

Dedication

To my dear parents Nadia and Mouhand for their love, advice and support.

To my grandfather Said and my grandmother Taous. I ask God to welcome them in his paradise.

To my two lovely sisters Ranida and Lily, my brother Syfax ,and my aunt Ouiza.

To all my friends and classmates, particularly Lamia, my dearest Amel, Kahina, and my best friend Idris.

Thalouith

To my parents;

To my husband;

To my friends.

Katia

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Abstract

This research paper explores the themes of hegemony and counter-hegemony within two dystopian novels, George Orwell's *1984* and Boualem Sansal's *2084*, relying on the socio-political theories of Antonio Gramsci. Our study investigates the dynamics of power and control in these literary works. We aim to examine the ways in which the ruling classes establish and maintain hegemonic structures through non-coercive means, while also shedding light on the strategies of resistance and subversion employed by the marginalized. This study has revealed that *1984 and 2084* portray the ways the totalitarian systems exert control over the masses like surveillance, propaganda and distortion of historical events. Our study has also revealed that the marginalized groups in the two novels developed strategies for subversion through identifying instances of intellectual and cultural resistance that emerge from the margins of society through collective action of subaltern groups.

Key words: Hegemony, Counter-hegemony, Dystopian literature, spontaneous consent, Power, resistance.

Contents

Dedications	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Abstract	iv
Contents	v
Introduction	1
1.Review of Literature	2
2.Issues and Working Hypothesis	6
3.Methodological outline	7
Methods and Materials	7
1. Methods	7
a.Cultural Hegemony	8
b.Counter-hegemony and the Role of Intellectuals	9
2. Materials	10
a. Historical Background of <i>Nineteen Eighty-Four</i>	10
b. Historical Background of <i>Twenty Eighty-Four</i>	12
c. Biography of George Orwell	14
d.Biography of Boualem Sansal	15

e.Synopsis of 1984	16
f.Synopsis of 2084.....	16
Results	18
Discussion.....	20
Chapter one: Power, Hegemony and Ideology in 1984 and 2084	20
1. Surveillance, Propaganda and suppression of History	21
a. Big Brother Is Watching You	21
b. Bigaye Is Watching You.....	27
c.Hegemony : Ideology Analysis	34
Chapter two: Counter Hegemony and Resistance in 1984 and 2084	41
1.The Intellectuals of 1984 and 2084	41
a.If there is Hope, It Lies in the Proles	41
b.The Party Intellectual Knows	43
c.Ati as an Organic Intellectual	48
2.Counter Hegemony and Resistance in 1984 and 2084.....	50
a.Down with Big Brother	51
b.Death to Begaye	53
Conclusion.....	60
References	62

I. Introduction

Writers express and convey their various thoughts, perspectives and ideologies through their literary works. This is why literature is considered as a way for them to describe the events that happened in the whole world. This is why literature is considered a weapon that authors use to oppose and resist oppressive ideologies. Writers from different countries have witnessed many socio-political crises such as the First and the Second World Wars, the Cold War and the rise of Islamic fundamentalism. These events have influenced them and pushed them into writing remarkable works as a means of responding against the cruel crimes and atrocities that had been committed. In their writings, they often use their imagination to depict utopian or dystopian societies. These terms in literature refer to opposing depictions of fictional worlds. Utopia is a concept that originated from a book entitled “Utopia” written by Sir Thomas More in 1516. It signifies an imaginary good place and perfect world where there are opportunities for living a good life. This means a society where people have social and political equality, complete freedom, and no government control or domination. On the other hand, writers create dystopias, which represent a futuristic and imaginary world where the government or the power structure in society has taken control of everything, where people’s liberties are limited, and technology is used as a means of surveillance over individuals.

In this context of control, domination, and resistance, there evolved hegemony, which is in fact considered as a major concept in dystopian literature, that refers to the dominance and leadership exercised by a particular class in a society over the lower classes, whether by force or non-coercive means like media, schools and culture. The ruling class imposes its control and domination by shaping the values, beliefs and consent of the population specially the lower class citizens.

One of the important masterpieces that explore these themes of totalitarianism within

the frames of hegemony and dystopian worlds is George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949). This dystopian novel is set in a futuristic totalitarian society driven by the ruling party that controls every aspect of the citizens' lives. The novel demonstrates the fear, surveillance, injustice and manipulation that exist in Oceania one of the three totalitarian super states that dominate the world led by the party. It is a kind of warning against the dangers of totalitarianism. Similarly, the Algerian author Boualem Sansal often assaults the religious autocracy of Islam, never hesitating to show his hate for extremism. His remarkable novel entitled *2084: The End of the World*, which was published in (2015), was inspired by Orwell's novel *1984*. It pictures a futuristic country named Abistan that is ruled by a religious state which has taken control over society. It explores themes of religion, resistance and power, as well as a kind of struggle against the totalitarian state.

This present research is a comparative study between the two novels cited above. It will permit us to reach a deeper understanding of power dynamics, ideological control, and resistance, and for this purpose, we are tackling the issues of hegemony and counter-hegemony by referring to Antonio Gramsci's theory known as "cultural hegemony".

1. Review of Literature

George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-four* and Boualem Sansal's *2084* are two influential literary works, whose narratives have received an important bulk of criticism and studies. First, George Orwell's novel has been looked at from numerous standpoints, assessing its themes from different perspectives.

Firstly, Irving Howe in his essay entitled "*1984 – Utopia Reversed*", discusses Orwell's construction of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* as a work that has an important significance, not only as a novel, but also as a political document as well.

(Howe, 1950, p. 2). It portrays a totalitarian society driven by the author's fear. It

is also a kind of appeal to prevent individuals from being “ultra-modern slaves” (Howe, 1950, p. 2). He says that the social horror described in the novel is the result of Orwell’s imagination; however, it gains power from its connection to reality. He adds that in *1984*, the author creates an inversion of the utopian novel.

Secondly, Issac Deutscher was one author who dealt with the novel in his article entitled “*1984 – The Mysticism of cruelty*” (1955), where he affirms that Orwell’s novel is a political book where the terms used by Orwell like “big brother” and “newspeak” are political terminology, and so, it is described as a “creation of focused and intense imagination marked by fear”, and some critics describe it as a kind of a “political horror comic” (Deutscher, 1955). The author also says that the novel lacks the richness, subtlety of thought, and that his imagination is unruly but at the same time penetrating. (Deutscher, 1955). Besides, he relates the novel to one written by the Russian Yevgeny Zamyatin, entitled “*We*”, where many similarities can be drawn, like the influence of the Russian war. Zamyatin’s vision is as full of horrors as is Orwell’s novel *1984*, where the societies of the future deal with banning love and the development of interpersonal connections.

Furthermore, Pull Chilton in an essay entitled “*The Language as the Ultimate Weapon In Nineteen Eighty Four*”, was published in (2000), Chilton claims that scholars recognize that language can be a powerful means in politics to change reality, and in *1984*, Orwell used the concept of “*Newspeak*” to demonstrate how governments use language to impose hegemony. In this context, it becomes a tool of controlling minds, with the purpose of restricting of free will and imagination. The critic also asserts that *Newspeak*’s objective is to confine people’s abilities to think.

In addition, Kathleen Fitzpatrick entitled “*An Overview of 1984*” published in (2014), where she states that Orwell’s dystopian vision in ‘1984’ did not precisely

match the development of soviet style communism. Orwell's portrayal of dehumanised society has left a lasting impact like fears shown in the concept of "big brother" who controls everything. Critics generally agree that the hero Winston Churchill and an ordinary person, showing that it is not a great figure but a symbol of humanity. (Fitzpatrick, 2014, p. 1).

In fact, we are going to look into Boualem Sansal's *2084: the End of the World*, and the reviews and analyses conducted on the novel, for it has received a huge amount of criticism from Algerian intellectuals. One of these critics is Bruce Fudge, which he entitled "*The Failure of Sansal's '2084' : its essential optimism*". Fudge affirms that the story in *2084* takes a secondary role, with the primary focus being on the ideas presented. The book portrays the devastating outcomes of extremism and highlights how the regime manipulates thoughts, leading to the suppression of individual liberty. It draws parallels with the life of the prophet Muhammed and pre-Islamic Meccans of Quraych. Additionally, it includes allusions to Orwell's *1984* which inspired the book, which in turn, adds depth and complexity to the novel. Furthermore Sansal's novel exhibits more similarities to Michel Houellebecq's *Soumission*. Both works share common themes about the critique of religious extremism and its impact on the state and society. (Fudge, 2015, p. 2).

Moreover, Mustapha Harizoun wrote an article called "*Boualem Sansal, 2084: La fin du monde*" (2015), in which he affirms that this novel depicts the totalitarian ideology from an Orwellian Islamic perspective. Harizoun asserts that the novel also explicitly invites us to reflect and to deconstruct our conceptual frameworks and imaginaries, asserting that it is difficult not to read *2084* without thinking about what has been our long-lasting current events, media and political repercussions, such as the instrumentalization of fears, the advance of ignorance, the mechanisms of submission, and

more. The critic argues that if Sansal's novel denounces Islamization, it also warns democracies against ongoing putrefaction (Harizoun, 2015, p. 3).

Another critic of Robin Yassin Kassab who made a review about the novel, saying that the novel sounds like thought-provoking science-fiction just like George Orwell's *1984*, where Sansal uses a futuristic setting to comment on contemporary societal issues, and delivers a clear message that opposes religious dictatorships and promotes democracy and freedom. Kassab adds that the novel seems to be a powerful critique of obscurantism and religious fundamentalism, and is instead advocating for the removal of divinity as a societal organizing principle. It aligns with the period of Enlightenment thinking focused on intellectual topics, exploring modernization and scientific thoughts. Drawing parallels to Voltaire's use of the fable genre in *Candide*, and connects to a secular or non-religious Arab prose tradition dating back to the 19th century Nahda (Arab Renaissance). (Kassab, 2017, p. 20).

To conclude with, Ewa Drab's "*La dystopie musulmane en tant qu'expression du conflit L'exemple de 2084 : La fin du monde de Boualem Sansal*" (2018), where he highlights the question of conflict rooted in totalitarian ideology. Boualem Sansal focuses on the creation of a dystopian world that helps demonstrate the divisions brought by the state, and affecting the oppositions inside and outside the system. Drab says that Sansal's work is followed by the outline of three types of conflicts; individual, internal and external. He then shows the importance of dystopian poetics like symbolism, imagery and irony stressed in the context of the West-Middle East opposition that allows proceeding to the interpretation of particular threads of Sansal's novel. The final part of the reflection compares Sansal's *2048* with George Orwell's *1984*, as Sansal drew inspiration from Orwell's novel, and this is because the protagonist lives in a totalitarian ideology. (Drab, 2018, p. 62).

2. Issue and Working Hypothesis

It is clear from the previous review of literature that both George Orwell's *1984* and Boualem Sansal's *2084* have received critical attention from different standpoints, with each critic decoding a different hidden message. Mainly, the two works shared common similarities in terms of their theme, which is the depiction of totalitarian systems; both of them are dystopian novels, which depict a futuristic world controlled by a totalitarian regime. However, many elements set the two authors apart, such as nationality, language and culture. For instance, Orwell is a British political novelist who is considered an outstanding figure of dystopian fiction, whereas Sansal is an Algerian political author known for his remarkable novel *2084* that is an adaptation of Orwell's novel *1984*. Despite these intricacies, and the presence of oppressive ruling classes in the settings of the two novels, we have yet to see a study linking them and their themes in respect to hegemony and the practices of the higher classes aimed at influencing or repressing the lower strata of society. Therefore, for this study, we are going to borrow from Antonio Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks (1947)*, some of his concepts that we find suitable for our topic in order to analyse these novels. These concepts are hegemony and counter-hegemony, and we are going to touch upon his conceptualization of the intellectuals, mainly the organic, and their roles to oppose and resist the oppressive and hegemonic power in their society. The purpose of this piece of research is to go deeper into these issues, by conducting a comparative study between the literary dystopias of Orwell and Sansal, *1984* and *2084*, respectively. The study focuses on how totalitarian regimes control the masses through various tools, such as manipulation, control and surveillance, where each novel presents a society in a future, where the ruling class has taken total control over their citizens. In addition, we are also interested in counter-hegemonic practices;

therefore, we will study the individual characters that went against their ruling classes and the ways in which they attempted to revolt against them.

