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**Power Lust, Violence and Depression in Orwell's
1984 (1949) and Kourouma's *Les Soleils des
indépendances* (1968)**

Presented by:

BOUKELAL Fouzia

Panel of examiners:

Gada Nadia, MCB, Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou, chair.

Guendouzi Amar, MCA, Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou, supervisor.

Seddiki Sadia, MAA, Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou, co-supervisor.

Ben Mechiche Hacem, MAA, Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou, examiner.

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Dedications

To:

My dear family

My friends and classmates

Abstract

Based on George Orwell's 1984 and Kourouma's Les Soleils des indépendances, this research paper intends to study some central themes which the two novels share. This dissertation is concerned with the study of the idea of the totalitarian leading elite's lust for power and their use of violence. We have examined the position of the two authors towards issues through referring to the socio-political influences in writing the plot of two novels. This justifies our appeal to the "New Historicist" theory in dealing with our corpus; this has allowed us to study those two literary works in relation to history. In this analysis, we have tried to demonstrate that in spite of the fact that both writers come from different areas and lived in different periods, they share the same concerns and reflect the same issue that characterized their time. Both of them have portrayed the rise of totalitarian governments which resort to several strategies to reach absolute power and keep the population masses under control. They have depicted the violent nature of totalitarian regimes which perpetrate terroristic acts to sustain their power and to reprimand any attempt of resistance. The two authors have also described the depressive situation of citizens living under such authoritarian regimes. This research paper has been divided into three chapters. The first one comprises the times and life of the two authors. It also includes the summary of the two novels. The second chapter, entitled Hegemonic Despotism, is divided into two sections: the first section is devoted to study the theme of totalitarian governments' rise in which the single party plays a decisive role in reaching its ultimate goals. The second section analyzes the techniques of manipulation and control the totalitarian government uses to sustain its power. The last chapter puts emphasis on two other central themes. The first portrays the totalitarian government's recourse to violence to subjugate the masses and to express power. The focus of the second theme lies in depicting the state of despair that overcomes the citizens who live under totalitarian regimes.

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General Introduction

I) Introduction

Literature, besides being an artistic manifestation, is a redoubtable instrument of expressing political views and themes. The world of literature is influenced by political and ideological issues which have resulted in the production of politicized writings. Literature, then, may be used both as propaganda of disseminating ideologies or political views and as a way of rebuking political abuses and violations.

Many artists and writers have invested their creativity to produce works that depict political oppression and submission exerted by the existing tyrannical systems on the helpless population. In literature, authors blend historical events with fiction in order to denounce and criticize oppressive political systems and dictatorships which obscure the citizens' lives. This political discontent, which is expressed by way of literature, is vividly captured by literature produced by writers from different parts of the world (Africans, Hispano Americans, Europeans, Asians...). Through their writings, those authors depict the authoritarian abuses of the ruling powers and describe the sordid conditions of people living under totalitarian political systems. Among those writers, we may cite two prominent literary figures: Ahmadou Kourouma who is an African (from Ivory Coast) writing in French and the British writer George Orwell. Both writers provide an accurate picture of the dangers of totalitarian regimes and the repressive terroristic state.

Thus, the aim of this dissertation is to highlight the totalitarian regimes' lust for power and to shed light on the strategies they use to dominate, control and subjugate the population masses in Orwell's masterpiece *Nineteen-Eighty Four* (1949) and Kourouma's first novel *Les Soleils des indépendances* (1968); two important works that

have enriched the universal library. The importance of choosing to study such themes lies in being topical themes which have preoccupied the world till the present day.

Both Orwell's *1984* and Kourouma's *Les Soleils des indépendances* provide great insights and warnings about the ills totalitarian regimes can cause. *1984* is a dystopian fiction that describes the horror, paranoia, fear and the state of uncertainty and hopelessness that prevail in different parts of the world, especially Europe which witnessed the rise of radical ideologies after the end of the First World War. This rise of dictatorial ideologies was exacerbated during the Second World War and the Cold War. The nightmarish world, as described by Orwell in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, offers a stark warning against the threats totalitarian systems would represent if they predominate; so, the hopes of establishing a democratic nation would be dashed.

Les Soleils des indépendances describes the African situation in the aftermath of colonization. After getting their independence in the 1960s, the Black African nations, that were mainly occupied by France and Great Britain and which endured years of atrocities, injustices, debasement and dehumanization, hoped to establish nations based on justice, freedom and economic development. The Africans' aspirations of the independence were so great; dreams were about to be realized and great expectations were to be met by the rulers of the young nations. Nevertheless, those aspirations vaporized and the dreams became bad dreams. The single party led by the figure of the president replaced the colonizer with no real detachment from it. In fact, the post-independence period was such a disappointment for Africans. The dream of building a democratic nation vanished with the political changes entailed by the suns of independence and the independent Africa was characterized by decadence, corruption, dishonesty and regression. Kourouma, with his innovating novel which marks the

rupture with the previous literary tradition, has painted a vivid picture about the African socio-political chaos under the totalitarian rule of the new emergent black bourgeoisie.

So, through their imaginative literature, both writers mirror reality and the central themes of the two novels emerge directly out of the authors' experiences.

II) Review of the Literature:

Nineteen Eighty-four and *Les Soleils des indépendances* are among the best known novels and they are considered as classics in literature. Accordingly, they have been subject of several literary researches and they are included in the corpus of many school programs. Their success is worldwide.

Nineteen Eighty-Four is a political novel which has received a lot of criticism. It has grabbed the attention of many critics who have dealt with the work and studied it under different perspectives. Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, like his earlier novel *Animal Farm* (1945), was produced at a time in which the world witnessed a dreadful change and the population faced harsh times. Tackling the issue of the ideologies propagated in his time like Socialism, Stalinism and Hitlerism, Orwell gained a worldwide fame that elevated him to the rank of a "hero". This is what is pleaded by D.S. Savage (1983) who says:

Released (*Animal Farm* and 1984) at a time when world power relationships, and popular opinion with them, were suffering a painful change, Orwell's books played an important part in effecting a several of attitudes towards the West's wartime Soviet ally. Their author's hitherto uncomfortable anti-Stalinism became all at once not only acceptable but fashionable, and the way was opened for his subsequent gradual elevation into a cult figure, a hero of our times, a secular saint.¹

G.C. Thornley and Gwyneth Roberts (1984) tackle another idea which is prominent in Orwell's novel: the idea of manipulation and control. The world described by Orwell is predominated by totalitarianism, terror and oppression; a world where

people are manipulated and controlled. In the world of *1984*, privacy is inexistent. The abovementioned critics argue: “*This book (1984) describes a future world where every word and action is seen and controlled by the state.*”²

The notion of the modern state is another issue which is carried out in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Big Brother is projected as the model of the modern dictatorial state which depends on the subjection of mass population to reach absolute power. Beatrix Campbell observes that: “*Big Brother has become the metaphor for the modern state (...) Orwell’s state is not just a spectre of secrecy and surveillance, because the whole thesis also depends on a notion of absolute power which depends on the condition of mass powerlessness.*”³

Criticism on Orwell’s novel is also illustrated by Michael Walzer who opines that *Nineteen Eighty-Four* presents an obscure image of societies living under an absolutist totalitarian system in which any attempt of dissidence is damned and any resistance is hopeless. “*The vision (in 1984) is too grim, denying any hope of resistance; there are no positive heroes(...) what they(Animal Farm and 1984) describe is the nightmare of the boot pressing down on the human face...forever(...) they inspire fear, not hope.*”⁴ Similarly, Thornley and Roberts share the same aforementioned view that *Nineteen Eighty-Four* describes an obscure and gloomy future and point that “*This picture of the future, influenced by the hardships and dangers of the Second World War and the political events that followed it, is a dark despairing one.*”⁵

Kourouma’s *Les Soleils des indépendances* has also been a fertile subject of criticism. Critics have probed and explored divergent viewpoints of the novel. The latter is considered as the first African novel to reflect the realities of the Post-Independence era: « *Il revient ainsi au roman de Kourouma, du fait de la conjonction de son écriture*

singulière et de la grande visibilité du sujet dans son livre, d'avoir été salué comme le premier roman sur les indépendances. »⁶ Arab Abderrehmene (1982) considers Kourouma's novel as a tragic story about the corrupted political systems existing in Africa just after the independence. In this respect he says: "*With devastating irony and critical detachment, Ahmadou Kourouma exposes the upholders of petty authority, the incompetence and corruption of civil servants, the restrictions on individual liberty, the mockery of justice, the demagoguery and hypocrisy of statesmen and politicians.*"⁷

Les Soleils des indépendances presents a harsh criticism on the African post-independence political systems based on an ideological violent single party which betrayed the principles of the revolution led against the colonizer, and which ruined the traditional social structures. This kind of modern state is what is denounced and warned against in the novel: "*More than tribalism and reaction, it is/ the totalitarianism and barbarity of the modern state which Ahmadou Kourouma warns against in this novel.*"⁸

Jacques Chevrier (1984) insists on the failure of the independence to bring prosperity and justice to Africans and says: « *Dix ans après les indépendances, elle (l'oeuvre) nous rappelle opportunément que toute mutation politique s'accompagne inéluctablement d'injustices et d'échecs humains.* »⁹ Harrow Kenneth (1994) sees that Kourouma's novel describes the sufferings of African individuals who live under a corrupted system which plunged Africa into turmoil. He argues that "*Les Soleils des indépendances is involved in the oxymoron and contradiction, which depicts a post-independence Africa in a state of turmoil. Social problems and corrupt officials appear on one level, while on another are found the psyches of those living in a world that offers no haven of ease, no insight into truth.*"¹⁰

III) Working Hypotheses:

Nineteen Eighty-Four and *Les Soleils des indépendances* are two dystopian novels which have become classics in literature due to the universal issues they include. Both of them have raised great discussions and criticism. They have grabbed the attention of many scholars who studied them from different perspectives. They are compared to many other literary works but no comparative study has yet involved them together. Therefore, this research paper attempts to expose similar central themes that the two novels share.

It may seem surprising to evoke Orwell in reference to Kourouma and to suggest that their texts can be read in parallel. It is true that there are many elements which seem to set these two authors apart: place of birth, time and place they wrote, their style. While, for example, Orwell is a British political novelist and essayist whose novel stands as an outstanding model of dystopian fiction, and who attracted the whole world by his philosophy, Kourouma is a sub-Saharan African author having been acknowledged as an innovative writer who revolutionized the standard French language by “Mlinkénizing”¹¹ it. These factors may well set the two authors apart and deny that their texts may be read jointly. Yet, a careful look at the two works support drawing incontestable commonalities. Both novels are set in fictitious places where totalitarian dictatorships prevail.

In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Orwell paints a gloomy and dark image of the world, especially Europe, which is governed by a dictatorial totalitarian regime; a world where freedom of expression is confined and people live squalid conditions. This kind of authoritarian regime intends to reach absolute power and total manipulation on the whole society.

Like Orwell, Kourouma, with his masterpiece *Les Soleils des indépendances*, has expressed his disillusionment and disenchantment after the colonial era. Tyrannies led by the single party substituted the colonizer's ones leading to the deterioration of the social conditions, the persecution of the population and to the restriction of the civil liberties.

Thus, the purpose of this research paper is to show that though the two writers come from different environments and their two works were written in different periods, the two share common features and similar perceptions. This research paper consists on considering the manner how *1984* and *Les Soleils des indépendances* display the strategies the dictators use in setting up a dehumanizing totalitarian regime and how those strategies are exploited by them for political ends and purposes. This will lead us to prove that the end justifies the means the totalitarian regimes use to reach absolute power. We are also going to consider the effects of the totalitarian regimes' practices on the masses.

This analysis takes in consideration the socio-political context in which the two novels were set so as to show the influence of the historical events in writing *1984* and *Les Soleils des indépendances*.

Method and Materials

Our analysis will lean, as we have already seen, on Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and Kourouma's *Les Soleils des indépendances*. Those materials are selected to study the prevailing themes which are: the political elite's greed for absolute power, its use of violence and the state of depression which overwhelms the population masses. In order to study our subject, a literary theory is needed. So, our analysis will be grounded on the theory of New Historicism.

New Historicism is a literary theory that has been promulgated since the early 1980s. Many books and several essays have been issued to expound its main ideas. Greenblatt is an outstanding figure who has carried out many studies on New Historicism. It is worth mentioning that prominent thinkers like Foucault, Bakhtin and Marx were of major influence in crystallizing the main principles of the theory.

