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Newspeak, Nadsat and Láadan – The Evolution of Speech and the Role of Language in 20th Century Dystopian Fiction

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Words! Mere words!
How terrible they were!
How clear, and vivid, and cruel!
One could not escape from them.
And yet what a subtle magic there was in them!
They seemed to be able to give a plastic form to formless things,
and to have a music of their own as sweet as that of viol or of lute.
Mere words!
Was there anything so real as words?

- Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

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Table of Contents

"Language is power, life and the instrument of culture,
the instrument of domination and liberation."

- Angela Carter
(English novelist, 1940-92)

1. Introduction

1.1 Preliminaries

Whenever someone asks me, which book I enjoyed reading the most in my schooldays, I will eventually mention *1984* by George Orwell. At that time, it differed profoundly from the literary canon taught in our school, which mostly included the classic works of Shakespeare and Dickens, Schiller and Mann. Even though they had their own charm, they could hardly catch the attention of an adolescent outside the classroom. With Orwell, the case was slightly different. It read like a science fiction story, but its setting was extraordinarily bleak. It lacked action and memorable characters, but at the same time it abstained from using abstract ideals or well-known stereotypes. Although it was almost half a century old at that time, it felt modern, different, and peculiar. Its plot appeared to be real, too real almost, evoking images of despair that I had only known from historical documentations on TV. In short, it was fascinating – in an uneasy manner.

Until now, my fascination with Orwell's novel has not faded. And apparently, neither has its influence on the genre of dystopian literature. Since its publication in 1949, there has not been another dystopian novel that is often considered a synonym for the whole genre. Not only did *1984* made an impression on the emerging genre of dystopian fiction, it has also gained enormous popularity outside a literary discourse: "Orwellian" for instance has become a label to denote oppressive measures in general, and "Big Brother" has entered our vocabulary as a reference for surveillance and control. Orwell's depiction of a totalitarian super state, which seeks to ultimately control the minds of its population, has become a cultural paradigm. Although *1984* was not the first proper dystopian novel written in English[1], many of its themes, ranging from an oppressive government to

[1] Until now, there is no unison considering the question which work should be considered the first dystopia. Novels such as H.G. Well's *The Sleeper Wakes* (1899) or Jack London's *The Iron Heel* (1908) are mentioned

surveillance, sexual repression and rebellion have found its way into a vast number of succeeding dystopian works.

And then of course there is Newspeak, Orwell's concept of a language that allows its users to accept that 2+2=5, and which makes any form of dissent essentially impossible. Newspeak arguably emerged from Orwell's dissatisfaction with the English language at his time, which later led fellow writer Anthony Burgess to describe him as "a word-user who distrusted words".[2] Within the concept of Newspeak, Orwell incorporated the idea that language can be controlled by an authoritative power and used to different ends – a notion, which is not necessarily new. After all, Aristotle already noted in *Politics* (350 B.C.) that "the power of speech is intended to set forth the expedient and inexpedient, and therefore likewise the just and the unjust."[3] Orwell merely adopted this ancient idea and placed it prominently as an integral part of *1984*'s power structure.

Given the influence of *1984* on general dystopian themes and motifs, one would expect that concerns with language have also found their way into the canon of dystopian literature. And indeed, the corpus of English-speaking dystopian fiction in the last century has produced a rich body of works, in which the use of language plays a significant role. Of course, not all of them adopt Orwell's concept of Newspeak; in fact, many diverge profoundly from it, but nonetheless, language can be found in various 20th century dystopias.

One of these dystopias is Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We* (1921), which depicts a technologically advanced society, whose language reflects "its mathematical order".[4] In another renowned novel, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932), a process called "hypnopaedia" is used to condition humans in an early stage of development. The plot of Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* (1953) is built around the burning and destruction of books, a recurrent theme in dystopian fiction. In Walter M. Miller's *A Canticle for Leibowitz* (1959), survivors of a nuclear holocaust find scraps of old language that have to been explained according to the rules of a different culture, not unlike as it is the case in Russell Hoban's

at times, but as we will see in chapter 2, there is no clear dividing line between dystopia and the broad field of anti-utopia, which makes the definition of an exact starting point difficult.

[2] Roy Harris. 1984. *The Misunderstandings of Newspeak*. London: Times Literary Supplement 4214, 17.

[3] Aristotle. 350 B.C. *Politics*, Book 1, Part II. The Internet Classics Archive [Online source]

[4] Gorman Beauchamp. 1974. "Future Words: Language and the Dystopian Novel". In: *Style* 8 (1974), 463.

Riddley Walker (1980). Thomas Berger's *Regiment of Women* (1973), on the other hand, explores the ramifications of a sexual rhetoric that precedes some of the issues contained in Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) and Suzette Haden Elgin's *Native Tongue* (1984). Ursula K. Le Guin's *The Dispossessed* (1974), though usually considered science fiction rather than dystopia proper, involves the creation of a constructed language and exploration of the Sapir-Whorf-hypothesis, which turns out to be a crucial element in dystopian fiction. At last, in more recent works, the plot of Margaret Atwood's *Oryx and Crake* (2003) involves, albeit to a minor degree, the role of language after the collapse of civilization, and Will Self's *The Book of Dave* (2006) employs a satirical form of Cockney English, aptly titled 'Mockney'.

Looking at this list, which is by no means exhaustive, surely one would expect language[5] to be considered a theme on its own in dystopian fiction, just like the aforementioned issues of suppression or surveillance. However, this is not the case. In fact, as the following chapter will show, only few literary critics acknowledge the role of language as a theme throughout the genre, despite its conspicuous prevalence. I decided to conduct this study to re-evaluate the role of language in dystopian fiction and to draw attention to this apparent deficiency in dystopian research. The aim of this study is to look at the different ways in which language is used in 20th century dystopian fiction, and to find possible explanations for this phenomenon. I will offer an introduction of the term "dystopia" and its peculiar position in the wide genre of anti-utopian thought, and illustrate its emergence and separation from the utopian idea. Based on these preliminary assertions, I will then continue with an in-depth analysis on how language and speech are portrayed in several seminal 20th century dystopias. I decided to include a small corpus of dystopian fictions from different decades and different backgrounds, in order to prove that language is indeed a recurring theme in modern dystopian literature as a whole, and not just a ramification of a specific branch. I deliberately chose works that differ profoundly in terms of plot, narrative mode and structure, because it allows the most thorough research. As it is useful to know the plot and context of the works discussed, I will provide a brief summary of each over the course of the analysis.

[5] It has to be noted that the term "language" itself varies greatly, and the definition of (human) language has lead to various discussions in the field of linguistics. For simplification, I will use the term in its most general way, according to the definition of the OED: "language: the method of human communication, either spoken or written." (Oxford English Dictionary Online)

Among the novels I am going to discuss are two indisputable classics, and thus the most obvious choices for an analysis: *Brave New World* (1932) by Aldous Huxley and, of course, *1984* (1949) by George Orwell. While different in style and content, both offer archetypical instances of the use of language in a dystopian context, and they set the standard for many concerns in this matter. Thus, they cannot be disregarded, although they have already been widely discussed in literary research.

Not quite as extensively discussed, but highly popular nonetheless remains Anthony Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange* (1962), which made a reasonable impact ten years after its publication thanks to the film adaptation by Stanley Kubrick in 1971. Although some critics dispute its affiliation to the genre of dystopia[6], *Clockwork Orange* clearly follows the dystopian tradition, and it is one of the first novels to be written entirely in an artificial language, which makes it particularly interesting for this study.

Russell Hoban apparently followed Burgess's idea in *Riddley Walker* (1980), as his novel is also told in a distinct vernacular, but its application and plot could hardly be more different. However, the creative use of allegories and puns and the depiction of a post-nuclear disaster culture have made *Riddley Walker* one of the most challenging and absorbing dystopian fictions in recent times.

Furthermore, I will include three works generally considered to be part of a feminist dystopian movement. First, *Native Tongue* and *The Judas Rose* by Suzette Haden Elgin, which represent the first two parts of the *Native Tongue* trilogy, published from 1984 to 1993. Both novels focus on the suppression of women in a future society, and their attempts to overcome their subjugation through the means of language. As the trilogy's final instalment, *Earthsong*, discards concerns with language, it will not be included in this study. Instead, I take on Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), another work dealing with gender inequality that can easily be considered a classic of the dystopian genre by now.

[6] Cf. Robert O. Evans. 1987. "The Nouveau Roman, Russian Dystopias and Anthony Burgess." In: Jack I. Biles (Ed.). *British Novelists Since 1900*. New York: AMS, 253-66.

At last, to add a more recent novel to the discussion, I decided on Will Self's *The Book of Dave* (2006). It may come as no surprise that a recent 20th anniversary edition of *Riddley Walker* was published with an introduction by Will Self, as *The Book of Dave* seems to be massively influenced by Hoban's original novel and its style, as we will see later on.

It has to be noted, that this study is part of a degree in English literature, and thus most of the works included are by British writers. The only exclusions are Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid Tale* and Suzette Elgin's *Native Tongue* and *The Judas Rose*, with Atwood being Canadian and Elgin American. It might be a mere coincidence that both writers are often grouped under the sub-genre of feminist dystopia, and it can be speculated in which way this reflects British and American literature in regards to feminist writing. The reason for their inclusion in this study, however, is that all three novels evolve around the topic of language in regards to a feminist discourse. As this study is intended as a comparative approach to the issue of language and dystopia, the feminist background of both novels offers another important and interesting aspect to analyse. Russell Hoban remains in a special position, as he is a born American, but has been living in London since 1969, and all of his major novels, including *Riddley Walker,* are set in England and deal with English society (and British English, as *Riddley Walker*'s vernacular is roughly based on Cockney and Kent accents). For this reason, I consider Hoban a 'naturalized' English author for the sake of this thesis.

Before the actual analysis commences, it is important to establish a theoretical framework first. Thus, the following chapters will highlight some of the shortcomings within literary research, and briefly explain the characteristics of dystopian fiction.

1.2 'The destruction of words' – language in dystopian research

1.2.1 State of research

The increasing number of dystopian novels during the 20th century – a development that I will trace in chapter 2 – also led to an increasing literary interest in the anti-utopian idea. While there have been attempts to classify anti-utopia and dystopia throughout the centuries, it was not until last century that extensive researches focusing solely on dystopian fiction as a genre on its own appeared. Nowadays, there is no shortage of

research on dystopian literature, but most critics seem to base their assumptions on or against a small amount of seminal works in the field of dystopian research. For now, I want to introduce five introductory studies that are frequently referred to over the course of this thesis, and which ultimately provide its theoretical backdrop.

One of the earliest works exclusively dedicated to dystopian literature is Chad Walsh's *From Utopia to Nightmare*, published in 1962. Walsh claims that "a decreasing percentage of the imaginary worlds are utopias"[7], pushed aside by the emergence of dystopia in the first half of the 20th century. Although there have been various recent studies attempting to disprove Walsh's claims[8], his theories are generally a good starting point, as he takes three seminal dystopias of last century in account, namely *Brave New World, 1984* and Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We*. Besides that, he was also among the first to look at the social context from which these novels arose, thus leading to a first attempt to classify the corpus of dystopian literature and to identify contemporary issues within the novels – an element that is crucial to the dystopian enterprise.

Another comprehensive research in the field of utopia and dystopia is Krishan Kumar's *Utopia and anti-utopia in modern times* (1987)[9], which provides an extensive look into the history of utopia and its counterpart anti-utopia, going back as far as ancient Greece. Kumar's research traces the evolution of both utopian and anti-utopian thought up until the late 20th century, and he also dedicates two extensive chapters to dystopian novels, one of them being yet again *1984* and its relationship to politics, the other one being *Brave New World* and its portrayal of scientific progress. The latter aspect is also at the centre of a seminal study by Alexandra Aldridge, titled *The Scientific World View in Dystopia* (1984)[10], which also includes a short but concise introduction into the history of the dystopian novel and its connection to the science-fiction genre. Aldridge's study is especially useful, as she, unlike Kumar, draws distinctions between the wider field of anti-utopia and dystopia. As I will show later on, there are indeed important differences between the two.

[7] Chad Walsh. 1962. *From Utopia To Nightmare*. London: Bles, 14.
[8] Cf. Raffaella Baccolini (Ed.). 2003. *Science Fiction and the Dystopian Imagination*. New York: Routledge.
[9] Krishan Kumar. 1987. *Utopia and anti-utopia in Modern Times*. Oxford: Blackwell.
[10] Alexandra Aldridge. 1984. *The Scientific World View in Dystopia*. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press.

In a more recent study, Chris Ferns comments extensively on the narrative form of both utopia and dystopia.[11] He classifies utopian literature as a hybrid genre in an attempt to define elements of both utopian and dystopian narratives in a historical context. His critical assessment of utopian studies and his inclusion of gender aspects and political ideology complete another recommended introduction to modern utopian and dystopian fiction.

At last, Keith M. Booker follows the dystopian impulse in modern literature by placing it within the theoretical and philosophical frameworks of Habermas, Adorno, Freud and Nietzsche.[12] He is less concerned with the history of the dystopian genre *per se*, and focuses rather on the ambiguity of dystopian fiction, its relationship to its utopian counterpart, and at last, its use as a device of social criticism, which is in fact one of *the* defining features of modern dystopian fiction, and ultimately important to uncover the role of language within the same.

1.2.2 Language and dystopia – an overlooked theme?

Although there is a wide selection of research on dystopian literature available in general, the connection between language and dystopia (or language and utopia, for that matter) appears to play only a secondary role. This does not mean, however, that the aspect of language is completely ignored in studies of individual works. For example, there is hardly a study on *1984* not dealing with the concept of Newspeak in one way or another, and based on Orwell's personal interest in the aesthetics of language, critics like Roger Fowler conducted complete studies on Orwell's view and the role of language within his oeuvre.[13] Especially Fowler's analysis of the role of social class and status in *1984* is interesting for this study (I will pick this up in chapter 3.3), as he draws a connection between Orwell's contemporary society, linguistic theory and the extrapolated future of *1984*. Similarly, novels such as *Brave New World*, *Native Tongue* or *The Handmaid's Tale* cannot be properly analysed without giving at least some thought to the idea of language and control Other novels, such as *Riddley Walker*, *Clockwork Orange* and *The Book of Dave* rely

[11] Chris Ferns. 1999. *Narrating Utopia*. Liverpool: UP.
[12] Keith M. Booker. 1994. *The Dystopian Impulse in Modern Literature: Fiction as Social Criticism*. Westport: Greenwood.
[13] Roger Fowler. 1995. *The Language of George Orwell*. London: Macmillan.

heavily on the creation and usage of distinctive speech patterns and artificial languages, making the role of language *de facto* impossible to ignore.

And yet, there is a shortage of comparative research, which tries to analyse and compare different occurrences of language throughout the genre. Until now, most concerns with language are considered as "minor interests, points that enrich affective dystopian societies but do not play a central role in them."[14] In fact, there are only a few critics who acknowledge language as a recurrent theme in dystopian fiction at all. One of them is Robert Baker, who observes the influence of language on future novels in the works of H.G. Wells, and especially Wells' proto-dystopian novel *When the Sleeper Wakes* (1899):

> One feature of Well's novel is especially characteristic of the dystopian narrative – the preoccupation with communications, media and language. […] This motif of language will recur in the dystopias of Zamiatin, Huxley, and Orwell, only in more complexly subtle forms.[15]

Baker is one of few critics who actually claim that there is a linking "motif of language" to be found within the classic dystopias he mentions. However, since Baker's study concentrates on *Brave New World* only, the general motif is not further analysed, but the notion of a preoccupation with communications and media has to be kept in mind.

In order to properly posit this study within the field of dystopian research, it requires more substantial theories regarding language and dystopia. Walter E. Meyers conducted one of these extensive studies in 1980, titled *Aliens and Linguistics: Language Study and Science Fiction.*[16] As the title reveals, Meyers's focal point remains the role of language in science fiction, but towards the end of his study, he extends some of his findings to dystopian fiction as well. Meyers claims that many utopian fictions share a concern in language and that most dystopias can in fact be analysed using the Sapir-Whorf-hypothesis.[17] For Meyers, language and control share a reciprocal relationship that is central to dystopian fiction. In other words, if a society tries to control language and thought, it has to be considered dystopian. However, this claim is probably too restrictive. As we will see later on, language is not necessarily controlled by an authoritative power in novels such as

[14] David W. Sisk. 1997. *Transformations of Language in Modern Dystopias*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 11.
[15] Robert S. Baker. 1990. *Brave New World: History, Science and Dystopia*. Boston: Twayne, 37.
[16] Walter E. Meyers. 1980. *Aliens and Linguistics: Language Study and Science Fiction*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.
[17] I will extensively comment on the theories of Sapir and Whorf in chapter 3.1.4.

Riddley Walker or *Clockwork Orange* – novels that are unmistakably dystopias. Also, language, while being a recurrent theme, is not always needed to classify a novel as dystopian or not. Thus, Meyer's theory needs to be slightly amended and further expanded. It is Raffaella Baccolini, who provides a slightly more general definition of the topic at hand:

> Language is the key weapon for the reigning dystopian power structure [but] the process of taking control over the means of language, representation, memory, and interpellation is a crucial weapon in moving dystopian resistance from an initial consciousness to an action that leads to a climatic event that attempts to change the society.[18]

Baccolini refers to two central, oppositional yet interdependent concepts in which language is used: First, as a medium that has to be controlled in order to maintain the stability of the dystopian order (similar to Meyers's assertion), and second, as a medium that can be used subversively in order to overcome the same, and often times suppressive, power structure.

Baccolini's claims are in accordance with the only work exclusively dedicated on the role of language in dystopia so far: *Transformations of Language in Modern Dystopias* (1997) by David W. Sisk. Until today, Sisk remains the only one to have made an attempt to compare several seminal dystopian novels of the 20th century under the aspects of language and speech, focusing on the "conscious attempts within dystopian fictions to control language as well as conscious rebellions against such controls."[19] According to Sisk, the conflict between both ways of language usage allows analysing almost all concerns in regards to language and dystopian fiction. Even more important, Sisk claims that a novel can only be considered dystopian if it illustrates this conflict: "Twentieth-century dystopias in English universally reveal a central emphasis on language as the primary weapon with which to resist oppression, and the corresponding desire of repressive government structures to stifle dissent by controlling language."[20] The notion of language as a means for control and, at almost always the same time, a means of resistance, will be an integral part of this study. As Sisk's dissertation deals with the same works (with the exception of *The Book of Dave*) also used in this thesis, it will serve as its main point of reference, and I will frequently refer to Sisk's theory, simply because it can be considered the most profound one in regards to language and dystopian literature up to this day.

[18] Baccolini 2003, 6.
[19] Sisk 1997, 2.
[20] Ibid.

However, Sisk's analysis does have its shortcomings, too, and that is where my study comes into play. Although the reciprocal relationship between language and control and resistance accounts for most issues in this regard, there are various other ways how language functions, many of which Sisk either fails to point out, or simply ignores in order to stick to his focus. For instance, on a fictional level, Sisk subsumes the relationship between language and social class and status within the broader issues of language and control, although its prevalence probably requires closer inspection. As I will prove in chapter 3.3, concerns of social class and language are so widespread in dystopian fiction that they should be treated as an aspect of their own. Furthermore, Sisk acknowledges the fact that there is a difference between an internal use of language (i.e. how language is used as a plot device) and an external one (i.e. how does the author use language stylistically), but fails to properly analyse the role of the latter. And even though he provides an analysis of characterization and narration in each novel, as well as a closer look at the typology of the artificial languages used in works like *Clockwork Orange* or *Riddley Walker*, his explanations for their relation to the dystopian idea fall ultimately short. Similarly, he almost completely fails to provide an explanation *why* language does play such an important role, or why the emergence of the dystopian genre might be tied to an increasing consciousness of the power of language during the 20th century. These are all questions that I will try to answer of the course of this study.

All in all, the intention of my study is not to disprove Sisk's theory, but to add more points to the discussion in order to corroborate the claim we both share: that language should be considered a recurrent theme and motif of its own in dystopian fiction. As the lack of comparative research proves, this is a fact that most critics seem to either overlook or submerge within other issues. The following chapter will provide an overview of how I will proceed with this study, and at the same time, it will serve as a preliminary classification of the novels discussed herein.

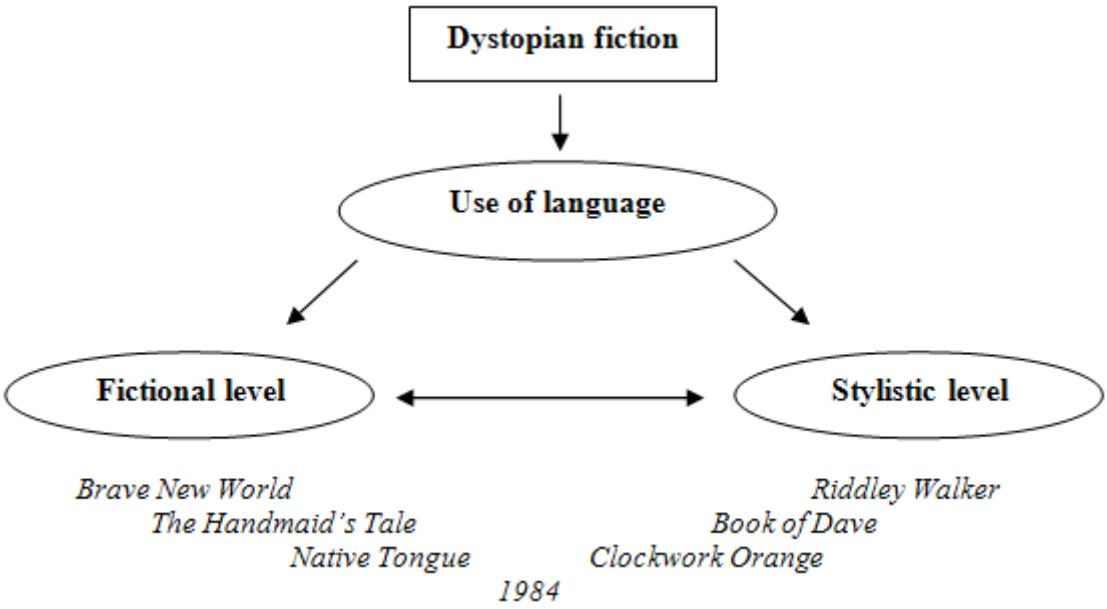
1.2.3 Classification and organization of language concerns

Not only is there a shortage of comparative research that allows for different interpretations of the topic at hand, but also is it difficult to establish a universal theoretical framework for the relationship between language and dystopian fiction. Even within the

limited corpus of this study, the novels are as different as they can be. Not only do they cover a period of almost 80 years between *Brave New World* and *Book of Dave*, but the novels differ profoundly from each other in terms of style and narrative structure. This makes it almost impossible to find external similarities in all of them, besides of course the fact that they all share dystopian features – a notion which I will elaborate in the following chapter. Not surprisingly, the use of language is equally diverse, but at the same time, it might be a foot in the door. If my initial claim is correct, and language is indeed a recurring theme, then it should be possible to find distinct ways, however diverse they are, in which language is applied and used to support the dystopian enterprise. This chapter will provide a possible organization of language concerns, and also explain some of the problems that we might encounter along the way.

Before we can start with a textual analysis, different forms of language application have to be identified, because each novel employs language concerns in a distinct way. In *1984* for instance, a totalitarian government tries to get rid of the common language by replacing it with the artificial and highly restrictive Newspeak, whereas in *Brave New World*, conditioning through language basically stifles any form of dissent in the first place. However, both classic dystopias essentially share the same concern: they depict language as a means of control. But if one compares *The Handmaid's Tale* to *1984*, it becomes clear that although the former depicts a similar (mis)use of authoritative power, the protagonist's escape *in* language is much more prominently displayed. Here, language is used primarily as a means to *overcome* control. I already mentioned these two uses of language. But if one is to compare the use of language in a novel like *Clockwork Orange* with *Brave New World*, the common ground will become even smaller, as there are no attempts to enforce and control language by a political power in *Clockwork Orange* (although there are issues of control and enforcing uniformity). Instead, it is told entirely in Nadsat, the protagonist's generational slang. Language in this case is primarily used as a stylistic device, and only to a lesser degree as plot device. I will get back to all of these examples over the courses of this study, but for now it is important to understand the various ways in which language is used. It has to be noted that because of their differences, not all novels can directly be compared with each other, although, if our claim is correct, language will be at the bottom of all of them.

David Sisk is also aware of the discrepancies that one encounters while looking at the role of language in dystopian fiction. To overcome these, he attempts to organize dystopian fiction in a more all-embracing manner by proposing three basic types of language concern, which are in line with the ones we just mentioned: "conscious manipulation of language by oppressors intended to control thought; conscious use of language by rebels as a means of resisting thought control and conscious use of language by the writer."[21] The first two types exist on a fictional level, while the third works on a stylistic level, only known to the author and the reader. Before I go into detail, it is helpful to take a look at the following illustration, which can be considered a rough and abstract outline of the following study:



Based on Sisk's proposition, I will adopt the dichotomy between fictional and stylistic usage of language. The first part of this study will take a look at how language is used on a fictional level only. I will try to find out how language is used as an element and motif within the plot. Moreover, I will try to uncover its purpose for the dystopian enterprise in general, and its relationship to other dystopian themes. In order to do so, I will take a look at the use of language as a means for both control and resistance, as well as the relationship between language and social class – an additional aspect that is often overlooked.

The second part will then focus on the stylistic and structural level, i.e. how language is actively used and transformed by the author. This part will move away from language as an internal plot device, and concentrate on language and its narrative function – the use of

[21] Sisk, 175.

artificial languages, paratextuality, metatextuality and nomenclature, and how these applications support the dystopian idea. Once a solid base for argumentation is established, I will tackle the question why dystopia is so susceptible to the use of language, and why language should indeed be considered an important theme on its own in dystopian fiction.

However, as one can see in the illustration above and referring back to our initial problem of classification, not all novels can easily be divided into fictional or stylistic issues. One only has to look at the employment of artificial languages: Several of the novels make use of such a language, may it be the Russian-influenced argot of Nadsat in *Clockwork Orange*, the women's language Láadan in *Native Tongue*, Mokni in *Book of Dave*, Inlish in *Riddley Walker* or Orwell's Newspeak in *1984*. Even so, the application of these invented or transformed languages varies greatly. For example, Láadan, probably the only language that is actually workable from a linguistics point of view[22], only makes a few appearances within *Native Tongue* and *The Judas Rose*, similar to a couple of Newspeak words and sentences in *1984*. On the other hand, *Riddley Walker* is written entirely in its own vernacular, and *Clockwork Orange* is written in the argot of its narrator and protagonist Alex, who, unlike Riddley, is fully aware of his language. In *Book of Dave*, only conversations between the inhabitants of Ham are written in Mokni, while most parts remain written in Standard English. In *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Brave New World*, language is not transformed at all (besides the creation of some neologisms), but used exclusively as a plot device. Thus, the spectrum ranges from a primarily fictional level of language use in *Brave New World* and *The Handmaid's Tale* to the proposed and implicated languages in *1984* and *Native Tongue*, up to an increased transformation of speech in *Book of Dave*, *Clockwork Orange* and, as the most 'extreme' example, *Riddley Walker*.

Hence, a clear and undisputed dichotomy of content and form is not possible, and often enough, novels make extensive use of both; there is, in all cases a relationship between fictional and stylistic use. For example, although language in *Riddley Walker* appears to be, first of all, a stylistic device, it also serves as the backdrop for the plot, as both reader and protagonist have to get past the barrier of language – the former has to learn the odd patois in which the novel is written in order to understand it, while the latter has to master the connection between myth, history and reality in his culture; a feat that is only possible

[22] I will return to the issue of linguistic plausibility in chapter 4.1.

by untangling the language by which he is surrounded. On the other hand, *The Handmaid's Tale* does not employ an artificial language, but its inclusion of an appendix and the fragmented nature of the protagonist's narrative include language concerns on a structural basis, too. Thus, the spectrum I propose has to be considered with care, and in many cases, it is exactly the mutual dependence of fictional and structural issues that raises the importance of language in general.

One last word concerning the procedure: As I try not to analyse the novels individually, I had to compromise them under various aspects, and it is important to realize that not every novel contains each aspect, but each aspect plays a role in several of the dystopias. For instance, not every novel explicitly displays a control of the past, and as mentioned above, not every novel necessarily foregrounds the control of language. However, put together, they form a matrix of language concerns, which I will then re-evaluate at the end of this study. Whether it is in speech or writing, on a fictional or stylistic level, what is most important, is that despite the differences in usage, language, in one way or another, lies at the heart of all dystopias, and it is the aim of this study to identify its multifaceted nature on behalf of the novels.

2. From the utopian dream to a dystopian nightmare

Before we can start with the textual analysis, we must first take a slight detour from our topic at hand and define the characteristics of dystopia itself. This does not mean to chart the complete evolution of utopian and dystopian vision – an endeavour, which would go well beyond the scope of this study. Instead, I try to present some general ideas of utopian thought and their influence on the anti-utopian and dystopian genre, which will then later be picked up again in an analysis of the novels with regards to language. This is important, because in order to understand all of the forthcoming concerns with language, one has to be familiar with the characteristics of the dystopian genre. I deliberately chose one of the most recurring allegories for this chapter's title – the journey from the utopian dream to its nightmare cousin dystopia – and I want to proceed with this chapter in similar fashion: as a journey from the dreams of a perfect society to the dark side of human nature[23], ending with a short presentation of recurrent themes in dystopian fiction.

2.1 The utopian idea

Starting with a simple lexical definition, Utopia is "a place, state, or condition ideally perfect in respect of politics, laws, customs, and conditions."[24] Needless to say, there has always been utopian thought in human culture. The attempt to not only imagine a society in the future, but to paint it in a brighter and more perfect light can already be found in the world of antiquity. Hesiod's *Works and Days* (ca. 700 B.C.) for instance depicted an early version of the Golden Age, and the Roman poet Virgil picked up Greek mythology and placed parts of his *Eclogues* in the "Earthly Paradise" of Arcadia. Also, the idea of Cockaigne, the land of abundance, excess and endless joy, can be found in almost all, even pre-classical cultures. Although all of the aforementioned can be considered varieties of an ancestral proto-utopian concept, the most important one in regards to a modern utopian tradition has yet to be mentioned: the planned society portrayed in Plato's *The Republic* (ca. 400 B.C.). Plato's society, run by philosopher-kings, incorporates a complex system of societal classes and justice, and reflects extensively on the relationship between the individual and the political body. Plato's influence can be traced throughout the centuries

[23] Kumar 1987, 100.
[24] Oxford English Dictionary Online. [Online source]

up to what is generally considered the first work of modern utopian tradition: Thomas More's *Utopia*, written in 1516.

