoc. As Winston Smith further reads from Goldstein’s book,

Even the humblest Party member is expected to be competent, industrious, and even intelligent within narrow limits, but it is also necessary that he should be a credulous and ignorant fanatic whose prevailing moods are fear, hatred, adulation, and orgiastic triumph. In other words it is necessary that he should have the mentality appropriate to a state of war. (p.200)

By following the principles of Ingsoc, a Party member is supposed to loathe anything that threatens the Party. As Arendt points out, the triumph of totalitarian regimes lies in big part in the complete and altruistic submission of its adherents.¹⁶ Individuality is not allowed in Oceania. Therefore, the identity of the citizens is lost; it becomes the property of the Party. The latter uses it in any way it sees fit for its agenda.

Said argues that “the Orient is itself a constituted entity, and that the notion that there are geographical spaces with indigenous, radically "different" inhabitants who can be defined on the basis of some religion, culture, or racial essence proper to that geographical space is equally a highly debatable idea.”¹⁷ The other does not exist as a single entity; rather it is a set of traits that signify the superiority of the self. The identity of the other, then, is fashioned through colonial discourse. Its representation is distorted with exaggerated negative traits that are based on stereotypes. The other, however, becomes a reality that needs a counter-discourse, which is one of the

¹⁶ *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Op.Cit., p.307.

¹⁷ *Orientalism*, Op.Cit., p.322.

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fundamentals of postcolonialism In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Emmanuel Goldstein's book serves as a counter-discourse that aims at exposing the Party for what it really is. For Harold Bloom, "For the Party's power to exist there has to be a sense of being entirely a part of it, and not excluded from it."¹⁸ That is to say, by eliminating private property, the Party works on giving the citizens a sense of equality. This equality, however, is a false notion. Power is in the hands of the few, the Party per se. To maintain this pyramidal structure of the totalitarian state, four main ministries, each with its specific function, have been established. *The Ministry of Love* concerns itself with law and order; *the Ministry of Peace* concerns itself with war; *the Ministry of Plenty* is responsible for the economic affairs; finally, *The Ministry of Truth* controls the Party's propaganda. The buildings are vast. As described in the novel, "It was an enormous pyramidal structure of glittering white concrete, soaring up, terrace after terrace, 300 metres into the air." (p.06) The other ministries have the same size. The sophistication of these four ministries serves a purpose: it allows the Party to manipulate the course of events to its advantage, and also to maintain its power. Therefore, as Winston thought, "from the moment of declaring war on the Party it was better to think of yourself as a corpse." (p.142)

Another means the Party uses to alienate and control the people is the *Thought Police*, the secret police of Oceania. Overseen by the Inner Party, they function as the Party's guardians. Since the Party has a complete control over what happens in Oceania, the *Thought Police's* job is made easier. They use various means of physical and psychological torture to monitor people's thoughts and actions. For example,

¹⁸ Bloom's Guides: George Orwell's 1984, Op.Cit., p.36.

when Winston was taken by the *Thought Police*, he was exposed to physical torture. They attempted to reshape his thoughts. Then he was taken to Room 101, a torture room in the Ministry of Love. In that room, Winston was subjected to his deadliest fear: rats. They eventually succeed in their mission and Winston ends up admiring Big Brother,

[t]here 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. (p.05)

Haphazard killings and executions are tools the *Thought Police* use to keep the society unstable. Arendt explains that “totalitarianism in power uses the state administration for its long-range goal of world conquest and for the direction of the branches of the movement; it establishes the secret police as the executors and guardians of its domestic experiment in constantly transforming reality into fiction.”¹⁹ The *Thought Police* work in secret. The citizens cannot predict when or how they would be intercepted. As it is mentioned in the novel,

[p]eople 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. (p.21)

¹⁹ *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Op.Cit., p.392.

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Telescreens that are put in every person's room facilitate the *Thought Police's* job to keep an eye on the citizens' movements. Their task is to eliminate anyone who has committed *thoughtcrime*.

Thoughtcrime is any thought a person has that the Party deems illegal. There are no clear laws in Oceania, but even keeping a diary, which would stimulate citizens to sustain independent thoughts, would be punished by death. It is not clearly passed as an illegal act. As Winston contemplates, keeping a diary, he ponders, "nothing was illegal, since there were no longer any laws, but if detected it was reasonably certain that it would be punished by death, or at least by twenty-five years in a forced-labour camp," (p.08) An act like that would deem a person as a *thoughtcriminal*. *Thoughtcrime* is so dreadful that a simple gesture could get a person in trouble. Even desire is a *thoughtcrime*. Winston says that "thoughtcrime does not entail death: thoughtcrime IS death." (p.30) This shows the level of intimidation a totalitarian regime can reach.

The other job of the *Thought Police* is to perform false operations. The latter are a series of bombs dropped on Oceania. The Party blames these bombings on the Brotherhood, led by Goldstein. According to Arendt, real power lies in the control of the secret police. As Goldstein's book states, "[n]othing is efficient in Oceania except the Thought Police" (p.206). Thus, the *Thought Police* are the Party's ultimate weapon to keep its power. Since there are no clear laws in Oceania, apart from *thoughtcrime* of course, the Party can arrest anyone who threatens its agenda.

Individualism has no place in the totalitarian state of Oceania. Loyalty to the Party is a serious matter. Arendt explains that

[s]uch loyalty can be expected only from the completely isolated human being who, without any other social ties to family, friends, comrades, or even mere acquaintances, derives his sense of having a place in the world only from his belonging to a movement, his membership in the party.²⁰

People must not have any ties or any form of affection for anyone except Big Brother and the Party. The latter deliberately ruins family ties in Oceania. For instance, marriage is allowed for the sole purpose of procreating offspring. Also, sexual intercourse between married couples is referred to as ‘the Party duty’. In addition, there is no trust between family members. The latter are mere strangers living together with nothing binding them but their love for Big Brother and the Party. Arendt explains this by saying that “[e]very individual of any consequence owes his whole existence to the political regime; and when this factual identity of interest is broken and the next purge has swept him out of office, the regime makes sure that he disappears from the world of living.”²¹ In other words, the very existence of individuals in a totalitarian state is at the mercy of the government.

Adults are not the only ones brainwashed by the Party. Children are also targeted. The Party realises the importance of children, so it uses them for its benefits. At a very young age, all children join an organisation called “the Spies”. They are taught to turn in any person they suspect, even their own parents. According to Philip Bounds,

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.324.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p.432.

Orwell's point was that surveillance is not simply a means of controlling external behaviour. Its main function is to induce ideological conformity by forcing people to behave with extreme caution. Anxious to ensure that his appearance does not betray the presence of improper thoughts, the individual ends up absorbing the dominant ideology simply in order to survive.²²

In the novel, there is the example of Mr. Parsons, who is Winston's fellow-employee. He is "one of those completely unquestioning, devoted drudges on whom, more even than on the Thought Police, the stability of the Party depended." (p.24). Parsons' children are members of the Spies, "[a]ll they think about is the Spies, and the war" (p.60). Children are no longer innocent in Oceania. For example, Parsons' children were disappointed at the fact that they could not attend a public execution of some Eurasian prisoners. Yet, in spite of Parsons' complete submission to the Party, his safety is not guaranteed. When Winston was taken to the Ministry of Love, he met Parsons there. The latter's crime was that he muttered '[d]own with Big Brother' in his sleep, which is a *thoughtcrime*. His own daughter heard him and turned him in to the *Thought Police*. What is disturbing is that Parsons himself was proud of his daughter. He boastfully pointed out that he "brought her up in the right spirit". (p.245) As Bloom says,

[t]he totalitarianism of the novel isolates the individual in order to supplant the family in emotional bonding structures: ... [T]he regime strives to become the heir of the moribund family and systematically appropriates the emotional capital of that institution. Its leader, Big

²² Philip, Bounds, *Orwell and Marxism: the Political and Cultural Thinking of George Orwell*, (New York: I.B.Tauris & Co Ltd, 2009), p.147.

Brother, combines the qualities of disciplinarian father and loyal sibling.²³

The Party breaks down the family unit so that the citizens would be mere machines that serve the regime. As it is stated in the novel, “[t]he 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. (p.140) By instilling hatred towards everything except the Party and Big Brother, the regime produces a generation that can easily be controlled. Living in such kind of society causes the people to lose their identity. All that matters to them is being obedient citizens to appease their government. They have to abandon their individuality and submit to the will of the totalitarian regime. They become passive tools for the Party’s ideology and obey its sacred principles, a point that will be tackled in the next section.

2. The Sacred Principles of Ingsoc.

One of Edward Said’s focal arguments in *Orientalism* is the use of discourse by the Occident solely for vicious purposes. He relies on Michel Foucault’s notion of discourse to illustrate how it is manipulated to fit the narrative of colonial powers. Said says that he has “found it useful here to employ Michel Foucault’s notion of a discourse...to identify Orientalism.”²⁴ He claims that holding power over discourse gives the Occident the complete legitimacy of defining the Orient in any way it sees fit. His argument was that “without examining Orientalism as a discourse, one cannot possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage-and even produce-the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily,

²³ Bloom’s Guides: George Orwell’s 1984, Op.Cit., p.30.

²⁴ *Orientalism*, op,cit, p.03.

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ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively.”²⁵ Discourse is used to justify atrocities with the pretext of civilising the ‘barbaric’ other. Therefore, discourse is the optimum weapon any colonial power uses to impose its ideology on the people. This is established in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in the manner Newspeak, the official language of Oceania, is considered as one of the principles of the ideology of Ingsoc: “[t]he sacred principles of Ingsoc [are] Newspeak, doublethink, the mutability of the past.” (p.28) This relationship between Newspeak and Ingsoc is so entrenched that one cannot do without the other. The government relies heavily on Newspeak to preach its ideological agenda of having total control over the citizens. Newspeak, with its distortions, permits Ingsoc to exist.

Newspeak is the official language of Oceania. It is the first sacred principle of Ingsoc. Syme, who is a specialist in Newspeak, explains to Winston that Newspeak is designed by the Party to avoid any form of free thought by the citizens:

[d]on’t you see that the whole aim of Newspeak is to narrow the range of thought? In the end we shall make thoughtcrime literally impossible, because there will be no words in which to express it. Every concept that can ever be needed, will be expressed by exactly one word, with its meaning rigidly defined and all its subsidiary meanings rubbed out and forgotten...Every year fewer and fewer words, and the range of consciousness always a little smaller...The Revolution will be complete when the language is perfect. (p.55)

Newspeak is a simplified form of the English language. The Party replaced Oldspeak, which is the English language, with Newspeak so that it restricts the thoughts of the citizens. The difference between Oldspeak and Newspeak is that the latter contains

²⁵ *Ibid*, p.3.

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fewer words with every new edition of the language. In the Appendix of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Orwell explains that,

[t]he word free still existed in Newspeak, but it could only be used in such statements as “This dog is free from lice” or “This field is free from weeds”. It could not be used in its old sense of “politically free” or “intellectually free” since political and intellectual freedom no longer existed even as concepts... (p.313).

The Party realises that by controlling the language, it can easily control the minds of the citizens. Any ‘ambiguous’ words are replaced with simpler ones. For example, *crimethink*, the Newspeak word for *thoughtcrime*, means to possess an unorthodox thought. In Newspeak, adding the prefix ‘un’ to a word is sufficient to give it an antonym. For example, bad is not the antonym of good, but *ungood* is. Words like freedom, peace, and individuality are all rendered meaningless. The Party is able to use Newspeak to control the actions and thoughts of the citizens. This is referred to as *crimestop*. The term *crimestop* in essence “means the faculty of stopping short, as though by instinct, at the threshold of any dangerous thought.” (p.220) *Crimestop* does not only entail the prevention of crime but even the thought of committing a crime. As aptly mentioned, “[i]t includes the power of not grasping analogies...of misunderstanding the simplest arguments if they are inimical to Ingsoc.” (p.220) This term alone strips any individual the possibility of having any thought that would go against the narrative of the Party and its ideology. “Crimestop, in short, means protective stupidity” (p.221)

The connection between Ingsoc and Newspeak is evident; “Newspeak is Ingsoc and Ingsoc is Newspeak,” (p.55) Language is ideology and ideology is language.

Norman Fairclough states that “language contributes to the domination of some people by others, because consciousness is the first step towards emancipation”²⁶ Ideology and language are intertwined. A governing entity needs power to pass its ideology and that is achieved by holding a firm grip on language. The existence of the totalitarian regime in Oceania depends upon the control of language. George Orwell, in his essay: “Politics and the English Language”, states that “[t]he great enemy of clear language is insincerity. When there is a gap between one’s real and one’s declared aims, one turns as it were instinctively to long words and exhausted idioms, like a cuttlefish spurting out ink.”²⁷ Language is the bridge that permits people to express their thoughts, to share them with society and to act upon them as they deem fit. When denied access to that bridge, the mind is nothing but an insignificant tool that condemns great ideas to a lifelong of imprisonment. Without the ability to act on our ideas, in Orwell’s understanding, we are all slaves. The commands, the announcements and the broadcasts by the telescreens are all in Newspeak. It is the only language used in all forms of media. As Craig L. Carr argues, “[b]y changing language, Big Brother is able to alter what can be thought; the possibility of revolution can be eliminated by erasing the salient concepts from the language...The required dislocation is achieved by continually revising language.”²⁸ Words are dangerous weapons and the Party is aware of that; therefore, maintaining a tight grip over language makes the Party’s goal of having total control over the citizens easier. If people only use the language designed by the government, then there would be no threats of any revolution.

²⁶ Norman, Fairclough. *Language and Power*, (London: Longman, 1989), p.233.

²⁷ "George Orwell." : *Politics and the English Language*. Web. 20 May 2015. <http://www.orwell.ru/library/essays/politics/english/e_polit/>.

²⁸ Craig, L. Carr, *Orwell, Politics, and Power*, (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2010), p.100.

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Another facet of exploiting Newspeak by the Party is promoting the idea of *doublethink*. *Doublethink* means holding two contradictory beliefs but believing in both of them. It is the second principle of Ingsoc. As Winston ponders,

[t]o know and not to know, to be conscious of complete truthfulness while telling carefully constructed lies, to hold simultaneously two opinions which cancelled out, knowing them to be contradictory and believing in both of them, to use logic against logic....to believe that democracy was impossible and that the Party was the guardian of democracy....That was the ultimate subtlety: consciously to induce unconsciousness, and then, once again, to become unconscious of the act of hypnosis you had just performed. Even to understand the word “doublethink” involved the use of doublethink. (p.37)

Doublethink reflects the extent to which the Party is capable of going to control the minds of the citizens. It became a normalised way of thinking any average individual in Oceania is expected to possess. In Oldspeak it was called ‘reality control’. The use of *doublethink* paves the way for the government to get away with any inconsistencies it presents to the people. *Doublethink* conceals the real motives of the Party, and allows it to propagate its ideology freely. By reinforcing it through Newspeak, *doublethink* becomes the shield that protects the Party from any potential threat. The Party’s three slogans themselves, “WAR IS PEACE, FREEDOM IS SLAVERY, IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH”, are examples of *doublethink*. They reflect the Party’s policy. As the Party sees it, permanent war will bring about peace, and if the citizens are ignorant to the true purpose of the war then having them enslaved would be easy. The three slogans imply the use of *doublethink*, which the Party encourages. In addition, the four ministries are named ironically. The Ministry of Peace, for instance, is responsible for wars. The implementation of *doublethink* by the Party terminates any

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potential of rational thinking. By using it, people unconsciously, accept any contradictions as factual. Oceanian citizens are aware of what they are expected to do. For instance, the term *unperson* applies to someone who was *vaporised*, terminated, by the Party. His/her family and friends have to convince themselves that he/she did not exist, yet they know that he/she did. The Party is so powerful that it convinces the people to alter their memories willingly by the exercise of *doublethink*. The procedure has to be conscious; or it would not be carried out with accuracy.

This brings us to the third principle of Ingsoc, which is the alteration of history. One of the Party's slogans is "who controls the past controls the future; who controls the present controls the past." The Party depends largely on the alternation of history, and has control of all past records. As Winston further reads from Goldstein's book,

[t]he mutability of the past is the central tenet of Ingsoc. Past events, it is argued, have no objective existence, but survive only in written records and in human memories. The past is whatever the records and the memories agree upon. And since the Party is in full control of all records and in equally full control of the minds of its members, it follows that the past is whatever the Party chooses to make it. (p.222)

The citizens have no access to any record of the past except the version the Party gives them. Even if they did remember that something has changed, they have to use 'reality control', which is *doublethink*. In other words, citizens are allowed to possess two versions of the past; yet they must give priority to the version the Party dictates. The falsification of history takes place in the Ministry of Truth, where the protagonist Winston Smith works. Winston's job is to rewrite newspaper documents or edit photos so that they would match the Party's current version of history. The Party

refers to this as ‘rectifying history’ rather than changing it. Since the Party controls the past, it guarantees absolute power. The citizens are deprived of any record of the past. Thus, “[e]verything faded into mist. The past was erased, the erasure was forgotten, the lie became truth.” (p.78) As Goldstein writes,

[t]he alteration of the past is necessary for two reasons, one of which is subsidiary and, so to speak, precautionary. The subsidiary reason is that the Party member, like the proletarian, tolerates present-day conditions partly because he has no standards of comparison. He must be cut off from the past, just as he must be cut off from foreign countries, because it is necessary for him to believe that he is better off than his ancestors and that the average level of material comfort is constantly rising. But by far the more important reason for the readjustment of the past is the need to safeguard the infallibility of the Party. (p.221)

No past thought, no literature and no history but the government’s version is available. When the citizens have no access to past records, they are obliged to abide by the version the Party presents. The Party censors any and changes any narrative that contradicts theirs. In talking about history change, Noam Chomsky points out that “[i]t is also necessary to completely falsify history. That is another way to overcome these sickly inhibitions, to make it look as if when we attack and destroy somebody, we are really protecting and defending ourselves against major aggressors and monsters and so on.”²⁹ A totalitarian regime needs to control all past records so as to safeguard the stability of its role. Past change reflects the Party’s ideology.

