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THE DECOLONIAL DEBATE: TERRITORIES O DEBATE DECOLONIAL: TERRITÓRIOS

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1984: COLONIALISM AND DYSTOPIA

1984: COLONIALISMO E DISTOPIA

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to analyze the dystopian narrative of George Orwell's novel 1984 as a symbolic source for understanding colonial violence. The author was born in a British colony, served as an enforcer for the British Empire in a colony, and witnessed the mechanisms of such repression. One of the practices is the control of self-perception through mass media action. bell hooks (2019) argues that media contributes to alienation through violence and perpetuates the deeply rooted distorted notion that common sense holds on black communities. Colonialism distorted the perception of the "other" to dominate and keep them subjugated, a practice so forceful that it ruins the ability to think and articulate feelings. Through the Newspeak mechanism, we observe an analogy to colonial oppression, where concepts, familial memories, and forms of communication were lost. Thus, the qualitative methodology allowed us to combine the fictional notion of dystopia with decolonial studies and their socio-political and historical intricacies inscribed in the text nuances. The result of applying this method allowed us to develop an interpretation that encompasses the experiences of the book's characters with the events affecting the indigenous peoples of the Americas, enslaved African populations, or the contemporary occupation of Palestine.

Keywords: Dystopia, 1984, George Orwell, Decolonial Studies

1 Introduction

The dystopian fictional universe of George Orwell's *1984*, published in 1949, distresses us due to a total lack of freedom. The control exercised over citizens promotes a continuous erasure of identities. The aim is to create a homogeneous society in which there are no dissensions. Individual freedoms are erased, small fulfilled desires are erased, daily doses of love, affection, happiness and hope are erased. The peace of the inhabitants rests on the stability of the system: well-being is provided by the Party, because it is that which manages the balance of the regime. Control, discipline and maximum adherence to ideology are unquestionable. If it is for everyone's happiness, it is not a crime to erase History. As we can note of Oceania subjects, the geographic block in which the narrative is outlined, their lives are cogs in the functioning structure, and the strenuous work and even the Two Minutes Hate break constituted a way of being both controlled and controlling.

In "1984: a distopia do sujeito sob controle", Evanir Pavloski provides us with some biographical passages about the author that may have encompassed a possible influence when composing the novel. Eric Arthur Blair, George Orwell's given name, grew up in coercive and disciplinary environments. He was born in 1903, in the city of Motihari, in the Bengal province of British India. He was then sent to a preparatory school in England, where he lived until he was 14. He obtained a scholarship at Eton College and later became a police officer for the British Empire in Burma, which made him experience colonization violence as a coercion agent. According to the professor, the then Eric Arthur Blair "feels in a frighteningly consistent way the mute hatred of the colonized who, worn down by misery and fear, suffocate their revolt and withdraw into their own thoughts" (Pavloski, 2014, p. 20, our translation). After this experience as a police officer, the writer moved to Paris, where he worked as a journalist. He volunteered in the Spanish Civil War and later, in World War II.

In 2020, in Brazil, in the midst of the pandemic caused by the COVID-19 virus, the Literature & Utopia research group completed twenty years of prolific academic work around the utopia/dystopia theme. In order to trace the group's creative path over its two decades of research, professors Ildney Cavalcanti and Alfredo Cordiviola published the article "Literatura & Utopia, 20 ANOS: criação, resistência e reinvenção" in *Alêre* Magazine. The authors indicate that the group created a collection of studies in 2018 that represented "a possible mapping of the movements of this recurring sign, utopia/dystopia, and its multiple manifestations in texts, visual representations and cinema" (Cavalcanti & Cordiviola, 2021, our translation). The perspective of the sign movement allowed us to develop the concept of dystopia-colonialism from *1984* onwards. We continue to be in tune with the group's actions, which seeks "connection points" between Literature and the historical and social Latin American conditions and with critical perspectives concerning Queer, Feminist and Decolonial productions. Therefore, we interpret colonialism in this essay as a totalitarian regime. In Discourse

on colonialism, the Martinican poet Aimé Césaire elaborates a comprehensive and incisive narrative on the colonial issue, by interweaving different historical moments:

And then, one fine day, the bourgeoisie is awakened by a tremendous shock, like a boomerang: the gestapos are busy, the prisons are full, the torturers invent, refine, argue amidst their work instruments.