As Krishan Kumar points out, although all of the aforementioned can be considered varieties of a utopian idea, modern utopia only started around the time of More and the Renaissance. Only after More, "a distinctive literary genre carrying a distinctive social philosophy"[25] was established. And indeed, Thomas More's contributions to the evolution of the utopian idea are tremendous. First of all, he essentially invented the word 'utopia', and his coinage of the term, deliberately or not, already anticipates its elusiveness and ambiguity: it can mean either Greek 'ou-topos' (literally 'no place'), or, if transliterated from Latin, to Greek 'eu-topos' (literally 'good place').[26] It is simultaneously a good place and a place, which does not exist at all, or as Chris Ferns puts it: "desirable, but at the same time unattainable."[27] Second, More coined not only the term but many utopian schemes as well: His Utopia is a welfare state, in which private ownership and private space is abolished (and with it any form of envy or crime), as everything is common property (another notion adopted from Plato). There is no illness, and if so, euthanasia may be enforced by the state before the ill become a burden for society, and the educational system as well as science and technology are much more effectively applied. At last, More also established the concept of utopia as a literary genre, which has then gradually been reworked and transformed during the following centuries:

> In spite of the terms built-in ambiguity and the classificatory complications arising from it, what More did, in effect, through naming, was to create a cohering, unifying concept out of something that had existed fragmentarily – in a variety of seemingly unrelated images or modes. […] More erected a formal model, a literary paradigm from which future fictional works of conscious intent would borrow.[28]

Aldridge refers to the "conscious intent" of utopian fiction, which is a hint at the most important function of modern utopia (as well as anti-utopia and dystopia): its inherent criticism of a contemporary society. As it turns out, More liberated utopia from the fantasy folktales of Cockaigne, the myths and dreams of the Golden Age and the theoretical dialogue of Plato. Whereas *The Republic* depicts an abstract ideal, More's *Utopia* is

[25] Kumar 1987, 3.
[26] Ibid., 24.
[27] Ferns 1999, 2.
[28] Aldridge 1984, 3.

already in existence – it is a place on Earth. In the novel, a representative from 'our' world, in this case Raphael Hythloday, spends five years in Utopia observing the native people and the organization of their culture. More's Utopia is no longer a normative model, because it has already been achieved, and it has to be compared with and assessed by the "author's community", just like Hythloday does by confronting Thomas More and Peter Giles after his visit to Utopia. The possibility (or need) to compare the perfect state of utopia with the seemingly less perfect society of the author also lies at the bottom of Darko Suvin's definition, contained in his seminal essay *Metamorphoses*:

> Utopia is the verbal construction of a particular quasi-human community where sociopolitical institutions, norms, and individual relationships are organized according to a more perfect principle than in the author's community, this construction being based on estrangement arising out of an alternative historical hypothesis.

The existence of an "alternative historical hypothesis" is in fact very closely related to the function of dystopia: "The overall trend has been toward utopian fictions where the more perfect society, rather than cutting itself off from the real world, seeks instead to replace it."[29] Modern Utopia is not only a more perfect place, but a direct response to the negative aspects of our society; it is a critical device, seeking for alternatives. Keith Booker, following the ideas of Karl Mannheim, states that "utopia is a complex of energies that work for change in [the author's] society, [and] a utopian notion of a desirable alternative future is necessary to empower meaningful political action in the present."[30] This has already, to some extent at least, been the case with the satirical utopia in ancient times, but it has become increasingly popular since More. In this way, utopia retains a prescriptive quality, showing how things *ought* to be done, as opposed to the way they currently are.[31]

Based on these thoughts, one is inclined to think that anti-utopia simply shows how things *ought not* to be done, but unfortunately, the case is slightly more complicated. After all, the form and structure of utopian literature has changed profoundly since its inception, moving from philosophical dialogue to poetic verse and from More's traveller's tale to the novelistic style of recent times. As Kumar asserts, modern utopia is "closer to the novel

[29] Ferns 1999, 2.
[30] Booker 1994, 3.
[31] Of course the question remains, whether utopian societies are perfect or desirable at all, and some critics mention the fact, that utopian societies are merely impoverishing the space of imagination by filling it with a static ideal. (cf. Ferns 1999, 9)

than any other literary genre", although "not necessarily of the kind we have come to identify too exclusively with its nineteenth-century form and focus."[32] Kumar's vague statement reinforces the ambiguity, at which every attempt to classify the form of utopia seems to arrive one way or another. After all, its form is not a constant, but prone to change, which led critics like Chris Ferns to argue that "utopian fiction is an inherently hybrid genre", and that the "boundaries between utopian fiction and other genres [are] more than usually permeable."[33] This claim needs to be remembered, because needless to say, its dystopian counterpart is by no means different. Although all of the works discussed later on can be classified as dystopian novels, there are significant differences in the way they are constructed, too, which in return relates to the topic at hand: Especially with the arrival of stylistic issues in chapter 4, one will see how dystopia's stylistic use of language is at times distinctly different from other forms of fiction, and yet impossible to classify. Although this probably requires a typological study on its own, it might be argued that dystopia's stylistic ambiguity can in fact be traced all the way back to the hybrid nature of the utopian roots we just mentioned, and that it serves as possible explanation for dystopia's susceptibility to language concerns as well.

2.2 The anti-utopian impulse

As I said, claiming that anti-utopia merely reverses the aforementioned conditions of utopia does not provide a satisfactory result. Anti-utopia is an equally ambiguous term, which in fact shares a lot of features with utopia rather than negating it, and more often than not, the boundaries between utopia and anti-utopia are blurred. After all, one person's utopia may be another person's dystopia, just as one person's dream may be another person's nightmare. Unlike *Utopia*, there is no defining work which gave its name to the literary genre and concept, and over the years, various terms have been offered, ranging from "anti-utopias" to "negative utopias" or "reverse utopias" and, at last, dystopias.[34] While all of these terms seem to denote the same concept, differences have to be drawn between the three most common types, which also evolved in that order: utopian satire,

[32] Kumar 1987, 25.
[33] Ferns 1999, 11.
[34] Sisk 1997, 5.

anti-utopia[35] and dystopia. All of the novels discussed in this study fall under the latter category, although *Brave New World* is often considered a utopian satire as well. Before I can elaborate on this, we have to take a brief look at how dystopia actually evolved from the field of utopian satire and anti-utopia first, and David Sisk provides an excellent distinction between the three forms of anti-utopian thought just mentioned: "Utopian satires, by definition, ridicule specific utopian visions; anti-utopias merely criticize more generalized utopian ideals, while dystopias aggressively target contemporary social structures without direct reference to utopia."[36] However concise this distinction may be, it needs further elaboration in order to uncover the characteristics of dystopia.

The concept of anti-utopia, a sceptical view on utopia's hopeful claims, is as old as utopian thought itself. I mentioned Hesiod in the previous chapter, who wrote about a proto-utopian Golden Age. But he also wrote about an Iron Age, a world of sorrow and misery for its human inhabitants, which inevitably follows the Golden Age. Hesiod's contrasting Ages are already representative for the mutual relationship of utopia and anti-utopia: if there is utopian thought, there will most likely be anti-utopian temperament as well, and the first literary form of the latter is probably the utopian satire.

Satire, by definition, always calls attention "to certain follies in the actual world"[37], or as influential literary critic Northrop Frye observes, it always needs an "object of attack".[38] In the case of utopian satire, this object of attack is part of the utopian ideal. Utopian satire takes utopian schemes, such as scientific advancement, and distorts, satirizes or parodies them. For instance, Jonathan Swift's classic utopian satire *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) ridicules the scientific methods of Francis Bacon in several of its episodes. Similarly, to give an example from the texts used in this study, *Brave New World* parodies Henry Ford's assembly line as well as the emerging consumerist culture of the 1920s. One has to look no further than the names of "Charing T" or the clock tower of "Big Henry" to understand the novel's satirical depiction of "Fordism", its object of attack. After all, Fordism is an exemplification of technological progress, the very same progress that lies at the bottom of many utopian novels. But as proven later on, progress wears a double face in *Brave New*

[35] It has to be noted, that I use "anti-utopia" in two ways: first, as a generalized contrasting concept to utopia, and only second as a literary form of expression of anti-utopian thought, according to the definition of Sisk.
[36] Sisk 1997, 5.
[37] Aldridge 1984, 5.
[38] Northrop Frye. 1957. *Anatomy of Criticism*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 224.

World, and although the novel might be considered a utopian satire, it is even closer tied to the dystopian tradition.

Eventually, the concepts of utopia and utopian satire were pulled apart, which in return spawned the formal subgenre of anti-utopia. Anti-utopia is a "theoretical reaction to a theoretical idea,"[39] which became more and more prominent in the centuries after Thomas More. It no longer tackles a specific utopian scheme (such as the abolishment of private property), but it portrays a more generalized anti-utopian temperament and distrust in the optimism of utopia. Both Kumar and Aldridge refer to an increasing anti-scientific bias, which does not mean that anti-utopian writers were against technological advance and progress itself, but rather against its application. Kumar claims that "the postulates of modernity" were "toppled from their pedestals" as the anti-utopian genre emerged as a cultural paradigm.[40] For instance, it was the Industrial Revolution, which promised a bright future of social stability, production and progress at first, but which later spawned an increasing anti-technological bias. Mechanization lead to the exploitation of labour, capitalism increased the gap between a poor working class and a wealthy upper class. In biology, Darwin's research and the publication of *The Origin of Species* in 1859 weakened the assumption of humans as divine creatures, while half a century later, Freud's modern psychoanalysis at the end of the 19th century offered a new approach to deeper, previously unknown spheres of the human mind, to name only a few contemporary developments that accelerated the distrust in utopian schemes, and eventually worked towards the inception of dystopia as well.

Formally, the theoretical framework of anti-utopia expanded the horizon of anti-utopian thought beyond the limited sphere of satire, without changing its initial purpose – both forms are still dependent on the idea of a utopia beneath, as Kumar notes in a widespread definition:

> Utopia and anti-utopia are antithetical yet interdependent. They are 'contract concepts', getting their meaning from their mutual differences. But the relationship is not symmetrical or equal. The anti-utopia is formed by utopia, and feeds parasitically on it. […] Anti-utopia draws its material from utopia

[39] Aldridge 1984, 16.
[40] Kumar 1987, 111.

> and reassembles it in a manner that denies the affirmation of utopia. It is the mirror-image of utopia – but a distorted image, seen in a cracked mirror.[41]

Kumar's "contract concept" mentioned here is certainly applicable for both utopian satire and anti-utopia, as both feed upon a utopian ideal. But what about dystopia? Does it fit into this concept? Not necessarily, although a clear definition of dystopia still evades us. Although anti-utopia and dystopia have been used interchangeably in recent times, dystopia has a much more specific scope. It is in fact a relatively recent phenomenon, which emerged from the broad genre of anti-utopia only during the late 19th century.[42] Dystopian fiction is distinguished from the wide field of anti-utopian literature in regards to application, content and form and should thus be regarded as a literary genre on its own. As Sisk points out, all dystopias are in fact anti-utopias, but not all anti-utopias are dystopias.[43] Aldridge provides a definition that includes several of dystopia's specific characteristics:

> The dystopia is not merely "utopia in reverse" as it has often been called, but a singular generic category issuing out of a 20th century shift of attitudes toward utopia. […] The dystopian novelist, instead of recreating some fragment of the actual world, extrapolates from his concept of actuality in order to make a holistic framework, a complete alternative (inevitably futuristic) structure.[44]

This contains two of the major differences between the broader form of anti-utopia and dystopia: Its futuristic setting and its extrapolation from a present society. Thus, the setting of all novels included in this study takes place in the future. Some are set hundreds of years ahead from our times (*Brave New World, Native Tongue, The Book of Dave, Riddley Walker*), others are placed in the near future (*The Handmaid's Tale, Clockwork Orange* and of course *1984*, although its title has become dated by now). Whatever its timeframe, dystopia is always concerned with trends in a present society, which are in return taken to a fictional extreme. This process is referred to as extrapolation, and in all of the novels subsequently discussed, extrapolation plays a significant role. Whether it is the fear of

[41] Ibid., 100. Kumar's use of the term 'antithetical' is problematic. It assumes that anti-utopia is in fact the complete opposite of utopia, but it has to be understood primarily in regards to content and form, but not necessarily function.
[42] However. it was probably not called dystopia at first. Although the term was originally used by John Stuart Mill in 1868, it was not until 1952 that J. Max Patrick coined the word as the opposite to eutopia ("good place"), literally meaning "bad place", and that it found its way into literary research (cf. Aldridge 1984, 8). The term dystopia can thus be considered to have been applied to an emerging movement within anti-utopian literature only afterwards.
[43] Sisk 1997, 6.
[44] Aldridge 1984, 18.

totalitarianism in *1984*, consumerist culture in *Brave New World*, gender inequality in *Native Tongue* and *The Handmaid's Tale* or the simple inclusion of a London's cab driver argot in *The Book of Dave* – extrapolation is a crucial element in dystopian fiction. It takes contemporary practices, discourses, attitudes and development and transforms them into a futuristic setting, portraying them as a possible outcome. In *Metamorphoses,* Darko Suvin's provides a definition of science fiction that is surprisingly applicable to dystopian fiction as well: "A literary genre [...] whose main formal device is an imaginative framework alternative to the author's empirical environment."[45] In order for science fiction (and as I claim dystopia) to work, the future society must both be different from ours and yet be plausible in one way or another; it must not appear to be impossible or unattainable (as Utopia), and it must be ultimately based upon our (i.e. the author's) society, thus being "a thinly disguised portrait of the contemporary world."[46]

Only by fulfilling this criterion, dystopian fiction can realize its didactic enterprise, which, along with extrapolation, serves as the basis for the dystopian idea. By extrapolating our contemporary society, dystopias predict a possible future that might come into existence if no further action is taken. Dystopias must be seen as warnings, and even though the future societies often appear to be horrifying and bleak (one only has to think of *1984* or *Clockwork Orange*), they often suggest actions to prevent the horrors they depict. This sets dystopia further apart from its parent genre anti-utopia; the latter does not necessarily provide a "way out", and its criticism of generalized utopian ideals does not require an extrapolated society. At last, Kumar's contract concept between utopia and anti-utopia is not applicable for dystopia, because dystopia does not focus on generalized utopian ideals, but on actual happenings.

And yet again, as I mentioned earlier, utopian and dystopian visions are not necessarily diametrical opposites,[47] but they are in fact parts of the same project. Utopian visions often implicitly contain a criticism of a current society, to which they provide a seemingly perfect alternative. Dystopia also tackles contemporary trends, but it portrays them in an extrapolated, futuristic and undesirable setting. Utopia stresses the difference of the society it depicts, without explaining exactly how it came into place, whereas dystopia is displayed as a logical conclusion from the world we are living in. In this way, the ties between

[45] Darko Suvin. 1979. *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction: on the poetics and history of a literary genre*. New Haven: Yale UP, 8.
[46] Kumar 1987, 110.
[47] Booker 1994, 15.

dystopia and the contemporary world are much more obvious than they are in the abstract spheres of utopia, and it is in this regard, that concerns with language come into play. After all, language is something immediate and also personal and as I will show, language concerns work towards both the concept of extrapolation and dystopia's didactic and warning purpose.

Now that I defined some characteristics of modern dystopian fiction, I will continue to use the term exclusively for all of the novels used in this thesis, although this means to make compromises. The society of *Brave New World* for example may appear rather pleasant at first, and it takes a while for the reader to get behind its utopian masquerade, so that one could argue it is in fact an anti-utopia or utopian satire rather than dystopia proper, but according to our definition, its future setting and extrapolation of contemporary trends (including language) clearly indicate a dystopian nature. Similarly, the comical elements in *Book of Dave* and its shift between a narrative based in a dystopian future and a present day society might be closer to satire, and they certainly stretch the definition of dystopia. Also, the futuristic world of the *Native Tongue* trilogy with its alien life forms and interplanetary travel can certainly be regarded primarily as a work of science fiction, although both genres do have a fair share of overlapping, too.[48] Nonetheless, all the novels share features with our definition of dystopia. For instance, all novels are based in the future, and all of the depicted societies, even the futuristic setting of *Native Tongue,* retain an intrinsic relationship to our contemporary society, either by referring to certain places and characters, as in *Book of Dave, Riddley Walker* or *Brave New World,* or by extrapolating contemporary trends and conditions. Furthermore, all of the novels portray a bleak future, even if it may not obvious at first. And at last, rebellion and opposition can be found throughout the novels discussed, thus adding to dystopia's didactic purpose.

2.3 Recurrent themes

Before I move on, I would like to take a short look at some of the recurrent themes of modern dystopian fiction, as most of them can be found in the novels discussed later on. Chad Walsh and Chris Ferns dedicated complete chapters to the recurrent themes of

[48] Dystopian fiction and science fiction are indeed often closely associated with each other (c.f. Suvin 1979, Aldridge 1984, Roberts 2000 and Stableford 2003).

dystopia, but I will only focus on the ones which are related, whether explicitly or implicitly, to the use of language: the establishment of a hierarchical social order, uniformity, surveillance, the suppression of individuality or groups by an authoritative power, rebellion on behalf of one or more characters, and, at last, a conspicuous interest in the past. As I will show in the following analysis, all of these themes are enforced, either implicitly or explicitly, through concerns of language.

Since Plato's *Republic*, most traditional utopias display a hierarchical society, which can be found in almost all dystopias as well. In fact, the establishment of a ruling upper class and authoritative power, such as the Linguists in *Native Tongue*, the Alphas in *Brave New World*, the Inner Party in *1984*, or the Commanders of the Faithful in *The Handmaid's Tale*, is crucial to the plot of these dystopias. Similarly, the implementation of a patriarchal leader figure can be found in various novels, such as Big Brother in *1984*, the Driver in *Book of Dave* or the fictional Eusa in *Riddley Walker*, with the latter even bearing the connotation of a deity, similar to Our Ford in *Brave New World*. As it turns out, all of these authoritative powers or characters either impose a language upon their inferiors in order to subjugate them, or set themselves apart from the rest by a seemingly superior use of language.

The adherence to the societal order is ensured by a concern with both surveillance and subjection of the individual.[49] The elimination of privacy can already be found in More's *Utopia*, but it is much more radically implemented in modern dystopias: *1984* depicts the use of telescreens, whereas in *The Handmaid's Tale*, so-called "Eyes" serve as spies. In *Clockwork Orange*, social workers like P.R. Deltoid are given the task to 'correct' anti-social behaviour, and in *Book of Dave*, members of the PCO have infiltrated most parts of society. But surveillance remains merely an end to oppress individual and independent thought. Walsh calls this process depersonalization and loss of identity.[50] The purpose of an individual is to serve society, and the individual is subjugated in order to maintain the societal order and the current state of dystopia. This is further strengthened by both conformity and uniformity, shown in the conditioning in *Brave New World*, the color-coded uniforms in *The Handmaid's Tale* and a wide array of rituals and rules, such as the "2-Minute-Hate" in *1984*, the "Changeover" in *Book of Dave* or the Ceremony in *The*

[49] Ferns 1999, 112.
[50] Walsh 1962, 144f.

Handmaid's Tale. All of these themes ultimately work towards the avoidance of growing awareness and subsequent dissent among the population:

> In suppressing the emergence of individual identity in the interests of stability, security, conformity, the dystopian state clearly seeks to discourage the development of any kind of mature, adult awareness – of any form of consciousness sophisticated enough to perceive and articulate the society's limitations.[51]

Stability seems to be the striving force in dystopian societies; the desire to establish a womb-like security[52], even if this means to sacrifice creativity, art, love and romantic relationships, which seem to be lacking in almost all dystopian societies. Again, language plays a significant role in this regard, because on more than one occasion, a society's discourse does simply lack the linguistic means to express emotions or creative thoughts. And even if there is something like art, such as Alex's dedication to classical music in *Clockwork Orange*, it will be eradicated from the individual's mind. In this way, the clash between individual freedom, creativity and love and the retention of a societal order is a central theme in dystopian literature, and often enough it serves as the starting point of a rebellion. To trace all forms of opposition would go beyond the scope of this work, but it can generally be said, that all dystopian novels are based around one or more characters that experience alienation with the given order and gradually move towards resistance and repudiation. Needless to say, language often plays a key role in this form of liberation, and this relationship will be studied in chapter 3.2.

At last, many dystopian novels show an interest in the past. Either by relying heavily on the past, such as the actual Book of Dave, which is later hailed as a sacred text, by which rules the inhabitants of Ham live. Another example would be the Story of Eusa in *Riddley Walker*, which is regularly re-enacted in a puppet show. On the other side, the past can also be eradicated and controlled. In *1984*, history is constantly rewritten to conform to recent developments, thus completely negating the idea that there had been a past at all, ensuring that the present society cannot be measured against a previous one. In this case, an interest in the past could serve as a means for rebellion – its subversive character can be found in *Brave New World* and *The Handmaid's Tale*, where all forms of 'ancient' literature are forbidden.

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[51] Ferns 1999, 114.
[52] Cf. Frank E. Manuel (Ed.). 1966. *Utopias and Utopian Thought*. Boston: Houghton Miflin.

3. Language in dystopia – fictional and contextual issues

Now that a sufficient basis is established, it is possible to move on to the textual analysis. As already explained, I will start with an analysis of fictional issues first, focusing mainly on the role of language for two of dystopia's most important themes: control and resistance. Within these broad concepts, more specific aspects will be analysed, which are important to several of the novels used herein. These aspects are the obliteration or control of the past, the relationship between language and control, the ban of literature and writing, freedom *in* language, freedom *from* language, and, at last, the relationship between language and social class.

However, before I start, I want to introduce a theoretical framework based on Michel Foucault's discourse theory first, which allows analysing the forthcoming concerns from a different and possibly more abstract perspective. This will help to categorize and identify the role of language in regards to my claim that language should be considered a recurrent theme on its own.

3.1 'The destruction of words' – language, power and control

3.1.1 Discourse, language and power

The relationship between language, power and control is as multifaceted as the nature of the dystopian novel itself, and yet it lies at the bottom of the majority of dystopian fiction published in the last century. Power relationships pervade dystopia, and often enough, language serves as a catalyst. Hence, critics like Walter Meyers and David Sisk insist on the "centrality of language as the key to both repression and rebellion"[53] – an assumption, which can be easily proved by looking at novels like *1984, Brave New World, The Handmaid's Tale* and *Native Tongue.* In each case, language is controlled or tailored by a ruling power, used subversively to overcome oppression, or even used for both ends simultaneously, a fact which is often overlooked because of the seemingly dominance of

[53] Sisk, 12.

the aspect of controlling language.[54] The most overt use of power and language shows itself in the control of language by a government or ruling class. Some works, however, seem to evade this form of control; in *Clockwork Orange, Book of Dave* or *Riddley Walker*, claims for language as the "battleground between oppression and resistance"[55] lose a significant amount of sustainability. Needless to say, this does not mean that language is by any means less important.

In order to establish language as a central theme of dystopian fiction beyond the limited scope of governmental control and resistance against it, Foucault's theory of discourse[56] has proven helpful, as it allows analysing the relation between language and power in a more abstract and thus all-embracing way. Various critics refer to Foucault's theories in their studies[57], but only a few have attempted to place dystopian fiction within a discursive framework.

Gorman Beauchamp was one of the first to connect dystopian fiction, language and discourse. Regarding the relation between language and reality, he quotes Herbert Marcuse: "The word communicates daily the society to its members […] but the word can all but lose its transcendent meaning – and tends to do so the more society approaches the stage of total control over the universe of discourse […]."[58] Of course, given the fact that Beauchamp's article was published in 1974, only shortly after Foucault published *The Order of Discourse*, "discourse" for both Beauchamp and Marcuse refers to its original use as written or spoken communication. Still, Marcuse anticipates Foucault, as he implicitly states that there is a regulating body, which controls the nature of discourse, or in other words: which controls what *is* said and what *can* be said within a society.

For Foucault, this regulating body itself is called discourse, and herein lays the most important difference between the definition of discourse in the traditional sense and in terms of Foucault. As established in *The Order of Discourse*, discourse precedes

[54] *1984* serves as a good example for this, as the use of language is mostly analyzed in regards to Newspeak and less in regards to Winston's apparent joy in language, which in return drives him to become a rebel in the first place. I will come back to this in chapter 4.2 when talking about aspects of language and freedom.
[55] Sisk, 174.
[56] It is important to clearly define the term 'discourse' beforehand. Even within Foucault's theoretical works, discourse is by no means an absolute term: As Michael Ruoff points out, different phases in Foucault's work spawned a different emphasis on discourse, especially in regards to power. (cf. Michael Ruoff. 2007. *Foucault-Lexikon*. Paderborn: Fink, 91f.). In this study, I will mainly focus on the form of discourse as presented in Foucault's 1970 paper *The Order of Discourse* and its theoretical predecessor *The Archeology of Knowledge* (1969).
[57] Cf. Booker 1994, Davidson 1988, Porter 1990 and Marcus 1999.
[58] Beauchamp 1974, 469.

awareness, reality and truth. In fact, it bears truth and forms reality. Discourse does not merely reflect societal reality, but it is an entity *sui generis*, a productive force. Foucault understands culture as a system of signs, both verbal *and* non-verbal (by doing so, Foucault slightly distances himself from classic post-structuralism), which has to be decoded according to certain rules. These rules are established by discourse and have to be understood in a historical context: "Die Diskurstheorie sieht vor, dass jeder Diskurs, entsprechend seiner geschichtlichen Formation, eigene Werte oder Wahrheiten etablieren kann."[59] To illustrate this, one could take the aspect of segregation between men and women in *The Book of Dave*, which forms a discourse on its own. Within this discourse, everything from marriage to divorce, custody, gender equality and anthropologic history of men and women is already inscribed. Discourse has to be understood as a network of (cultural) signs, as "systems of thoughts composed of ideas, attitudes, courses of action, beliefs and practices that systematically construct the subjects and the worlds of which they speak."[60] In *The Book of Dave*, social and religious discourses enforce male as the dominant sex, reminiscent of savage times; men are conducting business, gathering food and teaching "the Knowledge" to their kids (although presumably boys only), whereas women have to resign themselves to knitting or pulling the island's only plough. In this regard, discursive practices and attitudes lead to the establishment of an increasingly misogynist reality, whose origin we will find out later on.

Viewing culture and society as a body of signs has also found its way into the criticism of dystopia. Jean-Jacques Courtine, in a short assessment of Newspeak in *1984*, states that the totalitarian power "converted the entire society into a reading book; the social body has become a text and the body of each subject a sign […] power treats bodies as signs, but also signs as bodies."[61] In Foucauldian terms, it is not the governmental power who decodes the signs, but discourse itself. The rules, according to which discourse organizes what is said and can be said, are central to *The Order of Discourse*. Foucault himself calls them "systems of exclusion", which includes the will to tell the truth and proscriptions to what can be said in a certain discourse. These rules select, organize and channel the nature

[59] Ruoff 2007, 92.
[60] Iara Lessa. 2006. "Discursive Struggles within Social Welfare". In: *British Journal of Social Work* 36, 283ff.
[61] Jean-Jacques Courtine. 1986. "A Brave New Language: Orwell's Invention of "Newspeak" in 1984". In: *SubStance* Vol. 15, No. 2 (1986), 70f.

of discourse in each society.[62] It is important to understand that discourse is not created by individuals, but it is the force that produces subjects, and it is shaped by relationships of power, such as practices, law and institutions, which aim to "tame its power and dangers"[63]. Some of these institutions and practices exert more power than others, as they decide who is allowed to participate in a given discourse, and which discourse becomes predominant in a society. After all, there is not one singular discourse, but a whole network of discourses at all times, which constantly change and affect each other. Taking *The Handmaid's Tale* as an example, the Republic of Gilead is to a huge extent organized by the discourse of theocracy and religious dogmas. It enforces its views and dogmas by Scriptural readings and strict adherence to the *Bible*, which is in return used to reduce women's status as subjects. In one episode, the novel's protagonist, Offred, encounters a group of Japanese tourists in the streets. "It's been a long time since I've seen skirts that short on women ... their heads are uncovered and their hair too is exposed ... I used to dress like that. That was freedom. *Westernized*, they used to call it."[64] But now, a new discourse of dress (which is similar to the Islamic tradition) does not allow women to wear skirts or to expose their hair. The notion of a women's free choice of clothes has not only become impossible, it has become essentially unthinkable, as every women has to wear a specific, colour-coded dress, according to their imposed "function" in society. This serves as one example how discourse shapes reality and produces (or in this case reduces) subjects. Over the course of this study, plenty more examples will occur.

Taking the previous thoughts into account, one can say that each dystopia focuses on a predominant discourse: In *1984*, this could be said to be a political discourse, in *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Native Tongue/Judas Rose*, a discourse based on gender equality and religion, while *Riddley Walker* is built around a mythological and scientific discourse. The latter is also found in *Brave New World*, and *Clockwork Orange* could be said to focus on a discourse of moral choice and violence.

I mentioned the didactic purpose of dystopia and its use of extrapolation of contemporary trends before. Given the discursive framework, one could argue that dystopian fiction is in fact based on the extrapolation of discourses, and, as it lies in the very nature of dystopia itself, it is in the entangling of different, opposed discourses and

[62] Michel Foucault. 2003. *Die Ordnung des Diskurses*. Frankfurt: Fischer, 10f.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Atwood 1998, p. 28, emphasis in original.

the power struggles within discourse itself that Foucault's theory becomes most useful. Foucault acknowledged these power struggles; in fact, they are crucial to his definition of power:

> Unter Macht, scheint mir, ist zunächst zu verstehen: die Vielfältigkeit von Kraftverhältnissen, die ein Gebiet bevölkern und organisieren; das Spiel, das in unaufhörlichen Kämpfen und Auseinandersetzungen diese Kraftverhältnisse verwandelt, verstärkt, verkehrt […] die Macht ist nicht eine Institution, [sie] ist der Name, den man einer komplexen strategischen Situation in einer Gesellschaft gibt.[65]

The multiplicity of power relations mentioned here inherently contains and produces resistance, which is, ultimately, also central to dystopian fiction:

> Wo es Macht gibt, gibt es Widerstand. Und doch oder gerade deswegen liegt der Widerstand niemals außerhalb der Macht […] Es handelt sich um ein komplexes und wechselhaftes Spiel, in dem der Diskurs gleichzeitig Machtinstrument und -effekt sein kann, aber auch Hindernis, Gegenlager, Widerstandspunkt.[66]

In other words, discourse can both exert and impede power, and herein lies the relationship between control and resistance. I earlier identified opposition and resistance on behalf of an individual or a group as one of the central themes of dystopian fiction. Now placed within the context of discourse, one can say that dystopia no longer only portrays only the opposition of an individual against a ruling power, but rather opposition between or within discourses, as discourse always produces its own oppositional momentum.