²⁹ *Media Control, Second Edition: The Spectacular Achievements of Propaganda*, (Canada: Seven Stories Press, 2002), p. 24.

The Ministries of the Party are each tasked with a particular goal. However, the real motive behind their construction is keeping the hegemony of the government. Propaganda is an efficient way the Party uses to impose its version of the world upon the citizens of Oceania. It effectively brainwashes the people into believing that the Party is their only rescuer from all the evil that surrounds them. The creation of Goldstein, for instance, is a genius plan. The Party needs an eternal enemy to fight so that the people will always rely on it for saving them. A common national enemy is needed to rally up the citizens into a hysterical loss of security. Therefore, everyone will support the Party and whoever threatens its ideology. The Ministry of Truth is in charge of the Party's propaganda. It uses all kinds of media, such as the *telescreens*, to indoctrinate the citizens with the Party's narrative. A Party member is "supposed to live in a continuous frenzy of hatred of foreign enemies and internal traitors, triumph over victories, and self-abasement before the power and wisdom of the Party" (p.220). The Party strives to accomplish its purpose of transforming the citizens into obeying machines by providing them with false information that would fuel their hatred towards anything that the Party considers a threat. The Party's success in instilling propaganda in the citizens is evident in the novel. Oceanians blindly believe that their work is for the good of the country. However, their obedience only allows the Party gain absolute control. Arendt states that in order for a totalitarian regime to maintain its power, "the masses have to be won by propaganda."³⁰ There are many types of propaganda that the Party uses. Oceania is in perpetual war with Eurasia and Eastasia. Footages of Eurasian and Eastasian soldiers are broadcasted in the *Two Minutes Hate*. The Party informs the people that their enemies are attacking them all the time;

³⁰ *The Origins of Totalitarianism, Op.Cit.*, p.341.

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therefore, it is everyone's duty to support the Party. However, the true nature of this war is explained in the novel when Winston Smith receives a copy of Goldstein's book, *Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism*. It states that "[t]he war is waged by each ruling group against its own subjects, and the object of the war is not to make or prevent conquests of territory, but to keep the structure of society intact." (p207). The Book also explains that there are no winners, since the three super-states possess equal powers. Thus, the Party's goal is to keep its power by falsifying the nature of its war.

The sentence "Big Brother is Watching You" is another use of propaganda by the Party. It is posted everywhere around the country, and it appears on telescreens. Arendt points out that "[it] has frequently been asserted that in totalitarian countries propaganda and terror present two sides of the same coin."³¹ The sentence "Big Brother is Watching You" is meant to frighten the citizens and to remind them that they are watched all the time. They must live in a constant state of fear; fear of the unknown other that threatens their safety. The totalitarian government of Oceania successfully brainwashes the people into believing that their society is an ideal one. By having absolute control over all information, the Party ensures that the citizens will never have the slightest thought of seeking change.

Conclusion

The world of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is dystopian, a concept that means: "an imagined state or society in which there is great suffering or injustice, typically one

³¹ *Ibid.*, p.141.

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that is totalitarian or post-apocalyptic.”³² The term dystopia refers to a society, usually fictional, where oppression is the prevailing condition. The totalitarian government in Oceania is a hegemonic governing entity that alienates the citizens for the sake of obtaining absolute control. Aspects of postcolonialism are evident in novel. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* explores with succinct details the horrendous fate that befalls a society subdued to a totalitarian government. It shows how such a regime is able to keep a firm grip on every single aspect of the individuals’ life. Remarkably, having total control over a whole society entails high methods of manipulation. Apart from its military strength, in order to keep the citizens abiding by its laws, the Party uses propaganda and language to brainwash people in any way it sees fit. According to Brunsdale Mitzi, “Orwell’s times forced him to defend freedom by writing [for] political purpose. For him, liberty meant telling the truth, the objective truth which people usually [do not] want to hear.”³³ His biggest concern was to warn his society from what may happen if a totalitarian regime rose to power. He felt that such danger must not be taken lightly. Throughout the novel, it is made clear what consequences a totalitarian government can have on a society. It leads to distrust, disrupted kinship and even a general feeling of apathy.

Newspeak in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is one of the sacred principles of the government’s ideology, Ingsoc. It is the instrument through which the Party passes its narrative as the only absolute truth. The citizens cannot question anything the Party spoon-feeds them, since Newspeak itself is shortened in a way that limits free thought.

³² “Dystopia”. OxfordDictionaries.com. Oxford Dictionaries. Web. 1 Jun 2018

³³ Mitzi, M. Brunsdale, *Student Companion to George Orwell*, (London: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2000), p.xi.

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Newspeak is the Party's guise to cast a lion's grip over the people. The Party is aware that its most dangerous enemy is individuality. This is why it implements the notion of doublethink; a way in which the people accept two contradictory beliefs as both authentic facts. In this way, the mind and the power of individual creation can be totally controlled by the Party. Language has always been used as a means to achieve power by powerful nations. The mastery of exploiting language results in influencing the target audience. Controlling language means controlling thought. Once this control is done through a systematically convincing way, there will be no room for doubting the messages conveyed. Language, then, becomes a tool for domination.

Throughout the novel, Orwell has highlighted the various methods the party uses to maintain control over the people of Oceania. The secret police is a well-used source of authority that resorts to psychological torture to monitor people's thoughts and actions. They hunt down *thoughtcriminals* and give them what they think threatens the Party. I have made an overview of the tools the party uses to inspect their citizens at all times, such as *telescreens*, which both in private and public chambers, are a very popular method to detect thoughtcrime. These screens broadcast the propaganda of Big Brother at all times and give notice of important developments in the current warfare.

A more subtle attempt to maintain full control over people is the act of falsifying history. The Party's slogan "he who controls the past controls the future" is taken very literally. History is accommodated to the Party's advantage and is used as a way to fulfil the needs of the Party and safeguard its infallibility. Because citizens have no access to past records, they have to rely on the interpretation the Party gives

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them. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is a dystopian novel that is pertinent even over sixty years after it has been first published. It casts a light on a modern society and proves that limiting the freedom of thought is as damaging as imprisonment. In our modern days, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* can be equated to the foreign policy of several countries. The choice of this thesis is the United States' foreign policy after the 9/11 events, mainly the so-called war on terror.

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“Of course the people don’t want war. But after all, it’s the leaders of the country who determine the policy, and it’s always a simple matter to drag the people along whether it’s a democracy, a fascist dictatorship, or a parliament, or a communist dictatorship. Voice or no voice, the people can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. That is easy. All you have to do is tell them they are being attacked, and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism, and exposing the country to greater danger.”

Herman Goering at the Nuremberg trials.

After the planes hit the Twin Towers and the Pentagon on September 11th 2001, the United States declared a war against its offenders. President George W. Bush stated that from that moment on the US was in a ‘war on terror’, and that he would take it upon himself that every terrorist group worldwide would be stopped and defeated. The ‘war on terror’ was the front for the United States’ foreign policy after the attacks. It shaped what was to come after that for the subsequent years. The drive behind this war was not only to avenge what had been done to the United States, but also an ideal opportunity for the U.S to show its power to the world. Yet, what started as a revenge-driven war turned out to be a never-ending offence against other nations. The war on terror has been centred in a large part of the Middle East, the ‘other’ as defined by the U.S media, mainly Iraq and Afghanistan. The undefined enemy ‘terror’ has served as a legitimisation for the U.S’ atrocities in the aforementioned regions. This is where Edward Said’s *Orientalism* maintains its relevance. The old orientalist tropes were resurrected, and this time for the purpose of an American hegemonic plan disguised as a just cause. The Bush administration took it upon itself to ‘liberate’ the people deemed as the ‘other’. As Said contended, “[w]ithout a well-organized sense that these people over there were not like "us" and didn't appreciate "our" values-the very core of traditional Orientalist dogma.....-there would have been no war.”¹

Through media outlets, the Bush administration claimed that the attacks caused a ‘rupture’ in history. This, however, was not the case. Opposed to what the official accounts of the U.S government stated, the attacks were not unprecedented. Though monstrous and in no way to be justified, the attacks were in fact nothing but an

¹ *Orientalism*, p.xx

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operation driven by a long-held vendetta against the U.S for its involvement in the Middle East and Afghanistan in the past, particularly its involvement in the war against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan (1979 -1989). Jacques Derrida argued that “September 11 was in part, a ‘distant of the Cold War itself,’ and its genealogy can be traced back to the US support for the mujahidin against the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.”² The only difference between these attacks and the ones that preceded them is that the former took place in the U.S soil.

The United States government’s response was demonstrated through a war on terror against its offenders, with extension to other regimes it deemed as a threat, namely Saddam Hussein’s Iraq. This poses a question: was war the only plausible solution? According to Bush, war was a necessity to have peace. As he declared, “when we talk about war, we’re really talking about peace. We want there to be peace. We want people to live in peace all around the world.”³ That bears a striking resemblance to the *Nineteen Eighty-Four* government’s slogan “War is Peace”, a devious oxymoron meant to lessen the far-reaching and far-damaging this sinister action entails. What was the purpose of concealing such history from the public and making it as if the attacks were not anticipated? In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the Party relies heavily on the erasure of history. By doing so, it ensures that the people do not have any recollections of what actually happened in the past and would support any actions the government takes. Such tactics proved useful throughout history. As the

² Cited in Derek, Gregory. *The Colonial Present: Afghanistan, Palestine, and Iraq*, (New Jersey: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), p.48.

³ "HUD Archives: President George W. Bush Speaks to HUD Employees on National Homeownership Month (6/18/02)." Web. 03 Feb. 2016. <<http://archives.hud.gov/remarks/martinez/speeches/presremarks.cfm>>

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Party’s slogan goes “[w]ho controls the past...controls the future: who controls the present controls the past.” (p.37) Such determination to control the past does not come without its benefits for the leaders. The more people are quick to forget their history, the easier it is to manipulate them. The more the U.S government limits the whole war to “us” versus the “them”, the better it feasts upon the fear it instilled on the people through different media outlets. By resorting to a populist rhetoric, the Bush administration passed whatever legislations it saw fit for its own agenda. The war eventually was stripped of its ideological aspects; it was reduced to a war against savages.

The objective of this chapter is to shed light on the historical background that links the United States government to al-Qaeda and Saddam Hussein’s regime. It also aims at explaining how the U.S called upon a war on terror to make its aim as vague as possible and launch attacks at whoever it deemed a ‘terrorist’; hence toppling Saddam Hussein and the invasion of Iraq in 2003. In the latter part, the chapter will scrutinise the ways in which the U.S government exploited the fear of the people to pass laws to enforce its ideology. All this will be done through linking the U.S foreign policy in post-9/11 to what was dealt with in the previous chapter concerning Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

1. A Forgotten History.

As mentioned before, the 9/11 attacks were not unprecedented. The U.S intelligence agencies did in fact anticipate an eminent attack on its soil. The government, however, did not take those warnings as seriously as it should. They were

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marginalised and dismissed by the Bush administration at the time. As Douglas Kellner says,

[t]here were purportedly so many intelligence reports circulating of the dangers of imminent terrorist attacks on the U.S. that a government official Richard Clarke, the National Security Council’s counter-terrorism coordinator, warned FBI, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), and other crucial government agencies to be on the highest alert and not to take vacations during a six-week period over the summer.⁴

In fact, Osama bin Laden, who became the primary suspect of orchestrating the attacks, threatened and attacked the U.S multiple times and called upon his militants to go on a *jihād* against the U.S. According to David Holloway,

[t]he danger posed by al-Qaeda on 9/11 [was not] a new or surprising development. Twice in the preceding five years, first in August 1996, and again in February 1998, Osama bin Laden had issued public declarations of *jihād* (holy war) against the United States. In June 1996, in an attack in which bin Laden has often been implicated, the US military barracks at the Khobar Towers near Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, was blown up by a truck bomb, killing nineteen Americans and wounding hundreds more. The bombing of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in August 1998, in which twelve Americans and 291 Africans died, was also carried out by al-Qaeda fighters. There were portents of worse to come. In June 1999, the US temporarily closed six of its embassies across western Africa, citing bin Laden-related threats.⁵

The 9/11 attacks were most likely the nail in the coffin, rather than the first of their kind. An attack of the sort is expected when two countries are engaged in a long-

⁴ Douglas, Kellner. *From 9/11 to Terror War: the Dangers of the Bush Legacy*, (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), p.7.

⁵ David, Holloway. *9/11 and the War on Terror*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), p.1.

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rooted conflict. The Bush administration, however, took its opponents very lightly and underestimated what they were capable of accomplishing. An attack on the soil of the Empire would be a far-fetched dream after all. The overconfidence of the U.S military eventually allowed such an attack to take place. The result was a death toll of 2,753 innocent people.⁶

To conceal the nature of the attacks, Bush initially asked, “[w]hy do they hate us?” And he followed it up with: “they hate our freedoms: our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other.”⁷ The question itself was rhetorical: it was never meant to be answered. Susan Buck-Morss, an American philosopher and historian, maintains that “the question was never intended to elicit an answer. “More than a rhetorical question,” she argued, “it was a ritual act: to insist on its unanswerability was a magical attempt to ward off this lethal attack against an American ‘innocence’ that never did exist.”⁸ Roxanne Euben, a professor of political science, however, had another take on the question. She argued that what Bush asked was in itself an answer, because it demonstrated “a privilege of power too often unseen: the luxury of not having had to know, a parochialism and insularity that those on the margins can neither enjoy nor afford.”⁹ Initiating such a question absolves the U.S of any responsibility, so the burden of proof resides solely with the enemies of the United States.

⁶ "September 11, 2001: Background and timeline of the attacks." *CNN*. N.p., 08 Sept. 2016. Web. 23 Jan. 2017. <<http://edition.cnn.com/2013/07/27/us/september-11-anniversary-fast-facts/>>.

⁷ *CNN*. Cable News Network. Web. 10 Feb. 2016. <<http://edition.cnn.com/2001/US/09/20/gen.bush.transcript/>>.

⁸ Cited in Derek, Gregory, *op.cit*, p.21.

⁹ Cited in *Idem*.

Despite the fact that he initially denied any involvement with the attacks, Osama bin Laden was named as the pivotal culprit behind them. Al-Qaeda was on the U.S’ top list of terrorists that had to be eliminated. The reaction of the US government at the time and the discourse that was also adopted by the media made the whole situation look as if there were no link between al-Qaeda and the United States prior to these attacks. History reveals though that there were indeed tight relations between the two, a history that goes back to the Reagan era, when bin Laden himself was part of what was called the ‘mujahedeen’ who were supported by the CIA to fight against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan in 1979.¹⁰ The conflict between the US and al-Qaeda, and subsequently Iraq, did not start on September the 11th. In fact, the concept ‘conflict’ does not justly define the relationship between the US and its current enemies. One can claim that the U.S planted the seeds for the attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon with its own hands. Al-Qaeda as some said was the U.S’ own Frankenstein.¹¹

Before we delve into the historical background of the US-al-Qaeda relations, it is necessary to point out how the manipulation of history enables governments to issue laws in favour of their agendas without any resistance from the citizens. What we are going to see is that the U.S relations with al-Qaeda and Iraq are quite similar to those of Oceania and the two other superstates, Eurasia and Eastasia. Their similarities lie in the fact that both the US and Oceania attempt to erase any link to past relations with their current enemies. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Winston Smith thinks that

¹⁰ Fisk, Robert. "Anti-Soviet warrior puts his army on the road to peace: The Saudi businessman who recruited mujahedin now uses them for large-scale building projects in Sudan. Robert Fisk met him in Almatig." *The Independent*. N.p., n.d. Web. 09 Feb. 2017. <<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/anti-soviet-warrior-puts-his-army-on-the-road-to-peace-the-saudi-businessman-who-recruited-mujahedin-1465715.html>>.

¹¹ *Ibid*, p.46.

....to trace out the history of the whole period, to say who was fighting whom at any given moment, would have been utterly impossible, since no written record, and no spoken word, ever made mention of any other alignment than the existing one. At this moment, for example, in 1984 (if it was 1984), Oceania was at war with Eurasia and in alliance with Eastasia. In no public or private utterance was it ever admitted that the three powers had at any time been grouped along different lines. Actually, as Winston well knew, it was only four years since Oceania had been at war with Eastasia and in alliance with Eurasia. But that was merely a piece of furtive knowledge which he happened to possess because his memory was not satisfactorily under control. Officially the change of partners had never happened. Oceania was at war with Eurasia: therefore Oceania had always been at war with Eurasia. The enemy of the moment always represented absolute evil, and it followed that any past or future agreement with him was impossible. (p.36)

At times Oceania is an ally to one of the other superstates, and at other times, they would be enemies. This is quite comparable to the U.S’ relations with Al-Qaeda. Although the U.S government did not necessarily have to change history, it preyed upon the people’s ignorance of the past events and their fear of potential eminent attacks to go to war with its past allies. This renders the U.S government more dreadful than the Party in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, for the sole reason that it did not have to change history to achieve its goals; politicians simply did not bring it up in their public discourses. As Hannah Arendt pointed out, “[s]ociety is always prone to accept a person offhand for what he pretends to be....so that someone who not only holds opinions but also presents them in a tone of unshakable conviction will not so easily forfeit his prestige, no matter how many times he has been demonstrably wrong.”¹²

¹² *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Op.Cit., p.305.

