

**THE IMPACT OF TOTALITARIAN GOVERNMENT IN ORWELL'S  
'1984'**

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# LEGITIMATION

THESIS

THE IMPACT OF TOTALITARIAN GOVERNMENT IN ORWELL'S '1984'

BY

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It has been examined before the Board of Thesis Examination on June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021 and is declared to have fulfilled the requirements.

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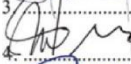



ENGLISH LITERATURE STUDY PROGRAM  
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## AGREEMENT

On Tuesday, June 29<sup>th</sup> 2021, the Board of Thesis Examination has kindly approved a thesis by Muhammad Naufal (F21116310) entitled *The Impact of Totalitarian Government in Orwell's '1984'* submitted in fulfillment of one of the requirements to obtain Sarjana Degree in English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University.

Makassar, 29<sup>th</sup> June 2021

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# DECLARATION

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## DECLARATION

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## APPROVAL FORM

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**APPROVAL FORM**

With reference to the letter of the dean of Faculty of Cultural Sciences Hasanuddin University No. 342/UN4.9.1/KEP/2020 regarding supervision, we hereby confirm to approve the undergraduate thesis draft by Muhammad Naufal (F21116310) to be examined at the English Literature Study Program of Faculty of Cultural Sciences.


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- D. **Nimal** and **lili** as the researcher parents in keep on remembering their son to finish his thesis as soon as possible
- E. To all of my friend, thank you for being there.

The researcher realizes that this thesis is far from perfect. Therefore, all critics and suggestion will be most welcome to make this thesis better. The researcher hopes that this thesis will be useful towards future researcher researching similar topic.

Makassar, 8 May 2021

The researcher

Muhammad Naufal



## **ABSTRACT**

**MUHAMMAD NAUFAL. The Impact of Totalitarian Government in Orwell's *1984* (supervised by M. Amir P and Rezky Ramadhani)**

The purpose of this research are (1) to describe the totalitarian government portrayed in the novel *1984*, and (2) to analyze the impact of totalitarian government whether it is in the novel and in real life.

In this research, the researcher was using the genetic structuralism theory to analyze the totalitarian government portrayed in the novel and to analyze the impact of the totalitarian government in the novel and in real life. The researcher was using descriptive method, which describe the object of research through social facts.

Through this research, the researcher found that the novel reveals the social facts that happened when the novel was written. Replacing the previous government, charismatic leader, media control, violence in public, using the word comrade, exploitation of children, elimination of opposition, purge, secret police, and human experiment are characteristics of the totalitarian government portrayed in the novel. So does the impacts of totalitarian government such as, freedom of killing, alteration of information, no freedom of expression, invasion of privacy, and intolerance to ethnic, race, or religion.

Keywords: totalitarian government, genetic structuralism, and impact

## ABSTRAK

**MUHAMMAD NAUFAL. Akibat pemerintahan totalitarian pada karya Orwell 1984 (dibimbing oleh M. Amir P dan Rezky Ramadhani)**

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah (1) untuk mendeskripsikan pemerintahan totalitarian yang digambarkan dalam *1984*, dan (2) untuk menganalisis akibat dari pemerintahan totalitarian baik itu di dalam novel dan di kehidupan nyata.

Dalam penelitian ini, peneliti menggunakan teori strukturalisme genetik untuk menganalisis pemerintahan totalitarian yang digambarkan dalam novel dan untuk menganalisis akibat dari pemerintahan totalitarian di novel dan di kehidupan nyata. Peneliti menggunakan metode deskriptif, yaitu menggambarkan objek penelitian melalui fakta-fakta sosial.

Melalui penelitian ini, peneliti menemukan adanya hubungan antara novel dan fakta-fakta sosial yang pernah terjadi saat novel ini ditulis. Pergantian pemerintahan sebelumnya, pimpinan yang karismatik, pengendalian media, kekerasan di tempat umum, penggunaan kata *comrade*, eksploitasi terhadap anak-anak, pengeliminasian para oposisi, *purge*, polisi rahasia, dan eksperimen terhadap manusia adalah karakteristik pemerintahan totalitarian yang tercermin di dalam novel. Begitu pula dengan akibat dari pemerintahan totalitarian seperti kebebasan untuk membunuh, perubahan informasi, tidak adanya kebebasan berekspresi, pelanggaran privasi, serta intoleransi terhadap etnik, ras, atau agama.