In order to connect this with language, Mikhail Bakthin, who had been a major influence on post-structuralism, and his theory of "heteroglossia" and "dialogism" come in handy. Without going too much into detail, Bakhtin developed these concepts in literary theory first, but later extended it to language in general. In Bakthin's terms, heteroglossia refers to the mixture of different languages, voices and world views that are always dialogised with others. This does not apply to the words of a novel only, but to their entire social and ideological contexts. If Foucault mentions the "disorderly noise of discourse" ("das

[65] Michel Foucault. 1992. *Was ist Kritik?* Berlin: Merve. Again, it has to be noted that this assumption has undergone various changes in Foucault's theory. In *The Order of Discourse*, power is still a part of discourse itself, while in *Discipline and Punish* (1975), power gains momentum as a productive force on its own. For this study, I assume the former position. (see also Ruoff, p. 96ff.)
[66] Michel Foucault. 1983. *Diskurs und Wahrheit*, 113f.

ordnungslose Rauschen des Diskurses"[67]), Bakthin refers to the variety of different languages and views that are always in relationship with each other; meaning is always deduced from dialogue. Thus, Bakhtin's dialogic concept implies that language is not a neutral medium, but rather that "there is something in the property of language itself that tends to work against the imposition of a narrow, authoritarian, monologic points of view", and that "no single group or attitude can ever dominate language entirely."[68] In other words, the forces of heteroglossia always produce a mixture of views and attitudes that are ultimately dialogized. The connection between Bakthin's concept and Foucault's discourse should become clear by now: taken together, it can be said that the discourse of language will always result in a permanent struggle, and Keith Booker concludes our previous thoughts in a very concise way:

> In every society there will be a dominant discourse (actually, a family of discourses), but that discourse can only define itself in relation to other repressed discourses with which it maintains a dialogic tension. Thus, the very nature of language itself indicates that there will always be a possibility that opposing voices can arise […]. Bakhtin sees language as a powerful political weapon, but it is a weapon that is inherently a two-edged sword – it may serve as a means of oppression, but it serves at the same time as a means of liberation.[69]

The following chapters will now try to identify recurrent methods of using language as the "two-edged sword" mentioned here. Both Bakhtin's and Foucault's assertions will help us to understand the struggle within dystopia, and, equally important, its use of language.

But the implications of discourse theory and language go further than that. As it turns out, language can be considered a manifestation of discourse; in language, in speech and writing, many, although not all, discursive practices are realized. Language is often needed as a matrix to encode the cultural signs, and in this way, it contains power itself. *The Bible* for instance is an obvious example, because it is a literary representation of Christian discourse; most of our religious beliefs are based on an interpretation of the *Bible*. In this case, the power of discourse is connected to a written text – a fact that we will accompany us throughout this study. In this regard, language is crucial to discourse and its establishment, and if we consider dystopian fiction to be a network of certain discourses

[67] Foucault 2003, 33.
[68] Keith M Booker. 1995. *Flann O'Brien, Bakhtin, and Menippean satire*. New York: Syracuse UP, 44.
[69] Booker 1994, 85.

and their power struggles, language must be crucial to dystopia as well. Sisk and Meyers are correct when they place language at the heart of dystopia, but it is not always about the actual control of language, but rather about the control of discourse(s) *with the means* of language. This is more abstract theory, which allows analysing of language concerns that are less explicit, but not less important. As we will see at the end of this study, language's supportive function, i.e. language supports and enhances certain discourses, is crucial to its role as theme.

3.1.2 'History is bunk' – mutability and obliteration of the past

As I explained before, dystopian societies exhibit a conspicuous interest in the past and I want to start the in-depth analysis with this aspect. Since every dystopian society is ultimately set in the future, the past becomes the main source of values in comparison. This does not only apply for the reader, who judges the dystopian society against his own, and is thus the subject of a didactic enterprise central to dystopian fiction, but also for characters within the narrative. In a way, the past often portrays 'better times', and in the act of measuring the past against the present, subversive actions and resistance are evoked. It is no coincidence that in *1984* Winston and Julia secretly meet above a shop that sells antiques, or that Winston writes down his unorthodox thoughts in an old-fashioned keepsake album on "beautiful creamy paper"[70], or that he buys a glass paperweight which possesses an air of "an age quite different from the present one."[71] All these remnants of the past appear in relation to Winston's opposition to the system: The possession of the ancient notebook itself is the starting point of his active resistance; it is indeed "the decisive act"[72] which brings the plot into movement. Similarly, memories of his mother and his previous existence, along with his encounters of 'old' and forbidden things, seem to further heighten his opposition to the Inner Party.

The implications are obvious, not only for *1984*, but for any dystopia: because of its very existence, history threatens the seemingly ideal condition of a dystopian society, which is built upon static stability and conformity of the *present*. As Booker points out, the existence of the past proves that things were once different, and it demonstrates that

[70] George Orwell. 1989. *1984*. London: Penguin, 8.
[71] Ibid., 99.
[72] Ibid., 9.

change is at least *possible*.[73] In other words, the mere recognition of a (different) past constitutes a danger to the idea of an ”eternal present”[74] that is both prevalent in utopian and dystopian schemes. Hence, in order to maintain stability and oppose potential resistance, various dystopian societies aim to counter the subversive power of the past; it must be either changed in order to conform to the present system, or become completely obliterated or redundant.

The control of history and the past fits within the Foucauldian theory of discourse as outlined above: Discourse has to be considered historically, as it produces truth in relation to a specific time and context. By trying to exclude any traces of a previous reality, dystopian societies work to shape discourse according to their present standards, and *only* to the present ones. Furthermore, by preventing certain individuals or social groups from gaining access to a specific discourse, the power of the respective discourse within the discursive network is progressively reduced.

The control of the past is the first aspect in the analysis of language and control issues, mainly because its implications reach into subsequent issues as well. The banning of literature for instance, is closely related to issues of the past, as literature ultimately contains references to a previous reality. However, while the past as a source of comparison is important in almost all dystopian fictions, not all dystopian societies are explicitly trying to control it. In novels such as *Book of Dave* or *Riddley Walker*, the past accounts for an important influence for the present society. Instead of reducing the discursive power of history, it is a key component in establishing a predominant discourse in the first place. In fact, the ancient story of Eusa in *Riddley Walker* serves as a backdrop for both the scientific and political discourse in the novel, as I will explain in detail later on. In *Native Tongue*, direct references to the past are mostly contained within the epigraphs that precede each chapter, but hardly within the narrative itself, which is why I exclude the two novels at this point.

Brave New World serves as the starting point for this chapter, as it is not only the earliest novel discussed in this study, but also arguably one of the “first widely read dystopia in

[73] Booker 1994, 119.
[74] Kumar 1989, 259.

English,"[75] and as such often thought on par with its Russian counterpart, Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We* (1921)[76].

Set in the "year of stability" After Ford 632 (AD 2540 in the Gregorian calendar) and centred in London, *Brave New World* depicts a society of advanced technological sophistication. The planet's population, with the exception of a few "savage reservations", is governed by the World State and its ten World Controllers, one of them being Mustapha Mond. Their motto, "Community, Identity, Stability", is the striving force of a society highly dependent on scientific and technological advance. Human reproduction has been replaced by a genetic assembly line process, which carefully "decants" (the word 'born' is considered as obscene as 'love' or 'mother') infants and designs them according to the specifications of the class to which they will later belong. In a highly class-conscious (and yet seemingly egalitarian) society, people are classified from "Alphas", who take on important and intellectual positions, down to low-class and cloned "Epsilons" with little intelligence but increased physical strength. After being decanted, all children are additionally conditioned by a process called "hypnopaedia" (a form of sleep teaching) and "neo-Pavlovian conditioning" to make them content with the roles designated to them, thus eliminating any form of discontent, jealousy and competition between the castes. Instead, a "hedonistic pursuit of pleasure"[77] is encouraged for members of all castes: Sex is used recreationally, as "everyone belongs to everyone else", and a ubiquitous drugs called "soma" is provided to allow for a "hangover-free sensation", along with synthetic music, sports, travel and "the Feelies", a movie format which combines the senses of smell and touch. Thanks to genetic and psychological conditioning, the society has reached a state of static stability, which, were it not for the highly satiric undertone of the narration, might appear to be utopian rather than dystopian at first.

The novel, told by an omniscient third-person narrator, follows the lives of several characters. One of them is Bernard Marx, an Alpha Plus specializing in hypnopaedia, who suffers from low self-esteem and who attempts to increase his reputation by introducing a literate savage called John into the World State, which in return leads to irreconcilable problems. Another one is Helmholtz Watson, another Alpha Plus working in the Department of Writing, who eventually recognizes the power of his writings. What both Marx and Watson have in common is that they become increasingly aware of their

[75] Sisk 1997, 19.
[76] However, Huxley claimed that he had not read *We* before writing *Brave New World*. (cf. Sisk 1994, 17).
[77] Booker 1994, 49.

individuality and language use, which is of course problematic in a society built upon uniformity and stability.

If stability is the main pillar in *Brave New World*, the past will be nothing more than an unwanted interference. "Was and will make me ill, I take a gram and only am", Lenina Crowne, a Beta Plus and John's later love interest, absent-mindedly recites the governmental propaganda at one point[78]. She unknowingly sums up her society's attitude towards both past and future: history has literally become a disease, which is contagious and may spread once too many people get in contact with it. As Mustapha Mond, one of the ten world controllers, recollects in his first appearance in the novel while talking some students: "History is bunk. […] That's why you are taught no history."[79] In this crude denial of history, Mond echoes a popular saying by Henry Ford, who has become a quasi-deity in *Brave New World*, meaning that the only part of history worth mentioning is the one we make today. Questions of "what has been" and "what will be" are no longer of concern, as everything that matters is the "here and now" – society is stuck in an eternal present. Ford's dictum has become a truth of its own; it is the epitome of an anti-historical discourse in the World State. It categorically denies any existence of the past; on the one hand because the past is dangerous and subversive; on the other hand because it is simply redundant: "We haven't any use for old things here," Mond remarks boldly. And why should they? For a society that has reached a state of stability, the past can only be a "horror story, a reservoir of obscene words and dim memories."[80] In order to not stir these dim memories and in order to prevent the emergence of dangerous, subversive thoughts tied to a previous reality, the World State has made a huge and ongoing effort to obliterate the past. Of course, the only ones aware of this process are the world controllers and the characters who challenge the nature of society, such as Helmholtz Watson, Bernard Marx and John the Savage, and only so, because they are told by Mond.

Among other actions[81], both spoken languages and literature have been severely reduced. As indicated early in the novel, Polish, along with German and French are now considered dead languages,[82] while others like Zuñi and Spanish are only spoken in the

[78] Huxley 2004, 90.
[79] Ibid., 29.
[80] Kumar 1989, 259.
[81] Besides issues of banning language and books, Booker also refers to the reduction of aging effects and the economic need to consume modern goods to counter historical change (cf. Booker 1994, 63f.).
[82] Huxley 2004, 19.

Savage Reservations and are almost extinct.[83] Certainly, this has to do with the longing for uniformity: as long as everyone speaks the same language, misunderstandings as well as subversive actions can be minimized. The possibility of a conspiracy by the means of a foreign or unknown language is eradicated. It is interesting to see that these languages are no longer considered merely lost due to the lack of speakers or moribund, but that they are already dead and a part of (irrelevant) history. When the Director of the hatchery asks the students if they know what Polish actually is, an answer, though given, cannot be expected, and it is very likely, that both the word and concept of 'Polish' will eventually be lost.

However, in an attempt to obliterate the past and stifle dissent by controlling language, the World State has gone beyond the mere reduction of spoken languages: The world controller refers to a whole "campaign against the past, the closing of museums, the blowing up of historical monuments and […] the suppression of all books published before A.F. 150."[84] Again, the confrontation with the past is unwanted, as long as it contains a potential subversive power. Museums, historical sites and monuments are all indicators of a discourse, whose existence the World State tries to obliterate. Although museums and historical monuments merely offer a metonymic reference to something non-existent, they still refer to a previous reality, which may constitute an alternative to the present state. Of course, this is a risk the World State is not going to take. Hence, the only places still left, where people can encounter a previous reality at all, are the Savage Reservations, as these are meant to help their visitors realize, how fortunate they are to have escaped from this unworthy way of living[85]. In other words, the past is only allowed when it appears to be seemingly worse than the present. In every other instance, it is obliterated. Consumption plays an important role in this matter, too. In a society so highly dependent on consumerism, which even used to have "conscription on consumption"[86], the World State wants the population to consume products produced by the current system, as only these are adapted to its ideology and of use to economic stability. Museums, on the other hand, have no consumption value.

In *Brave New World*, history and any discourse tied to it has been systematically eradicated. With no historical evidence, no historical documents and no historical memories on behalf of the population (with the exception of the world controllers), the past has become essentially non-existent.

[83] Ibid., 89.
[84] Ibid., 43-44.
[85] Kumar 1989, 259.
[86] Huxley 2004, 42.

Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* deals with the past in a slightly different, albeit equally important way. Although there has not been a systematic campaign against the past as in *Brave New World*, it plays a pivotal role for both the narration and issues of language and control as well. Narrated by a woman called Offred, whose real name remains unknown to the reader throughout, the novel takes place in the Republic of Gilead, formerly known as the United States. Gilead appears to be an authoritarian oligarchy, set up along fundamentalist Christian lines[87] after an unspecified catastrophe wiped out almost the entire population. After a revolution threatens what is left of social order, a military dictatorship called "Commanders of the Faithful" seizes control over the remaining population with the help of the "Guardians of the Faith" and the "Eyes" (a secret police). Other religions besides Christianity are forbidden, and non-conformist identities – based on sexuality, faith or race – are suppressed. Accordingly, the government tries to 'resettle' homosexuals ("Gender Traitors"), Jews and African Americans outside the country. Society is highly patriarchal, as women are "stripped of their individuality."[88] As most of the women are infertile these days, they are divided into different castes according to class status and reproductive capacity. Furthermore, they are "color-coded according to their function and their labor."[89] Handmaids such as Offred, who are still able to conceive children, are obliged to wear red. An increasing misogyny has led to the reduction of almost all legal rights and privileges for women, with the exception of the Commander's Wives, who retain a few perks such as cigarettes and television. Offred's previous marriage was declared illegal, and her husband and child were taken away from her. Throughout the novel, she recollects episodes of her previous life and scenes from her time as a Handmaid. As readers find out in a fictitious appendix titled "Historical Notes", these recollections are preserved in a series of audio recordings, which were discovered years after they took place. Professor Pieixoto, a key speaker at the "Twelfth Symposium on Gileadean Studies", which takes place about 200 years after the main narrative, turns out to be the one who reconstructed the text and titled it "The Handmaid's Tale", in homage to Geoffrey Chaucer.[90]

[87] Cf. Sisk, 109.
[88] Linda Kauffman. 1989. "Special Delivery: Twenty-First Century Epistolarity in The Handmaid's Tale." In: Goldsmith, Elizabeth (Ed.): *Writing the Female Voice: Essays on Epistolary Literature*. Boston, Northeastern UP, 232.
[89] Ibid.
[90] The appendix of *The Handmaid's Tale* serves an important function, which I will analyze in chapter 5.

As David Ketterer correctly observes[91], many of the features in *The Handmaid's Tale* are familiar to readers of dystopian fiction: the lack of freedom, increased surveillance, conformity, and attempts of resistance. What he does not mention, however, is the role of language. As one follows Offred's perceptions through her first-person narrative, one also learns about an ongoing reduction of language and concepts, which I will explain later on, and about a past, which is in the process of sliding away from the narrator as she tries to recollect it. There are several instances, in which Offred tries to recall remnants from her previous, pre-Gileadean existence: the shoes and clothes she used to wear, memories of her child, television programs.[92] But just like the reader's understanding of how exactly Gilead came into existence is limited (because Offred does not remember herself, and there are only hints to a war and the subsequent reduction of women's rights), Offred's descriptions remain fragmented. "I know I lost time"[93], she notes at one point, and all she can "hope for is a reconstruction."[94] But even a reconstruction proves to be ultimately difficult. The government has blurred all remnants of a previous reality, eventually shutting women like Offred out from every sort of historical discourse, in fact, from having a history at all. By recollecting the few memories she retained, she tries to establish her identity as an individual again, in a society, in which women have no individuality at all but are little more than commodities. "I'm a refugee from the past […] I wander back, try to regain those distant pathways."[95] It is important to understand Offred not as refugee trying to escape the past, but one who was forced to leave her previous existence behind. The distant pathways she mentions are not only memories of her friends and family, but they are often paved with words – history, as Offred tries to recover it, is closely connected to words, language and discourses. By following and rediscovering words, Offred and the reader gain an understanding of how Gilead came into place; whenever there is a description of the past, it is connected with language: "Humungous, word of my childhood"[96], she says while describing a pregnant woman's belly. Examples like this are scattered all over the novel, and not always exclusively by Offred. As she learns the origin of an inscription she found in her room, her Commander remembers: "We used to write all kinds of things like that. I don't know where we got them, from older boys perhaps". […] "There was another

[91] David Ketterer. 1989. "Margaret Atwood's 'The Handmaid's Tale'. A Contextual Dystopia". In: *Science Fiction Studies* 16, No.2, 211.
[92] Atwood 1998, 24, 63 and 144 respectively.
[93] Ibid., 39.
[94] Ibid., 263.
[95] Ibid., 227.
[96] Atwood 1998, 26.

one", he says. "*Cim, cis, cit…*" He stops, returning to the present, embarrassed."[97] Only in his memory of a Latin saying, does the Commander refer to the past. Even he is unsure of the past, as he does not remember where he heard the saying in the first place, and even he is embarrassed of talking about the past in the first place, indicating once more the past's elusive nature. The fact that even the privileged are no longer in control of the past seems to be an indication of a severe distrust in the past, which is later on confirmed by Professor Pieixoto. He reports, after Offred's recordings have been found: "As all historians know, the past is a great darkness, and filled with echoes. Voices may reach us from it; but what they say to us is imbued with the obscurity of the matrix out of which they come."[98] The obscure matrix means that history is still existent in *The Handmaid's Tale*, but it is unclear and fragmented. But for the Republic of Gilead, the past is not only darkness[99], but also a danger. Gilead's existence is much more unstable than that of the World State in *Brave New World*, as indicated by the reference to constant threats of a revolution from the outside. In this way, any reference to a previous reality, to history, may constitute a danger to society, thus it must be controlled. The more unstable society is, the more danger an alternative past exerts. However, while the past has been made literally non-existent in *Brave New World*, society in Gilead rather attempts to obliterate it by turning it into a story, a literary construction itself, similar to Offred's scattered recollection. At various points in the novel, it appears as if news have become deliberately controlled and changed over the course of the revolution. Offred remembers stories in the newspaper, which were "like dreams to us, bad dreams dreamt by others."[100] The "others", of course, refers to the military regime. Later, she is watching television, and again, she is unsure whether any of it is true: "It could be old clips, it could be faked."[101] Her uncertainty about whether it has happened *at all* proves how oblivious history has become. In a way, this also echoes the construction of history in *1984*. There is not only a difference between fact and fiction, but also between facts and (fake) documentation, used to manipulate the population. As Offred's uncertainty proves, her memories have already been clouded to some degree by the state's official propaganda, and her very own history has become a construction, a story that can be written and rewritten.

[97] Ibid., 187.
[98] Ibid., 311.
[99] The term 'darkness' of course is interestingly ambiguous: it can either refer to the 'darkness of war', which led to the creation of Gilead, as well as to the lack of historical documents from that time.
[100] Atwood 1998, 57.
[101] Ibid., 82.

Remembering another episode from her childhood, she recalls:

> I remember a television program I once saw […] it was the sort of thing my mother liked to watch: historical, educational. She tried to explain it to me afterwards, to tell me that the things in it really happened, but to me it was only a story. I thought someone had made it up. I suppose all children think that, about any history before their own. If it's only a story, it becomes less frightening."[102]

This encapsulates both Offred's and Gilead's relationship to the past – both try to portray history as a story. Offred tries to make her existence more bearable: without her clinging to words and memories, she would probably have no hope left. Gilead's regime tries to stifle history's subversive potential by clouding its true nature. In this way, the past evokes power struggles within discourse, as it helps to liberate Offred (and women in general) on the one side, and it has to be controlled by the regime to prevent unorthodoxy on the other. However, as indicated in the "Historical Notes", Gilead's experiment was a failure. As the reader is told by Professor Pieixoto at the symposium in 2195, the Republic of Gilead is no longer in existence. It becomes clear, that the Commanders, the only ones who were allowed to read and write, apparently did not trust each other in regards to history: "The surviving records of the time are spotty, as the Gileadean regime was in the habit of wiping its own computers and destroying print-outs after various purges and internal upheavals."[103] The distrust in historical documents is one of the reasons, why the symposium has to rely on Offred's recordings to properly reconstruct the society of Gilead. But the information is unreliable, and the reconstruction of Offred's tapes is based "on some guesswork."[104] In this way, the implications of Gilead's distrust in the past go beyond its existence; they are of concern even after Gilead collapsed. History is an unstable and highly linguistic entity in *The Handmaid's Tale*, and its mutability echoes the control of the past in Orwell's *1984*.

1984 takes a similar approach to *The Handmaid's Tale* in a similar distrust in the past, but instead of blurring out the past, this novel's dystopian society constantly re-writes its own history to ensure that it is in line with the system's propaganda. In this way, *1984* offers the most radical use of language and control in regards to the past. The novel is set in the fictional super state of Oceania, which comprises one third of the world next to Eastasia

[102] Atwood 1998, 144.
[103] Ibid., 303.
[104] Ibid., 302.

and Eurasia. Society is essentially a totalitarian oligarchy; about two per cent of the population are members of the Inner Party, which governs and controls society. Winston Smith, the novel's protagonist, is a member of the Outer Party, while the Proles, who are allowed a life seemingly unrestricted from the Party's policies, make up the majority of the population. The ruling party's mythical leader, Big Brother, is omnipresent on posters around the bleak and destroyed city of London. Party members are constantly under surveillance by the use of so-called two-way 'telescreens' in their homes, and every non-conformist behaviour can be detected as a sign of treason or 'thoughtcrime', as it is called, and summon the Thought Police. Sexual relationships are forbidden, and so are books and essentially all forms of recreation. Instead, the Party organizes "2 Minute Hates", in which the populace' suppressed feeling of hatred is directed at Emanuel Goldstein, an equally mythical traitor figure. The Party's ultimate weapon against unorthodoxy is "Newspeak", an artificial language in development, which aims to embed the Party's goals in its rules (I will explain Newspeak later on). The plot follows Winston as he observes his society, before he starts an illegal relationship with a young woman called Julia and becomes part of an intellectual revolution, only to be captured and 'cured' in the end.

In *1984*, history and time have become mutable entities. As shown early in the novel, Winston is unsure if it actually the year 1984, and if he is actually 39 years old.[105] For him, "the past was dead, the future was unimaginable."[106] His job lies in the Ministry of Truth (or Minitrue in Newspeak), where he has to revise historical documents and change them according to the Party's official version of the past. After all, the past in *1984* is contemporaneous: If the Party's orthodoxy changes, the historical documents are altered accordingly. As Oceania is constantly at war, and its enemies are prone to change from one day to another, its historical documents have to be readjusted. Goldstein writes in his elusive book, the pamphlet of the rebellious "Brotherhood", which Winston eventually receives from fellow Party member O'Brian (who turns out to be a member of the Thought Police and author of the Book in the end):

> The alteration of the past is necessary for two reasons, one of which is subsidiary and, so to speak, precautionary. The subsidiary reason is that the Party member, like the proletarian, tolerates present-day conditions partly because he has no standards of comparison. He must be cut off from the past, just as he must be cut off from foreign countries, because it is necessary for

[105] Orwell 1989, 9
[106] Ibid., 28.

> him to believe that his is better off than his ancestors and that the average level of material comfort is constantly rising.[107]

This directly resembles ideology in *Brave New World*, with the exception that the World State has indeed reached a state of stability and technological advance, while in *1984*, reality is in fact much bleaker than it is asserted, and "material comfort", if it does exist at all, is stagnating at best.[108] Goldstein continues:

> But by far the more important reason for the readjustment of the past is the need to safeguard the infallibility of the Party. It is not merely that speeches, statistics, and records of every kind must be constantly brought up to date in order to show that the predictions of the Party were in all cases right. It is also that no change of doctrine or in political alignment can ever be admitted.[109]

The last sentence can in fact be applied to all dystopian societies in which an authoritative power is present. Whether it is the case of *The Handmaid's Tale, Riddley Walker, Book of Dave* or *Native Tongue* – in order for a dystopian regime to work, its infallibility must be taken for granted; there cannot be any indication that the present state might not be the best one possible. Orwell has developed these thoughts before he started working on *1984*. In an essay titled *The Prevention of Literature* in 1946 he anticipates the relationship between a totalitarian state as depicted in *1984* and the past in the following way, which echoes the description by Goldstein:

> From the totalitarian point of view history is something to be created rather than learned. A totalitarian state is in effect a theocracy, and its ruling caste, in order to keep its position, has to be thought of as infallible. But since, in practice, no one is infallible, it is frequently necessary to rearrange past events in order to show that this or that mistake was not made, or that this or that imaginary triumph actually happened.[110]

By changing the historical records to be in line with the Party's doctrine, the Party in *1984* leaves no evidence that a political change has ever existed, nor any evidence that the Party has ever been wrong. Any attempts of subverting the Party's orthodoxy are thus made literally impossible, because there is nothing to subvert. Political discourse in *1984* is stripped of any historical sphere, as it does only reflect the actual present. "Who controls

[107] Orwell 1989, 221.
[108] At one point, Winston ponders upon the fact that the Party announces astronomical numbers of boots produced, while in fact "half the population of Oceania went barefoot". (Orwell 1989, 44.)
[109] Ibid.
[110] George Orwell. 1946. *The Prevention of Literature*. [Online source]

the present controls the past" is one of the most memorable and principal slogans in *1984*, and it lies at the bottom of the Party's ideology. The Party controls both written documents and the population's mind, as both are directly related to each other, enforcing the relationship between language and the past. As Goldstein's text within the text points out, "since the Party is in full control of all records and in equally full control of the minds of its members, it follows that the past is whatever the Party choose to make it."[111] The population is subject to a continued form of linguistic brainwashing, which eventually dissolves any memories and replaces them with official 'facts'. There is segregation between 'fact' and 'truth', in which 'facts' are created from 'truths'. In a circular process, the Party takes truths (i.e. actual happenings) and transforms them according to their beliefs, thus creating what they refer to as 'facts'. As no documents are kept, not even Party members are able to remember the truth after it has been changed into a fact. In this way, a political discourse established on nothing but made-up facts will eventually become reality, as the Party, being the institution that exerts the most power, controls discourse. What sounds highly abstract to us readers is realized within the novel by the Newspeak concept of "doublethink", which allows accepting two mutually contradictory beliefs as correct. In this way, Winston and his colleagues can rewrite historical documents and create 'facts' as mentioned above, while at the same time accepting them as the truth:

> If the Party could thrust its hand into the past and say of this or that event, *it never happened* – that, surely, was more terrifying than mere torture and death? The Party said that Oceania had never been in alliance with Eurasia. 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. 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.' And yet the past, though of its nature alterable, never had been altered.[112]

By rewriting the past, the population's sense of reality is dislocated. There are no more points of reference by which the truth can be judged, and thus no comparison with former times, the only exception being human memory, which will inevitably fade. This is similar to Offred's narration in *The Handmaid's Tale*: Offred is trying to remember her past, but at the same time she has already started forgetting parts of her previous existence, thus constantly reminding us of the reconstructive nature of her story, as will be shown in the

[111] Orwell 1989, 222.
[112] Ibid., 37.

forthcoming chapters. However, in *1984*, the control of the past is even closer tied to the control of language, because it incorporates both the concept of Newspeak and an active re-writing of historical documents. Krishan Kumar claims that besides human memory, a "formal knowledge", such as written documents, is needed to have any certainty about the past.[113] Steven Blakemore seconds this thought by considering the reality of *1984* as "highly linguistic," as the "Party's reality becomes tied to paper and print; reality becomes paper reality."[114] Figures, statistics and speeches have to be brought up to date, and individuals, who are mentioned in newspaper articles but no longer exist, become so-called 'unpersons'. People, places and things are linguistically expressed in writing, and once their literary existence is destroyed, they cease to exist at all; if there is no prove of an existence on paper, it has never existed.[115] In *1984*, discourse is essentially tied to written texts, and since these texts are nothing but "palimpsests,"[116] which can be re-written as often as necessary, discourse itself becomes an unstable entity. As there is no more certainty about the actual truth of the past, there is only one truth to be accepted: the one proposed by the Party, proving how the control of the past and the control of language interlock.

All three novels discussed here make an effort to impede access or change the past, although to a varying degree. In *Brave New World*, the past is essentially non-existent, as the society has obliterated all references to a previous reality. In a state of 'eternal present' and static stability, the only reason to refer to a past is to demonstrate its undesirable nature. In *The Handmaid's Tale*, history is still present in the minds of the population, but the regime tries to effectively prevent any access to it, especially prevent access for women. In *1984*, the past has become a mutable entity, as it is constantly re-written, and the population, with the exception of a few individuals such as Winston, is unable to distinguish manipulated facts from actual truth. What all of the novels have in common, is first of all, that the past, or rather the discourse of the past, is considered dangerous to the present state. Adding to this, in order to control the past, language has to be controlled. In all of the novels mentioned so far, the past is controlled by the means of language – either

[113] Kumar 1987, 325.
[114] Steven Blakemore. 1984. "Language and Ideology in Orwell's '1984'". In: *Social Theory and Practice*, 10:3 (Fall 1984), 352.
[115] Blakemore, in line with classic post-structuralism, claims that the relation between signifier and signified has become inverted, as the appearance or absence of a person or a thing in print decides whether it exists or not. (Blakemore 1984, 352f.)
[116] Orwell 1989, 42.

in the absence or existence of literature or written documents, or in the modification of the same. However, this concedes only the tip of the iceberg in regards to issues of language and control. The following chapters will uncover more aspects and introduce other novels as well.

3.1.3 Control of literature and writing

Situated between the control of the past and the control of language and thought, the banning of literature and historical documents is a recurring issue in dystopian fiction, as it enforces both aspects. First of all, literature contains a form of "ancient memory"; its stories relate to different times, different societies, in fact, different perceptions of the world[117], and is thus often considered dangerous and subversive. In other words, literature is a carrier of the past and it also contains an imaginative sphere - the possibility, to create alternative places, worlds and societies. Secondly, coming back to our discursive framework, works of literature and written documents are often carriers of discourse as well. Again, discourse is not to be put on a level exclusively with written texts, but hegemonic (i.e. predominant) discourses are often manifested in texts: Juridical discourse relies on the existence of legal texts, just as the discourse of Christianity is manifested in *The Bible*. In *The Handmaid's Tale* for example, the *Bible* is exclusively available to the Commanders. At one point, Offred ponders upon its power: "It is an incendiary device: who knows what we'd make of it, if we ever got our hands on it?" It is incendiary and dangerous, because it is object to interpretation. By preventing women's access to a *Bible* in *The Handmaid's Tale* and the possibility of interpreting it, dystopian societies are enforcing Foucault's idea of the exclusion of subjects, as they are limiting the number of (active) participants of a certain discourse. Considering this, it is not surprising that several dystopian societies enforce a ban of literature, or rather a ban of literature that may contain a subversive power.