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Despite the numerous calls against this war, the majority of people were swayed by politicians and convinced that war was the only solution. In this case, the U.S proved that complete censorship and obedience did not matter much as long as the majority were misled.

In Oceania, the Party relies heavily on the alternation of history. The protagonist, Winston Smith, works in the Records Department, which is a branch of the Ministry of Truth. Winston’s job is to re-write any past newspaper articles the Party had published but no longer approves as true. The readjustment of history is one of the “sacred principles of Ingsoc”, in addition to “Newspeak” and “doublethink”. As Winston thinks,

[t]he past...had not merely been altered, it had been actually destroyed. For how could you establish even the most obvious fact when there existed no record outside your own memory? He tried to remember in what year he had first heard mention of Big Brother. He thought it must have been at some time in the sixties, but it was impossible to be certain. In the Party histories, of course, Big Brother figured as the leader and guardian of the Revolution since its very earliest days. (p.38)

Works of literature and history were in constant change. Memory erasure worked great for the Party. When the people had no access to past records, they could not process any thoughts of their own or assess the current events rationally. Their only source of information was the Party propaganda machines. We notice this when Winston tried to recall how the Party came into existence and if Big Brother ever existed or not. All he could remember were fragments of shattered memory pieces that could or could not be true. The absence of concrete evidence and the constant brainwashing the Party

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exercises on the people made Winston and the rest of the Oceanians inept to possess any memories of their own without much doubt.

But what if the government did not need to censor all history yet could achieve fairly similar results? This is one of the aspects in which both Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and the Bush administration foreign policy in post-9/11 part ways to some extent. The U.S government back then did not need to entirely censor historical documents that could have easily answered Bush’s question “Why do they hate us?” It did not have to burn books as in Ray Bradbury’s *Fahrenheit 451* (1953), a novel in which Ray Bradbury, who was also influenced by George Orwell, envisioned a world where the government would burn books in order to censor all forms of thought. All that is left for the people is television, and obviously there is nothing but state propaganda on it. This keeps the people under the government’s thumb. The Bush administration, however, did none of that. It did not censor books from public spaces, nor did it attempt at ‘rectifying’ them. They were just there. The ‘rectification’ that took place was at the level of political discourses. Anyone could have grabbed a book and educated himself/herself on the actual causes of that whole conflict. A kindergarten kid could have easily answered Bush’s question. The information was all out there. In fact, some of the resources this research relies on were written at the height of the conflict. Yet, people were too overwhelmed by the propaganda of the war on terror (we will see more of this in details in the following chapter.) This is definitely not to claim that the U.S government is the only one that makes use of these sinister tactics. It would be an understatement to claim other governments do not deceive their citizens this way. What makes the U.S government stand out, however, is

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its claim to democracy. As Derek Gregory says, “a democratic politics requires the informed consent of its citizens, and a democratic state cannot go to war on a foundation of falsehoods.”¹³ What kind of democracy deceives its own people for selfish political gains? There is no difference here between a totalitarian regime like that of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and a so called democracy that invades other countries for nothing but personal interests. The only difference is that one claims to be a democracy and calls itself the land of freedom whereas the other persuades the people that they do not need it. Their freedom relies on their complete submission to the will of the Party and its leader, Big Brother.

To trace the history of the U.S involvement with al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden, one has to go back to the Soviet-Afghan War (1979 -1989). Fearing the uprising of a fundamentalist Islamist government in Afghanistan, the Soviet Union employed its troops there. The insurgencies that took place in Afghanistan were secretly aided by the Carter administration six months before the Soviets came with their troops. The ‘Afghan trap’ it was called. As Chomsky argued, “[t]he organization of these forces started in 1979” and according to President Carter’s National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski “he had instigated secret support for Mujahidin fighting against the government of Afghanistan in an effort to draw the Russians into what he called an “Afghan trap,” a phrase worth remembering. He’s very proud of the fact that they did fall into the “Afghan trap” by sending military forces to support the

¹³ *The Colonial Present: Afghanistan, Palestine Iraq*, Op.Cit., p.183.

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government six months later.”¹⁴ The U.S, on its part, decided to do the same and employ its military use, backing up the fundamentalist Islamist group.

Since the conflict was between an Islamist fraction and a secular one, the Islamist fraction called upon a jihad on the Soviet Union; a call that was answered by numerous Muslims around the globe; “many of them from Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, others from Egypt, Algeria and elsewhere in the Arab world”¹⁵ These, later on, were called the mujahidin and were supported by the CIA. The Afghan resistance, as Gregory says, “was supported throughout this period in part by aid from the United States, whose Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) covertly supplied arms (including, from 1986, Stinger missiles) and provided military training to the mujahidin through Pakistan and its Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI).”¹⁶ President Reagan himself called them “freedom-fighters” and in 1982, he dedicated a space shuttle “Colombia” in their honour. He declared, “Just as the Columbia, we think, represents man's finest aspirations in the field of science and technology, so too does the struggle of the Afghan people represent man's highest aspirations for freedom.”¹⁷ Supporting people in need against their ‘oppressors’ is not objectionable. What is called into question, however, is the motive behind that support; especially since it was clear that the U.S’ sole purpose from that conflict was to secure its interests in the region and to lure the Soviets to their own Vietnam War. As Chomsky stated, “[s]upporting resistance against the Russian invasion in December 1979 is one thing. But inciting the

¹⁴ Noam, Chomsky, 9-11: *Was There an Alternative?*, (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2011), p.81.

¹⁵ *The Colonial Present: Afghanistan, Palestine Iraq, Op.Cit.*, p.34.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, p.36.

¹⁷ "Ronald Reagan: Remarks on Signing the Afghanistan Day Proclamation." Web. 6 Mar. 2016. <<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=42248>>.

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invasion, as Brzezinski claims proudly that he did, and organizing a terrorist army of Islamic fanatics for your own purposes, is a different thing.”¹⁸ One of those mujahidin happened to be Osama bin Laden, a wealthy Saudi businessman who was persuaded by the idea of fending off the Russians whom he saw as modern day crusaders. This is the same man who later on became the primary suspect of the 9/11 attacks, and one of Bush’s primary nemeses, alongside Saddam Hussein. He was an icon for fighting terror that was the Soviet Union back then. He was not directly financed by the CIA, but the fraction of mujahidin that the CIA helped had ties with him. So, in a sense, he had the blessings of the U.S government to do as he and his group al-Qaeda pleased. In 1989, the Soviet Union retreated from Afghanistan after it was defeated, and after that Afghanistan “fell of the American map” and there was no concerted attempt to rebuild its ravaged economy or society.”¹⁹

During the same decade, the U.S government was helping another close ally in his fight against their enemies: Saddam Hussein. Saddam was backed up by the U.S in his war against Iran in the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988). He was given the green light and was assisted with weapons to fight Iran, that happened to be on the U.S’ list of states that supported terrorism. As mentioned in Derek Gregory’s book, *the Colonial Present*, the relations between the U.S government and Saddam go a little back to when he came to power. In 1968, the Ba’ath party in Iraq seized power with renewed CIA support.²⁰ The CIA had a hand in it, and since then he had been supported by them against anyone who caused potential threats. After the Islamic Revolution in Iran

¹⁸ 9-11: *Was There an Alternative?*, Op.Cit., p.53.

¹⁹ *The Colonial Present: Afghanistan, Palestine Iraq*, Op.Cit., p.37.

²⁰ *Ibid*, p.152.

(1979), and the toppling of the U.S ally the Shah of Iran by Ruhollah Khomeini, the Iran-US, and eventually Iran-Iraq relations backfired. Saddam decided to wage a war against Iran because of long disputes over borders and fear of a Shia insurgency in Iraq. The United States welcomed the decision and gave its full support to Saddam's regime. Gregory argues, “Iraq was removed from the State Department's list of states supporting international terrorism, which allowed it to purchase ‘dual-use’ technology that was capable of both civilian and military use. From 1983, Washington supplied Baghdad with satellite intelligence on Iranian military disposition.”²¹ As a close ally, the U.S backed Saddam with all types of weapons against Iran. It was for the U.S' benefit that Saddam triumphs in that war, since Iran caused a potential threat to the stability of the region according to the US government. However, in 1986, Reagan authorised the covert shipment of anti-aircraft and anti-tank missiles to Tehran.²² The American trade with Iran was public. It was revealed later on that the Reagan administration secretly financed Iran with weapons in exchange for the release of American hostages there. The U.S thus played a double role. Ultimately, a ceasefire was agreed upon between Iran and Iraq in 1988 and the war finally ended.

For over a decade, the U.S government backed up the two main players who will take the blame for the attacks of 9/11 and become the first targets of the war on terror: Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein. Coincidentally and ironically enough, the relations between the U.S and both of them came to an end by the start of the year 1990. In 1990, Saddam decided to invade Kuwait. He considered it as part of Iraq, and he wanted to take it back. This was just a pretext obviously, for the real reason behind

²¹ *Ibid*, p.154.

²² *Ibid*, p.155.

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it was that Iraq suffered a major economic crisis after its war with Iran. This did not please the U.S; especially that Kuwait was situated in a strategic place. This move from Saddam caused a rupture in his relations with the U.S, and consequently the latter’s relations with Osama bin Laden. After the invasion of Kuwait, “bin Laden offered to mobilize 10,000 mujaheddin to liberate the kingdom from its occupation by Saddam Hussein’s secular Ba’athist regime.”²³ The U.S in its turn asked Saudi Arabia to allow it to deploy a military base there. According to Derek Gregory, this was confronted with enormous outrage since Saudi Arabia represents the heart of the Islamic faith, and many saw the U.S troops being there as an infringement of that holy place. One of the people who were vehemently vocal against this was bin Laden. He threatened that if the US comes to Saudi Arabia, he will see it upon himself that they get out with force. Saudi Arabia then sent him into exile and he eventually went to Sudan. The U.S received the green light to deploy a military base in Saudi Arabia in August 1990, and after that it bombarded the Iraqi army in Kuwait. Iraq officially withdrew from Kuwait. As a punishment for Saddam’s actions, the United Nations put sanctions on Iraq, sanctions that later on would weaken the Iraqi army and cause the deaths of many people out of poverty.²⁴

This short background aimed at demonstrating how the U.S government was ready to change its position concerning any country as long as their interests were in danger. What is even more ironic is that after the bombardment of the Iraqi army and the imposition of sanctions on Iraq, the Shia and Kurd minorities seized the occasion to demand autonomy from the Iraqi government. Uprisings stirred up in Iraq because

²³ *Ibid*, p.38.

²⁴ *Idem.*.

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the Iraqi army was weak. Saddam Hussein then committed massacres against the rebels in order to silence them. According to Noam Chomsky, Saddam’s attacks against the Shi’te rebels were ruthless. This happened while the U.S military exercised complete dominance over that part of the southern region.²⁵ Despite the numerous pleadings from the Shia and Kurds, the U.S decided to turn a blind eye on what was going on and let Saddam handle the situation as he saw fit. For the U.S, toppling Saddam would cause a huge issue, especially with the existence of a neighbouring Islamic government like Iran that was not tolerant towards the U.S government. That would have not been in the U.S’ favour, and they even considered helping out Saddam in case things went out of hand, but luckily for them, he managed to silence the uprisings and seize control once again. The U.S government breathed a sigh of relief after that.

Yesterday’s allies are today’s enemies. For governments to outrightly claim perpetual animosity against another country requires the blind faith of its citizens, or at least having them fooled easily. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Oceania is sometimes at war with Eastasia, and at other times allies with it against Eurasia. We notice from Winston’s reaction to this in his carelessness about the situation. Winston Smith represents the ordinary U.S citizens. His thoughts of the Party could resemble the thoughts of a U.S citizen towards his/her government. Despite the heavy work the Party employed in changing history, Winston could still keep some of his shadowy memories about what actually happened. But did any of that matter to him? No it did not. For one sole reason and that is the absolute control the Party exercises on the

²⁵ Noam, Chomsky, *Pirates and Emperors: International Terrorism in the Real World*, (London: Pluto Press, 2002) ,p.154.

citizens. It is a frightening entity that no one would dare go against. People then had but to accept the infallibility of the government and to trust what it was doing was for their well-being. The U.S did not change history; they merely excluded any mention of it in their public speeches. To claim the citizens did not know what was happening would be an understatement. So what was the motive behind that carelessness in the Americans’ situation? It was fear. The U.S government did not use force against its citizens, but it feasted upon what is worse: constant fear of an eminent attack on the U.S soil once again. That was enough to keep the people afraid and to manipulate the public opinion to whatever politicians wanted to do. Fear mongering is a major crisis in both *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and the U.S foreign policy in post-9/11. It proved to be a great weapon the governments can exploit in their favour. To harvest this fear even further, totalitarian governments employ the threat of perpetual eminent attacks by an undefined enemy; in the case of the Bush administration, it is ‘terrorism’. In the next section, we are going to see how the obfuscation of history paves the way for a discourse of perpetual war against a vague enemy.

2. A Perpetual War.

In response to the September 11th attacks, George W. Bush in an address to a joint session of Congress, declared a ‘war on terror’, naming a “terrorist organization known as al Qaeda”²⁶ and their leader “a person named Osama bin Laden” as the primary suspects. Stating it like that made it sound as if al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden were not known to the United States prior to 9/11; therefore, the attacks were not anticipated. As mentioned in the previous section, Bush and his affiliates made

²⁶ CNN. Cable News Network. Web. 10 Feb. 2016.
<<http://edition.cnn.com/2001/US/09/20/gen.bush.transcript/>>.

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sure to conceal the true nature of the war, and in the same speech that resembled the “Two Minutes Hate” in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Bush stated, about Afghanistan, “[w]omen are not allowed to attend school. You can be jailed for owning a television. Religion can be practiced only as their leaders dictate. A man can be jailed in Afghanistan if his beard is not long enough.”²⁷ He deliberately reduced the nature of the conflict to a collection of fanatics who want to pollute the rest of the world with their backward ideology.

He went on to say, “our war on terror begins with Al Qaeda, but it does not end there.”²⁸ And to assert a world duty to stand with the U.S in its decisions, he added, “every nation in every region now has a decision to make: either you are with us or you are with the terrorists.”²⁹ The sum of the whole speech was that terrorism must be eradicated and destroyed “where it grows”.³⁰ According to Bush’s speech, the whole conflict boiled down to a constellation of terrorists whose goal was to terrorise the peaceful nation that is the United States. Arundhati Roy, an Indian author, counters this argument by raising the following question: “Could it be that the stygian anger that led to the attacks has its taproot not in American freedom and democracy, but in the US government's record of commitment and support to exactly the opposite things - to military and economic terrorism, insurgency, military dictatorship, religious bigotry and unimaginable genocide (outside America)?”³¹ As Edward Said contended, “to build a conceptual framework around the notion of us-versus-them is in effect to

²⁷ Idem.

²⁸ Idem.

²⁹ Idem.

³⁰ Idem.

³¹ Arundhati Roy. "The Algebra of Infinite Justice." *The Guardian*. Guardian News and Media, 2001. Web. 10 Apr. 2016. <<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2001/sep/29/september11.afghanistan>>.

pretend that....our civilization is known and accepted, theirs is difference and strange – whereas in fact the framework separating us from them is belligerent, constructed and situational.”³² It was clear. “They” are the terrorists and “We” are the victims. The U.S then had a duty to chase down these terrorists and terminate them wherever they were hiding. We will notice how these ‘terrorists’ kept shifting their nature from one entity to another. The following question, then, imposes itself: Who is a terrorist? And what is the definition of terrorism?

After the incident of September 11th, 2001, the definition of terrorism has been fluctuating. In the past, “the word ‘terrorists’ was used to describe the combatants for independence in Algeria, and the enemies of apartheid in South Africa.”³³ In other words, the concept itself is relative to the perspective of the ones using it. To this day, there remains no definition of terrorism that is unanimously agreed upon; it keeps changing. Back when Communism was America’s eternal enemy, any act against the U.S’ interests by the Soviet Union was deemed as an act of terror. Noam Chomsky summarised the U.S definition of terrorism back then to these points:

[a]s a point of departure we may take the official United States Code: “‘act of terrorism’ means an activity that – (A) involves a violent act or an act dangerous to human life that is a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or any State, or that would be a criminal violation if committed within the jurisdiction of the United States or of any State; and (B) appears to be intended (i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; (ii) to influence the policy of a government by

³² Edward, Said. “The Clash of Definitions” in *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002, p.651.