Kata kunci: pemerintahan totalitarian, strukturalisme genetik, dan akibat

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of Background of Study, Identification of Problem, Scope of Problem, Research Question, Objective of Study, Significance of Study, and Sequence of Chapter.

#### **A. Background of Study**

Literature is a reflection of society. An author of a literary work usually puts the social condition in his/her lifetime in his/her work. This makes literature can also be a historical document. According to Wellek and Warren (1949: 89),

Literature is a social institution, using language as its medium, a social creation. Such traditional literary devices as symbolism and meter are social in their very nature. They are conventions and norms which could have arisen in society. But, furthermore, literature “imitates” “life”; and “life” is, in large measure, a social reality, even though the natural world and the inner or subjective world of the individual have also been objects of literary “imitation”.

It indicates that literature is a social creation that portray human activities. There are already many human activities that can be found in literature. One of them is a totalitarian government system.

A totalitarian government system is a form of government that does not allow any individual freedom and wants to control individual life as the highest authority. The term totalitarian first showed up in the 1920s by an Italian dictator, Benito Mussolini, he called it *totalitario* to characterize the new fascist state of Italy, which he further described as “all within the state, none outside the state, none against the state.” The

term totalitarian itself became publicly known in the 1930s or more specifically with the triumph of the Nazi party in 1933. Totalitarian term got even more famous when the Nazi-Soviet pact was signed in 1939. This kind of government has caused a lot of social problems.

A social problem is a problem that affects a lot of people rather than an individual. Many kinds of social problems emerge in a totalitarian government such as starvation, mass killing, and many more. These events can be found in a literary works, especially writer by the name Eric Arthur Blair or he was better known for his pen name George Orwell in his novel, '1984'.

Orwell wrote 'Nineteen Eighty-Four' or '1984' to portrays totalitarianism. In a study by Edward Pankowski, there is a quote from Eric Fromm saying,

George Orwell's 1984 is the expression of a mood, and it is a warning. The mood it expresses is that of near despair about the future of man, and the warning is that unless the course of history change, men all over the world will lose their qualities, will become soulless automatons, and will not even be aware of it. (2018: 8)

It indicates that the novel '1984' is a warning to future generation about what could happen if totalitarian government do not change.

The novel itself tells the reader about how Winston Smith, a party member that works in a totalitarian government lead by the 'Big Brother', fights against the oppression of the government. Because of the totalitarian government people do not have any freedom, so there is no freedom of thought, freedom of assembly, freedom of expression. Everything must be done according to the will of the Party. He tried to

break free from this kind of environment, he began to write his thought, he began to meet someone in private, he does everything that the Party forbid as an act of rebellion against the government. However, in the end, he got fooled and forced to follow the will of the government.

The reason why the researcher chooses '1984' to be analyzed is because totalitarian government as well as the social problems caused in the novel are also happening in today's society. Nabila Maulidio's 'The Structure and World View of George Orwell's 1984: A Genetic Structuralism Application' (2016), which she focused on the worldview of George Orwell and Aziz Septian Bardja Sacharissal's 'The Brutality of Political Pressure Towards Citizens in Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-Four' (2019), which he focused on the brutality of political pressure portrayed in Orwell's 1984, the current research focuses on the impact of totalitarian government in the novel '1984'. In this research, the researcher uses sociology of literature or more specific is genetic structuralism theory in order to know the impact of totalitarian government in the novel '1984'.

## **B. Identification of Problems**

After reading Orwell's '1984' several times, the researcher found some problems that occur in it:

1. The psychological condition of the main character caused by the totalitarian government.
2. The social condition under the totalitarian government.

### **C. Scope of Problems**

Based on the identification of the problems above, the researcher determines to elaborate the impact of totalitarian government to its people in the novel.

### **D. Research Questions**

After limiting the scope of the problems, the writer formulated the research questions into two questions as follows:

1. What sort of totalitarian government system portrayed in the novel '1984'?
2. How are the impacts of totalitarian government system in the novel and in real life?

### **E. Objective of Study**

Based on the research questions, the objectives of the study are :

1. To describe the totalitarian government system portrayed in the novel '1984'.
2. To analyze the impact of a totalitarian government system in the novel and in real life.

### **F. Significance of Study**

After conducting this study, the researcher hopes this research will be helpful for:

1. Theoretical significance; The following researchers will have a reference after this research is successfully conducted.



2. Practical significance; this research will become an inspiration for many people around the world to avoid the same social problem which was reflected in the novel or to find the solution if they are already experiencing the social problem reflected in the novel.

