

LOVE POLLUTION BY POLITICS

Pardis Karami Nejad^{1*}, Sohila Faghfuri²

¹MA. Scholar of English Literature, Vali-e-Asr University of Rafsanjan, Iran,
parthis.kn@Gmail.com

² Assist. Prof. Dr., Vali-e-Asr University of Rafsanjan, Iran, sohila_faghfuri@yahoo.com

*Corresponding author

Abstract

Politics can have remarkable impacts on different aspects of society therefore in a totalitarian society, even love is under control. Love has been the main theme for several literary works in which the characters sacrifice themselves to be with their loved ones. Love which is a strong feeling of devotion is influenced by the power of totalitarian society in Nineteen eighty-four by George Orwell in 1949. In a totalitarian society, ordinary people have no privacy and power and are completely controlled by the government. In this novel, love is in hands of politics and any passionate feeling between two genders is considered illegal. Orwell brilliantly shows how the parties in a totalitarian society are capable of using love as a control device over people. It is no longer clear whether the feeling is pure love or it is a way of showing hatred against the government. Orwell establishes four ministries in his novel: ministry of truth, ministry of plenty, ministry of peace and ministry of love. He forecasted love condition in a totalitarian society by saying that the ministry of love is a frightening one; there are no windows in it at all. The protagonist as Winston had never been inside the Ministry of Love, nor within half a kilometer of it. It is a place impossible to enter except on official business, and then only by penetrating through a maze of barbed wire entanglements, steel doors, and hidden machine-gun nests. Even the streets leading up to its outer barriers are roamed by gorilla-faced guards in black uniforms, armed with jointed truncheons and once Winston enters this ministry, he faces the aftermath of his illegal action. Being threatened and tortured several times, finally, he devotes his love for his safety and no longer has feelings for his beloved. As the result, love is polluted by politics.

Keywords: love, politics, totalitarian society, George Orwell, Nineteen eighty-four.

1 INTRODUCTION

The world has gone through various political and social changes from the beginning; from the day when people used to live in caves till now when people live in high skyscrapers above the sky. Politics have always been a controversial issue in every society; therefore, no wonder that literature is affected by it in different aspects. Thought leaders discovered that by observing, discussing and analysing social and political conditions, they can create better human beings. Literary writers and critics used their wit and talent to convey their thoughts concerning politics; some harshly criticized their status quo, some appreciated it, some portrayed what has happen and some forecasted what will happen in the future. By doing so, they depicted Utopia or Dystopia in several literary works.

George Orwell brilliantly describes the abuse of power in a totalitarian society in Nineteen eighty-four. He believed that artists and writers must have an active part in the political struggles to use their creativity for better world. In Nineteen eighty-four, Orwell establishes a totalitarian society where almost everything is under control. Its famous beginning sentence: 'It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen' (Orwell, 1949) suggests that the readers are going to read something that they have not read or heard before. Loneliness, domination, dehumanization and social class disparity can easily be observed in this masterpiece. How far can this power dominate people and individualities? This paper sets out with the aim of recognizing the power of government on people's most private issue such as love.

2 DISCUSSION

Government worldwide have always been in war for power and it seems that their thirst for power is never going to be fulfilled. It justifies numerous massacres, wars, threats and explosions. George Orwell, being famous for his war related works, commented incisively on the political, social and cultural situation of his time. He studied the power of politics on social and cultural matters in a society in his novels, using his intelligence and style in the most adequate way. Nineteen eighty-four is a complete political novel since scholars can investigate it through different lenses. Orwell manifests all the consequences of a society which is controlled by absolute power. Not only they control people's behaviour in the society but also they change people's thoughts and ideology. These societies push people towards their own purpose and turn people into obeying robots. Orwell shows how government use everything as a control device; they change history, newspapers, language and facts; they brainwash children and adults; they monitor every movement of their members and by harshly suppressing the rebellions they manage to dominate them forever!