³³ Tzvetan, Todorov. *The Fear of Barbarians: Beyond the Clash of Civilizations*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), p.107.

intimidation or coercion; or (iii) to affect the conduct of a government by assassination or kidnapping .³⁴

He also added that terrorism was defined as “the calculated use of violence or threat of violence to attain goals that are political, religious, or ideological in nature. This is done through intimidation, coercion, or instilling fear.”³⁵ This ironically applies to the U.S’ foreign policy for decades. Speaking at the FBI headquarters a few days later, President Bush said: “This is our calling. This is the calling of the United States of America. The most free nation in the world. A nation built on fundamental values that reject hate, reject violence, reject murderers and reject evil. We will not tire.”³⁶ Arundhati Roy, thus, presents us with a list of the countries the United States committed acts of terror against before Afghanistan:

[h]ere is a list of the countries that America has been at war with—and bombed—since World War II: China (1945-46, 1950-53); Korea (1950-53); Guatemala (1954, 1967-69); Indonesia (1958); Cuba (1959-60); the Belgian Congo (1964); Peru (1965); Laos (1964-73); Vietnam (1961-73); Cambodia (1969-70); Grenada (1983); Libya (1986); El Salvador (1980s); Nicaragua (1980s); Panama (1989), Iraq (1991-99), Bosnia (1995), Sudan (1998); Yugoslavia (1999). And now Afghanistan.³⁷

Since the end of World War II, the U.S has waged wars and military actions against all those countries. If that is not another façade of terrorism, then what is it? Nothing should excuse acts of terror no matter what their motive is, religious or political. Desperate times call for desperate measures though; a new enemy had to be created;

³⁴ *Pirates and Emperors: International Terrorism in the Real World*, Op.Cit., p.120.

³⁵ *Ibid*, p.121.

³⁶ Arundhati Roy. "War Is Peace." Web. 10 Mar. 2016. <<http://www.outlookindia.com/magazine/story/war-is-peace/213547>>.

³⁷ *Idem*

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and thus, the definition of terrorism had to change with it. According to Edward Said, the notion of terrorism has gained a remarkable place in the American public; it became the new communism, the US’ sworn enemy in the past. The ambiguity of what the concept of terrorism entails led to the spread of hateful speech.³⁸

As we noticed from Bush’s speech, the terrorists’ primary objective was to taint the rest of the world, especially the United States, with their barbaric ideology. Terrorism became a matter of being civilised or uncivilised, and not a political endeavour or a criminal behaviour. Declaring a war on terror, said David Holloway, served as a suitable obfuscation of why the 9/11 attacks happened and whether the U.S actions in the past had any role in the matter. The war on an uncertain enemy ‘terror’ shifted the public’s attention from finding out the roots of the conflict to being in constant fear of this unidentified enemy.³⁹ In sum, terrorism is any assault on individuals for political or religious reasons spawned by individuals, non-state organizations, or even legitimate governments. But it still remains relative to the people defining it. One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter. There is always a separating line between the two concepts though.

The vagueness of the concept of terror provided the perfect platform for the U.S foreign policy makers to ensure their interests are met. An evidence for this was the extension of the circle of terrorism to Iraq, and the urgent calls to remove Saddam Hussein’s regime from power. Saddam was part of an “axis of evil” as Bush declared, alongside Iran and North Korea. He was accused of the possession of weapons of mass

³⁸ Edward Said. "The Essential Terrorist." *The Nation*. 2006. Web. 20 Mar. 2016. <<http://www.thenation.com/article/essential-terrorist/>>.

³⁹ *9/11 and the War on Terror*, Op.Cit., p.04.

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destruction and the oppression of his own people, even though it was the United Nations’ imposed sanctions that made it worse for the Iraqi people. As it was revealed later on, those were mere excuses. No weapons of mass destruction were found. Bush exploited the fear of the people to his own interests. In his State of the Union address on January 28, 2003 he said: “[i]magine those 19 hijackers with other weapons and other plans, this time armed by Saddam Hussein. It would take one vial, one canister, one crate slipped into this country to bring a day of horror like none we have ever known.”⁴⁰ As Robert Byrd commented on the speech, “the face of Osama bin Laden morphed into that of Saddam Hussein.”⁴¹ Unfortunately, it worked. The American people were convinced by Bush’s claims that Saddam had links with al-Qaeda. According to a New York Times/CBS News survey, “42 per cent of the American public believe that Saddam Hussein is directly responsible for the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon. And an ABC news poll says that 55 per cent of Americans believe that Saddam Hussein directly supports al-Qaida.”⁴² The Bush administration had absolute monopoly on public opinion. People believed that the wars were for the sole reason of safeguarding the United States’ freedom and for spreading democracy around the globe.

The mainstream media outlets made sure this perspective prevailed. The 9/11 attacks instilled fear into the American people, and the government exploited this. Constant warnings about eminent attacks were spawned in every politician’s speech.

⁴⁰ *Washington Post*. Web. 10 Mar. 2016. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/onpolitics/transcripts/bushtext_012803.html>.

⁴¹ Robert Byrd. "The Road to Cover-Up Is a Road to Ruin." 2003. Web. 1 Apr. 2016. <<http://www.counterpunch.org/2003/06/26/the-road-to-cover-up-is-a-road-to-ruin/>>.

⁴² Arundhati Roy. "Mesopotamia. Babylon. The Tigris and Euphrates." *The Guardian*. Guardian News and Media, 2003. Web. 2 Apr. 2016. <<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2003/apr/02/iraq.writersoniraq>>.

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The people were subjugated to an endless state of fear. Arundhati Roy says that the Bush administration’s exploitation of the American public’s fear allowed it to easily increase the military budget after the 9/11 attacks.⁴³ The people bought the government’s lies as politicians claimed that the 9/11 attacks caused a rupture in the fabric of the United States history. Things from now on would be different. Chomsky adds, “[t]he attacks were widely described as a moment of historical rupture, an epochal event that drew a clear line through world history, dividing what came after 9/11 from what went before.”⁴⁴ Fear mongering made it convenient for Bush and his affiliates to issue laws as they pleased. The war on terror was just a front to continue an American hegemonic monopoly of world power.

The Bush Doctrine, thus, was introduced. This new doctrine emphasised the necessity of taking pre-emptive strikes against any state that caused a potential threat. Holloway argued that President Bush and other politicians constantly described the war on terror as World War Three; he continued: “Rumsfeld said that it could last as long as the Cold War, and Cheney, speaking like a true militarist, said it could go on for a “long, long time, perhaps indefinitely.”⁴⁵ A perpetual war for the sake of an American hegemony was the plan all along. Eliminating the perpetrators of the 9/11 attacks was not Bush’s top priority. It was merely a pretext to give the U.S the right to attack any enemy deemed terrorist. An example of this is the claim that Saddam harboured weapons of mass destruction and was ready to use them to attack the U.S.⁴⁶

⁴³ Idem.

⁴⁴ *9/11 and the War on Terror*, Op.Cit., p.01.

⁴⁵ Ibid, p.20.

⁴⁶ *From 9/11 to Terror War*, Op.Cit., p.6.

The idea of being in a perpetual war against Islamic terrorism conjured a years old thesis called a “Clash of Civilizations?” by Samuel Huntington. In his thesis, Huntington argued that there would come a time where the West enters a phase of war against Islam. He suggested that future conflicts would cease to be about ideology but rather about identity. He argued that “[t]he most important conflicts of the future will occur along the fault lines separating these civilizations from one another.”⁴⁷ The West, being the hegemonic civilised power, would fight against Islam, the barbaric religion that threatens its safety. Huntington argued that “the dominant division is between ‘the West and the rest,’ with the most intense conflicts occurring between Muslim and Asian societies on the one hand, and the West on the other. The dangerous clashes of the future are likely to arise from the interaction of Western arrogance, [and] Islamic intolerance.”⁴⁸ To many U.S politicians and pundits, the 9/11 attacks proved Huntington’s predictions: that the war on terror was indeed the sound retaliation against these attackers. The only way to defend the U.S and the West in general was to go on offense and attack those suspected of terrorism in their own countries. Donald Rumsfeld, the US Secretary of Defence, said in an interview that “if one looks down from outer space on earth, you find a couple of handfuls of countries that are generally like thinking, and they tend to be in Western Europe and North America. They have freer political systems, and freer economic systems, and tend not to covet the land or property or lives of other nations.”⁴⁹ This perception was adopted by Bush himself in his discourse. He used the concept “crusade” to refer to the war on

⁴⁷ Samuel P, Huntington,. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997), p.25.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p.183.

⁴⁹ “You Can Only Defend by Finding Terrorists and Rooting them out” *The Telegraph*. N.p., n.d. Web. 3 Jan. 2017. <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/northamerica/usa/1385993/You-can-only-defend-by-finding-terrorists-and-rooting-them-out.html>>.

terrorism. A few days after the assault, George W. Bush did this. Speaking spontaneously, without the aid of advisers or speechwriters, he put a word on the new American purpose that both shaped it and gave it meaning. “This crusade,” he said, “this war on terrorism.”⁵⁰ Linking the war on terror to the crusade proved effective as the Republican supporters were mostly Christians who believed in this discourse.

Huntington was not the first to come up with the idea of a war between the West and Islam. Bernard Lewis, a British American historian, coined it first. He garnered more media attention after the 9/11 attacks. Lewis was sought after by the Bush administration and news media outlets after the 9/11 attacks. Many Neo-conservatives⁵¹, like Dick Cheney, were his admirers.⁵² After the attacks, Bernard Lewis said, “the confrontation with a force that defines itself as Islam has given a new relevance—indeed, urgency—to the theme of the ‘clash of civilizations.’”⁵³ The assertions by Huntington, and later Bernard Lewis, gave the war on terror more prominence in the American public opinion. To them, it seemed to be an inevitable consequence that could not be avoided. The notion of ‘clash of civilisations’ was deeply ingrained in people’s minds. The 9/11 attacks reaffirmed that old belief. To refute it, one needed courage to go against the public, a public in which irrationality and fear permeated thoroughly.

Edward Said was a fierce critic of Lewis’ ideas. He pointed out that Huntington

⁵⁰ "The Bush Crusade." *The Nation*. N.p., n.d. Web. 6 Apr. 2017. <<https://www.thenation.com/article/bush-crusade/>>.

⁵¹ A “neoconservative” believes that other countries are a threat to us if they have different domestic political systems, so they must be defeated by all necessary means, including military force. The Washington Post "How should we define ‘neoconservative’?"

⁵² "Lost In Translation." *The New Yorker*. N.p., n.d. Web. 6 Apr. 2017. <<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2004/06/14/lost-in-translation-3>>.

⁵³ ""I'm Right, You're Wrong, Go To Hell"." *The Atlantic*. N.p., n.d. Web. 6 Apr. 2017. <<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2003/05/-im-right-youre-wrong-go-to-hell/302723/>>.

...relies heavily on a 1990 article by the veteran Orientalist Bernard Lewis, whose ideological colors are manifest in its title, "The Roots of Muslim Rage." In both articles, the personification of enormous entities called "the West" and "Islam" is recklessly affirmed, as if hugely complicated matters like identity and culture existed in a cartoonlike world where Popeye and Bluto bash each other mercilessly, with one always more virtuous pugilist getting the upper hand over his adversary.⁵⁴

He also went on to say that

neither Huntington nor Lewis has much time to spare for the internal dynamics and plurality of every civilization, or for the fact that the major contest in most modern cultures concerns the definition or interpretation of each culture, or for the unattractive possibility that a great deal of demagoguery and downright ignorance is involved in presuming to speak for a whole religion or civilization.⁵⁵

Huntington and Lewis' clash of civilisations' premise removes agency from those who plotted the 9/11 attacks. Instead of focusing on the roots of the conflict, politicians resorted to old myths of ancient conflicts between world religions, mainly Christianity and Islam in this case. Therefore, the Middle East became a monolith, an Islamic world that holds the same view: attacking the West. In accordance, the US had to take action before this malice reaches its soil another time.

The September 11th attacks were considered a rupture in US history. Yet, they still marked a consistency in the relationship between the West and the Orient. The discourse used in the war on terror underpinned all stereotypes and orientalist clichés that were used against Muslims in the past. The war on terror concept was used by the

⁵⁴ Edward, Said. "The Clash of Ignorance." *The Nation*. N.p., n.d. Web. 8 Apr. 2017. <<https://www.thenation.com/article/clash-ignorance/>>.

⁵⁵ Idem.

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Bush administration as retaliation against those who attacked the American soil. These supposed enemies, however, were stretched insofar as to include anyone who was “against us”, as Bush said in one of his speeches. In this prospect, the war on terror was initiated through various fronts. The first one was the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq. This veered into a need to tighten US security by passing legislations controlling those suspected of terrorism. Muslims were the first target of these measures. This war also took the shape of an orientalist discourse. The media used this pretext to frighten the people and make them support Bush. The war on terror rhetoric divided people into ‘good’ vs ‘evil’. The good ones being Americans, the victims of the attacks who needed defending; and the ‘evil’ ones being the terrorists, a concept with vague definitions. Using this discourse, the U.S government came off as the heroic freedom defenders, and their enemies as barbarians who want to destroy civilisation. The supposed 9/11 attacks existing in a vacuum was a tactic used by the Bush administration to garner support from the public. The U.S did play a role in having the attacks being targeted at its land. The attacks were not the only happenings without a context; terrorists also were presented as these violent barbarians who have no motives but to destroy civilisation. The war on terror was not a clash of civilisations as Huntington and Bernard Lewis said. It was rather a conflict between two ideologically opposed entities.

Conclusion

This chapter has covered the link between U.S foreign policy post-9/11 and George Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, focusing on the perpetuity of the war and the “rectification” of history records in favour of war. When George Orwell wrote

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Nineteen Eighty-Four, he intended it to be a warning against any kind of totalitarian regime. In his essay, “Why I Write”, he stated that everything he had written was “directly or indirectly, *against* totalitarianism”.⁵⁶ Thus, the dominant theme in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is totalitarianism. The society described in the novel is a dystopian one. Oceania fits into this category due to the way the Party governs it. For some reason, it seems as if Bush took Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four* as a manual guide. He did not even bother being subtle about it. The openness in which he expressed his will to wage a war to eliminate the ‘evil incarnates’ that were in Afghanistan and Iraq, strips the U.S of its claims of being a democracy.

At this point, there is little to no difference between The U.S’ foreign policy in post-9/11 and Oceania’s totalitarian regime. Bush insisted that the people, and even the U.S allies for that matter, were either with the U.S or with the terrorists. In an address to a joint session of Congress on September 20, 2001, Bush said: “every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists.”⁵⁷ There was no middle-ground. Opposing this was risky and would label any dissidents as unpatriotic or terrorist sympathisers. In an essay, George Orwell argued that “If you hamper the war effort of one side you automatically help that of the other.”⁵⁸ So, the U.S was free to go about its so called mission of liberation without much opposition. It became the new International Law maker, and an unstoppable war machine, much like a totalitarian superstate. Since the main focus of this chapter was

⁵⁶ George, Orwell. Why I Write. Web. 23 July 2015. <http://orwell.ru/library/essays/wiw/english/e_wiw>.

⁵⁷ President Declares “Freedom at War with Fear” Web. 10 Feb. 2016.
<<http://georgewbushwhitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html>>.

⁵⁸ “George Orwell.”: Pacifism and the War. Web. 10 Feb. 2016.
<http://www.orwell.ru/library/articles/pacifism/english/e_patw>.

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on physical oppression, the next chapter will shed light on the psychological warfare that the Bush administration propelled using its propaganda machine.

Chapter Three:

Propaganda and the Abuse of Language

The conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses is an important element in democratic society. Those who manipulate this unseen mechanism of society constitute an invisible government which is the true ruling power of our country.

Edward Bernays in Propaganda (1928)

Chapter Three: Propaganda and the Abuse of Language

Mind-control is as effective as physical control, and likely to be more so, as we shall see in this chapter. The U.S government relied heavily on propaganda to achieve their geo-political agenda. This is the main point which the totalitarian regime in Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) and the Bush administration foreign policy post-9/11 diverge to some extent. The premise of this dissertation is to compare the United States' foreign policy post-9/11 to that of the totalitarian government described in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* by George Orwell. As argued in Chapter Two, the U.S censorship was different in the sense that it was not as absolutist as that of the Party in Oceania. This, however, did not prevent it from achieving damaging results. What happened was that the people were flooded with too much information biased in favour of the war that any criticism of the war or the Bush administration was buried and did not come to the surface. This chapter will argue the dissertation's main problematic that the United States' foreign policy post-9/11 achieved more damaging effects than the Party in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, using more effective means. In that sense, it could be said that the U.S is post-*Nineteen Eighty-Four*. The tools are still the same but the usage is more efficient and more subtle than before, allowing for more control over the people.

The first section of this chapter will deal with the following question: what allows a supposedly democratic country like the U.S to act upon the same principles as those of the totalitarian regime in Oceania? The answer is: propaganda. As Noam Chomsky argued, "[p]ropaganda is to democracy what violence is to totalitarianism."¹ Through propaganda, the Bush administration could control their people easily to

¹ Noam, Chomsky, *Media Control, Second Edition: The Spectacular Achievements of Propaganda*. (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2002), p.15.

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reach whatever they wanted. The people obeyed and were under an influx of influence to support whatever the politicians said was in favour of protecting their country. American patriotism was at its apex and most citizens felt they had to stand firm by their government to fend off anyone who dared threaten their country. Politicians, through propaganda techniques, preyed on the people's fear and ignorance and made them vouch for things they probably would have opposed in the first place.