New Historicism claims that a literary work should not be studied apart from the historical context in which it was produced and “*In place of dealing with a text in isolation from its historical context, new historicists attend primarily to the historical and cultural conditions of its production, its meaning, its effects, and also of its later critical interpretations and evaluations.*”¹² So, the main aim of New Historicism is to understand literature through the historical circumstances which characterized a specific period and place. Within this angle, Aram Veeser explains that New Historicism “*attempts to explain facts, by reference to earlier facts...I mean the attempts to find explanation and relevant material in social sciences other than the one which is primarily under investigation.*”¹³ This means that literature is explained and understood through the interference of other forces: social and political. Those forces constitute the key materials with which literature is produced. Thus, literary works are not probed independently from the historical context; they are rather closely connected to history. The same point is illustrated by Abrams who pleads that “*new historicists conceive of a literary text as “situated” within the institutions, social practices, and discourses that constitute the overall culture of a particular time and place, and with which the literary text interacts as both a product and a producer of cultural energies and codes.*”¹⁴

One of the outstanding features of New Historicist analysis of literary texts is its recourse to interpretation. New Historicists argue that literature is interpreted through the historical context in which it is produced basing on the forces (cultural, social and

political) which shaped the past and on how they are represented in the present. They also argue that history is interpreted through literary texts, which permits its recreation and reproduction. They consider that history is not “a set of fixed, objective facts” but it is conceived as “a text which itself needs to be interpreted.”¹⁵ John Brannigan best illustrates the idea stated just above in the following quotation:

(...) In part this means that new historicist and cultural materialism critics are engaged in uncovering the historical contexts in which literary texts first emerged and received, but it also means that they are busy interpreting the significance of the past for the present, paying particular attention to forms of power which operated in the past and how they are replicated in the present.¹⁶

Another stand point in which New Historicism is concerned with is the relation of literature to history and politics. Through texts, the approach examines and exhibits the political and the ideological concerns promulgated and operating in a given society. It considers literature as a political operation: “*New historicism is the most prominent indication of a turn to history and politics in literary studies, and it reveals literary texts as political acts and historical events.*”¹⁷

Since *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *Les Soleils des indépendances* are two novels that mirror and reflect the historical contexts in which they were written and bear in their pages many ideological thoughts spread at those periods like Socialism, Stalinism, and Nazism, so the application of the theory of New Historicism is relevant as it binds and reads literature in relation to the historical context and in relation to the social and political forces that characterize a given society. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, we will examine Orwell’s depiction of a dystopian place where the world lives under a totalitarian political system which confines freedom of expression and exercises a total manipulation over individuals. Similarly, in *Les Soleils des indépendances*, we will study the portrayal of the tragic political scene in Africa just after the independence

through the depiction of the life of the protagonist Fama and that of the other characters, and we will analyze Kourouma's description of a dystopian place where dictatorship prevails and civil rights are confiscated.

Methodological Outline:

This research paper will be divided into three chapters. The first one will be devoted to the historical background of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *Les Soleils des indépendances*. The chapter also includes the summary of the two novels and the biography of George Orwell and Ahmadou Kourouma. The second chapter entitled "Hegemonic Despotism" will be divided into two sections. The first section will deal with the totalitarian government which is based on a single party system. In this section, we are going to show the role of the single party in consolidating the hegemony of the ruling elite and its lust for power. The second section will explore the theme of manipulation which safeguards the superiority of the rulers and its control over the citizens. The third chapter will expose the dictators' resort to violence and coercion as a way of expressing power. Then, it will deal with the idea of despair that overwhelms the population masses. This state of helplessness is a direct consequence of the totalitarian regimes practices. The conclusion will compress all the ideas exposed throughout the research work.

Notes and References:

¹ D.S.Savage, "The Fatalism of George Orwell", in *From Orwell to Naipaul*, Volume 8 of The New Pelican Guide To English Literature, ed. Boris Ford (Penguin Books), 121.

² G.C.Thornley and Gwyneth Roberts, *An Outline of English Literature* (England: Longman, 1984), 156.

³ Beatrix Campbell, "Orwell- Paterfamilias or Big Brother?", in New casebooks:*George Orwell*, ed. Graham Holderness, Bryan Loughrey and Nahem Yousaf (New York: St.Martin's press, 1998), 64.

⁴ Michael Walzer, "George Orwell's England", in New casebooks:*George Orwell*, ed. Graham Holderness, Bryan Loughrey and Nahem Yousaf (New York: St.Martin's press, 1998), 199.

⁵ Thornley and Roberts, *Outline of English Literature*, 157.

⁶ Marie-Christine Rochmann, Kourouma, *Les Soleils des indépendances: Le roman; l'œuvre littéraire, ses propriétés, sa valeur ; littérature et politique* in (Clefs Concours Khâgnes littérature, Atlande, 2012), 220.

⁷ Arab Abderrahmane, *Politics and The Novel in Africa* (Alger, Office des Publications Universitaires, 1982), 265.

⁸ Ibid., 268.

⁹ Jacques Chevrier, *Littérature Nègre* (Paris, Armand Colin, 1984), 117.

¹⁰ Kenneth W. Harrow, *Thresholds of Change in African Literature: The Emergence of a Tradition* (USA, Heinemann, 1994), 258.

¹¹ The Malinké, also known as Mandinko, Mandinka or Mandingo, is a West African ethnic group which belongs to the Mandé group. The Malinkés are the descendants of the Mali Empire who constitute the largest West Africa's ethnolinguistic group. Most of the Mandinka in Africa are Muslims and they speak the Mandekan language.

¹² M.H.Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (USA, Heinle & Heinle, 1999), 182-183. (7th edition)

¹³ Aram Veesser, *The New Historicism Reader* (New York, Penguin books, 1994), 10.

¹⁴ Abrams, *Literary Terms*, 183.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ John Brannigan, *New Historicism and Cultural Materialism* (London: Macmilian press, 1998), 6.

¹⁷ Ibid., 153.

Results:

The comparative study that we have carried out on Orwell's *1984* and Kourouma's *Les Soleils des indépendances* has allowed us to discover two prominent literary figures that have world widely marked the literary production through their political imaginative fiction. The former is an important author in British literature whose writings are among the most widely read and discussed. The latter is one of the most popular African writers who revolutionized francophone literature through his original and innovative writings.

Throughout the research paper, we have tried to show that the above mentioned writers share similar themes despite the elements that seem to put them apart. In fact, the two writers who are from different geographical areas and from different historical backgrounds share the same position towards the dangers and ills totalitarian regimes can cause. For instance, the analysis has shown the totalitarian ways governments exploit to reach absolute power: despotism, manipulation and coercion. It has also displayed the overwhelming state of desperation and depression of the population masses living under the rule of such governments.

We have carried out this study by taking into consideration the socio-historical context in which the two novels were set. The analysis has shown that both authors have reflected historical and political events that marked their age. This is why we have appealed to the theory of New Historicism which studies literature in relation to history.

This study has intended to parallel two different literary traditions: Anglophone British literature and Francophone African literature to draw a clearer view about the dictatorial systems' practices, with regard to geographical and temporal perspectives, that seem to be analogous all over the world.

Chapter One:
Time and Life of George Orwell and
Ahmadou Kourouma

1) Historical Background

1-1 *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

1984 was written in a critical time of Orwell's life. The suffering man was about to produce a work which would have a major influence on literary criticism. It is a hallmark not only in literature but in politics as well. Orwell's personal experience and the revolutionary changes, starting from the Industrial Revolution that Britain and the world witnessed, served as a plot of *1984*.

In *1984*, Orwell describes the political scene and the totalitarian states of the 20th century. It was published in 1949 which means that it was written just after the end of the most ravaging and devastating war in the history of humanity: the Second World War, and the projected world of *1984* echoes another conflict which was at its beginnings: the Cold War.

The aftermath of the Second World War was inculcated in the peoples' minds. The flying airplanes, the roar of bombs and air raids which deserted villages, burned out houses and reduced cities into ashes¹ was the drastic reality that shocked the whole world; everything had gone into flames. The war ended by a terrible event which has left scars to the present day: the dropping of the atomic bomb on two Japanese cities: Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This tragic end of the war marked the beginning of the nuclear age. The war's bloody and terrifying scenes, the Holocaust and the atomic bombs, prefigured the turn of "the hot war into a cold one"². The term "Cold War" was coined in 1947 to describe the ideological tensions between the powers which divided the world into two opposing blocs: the United States and the Soviet Union. The Iron Curtain, the Berlin Wall, and the armament race had prolonged the state of horror, fear and paranoia caused by the Second World War.

Orwell was a witness of the outbreak of radicalism in the 1930's. In the middle of the Great Depression and the rise of the fascist totalitarian system, Marxism and Russia, embodied in Stalinist socialism, offered a model for egalitarian regime³. Communism was considered as an alternative of Capitalism which failed to improve the peoples' living standards; instead, it served the interests of the bourgeoisie and debased the other social classes. In their *Communist Manifesto* (1848), Marx and Engels pleaded for a classless society and predicted a proletariat revolution⁴. However, Socialism started to faint as a result of Stalin's betrayal of the revolution (executions, repression of dissidents, sordid conditions of living and so on were what characterized Stalin's rule). Orwell considers that the original principles of Socialism had been corrupted by the USSR and the Spanish Civil War confirmed the failure of the "god"⁵. That is why he embraced what he calls "Democratic Socialism"⁶. In *1984*, Orwell illustrates the betrayal of the Russian revolution (1917) through the accusations Goldstein made against the established totalitarian system of Big Brother who refers to Stalin: *He (Goldstein) was abusing Big Brother, he was denouncing the dictatorship of the Party, (...) he was crying hysterically that the revolution had been betrayed.*⁷

Orwell's novel is engaged so deeply in the events that marked the world, especially Europe. It reflects the prevailing paranoia, the disillusionment, shock and horror entailed by the two World Wars, the Great Depression and the Cold War. The rise of the totalitarian ideologies, embodied in fascism, Hitlerism and Stalinism, constituted a great threat and danger on the nations. It was, then, within this context that Orwell plunged himself in writing *1984* as a warning of the dangers of authoritarianism and as a denunciation of, mainly, the Communist oligarchs.

The post Second World War literature brought no innovation in terms of form, language and style unlike the impact of the First World War on the literary expression

which was characteristic. It is mainly characterized by the “revival of realism”⁸. The return to realism was a way of relating and depicting the atrocities and horrors of the war. The general pessimism and despair that prevailed after the ravaging war were portrayed in many post-war literary works. It is worth mentioning that during the war time and even after, two major philosophical theories, which greatly influenced the literary production, emerged. These two philosophies are Existentialism and the philosophy of the absurd which explored the sense of absurdity and futility of the modern world.

In Britain, the damages caused by the war reduced its status as an important power. Its imperial role was weakened by the political, social and economic changes entailed by the war⁹. These changes urged many writers to record them and describe the state of overwhelming anguish and pessimism. The return to social realism by writers of early post-war years like George Orwell, Evelyn Waugh, Malcolm Lowry, Angus Wilson, William Golding and many others, shaped the post-war British fiction. The latter mainly explored the crisis of humanism and identity.¹⁰

There is no doubt that the first British post-war novel, which was published in 1945, was Orwell’s *Animal Farm*; a political allegory in form of an animal fable. With the publication of his last novel, *1984*, Orwell devoted himself as a prominent early post-war British political writer. Besides political novels, he wrote several political and critical essays and articles which explored the subjects that most interested him: the relation between literature and politics. Orwell’s last novel is a dystopian fiction which portrays an obscure image of a world governed by totalitarian regimes. Many anti-Utopian writers were of major influence on him. Wells, London, Huxley, Zamyatin “from all of whom Orwell borrowed, but greatly improved and transcended.”¹¹

1-2 *Les Soleils des indépendances:*

African literature has been marked for a long time by the dominance of the political themes engendered first by the colonial period then the independence era. The latter has come to be known as the neocolonial period. The authors who wrote and still write about those periods have resorted to literary expression as a way of social and political fight. In order to understand their literary productions, we have to return to the historical context in which they were written and provide some historical facts.

The presence of the West in Africa went back to the 15th century with the Portuguese exploration. The Western curiosity, greed and need for raw materials led the great powers of Europe to divide up the African continent and share “the cake” just after the Berlin Convention in 1885;; France occupied a part of the Western Africa (Afrique occidentale française, A.O.F) and a part of the central Africa (Afrique équatoriale française,A.E.F)¹²

The colonization settled down all over Africa. the Africans’ way of life was turned upside down and the African political scene was metamorphosed: the traditional political structure was based on chieftaincy, royalty or on lineage community. The traditional chiefs were usually conserved but in the lowest ranks of administration; they were put at the head of the canton. In addition to this, colonization had changed the economic system, which relegated the indigenous people into slaves, and spoiled the social values through missionaries and colonial schools¹³. It was within this context that the first African literature written in French emerged. African writers have expressed their contempt towards the colonial situation and harshly criticized the brutalities of the colonizer. As a response and a reaction to colonization, *Batouala* (1921) by René Maran, *Les Bouts de bois de Dieu* by Ousmane Sembène (1960) *Mission terminée*

(1957) by Mongo Beti, to mention only a few, are illustrative examples of the commitment of writers toward the African cause.