Surprise and indignation, and people say, “How strange! But, oh! It's Nazism, it will pass! And they wait and wait; and they remain silent in the face of the truth: that it is barbarism, but the supreme barbarism, that which crowns, that which sums up the everyday character of barbarities; that it is Nazism, yes, but before being its victims, they were accomplices; that they tolerated this Nazism, before suffering it; they acquitted it, closed their eyes and legitimized it, because, until then, it had only been applied to non-European peoples (Césaire, 2020, pp. 17-18).

Dystopia is a fictional category used to create pictures of an absolutely arbitrary society, with actions that border on the ineffable. Therefore, the analogy with colonization is appropriate, as it is possible to establish convergence points. In the book, a helicopter pretends to be a drone and approaches one of the windows of the Victory Mansions apartments. Dystopia is inserted in a universe that brings together ideology, technology, arms race and psychological warfare. The dystopian universe is surrounded by machines. In the article published at the VIII Meeting of Multidisciplinary Studies in Culture (ENECULT), professor Lucas Souza analyzes filmic language through the genesis of dystopia. The films analyzed by this professor present characteristics similar to those of Literature, namely a social nightmare, a high-tech paradise fed by the poorest classes, the protagonist's resistance and a lack of affective interaction.

When researching the film “Metropolis” by director Fritz Lang, the professor points to the cause of the workers and the protagonist's encouragement to create a rebellion against the machines. A similarity between the dictatorship of machines in the dystopian film and the dystopian novel is noted. And yet, according to the author, many dystopian cinema directors combine “fiction with Karl Marx's intellectual perception regarding the chain of alienations to which human beings are subject in capitalist society” (Souza, 2012, p. 4, our translation). Débora Reis Tavares' master's thesis on *1984* begins with a Karl Marx quote: “It is not man's consciousness that determines his being, but, on the contrary, his social being determines his consciousness” (Contribution to Critique of Political Economy). We believe the analogy between the Brazilian colonial experience and the fictional narrative is pertinent, considering that “absolute unrealism is still linked to a Platonic tradition of artistic interpretation” (Pavloski, 2014, p. 46, our translation).

Achille Mbembe (2018) compares a type of contemporary colonialism, like that in Palestine, for example, with that which has its origins in the plantation. The disciplinary notion, devaluation of body and necropolitic sovereignty are notions that permeate these colonialisms. Mbembe observes a detail in this economic system that he returns to when he mentions contemporary occupations, which is a “state of insult” and continues his argument pointing out that such a form of enterprise is possible “in a spectral world of intense horrors, cruelty and profanity” (Mbembe, 2018, p. 28). The author correlates Palestine's occupation with slavery, in which “death and freedom are irrevocably intertwined” (Mbembe, 2018, p. 68), and the issue of living in pain and injury, which is a constant. The author continues: “children blinded by rubber bullets; parents humiliated and beaten in front of their families; soldiers urinating on fences, shooting at water tanks from rooftops just for fun” (Mbembe, 2018, p. 69). In fiction, the population is also subjected to living in pain, and at the beginning of the novel we understand that the population lives in a state of injury, their electricity and food is rationed, not to mention health problems. Workers do not receive return for their tiring activities.