Starting once again with *Brave New World* and directly following up the issues of the past, literature is basically non-existent in the World State, and so are any forms of written

[117] This is closely related to the Sapir-Whorf-hypothesis, on which I will focus on in detail in the next chapter.

history, philosophy and culture, in short, anything that might evoke unorthodox thought.[118] The works of Shakespeare serve as an obvious example, because of their importance to John the Savage, who arrives in society after having grown up in an excluded reservation. Shakespeare is banned not only because it is old, but mainly because the words are beautiful, and they evoke unwanted emotions; emotions, which the system has essentially gotten rid of: "Beauty's attractive, and we don't want people to be attracted by old things. We want them to like the new ones,"[119] Mond explains to John. Shakespeare's depictions of love and hate are, after all, concepts the system has eliminated from the minds of its inhabitants. Thus, the Savage's dedication to Shakespeare leads to the subsequent "disjunction between […] Shakespearean expectations and the reality he encounters."[120] This serves as an example of the incompatibility of 'ancient' literature with recent society, and I will come back to this when talking about language and perception of the world in the next chapter.

But literature is also banned, because reading is considered an unwanted pastime, an unwanted distraction: "'Our library', said Dr. Gaffney, 'contains only books of reference. If our young people need distraction, they can get it at the Feelies'."[121] What is implied, of course, is a distraction from consumption, because "you can't consume much if you sit still and read books."[122] Reading is regarded as an active, creative act, opposed to the passive consumption of the Feelies. It can thus not be controlled by the state; it contains a sphere of unwanted privacy and, even more important, unwanted creativity. As Peter Firchow notes, this seems to echo a saying by the actual Henry Ford: "I don't like to read books; they mess up my mind."[123] And of course, they potentially 'mess up' the stability brought by the system, as every piece of literature or fiction, whether old or not, engage creativity on behalf of its reader. In a society based on mindless self-indulgence, there is simply no room for books, reading and critical thoughts.

Similar to *Brave New World*, literature, with the exception of the *Bible* as said before, has been purged from society in *The Handmaid's Tale*. Hence, when Offred first enters the

[118] Sisk 1997, 23.
[119] Huxley 2004, 193.
[120] Booker 1994, 59.
[121] Huxley 2004, 142.
[122] Ibid., 42.
[123] Peter E. Firchow. 1984. *The End of Utopia: A Study of Aldous Huxley's Brave New World*. Lewisburg: Bucknell UP, 139.

Commander's study at the first time, she is amazed by the amount of forbidden books: "But all around the walls there are bookcases. They're filled with books. Books and books and books, right out in plain view, no locks, no boxes ... It's an oasis of the forbidden."[124] As the reader learns at one point, books have been burned years earlier, when "house-to-house searches"[125] have been conducted, and they are now considered black market ware. Why exactly the Commander keeps them in a secret study, remains unclear, but his answer to Offred perfectly summarizes the argument of discursive power: "What's dangerous in the hands of the multitudes, he said, with what may or may not have been irony, is safe enough for those whose motives are… Beyond reproach, I said. He nodded gravely."[126] Surely, the multitudes mentioned here refer to the suppressed parts of society, namely women. By taking away books, written texts and every possibility to read and write, to put down thoughts and memories, the Gileadean regime attempts to exclude women from any chance of participating in discourse. This thought can be extended to dystopian fiction in general – the prohibition of certain discourses for a certain group of people. In the struggle of power relations in *The Handmaid's Tale* the discourses of theocracy and misogyny, enforced and controlled by a patriarchal power, are predominant. By restricting access to any form of literature, access to and participation in other discourses is prevented. After all, books and magazines retain a subversive power, which is fittingly described by Offred after being confronted with them in the Commander's study:

> What was in them was promise. They dealt in transformations; they suggested an endless series of possibilities, extending like the reflections in two mirrors set facing one another, stretching on, replica after replica, to the vanishing point. They suggested one adventure after another, one wardrobe after another, one improvement after another, one man after another. They suggested rejuvenation, pain overcome and transcended, endless love. The real promise in them was immortality. This was what he was holding, without knowing it.[127]

In these magazines, Offred finds everything she has been deprived of: the ability to choose her own clothes, to move freely or to choose her partner. In short, everything the prevailing discourse has made impossible. These magazines are a way out of her misery, even if only for the time of reading. They are immortal, because they retain their imaginative power and they are proof not only of a previous reality, but of Offred's very own past, as they

[124] Atwood 1998, 137.
[125] Ibid., 157.
[126] Ibid., 158.
[127] Atwoor 1998, 157.

contain "images of her childhood."[128] At last, they contain discourses that are basically extinct: fashion, sex, music – all of them remnants of a former reality. In order to stifle exactly the emotions they bring out in Offred, the regime has decided to systematically purge all forms of literature, leaving nothing but *The Bible*, which is of course interpreted in regards to fundamentalist Christian beliefs and traditions.

Religious beliefs also pervade the society depicted in Suzette Elgin's *Native Tongue*, which is quite different from all the other novels in this study.[129] As with *Riddley Walker*, *Book of Dave* and *Clockwork Orange*, I refrained from including the novel in the first part, because it does not explicitly depict a controlling of the past. Set about three centuries in the future, humankind has made massive technological advance. Earth has become part of an interplanetary commerce system and is in contact with hundreds of alien life forms. But while technological achievements such as space travel seem to have become ordinary, society on earth has in fact regressed. America, now dominated by the Catholic Church's theocracy, has repealed the 19th Amendment (the right to vote, independent of one's sex), and women have been depraved of other citizen rights as well. They are no longer allowed to possess property or to work outside of their home without the permission of a male relative. In order to conduct intergalactic business, which has become crucial to Earth's existence, it is dependent on human translators. These translators, for reasons yet undiscovered, are all members of thirteen families of Linguists called the Lines. With rigid discipline, all male and female children of the Lines are made to learn various alien languages at young age, so they can keep up Earth's economy. Thanks to this, the Linguists control the economy and are among the wealthiest people on Earth. However, they are despised by the public, which believes that the Linguists lead a simple life of prosperity – a misconception, because in fact they lead a rigidly controlled, almost monastic lifestyle unknown to most of the public. The government fuels the disdain, as they are unable to "interface" their own children with alien life forms, and hope to wear down the Linguist's hegemony in order to gain power.

The first novel, told by an omniscient third-person narrator, follows the life of one especially gifted linguist woman – Nazareth Chornyak Adiness, daughter to Thomas Blair

[128] Ibid.

[129] First of all, *Native Tongue* contains much examples of classic science fiction than any other dystopian fictions used here, such as space travel, aliens, and technological advance. Nevertheless, it also incorporates most of the dystopian themes previously mentioned, and in terms of plot, it is indebted to the feminist dystopian tradition, just as *The Handmaid's Tale*.

Chornyak, Head of all the Lines. The timeline covers a span of about thirty years and traces Nazareth's life from early childhood to adulthood. Nazareth's abilities allow her to create so-called 'Encodings', the naming of previously unnamed "chunks of the world". In separate "Barren Houses" – amongst exclusively female company – women secretly begin to develop their own language based on these Encodings in an attempt to "challenge the patriarchal power and the androcentric character of society".[130] This language is called Láadan.

At the beginning of *The Judas Rose*, Nazareth is still alive and Láadan flourishes among the linguist women. In an attempt to spread the language to women of the public as well, they translate the *King James Bible* into Láadan and preach it at church meetings. Once the Catholic Church becomes aware of this, they assign Sister Miriam Rose (The "Judas Rose") to overlook a process in which the Bible is bowdlerized from Láadan and a patriarchal hegemony re-established, not knowing that Miriam has subverted the Church for years. She translates the cleansed *Bible* into "clank and stumble" language, knowing that this way it is useless to attract women to the patriarchal religion. Once she confesses her deeds at the end of the novel, Láadan has already spread beyond the Lines, ending the novel on a seemingly optimistic note.

I will come back to the nature of Láadan and its subversive power in detail, but for now I only want to focus on the banning of literature in *Native Tongue*, which is in fact very similar to the happenings in *The Handmaid's Tale*. As the reader is told by an omniscient narrator, most sorts of literature have been banned, especially the ones from the time of the Women's Liberation movement, a revolutionary group. These books were permitted only to males and are now considered "contraband,"[131] because they make up "archives of a time when women dared to speak openly of equal rights"[132] (which of course refers again to a previous discourse in the past). The titles of these books give away, how discourses have changed; they are titled "The Theology of Lovingkindness" and "The Discourse of the Three Marys,"[133] both titles referring to a matriarchal form of religion, which of course challenges the existing patriarchal discourse. Accordingly, the *Bible* is interpreted in an equally male-dominated fashion. As the Church realizes that the women have translated

[130] Karen Bruce. 2008. "A woman-Made language: Suzette Haden Elgin's Láadan and the Native Tongue trilogy as thought experiment in feminist linguistics". In: *Extrapolation*, Spring 2008, 2.
[131] Suzette Haden Elgin. 2000. *Native Tongue*. New York: The Feminist Press,124.
[132] Ibid.
[133] Ibid.

parts of *King James Bible* in Láadan, they find them to refer to a goddess instead of a god, and they subsequently try to change it again according to their principles (I will explain this in detail in chapter 4.2).[134] It appears, as if the purging of books in *Native Tongue* is grounded on the same principles as it is in Atwood's novel, with the exception, that books are forbidden only to women in the former, while they are forbidden for everyone in *The Handmaid's Tale*. In any case, the prohibition of literature is closely related to a gender-related discourse, with both societies trying to exclude women from everything that even remotely suggests a previous existence and/or gynocentric power.

Of course, *1984* displays a slightly different approach. If one keeps in mind, that every historical record has been changed and merely substituted with a lie, it is not surprising that every form of literature has been changed as well. It is unclear, whether any form of literature has been actually banned, because, as Winston notes, "there were no longer any laws"[135], but then again, as the historical records, literature will eventually be brought 'up to date' as well, as Winston's colleague Syme explains: "The whole literature of the past will have been destroyed. Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Byron – they'll exist only in Newspeak versions, not merely changed into something different, but actually changed into something contradictory of what they used to be."[136] It is interesting that Syme refers to destruction first, and to change later, because by changing the text into something contradictory, literature's original "soul" is indeed destroyed.

As it turns out, unlike in the other dystopias mentioned so far, literature, books and magazines in general are still widely available in Oceania. However, just like the past, they have been produced and altered by the Party:

> [The] process of continuous alteration was applied not only to newspapers, but to books, periodicals, pamphlets, posters, leaflets, films, soundtracks, cartoons, photographs – to every kind of literature or documentation which might conceivably hold any political or ideological significance.[137]

Instead of a systematic ban on literature, the totalitarian regime in *1984* has chosen another approach. Instead of preventing access to certain discourses, as it is the case in all of the three dystopias mentioned before, the Party tries to literally flood the population with

[134] Suzette Haden Elgin. 2002. *The Judas Rose*. New York: The Feminist Press, 182f.
[135] Orwell 1989, 8.
[136] Ibid., 56.
[137] Ibid., 42.

information, including literature, produced to their ends. Booker calls this a form of "cultural control".[138] He recognizes a resemblance to the theories of Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1944). The latter two refer to a calculated production of cultural goods (movies, art) that only resemble reality on the surface with the intention to create passive consumers. In *1984*, something similar is achieved by the constant "barrage of video propaganda"[139] on the telescreens, and a literal bombardment of information. Even the proles are not exempt from this, as the Party tries to keep them in line with their ideology as well by supplying them with what is referred to as "prolefeed":

> There was a whole chain of separate departments dealing with proletarian literature, music, drama and entertainment generally. Here were produced rubbishy newspapers containing almost nothing except sport, crime and astrology, sensational five-cent novelettes, films oozing with sex, and sentimental songs […][140]

Certainly, this recalls the consumerist madness of *Brave New World* (except that there is no literature in the World State). In *1984*, the systematic spreading of books, texts and information is allowed, as long as they emerge from the Ministry of Truth. Whereas Adorno and Horkheimer refer to an economic force behind the culture industry, in this case it is more of a political one: In spreading numbing pieces of information filled with propaganda, the Party can stifle the dissent of its population, even the proles, without taking any physical action. They are in control of the written word, and in this way, they are constantly promoting propaganda. Although the proles are allowed to read, the Party makes sure that their creativity is not engaged, and that they stick to their daily, mostly boring routine. By the means of language, the Party is subversively putting its population in a state of propaganda-filled numbness, purging any form of unorthodoxy from their consciousness. Oceania's culture industry "seeks to interpellate individual subjects within the ideology of the Party."[141] The production of social memory has become a major industry, as popular culture, and especially literature are carrying out important state functions.[142] However, it is not authentic, as Goldstein, who bears more than a merely physical resemblance to Leo Trotsky, sums up: "The field are cultivated with horse plows,

[138] Booker 1994, p. 78.
[139] Ibid.
[140] Orwell 1989, 46.
[141] Booker 1994, 79.
[142] Irving Howe. 1956."Orwell: History as Nightmare." In: *American Scholar* 25 (Spring 1956), 201.

while books are written by machinery."[143] Literature may not be systematically banned, but it contains nothing but preformatted, fabricated truth, and thus it leaves no room for subversive thoughts and it leaves the question whether it can still be considered literature at all.

As seen earlier, the control of literature and writing is present in various different dystopias. In some, such as in *Brave New World, The Handmaid's Tale* and *Native Tongue,* literature is essentially forbidden for most parts of the population, as it contains either references to a previous reality or a subversive potential. As a carrier of discourse, literature possesses power, which has to be controlled by the government. This is the same in *1984,* but in the state of Oceania, literature has been stripped of any meaning, truth and subversive power, and it is changed just as easy as the past. Literature as a medium is equally important in other dystopias not touched so far: In both *Riddley Walker* and *Book of Dave*, pieces of literature are crucial to the plot, but in both novels, access is not prevented, as both societies have lost the technological means to produce books in the first place, and their population is essentially illiterate. Instead of controlling literature itself, these societies enforce merely a control of interpretation over discourse, and I will pick this up in the next chapter, when some of the implications of a control of language, past and literature are analysed. The only novel not mentioned so far remains *Clockwork Orange*, as its use of language works mostly towards freedom, and will thus be discussed in chapter 3.2.

3.1.4 Language, thought and reality

It is now time to come to one of the central concepts in regard to the control of language in dystopian fiction: the relationship between language and reality, or: how the control of language effects and supports the present state of a dystopian society. Of course, as seen before, both the control of literature and the past are enforced by the means of language. However, the alteration of written records, or the prevention of access to the past and subversive literature only touches language on the outside. Now, the subject of concern is how language *itself* can be controlled – how words and their seemingly innate concepts can

[143] Orwell 1989, 201.

change or lose their meaning – and how a specific use of language defines reality. In order to arrive at an understanding of the issue, it is useful to take a look at the theories of Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf first, as they serve as the basis for many of the aspects in this regard.

"If thought corrupts language, language can also corrupt thought", George Orwell once said in one of his essays.[144] Although Orwell himself did not make the connection, his notion reflects the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, which, in its strongest sense, theorizes that thoughts and behaviour are determined by language. First expressed by Edward Sapir in 1929, and later advanced and published by his student Benjamin Lee Whorf in 1940, the hypothesis is based on two principles, none of which they explicitly expressed, but which have been deduced from their studies afterwards.[145] According to the first of these principles, *linguistic determinism*, our language determines our thinking, and the speaker is object to it without a choice. This is also called the 'strong' hypothesis. The second, the 'weak hypothesis', has been labelled *linguistic relativity*. According to it, different languages allow for a different perception of the world. For example, speakers of languages with a different tense system might possess a different perception of the way time is organized. In a widely cited passage, Whorf states:

> We dissect nature along lines laid down by our native languages. The categories and types that we isolate from the world of phenomena we do not find there because they stare every observer in the face; on the contrary, the world is presented in a kaleidoscopic flux of impressions which has to be organized by our minds – and this means largely by the linguistic systems in our minds. We cut nature up, organize it into concepts, and ascribe significances as we do, largely because we are parties to an agreement to organize it in this way – an agreement that holds throughout our speech community and is codified in the patterns of our language.[146]

Ever since its publication, linguists have challenged Sapir-Whorf's hypothesis. Today, linguistic relativity in its strong sense is generally disregarded and considered untenable.[147]

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[144] George Orwell. 1945. *Politics and the English Language*. [Online source]

[145] The theory became popular only after Whorf's death, as he died at the early age of 44, only one year after the publication of his study.

[146] Benjamin Lee Whorf & John B. Carroll (Ed.). 1956. *Language, Thought, and Reality: Selected Writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 213.

[147] It would go beyond the scope of this study to give a detailed description of criticism on Whorf's hypothesis. Whorf's methods in the research of Indian languages have been widely challenged, and after Chomsky's mode of a Universal Grammar became a dominant paradigm in the 1960s, Whorf's theory was generally discredited.

However, its weak form, which claims that human languages may influence the categories of thought without being fundamentally restrictive, is still considered trivially true.[148] In regards to this study, Whorf's hypothesis is useful to explain and accept certain issues of language and control in dystopian fiction. As both Walter Meyers and David Sisk claim, the hypothesis "serves as a foundation for many of the language-based concerns articulated in the dystopian novel,"[149] and Myra Barnes goes even further by stating that "all dystopian languages technically belong to Whorf."[150] Suzette Haden Elgin, who is a professional linguist, explicitly refers to her *Native Tongue* trilogy as a "thought experiment", which is based on four hypotheses, one of which is to accept the concept of weak linguistic relativity.[151] It is indeed safe to say, that although Whorf's theory has to be handled with care from a linguist's point of view, its implications can be found in almost every dystopian novel that involves issues of language and control. For now, I only want to focus on the novels in which the acceptation of Whorf's hypothesis is used in order to control and ultimately suppress individuals, social groups or discourses.

Huxley, who published *Brave New World* eight years before Whorf formulated his theory, already seemed to anticipate the central notion of linguistic relativity in his novel. I already touched this subject while writing about the role of Shakespeare in the novel, but in order to explain Whorf's hypothesis, it is useful to refer to it once more. I concluded that within the fictional universe of *Brave New World* Shakespeare's writings are considered subversive, because they depict and evoke strong emotions, which are neither required nor wanted by the World State. Shakespeare's words evoke emotions in their reader: Only after John the Savage reads Shakespeare, he seems to be able to develop a feeling of hatred, which he then directs at Popé, one of his mother's lovers:

> He hated Popé more and more. A man can smile and smile and be a villain. Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain. What did the words exactly mean? He only half knew. But their magic was strong and went on rumbling in his head, and somehow it was as though he had never really hated Popé before; never really hated him because he had never been able to say how much he hated him. […] These words and the strange story out of which they were taken (he couldn't make head or tail of it, but it was wonderful,

[148] Cf. Pederson, Eric. 2007. "Cognitive Linguistics and Linguistic Relativity". In: Geeraerts, Dirk & Hubert Cuyckens (Eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics*. Oxford: UP, 1012.
[149] Sisk 1997, 12.
[150] Quoted after Booker 1994, 81.
[151] Suzette Haden Elgin. 1999. *Láadan, the constructed language in Native Tongue.* [Online source]

> wonderful all the same) – they gave him a reason for hating Popé; and they made his hatred more real; they even made Popé more real.[152]

Only after John gathers words like "hate" from the works of Shakespeare, is he able to frame the matching concepts. Even more importantly, these newly acquired words provide him with a new perception of reality: Popé becomes more 'real' after John is able to express his feelings linguistically, which is exactly in line with Whorf's (strong) linguistic relativity hypothesis. Referring back to the issues of control, it is obvious that the World Controllers in *Brave New World* try to prevent the reading of literature such as Shakespeare and with it any form of unorthodox thought, because they believe that "people who have no words to express antisocial sentiments cannot think antisocially."[153] The key medium of controlling language and stifling antisocial thoughts, besides the already mentioned ban of literature, is hypnopaedia. As the Director of the Hatchery explains at the beginning, "wordless conditioning is crude and wholesale; cannot bring home the finer distinctions; cannot inculcate the more complex courses of behavior. For that there must be words, but words without reason. In brief, hypnopaedia."[154] In nurseries, children are inculcated with the World State's suggestions of orthodox morality in their sleep by countless repetition, and in the end "the sum of these suggestions *is* the child's mind;"[155] it has absorbed the World State's orthodoxy. By indoctrinating every individual with the words of propaganda, the World State has literally deteriorated language into a medium cleansed of reason. In lieu of reasonable and critical thinking, mindless jingles and slogans dominate people's minds; they make them accept their social class, work and seemingly joyous existence without discontent, simply because they know no alternative. As long as they not aware of any words (and thus concepts) outside their conditioning, the danger of subversive thoughts is essentially averted. Hence, Sisk ascribes the stability of the World State to the interplay between proscribed happiness and the control of language: "Language becomes a tool for conditioning happiness, which in turn prevents unhappiness from expressing itself in language."[156] As long as there are no words to express unhappiness, it will be an unknown phenomenon. And even if the words still exist, they have changed their meaning or they refer to "out-dated concepts", which have been

[152] Huxley 2004, 114.
[153] William Matter. 1983. "On Brave New World". In: Rabkin, Eric et al (Eds.). *No Place Else. Explorations in Utopian and Dystopian Fiction*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 105.
[154] Huxley 2004, 23.
[155] Ibid.
[156] Sisk 1997, 32.

"debased into vapidity (*love*), smutty humour (*marriage*) or even obscenity (*mother*)."[157] Because there is no more need for human reproduction, the concept of a 'mother' is no longer needed and it has changed its denotation. One can see, how both the issues of controlling the past, literature and language itself are connected with each other; how whole discourses, such as sexuality, are changed by the means of language. In accordance with Whorf's hypothesis, by taking away language, a different reality is produced in the minds of the population, and in most dystopian societies, this reality is stipulated by the ruling power in order to ensure stability.

But the population of the World State is not the only one being conditioned by language. John has undergone a similar process, but instead of being conditioned by the World State's nurseries, he is conditioned by the works of Shakespeare, which is in fact the only literature he knows. John is unaware of the exact meanings of Shakespeare's words, and yet he adopts the "emotional attitudes of Shakespeare's characters"[158] to explain the world around him, as seen in the scene with Popé. After he is brought to the city by Bernard Marx, his perception of the world is shattered, as he is unable to reconcile the emotions he gathered from Shakespeare's plays and his religious uprising with the society he encounters. The values he picked up, especially in regards to sexuality and religion, are non-existent in the World State: Ford has replaced God, promiscuity is openly encouraged, and a mother-child relation as he knows it does not exist. Thus, John's relationship with Lenina Crowne proves as an example of how two different perceptions of the world are incompatible to each other. As John mentions marriage and quotes from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Lenina answers as expected: "For Ford's sake, John, talk sense. I can't understand a word you say."[159] Both are subject to different discourses and different linguistic realities that are impossible to reconcile. This fact leads to another important point: Even people from the outside (e.g. the Savage Reservations) are apparently not able to undermine the system, because even if they are able to express their discontent, they will not be understood. Taking Whorf into account, one can say that the people from the World State do not possess the vocabulary and according mental concepts to form critical thoughts, and thus are equally unsusceptible to any criticism from outside. In this regard, the World State is a completely self-contained 'organism' that can only be subverted from *within* (i.e. if someone grows conscious of his language, such as Helmholtz Watson, as we

[157] Sisk 1997, 22.
[158] Ibid., 28.
[159] Huxley 2004, 168.

will see later on), but not from the outside, because people from the outside will ultimately have a different language, even if it is still English.

As John "strives to fit the world he encounters into the language he has acquired,"[160] he is unable to reconcile his perception of the world with the reality of the World State. The only choices he has, are to adopt the ideals of the World State and abandon his Elizabethan language, or to return to the isolation of the reservation. Because he is unwilling to do either, he becomes the tragic hero (in an, ironically, Shakespearean way) as he is driven back into isolation and kills himself in the end.

Suzette Haden Elgin's *Native Tongue* and *Judas Rose* take a slightly different direction, as they foreground gender-related issues. Their focus is not on how society as a whole is controlled, but rather on how women are subjugated. Also, instead of taking away single words or changing their meaning, as it is the case in *Brave New World*, language as a whole has already changed. Both of Elgin's novels rely heavily on Whorf's hypothesis, and the implications work towards opposite ends – both control and dissent – which are unique compared to the other novels discussed here. First of all, the acceptance of the Sapir-Whorf theory allows for the creation of a man-made and androcentric language called Panglish, which is the *lingua franca* of Earth and its colonies at the beginning of the first novel. Second, it allows Láadan, the women's secret language, to become a force of resistance. As issues of language and resistance are discussed in the next chapter, I want to focus only on Panglish for now and how it is used to suppress women. Elgin has developed and transformed the concept of Panglish in several works throughout her career as a fictional form of English that has had "the bugs scrubbed out of it".[161] However, Panglish is not identical to English. Karen Bruce points out that, although issues of race (among others) have been *de facto* erased from language, the separation of gender has become worse. The main reason behind this regressive development lies in the fact, that women, Linguists or not, are not allowed to participate in politics, academia or scientific professions anymore. Therefore, "they would have played no substantial role in the development of Panglish from English, and the language would have continued to express

[160] Sisk 1997, 29.

[161] In a 2004 short story, Elgin explains Panglish in more detail, and it can be assumed that the Panglish of *Native Tongue* serves as its basis. Even though the stories are not directly connected to each other, both take place at approximately the same point in the future (see Suzette Haden Elgin. 2004. *We Have Always Spoken Panglish* [Online source]).

a patriarchal, even misogynist, viewpoint."[162] This development has had two effects. First, due to the androcentric nature of Panglish, it is suited best to describe violence and aggression. Elgin "suggests that a violent and divisive language will inevitably give rise to a violent and divisive culture."[163] This notion is clearly supported in *The Judas Rose* by one of Nazareth's diary entries, in which she explains the nature of Panglish in more detail:

> Suppose you were a speaker of Panglish and you wanted to talk about war, or killing or violence. There was no weapon, and no smallest variation on a weapon, that did not immediately receive its own convenient Panglish name … but not all of life was so well provided for … there was the world 'love'; it was almost impossible in Panglish to say which of the many subtle and different kinds of love was the one you felt toward someone in less than ten minutes.[164]

Nazareth's description bears resemblance to *Brave New World*: In both novels, the concept of 'love' has essentially been lost. In Huxley's dystopia the word itself has changed its meaning as there is no need for love anymore, whereas the vocabulary of Panglish does not provide adequate words or descriptions to properly describe the feeling in the first place.

According to Whorf's hypothesis, a language that normalizes violence will inevitably lead to a society in which violence is the norm, which is the case in the society depicted in the novel. There are various examples in the text that seem to support this thesis: the unscrupulousness with which the government tries to interface non-linguist children with alien life forms, even if it results in their death. Or the lack of affection between the sexes, which eventually results in women past the childbearing age being sent to "Barren Houses". At last, an omnipresent sphere of distrust can be observed, not only between the linguists and other citizens, but also between the humans and alien life forms. As Thomas Chornyak, one of the main characters, at one point tells his wife during an argument: "I'm not your darling…or anyone's. As you know perfectly well, I am a cruel and vindictive and heartless monster, who cares for nothing but his own selfish and twisted goals."[165] Although he is being ironic, he unconsciously summarizes how men in the two novels are depicted: Because their language does not allow for an alternative, they have been reduced to violent and emotionally depraved creatures, and indeed most of the men are portrayed in a rather unsympathetic fashion.[166]

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[162] Bruce 2008, 9.
[163] Ibid., 10.
[164] Elgin 2002, 237.
[165] Elgin 2000, 149.
[166] The character of Ned Landry serves as a good example, as he portrays both misogynic and highly unsympathetic traits. (Elgin 2000, 35-44.)

The second and arguably more important ramification of Panglish is that it has literally silenced women's perceptions. The male-dominated government has not only taken away women's rights and stripped them, with the exception of the Linguist women, of any proper work, but it has taken away their linguistic means to express feelings that are generally coded as 'feminine' (e.g. any feelings that may indicate weakness or affection) or deal with women's perceptions. At the beginning of the first novel for instance, Nazareth is diagnosed with breast cancer, and her household is willing to pay for the surgery (after all, Nazareth is a most extraordinary Linguist and thus important for the household's interplanetary business), but not for the breast regeneration. As Bruce observes, this decision "arises out of an inability to understand how many women would perceive the removal of their breasts as a mutilation."[167] As there is no vocabulary to express how a woman feels about her breasts, the males are not able to perceive Nazareth's emotional pain. Another scene that proves the lack of words to express emotions happens once Nazareth's love for Jordan Shannontry is exposed, which lead to her humiliation on behalf of the men: "And there were no words, not in any language, that she could use to explain to them what it was that had been done to hear, that would make them stop."[168] The idea of 'love' has not only turned into vapidity (as in *Brave New World*), but it has become an object of humour and humiliation.

But the implications go beyond the mere inability to express feelings. It is in fact the most important aspect in the process of women's subjugation: "Forcing women to use languages totally unsuited to communicating their perceptions is an act of oppression so thorough that only a few legal and social modifications are necessary."[169] In other words, although both women and men have become object to the controlling nature of Panglish, it has been used primarily to subjugate women. Its goal was not only to "clean out the bugs", but to use it in order to erect a new, entirely androcentric society. By taking away the words, metaphors and concepts of women's perceptions, men have achieved to not only exclude women from taking part in discourse, but they have, at least in their mind, made the existence of any female discourse impossible. Unlike in *Brave New World*, where language is controlled in order to ensure the World State's eternal state of happiness, language in *Native Tongue* is primarily controlled to subjugate and thus control women's thoughts. Of course, women will eventually use exactly the same line of thought to create

[167] Bruce 2008, 12.
[168] Elgin 2000, 201-202.
[169] Sisk 1997, 119.

their own, gynocentric language Láadan, as the next chapter will show – after all, Whorf's hypothesis works in both ways, which emphasizes its importance to the dystopian idea.

The Handmaid's Tale, though profoundly different in its plot, focuses on similar discourses as *Native Tongue*: the suppression of women, religion and, to a lesser degree, sexuality. Similar to Elgin's novel, it depicts how women are subjugated and how the perception of reality has been changed through language. However, whereas the transformation of language in *Native Tongue* has already been finished, society in *The Handmaid's Tale* seems to be still in an early stage after its formation. As seen in the previous chapters, Offred is still able to recall events from her past, but it is an elusive past, and words have already changed their meaning, although Offred is still vaguely able to remember their original context. As in *Brave New World*, several words and their respective concepts are no longer used, and even more importantly, considered subversive. As Offred tries to recall a song, she is unsure of the exact words, and explains: "I don't know if the words are right. I can't remember. Such songs are not sung anymore in public, especially the ones that use words like *free*. They are considered too dangerous."[170] Freedom in Gilead, just like marriage in *Brave New World*, has become an out-dated concept. In a state bound to theocracy and strict rules, individual freedom has literally vanished, and its linguistic expression is fading from the memories of the population. There are other passages in which Offred explains how Gilead's present state came into being, and most of the time, she uses words that are no longer used or banished. Words like "job", for example: "It's strange now, to think about having a job. Job. It's a funny word. […] All those women having jobs […] It was considered the normal thing. Now it's like remembering the paper money, when they still had that."[171] An even more obvious example on how language and meanings have changed can be found towards the end of the novel, when Offred secretly meets with her Commander's chauffeur Nick: ""No romance," he says. "Okay?" That would have meant something else, once. Once it would have meant: *no strings*. Now it means: *no heroics*. It means: don't risk yourself for me, if it should come to that."[172] Of course, since women are not allowed to choose their partners anymore, concepts like "romance" are no longer needed; the idea of a relationship with "no strings" attached is unthinkable. Instead, it has become a forbidden, a subversive political

[170] Atwood 1998, 54.
[171] Ibid., 173.
[172] Ibid., 262.

act, and its meaning has changed accordingly. Given these thoughts, *The Handmaid's Tale* may be said to occupy the space between *Native Tongue* and *Brave New World*: Its plot and gender-related discourse are closely related to the feminist dystopian tradition of the former, but the way in which language and thought are controlled is more in line of the latter.