In the 1920s, the first anti-colonial protests and complaints started to appear. Syndicates, associations and parties were created by the African elite. In Ivory Coast, the Ivoirians formed an autonomous African syndicate, which was previously annexed to the S.P.C.I (le Syndicat des planteurs de Côte d'Ivoire) to which great European and Ivoirian plantation-owners adhere, and became later on the infrastructure of a party: the Ivory Coast Democratic Party (P.D.C.I) founded by Félix Houphouët-Boigny, who became the dominant figure of the political scene in the country, in 1945. In 1959, he became the chief of the Ivory Coast's government, and in 1960 he was elected president of the independent Ivory Coast. Since 1957, there was only one party, the other parties being rallied to the (P.D.C.I).¹⁴

The transition from colonization to independence had painful repercussions on the African population. In Ivory Coast, The elected president followed a policy that favored the class of bourgeoisie which consisted of the land owners (the president Houphouët-Boigny was one of the greatest land owners since 1939) and downgrading other classes. In addition, the newly independent country had not detached itself from the metropolis, and kept close relations with the former colonizer. This neo-colonialism was perpetuated by the black ruling classes through leaguings with the multi-nationals. Faced to this situation, Ivoirian intellectuals and students began to proclaim more independence and detachment from France and pleaded for the Africanization of the institutions. After different repressive measures taken by the Ivoirian government, a plot broke up in 1963 in which many personalities were imprisoned and condemned to heavy penalties.¹⁵ This incident is depicted in Kourouma's novel who was himself one of the arbitrary detained victims.

The upheavals of independence on the African continent were devastating. The post independent scene was prevailed and inflicted by the state of despair, violence and horror. Corruption, dictatorships, injustice, decadence, repression and the single party rule was what characterized Africa after independence. Furthermore, the Cold War had propelled ideological confrontations mainly between Socialism and Liberalism. This is best illustrated by Kourouma's *Les Soleils des indépendances* when he exposes the political context of Guinea (the Republic of Ninkai) which is a Socialist nation and that of Ivory Coast (the Ebony Coast) affiliated to the Occidental Party. The regime of the two republics recognize only the reign of the single party: the P.D.C.I created in 1945 and the Guinean Democratic Party (P.D.G referred to as the L.D.N in Kourouma's novel).

So, as Jacques Chevrier puts it: « *toutes les conditions sont réunies pour créer une Afrique de malaise.* »¹⁶ The failure of the independence in meeting the great expectations of the Africans nourished the emergence of the "literature of disillusionment"¹⁷; to borrow Jacques Chevrier's term, to which *Les Soleils des indépendances* adhere. Disillusionment constitutes a prevalent theme in post-independence African novel.

The African literature after 1960 confirmed the failure of the independence and mirrored the drastic social and political changes that marked the African continent just after the access to independence. Within this context Midiohouan claims that « *La littérature négro-africaine d'après 1960, quel que soit le point de vue d'où on l'envisage, est le reflet de cet échec des indépendances.* »¹⁸ The African literature presents a harsh criticism on the antagonisms and defects of the post-independent African society and on the abuses of the corrupted leading elite which replicated the colonizer's oppression. Post-independence era produced a generation of disillusioned

and disenchanted writers which drove them to the pen to reflect the distressing African realities and to paint a picture of the political and social chaos that predominated Africa. Those writers acted as both artists and political activists who described their disillusionment and that of the African population masses after the independence. Ironically, this generation of writers was preceded by the negritude movement which over praised the African society and glorified the blacks; it was the same glorified blacks who persecuted and impoverished their brothers after the independence.

The independence then brought nothing but failure at all levels: political, social and economic. The African elite that succeeded the colonizer's rule had obscured the African scene by introducing totalitarian dictatorships which created a sense of disappointment and despair. This state of disillusionment besides injustices, violence and impoverishment are minutely scrutinized by both Anglophone and Francophone writers. Achebe, Armah, Sembene Ousmane, Monénembo and many others are among the prominent figures who have produced novels which demonstrate the socio-political chaos that Africa witnessed after the independence, but "*De tous ces romans, l'un des plus représentatifs est celui d'Ahmadou Kourouma, Les Soleils des indépendances.*"¹⁹

2) The Life of George Orwell and Ahmadou Kourouma

2-1 George Orwell

George Orwell is an eminent British writer and essayist whose fiction and non-fiction writings have provoked a lot of criticism. His writings have been influenced by his personal experiences; this is why we have to return to the moments and circumstances that shaped his life, fiction and politics in order to discern that influence.

Eric Arthur Blair was born in 1903 in India, where his father Richard Walmesley Blair worked for the Indian Civil Service as an administrator in the Opium Department. The family moved to England in 1907. Orwell entered Eton, a prestigious school, where he met his schoolmates: Cyril Comolly, Cecil Beaton and Anthony Powell. Aldous Huxley, whose writings were of a major influence on him, was his French teacher for a year. He abandoned his studies to serve with the Indian Imperial Police in Burma. After spending five years (from 1922 to 1927), in what he felt was “unsuitable profession”, Orwell resigned from the Imperial Police and came back to Britain determined to fulfill his ambition to be a writer. This experience inspired his first novel *Burmese Days* (1934), which is an example of anti-imperialist writing that portrayed the absurdities and realities of the colonial life, and one of his best essays *Shooting the Elephant*. Several years of poverty followed. During this period of economic deprivation and vagrancy, he lived and worked in Paris for two years before returning to England where he tried to survive in “the London of the depression”²⁰. There, he worked successfully as a private tutor, schoolteacher, bookshop assistant, and contributed reviews and articles to a number of periodicals. His foray into the world of tramps and tramping resulted in *Down and Out in Paris and London* published in 1933. With this, he became no longer Eric Blair but “George Orwell”; the Orwell is a river in Suffolk which flows in the Southern side where his parents lived.²¹

Then, he wrote two other novels, *A Clergyman's Daughter* and *Keep the Aspidistra Flying*, respectively published in 1935 and 1936. In 1936, he was commissioned by Victor Gollancz to visit areas of mass unemployment in Lancashire and Yorkshire, and *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937) is a powerful description of the poverty he saw there and a depiction of Labour's miners. This novel reveals Orwell's growing interest in politics and particularly socialism. At the end of 1936, unlike his

contemporaries, Orwell went to Spain to fight for the republicans, joined the POUM and got wounded by a fascist bullet. From this experience, he returned in disillusion both with Communist tactics -which acquiesced with the victory of the fascist Franco, foreshadowing the 1939 non-aggression pact between Hitler and Stalin- and the attitude of the British left-wing intellectuals who supported them. *Homage to Catalonia* is his account of the Spanish Civil War published by Frederic Warburg in 1938. He was admitted to a sanatorium and from then on was never fully fit. He spent six months in Morocco, and there he wrote *Coming Up for Air*. During the Second World War, he was involved in several journalistic activities and created with his friends Arthur Koestler and Tosco Fyfe a collection of militant texts to which he gave an important essay *The Lion and the Unicorn*. He served in the home guard and worked for the BBC Eastern Service from 1941 to 1943. His experience in BBC seems to influence his creation of the Ministry of Truth. As literary editor of *Tribune*, he contributed a regular page of political and literary commentary, and also wrote for the *Observer* and later *The Manchester Evening News*. His unique political allegory, *Animal Farm*, was written during wartime though it did not appear until 1945. The original idea of this fable had been conceived in Spain in 1937, and he wrote it over a period of three months in late 1943 and early 1944, at a time when the Russians were beginning to throw off the German advance, when Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin met in Tehran to plan the Nazi overthrow, and when Stalin stood high in British popular esteem. The book is an allegory of the betrayal of the Russian revolution by Stalin. In 1946, Orwell started to write *1984*. This novel had devoured him and he struggled against his illness (he suffered from Tuberculosis) to finish it. In a letter sent to his friend Fred, Orwell, who is hospitalized, wrote about the novel:

I am not pleased with the book but I am not absolutely dissatisfied. I first thought of it in 1943. I think it is a good idea but the execution would have been

better if I had not written it under the influence of TB. I haven't definitely fixed on the title but I am hesitating between NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR and THE LAST MAN IN EUROPE.²²

Orwell finished writing the novel in 1948 and he published it in 1949. It was this novel together with *Animal Farm* which brought him a worldwide fame. *1984* presents a nightmarish picture of the terrors of power greed and a dehumanized world where the ideology of power and control prevail. He depicts an obscure image of a Totalitarian Great Britain as a warning of the infiltration of Communism and other dictatorial systems. The novel is Orwell's last major work he wrote before he died in London in January, 21, 1950.²³ Orwell died but his works bear witness of his importance as a prominent literary and political figure: *In striving to keep a deliberate balance between public and private values, between creative work and necessary labour, between politics and culture, Orwell's life and his writings should both guide and cheer us.*²⁴ Orwell's love for England and English patriotism, his interest and commitment in politics and literature, his humanism and egalitarianism, his hatred of totalitarianism and his pleading for democratic socialism have shaped his identity, "the Orwellian" identity.²⁵

2-2 Ahmadou Kourouma

Ahmadou kourouma is an important African writer whose literary productions are of major influence on francophone literature. He was born in 1927 in the north of Ivory Coast in the town of Boundiali, in the village of Togobala of the Horodougou (the only setting to escape to concealment in *Les Soleils des indépendances*), a province that colonization divided between the Ivory Coast and Guinea.

Kourouma, like the protagonist of the novel *Fama*, is from a princely family; the name Kourouma means "warrior" which refers to the category of the malinkés' nobles.

His society was traditionally divided into three categories: the nobles, devoted to war and commerce, the caste (the griots, blacksmiths) and the slaves. At an early age, he was raised by his uncle, a nurse who belonged to the colonized elite.

The uncle Niankoro sent his nephew to the rural school of Boundiali; thanks to his intelligence and seriousness, he could pursue his studies in the regional school of Korhogo where he obtained a diploma (le certificat d'étude); then he joined the Superior Primary School of Biengerville (1943-1945). It was the period of war and the first movements of emancipation started to appear. Thus in 1947, when he entered the Superior Technical School of Bamako (Mali), he was politically prepared to follow the agitations which shook the A.O.F (Afrique occidentale française). A strike triggered in the school of Bamako and Kourouma, considered as the leader, was expelled and sent back to Ivory Coast. He was then mobilized for three years in the military service. Ironically, his regiment was charged to subdue the revolt movements of the "Rassemblement démocratique africain." He was also mobilized in the colonial army of Indochina, but he refused to join it. Yet, the incitement of Bernard Dadié, an already Ivoirian well-known writer, had convinced him to go to acquire a military formation as a preparation for the anti-colonial war: « À Saïgon et dans d'autres villes et postes du Vietnam, j'ai vu comment des colonisés peuvent se libérer, les armes à la main »²⁶, Kourouma noted. After his liberation from the military service, he pursued his studies in mathematics in France: in Paris and Lyon.

He exercised his profession as an insurance technician first in France and then returned to Ivory Coast in 1961, just after the independence, with his French wife Christiane and his first daughter. Recruited to create pension fund in Ivory Coast, Kourouma hoped to play a prominent role in reorganizing the country. However, in 1963, the president Houphouët-Boigny, in his prevention from Communism which

obsessed him, denounced a plot and organized repressive actions that were followed by imprisonment and torture; Kourouma was arrested then released thanks to the intervention of the French embassy. This incident was a turning point in shaping Kourouma as a writer. He, then, left Abidjan and went into exile in Algeria.

It was in this fatalistic year of 1963 that he conceived his novel *Les Soleils des indépendances*, undertaken as a denunciation of the arbitrariness of the new African regimes. It was also conceived to remedy the deficiency of the writings of the colonial administrators and anthropologists about the African society. It was first intended to be an essay, however, Kourouma was unsatisfied of the journalistic approach of facts; he finally took up in writing a novel. Started in Abidjan, continued in Algeria, between lost manuscripts, rewritten and reworked texts, *Les Soleils des indépendances* was not proposed to publication until January 1966, a date in which the book was sent to a number of editors including Seuil, Présence africaine, Grasset, Gallimard. It was refused everywhere. At a point of abandoning, Kourouma discovered in the Algerian press in 1967 that the journal *Études française* of the University of Montreal sought manuscripts of francophone literature to publish. He then sent his manuscript and received a favorable response. The Canadian editor George André Vachon sent for Kourouma to come to Montreal and together worked for three weeks. « Il m'a fait reprendre espoir. C'est lui qui m'a fait. »²⁷ said Kourouma. Hence, the first publication of *Les Soleils des indépendances* was in 1968 in Montreal for which he received a prize of “ la Francité du Québec”, then in 1970 that of “l'Académie royale de Belgique” and finally that of “ la foundation Maillé-Latour Landry de l'Académie Française”.

Writing for Kourouma constitutes a vital and absolute need. He invokes the importance of writing in reference to the traumatic European writer's experience during the Second World War. In this respect, Kourouma says:

Tous les écrivains français contemporains, comme les auteurs d'autres pays d'Europe, ont consacré une partie de leur production à la réflexion sur les quatre ans d'occupation et d'oppression que leurs pays ont subis pendant la Deuxième Guerre mondiale. Or, en Afrique, nous avons eu 100 ans d'occupation, et vous comprenez bien qu'il est vital pour nous d'en parler, d'en analyser les suites et les effets. Nous avons eu autant de massacres que les Européens pendant cette dernière guerre et sous les régimes autoritaires staliniens.²⁸

Alerted by its success, Paul Flamand, the director of the Seuil, proposed to Kourouma to buy back the rights of the work's (*Les Soleils des indépendances*) publication. Thus, the novel was to be published in this prestigious Parisian edition in 1970 with a letter of apology and excuse of the director to the author. The publication was awarded by "l'Académie française".