Nineteen eighty-four society is led by a ruthless dictator called "Big Brother". Thanks to the technology he is almost everywhere, in public areas and in private houses. In this society nothing as privacy or individuality makes sense. Independent ideology is unpatriotic; privacy is invaded by Inner Party telescreens showing Big Brother's face staring at the audience; by creating an opposing motto "war is peace, freedom is slavery and ignorance is strength" (Orwell, 1949) Big Brother guarantees his absolute power. Winston Smith, the protagonist, risks his life to join Brotherhood, a supposed group of secretive rebels who intent on bringing down the government. Big Brother uses mass media to form and shape public thoughts and beliefs. What is seen in television and what is read in the news paper appears to be for the national interest but in fact their actions are only for the interest of small, dominant elites who command the resources.

Orwell in Nineteen eighty-four introduces four ministries in pyramid. Each ministry is in charge of something opposed to its name. For example, the Ministry of Truth, where Winston works, is responsible for removing facts from newspapers and creating them according to the government's purpose. The ministry of peace justifies all invading and war procedures of government and as the result war is no longer destructive for societies but according to what people have believed war is peace, it is constructive and people and government share the interest. The Ministry of Plenty rations and controls food, goods, and domestic production and according to this ministry the standard of living is increasing but in fact it is the opposite. The last ministry, the Ministry of Love, according to Winston is the most frightening one:

The Ministry of Love was the really frightening one. There were no windows in it at all. Winston had never been inside the Ministry of Love, nor within half a kilometre of it. It was a place impossible to enter except on official business, and then only by penetrating through a maze of barbedwire entanglements, steel doors, and hidden machine-gun nests. Even the streets leading up to its outer barriers were roamed by gorilla-faced guards in black uniforms, armed with jointed truncheons. (Orwell, 1949)

Love is the absolute concern of mind, the preoccupation of heart and man or woman's deep desire to be with one another. Love is the language of heart which all countries with different cultures share regardless of time, race and religion. Writers, poet and dramatists have used love to create worldwide myths such as Shirin and Farhad, Romeo and Juliet, Penthesilea and Achilles and etc. Something which is common between these legendary stories is that the whole story portrays the struggle and pain that lovers bear to be with each other. In Catholic tradition, there is an opposition between physical love which is concerned with natural love and ecstatic love and they believed that this opposition provides enough explanation of love aspects. For their first date, Winston being used to living without women, feels wonder and pride, he knows that what he feels is not physical desire but he has found a soul mate; someone who hates the government just like him. If his love for Julia is not physical so it must be ecstatic. Winston likes the feeling but he does not know what the feeling is. He sees no evidence of beauty in her and is not physically attracted to her, he does not even know if he is in love because all feelings are mixed with fear and hatred.

As Winston and Julia keep their relationship going, the fire of love starts to flame. They talk about the government, their past relationships and their ideology. Apparently they are both falling in love. They arrange several meetings at any price; they both know that if they get caught, the government will destroy them physically and mentally. Despite knowing this, they appreciate every minute of each other's presence. Julia and Winston were both inside the ministry of love; they took a hazardous journey on the route to destruction.

Julia risks her life to bring sugar, coffee, bread and jam for her beloved. Even though they are together, deep down they doubt their love whether it is a movement against the government that forbids love, or it is pure feeling and desire. In catholic tradition, if Winston loves Julia for what she believes in or her bravery, it is ecstatic love and if Julia is attracted to Winston just physically, again it is love. Winston thought to himself:

A man looked at a girl's body and saw that it was desirable, and that was the end of the story. But you could not have pure love or pure lust nowadays. No emotion was pure, because everything was mixed up with fear and hatred. Their embrace had been a battle, the climax a victory. It was a blow struck against the Party. It was a political act.

Freud sees love as a transformation of libido from subject's own self to another person. Considering this claim, he introduces the term "primary narcissism" which suggests the love of one's own self as in animals or human who consider themselves worthy of living. According to him, when somebody becomes attached to an object, the level of narcissism declines. The same way, when this attachment fades away, narcissism flows back as it was before and that is what Freud calls "secondary narcissism". According to him, we chose our objects in two different types: first, those who resemble our care takers during childhood and second, someone who resembles us, which is a narcissism approach. For the first choice, if we fall in love with this object, the narcissism level goes to its lower place and I think that is what happens when lovers sacrifice themselves for their beloveds and on the other hand, if one falls in love with the second type, the narcissism is in its higher position.