The Party is a war machine and makes every individual surrounded by death. The atmosphere of the described places displays an aspect of devastation, as do individuals, used exhaustively for resource extraction. In colonialism and in *1984*, the body and their strength were values. In the book, the Proles and members of the Outer Party worked their hardest for the good of common security. Symbolically, mining the lands of the Yanomami indigenous people would be a dystopian branch of the colonialist legacy, in a dynamic that combines strenuous work, social and material exclusion, alienation and violence. This situation can be understood through the notion of epistemicide, which the philosopher, activist and Geledés creator, Sueli Carneiro (2005), revisits in her doctoral thesis, defended by the University of São Paulo:

The concept of epistemicide allows us to identify these spheres, in which the negative attributed to the Other, is this, especially with regard to his/her inability to elevate him/herself to the condition of a subject of knowledge in terms validated by the West, or to be a bearer of relevant knowledge from the point of view of this same tradition. This negative identity impacts him/her in such a way through the internalization of the socially attributed negative image, which pushes him/her to the self-fulfilling prophecy that endorses the terms of stigmatization, or leads him/her to self-denial or adherence and submission to the values of the dominant culture (Carneiro, 2005, page 277, our translation).

O'Brien demonstrates to Winston that whoever has power controls knowledge: two plus two can equal five. Faced with the force of the epistemicide practiced in Oceania, knowledge of the world, which also forms subjectivity, no longer makes sense. Orwell builds dystopia with ironic elements. The following excerpt demonstrates the population's contentment after Oceania broke all production records and the standard of living rose another twenty percent compared to last year. The population was on the streets to show gratitude to Big Brother. However, consumer items remained in short supply.

The expression "new and happy life" was repeated several times. Lately this expression was in fashion at the Ministry of Strength. Parsons, alert since the trumpet blast, listened, sitting silently in a kind of open-mouthed gravity, in a kind of edified boredom. He was unable to follow the numbers, but realized that they somehow justified a state of satisfaction. He held a large, dirty pipe, half filled with charred tobacco. With tobacco rationed to one hundred grams per week, it was rarely possible to fill a pipe completely. Winston was smoking a Victory cigarette which he kept carefully horizontal. The new ration would only be distributed the following day and he only had four cigarettes left. At that moment he had his ears closed to distant noises and was listening to what the telescreen transmitted. He was informed that there had even been expressions of gratitude to Big Brother for raising the chocolate ration to twenty grams per week. Just yesterday, he reflected, a ration reduction to twenty grams per week had been announced (Orwell, 2009, pp. 75-76).

This point in the narrative highlights the thought crime practiced by Winston, who begins to hide his self in the depths of his observations and daydreams. Due to his insistence on preserving remnants of experiences and news that confronted the truths propagated by the Party in memory, Winston was unorthodox regarding Doublethink, a psychological violence that makes the subject have the capacity to harbor two contradictory situations in their consciousness and believe in both, even if their eyes are witnesses to countless changes in the speeches given by the dominant system.

2 Big brother watches you

Winston is amazed at his colleague who doesn't notice the change in reality in a short space of twenty-four hours. Propaganda is an indispensable mechanism for maintaining a domination system. In *Black Looks: Race and Representation*, bell hooks argues that one of the pillars of colonial power is image manipulation, which negatively influences the self-perception of men and women: "From slavery onwards, white supremacists recognized that controlling images is central to the maintenance of any racial domination system" (hooks, 2019, p. 33). Undeterred by any objection, Winston's colleague simply celebrated the "increased" chocolate ration. In dystopia, propaganda and image control are important in alienating the population. In a similar way, bell hooks appears worried in front of a mostly black audience who were amused by scenes of violence between young black people, in the film "The Street Owners" (1991), by director John Singleton. According to hooks,

This reaction is a powerful testimony, revealing the forms of representation in white supremacist society that teach people of color to internalize racism so deeply into our collective consciousness that we can take pleasure in images of our death and destruction (hooks, 2019, p. 40).