3. Methodological Outline

We shall divide our research paper into two chapters. The first one will explore the notion of hegemony, power and ideology in Orwell's *1984* and Sansal's *2084: the End of the World*. This is done by showing how the ruling class imposes its control over the other classes in society by highlighting the different non-coercive elements used by this hegemonic power in both works. For this, we will make a critical analysis of both novels and their settings. Then, we will examine how power is exercised through mechanisms of surveillance, propaganda and manipulation. The second chapter will investigate the concept of counter-hegemony and resistance by showing how resistance is possible against the controlling systems in both novels, by discussing and analysing the ways in which the characters of the books oppose hegemony of the state despite the risks it entails. In order to achieve this, we will appeal to the theory of Antonio Gramsci known as "cultural hegemony" and we will borrow its concepts of hegemony and counter-hegemony and organic intellectuals. The general conclusion sums up the findings reached through this study.

II. Methods and Materials

1. Methods

The purpose of this section is to provide an explanation to the theory of cultural hegemony borrowed from Antonio Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks*. Gramsci developed his concepts while he was in prison in the 1920s. This being said, we will rely on the concepts of hegemony, counter-hegemony and organic intellectuals, in analysing the two novels of Orwell's *1984* and Sansal's *2084: the End of the World*.

a. Cultural Hegemony

“Cultural hegemony” is a concept in sociology and cultural studies, developed in the 1920s and 1930s by the Italian philosopher Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) in his famous *Prison Notebooks*. This concept refers to the dominance and control that one group or class in a society exercises over the culture’s thoughts, values and ideology. According to Gramsci This control is achieved through the use of manipulation of cultural means like institutions, media, education and other non-coercive tools of shaping people’s thinking.

The word “hegemony means leader or dominant state. (Gramsci, 1937, p. 20). Gramsci

uses the concept of cultural hegemony to denote cultural leadership employed by the ruling power. He sees culture as one of the major sites where the struggle for hegemony takes place.

So, he regards that power is maintained, not only through force, but also by manipulation of ideas by using non-coercive means to control people’s minds such as education, media and language. He also insists on the role of ideology by which the ruling class maintains its domination in society. By stating:

The spontaneous consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group ;this consent is historically caused by the prestige and consequent confidence which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production (Gramsci, 1937, p. 142).

Gramsci distinguishes between political and civil society, both contributing to the establishment of hegemony; the Civil one creates “spontaneous consent” and it generates voluntary acceptance of prevailing ideologies. whereas the political one is a state that uses coercive institutions like the police, governmental and legal systems in order to secure consent in those classes that do not accept to consent in society. And civil society’s institutions are non-coercive such as media and political parties as Gramsci argues:

“everything which influences or is able to influence public opinion, directly or indirectly, belongs to it : libraries , schools , associations and clubs of various kinds , even architecture and the layout and names of streets” (Ibid., p. 389).

Additionally, Gramsci notices that the “subaltern” and “subordinate” people or what Gramsci called non-hegemonic classes are manipulated so that they do not question the dominant system that can be seen as a norm. The ruling class maintain their hegemony and power by seeking to win the approval of the other classes. Dominic Strinati maintains :

Dominant groups in society, including fundamentally but not exclusively the ruling class , maintain their dominance by securing the ‘spontaneous consent’ of subordinate groups , including the working class , through the negotiated construction of a political and ideological consensus which incorporates both dominant and dominated groups (Strinati, 1995, p. 165)

Antonio Gramsci adds that “the supremacy of a social group or class manifested itself in two different ways : ‘domination’ or ‘coercion’ , and ‘intellectual and moral leadership’(Gramsci, 1937, p. 24). So, domination is exercised by force by the political society. Meanwhile, hegemony is exercised through consent by civil society. This means “hegemony is attained through the myriad ways in which the institutions of civil society operate to shape, directly or indirectly, the cognitive and effective structure where men perceive and evaluate problematic social reality” (Ibid, p. 24). For Gramsci therefore, physical force is used only against those who refuse to consent.

b. Counter-Hegemony and the Role of Intellectuals

Gramsci highlights the role of intellectuals in challenging dominant ideologies and creating “counter hegemony”, so He argues that intellectuals are often seen as a fair group of social life they function as the deputies of the ruling class, encouraging people to follow the norms established by the ruling power. Gramsci distinguished between traditional intellectuals and organic intellectuals. the traditional ones refer to educated individuals who are viewed as experts in

their field and they acquired knowledge by establishing cultural institutions such as universities or research organizations. They often represent the interest of the ruling power. However, The organic intellectuals are those who connect to specific social group, which means they emerged from communities particularly the working class. They play a role in creating counter-hegemonic ideas to oppose the ruling group.

1. Materials

a. Historical Background of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

Orwell's 1984 was influenced by his own experience and his personal encounters with tyranny across different regions like Spain, Germany, and the Soviet Union. Situated in a dystopian setting, the novel mirrors Orwell's concerns regarding governmental suppression and the loss of personal liberties, notably following the Second World War. The aim of Orwell is to alert readers to the dangers of totalitarianism. However, the conditions that led to the rise of such oppressive regimes were depicted in "1984" were present in Orwell's time.

Completed in 1948, amidst the post-War division of Britain by global powers, the novel's fictive London serves as a recognizable caricature of the real post-War London.

"1984" thus serves as a reflection of the political climate and historical context in which it was written, highlighting the parallels between Orwell's fictional society and socio-political realities of his time. His evolving attitude towards socialism reflects the tumultuous era he lived in. In the face of the rise of dictators like Mussolini in the 1930s, George Orwell saw the importance of defending individual freedom against totalitarianism. He was critical of the abuse and manipulation of language for political purposes, as seen in his writings on the dangers of propaganda and thought control. At the same time, he recognized that certain forms of socialism,

which championed individual liberties and protected against fascist aggression, offered a potential defence against oppressive regimes. This nuanced perspective underscores Orwell's commitment to truth and the integrity of language, while also acknowledging the complex political landscape of his time.

The events in Communist Russia, particularly the power struggle between Leon Trotsky and Joseph Stalin during the 1920s, heavily influenced the plot and themes of Orwell's 1984. Stalin, a key figure in the communist Party, consolidated power through his role in managing party activities and controlling purges aimed at maintaining party purity. This struggle for dominance within the party echoes themes of power and control depicted in Orwell's novel. Stalin, along with his allies Zinoviev and Kamenev, swiftly consolidated power by employing the secret police to suppress any dissenting voices. Trotsky, then the minister of war, advocated for some degree of party democratization, but his followers were systematically removed, with many exiled abroad. Eventually, Trotsky was forced to resign and later assassinated by the secret police. From 1928 until the outbreak of the Second World War, Stalin wielded absolute authority, implementing significant societal changes such as collective agriculture and industrialization, often relying on forced labour. The era of the Five Year plans, initiated in 1928, aimed to achieve ambitious economic goals, although the targets of the initial plan were largely unmet. However, Stalin's transformation from the leader of the late 1920s to the warlord of the Second World War era was palpable.(Cheballah, 2019, p.25)

During this War, Britain and the United States, and Russia formed an alliances against Germany as a global conflict divided spheres of influence. The United States, establishing its dominance in Europe and Eurasia, controlled Eastern Europe, leading to tensions with Russia and sparking the beginning of the Cold War. George

Orwell harboured resentment towards the totalitarian regimes and their leaders, witnessing the suffering inflicted by their policies. The political climate of the early Cold War heavily influenced his writing, prompting him to set his writing in England as a backdrop for the struggle against factions within British socialism susceptible to Stalinist influence. Characters like Big Brother and Emmanuel Goldstein in Orwell's 1984 bear resemblance to Stalin and Trotsky, both in appearance and ideology, serving as symbols of oppressive regimes. Orwell aimed to illustrate how totalitarianism regimes control the human spirit, ensuring that readers grasp the detrimental effects of such oppressive systems on people. (Taibi, 2013, p. 18)

b. Historical Background of *Twenty Eighty-Four*

Boualem Sansal's writings is considered as a reaction to the Islamic Fundamentalism or Islamic terrorism that took place in Algeria during the Black Decade. along with the assassination of Mohamed Boudiaf in 1992. This Algerian Civil War was a conflict between the Algerian government backed by the national people's Army, and various Islamist groups from 1992 to 2002. The War concluded with the government forces emerging victorious, marked by the surrender of the Islamic Salvation Army and the defeat of the armed Islamic group. Over a decade, the violence resulted in between 60,000 and 150,000 deaths, along with thousands of disappearances, one million displaced individuals, tens of thousands of refugees, and over twenty billion dollars in damages

The conflict started in January 1992 when the Algerian government, fearing potential loss of power after initial election results favoured the Islamic Salvation FIS and the possibility of an Islamic republic, consequently, the electoral process was halted, the FIS was banned, and thousands of its members were arrested. This led to

the emergence of various Islamist guerrilla groups, including the Armed Islamic Movement in rural areas and the Armed Islamic group in urban centers. Initially targeting security forces, some factions soon began attacking civilians. By 1994, amidst negotiations between the government and the FIS leaders not in custody, the Armed Islamic group declared war on the FIS and its supporters. meanwhile, the Armed Islamic Movement and other groups joined forces to create the Islamic Salvation Army, which aligned itself with the FIS.

In 1995, talks collapsed, promoting a new election won by General Liamine zéroual, backed by the military. Tensions heightened between the GIA and the AIS. In the subsequent years, the GIA conducted a series of massacres targeting entire villages, peaking in 1997 during parliamentary elections won by the newly formed pro-military party, the National Democratic Rally. Faced with attacks from both sides, the AIS declared a one-sided ceasefire with the government in 1997, while the GIA splintered due to its brutal tactics. In 1999, the election of President Abdelaziz Bouteflika was followed by an amnesty law for most combatants, leading to a period of relative calm. Although violence decreased with the government's success, it did not entirely vanish. By 2002, the GIA's remnants appeared to have all but disappeared. Overall, the rise of Islamic Fundamentalism in Algeria led to a devastating conflict that deeply scarred the country and its people. Which also raised questions about democracy and Islam.

So, Boulem Sansal's novel "2084" : The End of the World draw parallels to the Algerian Civil War through its exploration of themes such as authoritarianism and religious extremism. However, the work is set in dystopian future and echoes the tensions of Algeria's recent past. The author describes the oppressive regime Abi which controls society just like the authoritarian regimes that dominated Algeria during the conflict employing tactics of surveillance, propaganda and fear. The society also in the novel is characterized by religious extremism this reflects the rise

of Islamist groups during the conflict such as the Armed Islamic group and the FIS which sought to impose their interpretation of Islam through force.