To achieve satisfactory results of control, propaganda relies on the manipulation of language. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the Party uses Newspeak as a means of restricting people's thought. As we have seen before, Newspeak is one of the principles of Ingsoc, and a substantial tool the government uses to control the people. The post-9/11 discourse in the United States was a field that was characterised by a Newspeak parallel, which is often termed Doublespeak. It is a term that is taken from Orwell's 'doublethink', a mind-controlling technique the citizens in Oceania rely on to accept two contradictory beliefs. The idea of doublespeak is that politicians and news media outlets rely on a language that conveys two contradictory meanings, in order to achieve their end goals. The second section of the chapter will focus on the language used post-9/11, which encompassed a discourse filled with orientalist tropes and evasive expressions that were meant to make things more obscure for the ordinary citizens. As language abuse allows for passing abuse of prisoners (famous US torture) as something normal, people would not react to it because it is already justified in their minds.

1. Propaganda War and the U.S Media

Edward Bernays, one of the pioneers of the public relations industry in the United States, defined propaganda as “a consistent, enduring effort to create or shape events to influence the relations of the public to an enterprise, idea or group.”² It is also the use of manipulative means to shift people’s attention towards a certain end. Different institutions rely on it to have control over public opinion. As Bernays says, “[i]n the present structure of society, [propaganda] is inevitable. Whatever of social importance is done to-day, whether in politics, finance, manufacture, agriculture, charity, education, or other fields, must be done with the help of propaganda.”³ It is known throughout the history of mankind that Alexander the Great was one of the earliest war generals recorded to have used propaganda. After retreating from each conquered territory, he used to leave trails behind so that anyone approaching the region would be aware of his army.⁴

Despite its tangible prominence in times of war, the word propaganda holds a negative connotation. Steven Poole, a British author, says: “[of course, propagandising did take place; it just wasn’t called that. Sometimes it was called, instead, ‘public diplomacy.’”⁵ Edward Bernays also pointed that out in his book *Propaganda* (1928). He argued that

....a group of citizens writes and talks in favor of a certain course of action in some debatable question, believing that it is promoting the

² Edward, Bernays. *Propaganda*, (Barcelona: Melusina, 2010), p.25

³ Ibid., p.20.

⁴ "The Power of Propaganda." *Weekly Standard*. N.p., n.d. Web. 23 Jan. 2017. <<http://www.weeklystandard.com/the-power-of-propaganda/article/2006>>.

⁵ Steven, Poole, *Unspeak: How Words Become Weapons, how Weapons Become a Message, and how that Message Becomes Reality*, (New York: Grove Press, 2007) ,p.14.

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best interest of the community. Propaganda? Not a bit of it. Just a plain forceful statement of truth. But let another group of citizens express opposing views, and they are promptly labeled with the sinister name of propaganda.⁶

Therefore, propaganda takes the negative form only when the opposing group uses it. Each side gives it different euphemisms that usually cover what they entail, like ‘public relations’ for instance. The enemy’s usage of propaganda is often denounced vigorously and called for what it is.

According to Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O’Donnell, propaganda is divided into three categories: white, black, and grey. White propaganda is when the source is clearly recognised, and the delivered information is authentic.⁷ The usage of this type of propaganda is usually to give credibility to a certain idea. Coming from a credible source, however, does not mean the whole truth would be told. Sometimes important information surrounding the news would be left out. White propaganda differs from black propaganda in that the latter’s source is often unauthentic and the information is deceptive and false.⁸ Since people rarely check the sources or the validity of the news they receive, this type of propaganda often finds its supporters. The last type of propaganda is the grey one, and it is the most difficult one. It posits itself between white and black propaganda. Jowett and O’Donnell argue that the information and the sources in this type cannot be verified; hence, more lies would be easily spread.⁹

⁶ *Propaganda, Op.Cit*, p.23.

⁷ Garth S. Jowett., and Victoria O’Donnell. *Propaganda and Persuasion*, (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 2012), p17.

⁸ *Ibid*, p.18.

⁹ *Ibid*, p.17.

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Bernays thought that people were irrational so they needed to be controlled via more subtle ways. He argued that “as civilization has become more complex, and as the need for invisible government has been increasingly demonstrated, the technical means have been invented and developed by which opinion may be regimented.”¹⁰ It is the manner in which First World countries divorced from the old ways of direct control into an indirect one, giving the people what they want in order to control them subtly. As Jacques Ellul, a French philosopher, observed, “propaganda is always at its most effective when it is least noticeable.”¹¹ Subtlety is what defined these new techniques of propaganda. Coercion was no longer an option.

Over the years, propaganda’s usage has evolved and varied vastly. In the past, where most countries were under a dictatorship rule, propaganda used to be apparent. Even an ordinary citizen would point out to it. The government would not need to make much effort to conceal its blatant propaganda since everyone was under its total control. This still exists today of course, mostly in Third World countries that are still under dictatorships control. In countries like the United States, however, things have changed. The public relations industry has shifted its methods from primal direct methods of propaganda to more subtle and sophisticated ways that cannot be easily spotted. In a country where free will exists and the people have the absolute right to protest what the government does, there has to be more persuasive and subtle ways to make the public support the government’s decisions. In totalitarian regimes, however, such rights are non-existent, and thus propaganda would be more direct. As Chomsky

¹⁰ *Propaganda*, Op.Cit., p.12.

¹¹ Cited in Erin, Steuter, *At War with Metaphor: Media, Propaganda, and Racism in the War on Terror*, (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2008), p.20.

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says, “[p]ropaganda is to a democracy what the bludgeon is to a totalitarian state.”¹² In a totalitarian state, all the government would need to do is threaten the citizens’ safety and they would obey. However, as societies move towards a more democratic rule, that option is no longer available. Thus, the government would be required to develop its propaganda techniques in order to gain the citizens’ support.

Twentieth century America, especially after World War I, witnessed a tremendous outbreak in the field of psychology. Relying on his Uncle Sigmund Freud’s psychoanalysis theories and others before him, such as the French psychologist Gustave le Bon, Edward Bernays applied that to clever ways to control the masses. According to Erin Steuter¹³, Bernays reached his goal through the combination of what he gathered from Freud’s world with social psychology. He achieved that through the employment of public opinion polls and advertising. He also coined the phrase ‘necessary illusions’, which indicate means to fool the public and reach the state of what he called ‘engineering of consent’¹⁴. Bernays stated that “[i]ntelligent men must realize that propaganda is the modern instrument by which they can fight for productive ends and help to bring order out of chaos.”¹⁵ He strongly believed that in order for a government to reach its goals, it must possess mastery of propaganda techniques, for without propaganda, chaos is eminent.

Walter Lippmann, another American pioneer in the field of journalism, famous for his book *Public Opinion* (1922), argued that in order to ‘manufacture consent’, propaganda was essential. The public, he claimed, could be pushed to buy or support

¹² *Media Control*, Op.Cit., p.15.

¹³ *At War with Metaphor: Media, Propaganda, and Racism in the War on Terror*, p.19.

¹⁴ *Idem*.

¹⁵ *Propaganda*, Op.Cit., p.159.

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things they never thought of before, all thanks to propaganda.¹⁶ According to Chomsky, Lippman “thought that this was a good idea, in fact, necessary. It was necessary because, as he put it, “the common interests elude public opinion entirely” and can only be understood and managed by a “specialized class “of “responsible men” who are smart enough to figure things out.”¹⁷ This illustrates that early theorists of propaganda thought that the people could not be trusted to make any decisions, and since coercion was something of the past, the people had to be led towards the state’s agenda through the use of propaganda.

Propaganda, then, is the exploitation of available communication tools in order to direct the attention of the public towards a specific goal, be it a political agenda or an economic one. In a sense, propaganda tends to unify people’s views and ensures that the masses overcome individualistic thoughts. As Gustav Lebon puts it in *the Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind*, the individual loses his or her ideas once in a crowd. Propaganda is mostly extensively used when a certain nation is going through a crisis, usually a war. War is still regarded with disdain. Most people would prefer to avoid it at all costs, even if it is a necessary evil. This is where propaganda’s practicality comes into play. Through systematic visual or other tactical means, the public would be subjugated to endless news that would align their perception with that of the government, and make them rally behind it in support of whatever the government intends to do. The crowd mentality takes hold and individualistic thoughts would be neglected.

¹⁶ Cited in *Media Control*, p.11.

¹⁷ Idem.

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George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is one of the landmarks in literature that takes propaganda to a total extreme. The government has an absolute, unchallenged control over the people through its propagandist machinery. It works as a drug that makes people easily controlled and manipulated. Even the famous opposition, the Brotherhood, led by Big Brother's supposed nemesis Emmanuel Goldstein, turns out to be part of the Party's propaganda. When Winston Smith asked O'Brien whether they truly exist or not, he was never given a definitive answer. O'Brien simply said, "you will never know. If we choose to set you free when we have finished with you, and if you live to be ninety years old, still you will never learn whether the answer to that question is Yes or No. As long as you live it will be an unsolved riddle in your mind." (p.272) Their existence did not matter as long as Winston, and the rest of the citizens believed in them. This is the same way Big Brother exists solely as "the embodiment of the Party" (p.272)

There is no escape from Big Brother's totalitarian control. We see this through Winston's and Julia's attempt to fight the system and their inevitable failure. In this prospect, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* provides a significant reference to the war on terror operation. In a sense, the people in Oceania breathe propaganda. It is part of their lives. Their thoughts and everything they do is controlled by propaganda. Throughout the novel, Orwell illustrates what a totalitarian regime can achieve through the mastery of propaganda. It highlights how a government would control society through sheer terror, from violent means to psychological warfare using propaganda. The latter makes the citizens passive and obedient, and thus easily manipulated. As Hannah Arendt put it, totalitarian thinkers have "extreme contempt for facts as such, for in

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their opinion fact depends entirely on the power of the man who can fabricate it.”¹⁸

The people only know what the Party wants them to know. The latter makes sure all the knowledge they receive is as filtered as possible. This limits the people’s ability to question anything the government does.

The “old” versus the “new” ways of propaganda is what separates the United States’ foreign policy post-9/11 from the totalitarian regime of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. However, despite the fact that the U.S’ government was not coercive in its propaganda techniques, it still achieved tremendous results, at odds with those of the Party in Oceania, and which in turn renders it post-*Nineteen Eighty-Four*. The September 11 attacks came as a shock to the whole world and not the United States alone. The U.S used to, and still does, represent an impenetrable fortress. The World Trade Centre embodied a symbol of capitalism, and the Pentagon a military stronghold. An attack on them was perceived as a threat to the world order. The U.S government, however, seized that opportunity to widen its horizon for its war on terror operation. Using the same tactics as the terrorists who attacked them, the U.S media deployed terrorism in its favour. It mastered the exploitation of fear that was the product of the attacks and launched it at its people so that they would support any war it wanted.

The 9/11 attacks terrorised the American people and the media added fuel to fire by exaggerations in their coverage of the incident. The war on terror then became a media war. Video clips of the planes hitting the Towers and images of the rabble and bodies of the victims were broadcasted repeatedly. The replication added to the trauma and people were forced to be indulged into this whole event. There was no escape from

¹⁸ *Unspeak, Op.Cit.*, p.42.

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this. Ignoring something like this would have meant allowing danger to come to their homes. This has a striking resemblance with what the Party does in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Propaganda that is in favour of the Ingsoc ideology is rampant in Oceania. There are numerous ways in which the Party indoctrinates the people with its propaganda. The government keeps the citizens occupied by broadcasting nonstop propaganda through radio stations and through telescreens.

Telescreens cannot be turned off so as to facilitate for the Party the broadcast of any information it wants at any time. They also function as surveillance tools as we saw in the previous chapter. The Two Minutes is one of the events broadcasted on the telescreens. Scenes of Goldstein and Eurasian soldiers are broadcasted on daily basis as a reminder of the danger that awaits the citizens. As Winston thinks,

The horrible thing about the Two Minutes Hate was not that one was obliged to act a part, but, on the contrary, that it was impossible to avoid joining in. Within thirty seconds any pretence was always unnecessary. A hideous ecstasy of fear and vindictiveness, a desire to kill, to torture, to smash faces in with a sledge-hammer, seemed to flow through the whole group of people like an electric current, turning one even against one's will into a grimacing, screaming lunatic. And yet the rage that one felt was an abstract, undirected emotion which could be switched from one object to another like the flame of a blowlamp. (p.16)

The end goal from this was that the people would lose their sense of reality and immerse themselves into the hateful, collective outrage the crowd creates. This makes them prone to any manipulation by the Party. The 9/11 attacks entailed that the United States was no longer invincible and now any terrorist group can breach its walls. The

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war on terror then became a war of “imagination, images and words. The appearance and disappearance of terrorists and militants takes place within the media space and, indeed, terrorism is foremost a communicative act which takes place through the publicity of news reports.”¹⁹ This psychological warfare affected the U.S citizens and raised their anxiety and fear of any eminent attacks.

People are at their most irrationality when they are anxious and afraid, and this would mean an impeccable opportunity for any media outlets to push their agenda, namely the government’s agenda onto them and make them believe in it and even become vehement devotees of it. As Douglas Kellner notes, the Bush administration constantly reminded the American public of eminent attacks from an ‘axis of evil’, and that the military was ready to defend the U.S at all costs. This kept the public in a state of fear, which in turn allowed the government to pass any legislations they wanted thanks to the help of mainstream media.²⁰ The events following the attacks were broadcasted as a TV drama. Day and night, the people would be provided with images and videos of people being pulled out of the rubble, others recounting their survival, and of course the videos of the attacks themselves. No one was safe and similar attacks were eminent. The events were so intense that even those who did not witness the attacks first-hand felt as though they had been there in the same situation as those who experienced them. The focus was solely on the attacks and the rescue events that followed them. The coverage of that was as hysterical as it could get.

¹⁹ Graham, Spencer, *The Media and Peace: From Vietnam to the ‘War on Terror’*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 2005), p.164

²⁰ *From 9/11 to Terror War*, Op.Cit., p.19.

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This brings us to Noam Chomsky's and Edward S. Herman's "propaganda model". In their book *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media* (1988), Chomsky and Herman proposed a propaganda model, a framework that the media is bound to abide by. What this framework encapsulates is that the media panders to the wishes of the owners. They argue that since the media needs funding and sponsors, it would filter out any information that would be against their sponsors' interests. They point out that wherever bureaucracy is rampant, the government could have absolute control over the media, putting the latter under the mercy of the elite in control.²¹ So, the notion that the media is the people's eye to the world, according to Chomsky and Herman, is not true. They serve the interests of those who own them. In this prospect, the propaganda model's main focus is the "inequality of wealth and power and its multilevel effects on mass-media interests and choices."²² It also demonstrates how money and power influence the news media.²³

Chomsky and Herman claim that all that the media publishes undergoes certain checkpoints before it can go public. In this case, the media is under an authoritarian control and is not free. They lay out five filters they argued each media outlets go through. These five filters constitute the propaganda model:

The essential ingredients of our propaganda model, or set of news "filters," fall under the following headings: (1) the size, concentrated ownership, owner wealth, and profit orientation of the dominant mass-media firms; (2) advertising as the primary income source of the mass media; (3) the reliance of the media on information provided by

²¹ Edward S. Herman, Noam, Chomsky. *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*, (New York: Pantheon Books. 2002), p.01.

²² Idem.

²³ Ibid, p.02.

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government, business, and “experts” funded and approved by these primary sources and agents of power; (4) “flak” as a means of disciplining the media; and (5) “anticommunism” as a national religion and control mechanism. These elements interact with and reinforce one another.²⁴

The propaganda model then suggests that mass-media is under tight control. Using this model, we can dismantle how mainstream media in the United States rushed to support the Bush administration’s decision to go to war against Afghanistan and Iraq. As explained in the previous chapter, the Bush administration did succeed in pushing its own pre-emptive strikes laws and established itself as the World Police.

The first filter illustrates how stockholders are in control of corporate media. Media firms are under the control of wealthy people and ‘other market-profit-oriented forces’²⁵ Since they have interests in the economic and political sphere of the country, they make sure the media firms they control only report what would benefit them more. They would not, for instance, criticise any policies that would be of benefit to them. According to Erin Steuter, the NBC network, for instance, is owned by General Electric. Since the latter manufactures weapons, NBC’s coverage of U.S military would be favourable and void of any criticism.²⁶ Another famous right-wing news network that fits into this category is Fox News. It is owned by Rupert Murdoch, chief executive of News Corporation. Murdoch used his networks to promote his agenda concerning politics and to widen his interests. He was a fervent supporter of the Bush administration and its policy concerning the war on terror. Steuter states that The Daily Telegraph, which is also owned by Murdoch, reported that remnants of torture victims

²⁴ *Ibid*, p.02.

²⁵ *Ibid*, p.14.

²⁶ *At War with Metaphor: Media, Propaganda, and Racism in the War on Terror*, Op.Cit., p.168.

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were found in Iraq. However, *CNN* and the *New York Times* refuted the claim and the remains turned out to be of Iraqi and Iranian soldiers killed in the Iraq-Iran war.²⁷

It was not the first time that a Bush administration used media hysteria to push for its political agenda. Before George W. Bush, his father George H. W. Bush used the same tactics, against the same enemy, who used to be an ally before. Saddam was supported both by the Reagan administration and the Bush government. Since his popularity was failing, Bush senior saw in Saddam an opportunity to gain public opinion favour and get re-elected. And so it happened. A New World Order was born later where the U.S would act as a World Police to ensure “stability in the world”. Following on his father’s footsteps, Bush junior did the same thing and seized the opportunity of the attacks to gain popularity and thus ensure his agenda is fulfilled.