Doublethink can be interpreted as a remnant of coloniality effects. In a cinema session, the writer observed the internalization of violence that affects black bodies. On the one hand, this violence is part of an atrocious daily routine and, on the other hand, also a source of humor. Most of the audience, hooks reports, was black. A colonial narrative is reinforced by the media in attributing "crimes" to indigenous people, and one way is to label them as unproductive. Doing nothing is a crime against capitalism. Or in the case of the Orwellian dystopia, a crime against the Party. Professor Evanir Pavloski clarifies this dynamic: "In 1984, all environments in which

Winston is included in are rigidly organized and controlled in order to extract obedience, time and work from individuals” (Pavloski, 2014, p. 80, our translation).

We, therefore, obtain an argument very conducive to the elaboration of the plastic artist Jaider Esbell, from the Makuxi ethnic group, reenacted in 2021, on the indigenous crime of laziness and unproductivity, from a neoliberal and fascist-leaning point of view: “The laziness and unproductivity attributed to the Indian — read and spoken as the term **indigenous** — has its negative weight reinforced with the minimal lack of knowledge of the *status quo* such as being born and living and working in the forest” (Esbell, 2018, p. 29, our translation, our emphasis). In an analogy between fiction and reality, indigenous lands constitute an utopia within the Brazilian colonial dystopia, in the same way that Winston and Julia sought an utopia immersed in a forest.

Pavloski points out that control can also be exercised through the production and conscious deprivation of resources, so that material scarcity guarantees a hungry population, whose purpose in life is to work: “the developed technical advances are deliberately directed towards arms production which ends up self-consuming and holding back any other progress that would bring about an improvement in the population’s living conditions.” (Pavloski, 2014, p. 70, our translation). Oceania society was subjected to an arms race and ideology directed technological use. The same analogy is possible concerning the daily abuses experienced by slum populations, when observation and monitoring with drones, helicopters and modified police vehicles (*caveirões*) clearly indicate the direction of this policy of death aimed at the poor.

Similarly, helicopters watched the windows in the Orwellian dystopia: “in the distance, a helicopter, flying low over the rooftops, hovered for a moment like a dragonfly and then moved away again with great speed” (Orwell, 2009, p. 12) . The current study seeks, to find ways to understand our time through a fictional narrative, and the application of a qualitative methodology was paramount to contextualize dystopian horror as a modality that “abolishes the distinction between fiction and reality at the moment it shows the real state in which things are found: subjects, the world and their particular world” (Souza, 2012, pp. 17-18, our translation). Thus, we develop overlaps between fiction and reality based on human experiences, as the experiences of dystopias and colonial systems use similar power mechanisms.

2.1 Selective omniscience or thought police

A claustrophobic living condition. Citizens compelled to the intense production and surveillance rhythm without any rest, much less solitude. The Party's mechanisms for controlling bodies and minds are even more effective when they combine these trainings with a new linguistic policy, Newspeak, which promises to put an end to heterodoxy, so that no different observations can compromise the system's solidity, simply because they cannot be thought of. Winston holds back a piece of his most disturbing thoughts. There is a recess in his room, a fork capable of leaving him free from Big Brother's uninterrupted sentry.

For some reason, the telescreen in the living room occupied an unusual position. Instead of being installed, as usual, on the back wall, from where they could control the entire room, it was on the longest wall, opposite the window. On one of its sides there was a shallow recess in which Winston was now installed and which at the time of the construction of the apartments was probably intended to house a bookcase. By sitting in the recess and remaining far back, Winston was able to stay out of range of the telescreen, at least as far as vision was concerned. He could be heard, of course, but as long as he remained in that position he could not be seen. It was partly the unusual topography of the room that gave him the idea to do the thing he was about to do (Orwell, 2009, p. 16).

What he was about to do was compose his diary. Since the telescreen could still capture sounds and, apparently, Winston was not within sight of the device, there was nothing better than keeping the silence of his impressions in a diary. Winston was correct in seeking his memories. However, there was no history in that society; the narrative was controlled by the totalitarian state, which justified and maintained this power. There was no balance between coercion and consensus. In London, the main city of Air Strip I, the consensus is to accept absolute coercion in the name of the Party.