Sansal used words throughout the story that refer to this religion (Islam) for instance the god “Yolah”, the sacred book “Gkabul”, the enemy “Chitan”, the mosque “Mockba” and the prayers that punctuate the day of the Abistaine people such as the prayer that is performed several times a day, the Siam which refers to Ramadan, one of the pillars of the religion of Islam. Moreover, Sansal never hesitates to show his radical refusal for Islamism especially after witnessing the Algerian civil war led by radical Islamists, He denounce the authority of religion and government in the sense that he demonstrate his opposition to those powers in his literature as a way of rebellion. While he called for liberalism and revolution against any form of radicalism attacking in particular Islamist extremism. (Slimani, 2022, p. 36).

c. Biography of George Orwell

George Orwell, by his real name Eric Arthur Blair, is an English writer, journalist, and critic, famous for his novels *Animal Farm* (1945) and *1984* (1949). He is also known for his non-fiction works like *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937) and *Homage to Catalonia* (1938).(Orwell, 1949, p. 1)

He was born on June 25, 1903 in Motihari, Bengal, India. His father was employed in the Indian civil service and his mother had French ancestry. Orwell’s family belonged to the lower class. In 1907, his family returned to England, and that was when he enrolled in a school on the Sussex coast. Because of his financial situation and his intelligence, he was given a fee reduction in 1917 and was awarded a scholarship to Eton, one of Britain’s best schools, where he studied until 1921. After finishing school, he decided to join the Indian imperial police force in Burma instead of joining university.(Slimani, 2022, p. 28). In 1937,

Orwell joined the Spanish civil war. But, this did not stop him from volunteering for military administration when Britain entered World War II, but he got progressively sick. Orwell's experience in the Spanish civil war from 1936 to 1939 happened in a period that is seen as a precursor to the Second World War, and was marked by the rise of totalitarian ideologies like Fascism and Communism. All this has influenced his political views and were documented in his book "homage to Catalonia", where he provided a first-hand account of his conflicts within the anti-fascist forces during the war. (Taibi, 2013, p. 18).

d. Biography of Boualem Sansal

Boualem Sansal is an Algerian author who was born on October 15, 1949, in Theniet el Had, Tissemsilt, Algeria. He spent his childhood in the neighbourhood of Belcourt in Algiers and studied engineering and then obtained a PhD in economics. He was a teacher, consultant, business manager and senior servant at the Algerian government. He began writing novels at the age of 50. The rise of Islamic fundamentalism in Algeria influenced him to take the decision to begin writing. His personal life was affected by the islamization of the country. He was forced to send his wife and daughter to Prague in order to protect them from threatening Islamism, when he started writing against Islamic terrorism during the black decade in 1990s in Algeria it experienced a civil conflicts characterized by violence and terrorism. With the support of his friend Rachid Mimouni, he realized his novel called *Le Serment des Barbares* (1999) published by Gallimard. He also wrote *L'Enfant Fou de l'Arbre Creux* (2000). He received le Grand Prix du Roman de l'Académie Française for his novel *2084: the End of the World*, and in 2020, he was awarded the Mediterranean Prize of Literature for his latest novel *Abraham ou la Cinquième Alliance*. Sansal's writings can be described as a critique of religion, especially Islam. He continues to live with his family in Algeria despite the controversy of his books. (Slimani, 2022, p. 36).

e. Synopsis of Nineteen Eighty-Four

George Orwell's 1984 is a dystopian novel published in 1949 in England. It explores a society in the futuristic world that struggles against the totalitarian regime of the Party. It is set in London. This society is divided into three superstates: Oceania, Eurasia and Eastasia, and society is divided into three classes: the Inner Party, the Outer Party and the Proles. The work tells the story of Winston Smith, the protagonist of the story, who struggles and opposes the head of the ruling party who is known as Big Brother. Winston Smith has a job in the Ministry of Truth that is in charge of destroying all the history of Oceania and distorting the truth by manipulating news and reality for the population to support the hegemonic regime. Big Brother and the Thought Police control every aspect of citizens' lives and forbid any relationship between two classes and any rebellious thinking which may oppose the ruling Party, and if they do so, they will be taken by the Thought Police to be punished. Furthermore, the Party created a new language known as Newspeak, designed to limit free thought and expressions. Moreover, people are conditioned to hate Emmanuel Goldstein who is the enemy of the Party. The party also organizes rituals like Two Minute Hate in order to influence the emotions of people. The ideology of the Party is powerful enough to manipulate the reality and lead people to false consciousness, which is why Winston tried to resist the Party but he was captured by the thought police and got tortured until he became loyal to Big Brother.

f. Synopsis of 2084: The End of the World

Boualem Sansal imagined a dystopian society which is under the control of the single God named Yolah and his delegate Abi. Abistan is the fictional totalitarian state that maintains domination over its citizens. In this state, the disappearance of books became the norm, and independent thought is not allowed. In fact, it is described as a closed and strange

place with submissive inhabitants who remain ignorant of what happens in their life. The Just Brotherhood is responsible for governing people and has absolute power. There are many ministries in Abistan, and the apparatus is responsible for controlling each aspect of citizens's lives, such as telepathic agents named V's. Abistan is in constant war against the enemy which has many names like the devil, the Chitan and Makouf. There is also "Bigaye" who observes everything with mural screens. Besides, the system has invented a new language which is called Abilang, destined of making language rudimental.

In the novel, is a protagonist named Ati, who is searching for the truth after having spent two years away from his home situated in Qodsabad, the capital of Abistan, because he was in a sanatorium in the Oua mountain at the edge of the empire. His desire to know the truth and his evolution of thinking that begins with doubts that lead him to question the world where he lives, pushed him to embark on dangerous adventures in Abigov, the heart of Abi's government, to resist the power of the religious regime. He seeks the border that can lead him to a better world with no surveillance and control. On his journey, he meets his friends who help him discover the truth of the state, its religion and the history which has been erased. These friends are Koa, the grandson of a former religious leader of the Mokba and Nas who is an archaeologist searching for remnants of ancient monotheistic civilization. The other friend is named Toz and is a collector of ancient artefacts, and who is in reality the brother of one of the members of the theocratic oligarchy that make up a revolutionary movement known as the Brotherhood. After a series of incidents and misfortunes, Toz reveals to him the secrets of Abistan, and the Brotherhood's bid for political power, and Abi ends with finding the answer to some of his questions whilst others remain unanswered as he ventures to find the borders of Abistan.

III. Results

This part of our dissertation is devoted to presenting the results we have come to deduce from the humble analysis we made of the novels *1984* and *2084* by George Orwell and Boualem Sansal, respectively. We have studied and compared them using Antonio Gramsci's conception of intellectuals in society, as well as hegemony and counter-hegemony. It is worth mentioning that Sansal's text was inspired by Orwell's, hence the striking similarities.

We have found that in the 1949 novel, it was a socialist totalitarian regime that reigned, whereas in the 2015 one, we learn that the world had adopted an extremist religious ideology. The worlds of Oceania and Abistan are both taken over by an order ruled by characters which no one was allowed to see. Big Brother and Abi were mystified in this manner, and they have been given praise for ruling their lands.

Language was an important means as well. We have found it to be used in the two totalitarian worlds as a weapon against people's free thinking faculties, and in both, language was designed to make the dictionaries smaller, and such was in the aim of depleting people's analytic minds. Moreover, they were kept under mass-surveillance, and mass media played propagandist discourse non-stop over their heads.

However, it proved to be one of the differences between the rules of Big Brother and Bigaye that for in the former, the lower class of the proles was not kept under surveillance, whereas in the latter, the poor people were made to spy on each other. Winston Smith and Ati emerged as organic intellectuals who, not only denounced their governments with words, but also sought to find out the truth about

their systems. This leads us to the remaining point in common we discussed in the chapters, which was the collective and individual resistance, that ended in two different ways. We thought it interesting that Orwell's ending was bitter whilst Sansal's left a window of hope for its protagonist. Likewise, the underground rebellious cells were debunked as myth in *1984* and ended pessimistically, whereas it staged a seamless political transition in *2084*, despite the eventual outcomes remaining largely unknown. These were our findings for the two primary sources we have tackled, with reference to Antonio Gramsci's conceptions of hegemony which allowed us a further understanding of the mechanisms of manufacturing the consent of the people, similar to the situation in the two novels we have compared.

IV. Discussion

This part of our dissertation delves into the dystopian novels of *Nineteen eighty-four* (1949) and *2084: the end of the world* (2015), written by George Orwell and Boualem Sansal respectively. We have divided our work into two chapters in order to analyze multiple themes that are found in the books, by applying Antonio Gramsci's concepts of Hegemony and the Organic intellectual on the dystopian novels. This is done with the aim of gaining a deeper understanding of power dynamics, ideological control, as well as counter-hegemony and resistance against these means of oppression.

Chapter I: Power, Hegemony and Ideology in *1984* and *2084*

The primary sources we are dealing with are connected because Boualem Sansal was inspired by George Orwell's classic *Nineteen eighty-four* when he was writing his novel *2084: the End of the World*. We will refer to the books using only the numerals of their titles moving ahead. The influence of *1984* is seen first and foremost at the level of the titles, but it also goes deeper into the themes of these books. Sansal's title *2084* is one century later from Orwell's and makes references to how Abistan is in fact a continuation of Oceania's system, or its inspiration and predecessor. The interesting fact about these books is that, unlike most dystopian fiction that deals with anxieties of technological developments, these ones instead focus on social and political dystopias, depicting worlds where the fundamental issues rise from rampant control over the population by means that suppress their critical thinking and restrains their freedom.

For this first chapter therefore, we have chosen to focus our analysis on the ways that society is led by the governments. Big Brother in *1984* and Abi in *2084* exercise full control over their people, and use mechanisms to maintain full-surveillance whilst suppressing any thought lest it leads to resistance. For this analysis, we opted for Gramsci's concepts of

hegemony. developed in his book *Prison Notebooks*, this concept is used today to refer to a domination based on people's consent.

1. Surveillance, Propaganda and Suppression of History

In the novels 1984 and 2084, society has lost any freedom it used to have before some big war happened. In 1984, a revolution in the 1960s happened, following a third World War where nuclear weapons were used, whilst in the fictional state of Abistan of 2084, it was a Holy War against Chitan that was used to justify the state's dictatorship. This is done through various means that Orwell and Sansal explored through their main characters, whose conscience of their states' manipulation of their affairs enabled them to critically observe their surroundings. Moreover, by relating their observations to Gramsci's hegemony, we will prove that totalitarian regimes in the novels deployed non-coercive methods to gain legitimacy.

a. Big Brother Is Watching You

The title of this part is directly taken from the first page of the novel 1984. It is from a large poster that was tacked to the walls of Victory Mansions where the main character, Winston Smith, lived in a flat. The story began with Winston as he was walking up to his room, whilst the narrator described the poster by saying:

On each landing, opposite the lift-shaft, the poster with the enormous face gazed from the wall. It was one of those pictures which are so contrived that the eyes follow you about when you move. BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU, the caption beneath it ran. (Orwell, 1949, p. 3)

There had emerged three superstates that took over the world: Eurasia, Eastasia, and Oceania. The latter was likewise divided into districts, and Winston lived in one of them called Airstrip One, formerly known as Great Britain, in the city of London. The parts of the world which did not politically merge with the three superstates were disputed over by them. These territories were the cause for the perpetual wars that arose between the superstates, with

interchanging alliances, though we come to learn that they were merely playgrounds for the waste in supply that would otherwise go to the benefit of the people. Throughout the book, it was revealed it was not even important which was the ally of Oceania at a given moment. In fact, Julia, Winston's lover remarked "'who cares?' (Orwell, 1949, p. 194) 'It's always one bloody war after another, and one knows the news is all lies anyway'" (Ibid., p. 194).

More characters emerged as the story unfolded, many of whom the author used to reveal more and more details about the way the state affairs were run, mainly through dialogue or the events that involved them. Orwell meticulously exposed the power dynamics in Oceania, and traced by so doing, the far-reaching effects that they had on the people who were constantly with fed pieces of information, specifically designed to keep them dependent on the state, and afraid of it at the same time. Julia appeared to be a peculiar woman to the main character. At first, Winston despised her, suspecting she might have been spying on him, trying to catch him as a *thought criminal*. The Thought Police in charge of these arrests was a section of the Ministry of Love, which was ironically concerned with affairs related to treason, torture and instilling fear in the hearts of people. *Miniluv*, as it was known, was one of four ministries that each operated from a three hundred-meter high pyramid in the middle of the city. The others were called The Ministries of Truth, Peace and Plenty. Each was devoted to affairs that were the opposite of their names. This was a ploy used by the government branch responsible for language and words (Ministry of Truth), in order to create confusion in the minds of people. The narrator elaborates on the use of these words: "these contradictions are not accidental, nor do they result from ordinary hypocrisy; they are deliberate exercises in DOUBLETHINK" (Ibid., p. 273).