The production of *Les Soleils des indépendances* is, then, related to the political, social and economic chaos that the Ivory Coast witnessed after the independence. Kourouma's novel depicts this Ivoirian crisis to denounce the practices of the political institution in the country which is based on the single party system: "Quand j'ai écrit *Les Soleils des indépendances*, j'avais pour objectif de dénoncer des abus de pouvoir, des abus économiques et sociaux"²⁹, Kourouma claims. The author satirizes the post-independence regime in the Ivory Coast which obviously refers to the political rule under "Houphouët Boigny. By doing this, he declares himself as an opponent of the post-independence Ivoirian rule. As a result of his criticism of the political scene in his writings, he spent much of his life in exile.

In an attempt to describe a world turned upside down and to caricature reality, Kourouma recurses to the power of language; a "Métis" language which he elaborated. Within this context, Kourouma declares: « *Je n'avais pas le respect du français qu'ont ceux qui ont une formation classique. [...] Ce qui m'a conduit à rechercher la structure*

*du langage malinké, à reproduire sa dimension orale, à tenter d'épouser la démarche de la pensée malinké dans sa manière d'appréhender le vécu. »*³⁰

In 1970, Kourouma returned to Abidjan. However, two years later and as a result of the performance of his play *Tougnantigui or Le Diseur de la vérité*, considered as subversive, he went again into exile, first to Cameroon then to Togo.

Being considered as a one novel writer, Kourouma published his second novel *Monnè, outrage et défis* in 1990 which traces a century of colonial history. This novel was followed by *En attendant le vote des bêtes sauvages*, published in 1998 and a winner of "livre Inter" prize, on African dictatorships. *Allah n'est pas obligé* (2002), a winner of Renaudot prize and Gouncourt des lycéens prize, is the novel before the last one. In this novel, we follow an infant soldier misfortune during the tribal wars in Liberia and Sierra Leon. *Quand on refuse, on dit non* (2005), unachieved posthumous novel, pursues the unfortunate adventure of that infant soldier, this time in Ivory Coast in the midst of the civil war.³¹

Ahmadou Kourouma, like Fama, "a fini" in 2003. However, to say "a fini" instead of "est mort" is to « *reprendre le concept malinké selon lequel les morts ne disparaissent pas: on finit une vie pour en recommencer une autre, différente.* »³² At least, Kourouma stays present with his literary heritage which continues to shine in the literary world.

3) Summary of the two novels

3-1 *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

1984 is a novel which describes a world where Totalitarianism and manipulation prevails. The world of *1984* is divided into three parts: Eurasia, Eastasia and Oceania.

The story is set in Airstrip One (London) which is a part of Oceania. The nation is governed by the party led by the prominent figure of Big Brother. The country is composed of three social classes: the Inner party, the Outer party and the Proles. The ruling party resorts to indoctrination, fear and propaganda to set order and obedience and to subjugate the masses.

Winston Smith, the protagonist of the novel, is a member of the Outer party. Through the telescreens, implanted everywhere (in the streets, at homes), the party watches and observes everything, and every suspect movement is detected. Everywhere Winston goes, the face of Big Brother, which is plastered on posters and on the telescreens all over Oceania, watches him. The party controls everything in Oceania including the people's history and language. Newspeak is the language invented by the party to prevent rebellious thoughts which are referred to as thoughtcrime. Winston works in the Ministry of Truth, having the function of re-working the historical texts in which he re-writes and alters the past to meet the party's agenda and needs.

Being a thought rebel and an opponent of the party's policy, Winston buys a diary from a shop in the miserable quarter of Oceania to write down his criminal thoughts even though he constantly believes that he will be arrested for thoughtcrime. During the two Minutes Hate, he developed an infatuation with O'Brien, a member of the ruling party, whom he believes that he is a member of the brotherhood and shares the same opposing thoughts; the sole opposition of the ruling party.

In the Ministry of Truth, he notices a beautiful dark-haired girl whom he suspects to be a worker in the thought police and will arrest him of thoughtcrime. One day, she slides a note, which says "I love you", into his hand. Julia, her name, and Winston then develop an illicit sexual relationship which is strictly prohibited by the

party. Subsequently, they rent a room above the antique shop of Mr Charrington where he bought the diary. They continue to meet each other even though they know that they are “the dead”. Winston’s hatred towards the party is in a constant increase, especially when he receives a message from O’Brien inviting him to meet him.

Winston along with Julia go to O’Brien’s apartment and discover the luxury, the comfort and the prerogatives in which the members of the Inner Party live comparing to the miserable, sordid and squalid conditions in which the other social classes live. O’Brien confirms the deductions of Winston and asserts that he is a member of the brotherhood and hates the party as much as Winston does. O’Brien gives to Winston a book of Emmanuel Goldstein, the supposed ultimate enemy of the party who should be fought and hated. So, Winston devoted himself in reading the book with great interest.

Winston has always known that his rebellious actions are doomed to be revealed and this will be fatal for him and for Julia. Effectively, the soldiers of the party surround the rented room and the two discover that Mr Charrington is a member of the party. Winston and Julia are taken to the Ministry of Love where they found out that O’Brien too is a member of the party who trapped them in an open act of rebellion against the party. As a result of his resistance to the torture and brainwashing, O’Brien sends Winston to room 101 where he has to face his worst fear: the rats. Menaced with the cage of rats appointed to his head, Winston renounces and betrays Julia. O’Brien has reached his goal: Winston loves Big Brother.

3-2 Les Soleils des indépendances:

Les Soleils des indépendances is a historical and a socio-political novel which describes the disillusionment and disenchantment of the Africans after the independence. It relates the tragic story of the protagonist Fama, a Doumbouya prince

that “les soleils de la politique” (the anti-colonial fight) then “les soleils des indépendances” have dethroned and dispossessed from his prerogatives. Fama, which means in malinké “king” or “prince”, is the last legitimate heir of the throne of the Doumdouya tribe in the province of Horodougou; a province which has been divided between two republics: the Ebony Coast and the socialist republic of Nikinai. But, in a world which is turned upside down, Fama is reduced to a beggar.

The novel opens with the funerals of Ibrahima koné; there, Fama is confronted to the disrespect of “les batârs”, les fils des chiens” and “les fils des esclaves” and discovers that his royal lineage is useless with the new regime. He is deprived from chieftaincy in favor of his cousin Lacina and settles in the capital after losing his dignity as a prince. He lives in the poor quarter of the city “le quartier nègre” with his wife Salimata.

Salimata perseveres and works hard to get money and feed her husband while he roams in the city, prays in the mosque and attends funerals. Salimata does not earn money only to feed her husband, but also to pay the marabou Abdoulaye and to afford the sacrifices he requires in order to become pregnant of a child that will sustain the descent of the Doumbouya. This haunts her and becomes an obsession. Through the flash backs, Salimata recollects her traumatic experience of excision during the rites of passage to initiate her into womanhood. She also recalls the dreadful incident when Tiécoura raped her.

Fama returns again to his native village when he hears of the death of his cousin Lacina. Being the last legitimate descendant of the Boumbouya, he has to assume the chieftaincy. The journey from the capital to his village reveals to him how things have changed in the city as well as in the countryside. When Fama arrives to the village, his

people welcome him as “an eternal president”, especially the two elders of the village: Balla and Diamourou. He takes Mariam as a second wife to assure the posterity of the Doumbouya. At the end of the forty-day period of Lacina’s funeral, Fama decides to go back to the capital to set his affairs before coming back to settle in Togobala.

Despite Balla’s advice and prophecy, Fama takes his wife and leave the village. When he arrives to the capital, Fama presents his wife to Salimata. The two women seem living in harmony at the beginning, but soon the hostilities and the conflicts begin. In the meantime, Fama is accused of participating in a plot against the government and gets jailed and condemned to twenty years of imprisonment. In the name of national reconciliation, the president amnesties all the prisoners. Broken and defeated, Fama decides to return to his village but the frontier guards forbid letting him enter to Togobala. Furious and incapable of understanding the post-independence changes, he jumps into the river to reach the village of his ancestors. Unfortunately, he receives a deadly wound from a sacred caiman. The last Doumbouya dies in the ambulance in his natal village: Togobala.

This chapter has demonstrated the extent of influence of the historical events upon the two authors. In fact, this constitutes the key material in writing the plot of *1984* and *Les Soleils des indépendances*. This shows that both Orwell and Kourouma are products of their age who reflected the realities that marked their epoch.

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Chapter Two:
Hegemonic Despotism in Orwell's
1984* and Kourouma's *Les Soleils des
indépendances

Introduction:

The following chapter intends to examine two main themes in Orwell's *1984* and Kourouma's *Les Soleils des indépendances*. The first section will be devoted to study the totalitarian government strategies in imposing its doctrine and will. In this section, we will show the important role of the single party in disseminating the state's ideology to reach absolute power and to achieve uniformity in all aspects of life. The second section will analyze the strategies deployed by the single party in manipulating mass population to safeguard its power. In this section, we will examine how totalitarian governments resort to manipulation to create a standardized world. We will study all these by appealing to the theory of New Historicism.

Section one: Totalitarian Government and the Role of the Propagandist Single Party in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *Les Soleils des indépendances*:

A New Historicist reading of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *Les Soleils des indépendances* is concerned with the historic-political events which characterized the period of their production. It is also concerned in displaying the ideological and political interests operating in the society in which they were set. For, *New Historicism is a project of reading literature in relation to history, society and politics.*¹

Nineteen Eighty-Four and *Les Soleils des indépendances*, as we have already illustrated in the previous chapter, were produced in a period which witnessed the prevalence of dominating ideologies and dictatorships. The former was written in a critical period marked by the rise of Totalitarian ideologies, the aftermath of the Second World War and the Cold War tensions. Similarly, the period in which the latter was produced, was characterized by the ideological confrontations generated by the Cold War, the dominance of the corrupted dictators, who represented the rise of "the African

totalitarianism”², and the rule of the single party. The Cold War, which is reflected in both novels, was marked by the division of the world into two opposed blocs: the liberal and capitalist ideology propagated mainly in Western Europe and the U.S.A and the Communist ideology incarnated by the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Their influence as well as their tensions had affected different parts of the world. The fictitious settings in the two novels (the division of the world into three Super States in *1984* and the two republics in *Les Soleils des indépendances*: the Ebony Coast and the republic of Nikinai) illustrate that division and demonstrate the hegemonic disseminated ideologies. The latter have operated in the two works through, as Gramsci puts it, “*une série d’appareils ou d’institution*”³ in which political parties figure up among them.

Thus, in both works, the authors put emphasis on the decisive role the party plays in representing, disseminating, and imposing the state’s own ideology and doctrine. In order to reach absolute power and dominance, the totalitarian regime, which is based on a single party system, utilizes the latter as propaganda in monitoring and controlling the masses.

In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Orwell plunges us into a terrifying totalitarian world where civil liberties and individual freedom are confiscated. He paints a bleak picture of an England governed by an Inner party which detains supreme power and which resorts to frightening techniques to subject Oceania’s citizens. Through the novel, Orwell exemplifies the extent of the hegemony and power the totalitarian government is able to exert. Ingsoc (English Socialism) represents the official ideology of Airstrip One (England) in the province of Oceania. It is a totalitarian ideology which is disseminated by the Inner Party to safeguard its power, hegemony and control; everyone in Oceania should respect the principles of Ingsoc and everyone should show an entire orthodoxy to it. Even Winston, the protagonist, who manifested rebellious thoughts and who

developed great hatred to the repressive party, has ended by submitting to the party's doctrine and logic. The thinking process must be in accordance with what the party wants and dictates.

The Inner Party is led by the supreme omnipresent leader Big Brother. The latter is one of the characters that have brought a worldwide success to the novel. It has entered nowadays vocabulary and has been used as a symbol of power, control, surveillance, protection and nursery. Through the use of that figure, which refers to a member of a family, Orwell has projected the modern totalitarian state; what structures the state then is "the family" in which its members share things with each other but at the same time abide to the "paterfamilias"⁴ feature personified in the novel by Big Brother. Beatrix Campbell illustrates Orwell's use of this metaphor in the following passage. She says: "*his (Orwell) metaphor for nationhood is the family, the collectivity in which all know their place in relation to each other, in which all are intelligible to each other.*"⁵

Big brother is the supreme representative of the Inner Party. He is the leader of the nation whose real existence is not sure. Around his leadership, a personality cult has been created. He inspires big-brotherly love, nurturing and obedience, but behind this warm description he symbolizes the omnipotence, fear and terror. *His function (big brother) is to act as a focusing point for love, fear, and reverence.*⁶

When Orwell developed the concept of Big Brother, he had in mind, as examples, the totalitarian regimes of the 20th century like the Hitlerian fascism and the Stalinist communism. Those tyrants besides others (Mussolini, Mao tsi tung, Franco) inspired him in the godly figure of Big Brother and in denouncing oppressive political systems that obscured the populations' lives.