Winston worked at the Ministry of Truth, the body responsible for fabricating lies, a fake news center at any time, ready to fabricate the present. Winston is aware of this fact and knows that he lives with a network of lies and understands that his job, basically, is

maintaining this system. What constitutes a crime in the behavior of 1984's protagonist is not thinking "with good eyes" that all this lying is for his safety; he does not conceive and refuses manipulation. While reading Goldstein's Book, which he had received from O'Brien, he believed he was reading a denunciation made by the Party traitor about how power was exercised in Oceania. We come across these parallel movements, with Doublethink and Goldstein's Book comprising exemplary cases. Winston won the work due to his subversive attitudes, however, he is unaware of the fact and believes he is on the eve of a revolution. The combination of one book within another highlights how metalanguage can be raised so that readers understand the world of Literature. In this way, readers become witnesses and understand the effect of mental control on each inhabitant.

According to Débora Tavares, in her master's thesis, the narrator has selective omniscience (Tavares, 2013) and has access to Winston's daydreams and thoughts, narrating his anguish, desires and pains in detail; his effort to rescue moments from his childhood and be able to outline a canvas on which his family and the now hover. Access to these particularities is something that a narrator with some omniscience could inform us about. He is not a character, he is a bifurcation of this consciousness, which can be analyzed as a stylistic resource that emphasizes the totalitarian system. Furthermore, we also observe the way in which "he", the narrator, describes material issues as if he were informing, lurking or denouncing, just like a thought policeman. We discover that Winston has a kind of hiding place in his house through this narrator, a diary, a pen; "he" knows how much bread the protagonist has at home. In this way, a structural aspect also that identifies what we will discover, when everything turns to ruin: that the Ministry of Truth employee had been monitored by the party for years: "I'm wasting some time with you, Winston,' he said, 'because It's a worthwhile case. You know very well what your problem is. You've been aware of it for years, even though you've been trying to deny it'" (Orwell, 2009, pp. 288-289). The other part of the narrative may comprise the metonymic configuration of Big Brother itself: everyone is inspected at every moment of their lives.

On the one hand, Tavares and Pavloski point out that the narrator has selective omniscience, as the narrative focus is on Winston, which causes a kind of silence in relation to the other characters. On the other hand, the structural ambiguity of the composition indicates there are clues to be analyzed. One of them is that the uninterrupted surveillance system promoted by the Party leaves the population in an infinite state of alert, the silence of characters like Mr. Parsons doesn't mean he wasn't also under surveillance. Everyone is trained to be vigilant. Mr. Parsons, watched inside the house, was handed over to the Thought Police. Thus, all the silenced meet in the Ministry of Love. As there were no laws, just customs, nothing seemed to actually be a crime, although everyone was controlled and the effectiveness of this order was seen in how much citizens spied on each other.

Of course, there was no way to know if you were being watched at a specific time. Trying to guess the system used by the Idea Police to connect to each individual device or how often it did so was nothing more than speculation. It was even possible for it to control everyone all the time. Whatever the case, one thing was certain: it had the means to connect to his device whenever he wanted. You were forced to live - and lived, as a result of habit turned into instinct - believing that every sound you made would be heard and, if the darkness was not complete, every movement meticulously scrutinized. (Orwell, 2009, p. 13).

Winston, Mr. Charrington, Mr. Parsons, and O'Brien are all parts of the same system. Their conduct serves as an example. Winston and Mr. Parsons committed a crime and are considered citizens who do not fit in. They practiced thought crime, which is the contravention of contradictory and questioning thoughts and feelings that remain silent in the most private corner of beings and that can be revealed at any time, like what happened to the protagonist's neighbor. He continued with his effort to protect his childhood and the memories of his parents, as if in this thought effort he could find a way out of a utopian life. In this way, the Ministry of Truth employee, Winston Smith, commits the crime repeatedly.