Before explaining the concept of *doublethink*, one must first bring up Antonio

Gramsci's understanding of grammar. In the book entitled *Language and hegemony in Gramsci*, Professor Peter Ives explained how Gramsci distinguished between two types of grammar, the spontaneous and the normative. The spontaneous type (also referred to as immanent) is used to denote grammatical patterns that emanate from social processes of communication between different groups of people, whilst normative grammar denotes a more structured way in which linguists organize grammar, and give it rules. Ives explains Gramsci's ideas in a way which makes the following passage pertinent to our study, by stating:

In distinguishing (but not separating) normative and spontaneous types of grammar, Gramsci provides a specific model for these relations. Normative grammars are formed (made normative) by codifying one spontaneous grammar and excluding others, or through a process of engaging and transforming a multitude of spontaneous grammars. This process can include both coercion and consent. (Ives, 2004, p. 123)

This passage explains how normative grammar is formed. Through taking multiple spontaneous grammars (referring to the different ones that appear in different social groups), and codifying them, linguists then obtain a standard type that is used as the norm and against which, other forms of spontaneous grammar are judged. By the end of the passage, Ives mentioned that the way this process was conducted can be forced or consensual amongst the people. This brings us back to the novel of *1984*. The Ministry of Truth in the novel had a section tasked with compiling words for the *Newspeak* dictionary. Syme, who worked in the Research Department, explained the purpose of this dictionary, and said it was "cutting the language down to the bone" (Orwell, 1949, p. 62). He was tasked with destroying language, in order to get to the "definitive edition" (Ibid., 1949, p. 62) which was a very simple version of language. Syme, who went on to disappear later in the novel, talked about this new way of codifying language on an institutional level, making news outlets speak with it, and making other manners of speech disappear. With too little caution, Syme elaborated on this issue:

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. Or again, if you want a stronger version of ‘good’, what sense is there in having a whole string of vague useless words like ‘excellent’ and ‘splendid’ and all the rest of them? ‘Plusgood’ covers the meaning, or ‘doubleplusgood’ if you want something stronger still... In the final version of *Newspeak* there’ll be nothing else. In the end the whole notion of goodness and badness will be covered by only six words— in reality, only one word. Don’t you see the beauty of that, Winston? It was B.B.’s idea originally, of course,’ he added as an afterthought (Orwell, 1949, p. 66).

All forms of speech and their grammar were decided by the government in Oceania. Eventually, there would be no more terms to express ideas that go against the party, like a sense of disbelief or a desire for freedom. Big Brother’s policy would eradicate, with its suppression of words, people’s ability for critical thinking. The normative grammar will therefore insure the ruling class’s dominance over everybody in the state in a non-coercive, but extremely efficient way that people do not even take notice of. The gradualism of this process makes it undetectable, along with the perpetual tampering with formerly published data.

Returning to the concept of *doublespeak*, one may comprehend it better after the explanation of how the *Newspeak* dictionary works: similarly to reducing language to a few basic words that express nothing more than bland meanings, *doublespeak* takes this one step further. Orwell explained this by analogizing the colors black and white to form one single word: *blackwhite*, saying that party members especially are expected to have “the ability to BELIEVE that black is white, and more, to KNOW that black is white, and to forget that one has ever believed the contrary” (Ibid., p. 268). George Orwell had already published an essay entitled *Politics and the English language*, in which he stated, “if thought corrupts language, language can also corrupt thought” (1946, p. 11).

Winston Smith worked for the Ministry of Truth, in the Records Department, where his job was to *rectify* publications of newspaper articles and any documents that held ideas,

names or information that went against the ruling Party. He was often tasked with editing and cross-referencing previously published materials. When he was done, and a *lie* was chosen to become the new truth, he would dump the existing evidence of contradiction down an orifice in the room, known as a *memory hole*, where they were destroyed. Rewriting history was one way of tampering with it, until truth became a matter of opinion. Similarly, a person could become an *unperson*, which was how traitors and opponents of the Party were completely erased from history. Mirroring this ruse, the ministry would invent people who never existed for the reasons of being treated as a caution-tale, or an inspirational one. This is how they controlled narratives. The tactics of public glorification and humiliation was found by the government to hold much emotional charge for the people; therefore, it was expanded to become a Two Minute Hate ceremony that was performed every day. It was a way of directing the members of the party's energies for the advantage of patriotism, their public enemy was named Emmanuel Goldstein, who was speculated to lead an underground resistance called the Brotherhood.

The Italian thinker Antonio Gramsci spoke in an essay entitled *Agitation and propaganda* about the ways in which a state's ruling Party was separated from the people, and furthermore, how their values, beliefs and education are tampered with. He discussed this affair at the level of parties of the government which form the one ruling Party, and scrutinized the substitution of ideas with lower versions of them. He distinguished the following concepts with their respective replacements: Instead of political history, bloodless erudition; Instead of books and great reviews, daily papers and broadsheets; instead of serious politics, ephemeral quarrels and personal clashes" (Gramsci, 1930, p. 477). In 1984, this is exemplified by the multiple diversions created for the public, meant to replace their better judgments with ones based on fear and cognitive dissonance, such as news about capturing enemies of the state, hearing bombing noises constantly, also a frightening tactic, as

pointed out by Julia, and the fact that “at any given moment there was some necessary article which the Party shops were unable to supply. Sometimes it was buttons, sometimes it was darning wool, sometimes it was shoelaces; at present it was razor blades” (Ibid., p. 63), which always kept people’s attention perpetually misled.

Surveillance was used by the government to incessantly spy on its members as well, and the conditions of being watched evoked feelings of existential anxiety. Winston, therefore found himself exhausted. This led him, at the outset of the novel, to buy himself a diary and a pen which he hid from the “oblong metal plaque like a dulled mirror which formed part of the surface of the right-hand wall” (p. 4). The plaque was also known as a telescreen, through which party members were being watched and heard at all times. This surveillance project made it impossible for anyone to have privacy. In addition to the technological devices, the Youth League of Spies conditioned kids to report any deviation of the expected behaviors of their parents and inform Big Brother. The totalitarian regime of Oceania had succeeded in eliminating any devotion but to it, and in so doing, loving relationships felt as though they were never the norm. In fact, there was even an anti-sex league, that discouraged romantic or physical entanglements with the proles strictly forbidding inter-party relations for fear that it would lead to alliances that it can not shake.

Orwell talked about higher-ranking members of the Party, who all worked under Big Brother’s command. They were called Inner Party members, who have privileges that were denied to Winston and his peers. This illustrated the stratification of society, with each member firmly given his limited rights and duties, albeit, there were no specific regulations forbidding doing anything, said Orwell, for “nothing was illegal, since there were no longer any laws” (p. 9). Outside of the Party members who were all living in Victory flats and eating Victory foods, there was another strata of society which did not undergo the same process of scrutinizing surveillance. They were referred to as the proles, and lived outside of the city in

poor slums, about which the government did not exercise much control nor offer any opportunity. Those people were kept down by dulling their intelligence, and dimming their opportunities of improving their impoverished lives. Their women were often sought for cheap thrills, and the general population was rendered obsessed with the lottery, although it was largely won by inexistent people.

The novel *1984* is full of mechanisms that the totalitarian regime of Oceania deployed on a daily basis to assert its power and maintain it. Julia, who became entangled with Winston romantically, remarked one day: “if you’re happy inside yourself, why should you get excited about Big Brother and the Three-Year Plans and the Two Minutes Hate and all the rest of their bloody rot” (p. 167)? Their unhappiness, stems from the government’s taking over every aspect of people’s lives. From what they eat and whom they marry, their control was total.

b. Bigaye is Watching You

As George Orwell’s novel *1984* is the admitted inspiration for Boualem Sansal’s *2084*, it was only logical that we would start our analysis of the power dynamics in the two, by an illustration of how the system in Oceania functioned, persisted and maintained power against all and any efforts to try discrediting it. Sansal’s *2084*, likewise, focused much of its narration on exposing the totalitarian regime of Abistan. We are going to detail our study by referring to quotations from the book itself, and with reference to common points as well as differences with Orwell’s *1984*, and such is in the aim of highlighting the unique attributes of this Algerian writer’s rendition of a fictional world that was based, not solely on Orwell’s dystopia, but also on events that struck Sansal’s own country, as he witnessed the civil war of Algeria, and Islamization of the regime during the nineties of the last century.

2084 takes place in a world that seemingly had no borders nor frontiers. This world, known as Abistan, stretched infinitely across the globe. Words that denoted limit or border

subsequently had no purpose for existing. The land was described as having a thousand and one holy monuments, places or villages that the Abistanis (people of Abistan) occasionally got the privilege of visiting, and rejoicing in their holiness. The rampant lifestyle was predominantly religious, and everyone subscribed to it. The general air that the people held was one of love for their ruler Abi, who was a prophet and God's Delegate on earth.

Abi's portrait, which was "a sort of negative of a face: at its center was a magic eye, pointed like a diamond, endowed with a consciousness that could pierce armor plating" (Sansal., p. 19), was plastered all over the land of Abistan. One day, someone mysteriously inscribed a text next to one of these haunting portraits, which "consisted, in fact, of no more than a play of shadows" (Sansal, 2015, p. 19), and evoked a watchful eye, a sentence in an archaic language that no one understood, but that was later translated to the people. The inscription read: "Bigaye is watching you!" (Ibid., p. 28). The name Bigaye, however, seamlessly changed its spelling in an official decree issued by the government, and had become Big Eye. The people, of course, took no notice of this change. The holy flair of the shadowy portrait often made "[passersby] ... subjugated, then before long [they were] happy, and felt intensely protected, loved, promoted — crushed, too, by the majesty and all it conveyed of formidable violence" (Ibid., p. 25). Furthermore,

The idea of representing him in this way, with one eye, was cause for debate, and theories were advanced: it was said he was one - eyed — from birth, according to some, or due to the suffering he endured in his childhood, according to others; it was also said he actually had an eye in the middle of his forehead, and that this was the mark of a prophetic destiny, but equally firmly it was posited that the image was symbolic, signaling a spirit, a soul, a mystery (Ibid., p. 24).

This passage shows us the power of Abi's representation. For whence it was vague, it was also magnetic and sparked debates and discussions about its true meaning. This is one of the system's ways in keeping people guessing as much as they can about causes that were really of no importance. It was beneficial to the state for it distracted them from thinking about

things that would possibly question the established notions. His symbolic image therefore, could be said to be one of the ways in which the people's minds are misled. Additionally, in the city of Qodsabad where the Delegate lived, his palace was protected by "hundreds of well-armed men ... , aligned to form concentric, hermetic barriers that not even a fly could get through without the permission of the Apparatus" (Sansal, 2015, p. 23). This overprotection also sparked a lot of intrigue from the people, who called these terrifying men "Abi's Fools" (p. 24), and had a myth circulating about their origin and questions about their nature.

The Apparatus of Abistan can therefore be seen to create polemics and debates in order to keep the common people's days occupied. The degree of these issues presented to Abistanis as matters worthy of their interest vary considerably in their nature and grossness. For instance, the Abi government liked to occasionally show its people that it was worse to survive an attack than to die. In the far mountain of Sin where the sanatorium was situated, government caravans carrying medicine would routinely disappear and the military personnel escorting it would be killed off. In the event of survivors, they would end up at a stadium of public gathering, "on the day of great prayer, and [would be] executed to the sounds of great cheering after they had been paraded through town" (2015, p. 32). It is worth mentioning however, as did Sansal, that it was just as easy to incite the public on a matter, as it was to make them forget it. Sansal recounts this by explaining that "suddenly the event became an affair of state, and disappeared from public view" (2015, p. 29).

The above makes it abundantly clear how totalitarian regimes divert the minds of their people. What is to follow is another means Abistan used to render thinking remotely improbable. Before Sansal's time, George Orwell commented on this very issue in multiple essays he wrote in the Forties, which we have used in the previous part. In Abistan, the established order made one language the official language apart from which all others paled, and were actively being destroyed. It was called *Abilang*, "the sacred tongue Yölah taught Abi

in order to unite the believers as one nation” and “all other languages were the product of contingency, and they were pointless, they divided mankind, shut them off into the particular, corrupted their souls through invention and falsehood” (2015, p. 59). This language as it was the only one recognized by the state, was also a secret weapon it utilized against its citizen. For instance, it removed and added words as it saw fit, and carried its agenda of manufacturing a people which hollowed obedience and refused critical thought on its very own. One word that was deleted from daily use was *border* in *Abilang*. Such was done to destroy the notion that their state could have frontiers. The state also had an enemy that it used to put fright into people’s minds, and to simultaneously justify the Holy War against him, known as Balis. The war was only to end “once Yölah crushed Balis, in accordance with the Promise” (2015, p. 30).