In addition to the figure of Big Brother by which the Inner Party exhibits its sovereignty and despotism, the three slogans of the Party, which are inscribed everywhere, announce the authoritarian ideology of Oceana. The oxymoron “war is peace”, “freedom is slavery” and “ignorance is strength” are the first initiation to the notion of “doublethink” that intends to control the individuals’ minds. The Party guarantees the dependence of the mass population and prevents any challenge from them through waging perpetual war. So, the stability of Oceana resides in its instability and “war” is peace for the Party as long as it preserves its interests. Freedom of being independent and a distinct individual is slavery because such an attempt is doomed to failure. Slavery, by being subject to the party’s will, means freedom from punishment and persecution. Ignorance of the real situation in Oceana and the inability to perceive the contradictions in the Party’s logic intensify its strength.

In addition to these three slogans, the Party propagates Ingsoc’s ideology and expresses its totalitarian hegemony through the effective use of the four ministries, The Ministry of Truth (minitrueth), the Ministry of peace (minipax), the Ministry of love (miniluv) and the Ministry of plenty (miniplenty). Ironically, the names of those ministries mean exactly the opposite thing; the invention of the word “doublethink” has made the acceptance of contradictions possible. The Ministry of truth is the place where history falsification is carried out and the past is constantly altered so as to fit the Party’s needs and ideology. The Ministry of Plenty is concerned with economic affairs. It follows the same process of falsification as the Ministry of Truth. After forging the original documents, the statistics about economic production is bumped up. This is the case with the boots and the chocolate. Those statistics are nothing more than a flight of the Party’s imagination because reality says the contrary. The Ministry of peace is concerned with war. The state of warfare in Oceana is perpetual. This policy of waging perpetual wars,

usually against an invented enemy, keeps the population frightened and panicked so as not to perceive the external reality or realize the dictatorship of the Party. Thus, people stay subjects of the Party's power. The Ministry of Love is the institution that sets order in Oceana. It is the place where political criminals are condemned and tortured. Through the thought police, it tracks any one that may develop dissident thoughts.

These four ministries are important institutions through which the Inner Party safeguards its interests and power. They are the extreme incarnation of a totalitarian government that tries to mold one version of the country's history.

Oceana's totalitarian government is also based on Newspeak. Newspeak is the new invented official language of Oceana. It intends to minimize the number of words in order to prevent thinking; it is not used to express ideas but rather to destroy them. The Inner Party has grasped the reality that language is power because without language there is no thought and consequently, there will be no revolt:

(...) the whole aim of Newspeak is to narrow the range of thought. In the end we shall make thoughtcrime literally impossible (...). Every concept (...) will be expressed by exactly one word (...) all its subsidiary meanings rubbed out and forgotten. The Revolution will be complete when the language is perfect. Newspeak is Ingsoc and Ingsoc is Newspeak.⁷

The eleventh and final edition of Newspeak dictionary is about to be issued. This will destroy the Oldspeak and will restrict the mind from reasoning, and then will devote the domination of the Party.

It has been said earlier that *Nineteen-Eighty Four* is a depiction and a denunciation of the totalitarian regimes that rose during the twentieth century like Communism and Nazism. However, The Party insists that Oceana's dictatorial system is different from that of Communism and Nazism. For Bernard crick, Oceana's

totalitarian regime model is a *régime (...) that blended the techniques of Communism with those of Nazism for no other purpose than to perpetuate a power-hungry élite of intellectuals in power*.⁸

Like Orwell, Kourouma in *Les Soleils des indépendances* describes a totalitarian government which disseminates and imposes hegemonic ideological discourses. In Africa, the influence of the two ideologies entailed by the Cold War constituted primarily in the rise of the political consciousness and in the promotion of the nationalist spirit which had already started in the 1930s.

In Kourouma's novel, the republic of Ebony Coast represents the occidental Capitalist bloc and the republic of the Nikinai is identified to the Communist bloc. The influence of the two ideologies on the African nationalists gave rise to voices which called for emancipation and claimed a total independence. Fama, the protagonist of *Les Soleils des indépendances*, is one of the nationalists who has joined the anti-colonial movement to liberate his country from the colonial oppression and to « *venger cinquante ans de domination et de spoliation* »⁹. Once the independence is gained, the nationalist rulers who succeeded the colonial administration are expected to meet the population's aspirations. The nationalist discourse of the new regimes has espoused the rule of the single party as a way of unifying the different members of the nation and to reinforce the national consolidation. Subsequently, the political scene becomes dominated by the single party represented by the prominent figure of the president. The latter, in Kourouma's novel, is compared to the figure of "the mother"; an allusion which indicates that the president is "the father" of the nation. Like Orwell, Kourouma, in *Les Soleils des indépendances*, employs the metaphor of a family member to refer to the president as a symbol of the totalitarian state. This echoes the president's paternalistic discourse in his political speech. Indeed, the president, who is far from

setting up an egalitarian relationship and citizenship between the people of the republic, establishes with them a relation of a mother towards her children.¹⁰

In this sense, just as the mother has the function of loving, nurturing, taking care of her children as well as punishing them when they do wrong, so is the president. The latter serves, protects and loves his citizens, at the same time he has the right to penalize and reprimand them because “*Lui, le président, était la mère de la république et tous les citoyens en étaient les enfants. La mère a le devoir d’être parfois dure avec les enfants. La mère fait connaître la dureté de ses duretés lorsque les enfants versent par terre le plat de riz que la maman a préparé pour son amant.*”¹¹. With his paternalistic discourse, the president convinces the citizens of their incapacity of taking responsibilities and proves that they are in need of a person who will guide them and steer them to the right way just like children. This also implies the limitation of having choices and a restriction of having a free will. Like Big Brother, the president develops a personality cult and through adopting honorific titles “*les personnalités de régime apparut*”¹² legitimize their seizure of power. As Pierre N’Da puts it : « *toutes ces dénominations forment un discours satirique sur le totalitarisme des pouvoirs africains et le culte de la personnalité des dirigeants.*»¹³

With the coming of the independence, Fama, the protagonist of the novel, hopes to restore the traditional organization of the pre-colonial society; the unique heir of the Doumbouya wants to assume his status as a prince and chief of Togobola. However, the “*régime apparut*” and his previous anti-colonial companions have dismissed him from this privilege and have taken the monopoly of everything in Ebony Coast. Just as the great powers of Europe had shared the cake of the African continent so has done the new political black bourgeoisie, represented by the single party, which have shared the cake of the independence. “*Les Soleils des indépendances, c’est (...) l’histoire de la*

déchéance de l'ancienne aristocratie face à l'émergence d'une bourgeoisie africaine. »¹⁴ The latter has appropriated the power and manifested its supremacy through the «parti unique», «coopérative», «garde-frontière», «secrétaire general», «comité», «sous-préfet». Kourouma illustrates this as follows

Les deux plus viandés et gras morceaux des indépendances sont sûrement le secrétariat général et la direction d'une coopérative...Le secrétaire général et le directeur, tant qu'ils savent dire des louanges du président, du chef unique et de son parti, le parti unique, peuvent bien engouffrer tout l'argent du monde sans qu'un seul œil ose ciller dans toute l'Afrique.¹⁵

The dictatorial ideology of the post-independence official government, which is represented by the single party, is exhibited in all aspects of life: political social and cultural. It has succeeded and replicated the colonizer's administration and perpetuated its organization and order: «*L'aube naissante des indépendances annonçait ainsi un jour lugubre: le soleil se coinça. De la dictature des colons l'Afrique passa sans transition à la dictature des colonels.* »¹⁶

Fama, who is dethroned first by the colonizer, who preferred his cousin Lacina, then dismissed by the sons of independence, despaired from rehabilitating the traditional way of life and from regaining his status as a prince, hopes at least to occupy a post and play a role in reconstructing the new republic and in modernizing the country :

Quand l'Afrique découvrit d'abord le parti unique, puis les coopératives qui cassèrent le commerce, il y avait quatre-vingt occasions de contenter et de dédommager Fama qui voulait être secrétaire général d'une sous-section du parti ou directeur d'une coopérative. Que n'a t-il pas fait pour être coopté?¹⁷

He is deprived and frustrated from this by his ancient anti-colonial companions because he is «*analphabète comme la queue d'un âne*»¹⁸ and privileged those who know «*lire et écrire*»¹⁹. The black bourgeoisie's ideology, therefore, legitimates itself through the

political control it exerts via the single party. This is ironical because on one hand the leaders of the Ebony Coast republic have opted for the Liberal ideology, which is based on the multi-party system, and on the other hand they have dominated the political scene by a one- party system.

The will to establish an egalitarian society based on justice and equality urged the African intellectual elite to embrace the Communist ideology- which was a worldwide hegemonic ideology- to face off the occidental imperialism and capitalism. The contribution of the socialist ideology to the rise of African nationalism was incontestable.

In Kourouma's novel, the socialist ideology is, as we have said earlier, identified by the republic of the Nikinai as opposed to the neighboring republic of Ebony Coast which has conserved relations with the capitalist occident.

The principles of the doctrine of Communism are crystal clear in Kourouma's novel. The single party is one of those principles upon which the Communist political system is founded. The republic of Nikinai, which follows the Communist doctrine, espouses the single party system and rejects the existence of other parties or any opposition; this is why « *Le père de Diakité, qui était dans l'opposition, fut convoqué, on lui signifia que son parti était mort, qu'il avait à adhérer au parti unique L.D.N.* »²⁰

Furthermore, the establishment of a Socialist society is based on the collective property of the means of production. With the advent of the independence, Socialism and the single party, the father of Diakité - a wealthy man (he owns sixty oxen, three trucks, have ten women and a son) - has to pay subscriptions in favor of "l'investissement humain". It is in the name of these socialist ideals that the African totalitarian government exerts its power and it is in the name of the same socialist ideals

that the father of Diakité « (...) *paya les cotisations pour lui, sa famille, ses bœufs, et ses trois camions. (...) Quelques mois après (...) le père de Diakité devait donner ses camions pour construire le pont du village.* »²¹ Having not participated in the construction of the bridge, Diakité has been attacked, humiliated and tied to a stake by the members of the L.D.N as he passes through the bridge. They plead that socialism marks the end of exploitation of humans by other humans. This is why when Diakité's father has begged the general secretary to free his son, the latter has answered that « *Le socialisme étant la fin de l'exploitation de l'homme par l'homme, l'on ne devrait plus marcher sur un pont à la construction duquel on n'avait pas participé. (...) Le socialisme était le socialisme.* »²²

The passage above shows the tyrannical practices the members of the single party exert on the population to display the rulers' hegemony and lust for power, and the whole section's analysis confirms the failure of both ideologies in Africa, just like in Europe to bring happiness and stability to people.

Section two: Strategies of Manipulation

We have seen in the previous section how the single party has imposed and disseminated the state's Totalitarian ideologies and dictatorial practices to express domination and power. In this section, we will display the strategies the single party uses in manipulating and controlling the mass population as they are portrayed in both Orwell's and Kourouma's novels.

In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the Inner Party displays its hegemony through the use of manipulation. The latter is effectively invested by the members of the ruling group in subjugating people and in keeping them under control.

Orwell has portrayed the Inner Party's manipulation through the hypnotic power of Big Brother. Big Brother must be loved, adored obeyed and even worshiped because he is the all-powerful, the protector and the 'Savior' who is "*capable by mere power of his voice of wrecking the structure of civilization.*"²³

From the very beginning of the novel, the sovereignty of Big Brother manifests. The slogan that runs beneath his poster "BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU" expresses his enormous control and power. His face is found everywhere and his eyes are gazing and following every move.