It didn't make the slightest difference whether he carried the diary forward or not. In any case, the Idea Police would catch him. He had committed — and would have committed, even if he had never put pen to paper — the essential crime that encompassed all the others. The thoughtcrime, they called it. Thoughtcrime was not something that could be disguised forever. You could even dodge for a while, sometimes for years, but sooner or later, they would certainly catch you (Orwell, 2009, pp. 29-30).

2.2 Thought criminals

One day, Mrs. Parsons asked Winston to help her with the leaking faucet, and while fixing the problem, the man was amazed by the children's ferocious behavior. He was called a traitor and a thought criminal, not to mention that the boy physically attacked him and said "Goldstein!" in anger. Upon returning to his apartment after helping his neighbor, he concluded: "With children like that," thought Winston, "that unfortunate woman must lead a life of terror. Another year or two, and they would begin to watch her night and day for the slightest symptom of unorthodoxy." (Orwell, 2009, p. 36).

Evanir Pavloski argues about the idealized idyll and the idyll later consummated with Júlia as utopian units within dystopia: "Dissatisfaction with the real world and/or with the regimes that regulate it encourages these thinkers to constantly reflect on a past in which evils of the present are not verifiable or a future in which social injustices would be suppressed" (Pavloski, 2014, p. 34, our translation). It is interesting to note that the title of the essay by Makuxi artist Jaider Esbell is called "Makunaima, my grandfather in me!". The notion of changing times is not just an artistic, ethical, ethnic and political nuance of the artist and a large part of indigenous peoples, it is intrinsic to the being of the Cosmos.

We emerge alongside with art all the challenges of great existence and its clearest individual and collective urgencies. We emerged in apparent chaos, as described among the great Shamans of the world and a near consensus in science, in terms of the direction for humanity as it is. The mathematical foreshadowing of the end of the world is also a scenario for our appearance. As a product, also of that time, I have the idea that colonization was a process, although I know that it is a continuous act. So I looked everywhere and saw my grandfather on the horizon. On the horizon it is also clear that there will be no culture or life — and much less quality life — for anyone in anything being done. It is not possible, if we do not break some extra membrane of the now, to think about an idea of the future in matters of our spiritual connection with the earth and our waste (Esbell, 2018, p. 11, our translation).

Memories comprise the effort to deposit a breath of life in places of the past. The memory, the diary, the bucolic village and even the room in the Proles neighborhood functioned as spaces of struggle. The fact that the couple consummates their love idyll in a place similar to an antique shop can be interpreted as an effort to search for their origins in their memories. Thus, many indigenous ethnicities ritualize the memory of their ancestors in the sacred space of their lands, which are also a space of struggle. The argument that indigenous lands are unproductive is a mechanism to confuse public opinion through the mass media. If the system is in a constant state of work, anything that goes against this standard is a crime against common sense, which is full of this ideology.

The lugubrious impression that Winston had of the land in which he lived in can be, in part, attributed to the prospector's way of extracting material and human resources, leaving only exposed ruins. This protagonist impression is not different from the impression of the Yanomami Shaman, Davi Kopenawa, about mining in his lands, a topic constantly in fashion: "If we let the miners dig everywhere, like wild pigs, the rivers in the forest will soon turn into muddy puddles full of engine oil and trash." (Kopenawa, 2015, as cited in Kopenawa & Albert, 2015, p. 336, our translation). Idyll is a crime because it is resistance. What is possible to note is that, in the entire narrative's structure, we are informed that there is a writing within another writing: in addition to Goldstein's Book, there is Winston's diary. The Party in Oceania is nothing more than a part of a power, the same as that configured in Eastasia and Eurasia. It doesn't matter if invasion and territory annexation on other continents take place; we remain immersed in this metalinguistic resource.