In the world of Abistan, English had become an archaic useless language that people do not recognize nor speak anymore. In Abistan, a superstate that has taken over from the ruins of Oceania, reverted to the same totalitarian abuse of words for their own benefit. The only thing that has changed is the religious sacredness that *Abilang* acquired, justified by the Holy Book *Gkabul* being written in this tongue. Parallels between this practice and Algeria’s nineties massacres of the indigenous people of the country in order to institute a language-based meritocracy amongst the people whom, the government hoped would surrender to their threats. However, despite this not being the eventuality in Algeria, Abistan was another case. Its people relinquished any former identity. In fact, it was so extreme that history was not even known anymore. The novel’s protagonist Ati was “at the age of thirty-two, or thirty-five, he wasn’t really sure” (Sansal, 2015, p. 37). History had been erased, and time stood still.

Sansal’s implicit clues as to the nature of Ati were clear from his name. In French, the original language of the novel, Ati is an almost exact pronunciation as the word “athée” which is “atheist” in English. Interestingly enough, this name is

naught but his government's own distortion of who Ati really was. As Sansal professed in the story, the main character merely wanted to understand the place I which he was living. This alone sufficed to make him, and his companion, Koa, dangerous for the government as Sansal says: "What the Just Brotherhood had always feared, without being able to name it, was there before them, at an embryonic stage, carried by a reclusive patient in the most isolated place in Abistan and a civil servant who was too wise for what he was supposed to be doing there" (Sansal, 2015, p. 195).

The totalitarian regime of Abistan was not one to name the challenges it could face, it worked at making language devoid of terminology to express what the concept of democracy was. On the tongues of people, however, it circulated sometimes, specially coming from the tongues of old men who witnessed the world before the apparition of the Just Brotherhood. The name they retained was *Democ*, but no one could quite tell what it was, or who it was, perhaps "a ghost, a secret organization, no one knows, Apparently people talk about it, now and again" (2015, p. 169). The unspeakable *Democ* in this fashion was one of the three most hated enemies of the state in addition to Balis and the *Makoufs* or the renegades that go against it.

The supernatural power that the people believed the government had deployed to catching renegades and bringing them to justice, was called the V's. These invisible agents were characterized by telepathy. They evoked the same characteristics as the Islamic culture beliefs of djinns, that are creatures of higher technological advancement living in another realm. In Abistan, they somehow breached the veil to this reality and were perhaps recruited by the government somehow. These V's were "mysterious beings, formerly known as djinns, who mastered telepathy, invisibility, and ubiquity" (Sansal, 2015, p. 63). They could also read minds. This element of science fiction gives more nuance to the story, illustrating just how far the mental faculties of Abistanis were subdued.

Boualem Sansal situate his hero Ati in a position that allowed him escape from the moral police. He was not captured indefinitely nor has he been put through trial in which he would surely have been convicted in the great Stadium as were all those charged. His friend Koa likewise ventured with him far beyond lawlessness, but admittedly:

Now that they had come this far, the two friends needed to stop and consider the fact that they had crossed a line, and that to keep on in the same direction would lead them to their death. They must not act blindly. It was already nothing short of a miracle that they had carried their revolt this far without being caught. They were still protected by their status. Ati was a veteran; he had survived tuberculosis and come back from the terrifying sanatorium at Sîn; and Koa bore an illustrious name and was a graduate of the unparalleled SDW, the School of the Divine Word (2015, p. 128).

The two friends were aware that their curiosity would lead to their demise and It had already led to them becoming renegades and criminals. The author summed their crimes –thus far– which were “ the escapade to the ghetto, that infernal burrow of Balis and the Regs, ... the business with the license, the breaking and entering, the falsification of a public document, usurpation of function, trafficking in an organized gang, theft” (2015, p. 126). The fact that they were not caught showed the hierarchy of the system they were living in, more precisely the importance of reputation in that place, for a man is raised according to what was known of him, and respectable people were less likely to be doubted. In Abistan, once someone’s reputation has been tarnished, it was sure that they would end prosecuted and condemned, not only by the government, but also by all the people who were more than willing to turn on their own. This was exemplified in the book when an altercation took place between two women, when one of them, who was fifteen years of age, uttered heretical words, and was consequently brought to justice, after the many testimonies of her neighbours.

Brainwashing was therefore in full swing in Abistan. The people had believed that Yölah was indeed all-powerful and just. This was the result of subduing their minds since

their childhood, by being taught ninety-nine expressions all venerating god and the Apparatus, brainlessly. Obedience was etched into their being, so much so that to them, it was simply the way things were designed by Yölah, and Yölah could do no wrong. Whenever someone had a thought that interfered with their teachings, the individual would self-flagellate. The protagonist witnessed these acts of protection against heresy:

Men flogged themselves in keeping with the tradition of their region, or banged their heads against the wall, or clawed at their chests, or screamed at the top of their lungs: such an act was a heresy that would bring ruin to believers (Sansal, 2015, p. 29).

Heresy was their worst fear. It meant siding with Chitan in the Great Holy War against him, which he was promised to lose, and although facts about the war were purposefully left vague to incite interpretation and confusion, it was enough to make the population eager to send out its young men as martyrs, so that the Just Brotherhood be satisfied with them. Additionally, spying on one's neighbours was encouraged, and there were even civil committees formed by civilians in order to catch any questionable behaviour. These so-called neighbourhood Civics, were from the people, in service of their oppressors, unbeknownst to them. They could knock on anyone's house for any reason as simple as "conversation between friends after work ... only the Chitan could inspire such idleness" (Ibid., p. 95).

This total submission was manufactured slowly by altering history. Similarly to the frightening techniques employed by the Oceania, and the ones where memory-effacing modes of reign reigned, Abistan collected its people's brains in a collective basket of acid and melted them. Abistan's *nadirs* or wall screens were the most prominent propagandist media outlet. They incessantly reported news that favoured the government. Its restless presenters were subsequently called parrots. In the event that a Great Commander was live on the screen, people had the obligation to stop at their sight, "the custom was to recite a little verse then back away" (2015, p. 144). This, in addition to the *Mockbi*'s Thursday Imploration, where an Honourable "commented on a verse from the Gkabul having something to do with current

affairs, in particular with the current Great Holy War, or the one that was being prepared in secret” (Sansal, 2015, p. 132), and the loudspeakers broadcasting chants in the intervals of the nine daily prayers offered enough to castrate the critical judgment of Abistanis.

The storyline of *2084* is interesting in the ways in which it deviated from its inspiration, *1984*. The premise of the novels is the same. there are blatant blows struck against totalitarian regimes, serving as a warning for their growing influence as well as an exposition of the ways in which the authors went about transmitting their message. however, were significantly different. Sansal’s attitude felt less gloomy and desperate. The journey of its protagonist was not made to look helpless in its aim, unlike Winston Smith’s. This denotes an undercurrent of optimism, one which Orwell did not display. Thus, it can be said that Sansal’s novel, in at least this manner, presented folk with a tale of a hero whose destiny is not sealed, and perhaps this had something to do with the life of its writer, who lived during an era when religious extremism was in full power in his country Algeria, but soon withdrew by the early twenty- first century in favor of a more democratic rule, that despite its shortcomings, was not veiled with Islamic rhetoric. The novel *2084* ended with its protagonist journeying out of the borders of Abistan, in search for *Democ*, a clearly optimistic closing of the book which did not despair its readers as did Orwell’s *1984* in which Winston and Julia were converted to their state’s ideology, renounced each other, and sat calmly awaiting their demise.

c. Hegemony: Ideology Analysis

Now that we have seen the means of mass-manipulation as they are found in *1984* and *2084*, and with reference to Gramsci’s concepts, we feel compelled to go slightly deeper into an analysis about the underlying ideologies that each of the states, Oceania and Abistan, have adopted. In Oceania, the doctrine adopted by the government was known as *Ingsoc*, which is

the abbreviation of English Socialism. In Abistan, it was known as *Abigov*, an abbreviation of Abistan Government. Throughout our reading of the two novels, we have distinguished many points of similarity between the two, as well as some differences mainly in what relates to the historical background of the authors' lives.

Orwell's dystopia was a socialist one, where one Party literally became the sole authority in a country. The anxieties that the western world had due to the spread of communism after the second World War propelled many of the former camp's writers to mirror these worries in their writings. So, Orwell constructs a world in which capitalism was destroyed and the one-party rule took over. His vision of the world after only three Superstates succeed to reign, was brought about by the nuclear bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6, 1945, and took it one step further into a fiction where many more of these weapons were dropped in the fifties on different places of the world, shifting indefinitely the power dynamics.

Boualem Sansal's *2084* was likewise inspired by events that deeply impacted his country. As a formerly colonized country, After gaining independence in 1962, Algeria had descended into a different form of oppression marked by political turmoil during the presidential struggle and tensions among ethnic groups. The situation was further exacerbated by the rise of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), which won the 1990 local election but was disbanded by the military in 1993, leading to a violent aftermath. Subsequent events led to the civil war from which the country only recovered by the end of the 1990s. Consequently, It was a religious anxiety that propelled the Algerian writer.

Sansal's religious dystopia was based on a rule inspired by the one-party policy that went strictly against democracy in his opinion, evidenced by the chasing of *Democ* in his

novel, a clear abbreviation of the word democracy. Abistan's adopted religion also makes reference to Islam, with the slight distortion of the names of this religion's most important pillars, such as Yölah, the nine times a day prayer, the week of complete abstinence, and the slaughtering of animals. These rituals of worship, submission and sacrifice were almost an imitation of the Islamic religion's emphasis on the importance of maintaining one's faith blindly, which was also found in the Abistani state. Poverty was justified by making it seem noble. The constant surveillance the people accepted, and the system of condemning one another were how the system in place prospered. Likewise, in Oceania, people were also under constant scrutiny from the telescreens that kept track of the Party members' every move. This allowed its Party to prosper without ever making its people's lives better.

As the title of this section suggests, we are going to relate the two worlds of Abistan and Oceania to Antonio Gramsci's conception of hegemony in his *Prison notebooks* in order to illustrate how the people in these two separate but inherently connected states, consent to being manipulated, and tied to ideas that were manufactured specifically to detain their opinions and non-coercively leave them in a never-ending cycle of polemics, fear and poverty, unknowingly. Hegemony as was previously defined, was coined by this Italian thinker in order to denote a strategy used by Civil Society in order to influence the subordinate groups. A Civil Society in this context, as distinguished from Political Society, is made of institutions which are normally thought of as private, such as churches, the media, and political parties. However, it must be noted that the former is not strictly as independent from the latter due to conflicting interests, and power imbalances, for instance, media platforms, such as news outlets often claim to be reporting fact in an unbiased way; While, most of them are directly or indirectly funded by the Political Society. And When it comes to dealing with the subordinates of a certain regime, it is crucial to recognize the influence of both societies, for the lower classes are the recipients of the trickling down of the influence of

Civil Society, as dictated by the Political one. In other terms, the ruling party of the government spreads their ideology over its people, in many ways, one of which is non-coercive, the coercive methods being violence and the use of physical force over the weakest links. The more peaceful –and furtive– way of going about it works through manufacturing consent, or what is known as cultural hegemony. Despite this, Gramsci asserted that hegemonic methods and blatant force cannot be separated in the viewpoint of Karl Marx:

The fact that, more than any other great revolutionary Marxist thinker, he concerned himself with the sphere of “civil society” and of “hegemony”, in his prison writings, cannot be taken to indicate a neglect of the moment of political society, of force, of domination. On the contrary, his entire record shows that this was not the case, and that his constant preoccupation was to avoid any undialectical separation of “the ethical-political aspect of politics or theory of hegemony and consent” from “the aspect of force and economics” (Gramsci, p. 447, 1948).

In the context of the two novels we are analyzing, *1984* and *2084*, the influence of the Political and Civil Societies is present, as well as the hegemonic ways in which the ruling classes maintain power. First, George Orwell’s *1984* exposed the triangular hierarchy of Oceania, so while the Inner Party was only about 2% of the population, the Outer Party members made about 18%, leaving out 80% of the people as proles, otherwise known as the proletariat or the working class, that was kept poor and undereducated. In *Abistan*, the system was also hierarchically divided, however, the terminologies for the different positions of power were very compartmentalized, leaving us with a rough outline of about the same percentages, separating the Just Brotherhood with *Abi* at its top, followed by the educated few whom were educated and trained on religious affairs and rhetoric, and at the bottom of the classes lay the poor.