Even from the coin the eyes pursued you. On coins, on stamps, on the covers of books, on banners, on posters, and on the wrappings of a cigarette packet- everywhere. Always the eyes watching you and the voice enveloping you. Asleep or awake, working or eating, indoors or out of doors, in the bath or in bed- no escape. Nothing was your own except the few cubic centimeters inside your skull.²⁴

Big Brother is the supreme powerful ruler who is behind every progress in Oceania. All achievements are attributed to him. He incarnates the power of god; "he is a semi-divine leader";²⁵ Big Brother is a figure that will never die. He is "*infallible and all-power. Every success, every achievement, every victory, every scientific discovery, all knowledge, all wisdom, all happiness, all virtue, are held to issue directly from his leadership and inspiration.*"²⁶

During the Two Minutes Hate, which is an important instance of manipulation during which the members of the party generate great hatred and disdain towards the state's enemies, Winston describes the impact of Big Brother's face on party members. Even though it faded away from the telescreen, Big Brother's face persisted in the people's eyes for a while. He is considered as a god to whom the little sandy-haired "was uttering a prayer"²⁷; and the people start to chant a "sub-human" rhythmical hymn to Big Brother. He is omnipotent and hypnotic; when Winston's eyes fall in Big

Brother's eyes gaze *"It was as though some huge force were pressing down upon you-something that penetrated inside your skull, battering against your brain, frightening you out of your beliefs, persuading you, almost, to deny the evidence of your senses."*²⁸

The Inner Party with its propaganda makes sure that everyone is obeying and following the principles of Ingsoc. In Airstrip One, there exists no laws but there is the Thought Police which is even more efficient than the army. The Thought Police is a highly sophisticated institution that manipulates people and safeguards the absolute power of the Inner Party. Any act of dissidence or any thought that opposes the party are detected. People who provoke the displeasure of the party cannot flight from the Thought Police because *"No one who had once fallen into the hands of the Thought Police ever escaped in the end."*²⁹; and once fallen into its hands, those people get tortured, undergo the long sessions of inquisitions and confessions and then doomed to extinction and disappearance, *"they were corpses waiting to be sent back to the grave."*³⁰; they simply become "UNPERSONS": they have never existed and all records about them have been erased.

The deployment of technological devices is another effective way of exerting manipulation and control. Their function is to keep people under constant surveillance so as to detect any suspected action that opposes the party's doctrine. Thanks to the telescreens and microphones, which are implanted everywhere (in the streets, in homes), the party can dominate every aspect of Oceania's people's life; every move and every sound is noticed; *"Any sound that Winston made, above the level of a very low whisper, would be picked up by it (the telescreen), moreover, so long as he remained within the field of vision which the metal plaque commanded, he could be seen as well as heard."*³¹ With those sophisticated devices, privacy is inexistent. People's life is minutely scrutinized in so far as even the beats of the heart can be picked up.

Control and manipulation is also exerted through imposing physical exercises on the members of the Party. During the “Physical Jerk”, Winston has to perform movements that he most despises and has to endure the pain entailed in doing such exercises “*which sent shooting pains all the way from his heels to his buttocks and often ended by bringing on another coughing fit.*”³² Besides the obligatory physical exercises, the infliction of pain through torture is another physical control. By using methods of torture, the Party prisoners confess their crimes which they have not necessary perpetrated. The confession is just a formality; whether they confessed or not, it makes no difference; at the end they will be “vaporized”. The whole process is an expression of superiority in which the main objective is to obtain the prisoners’ surrender and “*in the end the Party would announce that two and two made five, and you would have to believe it.*”³³

The facial expressions are also part of the physical control. They are thoroughly scrutinized, for they can reveal signs of dissidence, and any offensive facial expression which discontents the Party is punished for; it is called FACECRIME.

It was terribly dangerous to let your thoughts wander when you were in any public place or within range of a telescreen. The smallest thing could give you away. A nervous tic, an unconscious look of anxiety, a habit of muttering to yourself- anything that carried with it a suggestion of abnormality, of having something to hide. In any case, to wear an improper expression on your face (...) was itself a punishable offence. (...) FACECRIME, it was called.³⁴

In addition to the physical manipulation, the Party also resorts to the mental and psychological manipulation. The latter is best illustrated in Winston’s and Julia’s sexual frustration. Winston has suffered for a long time with his wife, Katherine, who is obsessed in making a baby only to fulfill her duty towards the Party. The latter has eradicated the sexual instinct and “*All marriages between Party members had to be approved by a committee appointed for the purpose, and (...) permission was always*

*refused if the couple concerned gave the impression of being physically attracted to one another.”*³⁵ By abolishing the sexual instinct, “*the procreation will be an annual formality like the renewal of a ration card*”³⁶

The mind is the most dangerous threat that can shake the party's interests. It is the center of consciousness that generates thoughts and which provides a better understanding of the real situation. This is why the Party strives to annihilate the human's mental faculty. The control over thinking process is achieved through several strategies such as DOUBLETHINK, CRIMESTOP and NEWSPEAK.

DOUBLETHINK, as we have seen it before, is a mental process that the Party members go through and in which they are supposed not only to consent with contradictory things that the Party says but to believe in them and “*forget that one has ever believed the contrary.*”³⁷ If the Party claims that two and two makes five, the members of the Party have to believe it. The whole thing means “*a loyal willingness to say that black is white when Party discipline demands this. But it means also the ability to BELIEVE that black is white, and more, to KNOW that black is white.*”³⁸ If ever a dangerous thought flows, and that can discredit or question the party's logic and reasoning, it will instinctually be stopped and killed by CRIMESTOP because it may lead to revolt and rebellion. Yet, having dissident thoughts will not be possible any more in the future after the invention and the refinement of the official language of Oceania which is called NEWSPEAK.

Manipulating memory is a highly important procedure the Totalitarian governments exploit to achieve their goals. Memory distortion is the central tenet of Ingsoc. The past is constantly altered so as to fit the Party's needs and ideology. Newspapers, books, pamphlets periodicals and other documents have been rewritten

and reprinted while the original copies have been destroyed in the memory holes. The whole operation intends to make people believe that the Party is always right in whatever it says and to meet Big Brother's predictions. This is carried out by destroying the evidences that can contradict that. This is why Winston's memories, a member of the Outer Party and paradoxically a worker in the Ministry of Truth, the place where the falsification process is carried out, get blurred; when he starts writing in the diary, he inscribes down the year 1984 but he cannot cut with certainty that it is the right year. The same happens to him concerning the wars and alliances between the three super states: Oceania, Eastasia and Eurasia. The party says that Oceania has always been at war with Eurasia and in alliance with Eastasia but "*He, Winston smith, knew that Oceania had been in alliance with Eurasia as short a time as four years ago. But where did that knowledge exist? Only in his own consciousness, which in any case must soon be annihilated.*"³⁹ If the Party has this power of altering the past and denying events of being real facts and

If all others accepted the lie which the Party imposed- if all records told the same tale- then the lie passed into history and became truth. 'Who controls the past', ran the Party slogan, 'controls the future: who controls the present controls the past.'⁴⁰

Through the technique of Doublethink, which means "the *power of holding two contradictory beliefs in one's mind simultaneously, and accepting both of them*"⁴¹, the members of the Party train memories to accept and forget the act of falsifying events, which will become facts after the falsification, and deny the existence of any objective truth. Winston, who seems to be the only one in Oceania to hold memories about the past, is considered by O'Brien as "mentally deranged". Thus, anyone who manifests that he knows a truth different from that the Party imposes is considered insane and in need of a cure. "*You suffer, from defective memory*". *O'Brien said to Winston. "You*

*are unable to remember real events and you persuade yourself that you remember other events which never happened. Fortunately it is curable.”*⁴²

The process of altering past facts and erasing memories is a central step in reaching total domination. In Oceania, there is no history, no past except that dictated by the Inner Party. Winston's attempt to restore his memories about the past, by asking old people, is annihilated and obliterated so as not to provide him with standards of comparison with how things used to be.

In *Les Soleils des indépendances*, like in *1984*, the supremacy of the black political bourgeoisie is displayed through the manipulation of the population which is manifested mainly through rhetoric, in which the politicians use persuasive language in their speeches to influence people and to gain their support, and through the use of violence. The president's ability to convince and attract people when he gives his demagogic speech is striking. His voice and words work as hypnosis : *« Cette fois le discours commença, le président parla. D'abord doucement, tranquillement, et avec cette voix sourde et convaincante dont le président seul avait le secret. »*⁴³

The national reconciliation undertaken by the president constitutes another instance of manipulation. In this occasion, “le président mythique”⁴⁴ has reprieved the condemnations of those who plotted against him and offered “le grand pardon”⁴⁵ for all the inmates who participated in the insurrection. During his speech of reconciliation, the president has played on the patriotic feelings to assemble the population: *« Il parla, parla de la fraternité qui lie tous les Noirs, de l'humanisme de l'Afrique, de la bonté du cœur de l'Africain. Il expliqua ce qui rendait doux et accueillant notre pays : c'était l'oubli des offenses, l'amour du prochain, l'amour de notre pays. »*⁴⁶

The president's use of hyperbolic terms like "fraternité", "l'humanisme de l'Afrique", "la bonté du cœur de l'Africain" is ironical, for his discourse entirely contradicts the violence and barbarism the prisoners have endured, and from this, we can easily perceive and discern the hypocrisy and the lies of the ruling elite.

The use of language by the political leaders as an instrument of manipulation is characteristic. In order to persuade and influence people, politicians even recourse to use proverbial forms. The use of proverbs in the politicians' speech conveys wisdom and sincerity and reinforces the arguments given to conquer the people's support. In his reconciliatory speech, the president of Ebony Coast has focused on using persuasive language to reconstruct his national as well as international image which is spoiled because of the persecutions he perpetrated. The president says:

La plus belle harmonie, ce n'est ni l'accord des tambours, ni l'accord des xylophones, ni l'accord des trompettes, c'est l'accord des hommes. « Un seul pied ne trace pas un sentier ; et un seul doigt ne peut ramasser un petit gravier par terre. Seul lui, le président, ne pouvait pas construire le pays. Ce sera l'œuvre de tout le monde. ⁴⁷

He even tempted the freed prisoners with "de billets de banque", a temptation which worked with Bakary but not with Fama, who refused to accept such a bribe which is intended to buy the prisoners' silence and to perpetuate the population's submission. Bakary, in his attempt to convince Fama to accept the president's gift, says to him that « *Le président est prêt à payer pour se faire pardonner les morts qu'il a sur la conscience, les tortures qu'il vous a fait subir ; il est prêt à payer pour que vous ne parliez pas de ce que vous avez vu. Profitez de cette aubaine.* »⁴⁸ The importance of using rhetoric in manipulating the population masses is best summarized in the following quotation by Midiohouan:

(...) il y a le verbalisme démagogique de quelques tyrans inspirés qui ont trouvé dans cette manne un moyen de mobilisation et de manipulation au profit de leur parti unique et de leur pouvoir personnel. Le reste n'est que slogans destinés à détourner le peuple des vrais problèmes que sont la misère, l'exploitation, les inégalités criarde, le manque total de liberté.⁴⁹

Like in *1984*, in *Les Soleils des indépendances*, the resort to violence constitutes a way of manifesting manipulation and a way of imposing authority on people. The leaders of the two republics express their superiority and control through imprisonment, torture, confessions, concentration camps, murders and arbitrary executions. This idea will be further detailed in the following chapter.

From everything that has been previously said, it emerges that both *1984* and *Les Soleils des indépendances* have stressed the role of the single party in displaying the government's Totalitarianism and in disseminating dictatorial ideologies. In fact, the state's leading figures (Big Brother and the president) incarnate the hegemonic despotism and the totalitarian lust for power, and through the use of several strategies, they exercise terror and subjugation upon the population masses. The two novels also display the recourse of the leading elite to use techniques of manipulation to safeguard its interests and power and to guarantee the population's orthodoxy to the state's doctrine.

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⁴² Ibid , 258.

⁴³ Kourouma, *Les Soleils*, 173.

⁴⁴ Christian Bouquet, *Géopolitique de la côte d'Ivoire: Le désespoir de Kourouma*, (Paris : Arman Colin, 2007), 90.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Kourouma, *Les Soleils*, 173.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 174.

⁴⁸ Ibid, 182.

⁴⁹ Midiohouan, *L'Idéologie*, 182.

Chapter Three:
Coercive Practices and the
Expression of Despair in *1984* and
Les Soleils des indépendances

Introduction:

This chapter will analyze two other important themes in Orwell's and Kourouma's novels, which are a direct consequence of the themes mentioned in the previous chapter. Indeed, a dictatorial state that intends to absolute power resorts to violence to maintain it. Thus, the first section will deal with the theme of violence which is an outstanding characteristic of the dictatorial regimes and will demonstrate how it is used as a way of expressing power. The second section will examine the population's state of despair that pervades in the two novels; a desperation entailed by living in a totalitarian, repressive and violent state.

Section one: Coercion and Violence

In order to detain supreme rule, the authoritarian political systems recourse to use coercion and violence. The use of force is what characterizes the dictatorial governments in which acts of repression, arbitrariness and suppression take their shape. Dictators resort to use violence and coercion as a way of expressing political power and hegemony and as an effective way of imposing their will and instill their ideals.

In *1984* and *Les Soleils des indépendances*, violence is exercised by the ruling class over the ruled to express its superiority and guarantee the peoples' complete orthodoxy. Through the narration of the different stories of the characters, Orwell and Kourouma display and denounce the barbarity of the existing totalitarian systems and the dictators' terrifying methods in achieving total obedience and in silencing any form of opposition. Violence is depicted in both novels as a vehicle through which power and superiority are manifested.