The war on Afghanistan did not wield good results for the Bush administration. Although images of the U.S troops dropping food for the Afghani citizens were broadcasted as part of the propaganda, more pictures of refugees and the damages caused by the U.S military were broadcasted. In addition to that, the big heads of the Taliban, especially Bin Laden, escaped and were not caught, which made the American citizens perceive it as a failure even though the Taliban were defeated. As with his father in the Gulf War, Bush junior needed another media hysteria to win the people’s favour. Saddam’s Iraq provided the perfect opportunity for such occasion. Thus, in 2002, Bush employed his “axis of evil” rhetoric that included Iraq, Iran, and North Korea. According to Edmund Byrne, Bush’s discourse,

²⁷ *Ibid*, p.171.

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...disregards the fact that (1) a half-dozen other nation-states have incomparably more nuclear weapons (Pakistan and India, Russia and Israel, the UK and the US); that (2) a decade after the end of the Cold War, hundreds of thousands of American troops, supplied with the world's most advanced weaponry, sometimes including nuclear arms, are stationed on over sixty-one base complexes in nineteen countries worldwide, using the Department of Defence narrowest definition of a major installation_(e.g., Okinawa, Germany, and Turkey); and that (3) the US government is now establishing additional bases (e.g., in Uzbekistan, Qatar, and most recently four in Iraq).²⁸

In that year, a massive propaganda war was launched against Saddam Hussein. It started with the oppression of his people, to owning weapons of mass destructions, and eventually it turned into a war of 'liberation'. Bush needed a figurative triumph over terrorism and Iraq was the perfect opportunity.

The media ensured to provide a massive coverage of the invasion and bombing of Iraq. It was a great show to gain more ratings. After all, it was the moment they kept promising the people and they needed to live up to the hype they built. This leads to the second filter: advertisers. Media networks cannot function without advertisers. They are their pulse. "The advertisers' choices influence media prosperity and survival."²⁹ This means advertisers have a say in what the media reports on. The latter in this case would be more interested in targeting buyers instead of caring for diverse, informative news. "In its 2003 "Fear & Favor" report, media watchdog *FAIR* examines the pressures exerted by advertisers on programming; *FAIR*'s Janine Jackson told the American Free Press that 60 percent of the journalists it surveyed said advertisers "try

²⁸ Cited in "The Post-9/11 State Of Emergency." *Social Philosophy Today* (2003): 193-215. Web.

²⁹ *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media.*, Op.Cit., p.14.

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to change stories.”³⁰ The media’s reaction to the 9/11 attacks was far from being professional. Bias was apparent. Instead of calming the people, they added to their fear and hysteria, which is exactly what made them rally behind in support of their government for a war against the supposed responsible for the attacks. Patriotic discourse was on the rise and anyone who opposed the war was deemed unpatriotic.

Sourcing mass-media is the third filter. Chomsky and Herman claim that mass media and powerful sources are linked together through sheer economic necessity.³¹ Politicians can be reliable sources of news, and the media would need access to that. Media networks for the most part rely on government sources in this case for their reporting. When the interests of the corporate media meet those of the government, this would constitute cooperation between them. Criticism would be lessened in this case in order not to lose valuable sources. When the attacks happened, government party affiliated networks brought some ‘experts’ to explain what was going on to the public. Fox News for instance brought Jean Kirkpatrick, who was known for favouring authoritarian regimes, and she argued that the United States was at war with Islam, resonating Samuel Huntington’s Clash of Civilisations.³² She said communist regimes would never collapse and she was discredited since the Soviet Union did collapse eventually; yet she was still at work and was brought as an intellectual and an expert on networks like Fox News. This sensational discourse triggers a ray of emotions, which are useful to the government because they allow it to manipulate the people.

³⁰ *At War with Metaphor: Media, Propaganda, and Racism in the War on Terror*, Op.Cit, p.173.

³¹ *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*, Op.Cit., p18.

³² *At War with Metaphor: Media, Propaganda, and Racism in the War on Terror*, Op.Cit, p.159.

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In this prospect, the media's coverage of the war was deceiving. As Steuter maintains, another way to have the people support the war is to censor the publication of civilian death statistics.³³ The media relied on government's statistics for Americans death tolls, while Iraqis and Afghanis casualties were counted by independent organisations that rarely received any media attention.³⁴ The American public was assured that there were no civilian casualties in the war and their soldiers avoided civilians as much as possible because of their 'technologically developed weapons.' It was what Bush said when he announced his war on terrorism plan:

On my orders, the United States military has begun strikes against the al Qaeda terrorist training camps and military installations of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. These carefully targeted actions are designed to disrupt the uses of Afghanistan as a terrorist base of operations and to attack the military capability of the Taliban regime.³⁵

The discourse that only 'evil-doers' were targeted and not innocent civilians reassured the people that the war was under control.

The fourth filter is flak, which is the pressure put on the media by the government. It is the manner in which the government censors the opinions of those who oppose its policies. The government is capable of putting pressure on the media through lawsuits and negative ratings. This would harm advertisers as well and they would give up said media network. According to Chomsky and Herman, media outlets

³³ *Ibid*, p.161.

³⁴ *Ibid*, p.160.

³⁵ "Bush's Remarks on U.S. Military Strikes in Afghanistan." *The New York Times*. N.p., n.d. Web. 23 Feb. 2017. <<http://www.nytimes.com/2001/10/08/us/a-nation-challenged-bush-s-remarks-on-us-military-strikes-in-afghanistan.html>>.

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that try to deviate from the official narrative put forward by the government will receive flak.³⁶

Patriotism was on the rise during the war on terror campaign, and anyone who opposed the war was labelled as unpatriotic and a traitor. Public rage was channelled against anyone who questioned the Bush administration's policies. No criticism of the war was allowed. Susan Sontag, an essayist who opposed the war on terror and argued that the attacks of 9/11 needed to be understood within the broader context of decades of American foreign policy in the Middle East, in return, was publicly attacked and denounced as a "quisling," a "fifth columnist," even a "pathetic ayatollah of hate."³⁷ Because the media alleviated the hysterical atmosphere of the campaign, even those who opposed the discourses used by politicians and right-wing media outlets were considered as condoning the attacks against the American soil. The Bush administration did not need to censor its critics. All it did was direct public outrage against them and that did the job perfectly.

The fifth and last filter, anticommunism, is of a higher significance since it is the way through which mass-media ensures it receives the positive feedback it needs from the government and various advertisers. Since Chomsky and Herman's book was written during the Cold War, anticommunism was the filter. It was later updated to 'fear'. This filter refers to the need of an external threat, something the media scares the people with in order to push their agenda. It demonstrated its relevance after the September 11 attacks. Terrorism replaced anticommunism as the dominant menace that threatened the security of the American people. The hysterical coverage of the war

³⁶ *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*, Op.Cit., p.28.

³⁷ Cited in *At War with Metaphor: Media, Propaganda, and Racism in the War on Terror*, Op.Cit., p.09.

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on terror campaign led to the inevitable question: who was behind the attacks and what could we as citizens do to prevent them from happening? To the media, the answer was quite simple: terrorists; and the government provided their readily solution: war.

The discourse of ‘us’ vs ‘them’ then started to take a stronghold in public opinion. The message was clear: we are at war and the only way to survive this is by taking a military action. Mainstream media provided no other solutions and pushed for this narrative that the only solution is to wage a war against ‘them’. Rationality vanishes when war is eminent, and in order to persuade the people of endorsing it, the government and the media affiliated with it, had to act fast. The Bush administration paved the way for its new foreign policy of pre-emptive strikes, and made sure that the media spread the message. As Kellner states, the government spread the idea that World War Three had replaced the Cold War.³⁸

With the presence of an eminent threat, which was terrorism, the Bush administration succeeded in convincing the people of several operations, such as bombing Afghanistan and invading Iraq. In fact, it did not require much effort from the U.S government. All it did was scare the people of more eminent attacks and they would be rallying in support behind it. The masses were already horrified and panic overwhelmed the country. The enemy was out there and it needed to be eliminated; the best way to do it was to put trust in the government that vouched to accomplish its job and exalt vengeance on terrorism, and who already made it clear that the only way to fight back is to go to war against ‘terrorism’. Obviously, the enemy was obscure. ‘Terrorism’ and ‘terrorist’ became labels thrown at anyone who opposed the U.S

³⁸ *From 9/11 to Terror War*, Op.Cit., p.06.

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government's interests. In a way, the concept of terror was stripped of its meaning and became a weapon in the hands of the Bush administration.

War is a necessary evil and propaganda is the one thing capable of igniting its fuel. It is the only way to gain public support. Propaganda works by taking advantage of people's emotions and controlling them when they are at their most irrationality. Its "intent is not to educate but to generate and direct emotion, to boil the blood while it narrows the mind. Its most essential task, and its most dangerous, is to ensure that public emotion dominates public discussion."³⁹ Dehumanisation of the other group is what usually characterises wars in general. People need not to see the other group as normal people. Their perception of them has to be as degrading as possible. As Edward Said argued,

...to build a conceptual framework around the notion of us-versus-them is in effect to pretend that the principal consideration is epistemological and natural – our civilization is known and accepted, theirs is different and strange – whereas in fact the framework separating us from them is belligerent, constructed and situational.⁴⁰

Only through this process, can soldiers and ordinary citizens support bombing other countries. In cases like these, the government exploits every stereotype the people have about the other group; the prejudices they grew up to hear for instance, or indoctrinated to believe in whether through public schools or religious ceremonies. These stereotypes about the Other, often overblown to a preposterous scale, serve as the trigger to people's inner fears. The government in this case feasts upon that fear

³⁹ *At War with Metaphor: Media, Propaganda, and Racism in the War on Terror*, Op.Cit., p.18.

⁴⁰ Edward, Said, "The Clash of Definitions" in *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 2002), p.577.

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and controls it in a way that would benefit it. Propaganda helps greatly in the construction of the enemy's image. As Steuter puts it, the image of the enemy has to be as "shadowy" as possible.⁴¹ The significance of this ambiguity lies in the fact that the people would not be given enough details to distinguish between the supposed enemies. They are all alike, so any group the government intends to target could easily be framed as a potential enemy.

In order to convince the people to go to war with another nation, the government must dehumanise the intended enemy. The less humane the other party appears to be, the more support the government attains for its agenda. The rhetoric of 'us' vs 'them' plays a huge role into this. As Slavoj Žizek, a Slovenian philosopher, explained, "in order to recognise the enemy, one has to 'schematize' the logical figure of the Enemy, providing it with the concrete features which will make it into an appropriate target of hatred and struggle."⁴² After the September 11 attacks, the U.S government employed its media personnel for the sake of promoting its agenda that was waging war on Afghanistan then eventually Iraq. Its claim was that they were terrorist states that funded the terrorists that were behind the 9/11 attacks. The term terrorism was used as loosely and vaguely as possible to leave an open interpretation and a backdoor to escape any blame for any action caused by the U.S military.

The concept of terrorism was exploited to achieve a U.S hegemonic agenda, and for the sake of waging wars at any governments or groups it deemed dangerous. The media exploited that term and made sure it changed public opinion on who a terrorist

⁴¹ *At War with Metaphor: Media, Propaganda, and Racism in the War on Terror*, p.26.

⁴² "Slavoj Žižek · Are we in a war? Do we have an enemy?: Love Thy Neighbour." N.p., n.d. Web. 19 Mar. 2017. <<https://www.lrb.co.uk/v24/n10/slavoj-zizek/are-we-in-a-war-do-we-have-an-enemy>>.

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was; it also terrorised the people to fulfil the government's geo-political agenda. The 'good', innocent victims Us vs the 'bad' terrorists 'Them' rhetoric characterised the whole operation covered by the U.S media. What was perpetuated by the latter is not necessarily the truth. It could be a fraction of it, as in the white type of propaganda, something that does not reflect on the whole situation. For instance, The U.S claimed at first that they were going to war against Saddam Hussein because he had weapons of mass destruction, and that he oppressed his people; eventually this ended up with a mission for the 'liberation' of the Iraqi people. What would be credible here is the oppressor part, but the true intents behind it were something else. It is also done with the perception of the 'self' as superior. A superior people often claim the right to pass judgement onto others, and that judgement includes what the U.S is famous for, "bringing democracy to oppressed nations."

To deceive the people, the U.S government feasted on their fear of another attack like 9/11. The enemy's image had to be tarnished and made into a savage monster that cannot be reasoned with. According to Said, the aim was "to keep the region and its people conceptually emasculated, reduced to "attitudes," "trends," statistics: in short, dehumanized."⁴³ Orientalist tropes helped a lot with this. Orientalist discourse started to take place and Middle Easterners were seen as potential terrorists, if not terrorists. An Arab, as Said pointed out, was "associated either with lechery or bloodthirsty dishonesty."⁴⁴ Likewise, in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the Party made sure the citizens absorbed enough propaganda about the supposed enemies in the Two Minutes

⁴³ *Orientalism*, Op.Cit. p.291

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p.286.

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Hate; images of Eastasian soldiers in the most heinous way possible were broadcasted, and the enemy within which was Goldstein.

Winning a war depends on the effectiveness of propaganda. It is impossible to offer a non-biased view of certain events by the media, especially in times of conflicts. Media outlets are as biased as they get, even though none would admit that. After the 9/11 attacks, the U.S media resorted to all kinds of bias in their reporting, from dehumanising the ones the Bush administration claimed were responsible for the attacks, to painting the attack as an unprecedented incident, something without a context. Stripping the attacks of any context was the first step towards paving the way for a war against the supposed attackers, namely Saddam's Iraq and Afghanistan. Then, what followed was a series of generalisations on the people of each country, often painting them as inferior to the American people, and jealous of their democracy.

The claims of the media as to why the U.S was going to war against Iraq, however, changed with time, as mentioned before. To ensure that it had all the support it can get, the Bush administration relied on several tactics of propaganda. It did not only aim at flooding its people with massive news about the situation in Iraq, but also reaching the Iraqi citizens and giving them the best image about the United States and its intentions. Unlike the American people, the Iraqi citizens did not forget that they were living in an extremely dire situation for the past ten years due to the sanctions imposed on them, and they blamed the United States for that and not their government. Thus, it was not easy to mislead them the same way as the American people.

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Though regimes differed, the effectiveness of the U.S propaganda proved massive and more effective. With the media taking a crucial part in the war, especially with live reporting from the war itself, and with the control it exercised on public opinion, the U.S government could not ignore these facts and made sure they used them for their benefits. In this case, the manipulation of facts was not enough. The government needed to control the language in which media outlets reported the events of the war. The next section will shed light on some of the techniques used by the Bush administration to manipulate language in its favour.

2. Newspeak and the War on Terrorism

Language is an essential tool of propaganda. George Orwell illustrates that in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* through the usage of Newspeak, the official language of Oceania. In the novel, only the leading articles in *The Times* are written in Newspeak. No one uses it in their daily speech. It is yet to be perfected to encompass all usages. As Goldstein states in his book, “[i]t was expected that Newspeak would have finally superseded Oldspeak (or Standard English, as we should call it) by about the year 2050.” (p.312) He also adds that “[t]he purpose of Newspeak was not only to provide a medium of expression for the world-view and mental habits proper to the devotees of Ingsoc, but to make all other modes of thought impossible.” (p.312) Through the manipulation of language, the Party shapes reality as it sees fit. The aim of Newspeak is to limit the thoughts of the people.

Newspeak is divided into three categories: The A vocabulary, which is comprised of words needed for everyday life; the B vocabulary including political

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lingo; and the C vocabulary which contains scientific and technical concepts. The aim of this division is to limit the language as much as possible. After all, “Newspeak was designed not to extend but to diminish the range of thought, and this purpose was indirectly assisted by cutting the choice of words down to a minimum.” (p.313) When Winston met Syme, one of the specialists on Newspeak, he explained to him the purpose of this language:

We’re getting the language into its final shape --the shape it’s going to have when nobody speaks anything else. When we’ve finished with it, people like you will have to learn it all over again. You think, I dare say, that our chief job is inventing new words. But not a bit of it! We’re destroying words --scores of them, hundreds of them, every day. We’re cutting the language down to the bone. The Eleventh Edition won’t contain a single word that will become obsolete before the year 2050.... It’s a beautiful thing, the destruction of words. Of course the great wastage is in the verbs and adjectives, but there are hundreds of nouns that can be got rid of as well. It isn’t only the synonyms; there are also the antonyms. After all, what justification is there for a word which is simply the opposite of some other word? A word contains its opposite in itself. Take ‘good’, for instance. If you have a word like ‘good’, what need is there for a word like ‘bad’? ‘Ungood’ will do just as well --better, because it’s an exact opposite, which the other is not. (p.53/54)

The Party understands that by monitoring the language it can effortlessly control the minds of the citizens. Any ‘ambiguous’ words are substituted with simpler ones. For example, *crimethink*, the Newspeak word for *thoughtcrime*, means to possess an unorthodox thought. In Newspeak, adding the prefix ‘un’ to a word is sufficient to give it an antonym. For instance, bad is not the antonym of good, but *ungood* is. Words like freedom, peace, and individuality are all rendered meaningless.