Orwell's *1984* exploits yet another sphere of language and reality control by introducing a completely new language: Newspeak, the "only language in the world whose vocabulary gets smaller every year."[173] Although it is based on English (called 'Oldspeak' in the novel), Newspeak has a greatly reduced and simplified vocabulary and grammar. Essentially, Newspeak is intended to make any subversive thoughts impossible by depriving the populace of words, and at the same time spreading the Party's orthodoxy. Unlike in other novels, such as *Brave New World* and *Native Tongue* in which the "project of linguistic purification"[174] has already been undergone, Newspeak is still in development at the beginning of *1984* and it won't be finished until about 2050. However, while English is still used by the majority of the population, Newspeak phrases and words are gradually poured into conversations and media, and once it is adopted by everyone "a heretical thought – that is, a thought diverging from the principles of Ingsoc – should be literally unthinkable, at least so far as thought is dependent on words."[175] By connecting thought and words, Orwell takes Whorf's hypothesis to its extreme: By changing language, reality is manipulated according to the Party's ideology. With the exception of a few examples, actual Newspeak words are rare within the novel, but there is an appendix which gives a detailed description of the characteristics of Newspeak, underlining its importance. After all, Newspeak is the Party's major weapon in stifling dissent.

I have already explained 'doublethink', the ability to not only accept but to actually *believe* two mutually contradictory meanings, which are either positively charged in regards to the Party, or negatively charged in regards to unorthodoxy. "Duckspeak" is a prominent example: "Provided that the opinions which were quacked out were orthodox ones, it implied nothing but praise, and when the *Times* referred to one of the orators of the Party as a *doubleplusgood duckspeaker* it was paying a warm and valued compliment." Most of these words are actually impossible to translate into Oldspeak without much

[173] Orwell 1989, 55.
[174] Courtine 1986, 69.
[175] Orwell 1989, 312.

effort, and they can only be understood if one fully accepts the principles of Ingsoc. Thus, gradually, Newspeak words will replace and ultimately destroy their old counterparts, and once the process is finished, "Newspeak is Ingsoc and Ingsoc is Newspeak"[176] – in other words, language *is* ideology *is* reality. Every word of Oldspeak will eventually be gone and with it any form of 'oldthink', i.e. concepts of objectivity, rationalism and democracy. In the end, even the Party's own slogan "Freedom is Slavery" will be obsolete, since there is no concept of freedom anymore. As I have explained earlier, each dystopian novel appears to focus around a central discourse, and it is no surprise, that words relating to the respective discourse are the ones affected the most. In *Brave New World,* sexuality, reproduction and science are closely interrelated. Hence, words such as 'mother' and 'marriage' and 'love' have either lost or changed their meaning. *1984*, on the other hand, focuses on a political discourse, and thus words such as 'freedom' and 'rebellion' have lost any sort of subversive meaning:

> The word *free* still existed in Newspeak, but it could only be used in such statements as "This dog is free from lice." […] It could not be used in its old sense of 'politically free' or 'intellectually free', since political and intellectual freedom no longer existed even as concepts, and were therefore of necessity nameless. Quite apart from the suppression of definitely heretic words, reduction of vocabulary was regarded as an end in itself, and no word that could be dispensed with was allowed to survive. Newspeak was designed not to extend but to *diminish* the range of thought […].[177]

Other seemingly heretical words – honour, justice, morality, democracy and religion, in short "all words grouping themselves round the concepts of liberty and equality"[178] (and thus parts of an unwanted political discourse) were contained in the single term "crimethink". But the active "destruction of words"[179] aims not only at a reduction of respective concepts, but also at the simplification of language as a whole. As Sisk remarks, ease and rapidity of speech are equally important, because it involves little thought on behalf of the speaker.[180] Robert Fowler observes that in *Politics and Language*, Orwell already developed the idea of a "political speaker as a machine,"[181] who utters words without thinking about them, leading to a form of 'automated speech'. The orator during Hate Week serves as an excellent example: During his speech, he receives a piece of paper,

[176] Orwell 1989, 55.
[177] Ibid., 313.
[178] Ibid., 318.
[179] Orwell 1989, 54.
[180] Sisk 1994, 46.
[181] Fowler 1995, 212.

which informs him that the enemy has changed, and he "unrolled and read it without pausing in his speech. Nothing altered in his voice or manner…but suddenly the names were different." He is not consciously choosing the words, but merely uttering orthodox jargon. In other words, Newspeak does not only reduce the actual words of a language, it also disassociates its speaker from thinking about the content of speech, as every form of content becomes ultimately political. By using Newspeak, it is impossible to use language without at the same time approving the Party's orthodoxy.

As seen so far, *Brave New World, The Handmaid's Tale, Native Tongue* and *1984* all incorporate or respond to Whorf's hypothesis to one degree or another. The reduction and change of certain words, concepts or even a whole language is used in order to control the population or certain of parts of it. By controlling language, reality is controlled, and the extrapolated discourse enforced.

However, there are two novels in which issues of language and thought are portrayed differently. One of them is Will Self's *The Book of Dave*. The novel stretches the boundaries of dystopian fiction, as it contains two stand-alone, yet interrelated stories. The first one is set in the recent past and tells the story of Dave Rudman, a middle-aged London taxi driver. As Dave drives his cab through London, the omniscient third person narrator regularly switches to Dave's (and later on other characters as well) erratic inner monologue, in which he rambles about his fares, the "Knowledge" (the ability to find routes within London without the help of a map) and his ex-wife Michelle, to whom he lost custody of his son Carl. As Dave's life slowly spins out of control, he begins to write down his misogynist and self-pitying 'memoir' as a legacy to his son. Eventually, he buries the "Book" in the backyard of his ex-wife's house during a mental breakdown, shortly before he is institutionalized. In every other chapter, the plot switches to the far-off future, the year 523 A.D. (After Dave). Dave's Book has been excavated and it has become the template for a new religious society, which strives to build a New London as foreseen by Dave. The sea level has risen dramatically, and Britain is now a set of secluded islands, with the population living in communities according to the rules and principles of the Book. One of these islands is Ham.[182] Its inhabitants, the "Hamsters", are mostly uneducated farmers who grow wheat and breed genetically modified "Motos", a mixture

[182] In *Book of Dave*, Ham refers to former Hampstead Heath in London. In *The Handmaid's Tale*, African-Americans are referred to as "Children of Ham" and resettled into marginally habitable areas. Given the similar secluded nature of Ham and the rather specific physical appearance of the Hamsters, this is certainly an interesting coincidence.

between herbivores and 2-year old infants. Much of the dialogue is told in the vernacular of the Hamsters – "Mokni" (or Mockney), derived from Cockney slang, which is opposed to the more sophisticated "Arpee" spoken by officials. Ham, along with most of Ing (formerly England) is under control of the PCO, a priestly hierarchy, which occasionally sends a "Driver" to Ham to watch over the Hamsters and enforce the covenants of the Book. One of these covenants includes the "Breakup", the strict separation from men (dads) and women (mums): Children spend half a week with their mothers and the other half, after a procedure called "Changeover", with their dads. Eventually, Symun Dévúsh, one of the Hamsters, challenges the principles of "Dävinanity" after he finds another, seemingly more benevolent book. Several years after Symun has been ostracized from Ham, his son Carl unknowingly follows in his footsteps, as he makes his own way to New London.

As mentioned before, *The Book of Dave* challenges the form of dystopian fiction, as only half of the novel (the future part) is actually set in a dystopian society, while the other half is merely the present state from which the dystopian narrative is derived. Although other novels discussed here, such as *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Native Tongue,* make use of meta-texts and appendixes set in a different time than the dystopian society depicted, none offers two stand-alone and stylistically different narratives. Language is the key element that connects both narratives with each other and which, in return, also extrapolates contemporary ideas, as the present narrative is basically our very own society. Only by referring back to Dave's present-time story is it possible for the reader to gradually entangle the meanings of words and the habits of the future society. As both stories progress, the reader realizes how Dave's language, values and principles are mediated in the future, and how his taxi-driver argot has replaced the old English terms: The sun is no longer called sun but "lamp", the sky has become the "screen", and "curry" is the generic word for food. All young women are referred to as "opares", while older women are condescendingly called "boilers". Of course, a simple replacement of one word or another does not change the perception of reality; the concept of the sun remains the same, even though it is now called lamp. However, implications of Whorf's hypothesis, though less explicitly executed than in the other novels, can be found in this novel as well. For instance, the inhabitants of Ham seem to possess no proper concept of ordinal time.[183]

[183] Will Self. 2006. *The Book of Dave*. London: Penguin, 118.

They divide their day into three "tariffs" instead of hours, and they count in "blobs" (weeks), with "mid blob" being the day of changeover. But not only their perception of time, but also their perception of reality, especially in regards to religion and family values, is primarily based upon the concepts laid out in the Book. After all, *The Book of Dave* emphasizes both the discourses of religion and family, and again, it is in this regard that language comes into play. Throughout the dystopian narrative, words like marriage or love are never mentioned among the Hamsters; they appear to be unknown, long-lost ideas. Instead, the Hamsters lead a life according to the principles of the Book, which seems to have replaced not only parts of the old language, but in fact changed reality up to the point when the previous way of living can no longer be put into words. As Antöne Böm, an educated queer living among the Hamsters, contemplates his strong feelings towards the mummies, he gravely observes:

> He knew that many others did as well […]. Yet they had no way to speak of such things, for they were all – dads, mums and queers alike – bound into the immemorial Wheel of Dävinanity, which, with its rituals and precepts, circumscribed their conduct and governed their innermost thoughts from when they arose at first tariff until they lay down as the foglamp dipped.[184]

The passage directly relates language to thought, and is the most overt statement of Whorf's hypothesis in the novel. It exactly describes how the Hamsters, and with them the rest of Ing, are governed by the Book. Böm himself, while being aware of his feelings, is unable to put them into proper words, as he awkwardly circumscribes them: "For always he saw the mummies' world in terms of the daddies', the daddies' in terms of the mummies'."[185] Over the course of a long time, the inhabitants of Ing seem to have lost the concepts of affection and equality, and although these feelings are still existent, they are unable to formulate them, which again bears resemblance to *Brave New World* or even *The Handmaid's Tale*. The Drivers, send to Ham by the PCO, are among the sternest supporters of Dävinanity, and one of them summarizes their clinging to the Book as follows: "In the beginning there was Dave's word and Dave's word alone. All that we have comes out of the Book. All that is, all that has been, and all that will come again."[186] Issues of controlling both literature and the past play a role in this matter, too: The only written text allowed is in fact the Book, with all other sorts of documents being condemned as

[184] Self 2006, 297.
[185] Ibid.
[186] Ibid., 177.

"toyist" (fake or taboo). Also, the Book remains the only valid remnant from a previous reality, while everything else is put down as a creation from the "MadeInChina". In this way, the Book has become the sole carrier of discourse, and with it, language.

At this point one has to ask the question how all of this relates to issues of control. After all, *The Book of Dave* differs from the novels previously discussed in this regard. In all of them, from *1984* to *Brave New World* to *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Native Tongue*, a ruling power such as the World Controllers, the Commanders or the Inner Party are responsible for the control of language. They know how to transform and shape language and discourse, in order to ensure stability, subjugate certain groups and enforce their orthodoxy. The authoritative powers employ language to support more general dystopian themes. The ruling power in *Book of Dave*, the PCO, however, is itself a victim of language, a victim of the Book, whose principles and covenants it tries to enforce in order to build New London:

> Still more critical voices noted how it was that as the PCO had grown and grown over the centuries, London – and beyond it Ing – became increasingly burdened by a religious bureaucracy the sole industry of which was its own perpetuation. However, these voices were stifled by the Doctrines and Covenants of the Book: the exactions of the Breakup and the Changeover, which kept Inglanders riven inside, and so unable to conceive of any purpose beyond the fulfilment of Dave's prophecies.[187]

As it is stated, it is not the PCO that stifles dissent, but rather the Book. The PCO, along with their Drivers and Lawyers, merely enforces a reality laid out by the Book, and by doing so over a long time, the former reality has become forgotten, the words lost. The Book, and with it the Book's language, has become the controlling authority in the dystopian society: "The Book was all the understanding any Hamster needed of anything. The Book stood outside of the seasons and of the years."[188] In other words, the Book has become the ruling power and the controlling instance of discourse; it has become a discourse *on its own*. By writing his book, Dave has created concepts of Breakup and Changeover, and by putting them into their respective words he made them available for his future adherers. Due to a literal interpretation of the Book, Dave's language has led to a change in thought; discourse has produced a new reality.

[187] Ibid., 307.
[188] Ibid., 60.

Let us shortly reflect upon our findings. The notion that Dave's book forms a discourse on its own is important in regards to this study's main focal point: the role of language and its consideration as a recurrent theme of its own. So far it appeared as if language is merely supporting prevalent discourses, which is indeed an important function. However, if one considers the important role of Panglish and its counterpart Láadan in Native Tongue, or the power of Scripture in *The Book of Dave*, one can also say that there is a distinct discourse of language to be found as well. We need to continue with the analysis first to prove this, but I will return to this observation at the end of this study, as it is important for my initial claim.

Riddley Walker is equally, if not more dependent on the interpretation and literalness of words as *The Book of Dave*. At the same time, it takes the relationship between language and thought to another extreme. Set about 2500 years in the future in the "Ram", what used to be former Kent in England (now called "Inland"), a nuclear holocaust has devastated the earth. Civilization has been set back to an almost Neolithic stage, as people stumble through the wasteland, foraging for food and relicts of a previous civilization. Most of the people gather in farming communities, called "forms", which are no more than derelict camping sites. However, they protect its inhabitants from wild killer dogs, which roam the countryside. Riddley Walker, the novel's first person narrator, is one of these inhabitants. The novel starts on his twelfth birthday, shortly before his father dies, and it recollects Riddley's subsequent journey as he writes it down for himself, although it only covers a few actual days. As Riddley is one of only a few literate people, he is announced the camp's new "connexion man", a profession similar to that of a priest. What he has to interpret, however, is not the *Bible*, but the government's central myth and propaganda: the Eusa story. The Eusa story is enacted by two of the highest officials of the Mincery in an itinerant puppet show: the Wes Mincer (Abel Goodparley) and the Pry Mincer (Erny Orfing). Essentially, it explains in an allegorical way how a scientist named Eusa made the "1 Big 1" (this can mean either holocaust or nuclear weaponry) possible, how the "Bad Time" followed and how people need to go through "Master Chaynjis" until they are redeemed. The Mincery has a political interest, though, in spreading the Eusa story: Although they officially condemn the return of science, they hope to rediscover "clevverness" (technological know-how) and the secrets of the 1 Big 1, which they mistakenly believe to be "Salt 4" (sulfur). As the story progresses, Riddley is isolated from his fellows at the camp and, because he is "dog frendy", escapes with a pack of wild dogs,

who lead him to another twelve year-old called Lissener, the "Ardship of Cambry." Imprisoned by the Mincery, Lissener is a descendant of the Eusa folk, the "Puter leat" (computer elite), who are believed to possess knowledge of the 1 Big 1. Riddley frees Lissener, and he eventually is caught in the middle of the struggle between the Mincery and the Eusa folk. Their goal is basically the same, but their interpretations and readings of the Eusa myth are distinctly different, according to their respective political ambitions. As Riddley travels through Kent, following unintentionally a route depicted in a children's rhyme called "Fools Circel 9wys", he is confronted with different accounts of the same story. Many of them seem to be based on a literal interpretation of the "Legend of Saint Eustace", a wall painting in Canterbury Cathedral. In the end, Riddley realizes the fragile state of society and he "penetrates the official lies and begins to expose them for the rest of Inland's population"[189] by enacting his own puppet show.

Some of the examples I have given already indicate that *Riddley Walker* employs another unique form of language. But unlike any other novel discussed so far, it is told *entirely* in a fractured form of English, invigorated by Cockney and often referred to as "Inlish", "Riddleyspeak" or even "Nukespeak" by some critics.[190] At first, the strange vernacular seems to impede understanding, but it quickly becomes clear that the language illuminates the novel's concerns: Riddley's journey is in fact a quest to find explanations in a world which is made up of allegories, myths and misunderstandings. Just like the characters try to salvage knowledge from "time way back", Riddley is confronted with words and stories he is not able to understand at first, and his maturation is primarily based upon his growing understanding of language and his world. The more stories he gathers from different sources, the more he is able to uncover the truth behind present society. Given these assumptions, it is easy to say that language does not only influence Riddley's way of thinking, but also the relationship between civilization and reality. Natalie Maynor draws attention to the primitive state of civilization, and she argues that "language contributes to this picture of primitive life," strengthened by the "literal nature of the character's thoughts."[191] David Dowling takes a similar stance by exclaiming that the language "itself reflects the devolution of post-disaster society into brutishness."[192] This can be seen for instance in the literalness of character's names (Fister Crunchman is one of

[189] Sisk 1997, 145.
[190] David Dowling. 1988. "Doing the Connections". In: *Critique* 29, no. 3 (Spring 1988), 182.
[191] Natalie Maynor & Richard F. Patteson. 1984. "Language as Protagonist in Russell Hoban's Riddley Walker". In: *Critique* 26, No.1 (Fall 1984), 20.
[192] Dowling 1988, 182.

the "hevvys", i.e. guards of the forms) or the child-like simplicity in such designations as "Bad Time" (the holocaust) or "Little Shyning Man" (the atom). The "brutishness" also shows itself in a general sphere of violence, which is not unlike the one in *Native Tongue*[193]: People are killed by dogs, arrested by the Mincery and their heads are put on poles, as is the case with the Ardship every twelfth year. On the other hand, emotions and sentiments are rarely if at all depicted, which supports the notion of a brutish, primitive society. Furthermore, general concepts seem to have been lost: Airplanes, which do not exist anymore, are referred to as "boats in the air", television are "picters on the wind." But although the simplicity of the language mirrors the backwardness of society, it does not explain how language is actually controlled within the novel. At first it appears as if everyone, including the government officials, is object to the shortcomings of their language: They all fail to find names for the abstract and to understand the bits of knowledge they recover. There is no controlling instance, such as the Party or the World Controllers that impose/s a specific language upon society by either force or conditioning. Both *Riddley Walker* and *Book of Dave* work in similar ways in this regard – discourse is controlled according to a myth; the Book in the latter novel, the story of Eusa in the former.[194]

David Sisk, in order to sustain his argument that every dystopian novel enforces control over language, probably overestimates the power of the Mincery; his claim that it prevents the literacy of the population is exaggerated. As it becomes clear towards the end of the novel, Goodparley and Orfing are rather pitiful characters, which are victims of misunderstandings just like everyone else (the latter even teaming up with Riddley at the end). Goodparley's grotesque yet comical misinterpretation of the original Legend of Saint Eustace proves just how incapable the government is to explain reality.[195] The fact that their "reign" comes to an end within only a few days in the novel can hardly sustain the claim that the Mincery forms an equally strong repressive government as the Party does in *1984*. What it tries, however, is to control discourse to their ends by spreading their canonical version of the Eusa myth. Leonard Mustazza observes that society in *Riddley*

[193] Also, *Riddley Walker* depicts a highly male-dominated society. In fact, there is only one female character mentioned throughout the entire novel: Lorna Elswint, the form's "tel woman", a sort of shaman that supplies Riddley with his first story.

[194] *Riddley Walker* apparently influenced Will Self when he started writing *Book of Dave*, so certain similarities between the two novels are not surprising. Self also contributed an introduction to the 20th anniversary edition of *Riddley Walker* in 2002.

[195] Russell Hoban. 2002. *Riddley Walker*. London: Bloomsbury, 123f.

Walker "readily subscribes to myths of different kinds."[196] It does not differentiate between historical knowledge and myth, as modern societies would do, but rather takes the myth for granted. Therefore, the people's use of language is heavily dependent on the existing myths; they try to explain reality by putting the words (such as the omnipresent technological jargon) they encounter in context. Surely, the Mincery tries to interpret the myth according to their political ends, and the illiteracy of the population certainly helps them, but as we will see in the next chapter, their ambitions are eventually undermined by Riddley. His thinking changes the more he comes to terms with the language around him, just like the reader gradually entangles the allusions and metaphors contained in Riddleyspeak.

The analysis so far has scraped the surface of the connection between language and thought in dystopian fiction. With the exception of *A Clockwork Orange*, every novel seems to take a note of the Sapir-Whorf's hypothesis, supporting Myra Barnes' claim that it is a crucial element of dystopian fiction. In most cases, language is controlled or changed in order to preserve a present state or to oppress the population or certain groups. In other cases, however, even the oppressors are subject to a reality laid out by language, and they are merely using it to their ends. Along with the obliteration of the past and the ban of literature, the relationship between language, thought and reality is a major aspect in regards to language and control. But of course, given the nature of discourse and dystopian fiction, resistance, rebellion and dissent is still possible, and again, language plays a dominant role.

3.2 Language as a means of resistance

The previous chapter was intended to provide an overview of how language serves as a medium that either has to be controlled or that holds a controlling function itself. In both cases, language is used as a device to control and shape discourse according to a certain orthodoxy, and to preserve the state of the dystopian society. But discourse is, by definition, not a stable entity. I quoted Michel Foucault earlier, and it is useful to refer to it once again: "Wo es Macht gibt, gibt es Widerstand. Und doch oder gerade deswegen liegt

[196] Leonard Mustazza. 1989. "Myth and History in Russell Hoban's Riddley Walker". In: *Critique* (Fall 1989), 18.

der Widerstand niemals außerhalb der Macht."[197] In other words, a repressive dystopian society will always produce resistance in itself. In any discursive formation, there will be forbidden speech, there will be words that cannot be stated, ideas which must remain unsaid.[198] Thus, just like control and conformity are central themes of dystopian fiction, so are resistance and rebellion on behalf of an individual or a social group. These power relations are crucial to the dystopian enterprise. And if language is used to control society, it is obvious that it can also be used to subvert it, that a different language itself or a different application of language becomes a tool of resistance. Hence, I now want to focus on the other side of Mikhail Bakhtin's "two-edged sword"[199]: How language supports resistance and rebellion, how a character's use of language works towards their freedom from oppression and growing consciousness. This does not necessarily have to coincide with an overtly political goal; it does not have to work towards the complete subversion and overthrowing of the dystopian system. As we will see, in novels such as *Brave New World* it can simply mean spiritual and creative freedom for individual characters like Helmhotz Watson.

In order to analyse this aspect, I divide this chapter into freedom *from* language and freedom *in* language, although this division is fairly superficial, as in most cases, both aspects go hand in hand. In *Native Tongue* for example, the women of the Lines attempt to escape *from* a language (Panglish) by creating another language (Láadan/Langlish).

3.2.1 Freedom *in* language

I want to start this chapter with the only novel not discussed so far, because its issues with language and control are only minor – Anthony Burgess' *A Clockwork Orange.* The novel is divided into three parts with seven chapters each.[200] Set in not too distant future England, a repressive totalitarian state is controlling the populace. All adults are required to work at mindless jobs provided by the State, while most culture and arts have been

[197] Foucault 1983, 113f.
[198] Jeffrey Porter. 1990. "Three Quarks for Muster Mark: Quantum Wordplay and Nuclear Discourse in Russell Hoban's Riddley Walker". In: *Contemporary Literature* 31, No.4 (Winter 1990), 462.
[199] Booker 1994, 85.
[200] The American edition, which was used as the basis for Stanley Kubrick's 1971 movie, omits the very last chapter of the original version. It ends with Alex waking up in the hospital, fantasizing about new acts of violence. For the present study, I will use the original version, which contains an important change in Alex's character.

degraded to worldwide television broadcasts, aptly called "worldcasts". At the same time, vicious gangs of teenagers roam the streets at night, beating and mugging men and raping women. The novel's first-person narrator, fifteen year-old Alex, is the leader of one of these gangs, which consists of him and his "droogs", Dim, Pete and Georgie. Every night, they meet at the Korova milk bar, which serves milk laced with drugs, before they go on a spree of violence. One night, they break into the house of author F. Alexander and rape his wife. Shortly after, the police apprehend Alex and he learns that the woman has died. As the second part of the novel begins, Alex is sentenced to fourteen years in prison. After two years, during which other inmates and guards tantalize him, he is selected to participate in an experimental treatment called the "Ludovico technique", which promises that Alex will be released after two weeks and that he will not be able to commit any more crimes. Although the prison chaplain warns Alex that a man ceases to be a man if he has no free will (one of the novel's central themes), Alex participates in the experiment.[201] Over the course of two weeks he is made to watch endless violent movies, and once he is released, even the thought of violence makes him physically sick. But the treatment also made him virtually powerless, so that he is unable to defend himself and even commit suicide. In the final part of the novel, his former victims and fellows take revenge on him, and as it turns out, Dim and Billyboy, Alex former arch enemy, are now members of the police. They take him to the countryside and beat him up severely. As he wanders around, he collapses on the step of F. Alexander's house. As the reader learns, F. Alexander has become a political dissident. He wants to use Alex, whom he does not recognize at first, as the poster boy of his campaign against the state. However, Alex's odd choice of words eventually reveals his identity, and F. Alexander punishes Alex by locking him into a room with classical music, which he used to love, but cannot endure anymore. Driven to insanity, Alex jumps out of the window and he later wakes up in the hospital. F. Alexander has been locked up and the government, in an attempt to cover the events, has reverted the Ludovico technique, thus allowing Alex to return to his violent former self. However, Alex appears to have changed. In the end, Alex forms a new gang, but he soon becomes bored with violence and contemplates an ordinary life with a family and a son. His violence, as he puts it, has only been a phase.

[201] Anthony Burgess. 2000. *A Clockwork Orange*. London: Penguin, 63.

Similar to *Riddley Walker*, *A Clockwork Orange* is told entirely in a unique form of English, called Nadsat. But unlike Riddley's Inlish, it preserves the syntax and morphology of Standard English, although most words of its vocabulary are based on transliterated Russian, such as "devotchka" (girl), "krovvy" (Russian 'krov', blood) or "horrorshow" (Russian 'khoroshó', good/well), to name just a few.[202] Also, it is peculiar to teenagers – adults hardly take note of it[203], and only adults who constantly deal with teenagers, such as P.R. Deltoid, a social worker, or the prison guards are actually using it or seem to be able to understand it at all. As the focalization is entirely Alex's, the reader comes to understand his character and society mainly through his narrative and his argot. Furthermore, Alex is fully aware of his narrative duties, and he occasionally directly addresses the reader and translates Nadsat vocabulary into Standard English to ease understanding: "Pete had a rooker (a hand, that is)."[204] More importantly, the narration "clarifies the competing interests of individual freedom versus social stability,"[205] which is the dystopian backbone of the novel. Indeed, Alex's vivid tale is the first thing a reader notices to be different from the bleak and mindless complacency of society. Although his story is highly violent, describing beatings and rape in an explicit fashion, he is also a masterful storyteller. Some critics, such as Richard Fulkerson, merely understood Nadsat as an artistic way to express violence, but in the end, Alex is unable to conduct violence anymore, and he still uses Nadsat, proving that his "creative medium is not violence, but language."[206] In this regard, Alex is an artist who enjoys the "finesse involved in using his chosen weapon"[207] just as much as he enjoys his language; for him, language is a creative and highly artistic medium. Of course, Alex's unique use of language is less subversive than for example the use of Láadan in *Native Tongue*: One can read his story as a tale of a rebellious teenager, but these claims fall ultimately short, because his political ambitions are unclear; he does not try to subvert the system, and his violence is merely a phase every teenager has to go through. Although it can be understood as a reaction against the complacency of society, and his individuality seems to oppose the orthodoxy of the state, it is only a temporary upheaval. In the end, Alex appears to be on the verge of dropping Nadsat, along with his violent nature, altogether. As he meets his old fellow Pete at the end of the novel, Pete's

[202] Full dictionaries of Nadsat are widely available on the Internet.
[203] During a 'treatment', Dr. Brodsky observes Alex's cries of agony, but merely condemns them as "odd bits of rhyming slang." (Burgess 2000, 86).
[204] Burgess 2000, 4.
[205] Sisk 1997, 58.
[206] Ibid., 60.
[207] Richard Fulkerson. 1974. "Teaching A Clockwork Orange". In: *CEA Critic* 37, No.1, 9.

wife mockingly remarks that he "talks funny". Indeed, Alex is 18 years old now, and he realizes that "youth must go."[208] Given this epiphany, it appears as if Alex finds only temporary freedom in language and that Nadsat is inextricably tied to youth. The state's conditioning may not be able to remove the language from him, but time will. However, Alex is certain that his future son will do the same things he himself has done, and that "he would not understand or would not want to understand" what his father has to say.[209] Burgess depicts Nadsat as an ephemeral phenomenon, but at the same time, he predicts that there will always be generational slang, and along with it different views on reality. In the end Nadsat allows for freedom – the freedom of choice, the freedom to choose whether one is ready to change. It is language that produces change, not the state's neo-Pavlovian conditioning.

But what Alex also does is writing down his story, describing in detail how he was both the agitator of violence and victim of the same. In this regard, he will essentially become F. Alexander as he grows up, except that the latter was first a victim and only later the agitator of violence. Not only do both characters share a sensibility of language, but they also have a similar history, which becomes clear if one pays attention to the novel's circular nature. When Alex and his gang break into the writer's home, at the beginning of the novel, Alex notes the first page of the manuscript: "The attempt to impose upon man, a creature of growth and capable of sweetness, to ooze juicily at the last round the bearded lips of God, to attempt to impose, I say, laws and conditions appropriate to a mechanical creation, against this I raise my sword pen."[210] If F. Alexander uses his writings to exemplify the violence of the state and the impossibility of free will (both central to the dystopian enterprise), Alex is going to do the same in the end – he continues to express his creativity through the means of language. In fact, he has traded his razor against a pen, using his peculiar language as long as he is still able to do so, to tell his story. Surely, Nadsat distinguishes him and his droogs from the bleakness of society, but he will eventually drop it once he grows up. His awareness of and his joy in language, however, will remain, and he might lead the life of an outsider just like F. Alexander, simply because he is aware of the power of words.

[208] Burgess 2000, 140.
[209] Ibid.
[210] Ibid., 18.