In *1984*, the scene of public executions in which war prisoners and state traitors get hanged indicates the cruel ways of punishment the Inner Party uses and the inhuman

acts it perpetrates. Satirically, such acts do not provoke shock or horror in the Outer Party members, but rather exaltation, joy and excitement. Even children show enthusiasm and a zealous claim to attend the hanging scene. The latter is horribly and frighteningly depicted by Orwell through the discourse of Syme who coldly describes the scene to Winston:

‘It was a good hanging,’ said Syme reminiscently. ‘I think it spoils it when they tie their feet together. I like to see them kicking. And above all, at the end, the tongue sticking right out, and blue- a quite bright blue. That’s the detail that appeals to me.’¹

In addition to public executions, imprisonment, deportation, expulsion, abduction and torture are common practices and even tolerated not only to set order but primarily to express the Party’s power and sovereignty. Orwell has described the awful conditions of detention in which the prisoners are exposed to starvation, insalubrities, and to the loss of temporal and spatial awareness. In *1984*, The Ministry of Love is the place of imprisonment where criminals are taken to. It is a terrifying windowless building where prisoners are put in dirty and filthy cells. It is a place where they can neither predict where they are nor what time of the day it is:

More often he wondered where he was, and what time of day it was. At one moment he felt certain that it was broad daylight outside, and at the next equally certain that it was pitch darkness. In this place, he knew instinctively, the lights would never be turned out. It was the place with no darkness (...) ²

The Ministry of love is also the place where barbarity, violence and tyranny of the Inner Party are displayed. It is concerned with the inquisitions, extracting confessions and brainwashing through physical and psychological torture. Truncheons, steel rod and boots are instruments used to inflict pain; there is no respite from torture; “*Sometimes he (Winston) was beaten till he could hardly stand, then flung like a sack of potatoes on to the stone floor of a cell, left to recuperate for a few hours, and then taken out and beaten again.*”³ Through the physical and mental torture, *they slapped his face, wrung*

*his ears, pulled his hair, made him stand on one leg, refused him leave to urinate, shone glaring lights in his face until his eyes ran with water*⁴, O'Brien not only succeeded to devoid Winston from his mental and intellectual faculty and to weaken his power of reasoning, but to deprive him from generating human emotion like love and friendship which is his ultimate aim; there is no love except for Big Brother. However, Winston's resistance to completely submit to O'Brien's inquisitions and to relinquish his love to Julia has urged O'Brien to resort to the final step in Winston's torture: Room 101. The latter is the nightmare of all the prisoners; it is the most frightening place in the Ministry of Love. The one who enters the room will come out 'white as snow'; he will become a new person with regrets of what the old person did. It is so scary in so far that one is capable of sacrificing very close persons to avoid the nightmarish Room 101:

Finish it off and let me die. Shoot me. Hang me. Sentence me o twenty-five years. Is there somebody else you want me to give away? Just say who it is and I'll tell you anything you want. I don't care who it is or what you do to them. I've got a wife and three children. The biggest of them isn't six years old. You can take the whole lot of them and cut their throats in front of my eyes, and I'll stand by and watch it. But not Room 101!⁵

In Room 101, the one faces his worst fears; for Winston it is rats. With the cage of rats appointed to his head, Winston has betrayed Julia and completely surrenders to The Inner Party's will. The latter's authority is displayed through brutality and barbarity which can even make people renounce their humanly faculties. These practices echo those of the Totalitarian regimes of the 20th century. In fact, Orwell makes reference to the Communist's and Nazi's techniques of persecution and torture to extract confessions and punish the dissidents. The inhuman conditions of detention in the ministry of love also echo the concentration camps the Communists and Nazi have created like that of Buchenwald and Dachau.⁶

In *Les Soleils des indépendances*, the barbarity of the dictatorial system in the Nikinai is displayed through the tragic story of Diakité. The latter accounts to Fama his traumatic experience with the delegates of the single party who make him endure atrocious tortures because he has passed through a bridge which he has not participated in building it. Neither his justifications nor his father's pleading have saved him from the torture; "*La jeunesse L.D.N. guettait sortit, assaillit, le ligota, le déculotta, noua son sexe par une corde et comme un chien le mit à l'attache à un pieu du pont.*"⁷ Not only have the single party tortured Diakité but also executed his father by shooting him. This is how the single party imposes its authority and proves its control.

Kourouma has mainly depicted the arbitrariness and violence of the members of the single party in the third part of the novel in which the first thresholds of a plot, intended to overthrow the government, have manifested. Consequently, a serial of arbitrary arrests and expulsions has started. People in high governmental ranks have been kidnapped and then expelled; others have been jailed with people whom are suspected to take part in the plot. The protagonist Fama and his friend Bakary are among them. They stand as witnesses of the arbitrariness of the regime as they are unjustly get arrested on suspicion of having participated in the insurrection. They fall victims of politics under dictatorial regressive regime : « *La politique n'a ni yeux, ni Oreilles, ni cœur; en politique le vrai et le mensonge portent le même pagne, le juste et l'injuste marchent de pair, le bien et le mal s'achètent ou se vendent au même prix.* »⁸ Fama is then, conducted to prison, where he finds his friends who mysteriously disappeared without leaving any trace, and there "*Fama y trouva tous ceux qu'il cherchait. Comme eux, il était arrêté.*"⁹

In *Les Soleils des indépendances*, we find the same sordid circumstances of imprisonment as in *1984*. The place with no darkness in Kourouma's novel is the caves

of the presidency and the concentration camps. There, Fama and other prisoners, like Winston and his co-detainees, have no awareness of the place where they are put and no notion of time. They know neither the name of the camp nor its location; the camp “*était la nuit et la mort, la mort et la nuit*”. They have also endured the same famine and insalubrity as the prisoners in the ministry of love.

Combien de nuits y passa-t-il ? Il ne le savait pas. Dans les caves les plafonniers restaient constamment allumés et on ignorait quand venait le matin et quand commençait le soir on y subissait la torture, on y respirait la puanteur, le ventre y sifflait la faim, la mort de temps en temps y retentissait et parfois aussi les éclats de rire ivres des geôliers vidant des bouteilles d'alcool. (...)Ce camp était la nuit et la mort, la mort et la nuit.¹⁰

The abuses of the leaders in *Les Soleils des indépendances* are illustrated through the repeated interrogatories, the room of torture where the inquisitors “*savait faire parler*”¹¹ just like O’Brien, and through the forced labor. The prisoners are judged without trial to heavy penalties which are fixed by the president himself. This indicates the power and the dominance of the president who is in control of everything in the country. This also indicates that there is no separation between the branches (the executive, the judiciary and legislative) which is a characteristic of dictatorial systems:

Vous êtes tous des chacals. Vous ne comprenez pas le français et vous avez voulu tuer le président. Voilà ce que le juge a dit. Il a dit que le jugement était fait. Voilà. Mais comme il sait que vous êtes tous des médisants, surtout vous les Malinkés, il dit qu’il n’a pas voulu casser la tête du petit trigre sans les yeux. Le juge tient à expliquer pourquoi les prévenus n’ont pas été convoqués, le jour du jugement. Cela lui a paru inutile. Dans les déclarations qui ont été faites librement, chaque prévenu avait reconnu sans détour sa faute. Et puis chaque dossier avait été défendu par un avocat de talent. Et dans tous les cas, les peines ont été fixées par le président lui-même. Et s’il se trouve ici quelqu’un pour contester l’esprit de justice du président, qu’il lève le doigt. Moi je ferai descendre ce doigt avec un claque.¹²

The above satirical passage demonstrates the absurdity of the post-independence African dictatorial regimes in which injustices and persecutions are perceived as normal

acts. The paroxysm of the absurdity of the executive power is the condemnation of Fama to twenty years of imprisonment because of a dream; he is condemned because he has not told his dream to the authorities on Nakou. The latter is considered as the head of the plot intended to kill the president and overthrow the government. Kourouma is echoing here a historical fact that marked the history of the Ivory Coast after the independence under the presidency of Houphët-Boigny who launched a serial of arbitrary arrests, imprisonment and torture after an insurrection intended to overthrow the president. Kourouma himself was one of the victims who were arbitrary imprisoned.

Through the narrative instances, we notice that the intensity of violence in the two novels has gradually progressed from a reprimand of revolt through imprisonment and expulsion to the apogee of terror and barbarity through torture. The latter has caused the degradation of the two protagonists' body. Winston's extremely emaciated body, which gives him a frightening look, is skillfully described by Orwell in page 284. Like Winston, Fama's state of health is deteriorated and his body suffers from the nasty conditions of imprisonment; "*des vers de Guinée poussaient dans les genoux et sous les aisselles*", "*constamment il desséchait*" and "*les cheveux se raréfiaient*."¹³

In both novels, the authors have reflected historical facts that they have witnessed and experienced. Both of them describe totalitarian governments that exert power on the population through the excessive use of violence. The latter sustains the rulers' quest for absolute power and devotes the abasement of the population. So, living in such a state, what consequence it entails?

Section two: The Expression of Despair:

The two novels, as we have already mentioned, were written in crucial periods which marked the world. Both of them reflect a period of great disillusionment and desperation. In *1984*, Orwell expresses his disillusionment of the Communist methods and describes a desperate bleak vision of the dictatorial regimes after the Second World War and the beginning of the Cold war. Similarly, Kourouma, in *Les Soleils des indépendances*, has reflected the general state of disillusionment that pervaded Africa just after the independence. He goes beyond the colonial ills to paint a picture of the post-independence social and political chaos in which Africa is plunged. With a devastating irony, he portrays the distressing and desperate situation of the independent Africa's mass population. In this section, we intend to show that both Orwell and Kourouma share the same futuristic dread vision.

Orwell has expressed the notion of despair through the fatalistic tone that prevails in his novel. The world created by the Inner Party is a distressing one which prevents any attempt for humans to exist as distinct individuals who can think and feel. "The last man in Europe" is a sentence which meaningfully indicates this notion of despair. By his analysis and interpretation of the historical events happened in his period, Orwell, in *1984*, paints a despairing obscure image of what may happen in the future with the powerful rise of totalitarian systems. Winston, the protagonist, embodies the hopeless and powerless man who cannot stand against those systems. He represents the individual's inevitable failure in resisting the dictatorial state.

Winston's attempt to prove his existence is manifested through his rebellious acts (he buys a diary in which he inscribes his thoughtcrime, he conducts an illicit relationship with Julia and he, finally, joins the dissident organization of brotherhood). Even though he knows that rebellion is doomed, he continues his dissidence because his

ultimate goal is not to preserve his life but rather to sustain his humanly faculties. When he is captured and tortured, O'Brien's main purpose is to dehumanize him and, especially, to devoid and drain him from his intellectual ability. He is a "difficult case", O'Brien acknowledges because Winston refuses to surrender and submit to the Party's logic. This is what makes him "the last man" and Winston's fundamental objective "*was not to stay alive but to stay human.*"¹⁴ His no-surrender attitude and his determination to safeguard his humanity sustain the idea that the last man in Europe remains so as long as he wills it. However, Winston desperately fails to be the last human when he sees himself as "a bag of filth". The mirror reveals to him the reality of the situation which he finally accepts; the reality that O'Brien has conquered his mind and triumphed over his consciousness:

If you are a man, Winston, you are the last man. Your kind is extinct; we are the inheritors (...) "And you consider yourself morally superior to us, with our lies and our cruelty?"
"Yes, I consider myself morally superior."
"You are the last man," said O'Brien. "You are the guardian of the human spirit. You shall see yourself as you are. Take off your clothes."¹⁵

The passage above demonstrates two opposing ways of thinking in which the Inner Party's one triumphs over that of the human kind. Winston's failure to resist indicates the extinction of humanity and thus the Inner Party perpetuates its dictatorship and control over human kind. Even the proles who are considered by Winston as being true humans, they are just "animals", "irrelevant" for the Inner Party. Winston sees in the proles the only hope to overthrow the Inner Party; but this optimism is in reality despairing because the proles are portrayed as "*people who had never learned to think but who were storing up in their hearts and bellies and muscles the power that would one day overturn the world.*"¹⁶ But, how can revolt be possible without thinking. The desolating proof that the proles are useless is portrayed when they were talking about lottery and through the vivid image of the washer woman with her monotonous actions.

The lack of objective truth has deepened Winston's despair and contributed in demolishing his human hopes. The inability to prove the existence of material evidences, and even his own existence, plunges him to a great state of helplessness.

Winston's destruction has been undermined by O'Brien progressively. Room 101 is the final step in dehumanizing Winston because even after listening to the tape, in which he says that he is ready to do whatever the brotherhood demands (killing, slaughtering...), and looking to the mirror, he still holds hope in staying human through clinging to love. Expressing feelings and emotions is a real challenge to the totalitarian system in Oceania; such things are not tolerated. Winston claims that he still loves Julia and loathes Big Brother; this is why the rats have been saved for the best part. Room 101 is a place where the prisoners transform themselves with their own will. This is why O'Brien refuses to tell Winston what to do to save himself. Depressed and anguished, Winston faces now the worst thing he most fears in the world, and screams out "do it to Julia". This scream declares Big Brother's triumph and Winston's own defeat, probably as Orwell wants to argue, the defeat of the entire humanity.