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The Party is able to use Newspeak to control the actions and thoughts of the citizens. This is referred to as *crimestop*. The term *crimestop* is defined as the “the faculty of stopping short, as though by instinct, at the threshold of any dangerous thought.” (p.220) *Crimestop* does not only entail the prevention of crime but even the thought of committing a crime. Goldstein further explains that “[i]t includes the power of not grasping analogies...of misunderstanding the simplest arguments if they are inimical to Ingsoc.” (p.220) By doing this, people’s chance of asking for change, or even demanding different things, will be lessened. No one will even think of going against the Party. It is a totalitarian rule after all. “Crimestop, in short, means protective stupidity” (p.221)

In his essay “Politics and the English Language”, George Orwell argues that “if thought corrupts language, language also corrupts thought. A bad usage can spread by tradition and imitation, even among people who should know better.”⁴⁵ The manipulation of language by politicians and the media in times of crises will render any person invulnerable and open to absorb anything that is broadcasted. Words influence thoughts and restrict them; therefore by controlling language, politicians can deceive their audience easily. In this essay, Orwell criticises the abuse of language by politicians. To achieve this, he claims that “political language has to consist largely of euphemism, question-begging and sheer cloudy vagueness.”⁴⁶ Orwell managed to further illustrate his thoughts on his novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Newspeak is one of the principles of the Party’s ideology Ingsoc. Norman Fairclough argues that

⁴⁵ “Politics and the English Language.” Web. 20 May 2015.
<http://www.orwell.ru/library/essays/politics/english/e_polit/>.

⁴⁶ Idem.

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“ideologies are closely linked to language, because using language is the commonest form of social behaviour, and the form of social behaviour where we rely most on 'common-sense' assumptions.”⁴⁷ The totalitarian government in Oceania, however, does not rely solely on language to control the masses; it relies on another principle of Ingsoc, which is doublethink.

Doublethink is another form of “reality control” used by the Party to psychologically control the people. It is how the usage of Newspeak is facilitated. As Winston observes:

To know and not to know, to be conscious of complete truthfulness while telling carefully constructed lies, to hold simultaneously two opinions which cancelled out, knowing them to be contradictory and believing in both of them, to use logic against logic....to believe that democracy was impossible and that the Party was the guardian of democracy....That was the ultimate subtlety: consciously to induce unconsciousness, and then, once again, to become unconscious of the act of hypnosis you had just performed. Even to understand the word “doublethink” involved the use of doublethink. (p.37)

In essence, doublethink and Newspeak are closely intertwined. Doublethink serves as the psychological explanation as to how the citizens of Oceania are able to absorb all the propaganda fostered by the Party, in which Newspeak takes the lion’s share. The Party employs Newspeak to promote the notion of doublethink. Since doublethink means holding two contradictory beliefs but believing in both of them, the Party’s three slogans themselves, “WAR IS PEACE, FREEDOM IS SLAVERY,

⁴⁷ Norman, Fairclough. *Language and Power*, (New York: Longman, Inc. 1989), p.02.

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IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH”, are examples of doublethink. In addition, the four ministries are termed paradoxically.

There are four ministries in Oceania: the Ministry of Truth, the Ministry of Peace, the Ministry of Love, and the Ministry of Plenty. In principle, each ministry functions in direct contrast to its name. The Ministry of Love concerns itself with law and order. The Ministry of Peace concerns itself with war. The Ministry of Plenty is responsible for the economic affairs. Finally, The Ministry of Truth controls the Party’s propaganda. The protagonist in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Winston Smith, is a propagandist himself. He works in the Ministry of Truth, the Records Department section, where all works of “rectifying” history take place. We see here the link between the three principles of Ingsoc: Newspeak reduces the citizens’ ability to have ‘rebellious’ thoughts; doublethink allows the Party to manipulate the psyche of the people, and eventually Oceanians would passively conceive the contradictions passed off by the Party’s propaganda, one of which is the perpetual state of war.

Since Newspeak is the only language which the media uses, the people of Oceania have no other means to know what is truly going on outside of the bubble the Party created for them. They are deprived of any chance to look into different sources other than what the Party provides for them. As Winston further reads from Goldstein’s book,

[i]t is absolutely necessary to their structure that there should be no contact with foreigners, except, to a limited extent, with war prisoners and coloured slaves. Even the official ally of the moment is always regarded with the darkest suspicion. War prisoners apart, the average citizen of Oceania never sets eyes on a citizen of either Eurasia or

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Eastasia, and he is forbidden the knowledge of foreign languages. If he were allowed contact with foreigners he would discover that they are creatures similar to himself and that most of what he has been told about them is lies. The sealed world in which he lives would be broken, and the fear, hatred, and self-righteousness on which his morale depends might evaporate. (p.204)

Through sheer force and the manipulation of the media, the citizens have no chance of having contact with the outside world. Living in absolute isolation and having no means to communicate their thoughts is the totalitarian regime's ultimate goal to have control over the people. By living in a ceaseless state of fear, the citizens will have to support the government in doing whatever it demands of them.

In a sense, mass media and terrorist organisations are in a symbiotic relationship. Terrorists strive for and rely on media coverage to spread their message, and in return the media is provided with exclusive news that will boost its ratings. In this prospect, the media sometimes utilises the same language used by terrorists and politicians, the former for adding 'excitement' to the news and the latter because they rely on their information (see propaganda model). This is troubling since the media is supposed to be neutral, but in most cases it is not. The post-9/11 media rhetoric in the United States was a field that was harboured by both Newspeak and doublethink. By combining these two words, a new concept was coined which is "doublespeak." As Steven Poole says,

Another term often used to describe political language is 'doublespeak', a word not coined by Orwell himself but clearly modelled on his concepts of Newspeak and Doublethink (in Nineteen Eighty-Four, the ability to believe two opposing ideas simultaneously). Introduced in the 1950s, 'doublespeak' (or 'double-

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talk') is generally used to describe the phenomenon of saying one thing while meaning another.⁴⁸

The notion of doublespeak entails that politicians and mass-media depend on a discourse that conceals their true intentions in order to achieve their agenda. The war on terror was first named 'Operation Infinite Justice'. Fearing the people might see through the term, it became a 'war on terror', to conceal the 'infinity' in it. Then the name became 'Operation Enduring Freedom', terms to confuse the people about what was going on.

The invasion on Iraq was assumed to be a regime change, and eventually became 'Operation Iraqi Freedom.' As Steuter maintains, the investigation into Saddam's alleged holdings of weapons of mass destruction was changed from "'Saddam's Programme for Weapons of Mass Destruction' to 'Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction'."⁴⁹ Even the phrase 'weapons of mass destruction' itself entailed a notion for weapons that could not be tampered with. The term gradually lost its original meaning. It was done on purpose to hide the mal-intentions behind the Iraq invasion. After the latter, no weapons of mass destruction were found, and the term was loosened to mean any threatening weapon.

A coalition against terrorist networks was called upon to rid the world of 'terrorists'. This coalition included Israel, a state that has been involved in terrorist crimes against the Palestinians. This divided the world into 'good' vs 'evil. As Arundathi Roy pointed out:

⁴⁸ *Unspeak: How Words Become Weapons, How Weapons Become a Message, and How That Message Becomes Reality*, Op.Cit., p.10.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p.112.

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The International Coalition Against Terror is largely a cabal of the richest countries in the world. Between them, they manufacture and sell almost all of the world's weapons, they possess the largest stockpile of weapons of mass destruction chemical, biological and nuclear. They have fought the most wars, account for most of the genocide, subjection, ethnic cleansing and human rights violations in modern history, and have sponsored, armed and financed untold numbers of dictators and despots. Between them, they have worshipped, almost deified, the cult of violence and war. For all its appalling sins, the Taliban just isn't in the same league” And as George Bush stated “those who are not with us are with the terrorists”. The stakes were clear, either the Bush administration would go about their plan as freely as possible, or their opposing parties would be accused of supporting terrorism.⁵⁰

The phrase ‘Coalition of the Willing’ was used to describe this agreement. The media adopted these terms and used them in order to conceal the true intentions behind the war, and to make the context as opaque as possible. Whatever the United States politicians or media said had to be accepted since they were in a position of power. They feasted on people’s fear and exploited it to different measures. One of the examples of this exploitation was the issuing of the Patriot Act Bill. This bill allowed the government to enjoy more power over the people, especially over their privacy. The government could spy on people’s private communications like emails and phone calls, and eventually all internet usage, without needing any warrant for that. The liberties of the people were suppressed all for the sake of being protected from this fearsome enemy that was constantly trying to attack the country.

⁵⁰ Arundhati Roy. "War Is Peace." Web. 10 Mar. 2016. <<http://www.outlookindia.com/magazine/story/war-is-peace/213547>>.

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The Patriot Act had a striking resemblance with Big Brother. Big Brother is a godlike figure in Oceania. He is praised for every good that happens in the country. Pictures of him are hanged everywhere, both as a propaganda tactic and a surveillance one. He is the sole person capable of protecting them from any upcoming danger. Opposite to Big Brother, there is Emanuel Goldstein, a leader of a supposed rebel group called the Brotherhood. He represents the opposite of Big Brother, a threat to the nation. People's irrational fear of this dangerous man, in addition to the fear of torture, will make them buy into anything the Party does. Once this binary of Good Big Brother, vs Evil Emanuel Goldstein is instilled into people's minds, it is easy enough for the Party to push its ideology and do as it pleases. According to Kellner,

Bush's police state has its USA Patriot Act that enables the state to monitor the communications of e-mail, wireless, telephones, and other media, while allowing government to arrest citizens without warrants, to hold them indefinitely, to monitor their conversations, and to submit them to military tribunals, all of which would be governed by the dictates of the supreme leader.⁵¹

The Patriot Act also draws parallel with telescreens and how the Party is constantly monitoring people's actions. The bill also allows the government to detain people suspected of terrorism.

Bush announced an order to imprison any person they suspect of terrorism without any trial. It was called "rendition", a term that was applied to situations where someone is accused of terrorism. The torture they went through was referred to as

⁵¹ *From 9/11 to Terror War*, Op.Cit., p.19.

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“enhanced interrogation techniques”.⁵² Civilians in war zones such as Afghanistan and Iraq were referred to as “non-combatants”, a sinister term that indirectly painted them as potential enemies. Steuter points out that,

....[e]ven an apparently neutral term like “non-combatant,” while apparently acting simply as a synonym for “civilian,” suggests a very different connotation. The word civilian connotes a non-soldier, someone separate from the battle and therefore not a legitimate target. Civilians are the opposite of soldiers, but non-combatants are not the opposites of combatants, and could become combatants at any moment. The word *non-combatant*, looked at in this way, implies an activity rather than an essential condition, an activity that might suddenly change. The condition of not-fighting seems a more temporary state than the condition being a civilian.⁵³

A term like non-combatant makes it easier for the people to even lose sympathy for those who were wrongly detained or murdered in bombings. The author Ahdaf Soueif, an Egyptian novelist and political commentator, wrote that constant images of Iraqi soldiers “stripped with their wrists tied behind their backs with plastic cord” were broadcasted in the media, and “at no point was there an outcry. We have grown used to seeing Arab men bound and hooded.”⁵⁴ The torture the prisoners were exposed to in Guantanamo Bay and the way they were treated was also the target of doublespeak. The U.S military referred to the tortures that occurred there as “self-injurious behaviour incidents”, and instances of suicide as “an act of asymmetrical warfare”

⁵² Timothy, Lynch. “Doublespeak and the War on Terrorism”. *The Cato Institute* Briefing Paper, 6 September 2006. <http://www.cato.org/publications/briefing-paper/doublespeak-war-terrorism>.

⁵³ *At War with Metaphor: Media, Propaganda, and Racism in the War on Terror*, Op.Cit., p.20.

⁵⁴ *Cited in ibid*, p.22.

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against the American military.⁵⁵ The way in which those supposed enemies were dehumanised by politicians and the media turned their torture into something the people could ignore.

There was an indefinite list of doublespeak words that were used during the war on terror operation. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the citizens were under tremendous psychological and physical control that made them subscribe to anything the totalitarian government wanted to do. After the September 11th attacks, the U.S media seemed sufficient enough to successfully implement a psychological control without the need for torture. As Norman Fairclough argued,

The hidden power of media discourse and the capacity of the capitalist class and other power-holders to exercise this power depend on systematic tendencies in news reporting and other media activities....the effects of media power are cumulative, working through the repetition of particular ways of handling causality and agency, particular ways of positioning the reader, and so forth. Thus through the way it positions readers, for instance, media discourse is able to exercise a pervasive and powerful influence in social reproduction because of the very scale of the modern mass media and the extremely high level of exposure of whole populations to a relatively homogeneous output.⁵⁶

After the 9/11 attacks, Middle Easterners were painted as potential terrorists. Orientalist clichés, such as the Orient being “aberrant, underdeveloped, [and] inferior”⁵⁷, came to light again and were used by various media outlets in the United States. The news media did not bother themselves with finding the ideological context

⁵⁵ “Doublespeak and the War on Terrorism”, Op.Cit.

⁵⁶ *Language and Power*, Op.Cit., p.54.

⁵⁷ *Orientalism*, Op.Cit., p.300.

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and reasons behind the attacks. They covered it in a way that echoed President Bush's speech "they hate our freedoms....We are beginning another front in our war against terrorism, so freedom can prevail over fear."⁵⁸ He also declared that "[f]reedom has been attacked, but freedom will be defended."⁵⁹ As Timothy Lynch said, "the Bush administration would soon push for measures that are antithetical to freedom, such as secretive subpoenas, secretive arrests, secretive detentions, and secretive trials."⁶⁰ So the media, and subsequently the people, supported a war against these supposed haters, painting them in the most degrading ways possible, without realising that in doing so, they were also generalising on a whole population that had nothing to do with the attacks. The public was under the influence of the media rhetoric; a rhetoric that included hateful clichés against certain ethnic and religious groups and smeared them as terrorists.

The language used post-9/11 encompassed a discourse filled with orientalist tropes and evasive language that was meant to make things more obscure for the ordinary citizens. The term "Orwellian" is also used to describe any situation that resembles what Orwell warned about through his novels *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *Animal Farm*. Bush used several clichés to name the attackers, from "a cult of evil" to "going on a crusade".

In his ground-breaking book *Orientalism*, Edward Said pointed out this dichotomy of seeing the 'other' as less than a human. He argued that Westerners usually regard the 'other' as the complete opposite of what they stand for, a barbaric

⁵⁸ CNN. N.p., n.d. Web. 7 Mar. 2017. <<http://edition.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0110/07/bn.01.html>>.

⁵⁹ Idem.

⁶⁰ "Doublespeak and the War on Terrorism", Op.Cit.

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entity that is driven by irrationality. This misguided and ignorant definition sets a huge barrier between the two; a barrier that is overwhelmed by mystery and ignorance: the Occident self being the leader of scientific and democratic advancement in the world, and the Orient other depicted as the destroyer and the ultimate threat to civilisation as it stands. This hegemonic Western view of the other serves no one but the West itself. Orientalist discourse, as Edward Said pointed out, was inherently hegemonic, alluding to the power structure of it. With the coming of the war on terror, *Orientalism* gained a new fresh form, that of a civilising U.S government against barbaric terrorists. The struggle of the U.S became that of the civilised world by default. Therefore, the West became defined by its opposition: terrorism. Terrorism became a brush to paint any opposition to this so-called civilising mission of the Bush administration.

The frame of the war on terror was remarkably hegemonic. In fact, orientalist discourse is inherently hegemonic. As Said argues, it is “based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between ‘the Orient’ and (most of the time) ‘the Occident.’”⁶¹ *Orientalism* presents the two binaries of the self and the other as opposing entities with the self being the dominant one. The Occident is the manifestation of civilisation and prosperity, while the Orient is the opposite of that. With that being said, in the case of the war on terror, the U.S, being the Occident, had the only and ultimate say in how to manage the Orient, the other. Questions such as “who are they?” and “what do they want?” were surfacing, and pundits started to ponder upon the life of Middle Easterners. According to Said, American media outlets assumed the authority to describe this ‘other’ as they saw fit, “by making statements

⁶¹ *Orientalism*, Op.Cit., p.02.

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about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restricting and having authority over the Orient.”⁶²

The hegemonic nature of the war on terror discourse is illustrated in the way in which media outlets describe those suspected of terrorism. The U.S being the pinnacle of human civilisation, had all the right to attack any country that threatened its safety. President Bush’s say in this was final. It was considered a ‘clash of civilisations’, the West on one side and Islam, representing the other, on the opposite side. Despite Bush’s attempts to appeal to the Muslim community and his calling Islam a “religion of peace”, his administration’s tactics of tightening surveillance on Muslims were a textbook example of political hypocrisy. Steuter says,

The largest framing of the war on terror is a frame of race, and thus our most demeaning language and our harshest representations are reserved for those marked as racially Other. Evidence for this assertion can be found in the difference of language used to talk about internal voices of difference and those external Others who, as we draw them through our metaphoric language, are not just different but are defined by their difference.⁶³

The war on terror manifested the tenets of Orientalism. Through media coverage of the war, what was spewed was fear-mongering discourse against Middle Easterners, Arabs, and Muslims. This jeopardised the safety of these people since fear was at its highest point back then. The aforementioned people were seen as a threat to the security of the American people, though some were Americans. Racial tensions

⁶² Ibid, p.03.

⁶³ *At War with Metaphor: Media, Propaganda, and Racism in the War on Terror*, Op.Cit., p.14.

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surfaced back again. Even those who had appearances similar to Arabs were at risk. Sikhs were among the most targeted alongside those of Arab descent.⁶⁴ Since the media upheld Americans as the heroes in all that conflict, citizens assumed that role and some took it upon themselves to safeguard that privilege.