### **G. Sequence of Chapter**

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter one is introduction, which consists of seven subparts such as background of study, identification of problem, scope of problem, research question, objective of study, significance of study, and sequence of chapter. Chapter two is literature review, which consists of four subparts such as previous study, theory of sociology of literature, general view of social problem, and totalitarian government. Chapter three is methodology, which consists of four subparts such as methodological design, method of collecting data, method of analysis, and research procedure. Chapter four is finding and discussion, which consists of two subparts such as the characteristics of the totalitarian government portrayed in the novel '1984' and its impact on both society and the novel. Chapter five is conclusion, which consists of two parts such as conclusion and suggestion.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERARY REVIEW

This chapter consists of previous study, theory of sociology of literature, social problem, and totalitarian government.

#### A. Previous Study

There are some previous researchers who had conducted researches that is relevant to this research, such as:

- 1) Nabila Maulidio in her thesis *The Structure and World View of George Orwell's 1984: A Genetic Structuralism Application* (2016). This thesis used genetic structuralism theory to focus on the worldview of George Orwell by looking at the literary structure that focuses on the relationship of the main character and the social structure that help shapes '1984'. The result of this thesis is that the writer, Maulidio, claimed that Orwell's worldview is a humanism, portrayed in the characterization, setting, and the theme of '1984'.
- 2) Aziz Septian Bardja Sacharissal wrote *The Brutality of Political Pressure Towards Citizens in Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-Four* (2019). This thesis used genetic structuralism theory to describe how the brutality of political pressure portrayed in Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and to describe how the citizen's worldview reflected in the citizens in Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. The result of this thesis is that the oppression of the low-class citizen is considered to be the brutality of political pressure.

3) Yusliana's thesis title *The Social Criticism in George Orwell's 1984* (2017).

This thesis explained the kind of social criticism that happens in Orwell's '1984' and explains the effect of a totalitarian government on the character in the novel '1984'. Yusliana concluded that the government system that Orwell wanted to describe in the novel is a totalitarian government system, in which the absolute power is on the hands of the Party and there is no freedom for individuals.

It can be understood that the similarity between these previous studies and this research is all of them are using the novel '1984' as their object of research. However, in the first research, Maulidio focused on the worldview of George Orwell. In the second research, Sacharissal focused on the brutality of political pressure towards citizen. In the third research, Yusliana focused on the social criticism in the novel. While the difference is on issue and approach. In this research, the researcher studies about the totalitarian government impacts on the society as portrayed in the novel '1984'.

## **B. Totalitarian Government**

Totalitarian is a form of government that wants to control every aspect of its citizen, whether it is ideas, belief, or statement. It was first mentioned by Benito Mussolini, and Italian dictator. He called it *totalitario*. With the triumph of the Nazi

party, the term totalitarian became publicly known in the 1930s and even got more famous when the Nazi-Soviet pact was signed in 1939.

In the broadest sense, totalitarianism is characterized by a strong central rule that attempts to control and direct all aspects of individual life through coercion and repression. Historical examples of such totalitarian rule are the Mauryan dynasty, the Qin dynasty, and the reign of Zulu chief Shaka. Modern examples of such totalitarian rule are Nazi Germany under Adolf Hitler, Soviet Union during Stalin era, Italia under Benito Mussolini, the People's Republic of China under Mao Zedong, and North Korea under the Kim dynasty.

Being under a totalitarian government means no more diversity. The social fabric is weakened because of the traditional social institution and organization are suppressed by the government. Even religion is being changed by artificial ties to the state and its ideology. In the end, all of the people will have to follow the belief and behavior sanctioned by the government.

Here are some of the characteristics of totalitarianism, according to Norman Davies in Peter Baehr *Totalitarianism*. (2005: 2344)

- 1) A revolutionary, exclusive, and apocalyptic ideology that announces the destruction of the old order-corrupt and compromised-and the birth of a radically new, purified, and muscular age.
- 2) A cellular, fluid, and hydralike political party structure that, particularly before the conquest of state power, devolves authority to local militant. As it

gains recruits and fellow believers, the party takes on a mass character with charismatic leader at its head claiming to be omniscience and infallibility, and demands the unconditional personal devotion of the people.