There are no heroes in room 101, "*all you care about is yourself*"¹⁷, says Julia to Winston, when they meet after their release. The description of their meeting is despairing; they are portrayed as "hollow shells" devoid of values and virtue. *1984*, describes the man's degradation and abasement, and offers no optimistic ideal for the future. A future that is predicted by O'Brien when he says to Winston:

We shall crush you down to the point from which there is no coming back. (...) never again will you be capable of ordinary human feeling. Everything will be dead inside you. Never again will you be capable of love, or friendship, or joy of living, or laughter, or curiosity, or courage, or integrity. You will be hollow. We shall squeeze you empty, and then we shall fill you with ourselves.¹⁸

The novel ends with a hopeless tone and offers no remedy for the future: "(...) *the struggle was finished. He had won the victory over himself. He loved Big Brother.*"¹⁹

In Orwell's grim finale prophecy, any hope of individual resistance and self-conformation vanished; the self is annihilated and ceased to exist: "you do not exist,"²⁰ said O'Brien to Winston.

Like Orwell, Kourouma in his novel depicts the state of despair pervaded in Africa after the independence era. With the advent of the independence, the Africans thought that the hardships and sufferings they passed through under the colonial period had ended with the departure of the colonizer. However, the access to independence had entailed violent changes that plunged the African continent into turmoil; the African population, then, was overwhelmed by a deep sense of despair and disillusionment. In *Les Soleils des indépendances*, Kourouma has described this distressing African situation mainly through the tragic story of the protagonist Fama.

When reading the title of Kourouma's novel for the first time, we expect an optimistic story, for when talking about "the sun", it indicates light, refers to life and to the coming of a new day. However, its plural form changes its meaning; "the suns" according to Kourouma refers to the independence era; it is associated to the bastards, thieves, liars and the corrupt politicians. He tacitly portrays a period in which the sun never sets. Here the sun of Kourouma can be compared to Orwell's Big Brother.²¹ The author "*manipulates the double meaning of 'soleil' to emphasize further the disillusionment of the people of post-independence 'Côte des Ibènes'.*"²²

Les Soleils des indépendances points out the collapse of the different institutions under the dictatorial regimes. Politics, justice and economy have ruined the life of the population masses. The overall scene in the two republics (Ebony Coast and Nikinai) is despairing: the terrifying repressive and corrupted politicians, the arbitrariness and blindness of justice and the concentration of the economic profits in the hands of a

minority. The novel describes the disastrous and the grievous economic and social situation in which people live. The commerce is ruined by the suns of independence on which the Malinké's prosperity relies, "*les indépendances ont cassé le négose*"²³; the sanitary condition is dreadful because the politicians have never kept their promises in ameliorating the basic public services; « (...) *les rues sans égouts. Sans égouts, parce que les indépendances ici aussi ont trahi, elles n'ont pas creusé les égouts promis et elles ne le feront jamais; des lacs d'eau continueront de croupir comme toujours (...).* »²⁴

This description reflects the realities and the chaotic political, social and economic situation in Africa under the suns of independence.

The state of despair is depicted from the beginning of the novel to the end. In fact, *Les Soleils des indépendances* starts with the death of Fama's cousin Ibrahima Koné and ends with his own tragic death. Fama is the last legitimate heir of the Doumbouya and the only chief of the Horodougou. The totem of his clan is "the panther"; an animal which has noble connotations. However, other animals which are attributed to Fama like vulture, hyena and dogs, indicate the degradation of the character under the suns of independence:

Fama Doumbouya! Vrai Doumbouya, père Doumbouya, mère Doumbouya, dernier et légitime descendant des princes du Horodougou, totem Panthère était un 'vautour'. Un prince Doumbouya ! Totem panthère faisait bande avec les hyènes. Ah! Les soleils des indépendances !²⁵

Once the independence is gained, Fama, who has fought against colonization and who has neglected everything (commerce, friends and women) to devote himself to his country's cause, has been forgotten by the independence and has been alienated by the new leaders of the state: "*Fama fut oublié et jeté aux mouches*"²⁶. The narrator has

described the access to independence as something which is not expected, something that has entailed devastating effects “*Comme une nuée de sautrelles les Indépendances tombèrent sur l’Afrique*”²⁷; from the independence Fama has gained nothing but “*la carte d’identité nationale et celle du parti unique.*”²⁸

The author depicts a disinherited prince who has lost not only his title but his dignity as well. The traditional respect, honor and esteem he used to possess have been withered away by the delegates of the single party. This is best illustrated by the character Bamba who defied and challenged Fama’s virility by abusing him. Bamba’s role in the novel is very important, even though he appears only once in the novel, as he shows the decadence of the protagonist in a world which is turned upside down; a world that leads to Fama’s anger, desperation and incomprehension:

L’ombre du décédé allait transmettre aux mânes que sous les soleils des Indépendances les Malinkés honnissaient et même giflaient leur prince (...) Bâtard de bâtardise ! lui ! lui Fama, descendant des Doumbouya ! Bafoué, provoqué, injurié par qui ? Un fils d’esclave.²⁹

Fama’s humiliation is better depicted in the following passage:

Fama devait- c’était les consignes et il ne voulait pas en entendre d’autres- s’agenouiller aux pieds du président du comité, frotter à terre les lèvres et se dédire, jurer sur le Coran ouvert la fidélité au parti, au comité et à la révolution (...) ³⁰

Fama, who is an authentic Doumbouya descent and a great trader, is now reduced to a beggar chasing after ceremonies; he lives in austere poverty. This urged the elderly Malinkés men (Balla and Diamorou) to give donations for him to afford for the funeral sacrifices and to give money for his people who still believe in restoring chieftaincy. This deplorable situation is Fama’s constant misfortune; he is living a lifelong despair. Fama escapes his awful present reality by recalling the old days of his past glory and grandeur; his recourse to nostalgia is an illusion that protects him from the pain of the moment. In the case of Orwell’s character, Winston, there are no old

days to long onto; he represents his longing for a better life through his dream about the “Golden country”.

Kourouma has also depicted the state of despair through the other characters’ sinister living standards; they are overwhelmed by famine, joblessness and illnesses. In the novel, the roads of the capital are populated by starved beggars, unemployed, sick persons and mutilate:

Les bas-côtés grouillaient de mendiants, estropiés, aveugles que la famine avait chassés de la brousse. Des mains tremblantes se tendaient mais les chants nasillards, les moignons, les yeux puants, les oreilles et nez coupés, sans parler des odeurs particulières, refroidissaient le coeur de Fama.³¹

The abovementioned quotation expresses the drastic reality the population endures. The description of the beggars as starved, mutilated and deformed gives an impression of their futility and uselessness. They are dehumanized and reduced to beasts just like the proles in 1984; « *Ils arrivaient, renverser vendeuse et cuvettes, se remplissaient les mains et la saignée de riz ou même s’agenouillaient et dévoraient à même le sol, avec le nez, la bouche et le menton, comme des bêtes.* »³²

Thus, *Les Soleils des indépendances* reports the degradation and the breakdown of the African world under independence. Even the elements of nature are portrayed as accomplice in the tragedy of the independence era. Those elements of nature like “l’harmattan” are invoked to accentuate total disillusionment with independence.

In fact, throughout the novel we feel the great despair of the population entailed by the failure of the independence. The latter has proved its sterility. Nothing functions; the country is plunged into an exacerbated chaos and anarchy, and the sterility of Salimata and Fama mirrors the sterility of the independence. Thus, the hope for a better world established upon democracy vanishes with the tragic death of Fama. The latter’s

despair and disillusionment is so great in so far he regrets his fight against the colonizer
*“Fama bouillait de remords pour avoir tant combattu et détesté les Français.”*³³

From all what is said in this chapter, we come to conclude that both Orwell and Kourouma share similar points concerning the themes of violence and despair. In both novels, the state’s leaders are shown as persecutors who resort to violence to express authority and power and to maintain the population’s complete obedience and servitude. In fact, violence and the use of force are what characterize any dictatorial regime. Living under such circumstances entail a sense of despair and pessimism among the masses. This situation is portrayed in both Orwell’s and Kourouma’s novels who share the same fatalistic tone and the same desperate sense about the future. Both authors have ended their novels without giving any hope or a remedy for the future.

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¹ George Orwell, *1984*, (London: Penguin books, 2008), 52.

² Ibid, 241.

³ Ibid, 253.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid, 248-249.

⁶ “Les camps de concentration”, Encarta 2009.

⁷ Ahmadou Kourouma, *Les Soleils des indépendances*, (Édition du Seuil, 1970), 84.

⁸ Ibid, 157.

⁹ Ibid, 158.

¹⁰ Ibid, 158-160.

¹¹ Ibid, 162.

¹² Ibid, 167.

¹³ Ibid, 169.

¹⁴ Orwell, *1984*, 174.

¹⁵ Ibid, 282-283.

¹⁶ Ibid, 229.

¹⁷ Ibid, 305.

¹⁸ Ibid, 268-269.

¹⁹ Ibid, 311.

²⁰ Ibid, 272.

²¹ Marie-Christine Rochmann, *Kourouma, Les Soleils des indépendances: Le roman; l'œuvre littéraire, ses propriétés, sa valeur ; littérature et politique* in (Clefs Concours Khâgnes littérature, Atlande, 2012), 225.

²² Malcolm Offord, Laila Ibnlfassi et all, *A Literary and Linguistic Companion: Francophone Literature*, (Routhledge, 2001), 107.

²³ Kourouma, *Les Soleils*, 23.

²⁴ Ibid, 47.

²⁵ Ibid, 11.

²⁶ Ibid, 24.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid, 25.

²⁹ Ibid, 16-17.

³⁰ Ibid, 135.

³¹ Ibid, 26.

³² Ibid, 63.

³³ Ibid, 32.

³⁴ Orwell, *1984*, 276.

General Conclusion

Conclusion

Nineteen Eighty-Four and *Les Soleils des indépendances* are two outstanding novels that have marked the literary creation. Both of them manifest an artistic expression which is mingled with political stances of their authors. Through literature, Orwell and Kourouma have slipped political themes which threaten the stability of the whole world. The two novels have portrayed a world of terror, panic, uncertainty and depression which is governed by totalitarian regimes. The latter are fiercely denounced by both authors who have warned against its depressive fatalistic repercussions.

Our comparative study has examined the aforementioned issue in Orwell's *1984* and Kourouma's *Les Soleils des indépendances*. It has allowed us to discern the shared points between the two novels concerning the totalitarian government's greed for power and the several strategies it uses to reach omnipotence, hegemony and control. It has also shown that power is measured through the capacity to inflict pain. So, the use of violence safeguards the totalitarian regimes' authority. This leads to the desperation and the helplessness of the masses.

Throughout our dissertation, and departing from our hypothesis which served as a basis of our study, we have come to conclude that totalitarian regimes have the same characteristics despite geographical distances. Everywhere, dictators resort to the same strategies that safeguard their power and dominance. In the course of our examination that is carried out through the three chapters, we expounded those strategies and showed that the end justifies the means. In the first chapter, we have dealt with the historical background which is important to understand the circumstances that led to the production of the two novels and to explain the great impact of the historical events in shaping and framing their plot. Indeed, our thematic analysis has been based on events

like the Second World War, the Cold War and the aftermath of the post-independent Africa. This chapter explains the reasons that lead to the prevalence of dictatorial systems in both Europe and Africa, the systems that obscured the people's life who lived in constant fear and uncertainty.

Those totalitarian systems, as it was shown in the second chapter operate through the dissemination of the totalitarian ideologies through which power and authority is exercised. Here comes the importance of the single party which constitutes the executive institution that assures the spread of the dictatorial system's ideology. This is achieved through using several techniques of manipulation which preserves the leaders' interests and control over the masses and guarantees their adherence to the state's doctrine.

Living in such a state is characterized by the excessive use of violence. The last chapter tackled this idea which shows that dictators usually resort to use violence and force to subjugate the masses and mainly to express power and superiority. Barbarism, repression, persecution and torture are common practices perpetrated by the totalitarian government to reinforce its hegemony over the masses. The latter, then, are overwhelmed by a general state of despair and disillusionment. In the two novels, this is portrayed through the inevitable tragic fate of the two protagonists who fail to confirm their existence as individuals in a totalitarian society. The hopeless end in both novels indicates the triumph of dictatorship against which both authors warn.

All in all, both Orwell and Kourouma have skillfully portrayed the dangers of the totalitarian regimes if they prevail. Their lust for power legitimizes the terroristic practices they perpetrate; "*Power is not a means, it is an end*"³⁴, said O'Brien. The realistic depiction of some historical events which are blended with fiction offers a

better understanding of the dangers of dictatorship. The grim distressing image the two authors paint about the future is despairing; though it serves as a warning to face off totalitarian systems.

Being produced (*1984* and *Les Soleils des indépendances*) in a crucial period marked by the prevalence of different dictatorships, can we say that the latter ended with the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989? This opens a window to enlarge the research to involve other literary works that portray this theme; citing for example Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Tahar Ben Jelloun and many others.

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