2084 evokes *1984* in a multitude of times, mostly to explain that *Abistan* was the successor of Oceania. The totalitarian regime of the former was a more refined, more scrutinizing version of the latter. Whilst Winston Smith’s state used telescreens and the Youth League of Spies as well as secret agents, *Abigov* used *nadirs*, *Vs*, *Civics* and all sorts of

espionage to exterminate the Regs. Abistan was also inspired by the three principles of Ingsoc, and created its own: “‘Death is life,’ ‘Lying is truth,’ ‘Logic is absurdity’” (Sansal, 2015, p. 274). The date 2084 is also clearly etched from 1984, despite never clarifying what it stood for exactly.

Secondly, after understanding the stratification of the different social classes, one might advance to the roles that they play or the conditions they undergo. Hegemony being a way of influencing people’s consent by the ruling class, implies that the desired ideology is indirectly made to infiltrate the lower classes’ lives until it becomes their *Commonsense*. Gramsci emphasized how Commonsense is an inherited or adopted understanding of life as is willed by Big Brother and Bigaye. These two figures, real or constructed for the theatrics, still convey a lot of authority. For instance, the peoples of both Oceania and Abistan were enthralled with their presence and power that they willingly accepted the surveillance and incessant mass media playing everywhere in their hometowns. Additionally, the media outlets take care of the opinions they get handed, to a full extent, even when the news they present are incoherent from one day to the next. For instance, in *1984*, the rations of chocolate were initially announced to be reduced from 30 to 20 grams. Eventually, as the Records Department worked on tweaking the facts, “it appeared that there had even been demonstrations to thank Big Brother for raising the chocolate ration to twenty grammes a week” (Orwell, 1949, p. 74). Language in Oceania was an important tool, and as such, outside of the novel, the topic of twisting, controlling or rendering one’s rhetoric vague for the purpose of manipulating the meaning is often described as “Orwellian” in reference to the author himself. This power was recognized in Abistan as well:

Its conception was inspired by Newspeak, from Ingsoc. When we occupied that country, our then leaders discovered that its extraordinary political system was founded not only on weapons but also on the phenomenal power of its language, Newspeak, a language that was invented in a laboratory and which had the power to crush all will and curiosity in the speaker. (Sansal, 2015, p. 263).

The ruling parties of both regimes manufacture language that it later makes people use in order to direct their minds. Another way in which they manufacture the masses' consent is through instilling the ideologies of their parties in kids who later grow up to become devoted believers, unable to feel love except towards the ruler of their nation. In the case of *1984*, this was done by the formation of Youth Leagues and Chastity Leagues, to insure they never develop healthy instincts. In *2084*, the doctrine was likewise imbedded in children who were taught devotion and submission as well.

Now back to the notion of hegemony, in order to illustrate its presence in the two fictional worlds of Oceania and Abistan. The ruling classes employed mostly media, and spoke in their respective tongues *Newspeak* and *Abilang* in order to influence people's minds. In addition, public spectacles were sponsored on a regular basis, aimed at diverting and distracting the people from anything meaningful in their lives. In the poor ghettos of London, it was the Lottery, which made people frantically invested despite never really winning important sums, and in Abistan it was the pilgrimage that kept people hoping they had be picked to go see one of the thousand and one holy places available. The ruling classes also controlled the information the people had access to and routinely changed facts as we have seen done in Oceania, in addition to the destruction of books in Abistan and subsequently history itself.

The women in London, certain colors of dress and makeup were seen to have certain connotations, and in Abistan, "loose women" (Orwell, 1949, p. 97) were mentioned when discussing the regular crimes people were punished for at the stadium. Overlooking women in the two novels unless it is to look over them in disdain or passing judgment is a redundant theme, which is not often mentioned in studies about cultural hegemony in such books. Albeit the novels tackle totalitarian regimes, and Sansal's *2084* borders on parody, it is

important to note the hegemonic discourses that the authors are likewise influenced by. We say this in order to briefly touch upon our topic for the next chapter, which is counter-hegemony and resistance, and to quickly mention that counter-hegemonic effects are multi-layered, going as deep as all that which we consider to be commonsense, while, the authors' own biases (like Orwell's attack on communism in *1984*, and Sansal's on religion) must be recognized in order to freely venture into an analysis of the counter-hegemonic efforts that the main characters of our primary sources exhibit.

Chapter II : Counter-hegemony and Resistance in *1984* and *2084*

After having seen how the ruling classes in Abistan and Oceania have come to have total control of their citizens, and by borrowing from the Italian thinker Antonio Gramsci his concept of hegemony, which essentially refers to the establishment and then maintenance of an ideology that the ruling class decides on, we are now going to enter the second chapter. Entitled Counter-Hegemony and Resistance, this part of our dissertation will deal with the efforts made by the characters of the novel to fight the currents of totalitarian control. We will, once more, refer to Gramsci's thoughts about the roles of intellectuals, as well as counter-hegemonic efforts that fight the conventional status-quo within a given society. By the end of the chapter, we will also make a brief commentary on how counter-hegemony is contained in its antonym, which makes its new dictions another form of manufacturing consent.

1. The Intellectuals of 1984 and 2084 :

a. If There Is Hope, It Lies In The Proles

When George Orwell first published his dystopian novel *1948*, it became an instant success amongst the people. Thousands of copies were sold, and multiple editions followed. Inside the book itself, the people were long lamented about. The lower classes more specifically, whom were referred to as the 'proles', were given a distant look from the outside, judging their insignificant lives, and wondering what would happen if one day, they would awaken to the power inherent to them in their huge numbers. The 'proles', hitherto, represented, not a character in the novel, but a mass of people whose individual characters did not so much matter as did the unity they could solidify amongst themselves.

Whilst analyzing counter-hegemony and its correlation with intellectuals, we shall focus on the 'proles' as an important social mass. In addition to them, we will bring up the characters of the play individually in order to understand their roles in going against state-sanctioned behaviour.

The lower classes in any economic system often find themselves marginalized. Due to the lack of education, resources, and the sanctioning of any attempts to form actual politically organized organizations that would function without the state's meddling, these groups lead lives of insecurity, below-par living conditions, and discrimination from the higher classes, especially the bourgeoisie or the ruling class. Therefore, they remain on the margins of society and are referred to as 'subalterns', a term coined by Gramsci, he says about them that "[they], by definition, are not unified and cannot unite until they are able to become a 'State'"(1935, p. 202). This description is befitting of the 'proles' of *1984*, which, aside from being kept separate from the ruling class, are also kept away from any knowledge that could help them improve their lives. Orwell discusses this in the book, by wondering, through his main character, Winston, whilst watching women fight over pans, "what almost frightening power had sounded in that cry from only a few hundred throats! Why was it that they could never shout like that about anything that mattered" (Orwell, 1949, p.90)

The subaltern group in *1984* receives only the information that is allowed by the party. This kept them ignorant, unconscious and drowning in social delinquencies. Orwell laments on multiple occasions about what would happen if they were aware of their power to influence, likewise, the system that harbours them. They possess a capacity for counter-hegemonic attitudes, such as the refusal to conform to the Party's dictions. However, as we come to learn, the proles have renounced political consciousness. This denotes their subscription to the hegemony of Oceania, meaning that their consent was manufactured. However, it is worth discussing their immense potential. because the author of the book has given this a lot of thought as well.

This part is meant to expose their complacency. In addition, as the proles are an unorganized mass, intellectuals arising from the inside of that society could have made a

difference. Despite this, the Brotherhood was debunked as an invention of the Party itself to trick rebels. During Winston's reading of the fake book that was given to him by O'Brien, the former had come to learn about the ways in which the proles were kept down by manufacturing their consent through hegemonic attitudes instilled in them to kill off their intelligence and render the growing of intellectuals amidst them virtually impossible as the people themselves would suppress said-intellectual without the interference of the state. Orwell explained this by saying, "they can be granted intellectual liberty because they have no intellect" (Orwell, 1949, p. 265). Thus, it is important to recognize the perfect construction of Oceania's policies in such a way as to make rebellion hopeless, and the chance for the apparition of real intellectuals dim.

b. The Party Intellectual Knows

That being said, an intellectual in Gramsci's conception can come from various strata, and their type as well as function would necessarily vary according to multiple other factors, such as the roles they play in a given society. In the novel *1984*, the protagonist Winston Smith can be regarded as an intellectual because of his political awareness, his vigilant attitudes towards the established system as well as his desire for change. These three parameters instantly classify him with the intellectuals of the organic type. This latter, as explained in the methods section of this dissertation, was defined as someone who has developed their consciousness from the margins of society. Admittedly, Winston does not belong to the proles as he is a member of the outer-party of Airstrip one; however, even as a member operating in a class higher than the lowest, he is still an oppressed individual given that the harsh punishments of the ruling party were still applicable to him, and since he had only the ability to execute their demands, and live a mundane meaningless life in which every instinct was continuously squashed.

Additionally, Winston Smith harbours the intense desire to take things into his own hands and participate in altering the status quo for the better. He had answered “yes” to O’Brien’s questions about his willingness “to corrupt the minds of children” (Orwell, 1949, p. 218) amongst other gross indiscretions and treasons he was willing to commit against his state. Despite Winston eventually getting captured, tortured, and being converted and doomed by the end of the story, the author still made this character his voice in the novel, recounting his own opinions as an opponent (although to describe someone as an opponent means they stand a chance). the kind of intellectual that Orwell was, seeped into his pages. The main character, hence becomes the fictional version of its creator meant to express his own intellectual tendencies.

Winston Smith belonged to Outer Party members, whom represented about 18% of the total population. His living conditions were often described as being dull and monotonous. He worked too often and suffered from an ulcer that significantly weakened his leg. His flat was situated in one of the Victory Mansions in which other members lived. Winston worked in the Records Department at rectifying what the government would ask him to rectify, such as past dates, testimonies, and names. Eventually, however, he gets disillusioned with the pale world that surrounded him, and begins letting his mind gradually dismantle his own biases wired into his head by Big Brother’s influence. This is how the main character, with the help of his diary, develops concrete ideas about what he thinks should happen, in order to move past the overwhelming surveillance they were constantly under.

By writing in a diary about ideas that went against the Party, he was already expressing disapproval with the way things were under the rule of Big Brother. He wrote fanatically “DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER over and over again, filling half a page” (Orwell, 1949, p. 23). He was rattled with ideas about the revolution, a resistance, or any hope that

could offer a way out of Oceania and its ideology *Ingsoc*. His thought processes denoted an incessant search for some means that would overthrow the Party. He mostly believed that “if there [was] any hope, it [lied] with the proles” adding “if only they could somehow become conscious of their own strength. Would [sic] have no need to conspire. They needed only to rise up and shake themselves like a horse shaking off flies” (Orwell, 1949, p. 89). His living conditions, the nature of his contact with the outside world of the proles, and his own personal agenda, put this character in Gramsci’s category of a organic intellectual, and here is why :

Firstly, this main character, from its standpoint does not rest on the higher end of the pyramid of hierarchy, and a job that affords him no real power. He only superficially belonged to the system he was serving for a long time, but that gave him the proper understanding of how the affairs were conducted, at least on a surface level. In accordance with Gramsci’s conception of the organic intellectual, we found that Winston Smith belonged to the category. In an article written by Valeriano Ramos, Jr., entitled *The Concepts of ideology, hegemony, and organic intellectuals in Gramsci’s Marxism*, he gave an in-depth explanation of what the term of intellectual meant and what it represents in civil society. According to the author:

Organic intellectuals, on the other hand, are more directly related to the economic structure of their society simply because of the fact that “every social group that originates in the fulfillment of an essential task of economic production” creates its own organic intellectual ... In addition, their interests are “more nearly identical with those of the dominant classes [they identify with] . . . than the traditional intellectuals” (Ramos, 1982, p. 50).

The organic intellectuals from Gramsci’s point of view come in handy when we tried to analyze the type of intellectual that Winston Smith was in the novel *1984*. The reason for this is the fact that he was not a member of the society that maintained order for the rest of the people, namely the proles, but merely an executioner of orders. His political coming-of-age or maturation which was filled with confusion, and disillusionment happened in the

confinements of his own society. His opinions of the lower classes were always conceited and full of disdain, but despite this, Winston came to let go of his haughtiness when he finally understood the system that created such a class. In fact, he had come to understand that all hope for change would have to come from them, as previously shown.