Offred's fate in *The Handmaid's Tale* is not as certain. In the end she escapes with what may or may not be members of Mayday, a rebellious underground group, and the reader is left unsure if she survives or not. All that is left are her voice recordings, which are found several years later. Her narrative on these tapes is not unlike the one of Alex in *Clockwork Orange*, as she is also fully aware of her role as a storyteller, and like Alex she constantly corrects or explains her choice of words. Just like Alex, who "raises his pen" in the end, Offred records her story and both characters are realized and absorbed in their narrative. As we have seen, Handmaids are not allowed to read and write at all, and the decision to record her story serves as the first step in her rebellion against the state. In this way, resistance is first of all tied to language, to an oral tale, which is of course a "mild" form of subversive language use, but all that is possible in her position. What is equally important is that within her narrative, Offred heavily contemplates the meaning and usage of single words, most of them proscribed or considered obsolete in Gilead's society. I already provided examples such as "job" or "romance" while talking about language and control, and one can say, that by remembering these words, by thinking about language, Offred describes her present state and society. Furthermore, she clings to every written word she discovers. The discovery of a Latin message scratched into the floorboard in her room is heartening for Offred: "I didn't know what it meant, or even what language it was in…Still, it was a message, and it was in writing, forbidden by that very fact, and it hadn't yet been discovered."[211] The mere existence of such a message, whether it was intended for her or not, seems to strengthen Offred's subversive character; it is a proof that resistance, even if it is just in form of a little message, is possible after all. Another example of her clinging to words is a cushion with the words FAITH embroidered in it: "I can spend minutes, tens of minutes, running my eyes over the print: FAITH."[212] As she has nothing to read besides these two things, they serve as a way out, as a temporary distraction from her suppressed state of being. However, her devotion to language becomes most obvious after the Commander invites her to a play of Scrabble: "This was once the game of old women, old men … Now of course it's something different. Now it's forbidden, for us. Now it's dangerous. Now it's indecent. Now it's desirable … It's as if he's offered me drugs,"[213] she describes her feelings. The Scrabble game is subversion taken to the maximum: Sisk notes that "language, the game of words, has become the most

[211] Atwood 1998, 52.
[212] Ibid., 57.
[213] Ibid., 138.

dangerous game in Gilead,"[214] and Linda Kauffman emphasizes the role of the game by claiming that Offred is "stealing the language back again"; that it is a "proleptic hint of the tape recordings she will eventually make."[215] Indeed, the words she chooses are hardly a coincidence: "Larynx", the organ of speech, is the first one she picks. Given her prohibition of speech outside the game, she finds a way to express herself within the game by the means of language - she is recapturing words no longer in use back from her oppressors. She is gradually becoming more and more involved with language: First, she only has the hidden message and the words on a cushion to read, later on she is allowed to read books, magazines and to play Scrabble. Once the Commander hands her a pen, she thinks: "The pen between my fingers is sensuous, alive almost, I can feel its power, the power of the words it contains."[216] It is hard not to see a similarity between *Brave New World's* Helmholtz Watson and Offred, as both grow aware of the power of words (see below). And yet, Offred's liberation is more significant. She gradually challenges the predominant discourses by using forbidden words and speech, which are ironically all provided to her *by* her oppressors, and the more contact she has with language, the more she begins to free herself, if only in an intellectual way. Still, her use of language and her thinking about words (or the lack thereof) in her narrative describe the reality of Gilead, and her escape into language is central to her liberation, even if her fate remains ultimately unknown. If one considers liberation a central theme of dystopian fiction, then surely language has to be taken in account, as most forms of liberation are connected with language in the long run.

So far, I identified only Alex and Offred as avid language users. Their conscious use of language sets them apart from the rest of society, and in both cases it allows for participation in discourses that have been suppressed by the state. In *Brave New World*, two characters are of similar interest in this regard: Bernard Marx and Helmholtz Watson.[217] Bernard works for the Psychology Bureau as an expert on hypnopaedia, Helmholtz is a lecturer at the Department of Writing. Despite being Alpha Plus members, both characters are thoroughly different in terms of appearance: Helmholtz is a

[214] Sisk 1997, 122.
[215] Kauffman 1989, 229.
[216] Atwood 1998, 186.
[217] I exclude John the Savage at this point, because although his language is profoundly different from the World State's, it does not work towards his freedom. On the contrary, his non-fulfilled hopes given to him by the readings of Shakespeare drive him into isolation in the end.

"powerfully built man" [218] and Bernard suffered from a physical defect, which makes him smaller and more stunted than his peers. What both share, however, is the "knowledge that they were both individuals,"[219] and both share a discontent with the state of society. What also unites them is their knowledge of language. Bernard for instance is able to recognize the hypnopaedic slogans when people around him utter them: "Never put off till tomorrow the fun you can have today," Lenina notes at one point, "Two hundred repetitions, twice a week from fourteen to sixteen and a half" is Bernard's subsequent comment. However, Bernard's unorthodoxy does not stem from distrust in the system but rather from his inferiority complex; the further the novel progresses, the more it becomes clear that he only despises society because it does not accept him the way he is. All he wishes for is a rise in popularity, which he gets, at least for a short period of time, by introducing John the Savage into society. Afterwards, he indulges in the pleasant vices he formerly despised. In short, Bernard uses the awareness of his individuality and his intellectual abilities merely to gain society's recognition and not for a resistance against the state. As Mustapha Mond tells him in the end: "As I make the laws here, I can also break them … which I'm afraid you *can't* do." This can be read in two ways: First, Bernard is not *allowed* to break the law and second, he is not *able* to break the law because he is, put boldly, a coward. Even though his reasons are selfish, he might not be selfish enough to defy the acceptance of his fellow citizens and work towards a higher goal.

Helmholtz Watson on the other hand, though a less developed character than Bernard within the novel, is arguably the one with the most subversive ambitions. He "has discovered his own capacity to be moved by language, and he now determines to create language to move others."[220] Helmholtz realizes that words could go beyond the mindlessness of hypnopaedic jingles, although he is yet unsure how to use them properly:

> I sometimes get a feeling that I've got something important to say and the power to say it – only I don't know what it is. […] I'm pretty good at inventing phrases – you know, the sort of words that suddenly make you jump, almost as though you'd sat on a pin…but that doesn't seem enough. […] I feel I could write something much more important. Yes, and more intense, more violent…Words can be like X-rays, if you use them properly – they'll go through everything. You read and you're pierced.[221]

[218] Huxley 2004, 57.
[219] Ibid., 58.
[220] Sisk 1997, 30.
[221] Huxley 2004, 59f.

The realization that words have the power to move others is of course central to the concept of the state's hypnopaedia, but given to an individual like Helmholtz, it becomes a highly subversive force. Helmholtz begins to understand how the World State is stifling him and his creativity and that he can actually use words to express sentiments he is not supposed to do. He shares his knowledge and insight in language with some of his students by reading out a poem about solitude, which is of course an unorthodox concept in the World State. Although his rhymes are hardly good, he finally feels able to use that "extra, latent power,"[222] which eventually upsets his students, just like the notion of a "mother" does earlier in the novel. Of course, before he can further indulge in his newfound knowledge, he is, along with Bernard, banished to an island by Mustapha Mond. But unlike Bernard, who is devastated, Helmholtz sees his punishment merely as a reward; he even requests to be sent to an island with a bad climate, because he believes he can write better there.[223] As it turns out, all of the creative and self-aware minds are being sent to exile, where they are among the "most interesting set of men and women to be found anywhere in the world."[224] This is an interesting and fairly unique feature in dystopian fiction, as dissidents are generally imprisoned or executed. In *Brave New World*, however, they are allowed to live outside the World State, as they apparently pose no threat to the system's present state. Although Helmholtz is not able (or even trying) to undermine the system, he finds his personal freedom after all; he escapes the stifling nature of the World State by gaining consciousness of language – it allows him to pursue his creativity and individuality.

In *The Book of Dave*, subversion through language is primarily portrayed by one character: Symun Dévúsh. If Helmholtz Watson becomes conscious of his individuality in *Brave New World*, Symun becomes conscious of the state's immorality and the injustice between men and women, and he does so at first by mastering and deciphering the language around him. After his fourteenth birthday[225], Symun delves into the forbidden Zone, where he senses a "profound jibing between the old religion of the island and the doctrine of the Book."[226] In the following months, Symun uses the "Daveworks" he finds, little plastic pieces with words on them, to improve his reading skills (the majority of the Hamsters seems to be

[222] Huxley 2004, 159.
[223] Ibid., 201.
[224] Ibid., 199.
[225] As in *Riddley Walker*, humans in *Book of Dave* seem to reach maturity much earlier than in our times: Riddley is twelve when he starts his journey, Symun is fourteen.
[226] Self 2006, 65.

illiterate) and to decipher the meanings of the Book himself, which is arguably the crucial moment on his way to rebellion:

> Naturally Symun was familiar with the Book; all Hamstermen were. […] Yet what they recited was gibberish to them – deprived, as they were, of the good offices of a Driver. Now that Symun could read, he could provide his own interpretation: he could see how the Book explained Ham, its shape, its isolation, its peculiar character. […] Then he knew what he must do. He understood what his mummy had implied but dared not openly state: he should use the Book to penetrate the mysteries of the Febiddun Zön.[227]

Eventually, Symun discovers another book in the Forbidden Zone. As it turns out, it is another book written by Dave after he was released from the mental institution. It is much more benevolent and less misogynist, denying almost everything written in the first book. Symun declares himself to be the next "Geezer", which is similar to a prophet, and he begins to understand the true nature of Dave's prophecies: "Symun could read the Book, so he could read the zone; all of the island of Ham was legible to him. He understood its origin – and he felt certain he knew its future as well."[228] Needless to say, the PCO and the Driver of Ham do not approve of Symun's heresy, and he is incarcerated in the Tower of New London. Symun's growing understanding of both Books and his increasing language skills are the first act of rebellion depicted in the novel, because they serve as the basis for his growing consciousness of society's plights.

But it is not only Symun's (or later Carl and Antone's) individual awareness of language that exemplifies how language can serve as the basis for rebellion. I mentioned in the previous chapter that it is in fact the Book itself that exerts power over Ing; Dave's Book is the manifestation of a misogynist discourse which ultimately controls society. With the discovery of the second Book, however, the power of said discourse is severely decreased: Symun is spreading his new-found prophecies even while being incarcerated, and they begin to slowly undermine the reign of the PCO. As it turns out, not only are the contents of the second Book different from the first one, but also the language:

> Dave's second testament was devoid of the wild language and mystifying gibberish that characterized the Book itself. It was an everyday faith for everyone, which required no one – Driver, Examiner or Inspector – to be an intercom between dad and Dave. It was also a credo that demanded literacy of

[227] Ibid., 76.
[228] Self 2006, 83.

> its adherents, so that they might distinguish between truth and falsity – between the gibberish of the old Book and the clarity of the new one.[229]

As it appears, Dave's second testament offers a much more protestant vision: It allows to directly address god (Dave) without the need for priests (Drivers), confession, inquisition (Examiners) or strict rituals. This indicates a change within the religious discourse: By gaining literacy and with the help of a second Book, understandable for everyone, the population will eventually move beyond their oppression and towards a new form of religion. If they regain consciousness of their situation, they will be able to form a new society, and establish discourses of marriage and family, which have been suppressed for a long time. The PCO, of course, attempts to avoid this development. It tries to keep the population illiterate in order to spread the covenants of the "original" religion, i.e. Dave's Book.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, literacy plays an important role in *Riddley Walker* as well, since only government officials and "connexion men" such as Riddley are capable of writing and reading. Needless to say, Riddley uses his ability not to interpret and spread the Eusa myth the way he is supposed to, but rather uses it to come to terms with the myths and language around him, while simultaneously subverting the Mincery's reign. As Jeffrey Porter, in analogy to the prevalent issues of nuclear power in the novel notes: "Like the atom, language too has come apart, split explosively by history, and [it] has lost its semiotic stability."[230] It is Riddley who has to piece the language together again, and who gradually uncovers truths from a time before the apocalypse. But Riddley's quest is not clear at first, neither to himself nor the reader, who has to rely on Riddley's (sometimes unreliable) telling. Although Riddley seems to possess a rebellious attitude, which becomes obvious as he talks back to Goodparley and Orfing upon their first encounter[231], he seems to accept the universal myths as truth at the beginning just like anybody else. It is only after he encounters more and more stories and discursive input, that he "comes to see the possibility that the myth itself may not be fixed and inviolable."[232] Indeed, the tales he encounters, the remnants of technological jargon and place names all seem to contain more information than is known at first, or as Jeffrey Porter puts it: "Language knows things

[229] Self 2006, 195.
[230] Porter 1990, 453.
[231] Hoban 2002, 38.
[232] Mustazza 1989, 22.

people do not."[233] Within the fragmented language, discourses from "time way back" are hidden, i.e. a scientific discourse, which involves the discovery of "knowledge" (and its political power), which both the Mincery and the Ardship are trying to recover. Each story brings Riddley closer to an understanding of how his world came into being and what the political motifs of the people around him are. The story of Eusa, society's central myth, is the most important of these stories, because different versions exist. It is only after Riddley hears Lissener's version and after Goodparley provides him with a literal reading of the original Eusa text (which is the only text written in Standard English, arguably to enforce its sacred character) that he is able to penetrate the language and understand how myth and history are connected, and even more important, how myths are used to conceal the true political ambitions.[234] After he encounters more stories and connects them, Riddley finally reaches Cambry (Canterbury), where he experiences a spiritual epiphany:

> Too many things coming in at 1ce. Like all ways. Mixt up I were. Like all ways. Yet some thing happent there in Cambry … I wer programmit different then from how I ben when I come in to Cambry. Coming in to Cambry my head ben ful of words and rimes and kynds of yellerboy stoan thots. Back then I ben thinking on Power of the 2 and the 1 and the Hy Power what ben wooshing roun the Power Ring time way back … My mynd ben all binsy with myndy thinking … now I dint want nothing of that … I wernt looking for no Hy Power no mor I dint want no Power at all.[235]

Riddley realizes how his mind has been occupied by "words and rhymes", which were all politically charged and ultimately connected to the search of power and knowledge from the past. Now that he is at the end of his journey, however, he has learned valuable lessons. He realizes that the quest for power has brought nothing but misery to him and the people around him, and that it will bring misery and destruction again once it is rediscovered. So in the end, he does exactly what he is supposed to do: he connects stories, but, and this is crucial, he does not follow the cycle of history towards another apocalypse. Instead, he finds his own voice and starts his own puppet show, the Punch show, in a similar fashion to the Eusa show, but his ambitions are different. For once, he does not follow the route of Fools Circel 9wys anymore, because he holds his first show at Weaping Form, which is not

[233] Porter 1990, 451.
[234] For Leonard Mustazza, this indicates the transition from a "myth-centered, primitive culture to modern culture in pursuit of absolute truth and power" (Mustazza 1989, 22).
[235] Hoban 2002, 166.

part of the circle. Furthermore, his show will not always be the same; it will not become yet another myth, but it will tell "real stories connected with the novel's future time:"[236]

> It aint in the nature of a show to be the same every time it aint like a story what you pas down trying not to change nothing which even then the changes wil creap in. No a figger show got its own chemistery an fizzics. What it is its all ways trying to fynd out what it is just now this same and very minim going thru its chaynjis.[237]

In this way, Riddley is subject to a new, emerging discourse based not around technological, but rather spiritual power; he wants to spread not the official myths (which he knows are lies), but his own experiences and interpretations, which indicate the "chanynjis" around him. At the beginning of the novel, Lora Elswint, the camp's shaman woman, tells him a story about the "1st knowing", the unity of humankind and nature. Throughout his journey, Riddley encounters occurrences of this knowing, but it is only after he connected all the stories that he understands the reason behind it[238]; it essentially means to "subordinate technological progress to ethical development."[239] Although the future of Riddley's society remains unknown to the reader, it will most definitely change, and even though the "1 Little 1" (gunpowder) has been rediscovered at the end of the novel, Riddley's new voice allows for the emergence of other, ultimately more hopeful discourses, if he manages to spread the word.

3.2.2 Freedom *from* language

The second part of this chapter is going to focus on two novels, in which the escape from a prescribed language is central to the dystopian enterprise: *1984* and *Native Tongue*. As mentioned before, both novels are depicting an escape *in* language as well; but as in both novels a certain language (Newspeak and Panglish, respectively) is, more or less forcefully, imposed upon society, the element of an "escape from language" seems to be more prevalent than in other novels.

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[236] Nancy Dew Taylor. 1989. ""…you bes go ballsy": Riddley Walker's Prescription for the Future." In: *Critique* 31, No.1, 35.
[237] Hoban 2002, 205.
[238] Maynor 1989, 32f.
[239] Sisk 1997, 156.

However, in *1984* Winston's relationship to Newspeak is, first of all, ambiguous: Although he tries to avoid talking and writing in Newspeak as much as possible, he is nonetheless a member of the Party and thus helplessly exposed to it. Hence, critic Steven Blakemore argues that Winston's thinking has already unconsciously adopted the values and terms of Newspeak. He asserts for instance that Winston considers terms such as "Minitrue" or "Minipax" merely as abbreviations, but fails to see the thematic significance of "mini" (which reflects a linguistically compressed world), because it does no longer exist in the sense of Oldspeak.[240] Similarly, in a conversation with Julia, Winston tells her that he "hates goodness" and that he wants "everybody to be corrupt to the bones."[241] For Blakemore this is an example of how the Party's ideology has already infiltrated Winston's consciousness. The words have changed to their Newspeak antitheses – what Winston calls "goodness" is in fact corrupt, and "corruptness" is good – but since their old meanings do not exist anymore, Winston is unable to use them. Although his observations are correct, Blakemore is slightly exaggerating the extent of Winston's conditioning: If it was already in an advanced stage, he would not be able to reflect on words such as "doublethink" or "INGSOC", which he is still able to identify (and criticize) as Newspeak concepts. More importantly, he would not be able to start with his diary and write down his subversive thoughts in the first place if he was not, at least to some degree, still conscious of his situation and the role of Newspeak for society. This brings us back to the matter at hand: how resistance is achieved (or at least attempted) by the means of language in *1984*.

First of all, Winston is a writer, and he finds pleasure in writing both at his job and at home. As it is said, his "greatest pleasure in his life was his work,"[242] and he finds tremendous gratification in inventing Comrade Ogilvy in order to correct, i.e. change a historical record for the Department of Truth. His work is the only place for him to be creative, as every sort of creative activity at home is considered subversive and probably punished. As he is an avid language user, he is able to enjoy his work even though he does not approve of the actual reasons behind it. But his consciousness of language can be found outside his workplace as well, where it becomes even more subversive, because he is not *supposed* to think about either his individuality or about Newspeak: "Winston was gelatinous with fatigue. Gelatinous was the right word. It had come into his head spontaneously. His body seemed to have not only the weakness of jelly, but also its

[240] Blakemore 1984, 352.
[241] Orwell 1989, 132.
[242] Ibid., 46.

translucency."[243] The pondering of single words in order to describe the situation reminds us of Offred's clinging to words from her past, but Winston shares even more features with *Brave New World's* Helmholtz Watson: Both characters are working in state departments dealing with language, both are conscious of their individuality and both are aware of the power of language. But their incentives could hardly be more different: Although Helmholtz realizes that words "can pierce through anything" he only uses his discovery to read some unorthodox poems to his students. Before he can use it for political ends (if he ever wanted to), he is happy to be send to an island where he can continue his writing, which is all the freedom he can wish for. Winston's goals, on the other hand, are ultimately more political. He considers his diary as "the decisive act"[244] in his rebellion and he actively resists and undermines the Party's orthodoxy first of all by starting his diary. His ambitions, however, are ultimately proven futile. In the end O'Brian captures him and his will is broken. The novel's ending is without a doubt the bleakest of all of the works mentioned in this study, as Winston has fully surrendered to the Party and Big Brother with not a glimmer of hope left. Although he finds a temporary refuge in writing his diary, reminiscing about the past and reading Goldstein's forbidden book (which was, after all, fabricated by the Party) he does succumb to the principles of Newspeak and doublethink in the end.

But Winston is not the only one whose resistance is supported by the means of language in *1984*. Even more important in this regard are the proles. As Winston is certain, "if there was hope, it lay in the proles."[245] This assumption may appear odd to the reader at first. Of course, it appears as if the proles are more or less exempt from the restrains of the Party's orthodoxy, as they are left alone in their "animalian freedom and squalor."[246] However, although the proles are not indoctrinated with the ideology of the Party, they are still kept under control. By a seemingly endless supply of prolefeed and mindless past-times such as the Lottery or movies produced by the Party, they are kept content and unconscious of their situation. Thus, O'Brian is certain that "the proletarians will never revolt, not in a thousand years or in a million."[247] Winston, however, is not so sure. And he is right about it: Although the proles appear to be incapable of any revolution for the moment, they have retained something important: their language. As it turns out, they are in fact mostly

[243] Orwell 1989, 186.
[244] Orwell 1989, 9.
[245] Ibid., 89.
[246] Walsh 1962, 109.
[247] Orwell 1989, 274.

exempt from Newspeak and with it from any sort of political discourse. Still, there are several hints indicating that they are in fact a much more subversive power than they appear to be at first. It is no coincidence that the proles often appear while Winston is conducting an act of unorthodoxy. For instance, he begins his diary by describing his experience at the movies the night before. The film showed a ship of Jewish refugees being bombed and a woman trying to protect her child. As Winston notes "there was a lot of applause from the party seats but a woman down in the prole part of the house suddenly started kicking up a fuss and shouting they didn't it ain't right not in front of kids…."[248] At this point, Winston does not yet see the significance in the woman's reaction to the movie. It is only after he dreams about his mother's disappearance that he realizes the real strength of the proles:

> They were not loyal to a party or a country or an idea, they were loyal to one another. For the first time in his life he did not despise the proles or think of them merely as an inert force which would one day spring to life and regenerate the world. The proles had stayed human. They had not become hardened inside. They had held on to the primitive emotions which he himself had to re-learn by conscious effort.[249]

Winston's realization is crucial, as it implicitly connects the power of the proles with language. The simple, primitive emotional language of the proles is basically a counter-attack on the violent and mechanical language of the regime; it has retained values which are not expressible by Newspeak, such as love, friendship and the repugnance of violence (which can be seen in the woman's reaction to the film), whereas the language of the Party is listless and dull, and can only be used to describe orthodoxy or drudgery.[250] If we keep Sapir-Whorf in mind, one can say that the language of the proles will, if it has not already, provide them with a different reality and with different discourses, which will be used to challenge the Party's doctrine. In a later episode, when Winston and Julia are meeting at their secret hideout, shortly before they are captured, a prole woman is singing outside their window and Winston is positive about their future once again:

> Sooner or later it would happen, strength would turn into consciousness. The proles were immortal, you could not doubt it when you looked at that valiant figure in the yard. In the end their awakening would come. […] The birds sang,

[248] Orwell 1989, 10f.
[249] Ibid., 172.
[250] cf. Sisk 1997, 52.

> the proles sang, the Party did not sing […] You were the dead; theirs was the future.[251]

Shortly afterwards, Winston and Julia are captured. As mentioned before, Winston's resistance has proven futile, but Orwell has kept some hope alive in form of the proles; they are "immortal" because unlike Newspeak, their language is not dying. As it turns out, it is not Winston who is freed *from* the language imposed on him, but the proles. Only the proles, who are exempt from Newspeak, can retain and express their human values. If they will ever revolt is left to the imagination of the reader, but they do have the linguistic means to do so. And as I will show later on, Orwell grounds this assertion on a critique of contemporary trends in language he despised.

In *Native Tongue*, and especially its sequel *The Judas Rose*, the resistance on behalf of the subjugated women has already started. More than in any other work analysed in this study, rebellion is tied to the use of language in both novels. In fact, it is the central element of the plot (again, indicating a discourse of language): The first novel follows Nazareth Chornyak, whose "encodings" ("a word for a perception that had never had a word on its own before"[252]) are crucial to the development of Láadan, an artificial language developed by the women of the Lines. As the *The Judas Rose* begins, Láadan already flourishes among the Linguist women, and they attempt to spread it beyond the Linguist's households. As I explained before, women create Láadan, because the androcentric Panglish restricts them from expressing reality the way they perceive it. In order to establish a female discourse, the women secretly develop a new language, because they believe that it can eventually change reality.[253] In this regard, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis works for both ends – oppression and opposition – as it explains how the current, misogynist society came into being on the one hand, and how reality can change with the introduction of a new language on the other. As Karen Bruce summarizes, the introduction of Láadan into society "is a deliberately political and subversive act, intended to bring about transformation by tearing down the patriarchal order and building a feminist eutopia instead."[254] However, although Láadan is, unlike Newspeak, Nadsat and Inlish, a properly

[251] Orwell 1989, 230.
[252] Elgin 2000, 158.
[253] Ibid., 296.
[254] Bruce 2008, 18. Bruce points out, that the women in *Native Tongue* are in fact not looking for a way to re-establish equality between sexes, but that the notion of a women's language is also tied to an idea of "female empowerment" (18). Given the novel's and Suzette Elgin's background in 1970s feminism (and many feminist utopias of that time), the idea of separatism as a "trope for women's liberation" (21) is prevalent,

developed language, only few examples of actual Láadan words can be found within the novel, which is not surprising, given the peculiar nature of the language itself. What is more important is how the idea of a women's language is transmitted and how it works towards their liberation. As the development of Láadan is a forbidden act, the women of the Lines try to hide it in yet another language: Langlish. Langlish has been used among the women of the Lines for many years, approved by the men, who think of it not as a potential threat, but merely as a meaningless past-time for barren women, a "pathetic monstrous pile of tangled offal."[255] And they are right, because Langlish, with its "endlessly growing list of phonemes and the constant changes in syntax, all the nonsensical phenomena, was only a charade."[256] Langlish is indeed used only as a decoy by the women, to be able to secretly develop and disseminate Láadan,

But the mere creation of Láadan/Langlish is not the only subversive act tied to language, although it is certainly the starting point. What is equally important in this regard is how the women finally attempt to spread the language beyond the Lines. In a complex sub-plot, they manage to infiltrate the central institution outside the Linguist's households – the Roman Catholic Church. As *The Judas Rose* begins, Nazareth has grown old, but she remains a driving force behind the dissemination of Láadan. The Linguist women manage to translate the *King James Bible* into Láadan and with the help of nurses, the only women allowed to go freely between the Linguists and the public, they preach it to other women at weekly devotions held in hospital chapels. Eventually, the Catholic Church becomes aware of this "heresy" as they believe that the translation depicts a female deity. In an attempt to 'sanitize' *The Bible* again by stripping it of any female contamination, they choose Sister Miriam Rose to oversee the process. What they do not know, however, is that Miriam is a born Linguist deliberately introduced to the church, and that she sabotages the Church's plan over decades. As she has the final say on the translated passages, she insists on changing the language in such a clunky way that the "new" and cleansed *Bible* will never attract women: "Who would have suspected that Father Dorien's precious Sister Miriam Rose would have a terrible tin ear? It was shocking, the way she would take a properly defeminised section, with a lovely ring to it when you read it aloud, and fool around with it

and it can be found in the novel as well, e.g. with the erection of separate "Barren Houses". As Láadan challenges the gender code, it will, taken to an extreme, eventually reverse the power dynamic between the sexes. This would arguably lead to a gynocentric society, which, of course, is hardly more desirable than an androcentric one. Several critics, including Mary Kay Bray and Patricia Hernlund, have criticized the overtly feminist nature of the novel, but it has to be said that in the third part of the trilogy, *Earthsong*, Láadan is described as a failure, because the women outside of the Lines were not interested in it.

[255] Elgin 2002, 168.

[256] Elgin 2000, 160.

until it went clanking and stumbling over the tongue, completely ruined."[257] Father Dorien, the bishop in charge, is aware of this effect, claiming that "women were theologically illiterate, and they had to be attracted to the Lord by the rhythm and power of words and music well assembled." However, he fails to see the plan in its entirety, because he is still unaware of the existence of Láadan behind the gibberish of Langlish, and so are the Linguists. Jonathan Chornyak, as he talks to Nazareth at the end of *The Judas Rose*, even finds amusement in the whole plot, because he is objected to the Catholic Church (as it turns out, all Linguists are in Protestants, which is probably another reason why the public despises them) and he believes that Langlish is still nothing more than romantic and exotic twaddle.[258] In the end, as *The Judas Rose* concludes, thousands of unaltered copies of the Láadan *Bible* have already spread all over the planet and its colonies by the help of nurses. The subversion of the system through language seems to have succeeded.

As the previous analysis has proven, *Native Tongue* and *The Judas Rose* do indeed display the most overt relationship between a subversive endeavour and language, using the latter in various ways to overcome their oppression. First of all, they object the androcentric nature of Panglish by creating their own language, Láadan. Keeping the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis in mind, they believe that a language especially created to depict women's perceptions will eventually change reality to a gender equal society, free of violence. Second, they hide their language inside yet another language, Langlish, which was granted to them only because it appears to be nothing but gibberish. At last, they subvert the *King James Bible* by translating it into Láadan. Given the importance of *The Bible* as a central institution of religious discourse in society, it can be argued that the newly created "Láadan Bible" will not only attract women from all over the world (because of its alluring nature), but it will effectively challenge the predominant discourses by offering an alternative, which is ultimately based on women's perceptions. Since the religious discourse outside the Linguist households is one of the most powerful, it is no coincidence that women's resistance is directly aimed at its subversion. In other words, the religious discourse, which has played a major role in subjugating women, has produced a counter-movement that will eventually subvert the same principles on which it is originally founded.

[257] Elgin 2002, 243.
[258] Ibid., 348.

At this point, it is useful to briefly recapitulate the findings so far. Referring back to the discursive framework and Bakhtin's theory of heteroglossia, we have seen that one distinct form of language (such as Panglish in *Native Tongue*) is countered by another one, proving once more that within the permanent struggle of discourse, there is no "unitary" language. My claim was that in order for language to be considered a recurrent theme, its prevalence must be proven. As the analysis has shown so far, language is closely connected to two of dystopia's most important ideas, and at times, even at the centre of these ideas, thus indicating that language is indeed at the core of many dystopian fictions.

3.3 Language and social class

Before I conclude the complex of fictional and contextual issues and with it the first part of the analysis, I want to take a look at another aspect, which is often either overlooked or merely submerged when issues of control and resistance are discussed: The relationship between language, social class and status. After all, most dystopian societies are class-conscious, some to a higher (*Brave New World, 1984, Native Tongue, Handmaid's Tale*), others to a lesser degree (*Book of Dave*). Others, such as *Riddley Walker* and *Clockwork Orange*, do not depict an explicit class-system, but different characters do possess a different social status: The Pry Mincer and the Wes Mincer for example, though members of the Ram government, do not seem to belong to a higher class in the traditional sense[259], and yet their social status is superior to that of the people living on the forms and fents. Most importantly, in all of the novels, class and status are mediated by the use of language. In fact, **every** dystopian novel discussed in this study shows that language is used as an indicator for either social status or social class, which is not a coincidence, but yet another proof for the importance of language in dystopian fiction, and, as I claim, another point to support the claim of language's prevailing role.