- 3) A regime in which offices are deliberately duplicated and personnel are continually shuffled, so as to ensure chronic collegial rivalry and dependence on the adjudication of the one true leader.
- 4) Economic-bureaucratic collectivism (capitalist or state socialist) intended to orchestrate productive forces to the regime's predatory, autarchic, and militaristic goals.
- 5) Monopolistic control of the mass media. "professional" organization, and public art, and with it the formulation of a cliché-ridden language whose formulaic utterances are designed to impede ambivalence, nuance, and complexity.
- 6) A culture of martial solidarity in which violence and danger (of the trenches, the street fight, and many more) are ritually celebrated in party uniforms, metaphors ("storm trooper", "labor brigades"), and modes of address ("comrade"). Youth are a special audience for such a culture but are expected to admire and emulate the "old fighter" of the revolution
- 7) Continual mobilization of the whole population through war, ceaseless campaign, "struggle", or purges.

- 8) The pervasive use of terror to isolate, intimidate, and regiment all whom the regime deems menacing. Charged with this task are the secret police rather than the army, which typically possess significantly fewer power and less status than it does under a non-totalitarian dictatorship or “authoritarian” regime.
- 9) The laboratory of totalitarian domination is the concentration camp. The experiment it conducts aims to discover the condition under which human subjects become fully docile and pliable.

There are several positive and negative effects caused by the totalitarian government. The positive effects are first, in a totalitarian government, things can be done quickly, because there is no need for delay asking for another opinion like in democracy. Second, having one absolute ruler means that there will be no political opponent to oppose the will of the ruler. As for the negative effects are first, there is only one person or group that is in power, that means everything that that person’s or group’s idea must be accepted without question. Second, there is no freedom, whether it is political freedom or individual freedom.

In the novel ‘1984’ by George Orwell, totalitarian government is being portrayed by a party called ‘Ingsoc’ with its ruler called ‘Big Brother’. This party ruled everything in ‘Oceania’, a fictional country where 1984 takes place, from how the people should talk, behave, and think. The opposition of this party always end up dead or getting brainwash by the police.

### **C. Genetic Structuralism**

Genetic structuralism is one of the branches of the sociology of literature that is developed by Lucien Goldmann in Wiyatmi (2013: 124). It is a combination of the intrinsic and extrinsic elements of a literary work. Genetic structuralism analyzes a literary work not only from the text but also from its author's background and its historical background.

Some concepts need to be understood in genetic structuralism such as author as a collective subject, worldview, human fact, and literary structure:

#### **A) Author as a collective subject**

Genetic structuralism has a unique perspective on an author. The author is not seen as an individual that creates his/her literary works but rather as a collective subject, which means that an author is not merely an individual but as a unit. In this case, an author is seen as a member of a certain social group.

#### **B) Worldview**

Worldview is a term that is used to call a whole concept of ideas, inspiration, and feelings that linked the member of a social group and differentiate them from other social groups.

#### **C) Human fact**

According to Faruk (in Muniroch, 2007), human fact means all human activities and behaviors, both the verbal and the physical one, which sciences try to understand.

#### D) Literary structure

Genetic structuralism has a different concept of literary structure. According to Goldmann (in Wiyatmi, 2013) literary structure is an imaginary worldview expression of the author's social group and in its effort to express that worldview, the author makes imaginary characters, objects, and relations. Because of that literary structure in genetic structuralism has a thematic quality because its main focus is on the relationship between character and between character and the object around it.

#### **D. Social Problem**

The following definition of social problem is something to help the researcher in deciding which of the problems in the novel are considered to be a social problem. According to Hart (1923:349) in his article "What is a Social Problem?" he defines that a social problem is:

a problem which actually or potentially affects large numbers of people in a common way so that it may be best to solved by some measure or measures applied to the problem as a whole rather than by dealing with each individual as an isolated case.

Another definition is by Barkan (2015: 2) in his book "Social Problems: Continuity and Change" said that "a social problem is any condition or behavior that has negative consequences for a large number of people and that is generally recognized as a condition or behavior that needs to be addressed." This definition is divided into two components which are objective component and subjective



component. Objective component is any condition or behavior to be considered a social problem if it is negatively affected a lot of people. While subjective component is some condition or behavior considered to be a social problem only if citizens, policymakers, or other parties decided to call it a social problem.

Looking at the definition above, the researcher concludes that a problem can become a social problem when it is negatively affected a lot of people. So, by knowing this definition, the researcher can easily notice which problems in the novel are considered to be social problems.

There are several problems portrayed in the novel '1984' for example, kidnapping, mass murder, brainwashing, invasion of privacy, and many more.