3 Conclusion

The analogy between the dystopian narrative of 1984 and decolonial studies allows us to put circumstances that correspond to each other into critical perspective. We note tactics of rewriting History, coercion, social and material exclusion, imposition of strenuous work and alienation in both situations. Ultimately, the apparatus of violence we encounter in a fictional narrative is similar to that used by colonial powers. The Party colonized the minds of its inhabitants and imposed a warmongering, police-like and propagandistic State. The machine of this immense control apparatus is responsible for constructing official narratives and persecuting dissident ones. Oceania characteristics reveal the intrinsic difficulties that women, children and men faced in building their subjectivities in

societies marked by colonialism. Decolonial research highlights the history of oppression, constituting a theoretical and critical source in the search for political, economic, aesthetic, intellectual and existential autonomy.

Therefore, we interconnect the notion of dystopia and colonialism in this study, strengthening the previous argument by professor Lucas de Souza about the subtle line of distinction between dystopia and reality. Even though the professor's article, published in VIII ENECULT, is related to dystopian cinema, we are guided by the professor's inquiry and also by the discoveries made by professors Ildney Cavalcanti and Alfredo Cordiviola, published in an article in *Alôre Magazine*, in celebration of the twenty years existence of the Literature & Utopia Group. The discoveries of these teachers demonstrate the complex cultural relationship caused by something that would comprise the cohesion of these utopia/dystopia notions. Furthermore, they allow for a reevaluation of discussions considering Latin America particularities, for example.

In colonized societies, the policy of disciplining bodies finds a parallel in the Ministry of Love portrayed in the fiction. These comprise indoctrination systems of bodies and minds, whether within the fictional society or in a colonized country in the real world. We have evidence of how behavioral subjection is rewarded or punished according to dominant interests. This encompasses widespread surveillance, but also results in self-surveillance, in which individuals cannot or should not harbor any trace of resistance to the system, as this would somehow be subject to Party investigations.

“Are you guilty?” asked Winston.

“Of course I'm guilty!” exclaimed Parsons with a servile look at the telescreen. “Do you think the Party would arrest an innocent person?” The frog's face became calmer and even acquired an expression of sanctimony. “Thoughtcrime is a horrible thing, old man,” he said sententiously. “It's hell, it can take over you without you even realizing it. Do you know how it dominated me? While I slept! True. I was there working, trying to do my part — I never imagined there was anything negative on my mind. And then I started talking in my sleep. Do you know what they heard me say?”

He lowered his voice like someone forced by doctor's orders to utter an obscenity.

“Down with Big Brother!”

(...)

“Who reported you?” asked Winston.

“It was my little daughter,” said Parsons with a kind of rueful pride (...) (Orwell, 2009, pp. 275-276).

In these times of constant “nows”, it is essential to master our consciences. Mining in indigenous lands to extract their natural resources is extremely important for the system; however, it is equally important to control public opinion about this need. Furthermore, it is crucial to control indigenous people, initially through illnesses and later through catechesis and various forms of conversion. In the Ministry of Love prison, Winston is informed by O'Brien that the Party's main project is to control the minds of the population.

“We control matter because we control the mind. Reality is inside the skull. Little by little you will learn, Winston. There's nothing we can't do. Levitate, become invisible — anything. If I want, I can float like a soap bubble. But I don't want to, because the Party doesn't want to. You need to get rid of these 19th century ideas about the laws of nature. We are the ones who make the laws of nature.” (Orwell, 2009, p. 309).

Thus, we come to the conclusion that mental control enhances obedience to the system, and coercion becomes an everyday aspect, as people follow government customs. “It's the small that makes big things”, goes the saying. Thus, the party invests in the conversion of children, entire generations that grow up without having a comparative picture of the past in relation to the present. Even flat-earthism, a widespread religious perspective, equally reaffirmed by philosophers and scientists and recently propagated, finds its place in the 1984 dystopia: “What are the stars?” said O'Brien indifferently. Points of fire a few kilometers away from us. We could

play them if we wanted, or delete them. The Earth is the center of the universe. The Sun and stars revolve around it" (Orwell, 2009, p. 310).

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