In order to analyse the relationship between class and language, I want to focus on the novels in which the ability to use language eloquently, i.e. both fluently and persuasively in speech and writing, is characteristic of a higher (and usually the ruling) class. I want to

[259] Civilization in *Riddley Walker* has been set back to the level of the Iron Age. A hierarchical society has not yet been established, although there are indications of an emerging struggle between the farming communities (forms) and the nomadic hunter-gatherer tribes (fents).

start with *Riddley Walker* and *Book of Dave,* because both are similar in this regard. In both novels, literacy in a predominantly illiterate culture is considered a highly exclusive feature. The ability to read and write *at all* is already an indicator of a high social status. Riddley Walker for instance is literate, and only because of that is he declared the next "connexion man" after the death of his father. Only because of his skills is he allowed to pass on and interpret the Eusa myth: "You wunt have seen the woal thing wrote out without you ben a Eusa show man or connexion man. No 1 else is allowit to have it wrote down the same which that don't make no odds becaws no 1 else knows how to read."[260] His literacy, along with his wit, separate Riddley from his fellows. In this regard, he is not unlike the linguists in *Native Tongue,* who are despised because of their linguistic abilities: "Your myndy don't you see", Fister Crunchman warns Riddley, "You ben learnt to read and write and all ways thinking on things…Dont think too much youwl grow hair on the in side of your head."[261] As it is implied, writing, reading and thinking are all connected, and as we have seen, it is Riddley's ability "to understand what people smarter than he did not understand long ago"[262], which guarantees his survival and allows him to do his own show in the end. In short, his understanding of language defines and increases his status as the novel progresses.

The Book of Dave depicts a similarly widespread illiteracy of the population. Most of the Hamsters, with a few exceptions, seem to be incapable of reading, which is one of the reasons why the PCO sends a Driver to Ham to teach and interpret the Knowledge of the Book to them (and to enforce its principles of course). But whereas in Riddley's post-apocalyptic society only one form and register of language exists, Will Self introduces a distinct vernacular called Mokni spoken mainly, but not exclusively, by the Hamsters. It is opposed to Arpee, the formal language enforced by the PCO, their Drivers and most people living in New London. Members of the PCO use their knowledge of Arpee in order to demonstrate their power over the Hamsters. Mister Greaves, the Lawyer, i.e. a man with large land holdings, abruptly concludes an argument with the Hamsters by switching to Arpee: "Mister Greaves shifted into the more sonorous cadences of Arpee, and Antone Böm realized he meant there to be no further inquisition."[263] Also, Arpee is used in legal contexts: Symun Dévúsh, who is able to read and who uses his ability to become the

[260] Hoban 2002, 29.
[261] Hoban 2002, 64f.
[262] Porter 1990, 455.
[263] Self 2006, 24.

Geezer at one point, is incarcerated in the Tower for heresy, where he becomes aware of his linguistic shortcomings:

> He's had scant opportunity to read the Book since acquiring his phonics [*alphabet*]. While, like all Hamstermen, he'd been accustomed since boyhood to call over the runs and points, this oral recounting was haphazard and imprecise. In the broad Mokni of Ham the runs were strings of meaningless gibberish. […] It was the same for any cockney or hick – with the consequence that well-born flyers [*heretics*] often survived in the Tower for years, the illiterate were dispatched with great expeditiousness.[264]

As the illiterate are "dispatched" (a euphemism for being executed), one must be able to switch to the more formal Arpee in order to survive. After Antone and Carl flee from Ham in order to get to New London, Antone warns Carl: "From now on we speak in Arpee only, even between ourselves. In this way our imposture may – Dave grant us – become more natural."[265] In this regard, Mokni is considered "unnatural" and its imprudent usage can identify Böm and Carl as flyers. Thus, in order to stay undercover, they have to adjust their use of language accordingly; they have to increase their linguistic abilities to hide their low-class background. Again, language divides different social classes and groups from each other.

Burgess' *A Clockwork Orange* is not unlike the previous two novels in its way of employing a unique form of language. Like *Riddley Walker*, its first-person narrator uses a distinctive form of slang to tell his story. The difference, however, is that Riddley has no other choice than to use the fragmented form of English available, whereas Alex's use of Nadsat is entirely voluntarily. More importantly, Nadsat is inseparably connected with a specific age group in society – teenagers. Of course, teenagers cannot be considered a social class, but Nadsat separates them linguistically from the rest of society and their "oppressors" (parents, teachers, social workers). But even within the peer-groups using Nadsat, status and power relationships are expressed linguistically: Alex's archaic use of pronominalization is the most important aspect in this regard. Julie Carson notes in her analysis that Burgess sets Alex apart in two ways: "from general society by giving him the nadsat vocabulary", which I have just mentioned, "and from his own group, with the pronoun distinction, […] revealing Alec's *[sic!]* position of power relative to both society

[264] Ibid., 185, emphasis added.
[265] Self 2006, 236

and his droogs."[266] Alex chooses to use the archaic "thou" or "thee" forms of address when he is in control or talking to people he believes to be subordinates (including his victims). For instance, Dim, the least competent of his droogs, is constantly addressed as "thou": "Come, gloopy bastard, as thou art."[267] In this way, Alex emphasizes his status as the self-proclaimed leader of the gang. On the opposite, Alex uses modern pronouns when he talks to the police or his superiors once he is sentenced to jail.[268] After he has undergone the Ludovico treatment, he ceases to use the archaic forms at all, and "his feelings of powerlessness are encoded in his pronominalization."[269] The loss of a pronominal code illustrates a change in his character: Alex has lost his superiority and with it an integral part of his former language.

In *Native Tongue,* the ruling class is basically named according to its abilities: The linguists control the world's economy, because they have mastered most of the alien languages needed for interplanetary negotiations. But they also use their abilities in conversations with citizens of the earth, and they mediate and enforce their higher social status by the means of language. As it is shown in the very first pages, language serves as a tool of power, when Kenneth, a non-linguist, participates in a conversation with the Heads of the Lines:

> It wasn't a fair contest in any way; poor Kenneth, straight from the public and brought into Chornyak Household with the public's bottomless ignorance of all linguistic skills…and Aaron Williams Chornyak, son of Adiness Household, second only to the Chornyak Line in the linguist dynasties. […] Kenneth obviously didn't understand what difference his choice of sensory predicates made here in the bowels of the great house, miles away from any member of the public who might risk contamination from his flaws of phrasing […].[270]

It is obvious that the linguists frown upon the misuse of language. By mocking the "flaws of phrasing" of the citizens, the linguists point out their shortcomings, further highlighting their own, superior status. In a similar encounter, a government official called Smith reflects upon his relationship with the linguists: "He'd met with linguists hundreds of times. And he knew that there was absolutely nothing an ordinary citizen could do if a linguist decided to structure an encounter in such a way that that citizen would look like a

[266] Julie Carson. 1976. "Pronominalization in Clockwork Orange". In: *Papers on Language and Literature* 12, 201.
[267] Burgess 2000, 15.
[268] Ibid., 70.
[269] Sisk 1997, 69.
[270] Elgin 2000, 12f.

perfect ass. That was one of the skills the Lingoes learned."[271] In *Native Tongue* and *The Judas Rose*, language is the ultimate indicator of social class; their ability to use language more eloquently than other citizens and their ability to teach alien languages to their children has led the linguists to the top of the social hierarchy, and it increases the gap between them and the rest of society.

The class system in *Brave New World* is arguably the most stringent of all the dystopias covered in this study, as conditioning and hypnopaedia are already determining a citizen's class before he is even able to speak. Hence, a rise in social class seems to be *de facto* impossible. As the novel only follows the lives of either Alphas or Betas, examples of lower-caste language use are non-existent, but it can be argued that their eloquence of language is significantly lower and less developed than that of the higher castes. As we have seen, only Alpha-Plus such as Helmholtz Watson, who have the "happiest knack for slogans and hypnopaedic rhymes"[272] are working in the Department of Writing or in any other position requiring eloquent use of language. Members of lower castes, such as the "black Semi-Morons"[273], are conducting merely lowbrow technical jobs. As the latter are subject to arrested development, their linguistic skills appear to be highly limited as well, and their newspaper, the "Gamma Gazette", consists exclusively of one-syllable words.[274] But even Betas, such as Lenina's friend Fanny, seem to be already limited in their linguistic choice: Fanny becomes "speechless and averted"[275] after Lenina tells her she decided to go out with Bernard Marx after all, and instead of arguing with Lenina, she merely comments on the beauty of her Malthusian belt, shifting into the pre-conditioned sphere of consumerism again.

At last, there is *1984*, which presents yet another highly class-conscious society. Within the society of Oceania, the biggest gap lies between members of the Party (both Inner and Outer) and the proles, who make up about 85 per cent of the population. At first sight it appears as if the proles are more or less exempt from the restrains of the Party's orthodoxy, as they are left alone in their "animalian freedom and squalor."[276] In reality however, although the proles are not indoctrinated with the ideology of the Party, they are kept under

[271] Ibid., 63.
[272] Huxley 2004, 57.
[273] Ibid., 54.
[274] Ibid., 56.
[275] Ibid., 42.
[276] Walsh 1962, 109.

control nonetheless. By a seemingly endless supply of prolefeed and mindless past-times such as the Lottery, this social group is kept content. As Winston observes, "even people who could barely read or write seemed capable of intricate calculations,"[277] but of course, nobody ever wins more than a small amount of money. After all, the Lottery is nothing more than a tool to keep the simple minds of the proles busy. Nevertheless, Winston believes that "if there was hope, it lay in the proles."[278] However, his hope is severely dampened after a conversation with an old prole in a pub. It is in this conversation, that the linguistic differences between the members of two different classes become most obvious. First, there are differences on a formal level, similar to the use of Mokni and Arpee in *Book of Dave*: Whereas Winston uses a formal register of Old English, the prole talks in a broad Cockney accent: "Lackeys! That reg'lar takes me back, that does. I recollect – oh, donkey's years ago – I used to sometimes go to 'Yde Park of a Sunday afternoon to 'ear the blokes making speeches…and there was one bloke…'E didn't 'alf give it 'em!"[279] But it is not only in the use of slang in which class distinctions are made obvious, but especially in the actual contents of speech: Winston patiently tries to get the old man to remember facts from his past, but he constantly deflects to other, irrelevant episodes from his life, which are nothing but "a rubbish-heap of details" for Winston.[280] It appears to him, as if "all the relevant facts were outside the range of [the prole's] vision."[281] It is almost comical that the first thing the old man remembers when asked if anything changed, is that the beer used to be better and cheaper, while Winston hopes to gather some important facts. But the proles have lost their critical and conscious way of using language, and in this way they are portrayed as linguistically inferior – a fallacy, as we have seen.

Now that it has been analysed how language mediates and facilitates the distinctions between social classes or social status, one has to ask why this is the case. Does this strengthen the dystopian nature? I claim that it does, and in order to explain it, it is useful to briefly introduce two theories in sociolinguistics first. In a short assessment of Newspeak, Paul Chilton refers to the theories of Basil Bernstein, who came to the conclusion that two types of language code can generally be distinguished: *elaborated* and *restricted*. Restricted code is used between two speakers who share the same background

[277] Orwell 1989, 89.
[278] Ibid.
[279] Orwell 1989, 94.
[280] Ibid., 95.
[281] Ibid.

and knowledge of a certain topic. It has a high syntactical and lexical predictability, while the content of speech is likely to be concrete and descriptive. Elaborated code, on the other hand, is more likely to be syntactically complex. The content of speech is more abstract and explicit, more likely to carry facts and ideas rather than common emotions and feelings. It is particularistic, and access to it depends on "specialized social positions within the social structure."[282] In other words, the higher the social class, the more likely one is to acquire and use elaborated code. Furthermore, Bernstein claims that the social structure generates "distinct linguistic forms or codes and these codes essentially transmit the culture and so constrain behaviour."[283] Here, Bernstein draws a connection between class and behaviour, which is a thought to keep in mind for a second.

Certainly, indications of a distinction between elaborated and restricted code can be found in several of the dystopian novels: The Hamster's use of Mokni for example serves as an example of restricted code: It is syntactically plain and mostly used among the Hamsters themselves.[284] Although people such as the Driver are perfectly able to switch to Mokni, the Hamsters are less likely to switch into Arpee, arguably because they are not familiar with the formal requirements or because there is simply no need for it, as they rarely communicate with Arpee-speaking strangers. The linguists in *Native Tongue*, on the other hand, possess a much elaborated code. Their lexical and syntactic variability is superior to that of the citizens, as we have seen, and they use their elaborated code to demonstrate their power. It can be assumed that in order to conduct interplanetary business and to acquire foreign languages, which require abstract and formal thoughts, the linguists obtain an elaborated code from a very young age, whereas the citizens, whose status prevents them from conducting any form of major business, are less likely to use it. In *Brave New World*, members are already conditioned with a specific code, with the lower castes arguably having a very restricted code, as they simply do not possess the intellectual capacity to conduct abstract argumentations, and therefore do not have the linguistic abilities either. At last, Natalie Maynor observes that the absence of abstract concepts in *Riddley Walker* suggests a restrictive code, which requires its speakers to rely heavily on context.[285] All of these examples prove that in many novels higher, authoritative powers

[282] Basil Bernstein. 1974. *Class, Codes and Control. Theoretical Studies towards a Sociology of Language*. London: Routledge, 79.
[283] Ibid., 122.
[284] Although it may appear that way, it has to be noted that the use of slang does not necessarily concur with a restricted code – it is perfectly possible to use a form of elaborated code even when using slang or vernaculars.
[285] Maynor 1984, 20.

possess an elaborated code, which in return allows them to oppress lower social classes. This emphasizes the effect of dystopian themes of authority and control, and at the same provides an easier way to achieve control by the means of language: if a lower class has a restricted use of language, it is more susceptible to oppression in the first place, and if it is prevented to acquire an elaborated code, dissent is minimized.

But what about a novel like *Clockwork Orange*? Nadsat is used only between members of a particular peer-group and the various ways to express and circumscribe violence indicate a restricted code. On the other hand, it is complex and playful, perfectly capable of transmitting abstract thoughts. Furthermore, Alex is a highly intelligent individual, coming from a classic middle-class family (though these facts do not have to coincide), and his behaviour is certainly not constrained by his use of Nadsat. On the contrary, as we have seen in the last chapter, Nadsat is Alex's primary creative medium. Similarly, Offred, though oppressed in her way of living and expressing sentiments, remains a highly capable language user. Although her social status is probably among the lowest in society, she is not inferior in regards to linguistic skills. In fact, it appears to be quite the opposite. Apparently, language can be both used to support class distinctions and at the same time exceed them, which is of course another exemplification of language's multifaceted application and nature. It seems as if Bernstein's dichotomy is not applicable in these cases, because he automatically correlates language codes with class level, which is not always the case in dystopian fiction: Some individuals do possess an elaborated code even though their social class or status is inferior. Clearly, Bernstein's model needs to be amended, and Murray Edelman did so by adding a political sphere: His classification into a formal or "elaborated language" and a "restricted public language" emanates from a political necessity: An elaborated language is needed to express "logical relationships and alternative views of reality"[286], whereas a public language merely "validates established beliefs and strengthens the authority structure of the polity or organization."[287] This notion supports all of the relations between language and class or status mentioned above: The Hamsters, the proles, the lower-castes in *Brave New World* and the citizens in *Native Tongue* are all subject of a restricted public language, and in this way, they reinforce the present order of the state. It is in the interest of the ruling power to keep them from

[286] Paul Chilton. 1983. "Newspeak: It's the Real Thing". In: Chilton, Paul (Ed.). *1984 in 1984. Autonomy, Control and Communication*. London: Comedia Publishing, 37.
[287] Murray Edelman. 1977. *Political Language. Words That Succeed and Politics That Fail*. New York: AP, 109.

acquiring an elaborated language, to keep them content and unconscious of any form of criticism. Mister Greaves at one point reflects that the Hamster's ignorance to anything beyond their own existence "was a large part of what made them the happy, healthful, seemingly naturally dävine folk they were."[288] Similarly, the premise of "Ignorance is Strength" echoes through *1984,* where the proles are left with their Cockney accent to a life of thoughtless entertainment, not unlike the Deltas, Gammas and Epsilons in *Brave New World.*

More importantly, however, Edelman's distinction allows disposing novels like *A Clockwork Orange* and *The Handmaid's Tale* in this scheme: Nadsat is a form of elaborated language without being tied to a higher class level. Nadsat clearly provides Alex and his droogs with an alternative, and ultimately more violent view of reality. Although Alex stems from a middle-class background, his language is much more elaborated than that of the ones around him and this is one of the reasons why he imposes a threat, or at least a disturbance upon society. In *The Handmaid's Tale*, women are subject of a restricted public language, as they are neither allowed to read or write, nor allowed to express certain sentiments. However, Offred maintains an elaborated language, which makes it possible for her to tell her narrative in the first place and which provides her with a subversive power, as we have seen.

To conclude this chapter, one can say that examples of elaborated and restricted language can be found in all of the novels discusses here, but they are not necessarily tied to a specific class. They do, however, draw distinctions between characters. And as Chilton points out, "the basic tendency of 'restricted public language' in Edelman's sense is to close off discourse, allowing only certain topics to be discussed, to obscure references to causation or responsibility, and to disallow criticism."[289] This brings us back to the issues of language and control and perfectly concludes the first part of the analysis: As status and power relationships are crucial to dystopian fiction, many authors try to express the distinctions between classes, groups or individuals in terms of language. In most cases, oppressed groups and classes (most often this is in fact the "public") are left with a restricted language, which prevents them from becoming aware of their situation and to participate in certain discourses. In other cases, groups and individuals, such as Alex, Offred or the women in *Native Tongue*, do distinguish themselves from the public by

[288] Self 2006, 68.
[289] Chilton 1983, 37.

possessing a unique form of elaborated language. The distinction of social class and status by the means of language thus works towards a general dystopian idea, and it is almost inseparably connected with the issues of both control and resistance discussed so far. Furthermore, it shows how language theory has apparently left its traces all over dystopian fiction – an observation, which has to be kept in mind in order to define language's prevailing status.

4. The language of dystopia – stylistic and narrative issues

So far I have mainly analysed how language acts as a plot device in dystopian fiction. I have shown that language is used in order to enforce and maintain some of the most important themes in dystopian fiction, such as control, resistance, obliteration or changing of the past and social order. Besides that, its prevalence throughout all the novels discussed in this study already supports the initial assumption that language can and should be considered a theme on its own in dystopian literature. But the analysis does not end here. Now it is time to move away from the subject of language *in* dystopia to language *of* dystopia. The second part of this study is dedicated to the analysis of stylistic and narrative issues and the examination of possible reasons for said prevalence of language in dystopian fiction. I will show that language is not used exclusively as a plot device, but that it acts as a protagonist itself; that many of the issues we have discussed so far are also realized on a structural and narrative level.

The first part of this chapter will thus focus on these issues and their relation to the dystopian enterprise – how does the author use language and how does it affect the narrator and reader? I will show how the use of artificial languages, paratexts, intertextuality, and even the simple naming of characters work in line with two of dystopias key concerns – didacticism and extrapolation. The second part will move slightly away from the texts at hand, as I try to uncover some of the linguistic theories and contemporary trends in language theory that found its way into the novels discussed herein. At last, I will try to answer one very last question: If we identified language as a consistent and recurring theme, why is that the case? What makes dystopian fiction so receptive to language issues?

4.1 ‘Language speaks’ – language as protagonist in dystopian fiction

To facilitate the move from the internal use of language as a plot device to stylistic and narrative issues it is helpful to recall once again one of the very central ideas of dystopian fiction. Darko Suvin, whom I quoted earlier in regards to utopia as a genre, defines science fiction as follows: “A literary genre whose necessary and sufficient conditions are the presence and interaction of estrangement and cognition, and whose main formal device is

an imaginative framework alternative to the author's empirical environment."[290] I explained the notion of an "imaginative framework before". However, Suvin's emphasis on "cognitive estrangement" also perfectly encapsulates another characteristic of dystopian fiction. 'Estrangement' in this regard refers to the element that we recognize as different, while 'cognition' refers to the logical and rational implications that prompt us to try and understand the dystopian landscape.[291] According to Suvin, in order for science fiction (and, as I claim, for dystopia) to work, both features must be present. In other words, the dystopian society must both be different from ours and yet be plausible in one way or another; it must not appear to be impossible or unattainable. Other critics have adopted Suvin's model with slight variations: Robert Scholes for instance refers to a process of "sublimation and cognition", the former being the process by which fiction "takes our fears and organizes them in a form charged with meaning"[292], while Keith Booker uses the term "defamiliarization" instead of estrangement.[293] What all definitions have in common, however, is that they refer to the transformation of something familiar in order to provide the reader with a new perspective and a different understanding of certain issues. For instance, the recurrent theme of forbidden literature in dystopian fiction may be linked to issues of censorship in the present time (I will return to this in the following chapter). These issues are, as we have seen, mostly part of a political, religious or scientific discourse and central to the plot. But if we recall our initial claim that language permeates dystopian fiction not only on a fictional level, but *also* stylistically, it can be claimed that the process of estrangement and cognition in dystopian fiction happens, first of all, on stylistic and narrative basis: The transformation of language itself is as important to the dystopian enterprise as the use of language as a plot device. In order to prove this, I will focus on three aspects: The use of artificial languages, the use of paratextuality and intertextuality and, at last, the use of nomenclature. This list is by no means complete; other potential aspects include the narrator's point of view, narrative voice or even the use of time. But since these are important for any form of fiction, I chose to stick with the three aspects mentioned above, which are not limited to, but especially peculiar in dystopian fiction.

[290] Suvin 1979, 8.
[291] cf. Adam Roberts. 2000. *Science Fiction*. London: Routledge, 8.
[292] Sisk 1997, 81.
[293] Booker 1997, 19.

4.1.1 Artificial languages

As mentioned repeatedly, several novels used in this study are told partly (*Book of Dave*) or entirely (*Clockwork Orange*, *Riddley Walker*) in an artificial language, while others (*1984* and *Native Tongue*) employ artificial languages merely as plot devices without actually using it. For now, I want to focus only on the former three. Of course, the introduction of artificial languages is by no means exclusive to dystopian fiction. As Sisk points out, they have been "figured prominently in utopian schemes"[294] before, and the idea of a future language is crucial to the majority of works of science fiction. However, most of the attempts to depict a future language in utopias or science fiction (or the lack thereof) have been criticized for being not linguistically plausible.[295] The artificial languages of dystopia at hand – Newspeak, Inlish, Nadsat and Mokni[296] – may encounter the same objections, because they either defy the actual development of a language or portray it in a highly arbitrary and unrealistic way. Either way, this criticism is beside the point; dystopian and utopian writers alike can easily deemphasize linguistic accuracy in order to emphasize their didactic purpose. After all, even accepting the strong Sapir-Whorf-hypothesis, which we found out to be crucial to most dystopias, is based on little factual ground from a linguist's point of view. What is more important is that language serves as a vehicle for the aforementioned elements of estrangement and cognition. In other words, the 'evolution of speech' that can be found in novels like *Riddley Walker*, *Clockwork Orange* and *Book of Dave* is not a stylistic *tour de force*, but it serves as the first act of estrangement by defamiliarizing the language common to the reader, which in return supports the dystopian enterprise. But how does it do so?

The first effect of this estrangement is the reader's immersion in the novel. Unlike many utopias, dystopias generally start *in medias res*, "often with arresting narrative devices calculated at once to stimulate curiosity and alert the reader to the *difference* of the world being described."[297] Certainly, the first difference a reader encounters, the first narrative

[294] Sisk 1997, 170.
[295] Gorman Beauchamp for instance argues that many dystopian fantasies fail to create a language that is "reflecting the specific reality of the projected future" (Beauchamp 1974, 463), despite their artistic superiority. However, considering how the seemingly primitive language of *Riddley Walker* supports the underdeveloped and backward state of society or how Nadsat is used to express the youth's violent nature can disprove his claims. (c.f. chapter 3.1).
[296] I exclude Láadan from this list, because Suzette Elgin has developed it outside the fictional sphere of *Native Tongue* into a perfectly workable language with its own grammatical and phonological rules.
[297] Ferns 1999, 111, emphasis in original.

device is the language of the narrative itself. One must only take a look at the first sentence of *Riddley Walker* to become intrigued by the protagonist's odd patois: "On my naming day when I come 12 I gone front spear and kilt a wyld boar he parbly ben the las wyld pig on the Bundel Downs any how there hadn't ben none for a long time befor him nor I aint looking to see none agen."[298] Similar experiences are likely to happen if one starts to read *Clockwork Orange* or *Book of Dave* – the reader is alerted to the difference of the world first of all through its language. Once curiosity is stimulated, the reader has to come to terms with the language of the narrative; he essentially has to *learn* the language in order to understand the novel. Hence, David Dowling observes about *Riddley Walker*:

> The language of the debased and degraded future that Riddley lives in is bound to be full of uncomprehended remnants of what we have today. No other nuclear disaster fiction has pushed this commonplace idea as far as Hoban has in this novel, which teaches the reader a dimly recognizable, mutated form of Cockney English even as he reads.[299]

Dowling refers to the act of teaching, and Anthony Burgess takes it one step further by predicting that at the end of *Clockwork Orange*, "you should find yourself in possession of a minimal Russian vocabulary – without effort, without surprise."[300] In this regard, the novel does to the reader what society arguably does to the population in the novel with worldcasts "being viddied by everybody in the world"[301] – it is a form of subliminal brainwashing: Just as the populace is exposed to the state's propaganda, the reader is exposed to Alex's Nadsat, and he unconsciously learns the language as the novel progresses. Thus, the employment of an artificial language fulfils the didactic purpose of dystopian fiction in its most elemental way: It teaches the reader how easy it is to unconsciously adopt a new language, new expressions and new ideas. This may sound positive at first – learning without any effort – but as examples from *Brave New World* show, the easier it is to learn, the easier it can be taken advantage of. Especially in the early stages of language acquisition, human thoughts are, at least in the novel's context, especially prone to become 'corrupted', to use one of Orwell's terms. And even in the later stages of our life, we are always unconsciously adopting the language around us. One only has to think of the subconscious power of advertisements and its slogans and how easily we seem to remember them. Authors such as Hoban, Self and Burgess remind us of this

[298] Hoban 2002, 1.
[299] David Dowling. 1987. *Fictions of Nuclear Disaster*. Iowa City: UP, 201.
[300] Quoted after Sisk 1997, 61.
[301] Burgess 2000, 15.

fact, as they "force us to rethink the challenge of language acquisition"[302] by extrapolating the very same processes of language control happening to characters within the novel to the reader; they performatively show how language can be used, even without force, to change our presuppositions of the power of language.

But the use of an artificial language serves another purpose besides stimulating interest and challenging the reader. It is primarily used to mediate the novel's central dystopian concerns. As proven, language in *Riddley Walker* does indeed know "more than its users"[303], and in fact more than its readers as well: Riddley has to gradually entangle the world of allusions and technological jargon in order to discover the true ambitions of his government; language contains a discourse that is seemingly inaccessible for the population, although Riddley seems to overcome the linguistic obstacles step by step. The process is similar for us readers, who have to rely on Riddley's notes, because we simply do not know more than he does, and his vernacular seems to impede our understanding at first. Hence, we have to accept the official Eusa myth as it is told by Riddley in the beginning as a fact. Only after Goodparley interprets the original text of the Eusa story (the only part of the novel written in Standard English), and after Riddley ponders the different versions told to him by Lissener and Goodparley, we are able to understand how it has been adopted by the Mincery and almost grotesquely misinterpreted to be in accordance with their political goals. As Riddley gains understanding, so does the reader. Only after one has mastered the amount of puns and allusions, is one able to understand the complete meaning of a phrase like "Swossage…You can't beat a good banger"[304], mentioned in the Punch & Judy show, which is of course yet another highly allegorical reference to a nuclear bomb. In the end, the reader will realize that language can be used politically and that he might be a "captive in a prison of discourse"[305] as well, as he is drawn into the novel's vernacular.

In *Book of Dave*, the reader has to equally rely on context as well in order to understand the novel. Although the use of Mokni is less prominent within the narrative and only partially used in dialogue between the Hamsters, its combination with seemingly familiar

[302] Sisk 1997, 170.
[303] Porter 1990, 457.
[304] Self 2006, 135.
[305] Eddie Marcus. 1999. "Speaking the Ineffable: Language and dystopia". *PostModern Perspectives Papers*. [Online source].

terms put into a different context serve as a tool of estrangement nonetheless. As in *Riddley Walker*, the first few sentences leave the reader with more questions than answers: "Carl Dévúsh, spindle-shanked, bleach-blond, lampburnt, twelve years old, kicked up buff puffs of sand with his bare feet as he scampered along the path from the manor. Although it was still early in the first tariff, the foglamp had already bored through the cloud […]."[306] The reader, without consulting the small Mokni dictionary provided by the author in an appendix, can only guess what "tariff" and "foglamp" mean at first – he has to carefully deduce how the meanings of words have changed and the reasons behind it either from context, or by interpolating the two narratives of the novel: Dave's present time story and the future dystopia. As the novel progresses, one discovers not only the origins of certain words (the world for 'chellish', meaning evil for instance refers to Dave's wife Michelle), but also their relation to a misogynist and theocratic discourse, whose basis is Dave's Book. Eventually, it becomes clear how Dave's taxi-driver argot is transformed into a religion, and how his seemingly demented views have been adopted as truths hundreds of years later.

At last, in *Clockwork Orange*, Nadsat is inseparably connected with Alex's character. Not only is the intriguing and playful nature of Nadsat a way to deviate from the violence depicted, but it also allows dissociating Alex and his peers further from the uniformity of society. Nadsat encapsulates a certain view of reality that differs profoundly from the one most characters in the novel and readers have. Burgess shows how language can be used as a creative medium, but at the same time, he is aware of its ephemerality: In the end, Alex is on the verge of dropping Nadsat, but not before he has told his story. He chooses to tell his tale in Nadsat, because it is the only way for him to properly describe his experiences and to make us, his "friends" as he directly addresses the readers, understand the dystopian concern that lie at the bottom of the novel – a feat that might not be possible or less effective if Burgess had chosen to stick to Standard English.

In all of the three novels discussed, common language is defamiliarized to a varying degree: "By suspending realist notions of meaning and by breaking the common rules of discourse, these stories project verbal counterrealities wherein the values and norms of official language are criticized and ultimately disrupted."[307] This estrangement or

[306] Self 2006, 1.
[307] Porter 1990, 450.

'disruption' will ultimately result in cognition on behalf of the reader: the reader's notions of language and its implications are challenged and he has to come to terms with the language of the novel in the same way the characters have come to terms with it. The struggle within the novel becomes a struggle in reading the novel – a fact that also plays an important role in the following chapter when discussing the use of paratexts. To conclude, it is safe to say that artificial languages are not merely used for aesthetic pleasure but they serve an important function in developing and strengthening the dystopian idea, by mediating between a structural and fictional level.

4.1.2 Para- and intertextuality

Brave New World opens with a well-known epigraph, based on a quote by Nicola Berdiaeff: "Utopias seem much more likely than we had thought in the past. And now we are faced with a far more distressing question: How can their ultimate establishment be avoided?"[308] Given the nature of Huxley's subsequently depicted society, which appears to be much more utopian than dystopian at first, the epigraph captures Huxley's critique on the utopian idea before the narrative has even started. It is a strong estrangement device, because it leaves the reader with an important and fairly unsettling question: Why should we avoid utopia? Isn't utopia something desirable, something we should strive for? Of course, the answer lies in the text and cognition happens once the reader grasps Huxley's satirical and critical assessment of utopian schemes, such as scientific advancement, conformity and the elimination of private property. The epigraph foreshadows some of the novel's central concerns, as it forces the reader to rethink familiar values and question the utopian ideal. It is one example of how dystopian writers use additional forms of texts and literary devices for their ends.