Choosing Julia as an object of love cannot be because of her resemblance to Winston's mother because according to the descriptions there are no similarities between them. As Orwell describes Winston's mother: "She was a tall, statuesque, rather silent woman with slow movements and magnificent fair hair." (Orwell, 1949) and Julia: "She was a bold-looking girl, of about twenty-seven, with thick hair, a freckled face, and swift, athletic movements." (Orwell, 1949) Therefore the first hypothesis as Julia, Winston's new care taker is rejected. This love is not like those in which lovers die for one another. The second hypothesis is Julia as Winston's self reflection. Winston is against the party and he seeks for ways to disobey the rules as Julia does. Winston thinks and does not accept whatever the party says and Julia shops in black market to show her dissatisfaction. The similarities between these two characters justify the love of each other. Julia acts more cautious than Winston, she joins different groups to support the party and simultaneously commits crimes against it, and she believes that this is the best way to stay safe. She says: "I hate purity, I hate goodness! I don't want any virtue to exist anywhere. I want everyone to be corrupt to the bones." (Orwell, 1949)

As Freud describes, when one chooses an object because of his/her resemblance to his/her self, the level of narcissism increases. In this totalitarian society words have no power, love has no meaning, people have lost their individuality and they do not know what they want and what is right. Julia and Winston are the victims of society because they were the only characters who still cared, loved and knew what was happening. They could become myths such as Romeo and Juliet but only because of the government interference in people's most private issues, love no longer has power. Love that had been the most influential power in the world of literature is defeated to the power of politics in Nineteen eighty-four.

Orwell shows different clues proving that they were both in love but he shocks the readers when Winston sacrifices Julia to rescue himself. Winston goes inside the ministry of love, the most frightening one, and Orwell in his last chapters describes the consequences of his disobedience. As party knew all his nightmares and fears, Winston's worst fear came true. The cage of rats was the party's last resort to torture him. When Winston is put into this position, he forgets about love and what he believed and fought for, he shouts: "Do it to Julia! Do it to Julia! Not me! Julia! I don't care what you do to her. Tear her face off, strip her to the bones. Not me! Julia! Not me!" (Orwell, 1949) The government wins and turns Winston and Julia into robots with no feeling and ideology.

Orwell kills his romantic characters not physically but mentally. He shows how successfully the totalitarian society dominates and controls every member of its party. In the last part of the novel, when Winston and Julia are talking to each other, not only they have no feelings, but also they assert that in order to save yourself you sacrifice your love because it is YOU that matters not the beloved.

'They threaten you with something, something you can't stand up to, can't even think about. And then you say, 'Don't do it to me, do it to somebody else, do it to so-and-so.' And

perhaps you might pretend, afterwards, that it was only a trick and that you just said it to make them stop and didn't really mean it. But that isn't true. At the time when it happens you do mean it. You think there's no other way of saving yourself, and you're quite ready to save yourself that way. You WANT it to happen to the other person. You don't give a damn what they suffer. All you care about is yourself.' 'All you care about is yourself,' he echoed. 'And after that, you don't feel the same towards the other person any longer.' 'No,' he said, 'you don't feel the same.' (Orwell, 1949)

3 CONCLUSION

The world is filled with power and all creatures fight and struggle to take the control of something whether it is a piece of bread or a continent. Human's desire of power is never going to be fulfilled and as history shows many people, lives, things have been sacrificed for this issue. Power is the one and only motivation for human's embarrassing actions. Despite all the advances that human has made still countries with super powers threat and fight for more power. George Orwell as an Indian writer appears to be tired of all struggle and pain; he shows how poor people are victims of politics and power. People lose their identity, their past and self-respect just because government took the control of history and language; nobody knows what was right and what was wrong, truth or lie, and even if they knew, they could not assert it since their language has lost its power.

As masterfully stated in Nineteen eighty-four, even love which was human's deep affection of peace and tranquility cannot escape the filthy desire of power. The party in Nineteen eighty-four, took the control of everything such as: history, language, love, food and humans most important device, logic and managed to enhance their power and surpass their enemies. Love which had been considered as a strong positive emotional power in history of literature turns into torture and pain. Maybe it is time for literature to take stronger steps towards teaching morality and humanity to make the world a better place. If literature and morality fail to save humanity and world, the destruction of world may not seem impossible within a few years because of advanced martial devices and high-tech weapons. Let us be hopeful for a better world and humanity.

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