The other could not speak for himself. All that was said was through U.S controlled media, and since most Americans were in favour of the war on terror, media outlets peddled the same message. Middle Easterners were seen as a monolith, Muslims or not, Arabs or not; anyone with a brown skin was considered one, and they had to speak for the rest of the group. Since the whole issue was boiled down to an “Islamic problem” and stripped of its political and ideological nature, an American born to second migrant generation Muslims had to apologize for what his/her adherers in faith were doing on the other side of the world. Muslims were seen as either bad or good, and the good had to apologise for what the bad was allegedly doing. The American preacher and media mogul Pat Robertson “implied this little syllogism: 1) All Muslims have beards; 2) All terrorists are Muslims; therefore 3) All terrorists have beards.”⁶⁵ This thought process highlights the hegemonic nature spouted by media outlets and their orientalist tropes.

Terrorism, through the multiple definitions given to it, was strictly linked to religion alone. Though based on some truth, the idea that terrorists were motivated by religion alone was preposterous. This discourse, however, was favoured by U.S media and politicians since they wanted to conceal the ideological motives of the attackers. It

⁶⁴ "After 9/11, turbans made Sikhs targets." *CNN*. N.p., n.d. Web. 5 Mar. 2017. <<http://edition.cnn.com/2016/09/15/us/sikh-hate-crime-victims/>>.

⁶⁵ *Unspeak: How Words Become Weapons, How Weapons Become a Message, and How That Message Becomes Reality*, Op.Cit., p.129.

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was easier to blame religion since the response would be based on sentiment and the public would favour it. The war on terror opened the doors for many political pundits, mostly Westerners, to define terrorism as they saw fit. The term became so narrow that it was confined to mean anyone of a Muslim heritage. As Glenn Greenwald, an American attorney, journalist and author, puts it,

[t]errorism is simultaneously the single most meaningless and most manipulated word in the American political lexicon. The term now has virtually nothing to do with the act itself and everything to do with the identity of the actor, especially his or her religious identity. It has really come to mean: “a Muslim who fights against or even expresses hostility towards the United States, Israel and their allies.”⁶⁶

Orientalist discourse used by the media therefore reinforced this notion that those of a Middle Eastern descent were susceptible of being terrorists. This gave a sense of superiority to Americans, and as a consequence, many ended up supporting what the Bush administration considered as the solution to get rid of terrorists worldwide.

Edward Said explained that “in any society not totalitarian, certain cultural forms predominate over others, just as certain ideas are more influential than others.”⁶⁷ Post-9/11 media discourse gave Americans the sense that their culture was superior and the attacks were nothing but the backwardness of the other trying to bring down those achievements. The solution was already presented and enacted upon by the Bush administration: going to war. Kellner argued that

⁶⁶ "Terrorism: the Most Meaningless and Manipulated Word." *Salon*. N.p., n.d. Web. 7 Mar. 2017. <http://www.salon.com/2010/02/19/terrorism_19/>.

⁶⁷ *Orientalism*, Op.Cit., p.07.

...[t]he Bush doctrine of pre-emptive strikes could indeed unleash a series of wars that would plunge the world into the sort of nightmare militarism and totalitarianism as sketched out in George Orwell's 1984. The Bush policy is highly barbaric, taking the global community to a social Darwinist battleground where decades of international law and military prudence will be put aside in perhaps the most dangerous foreign policy doctrine in U.S. history. It portends a militarist future and an era of perpetual war in which a new militarism could generate a cycle of unending violence and retribution, of the sort evident in the Israel and Palestine conflict.⁶⁸

The vanishing of any critical debate on U.S mainstream media puts the U.S democracy into question. The media is supposed to be the voice of the people, and there were many activists and politicians who were against the war but their voices were ignored, and some were even labelled as unpatriotic.

The media flooded its viewers with propagandist broadcasting in favour of a war. Patriotism and populism were on the rise. The people were hyped for a new war; a war where America strikes its enemies and restores its position in the world as a world power. The wounds of the attacks were forgotten, and now it was all about ridding the world of America's supposed enemies. Five days after the 9/11 attacks, Bush made a speech in which he said:

We're a great nation. We're a nation of resolve. We're a nation that can't be cowed by evil doers. I've got great faith in the American people. If the American people had seen what I had seen in New York City, you'd have great faith, too. You'd have faith in the hard work of the rescuers; you'd have great faith because of the desire for people to do what's right for America; you'd have great faith because of the

⁶⁸ *From 9/11 to Terror War*, Op.Cit., p.21.

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compassion and love that our fellow Americans are showing each other in times of need.⁶⁹

The use of “we” and “them” demonstrated a dividing rhetoric. Bush’s speeches constructed a perfect “evil other” and an “angelic” U.S nation. It was a binary discourse that was meant to stir up people’s emotions and make them rage against the so called enemies of their country. In another speech, Bush referred to the whole issue as a war between “freedom and fear”, between “those governed by fear” who “want to destroy our wealth and freedoms,” and those on the side of freedom. “During the 2000 presidential election campaign, Bush had recalled growing up in a world where there was no doubt about the identity of America’s “Other”. “It was ‘us’ versus ‘them,’ and it was clear who [‘they’] were,” he said. “Today, we’re not so sure who ‘they’ are: but we know they’re there.”⁷⁰ The problem with such totalitarian rhetoric is that it allows no room for negotiations. If one party is the “evil other” then the opposing party is the “good self”. No in-between explanations were allowed.

A war for freedom is what Bush kept saying in his speeches, yet the true freedom he was seeking was that of launching pre-emptive attacks on groups or countries he and his advisors deemed dangerous, dangerous to their interests and not necessarily to the American people or to the world. They violated every treaty out there for the sake of fighting a war for this freedom against the supposed fear. With time, the evil other, morphed into the image of Bin Laden. This terrorist other, unlike previous terrorists like the Soviet Union, did not have a specific place. He was just out

⁶⁹ Staff, CBSNews.com Staff CBSNews.com. "Business As Usual." *CBS News*. CBS Interactive, n.d. Web. 7 Apr. 2017. <<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/business-as-usual-16-09-2001/>>.

⁷⁰ *The Colonial Present: Afghanistan, Palestine Iraq*, Op.Cit., p.48.

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there and they needed to eliminate him. Thanks to the pre-emptive war policy, it was easy for the Bush administration to do as it saw fit, which echoed the Party's slogan "War is Peace".

To synthesise what we have discussed in this chapter, propaganda works hand in hand with orientalist discourse when the media knows how to channel public opinion towards a certain goal, in this case the support of Bush's war on terror. Applying Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky's propaganda model, we noticed how the media paved the way for the inevitable invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq in 2003. The most outstanding filter in the propaganda model was the fear of a potential threat: terrorism. Terrorism was used as a pretext for the Bush administration to do as they pleased under the guise of safeguarding the national security of the country. They could simply invoke the potential threat of a terrorist attack and the people would rally in support.

The same way the Party in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* relies on telescreens to broadcast the Party's propaganda and permeate fear into people's minds, the U.S media outlets broadcasted constant coverage of the war on terror and warnings of eminent potential threats. This, later on, pushed for the enacting of the Patriot Act Bill. Unfortunately, propaganda is so effective that one cannot point it out when they are living in the moment. It is only when looking back at past happenings that one can tell what lies were told and what truths were concealed, to a great extent at least. The truth remains relative in times of war and only through a careful analysis of what is happening can propaganda be pointed out. As people became more aware of propaganda techniques, governments and media outlets found other ways to spread

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their agenda. Ancient tactics were still in use, though. In order to convince the people to go to war in Iraq, the human record was mentioned. It was old news that was known for years, but the U.S government knew how to exploit it at the right moment. This is Orwellian in every sense of the word. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the Party constantly “rectifies” history and keeps the revisited records available.

George Bush’s rhetoric was a textbook example of orientalist clichés coming to life. His speeches divided people into “us” vs “them”. There were also elements of doublespeak in his discourse; he referred to the invasion of Iraq as “liberation”, and as a war for “freedom”. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Newspeak and doublethink are used by the ruling party as part of its control over the people. They are implemented to restrict independent thought and to preserve a tight grip upon the people of Oceania.

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The aim of this study has been to show how the Bush administration foreign policy post-9/11 resembled to a great extent the totalitarian government mentioned in George Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, albeit, the Bush administration superseded the Party in Oceania in that it only relied on propaganda as a great means of control. In Oceania, the citizens are put into a constant state of fear through different means: physical and psychological. Through sheer fear alone, the U.S could push its citizens into supporting the war. The media was ready to weigh in with their coverage of the war on terror. As illustrated through Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky's propaganda model, the media had its own agenda; an agenda that was fostered by big corporations for the sake of their own interests. The discourse the media pushed was that of orientalist tropes. In order for the people to support the war, they had to fear the 'other', the enemy that could attack their safety at any time. Like the Two Minutes Hate in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* where the people would watch clips of enemy soldiers and express anger at them, the U.S media presented its viewers with something similar in order to hype them up for the war. The 'other' had to be feared. The media and U.S politicians claimed the enemy, "other", was terrorism. Yet, as discussed in this study, the definition of terrorism was fluctuating. There was no specific designation of what a terrorist really is. What remained for the people, and not any ordinary people but those who have just experienced traumatic events in 9/11, was to generalise on anyone that had the appearance of what was deemed as the 'standard' terrorist appearance, usually anyone brown-skinned.

Decades after its publication, Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) proved its significance and relevance once again. The war on terror exemplified every notion of

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the “Us” vs “them” binary that Said talked about in his book. The Bush government exploited the tragic event of 9/11 to foster its offensive measures. It was a war where people were manipulated under the guise of protecting the national security of their country. The war on terror was a textbook example of *Orientalism*. The media coverage for instance illustrated how the other is viewed: aggressive and barbaric. Bush’s speeches also included the demonization of the attackers. He called them “evil-doers” and referred to the war on terror as a “crusade”. Since ancient Christian history was invoked, those of Middle Eastern descent were seen as traitors for the most part, if not as potential terrorists.

Images and videos of the war were on constant broadcasting by the media. They showed how the other lived and how terrorists that threatened them looked like. With a lack of nuance, anyone who had the appearance of a terrorist was at risk. Multiple incidents occurred where Sikhs were targeted, mistakenly thought of as Muslims. Orientalist discourse divided the world into “us” vs “them” and was highly deployed in the war on terror by the media and U.S politicians. It was a war between ‘civilisations and barbarism, and between the West and the East.

George Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four* turned to be a reality after the 9/11 attacks. The war on terror cannot but be described as Orwellian in every sense of the word, from the abuse of language by the media, propagating false stories about the enemy, to the changing of history and the claiming of events as a “rupture” in the history of the United States. The terrorists were denied any agency. They had no ideological purpose but violence. This was what the U.S media and politicians purported. American involvement in the Middle East decades before, from the

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presidency of Ronald Reagan through Bill Clinton, was completely forgotten. The terrorists were just violent barbarians who wanted to bring down civilisation. The answer to that was a perpetual war against once U.S ally, Iraq. This is similar to Oceania's constant shift in wars; sometimes it is allied with Eastasia, and sometimes with Eurasia. The citizens were not aware because the government made sure to "rectify" all the historical records. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the people were brainwashed and manipulated by the totalitarian government. Big Brother, the leader of the country, is in total control over the people. Banners with his pictures were everywhere, with the slogan "Big Brother is Watching You". Surveillance constitutes a huge part of the Party's control over the people. The United States government attempted to control the people through something similar. What was passed was the Patriot Act which bill allowed the government to spy on people for the sake of protecting their privacy. In reality, it only limited their freedom and permitted the government more power over them. For instance, the Patriot Act allowed the police to investigate anyone they suspected of terrorism without any warrant.¹

After the 9/11 attacks, the US citizens were subjected to a stream of hysterical news coverage that scared them and made them support the war on terror. Propaganda played a huge role. The Bush government had the help of the media to fulfil its goal. As the majority of the American citizens were convinced by the propaganda, the war on terror gained popularity. It was a never-ending war. It was just out there and they needed to end it. War was obviously chosen as the best solution. In *Nineteen Eighty-*

¹ Woodrow Wilson had already done this during WWI through the Espionage and Sedition Act in 1917. The Espionage Act (1917) was drafted to jail anyone who encouraged disloyalty to the government. The Sedition Act (1918), for its part, imposed severe penalties on anyone uttering disloyal or abusive language about the government, the constitution or the flag.

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Four, the same line of thought is invoked. Oceania is constantly at war with the other two superstates. The enemies, who were often the fabrication of the government, were constantly threatening the safety of the people, so the latter had to rage against them.

Bush's most used narrative was that the terrorists wanted to "attack [their] freedom". This propaganda worked well as it portrayed the terrorists as nothing but violent people with no thought in mind. Depicting them that way made the solution of war more acceptable, since they were seen as an easy target. Reality, however, was the opposite. Saddam Hussein, who was accused of housing the World Trade Center hijackers, proved to have nothing to do with the attacks. Even the weapons of mass destruction he was accused of having, and because of which he had to be removed, turned out to be blatant lies by the Bush government. And of course, the Bush administration was absolved of any explanation for their lies. They simply changed their talking points and obfuscated whenever confronted with their lies. At large, Islam was to blame for the attacks. Muslims were pushed into a corner and asked to justify every terrorist attack, until now. They were considered a monolith and every Muslim had to answer for the other. Cultural differences, and even religious ones, were not taken into consideration.

This dissertation has attempted to link George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* to the Bush administration post-9/11 through postcolonial lenses. Edward Said's *Orientalism* serves as a key towards understanding the stream of propaganda and false narratives Americans were exposed to by the media. Orientalist discourse, which is inherently hegemonic, brought both *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and the U.S foreign policy

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post-9/11 to a close comparison. The dissertation has also sought to underline the effectiveness of propaganda and how powerful it can be once it is used efficiently.

The United States has a rich history of propaganda testing, stretching from the 1920's until now. With Donald Trump assuming power, politics in the United States has changed. Events have taken such a dark turn in the US with the election of Donald Trump that many have felt the need to go back to the dystopian classics. That is why sales of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* have soared as soon as Trump became president. Trump and his administration have demonstrated an eerie and incredible ability to bend events in any way they see fit. Former White House press secretary Sean Spicer asserted that Donald Trump had the biggest inauguration audience in history. When questioned about it in an interview, adviser Kellyanne Conway defended the statement saying that Spicer was presenting his "alternative facts". This approach to truth is very reminiscent of the Party's rewriting history in order to keep total power. Besides, no one is able to stop Trump from giving such falsehoods. In fact, he keeps delivering them so frequently that the media cannot process them all. In addition to spreading "fake news", Trump's presidency have ushered in a new era of hatred towards Mexicans, Muslims, African Americans and other minorities. This could be easily linked to the Party's hate-mongering towards the state's enemies.

The campaign that Trump ran was different; every statement that he said was contradictory to what he had said before. Nothing was fixed anymore in spite of the media's attempts to fact-check his statements. His opponents were constantly changing. The language that Trump used triggered the fears of the far-right racists in America and brought them to light, allowing them room to express hatred towards the

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‘other’. He considered the media his enemy because they were trying to scrutinise and expose his 'alternative facts'. The current situation in the United States is another Orwellian scenario at best that deserves study from future researchers. The similarities shown in the dissertation between *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and 9/11 can easily be shown in another dissertation taking *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and Donald Trump as another comparative study.

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وزارة التعليم العالي والبحث العلمي
جامعة الجزائر 2 – أبو القاسم سعد الله
كلية اللغات الأجنبية
قسم اللغة الإنجليزية

تأملات في حملة 'الحرب على الإرهاب' لجورج د. بوش من خلال رواية جورج
أورويل ألف وتسعمائة وأربعة وثمانين

يقدم هذا العمل بهدف نيل شهادة الماجستير في شعبة اللغة الإنجليزية
تخصص: آداب وحضارة.

تحت إشراف:
د. آيت عمور حورية

الطالب:
قلوم أحمد

السنة الدراسية:

2019/2018

ملخص

هذا البحث يتمحور حول إمكانية القيام بمقارنة بين رواية جورج أورويل ألف وتسعمائة وأربعة

وثمانين وحملة "الحرب على الإرهاب" بقيادة جورج د. بوش. منطلق هذه الدراسة هو وجود أوجه تشابه كثيرة بين رواية أورويل وحملة جورج د. بوش، خاصة فيما يتعلق بالإعلام وكيفية توجيه الرأي العام من أجل أغراض شخصية. وبهذا الصدد، استلزم البحث القيام بدراسة مقارنة من خلال النظرية ما بعد الكولونيالية، بالتحديد مفهومي "الأنا" و"الآخر" المستوحيين من كتاب الإستشراق لإدوارد سعيد.

البحث قسم إلى ثلاثة فصول. الفصل الأول يقوم بدراسة شاملة لرواية أورويل من خلال مفهومي الأنا والآخر. الفصل الثاني يرمي إلى التركيز على خلفية هجمات 11 سبتمبر 2001 ومحاولة إدارة بوش صد الرأي العام عن الأسباب الحقيقية لها والتركيز على عدو مبهم "الإرهاب". الفصل الثالث يدور حول استغلال الإعلام من طرف الدولة للوصول إلى أغراضها.

السياسة الخارجية للولايات المتحدة عقب هجمات 11 سبتمبر 2001 فاقت سياسة "الأخ الكبير" في رواية أورويل ألف وتسعمائة وأربعة وثمانين في أنها اعتمدت فقط على الدعاية لإقناع الرأي العام، وذلك من خلال التركيز المكثف على إمكانية حدوث هجوم آخر من طرق العدو، الإرهاب. في ضوء هذه الأحداث، كتاب الإستشراق لإدوارد سعيد يبقى العمل المناسب لإجراء هاته المقارنة، خاصة وأن العدو الأزلي هو "الآخر".