The title of this section is taken from a quote from the novel, “The Party intellectual knows in which direction his memories must be altered; he therefore knows that he is playing tricks with reality” (Orwell, 1949, p. 270). It was taken from the context of being able to exercise and utilize *doublespeak* efficiently enough to reconcile contradictory language. Such was one of Winston’s job descriptions, which prove him to be apt at dealing with words and altering reality to suit an agenda. In spite of this, he was able to discern what was true and what was false from the web of deliberate lies that were being sown. This propensity for telling right and wrong from each other consolidates his role as an intellectually adept mind. He was also more than willing to fight for what he believed, and immerse himself in a culture and resistance that would bring down the system. The organic intellectual that Winston Smith was benefitted from the system he so despised slightly more than the proles, but still had no actual power over any of the two social classes he was in between. However, as he came to write more extensively in his journal, his ideology crystallized and he was shown as an illuminated character with discerning thinking abilities. He had successfully combated the hegemonic currents that spread through his society, even at the risk of danger, or perhaps because of it.

The counter-hegemonic efforts he made worked for a while. But his indulgence in the mental resistance coup with his lover Julia —whose own promiscuity represented hers— Winston’s mind and drive were broken down by O’Brien, who is the representation of the hegemonic current in the book. This led Winston to adopting a new ideology that admitted the fact that was repeatedly ushered through the book. It was not only one of re-adopting the same

hegemonic ideology he had escaped, but a more dangerous one. We will come back to the failure of counter-hegemony in George Orwell's *1984*, after we discuss the intricacies of his search for change.

After establishing that Winston was an organic intellectual by virtue of belonging to a class that faced constant surveillance and threats of *unpersoning*, and forming his ideas about the proles, we may refer to the article of Valeriano Ramos Jr. in which he elaborates on organic intellectuals by saying that "the organic intellectual 'gives his class homogeneity and awareness of its own function, in the economic field and on the social and political levels'" (Ramos, 1982). This explains the displacement that the main character of *1984* feels within his society: for in adopting an anti-hegemonic ideological approach, he had become aware of the injustices that people suffered, both on an economic level (creating penuries for example), and a political one (disappearing Syme without a trace).

As the plot of the novel progressed, we saw Winston and Julia get involved in a Brotherhood that was a secret resistance group aimed at dismantling Big Brother's reign. This is yet another sign of intellectual effort he made, for he was willing to play a role in the rebellion, and as Gramsci built his concept of the intellectuals, he made sure to explain that the term defined people specifically according to their social functions and not their abstract mental abilities because "all men are intellectuals, one could therefore say: but not all men have in society the function of intellectuals" (Gramsci, 1948, p. 140).

On the opposing spectrum from Winston and Julia, stood O'Brien as a traditional intellectual. This was due to his role as a higher society member who was in the business of maintaining the order established, suppressing opposing views as well as casting orders down for the rest of the classes to mindlessly absorb. The power he held distinguishes him as an

intellectual whose interest lay not in facilitating discourse with the proles or Outer Party members, but simply in killing off any opposition. He admitted this to Winston by saying:

The Party seeks power entirely for its own sake. We are not interested in the good of others; we are interested solely in power. Not wealth or luxury or longlife or happiness: only power, pure power. (Orwell, 1949, p. 332)

We can see the contrast between the organic intellectuals and the traditional ones, whom, in their different agendas and social functions, have divided the characters of this novel into two separate camps, with contradicting ideologies. And as O'Brien was never defeated, it is important to note from this, the pessimism of Orwell, that a totalitarian regime could be subdued, because of the powerful few individuals who steer the wheel in the direction they please, to the detriment of the rest of the people, who become nothing more than war casualties, sheep to mislead and overall a lower rank of humans that are replaceable.

c. Ati as an Organic Intellectual

In the novel *2084*, Boualem Sansal endowed his main character with specific attributes, like a clear perception and bravery, that allowed him to go on his journey in search for the truth about the totalitarian and oppressive regime he was living under. For most of his life, Ati had not questioned the Abistani rule he lived under, because of the permeation of its regulation, and people's adoption of them as common sense. Their spying and telling on each other seemed to be the norm, and the way to preserve their sacred religion from desecrators and the Enemy. However, Ati's two-year health crisis and residence in the sanatorium of the Sin Mountains allowed him to break free of the hegemonic practices of Abistanis. The first crack in his faith was brought about intrusive thoughts when he was in the sanatorium, when he questioned the limitlessness of his state, and wondered: "What is the border, dammit, what is on the other side". (Sansal, 2015, p. 33)

Subsequently, Ati goes through many changes of his beliefs, and into uncovering many a secret that his government kept from its people. Relating this to Gramsci's formation of intellectuals, we will learn that Ati, by virtue of his function in society, his origins and his eventual goal, was an organic intellectual. This type is defined by the Italian philosopher as:

The thinking and organising element of a particular fundamental social class. These organic intellectuals are distinguished less by their profession, which may be any job characteristic of their class, than by their function in directing the ideas and aspirations of the class to which they organically belong. (1948, p. 131).

By applying this definition to the protagonist, we get a clear picture of his formation as an intellectual. He was born as a member of the poor class who blindly submitted, grew up as a believer and performed his prayers. Afterwards, during his stay at the sanatorium, we catch glimpses into the ideas that cast him out of the labyrinth of the holy religion and the Gkabal. This was when his conscience as an intellectual was being developed. Ati nurtured these anti-establishment thoughts of his, therefore, after consulting with his friend Koa, both characters came to the realization that the Just Brotherhood was keeping things from its people.

In the first chapter, the extent of control over people's minds and bodies has been expanded on, along with Ati's gradual learning of the truth about the manufacture of mass-hysteria. In this section of the second chapter, we will focus on Ati's organic intellectualism, by relating it to the main character. The organic intellectuals of any social group serve to propagate a certain hegemony. Being it that of the ruling class or otherwise, this means that Ati, by first reading the Holy Book to completion with a critical eye, started to retract his former bigotry for the religion, and the hegemony communicated through it. Refuting this current of hegemonic influence, he has therefore been transformed into a man with little adherence to an ideology based on the policy of "logic is absurdity" (Ibid., 2015, p. 263). Afterwards, he met many new characters and conversed with them about the hidden truths of Abistan. This reveals his intellectual side, similarly to Winston of *1984* who joined a secret

organization, and learnt the truth through a book written by Emmanuel Goldstein. Ati learns about ancient civilizations in the museum of Toz.

2. Counter-hegemony and Resistance in *1984* and *2084*

The two novels we are working on are decidedly dystopian. Due to their shared themes of oppression under totalitarian regimes, and Boualem Sansal's admission of getting his inspiration from the *1984* novel. Despite this, the two storylines take different approaches to tackling their subjects, with Sansal's being less gloomy than the hopeless world of Orwell. We have noticed this difference in the tones of the authors, their plotlines, as well as the endings. Oceania merely tricks Winston Smith into thinking he is participating in any resistance, as is revealed after he had confessed to disobedience and mutiny. He does not get any useful action done in resisting or fighting back against the system eventually. In Sansal's book however, the ending was different. Ati goes on in his quest for truth, and might even ends by crossing the border that Abistan had denied the existence of.

In this section, we are going to look into the efforts to resistance that each of the main characters made which can be classified as counter-hegemonic acts, in addition to their friends or companions. Winston had Julia, and Ati shared the journey with his best friend Koa. Julia was Winston's lover who was like him, an organic intellectual, bred of the Outer Party and rebelled against their tyranny, and Koa was the best friend of Ati who was well-read and joined him whilst he read the Holy Book, and searched for Nas (who discovered a history- altering village), and went with him against the police for much of the story. Eventually, however, Koa gets killed, and Julia is separated from Winston by the systemic brainwashing they both go through at the hands of the government.

a. Down with Big Brother

The title of this section is taken from the words Winston Smith fanatically wrote on his diary while the Two Minutes Hate took place in London. It was a daily practice that everyone of the members of the Party had to take part in or otherwise be suspected of having hostile thoughts against Big Brother. In fact, even the act of owning a diary, much less writing in one was considered a thought crime. We can therefore see Winston's rebellious side from the first page of the book. It showed his individuality and how he retained his mental independence from the mass-hypnosis that his comrades fell under. Since the party forbade every unique idea that comes to people's minds, Winston's acceptance of his are considered an act of rebellion.

Writing in the diary about anything was illegal, for the reason that it was impossible for the government to spy on it. This is why all writing in Oceania had to be done by speaking into a speak-write machine which transcribed the words thereafter. However, even as Winston secretly bought his diary, the government still knew about it. In fact, it had been spying on him from the moment he got it, because they suspected that he was not honest in his displays of obedience. Winston of course only found out about this after he was taken in by the police, and after being heard say incriminating things through telescreens. This is one of the ways in which Orwell showed the difficulty of going against a regime that was based on surveillance. But whilst the main character was engaging in what he thought was a secret organization under the leadership of Goldstein against Big Brother, he had read parts of his book which was called *The Theory and practice of oligarchical collectivism* that taught him about the ways in which the system was maintained. Goldstein divided his book into three chapters, under the titles of "ignorance is strength, war is peace, freedom is slavery", and Winston learnt the borders of the three superstates, why they start wars, and the inherent classification of the kinds of people as "the High, the Middle, and the Low" (Orwell,

1949, p. 233). Reading this book was another act of rebellion and a resistance of the slogan of the Party which preferred ignorance over knowledge.

Furthermore, the main character of *1984* engaged in a love affair with a fellow Outer Party member named Julia. This is significant in Oceania because relationships that were based on attraction could result in loyalty to one another, and as such, forming deep bonds with people was a human experience that the Party sought to annihilate, O'Brien explained to Winston in the midst of torturing him that in the future, "there will be no loyalty, except loyalty towards the Party" (Orwell, 1949, p. 337). The affair with Julia restored in the protagonist the instincts of love and physical sensations that the Party worked on suppressing. Those same ways of suppressing them had worked on Winston's first wife Katharine whom he had come to loathe because of the formality and automation of physical intimacy with her. All of this keeps showing that the former was never mentally submissive to the hegemonic currents of his state.

By rebelling, Winston was exhibiting counter-hegemonic acts, such as the desire for freedom in a place where it had become forbidden, and the lassitude he developed of the same recurring set of lies that the Party kept playing, as well as the spectacles designed to put people's minds to sleep. The Party, however, was aware that counter-hegemonic discourse must be dimmed, and the chances for its rising dimmed, so that the only hegemony that would be maintained is that of the ruling class, with its main ideas of hating Goldstein, channeling one's rage towards enemies of the state, participating in public spectacles organized by the government, and chastity, resulting in the ruin of all instinct, and acceptance of Big Brother as the sole source and aim for everything.

Julia's part must also be looked at, for in taking Winston as a lover, and many before him, she was already rebelling against the state she was in. Winston loved her impurity, in fact he told her: "the more men you've had, the more I love you ... I hate purity, I hate goodness! I

don't want any virtue to exist anywhere" (Orwell, 1949, p. 158). This shows his disdain for the enforced chastity regulations, and Julia's transgressions of them despite knowing the consequences. Sexual rebellion was Julia's chosen means of fighting off the currents of thought that the system wanted her to adopt. In fact, she was very aware of this, she told her lover on one occasion:

They want you to be bursting with energy all the time. All this marching up and down and cheering and waving flags is simply sex gone sour. If you're happy inside yourself, why should you get excited about Big Brother and the Three-Year Plans and the Two Minutes Hate and all the rest of their bloody rot. (Orwell, 1949, p. 167)

She was an organic intellectual, who, much like her lover, had had the desire for contentment and freedom. Their union merely brought together the two characters who retained consciousness of their oppression in the novel.

b. Death to Bigaye

Contrasting George Orwell's *1984*, Boualem Sansal's *2084* narrates its plot from a didactic approach, and presents to us more characters than we saw in the former. This narration style, in addition to the optimistic ending of it, makes this book a less gloomy dystopian novel. There were even elements of science fiction at play, such as the telepathic agents of surveillance known as "V"s, broadening the literary genre that *2084* belonged to. Abistan was a world where the totalitarian regime did not completely apprehend the minds of its people indefinitely, specially because resistance was shown to exist both on an individual level, as well as underground organization that went against Abi.

Initially, we got to the world of Abistan, we learnt that many nuclear bombs have been dropped all over the world, earthquakes hit, and a Great War took place in the past but no one knew exactly when. As a result of these disasters, a regime based on fear was established. It saw people's terror, their need for reassurance, their fragility after what they have been put through, and the profitability of such a state. This event, both natural and man-

induced, were built on the ruins of the totalitarian regime of Oceania. It has therefore taken many of its dictions, and has kept the same system, whilst altering the style of ruling, in favor of a religious one, that had even a larger impact on people, because religion, much like the Islamic one the novel was satirizing, tends to numb people's inquisitive minds and exchange their questions with ready-made answers that rely on hyperbole, and that uses its surrounding environment as providence or as caution when addressing people.

The state of affairs in Abistan left people in the dark regarding everything, it was therefore normal for them to believe their government when it told them that the state had no borders or frontiers, that it was the only one left in the world, subsequently making it the best, and making any ideas about leaving it seem irrational. This of course, was not the case for everybody, for there was indeed a secret resistance that operated underground. This group saw the hegemony that Abi imposed, and chose to rebel against it. They lived outside of cities, took refuge in ghettos and abandoned spaces, and worked on educating themselves as well as those who chose to join them, like Ati.

The ghettos took the slogans of the Apparatus and flipped them. For them, it was not "Abi is great" but "Abi is all talk", and "Balis hero", "Balis will triumph" (Sansal, 2015, p. 107). It worked on weakening the system in any ways they could, for example, we learnt that they intersect the medical caravans going to the Sin Mountains, and kidnap their escorting personnel only to be found dead days or weeks later. The people had heard about this underground resistance group, almost as if they were myth, or represented evil. They were called Balis followers and people prayed and joined the army for their destruction. Although the nature of these bandits was never clearly elaborated on, they were clearly part of some anti—*abigov* operation. The ghettos were also the center of this rebellion, for the people who lived there displayed freedom which was not allowed in Qodsabad. Even their names was Arabic for "free". They were called "hur" and spoke a language that was entirely their own.

The collective resistance was not on this level only, but on higher ones as well. Ati's journey led him to meet a man by the name of Ram who divulged a plan that was bigger than all of them. Instead of leading armed groups with weapons, Ram and his people thought that it would instead be convenient to take the reign from Abi himself, and establish his uncle Bri as the new head of the Just Brotherhood. Ram's purpose for this was the idea that Abistan could be better, and deserved better than the misery it was living in at the moment. The method for doing this was by replacing the Just Brotherhood with an assembly of representatives, and Abi with *Democ*. This latter was described in the text as follows:

Mythical creature who'd appeared out of who knows what world, who was neither a god like Yölah nor a counter - god like Balis, but a disturbing, solar being, made all of light and reason, intelligence and wisdom, who could teach something totally unknown in the land of Holy Submission: revolution, inharmony and freedom (Sansal, 2015, p. 225).

This concept or myth was the hope for Abistan. But Toz reckoned later in a conversation with Ati that it would not work, that the same futile process of oppression was bound to repeat itself ceaselessly. Such was the nature of Toz, who ends up building a museum of the twentieth century, and it was thanks to his boldness that Ati comes to learn a great deal of things about life. They indeed "philosophized" (p. 237) for a long time, before he and Ati were to part ways indefinitely.

Toz's wardrobe was described as being bizarre and inadmissible in Abistan, it did not consist of the customary *Burni* like everyone was obliged to wear, but in jeans, a shirt and a jacket. This shows the perhaps civilization elsewhere was not completely eradicated by the natural disasters, holy war and atomic bombs as advertized, but lurked somewhere in a place where the hegemonic currents of anti-life beliefs got. In addition to philosophizing, more truths were brought ot light by the collective action that was taken by the resistance group aimed at installing their own system in Abistan, including the fact that there was no miracle in the founding of the Holy Religion; however, it was based on the same Yölah's religion, but

applied in a different way. The truth about Gkabal and the religion was then told:

It came from far away, from an inner malfunction in an ancient religion which had once brought honor and happiness to many great tribes of the deserts and plains; but its inner workings had been broken by the violent, discordant use that had been made of it over the centuries, and this had been aggravated by the absence of competent repairmen or attentive guides. The Gkabal came into existence because of a lack of care that should have been given a religion which, as the aggregate and quintessence of the religions that had preceded it, sought to be the future of the world (Ibid., p. 253).

The distortion of the Holy Scriptures, and the adoption of their false versions by a totalitarian regime, made this entire belief system one of the hegemonic tools that were aimed at manipulating the people of Abistan. This religion was based on fear (stadium trials), judgment (the Committee for Moral Health), and paranoia (behaviour Civics), covering the instincts of life that people had with merely the stars and crescents they proudly wore to show their good behavior. Their submission was total, which meant that hegemony successfully enveloped them, and their consent was manufactured. All of Ati's, Toz's and the Rebellion's actions were therefore counter-hegemonic in nature, following Gramsci's definition of it. It is worth noting though, that the direction that Bri was taking would have ended in establishing its own hegemonic ideology, as the dominant class's beliefs trickle down to the lower classes and are eventually adopted by the masses.

Ati's counter-hegemony was in trying to understand. The writer explained this when he was talking about him and Koa by saying: "And yet at no time did the two friends have any subversive thoughts, let alone heretical ones; they simply wanted to know what sort of world they were living in" (Sansal, 2015, p. 126). Curiosity was a punishable sin in Abistan however, and that led to the death of Koa in a mysterious way. Counter-hegemonic efforts and intellectual resistance were in fact the instigators for the whole plot, without whom, Ati would have retained his social class's beliefs and fear and love for their submission. It is worth mentioning, also, that despite Ati's decision to leave his town with

Koa in the search for Nas, The former still had faith in people. He professed at the grave of his fallen friend his opinion that “as long as people go on having children, finding a roof for shelter, and lighting fires to keep warm, ... they have life inside them and therefore an instinct for self-preservation. (Ibid., p. 217).

Throughout this chapter, we have seen many things that demonstrated the anti-hegemonic currents in the two novels of George Orwell *1984* and Boualem Sansal’s *2084*. They followed the journeys of two male protagonists, aided by like-minded companions, in their quest for truth and for change. We have related this to notions developed by the Italian thinker Antonio Gramsci in his *Prison notebooks* in which his essays were grouped after his death in 1948. These notions were those of the formation of the intellectual, hegemony as well as counter- hegemony as they were pertinent to our dissertation study. After we have completed our analysis, we have come to discover that the protagonists of the novels share many aspects, butlikewise differ in others, as did their plots.

Firstly, Winston Smith was disillusioned from his Party’s policies propelled him to buy a diary and illicitly write in it anti-government thoughts. He had been watched since then without his knowledge, for the librarian he had bought it from, Mr. Charrington, was in fact a spy for the Inner Party members. Despite being uncovered from the beginning, the Thought Police only observed him from afar without interfering with his life trajectory for a while. Boualem Sansal pertinently summed the reason for this, for a similar situation that his protagonist Ati was facing, and said:

Those who killed freedom don’t know what freedom is; in actual fact they are not as free as the people they gag and disappear . . . but at least they understood that they would never gain any understanding of freedom unless they left you free to move around, that they would learn while watching you learn . . . Do you realize, my friend, you have been the guinea pig for an extraordinary laboratory experiment: great tyranny is learning from you — a little nonentity of a man — learning what freedom is! It’s crazy! They’ll kill you in the end, of course; in their world freedom is a path to death, it goes

against the grain, it's disturbing, asacrilege (Sansal, 2015, p. 193).

Indeed, after the Party had gotten what they needed from him, he was converted back to loving Big Brother. With enough torture, his prior anti-hegemonic efforts have been reversed into a more dangerous slumber of mind, for in this, Orwell showed us the hardship of trying to go against a totalitarian regime that has mass-surveillance and mass-media at its disposal.

Winston was shown in our analysis to be an organic intellectual, by virtue of coming from the Outer Party members and his desire for change and the dismantling of their current empire. Organic intellectuals, like his love interest Julia as well, have the social function of challengers of the dominant state of affairs. This is also the case for Sansal's Ati and Koa, whom, by drawing out of the mass population's immersion in its religion's dictions that kept them as busy as possible, saw that the system was rigged, and tried to find out the truth about many things that concerned Abistan including the Renegades and the ghettos where they wished they could live in freedom.

Ati was more involved with the collective resistance after Koa's death. The other characters were shown to be members of an organization that sought to climb for power in order to change the order in Abistan, from the extreme of religious tyranny, into introducing *Democ*, a sort of mythical entity that would bring light with it. The ending of the story proved their ambitions successful, and Abi was successfully neutralized as was reported in the *nadirs* and broadcast to the whole nation. Such change was brought about in a slow way, seamlessly taking over the reign without disturbing the status quo of politics in Abistan.

We can say that by applying Gramsci's concept of the role of intellectuals and examining the strategies employed by characters in both novels to fight the conventional status-quo in these dystopian worlds, it becomes evident that both Orwell and Sansal have similarly used protagonists like Winston smith and Ati, who act as

organic intellectuals striving to resist the ruling class. They had successfully challenge the hegemonic power even the risk of danger. Alongside the various instances of resistance emerging from the margins of society through collective actions of subaltern groups in both novels. Despite this, the two narratives adopt contrasting approaches in depicting their subjects, with Sansal's being less gloomy than the hopeless world of Orwell as well as the endings.

V. Conclusion

We have reached the concluding part of our dissertation, in which we attempted a study of George Orwell's 1984 and Boualem Sansal's 2084. The latter was directly inspired from the former, with the similarities going as deep as the main themes of totalitarianism, influencing its title. We have compared them on the basis of Antonio Gramsci's thoughts which he developed in his *Prison notebooks* whilst he was imprisoned by the Italian fascist regime in the twenties and thirties of the twentieth century.

Our study focused on depicting the point of similarity as well as differences by many concepts on the contents of the books. We first depicted the totalitarian aspects, by studying their impacts on the subaltern groups of Oceania and Abistan, then moved on to an individual analysis of the two protagonists of the books, based on the formation of intellectuals that Gramsci worked on. Thirdly, we looked into the efforts of resistance that were made. Focusing on collective rebellion as well as the individual, we have come to understand that the two dystopian worlds both afforded underground anti-government actions, albeit the authors of the two literary works went about depicting them in different ways for different purposes.

The intellectuals play an important part in any given society. Based on their social function, they can persuade or dissuade their people from taking action in any direction. The consensus here being that they hold much weight, intellectuals are often suppressed and hunted down, sometimes even seamlessly converted to hold the ruling parties' ideologies and spread them to the people. Freethinking individuals are a menace to totalitarian regimes, which is why both main characters of the books were hunted down and chased around, as well as heavily monitored from the Party or the secret resistance group led by Bri in Abistan. This goes to show the magnitude of the influence of intellectuals, particularly the organic

type, who by spreading awareness about the ideology of the ruling class, comes to subvert it with counter-hegemonic ideas that go against the established common sense of the people of said-regime.

Our primary sources were therefore rich materials that allowed us to look into the inner workings of two regimes based on fear and oppression, that despite being dystopian, incorporated many aspects from real life in order to serve as parable against the spread of socialism or communism more broadly in *1984*, and against the spread of Islamic extremism in *2084*. Both anxieties were based on the authors' living conditions in their times and respective countries. Orwell witnessed the aftermath of World War II, and Boualem Sansal was a contemporary of the Black Decade when Algeria was plunged into a civil war in the 1990s.

This brings us to conclude this dissertation, with an emphasis, once again, on the similarities but also particularities of each novel. In fact, we have found our working issues to be pertinent to our works which bring us to suggest applying the concepts of the intellectuals and hegemony on these novels in order to gain a deeper understanding of the workings of civil society, in order to fight off the currents of totalitarianism and extremism both in our society as well as foreign ones where traces of the dystopia have started to become true.

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