Brave New World's epigraph is an instance of what is generally referred to as a paratext[309] in literary theory.[310] As Gerard Genette defines it, the "paratext in all its form is

[308] In a 1946 reprint, Huxley also added a foreword by himself, in which he explains that he had rather given John the Savage three choices in the end. This study, however, will focus on the original text without the foreword.

[309] Gerard Genette defines paratext as follows: "A literary work consists, entirely or essentially, of a text, defined (very minimally) as a more or less long sequence of verbal statements that are more or less endowed with significance. But this text is rarely presented in an unadorned state, unreinforced and unaccompanied by a certain number of verbal and other productions, such as an author's name, a title, a preface, illustrations […] These accompanying productions, which vary in extent and appearance, constitute what I have called

a discourse that is fundamentally heteronymous, auxiliary, and dedicated to something other than itself that constitutes its raison d'être. This something is the text."[311] In other words, paratexts are in almost all cases in a direct relationship to the text; they supplement the text with additional information or criticism, or, as it is the case in *Brave New World*, introduce elementary concerns, critical remarks and attract the reader's attention. Dystopian fiction appears to be especially prone to paratexts, because they are abundant: In addition to *Brave New World*, epilogues can be found in *Riddley Walker, The Book of Dave, The Handmaid's Tale* and *Native Tongue/Judas Rose*. The latter two also include epilogues, and *1984* adds an appendix on Newspeak, which is more than a simple typological analysis of the language, as we will see. At last, both *Riddley Walker* and *Book of Dave* also include small dictionaries of Inlish and Mokni as well as prefatory maps of the novel's setting. As their function is simply to help the reader follow the journey of the novel's protagonists and ease the way into their vernaculars, I will not discuss them any further in this study, but rather concentrate on the extraneous material that is more 'ambiguous' in its application.

Instances of such extraneous material and intervening texts that support the main narrative can be found in *Native Tongue* and *The Judas Rose*. All chapters are preceded by epigraphs, which constitute a vast universe of inter- and paratextuality, as Mary Kay Bray observes:

> Readers are reminded that the text *is* a text – a form of discourse – by epigraphs preceding each chapter, fictional, but documentary-seeming extracts from a wide range of conventionally nonfictional modes of discourse such as the U.S. Constitution, training manuals, examinations on linguistic theory, folklore and song, church readings, and so on […].[312]

The multitude of different modes, voices and sources that are presented to the reader are first of all an estrangement device. Although some of the epigraphs, such as excerpts from Nazareth's diary[313], are explicitly linked to the narrative at hand, others, such as the lyrics

elsewhere the work's paratext." (Gerard Genette. 1997. *Paratexts. Thresholds of Interpretation*. Cambridge: UP, 1)

[310] In some cases, however, the term "metatext" might be equally applicable, especially if the respective preface or epilogue reflects upon the main narrative.

[311] Ibid., 12.

[312] Bray 1986, 56.

[313] Elgin 2002, 111, 176, 237, 258, 291.

of drinking songs[314], teaching manuals[315] or linguistic theories[316] appear to be detached from the original text at first, leading to more questions rather than answers. And yet, in a way, they form a narrative on their own, and I would even go as far as claiming that all of the novel's major themes and concerns are to be recognized only by reading the novel's epigraphs, without the actual text. However, as the novels progress, the purpose of their inclusion becomes evident: As Bray notes, the narrative of *Native Tongue* covers a span of roughly thirty-three years, whereas only key episodes from nine of these years are described (strangely, no dates are mentioned in *The Judas Rose*, but it can be assumed that the story takes place about 60 years after *Native Tongue* ends, as Nazareth is now an old woman). Thus, "readers must imagine whatever intervening narrative seems necessary"[317], and the epigraphs provide the background information for said narrative. Indeed, most of the novel's contextual information is taken from these chapter introductions. One of the subplots for instance involves the unsuccessful attempts of government officials to "interface" a human child with an alien life form. It is only through the information of an epigraph, taken from a "Training Lecture of the U.S. Department of Analysis & Translation"[318] that the process of interfacing is explained as the common way of acquiring alien languages. Without this information, the reader would have to extract the information from the text, in which the process is mentioned, but not explicitly explained. Similarly, a definition of an "encoding", which is crucial to the development of Láadan and the novel's major concern, is given only within an epigraph. Thus, the epigraphs add much to the theoretical backdrop of the novel. Whereas in *1984*, Goldstein's book provides a political framework (I will refer back to this later), the epigraphs in *Native Tongue* illuminate discourses of female suppression and linguistic power. It is no surprise that many of them are either concerned with language or the role of women, and that 20th century feminist poems are aligned next to a brochure from "The Perfect Wife, Inc."[319]: The main purpose of this is to provide additional information on the subjugation of women, and it is achieved by interpolating texts based both on the narrative itself and the author's (and the reader's) time. At the same time, it challenges the reader's expectations and extrapolates contemporary concerns. Let us take a look at an excerpt from the following epigraph, taken from the fictional Krat Lourd, a panel speaker at the Annual Meeting of the American

[314] Elgin 2000, 162.
[315] Elgin 2002, 148.
[316] Elgin 2000, 145.
[317] Bray 1986, 56.
[318] Elgin 2000, 34.
[319] Ibid., 173.

Association of Feminologists: "We must continue to counsel our clients to encourage their females to be religious, because religion offers one of the most reliable methods for the proper management of women ever devised; religion offers a superb cure for the woman who might otherwise tend to be rebellious and uncontrolled."[320] First of all, this statement appears to be highly ironical if one considers the second novel's plot in which the same religion is subverted by Láadan. Second, it introduces the misogynist discourse prevalent at the novel's time: women have to be "managed" and "controlled", which essentially degraded them to the status of a pet. Third, it indicates a highly patriarchal form of religion, which is indeed the case in the novel's theocratic society. Finally, it challenges the readers to reflect upon their understanding of religion. It is an excellent example to show how extrapolation, estrangement and narrative function are realized; the epigraphs in *Native Tongue* show how intertextuality and paratextuality are used to enhance the dystopian idea; how these seemingly detached and arbitrary fragments are integrated within the narrative, and how they further illuminate the novel's concerns.

However, chapter epigraphs are not the only instance of paratextuality in *Native Tongue* and *Judas Rose*. Both novels also employ fictional prefaces, which are set beyond the time in which the novels take place. They explain that the following publications have been written secretly and anonymously, and that *Native Tongue* appears to be "the only work of fiction ever written by a member of the Lines".[321] Because of this fact, the publishers, among them organizations called WOMANTALK and The Láadan Group, have decided to publish the book in "the ancient manner", i.e. on paper. This fact already yields a glimpse at the dystopian society that follows, in which literature and books in the traditional sense are no longer in existence – a notion that probably irritates the reader at first. More importantly, however, the preface might lead one to question the authenticity of the following text: If it is merely a novel, i.e. a work of fiction, can its contents be considered to be true and factual? This question, unfortunately, is not completely resolved, but the prefaces do at least acknowledge a time "when Terran women were legally not adults,"[322] which seems to support the novel's central themes. But then again, the preface seems to collide with the epilogue of *The Judas Rose*: It is the memorandum of an interplanetary Council that considers Earth's population to be backward and violent, and which considers

[320] Elgin 2000, 130.
[321] Ibid., 5.
[322] Ibid., 7.

to either annihilate all humans or place them under quarantine until they destroy themselves. But if that had been the case, how can the novel be published hundreds of years after the events depicted? The seemingly contradictory natures of epilogic and prefatory material lead critics like David Sisk to call them incompatible with each other[323]. However, I consider the possibility of another, third option, namely that the women of Earth have indeed overcome suppression and established an egalitarian and thus less violent society. The fact that the publisher of the novels and author of the prefaces is a woman, and that organizations such as The Láadan Group exist at the point of publication seems to support this thesis.

But what is the narrative purpose of these paratexts? Unlike the epigraphs to the chapters, which are supporting the storyline, the epilogue and especially the prefaces serve the purpose of what I would like to call "disjunction", as they allow for new and possibly unexpected interpretations of the dystopian novel at hand. *The Judas Rose* ends on an optimistic note with the spread of Láadan, but the following epilogue seems to counter this optimism, as the fate of Earth is in fact in the hands of an interplanetary council. But if one refers back to the preface, the problems of a violent society seem to have been overcome. Thus, the novel appears to be optimistic after all, but only if one pays closer attention to the extraneous material.

This form of disjunction is by no means exclusive to *Native Tongue*. Both *The Handmaid's Tale* and *1984* use appendixes in very much the same fashion. The appendix of *1984* for instance seems to be hardly more than an extended, scholarly discussion of Newspeak. As the novel ends with Winston's spirit broken, the appendix appears to be detached from the actual novel, a mere addition with no distinct narrative function. On a closer inspection, however, its purpose may be quite different. Margaret Atwood for example notes that it is written in past tense and Oldspeak, i.e. Standard English[324], which might indicate that Newspeak is a thing of the past and has never been completed. Roger Fowler observes a "kind of plain, expository language" not found anywhere else in the novel and proposes another viewpoint altogether: "The voice of the Appendix may plausibly be attributed to a new, distinct and anonymous figure […] an anthropologist or a linguist."[325] This new voice uses the pronoun "we" to address its readership, and it employs a highly satirical tone that

[323] Sisk 1997, 112.
[324] Sisk refers to an interview with Margaret Atwood. (Sisk 1997, 85).
[325] Fowler 1995, 224.

may or may not comment on the foolishness of Newspeak, which aims to make speech possible "without involving the higher brain centres at all."[326] If one reads the Appendix in this way, the initial bleakness of the novel's ending is softened, because one could argue that the Party's efforts have ultimately failed. Hence, the Appendix casts a new light on the novel; it disjoins the reader's initial and probably bleak reading of the novel – an effect that works very much along the lines of cognitive estrangement.

The disjunctive effect becomes even more obvious if one looks at the "Historical Notes" of *The Handmaid's Tale*. Set about 200 years after the novel's narrative takes place, Professor Pieixoto explains at the "Twelfth Symposium on Gileadean Studies" that the preceding story is based on about thirty unnumbered tapes that were recovered and reconstructed "on some guesswork".[327] Over the course of his speech, he also provides some contextual information, which was not given to the reader by Offred. For example the fact that an AIDS epidemic and nuclear incidents in pre-Gileadean times eventually led to a widespread infertility of the population. In this regard, the Historical Notes fulfil a narrative function, providing additional information on Gilead's society and history. Besides that, the purpose of the Historical Notes has been analyzed in two ways. Peter Fitting argues that "this framing device seems designed to counter the pessimistic impression that the central narrative leaves."[328] This optimistic interpretation is arguably the most straightforward. Given the fact that women are part of the symposium, it can be assumed that Gilead has ceased to exist and is now object of historical study. Indeed, Atwood herself has agreed with this interpretation: "I'm an optimist. I like to show that the Third Reich, the Fourth Reich, the Fifth Reich, did not last forever."[329] However, others have proposed a more critical reading. Michael Foley comments on the satiric nature of the text, and especially Pieixoto, who "establishes a tone of pedantic and self-satisfied misogyny".[330] Not only does he make half-witted jokes about the Chairwoman, Crescent Moon, but his condescending attitude towards women becomes clear when he refers to the women's escape route: "We know that this city was a prominent way station on what our author refers to as "The Underground Femaleroad," since dubbed by some of our historical

[326] Orwell 1989, 322.
[327] Atwood 1998, 302.
[328] Peter Fitting. 1990. "The Turn from Utopia in Recent Feminist Fiction". In: Falk Jones, Libby (Ed.). *Feminism, Utopia and Narrative*. Knoxville: UP, 150.
[329] Geoff Hancock. "Interview with Margaret Atwood". In: *Canadian Fiction Magazine* 58 (1986), 141.
[330] Michael Foley. 1989. "Satiric Intent in the 'Historical Notes' Epilogue of Atwood's The Handmaid's Tale". In: *Commonwealth Essays and Studies* 11 (Spring 1989), 46.

wags "The Underground Frailroad." *(Laughter, groans)*"[331] His performance and paternalistic tone leave the question whether female oppression has indeed ended or whether it has merely been transformed in a less-obvious state. Based on this interpretation, Arnold E. Davidson even considers the Historical Notes "the most pessimistic part"[332] of the book. To my mind, the Historical Notes should at least be considered carefully, but they fit neatly into our argumentation, as they have a distinctive educational value, because they make us reflect upon the notion that misogyny can both precede and outlast dystopia.

At last, as with the prefaces to *Native Tongue* and *The Judas Rose*, the authenticity of the main narrative is severely questioned: As Pieixoto points out, difficulties "posed by accent, obscure referents and archaisms" in the original recordings required him and his colleague to rework the transcription several times, thus allowing for the possibility of errors or even changes. The late revelation of the text's origin creates "a gap between our initial, heuristic reading of the book … and our retrospective re-imaginings".[333] The text itself, like the text of *Native Tongue*, becomes an unstable product. Additionally, Sisk observes an important point, namely that Pieixoto and his fellow scholars are recasting "Offred's narrative for their own purposes,"[334] which is to give a scholarly account of Gilead's society, not to tell the story of a single woman and her feelings. In other words, Pieixoto has taken control of Offred's narrative as Gilead took control over Offred, and it is only after reading the novel that this becomes clear to us readers. This assumption has led Sisk to conclude the following:

> In both Atwood's and Elgin's dystopias, as with Orwell's, the reader must adjudicate between the conflicting authorities of the narratives and their prefatory and epilogic metatexts. Such conflicts reinforce the didactic purpose of the dystopias by compelling the reader to mediate between them. Conflicted authority between the texts and their attendant metatextual materials illustrates the dystopian struggle between oppressors and rebels over the terms of telling reality.[335]

[331] Atwood 1998, 301.
[332] Arnold E. Davidson. 1988. "Future Tense. Making History in The Handmaid's Tale". In: Kathryn VanSpanckeren (Ed.): *Margaret Atwood: Vision and Forms*. Southern Illinois UP, 120.
[333] Sisk 1997, 121.
[334] Ibid.
[335] Ibid., 116.

To conclude, one can say that the use of paratexts (or metatexts, as it is called here) serves two functions: First, it has a narrative function, providing us with additional information not contained within the main narrative. And second, it has a performative function, because it leads to a disjunction between the reader's initial reception of the text and his subsequent assessment. This mirrors the struggle within the novel's plot, as the reader is becoming object to different authorities and interpretations.

Besides paratextuality, there is another form of extraneous material that regularly finds its way into dystopian fiction: intertextuality. I refer to intertextuality in this context as the interpolation of additional texts or literary works within the narrative. Examples include Shakespeare's works in *Brave New World*, *The Bible* in *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Native Tongue*, the legend of St. Eustace in *Riddley Walker* or Goldstein's book in *1984*, the latter being a form of 'fictional intertextuality', i.e. referring to a text produced by the narrative itself. As with paratextuality, intertextual material is used to enhance the dystopian experience, as it has a narrative function, serves as an estrangement device or extrapolates contemporary concerns, and often enough, all these points go hand in hand.

Picking up the first point – the narrative function – one has to remember once again that almost all dystopian societies start *in medias res* with hardly any background information on how the society came into existence. Especially in novels that employ a first-person narrator, contextual information cannot exceed the narrator's personal knowledge. In *1984*, though not told by a first-person narrator, the narrative is restricted to Winston's point of view. Although Winston remembers episodes from his past, and is able to critically assess the development of Newspeak and doublethink, he has little knowledge on how Oceania and the Party were created in the first place (possibly because the records constantly change). In order to overcome this shortcoming, Orwell introduces the fictional book by Emanuel Goldstein, fully titled *The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism.* Winston receives *The Book*, as it is referred to, from O'Brian, who, as it turns out later, was actually involved in its production. However, O'Brian admits that it is true "as a description"[336] of Oceania, so that the reader can consider its contents factual in the context of the novel even though it is actually fabricated by the Party. Goldstein's account takes up a considerable amount of the narrative, as the reader reads it verbatim along with

[336] Orwell 1989, 274.

Winston. *The Book* illuminates the political philosophy on which states such as Oceania are based, and how the development of a caste system and technological advancement led to the erection of a totalitarian state. In this regard, Goldstein's book has an important function, not only for Winston's growing consciousness within the plot (which is short-lived, as he is captured before he can even finish the book), but also for the reader's understanding of the novel's theoretical background. *The Book* provides the political framework of the novel, as it extrapolates Orwell's critique on totalitarian politics in the 1940s.[337] It links the novel's society with a criticism on contemporary (i.e. the time it was published) trends, which is of course a crucial element in the dystopian enterprise. The introduction of a second, discrete text within the narrative, with its unique voice and register, fulfils two goals: First, it has a narrative function, as it provides additional information for the reader that the narrator cannot offer, and it supports the apprehension of the central, critical concerns of the novel. Second and closely linked to this, it offers a theoretical framework and the basis for a political discourse, on which the dystopian society is established.

Huxley's use of intertextuality is slightly different and primarily realized through Shakespeare. Not only is the novel's title taken from *The Tempest*, the playwright is also prominently featured within the narrative and directly quoted on more than one occasion. But why is this the case? Chapter 3.1.4 has already provided us with an explanation: Shakespeare's works are forbidden because they evoke emotions in their readers, which are either considered undesirable or have become obsolete in the World State's society. By providing John the Savage with a profound knowledge of Shakespearean language, the irreconcilable differences between him and the World State are made clear.

But the inclusion of Shakespeare serves another purpose, which is directly aimed at the reader. As Shakespeare is arguably the "epitome of English culture"[338], the prohibition of his works leads the reader to further question the true nature of the World State: What sort of society is this, if it does not even allow the greatest of all writers? Shakespeare functions "as a golden image of a *past* culture as opposed to the degraded modern culture of *Brave New World*."[339] Huxley explicitly quotes Shakespeare, thus performatively showing the

[337] cf. Kumar 1987, 298f.
[338] Booker 1994, 61.
[339] Booker 1994, 61. Booker also argues, however, that much of Shakespeare's original power is lost due to John's inappropriate quotations. (Ibid.)

vast differences between the World State's 'poetry' and what we expect to be higher literature.

Here is an example of a highly satirical poem produced by the World State:

> Hug me till you drug me, honey;
> Kiss me till I'm in a coma:
> Hug me, honey, struggly bunny;
> Love's as good as *soma*,[340]

as compared to a scene from Shakespeare's *Romeo & Juliet*, mentioned a couple of pages later:

> 'Is there no pity sitting in the clouds,
> That sees into the bottom of my grief?
> O, sweet my mother, cast me not away!
> Delay this marriage for a month, a week;
> Or, if you do not, make the bridal bed
> In that dim monument where Tybal lies…[341]

Helmholtz's guffawing response to the latter proves not only that concepts such as mother, marriage and grief have been deleted from society`s vocabulary, but also how it has become devoid of any form of emotional language that not even the novel's most language-conscious character, is able to understand. Again, the reader is reminded of the novel's degraded language, as he encounters well-known literature such as Shakespeare to be forbidden. In other words, Shakespeare allows for a direct comparison as he draws the reader closer to the dystopian society – a fact that is important in order for dystopia's didactic enterprise to work, as I will show in chapter 4.3.[342]

The Bible does fulfil a similar function in *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Native Tongue*. Whereas Shakespeare is a classic example of English culture, *The Bible* is an integral part of religious, political and social discourse in our Western society, as many of our traditions, habits and social values are based on the *Bible* and Christian beliefs. Both novels extrapolate this fact by placing *The Bible* at the centre of their theocratic societies. However, true to the dystopian nature of the texts, its application has gone terribly wrong.

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[340] Huxley 2004, 145.
[341] Ibid., 161.
[342] Booker also notes that several critics considered the inclusion of Shakespeare to be because of his objections to power structures in Elizabethan society. (Booker 1994, 61)

Biblical references are abundant in *The Handmaid's Tale*, starting with an epigraph from Genesis 30:1-3, which refers to the story of Rachel and Leah (the Rachel and Leah Center is also the place where handmaids are re-educated before they are sent to the households). In the original story, Rachel, who is infertile, competes with her sister Leah in bearing children to Jacob, using handmaids as proxies. Again, the epigraph anticipates a central issue of the novel – female reproductivity – because, as it turns out, a literal re-enactment of Genesis 30:3 is the basis for monthly ceremonies, in which the Commanders try to impregnate the handmaids while their wives are watching. There are more biblical references (e.g. the stories of Jezebel and Sarah and Hagar) in the novel, which I will not explain in detail here. What is important, however, is that although *The Bible* is hardly directly quoted, the multitude of references adds a level of intertextuality to the novel that works along the lines of cognitive estrangement: the exaggerated and literal adherence to Scripture challenges the reader's apprehension of the power of (religious) texts, one of the novel's central concerns.

The power of the *Bible* in *Native Tongue* and *The Judas Rose* is less explicit, although Father Dorien's reaction to the women's Láadan *Bible* indicates an equally important status within society. Whereas the Bible in *The Handmaid's Tale* is considered an "incendiary device", only allowed for the Commanders to read, the Bible in *Native Tongue* is one of the few books actually allowed to women. Of course this is mostly due to the fact that it has been interpreted in such a patriarchal way that it is considered to support the present state of society. But, as we have seen, the power of the *Bible* works in both ways, as it is also used by the women to subvert the current order – exactly because of its far-reaching power. The inclusion of the *Bible*, a text so familiar to us readers, serves a didactic purpose:

> [It is] challenging us to think about something otherwise difficult to see: the relationship between the crises of our civilization and its historic textual politics – the continuing story of who controls, legitimates, engenders and eliminates whom and what through the power of authoritative language, grounded in the Word.[343]

As *The Bible* is an epitome of our cultural, religious discourse, its appearance in the novels allows to draw further comparisons with our own society and the dystopian one; it

[343] Janet Karsten Lawson. 1987. *Margaret Atwood's Testaments: Resisting the Gilead Within*. [Online source]

represents not only power relationships within the novel, but it also calls our relationship to authoritative language into question. Shakespeare and the *Bible* are only two examples I want to discuss here. The legend of Saint Eustace in *Riddley Walker* would be another one, because it works in a similar way: It performatively shows how texts and language can be shaped by discourses and authoritative power; how susceptible our language is for interpretation. It is only by including familiar texts within the dystopian narrative that its didactic purpose can be effectively achieved. Thus, intertextuality, in addition to paratextuality, serves as another powerful stylistic device in dystopian fiction.

4.1.3 Allegories in naming conventions

To conclude the analysis of stylistic devices, I want to address the issue of naming conventions and their allegorical function, because they are two further recurring elements of extrapolation between the dystopian society and the present time. The naming of characters and places may seem commonplace and straightforward, but often enough, there is more to a name than it appears at first, and dystopian authors use names for more than just the sake of wordplay. Especially the names of the protagonists do, in almost every occasion, either mirror their characteristic traits or even convey the dystopian discourse at hand. Furthermore, the naming of locations often hints at existing places, which further bridges the gap between an extrapolated future and our contemporary society: It is not a strange and unfamiliar world we are experiencing, it is our very own in the future, and the names of places and characters constantly remind us of this fact. Thus, naming is an equally simple and powerful stylistic device for writers of dystopian literature, which is an integral part of the theme of language.

In none of the other novels is the transformation and adaptation of names as obvious as in *Brave New World*. Almost every character within the novel has one or more real-life counterparts, as Kumar asserts: “Huxley gives many of his characters names which symbolize his particular *bêtes noires*. Together, they add up to a fairly comprehensive indictment of western thought and achievement since the Enlightenment.”[344] For instance, capitalists are found in the name of Morgana Rothschild (combining both J.P. Morgan and

[344] Kumar 1987, 243, emphasis in original.

the Rothschild family), scientists are depicted in the names of Helmholtz Watson (combining German physician Hermann von Helmholtz and American behaviourist John B. Watson or, alternatively but not a scientist, English poet Sir William Watson) and Henry Foster, and left-wing socialists find themselves in Polly Trotsky, Sarojini Engels and, of course, Bernard Marx (combining George Bernard Shaw and Karl Marx). Especially the latter shows how Huxley extrapolates names in order to transmit ideas and criticism. As it turns out, Shaw is "one of the very few whose works have been permitted"[345] in the World State, and it was in fact through a transmission of a speech by Shaw that hypnopaedia was discovered. Given the fact that almost all literature is forbidden in the World State, the existence of Shaw's works asserts that they are completely devoid of all subversive potential. Similarly, the character based on his name, Bernard Marx, appears to have no subversive power despite his linguistic abilities, as we have seen before. On the other hand, Helmholtz Watson contains both the traits of a behaviourist and a poet: He works in "Emotional Engineering" and eventually discovers that words have a power of their own. His character is portrayed in a much more positive light than the one of Bernard Marx and he is also the only one, who is content with his faith in the end. This might lead to the assumption that poets, in Huxley's sense, are the only ones who are able to find individual freedom in the World State (and who have the potential to subvert the system by using the power of words).

The fact that names reveal characteristic traits of their respective bearers is indeed common in dystopian fiction. I already mentioned Fister Crunchman in *Riddley Walker*, and how his name reflects the brutish nature of society. Other names within the novel are used to equally satiric ends: Durster Potter is likely a pun on Dunster Pottery in Somerset, just as Belgrave Moaters is undoubtedly a pun on the Belgrave Motor Company. Rightway Flinter is the name of the "Big Man" at Weaping Form, who allows Riddley and Orfing to conduct their first Punch show at his place towards the end of the novel. Indeed, he is on the "right way", as he understands that a new show is coming up and he wants to be part of it: "Ter morrer all ways comes up the thing is to be 1 of them as comes up with it."[346] Eusa bears many connotations, from USA to the Latin "Jesu", from the U.S.S.R. to Orpheus and of course Saint Eustace, which is only later revealed to be in fact its eponym.[347] However, the

[345] Huxley 2004, 20.
[346] Hoban 2000, 210.
[347] Sisk 1997, 139.

ambiguity of the name itself highlights one of the novel's central concerns – the instability of language, which Riddley has to overcome: "Walker is my name and I am the same. Riddley Walker. Walking my riddles where ever they've took me and walking them now on this paper the same."[348] His name conveys his quest to solve the linguistic riddles in order to discover the truth behind society's myths.

In *1984*, Winston Smith is arguably based on Winston Churchill and the common surname Smith. While his character displays the ambitions of Churchill, the "epitome of British courage in the face of despair"[349], the lack of individuality common to the state of Oceania is reflected in the uniformity of Smith. Emanuel Goldstein on the other hand, with his "lean Jewish face and a goatee beard"[350] does not only physically resemble Leo Trotsky, who was of Jewish origin – his birth names was Lev Bronstein. Furthermore, Trotsky's book *The Revolution Betrayed* (1937) probably serves as a real-life counterpart for Goldstein's book in the novel, as both are critiques of totalitarianism. As we have seen in the previous chapter, *The Book* serves a narrative function, but it also draws the reader to Orwell's political ideas, which is further made clear trough the name and characteristics of Goldstein/Trotsky.

In *Clockwork Orange*, Alex's name offers two interpretations. It can be translated from Latin "*a lex*" into either "without law" or "without words"[351]. The former meaning can easily be adopted, given Alex's violent nature and the relish he finds in inflicting pain on others. But is he without words? Considering his abilities as a storyteller, one is inclined to discard this assumption altogether. And yet, critics like Geoffrey Aggeler argue that he "is articulate but "wordless" in that he apprehends life directly, without the mediation of words […] such as "liberty" or "stability""[352], thus accepting both meanings of the name as true and playing again with ambiguities, forcing the reader to deduct the proper meaning from the text.

The names in *Native Tongue* seem to be conceived in order to mirror the differences in status and class prevalent in the novel: The linguists are called Mary Jay, Rachel, Nazareth,

[348] Hoban 2000, 8.
[349] Sisk 1997, 42.
[350] Orwell 1989, 14.
[351] Sisk 1997, 62.
[352] Geoffrey Aggeler. 1983. "Anthony Burgess". In: *Dictionary of Literary Biography, Vol. 14. British Novelists since 1960*. Detroit: Gale Research Co., 176.

Nathan, Paul John, Thomas Blair and Aquina, among others, which are clearly indebted to Christian beliefs (which is surprising, given the fact that the linguists appear to be much less devout Christian than their non-linguist counterparts). The rest of the population, on the other hand, is titled much simpler: John Smith and Bill Jones are probably the most stereotypical names in English, and of course there is Lanky Pugh, whose name is described as 'unfortunate', "because he was shaped like a beer keg and not much taller."[353] Not only are the linguists more advanced in their use of language, even their names appear to be superior (at least on a superficial level), which underlines their status. Here, naming is an additional device to support the differences in social class by using language.

Status, or rather the lack thereof, is also important in *The Handmaid's Tale*. In this regard, Offred's subjugated position is already reflected in her name, which essentially means to be the Handmaid "of Fred", her Commander, as indicated in the Historical Notes at the end. Throughout her narrative, she does not reveal her real name, which is surprising at first, but she eventually explains why this is the case:

> My name isn't Offred, I have another name, which nobody uses now because it's forbidden. I tell myself it doesn't matter, your name is like your telephone number, useful only to others.; but what I tell myself is wrong, it does matter. I keep the knowledge of this name like something hidden, some treasure I'll come back to dig up, one day.[354]

For Offred, the patronymic name assigned to her is merely another part of her subjugation. By not revealing her proper name, she defies the blind acceptation of her faith; she retains the knowledge of her name for a time in the future. If we recall Offred's joy in language, in words and memories, it is not surprising that her name is one of the most precious things reminding her of her previous life. In this regard, Offred's name and her relationship to it encapsulates the dystopian plot: It depicts the central issue of the novel, the subjugation of women, on the one hand, and the resistance to oppression on the other by keeping memories of language, including one's own name.

But not only the naming of characters has a distinct function in dystopian fiction - place names are transformed as well. In *Brave New World*, Charing Cross in London becomes "Charing T" and Big Ben becomes "Big Henry", both based on the World State's official

[353] Elgin 2000, 48.
[354] Atwood 1998, 84.

deity Henry Ford and his "Model T" – the first car produced on an assembly line. In *Brave New World*, however, the same process is used in the creation and conditioning of human beings. Of course, this is another form of cognitive estrangement, as the reader is confronted with a familiar idea, but forced to consider the process of mechanization in a different context and as part of a different discourse. Also, the direct adaptation of Ford's name results has not only a satirical effect, it also decreases the distance between the novel's setting and the reader's society: As the reader is probably familiar with Ford and his technological achievements, it is easier to detect Huxley's criticism of the same.

Similar processes can be found in *Riddley Walker*, too, as many places are based on landmarks and cities in what used to be Kent: Cambry (Canterbury), Do it Over (Dover), Foark Stone (Folkstone), Fathers Ham (Faversham) and Dog Et (Dargate) are only a few examples of how a familiar, real-life setting is extrapolated and linguistically defamiliarized. But additionally, the places and their names serve a purpose within the plot: Their names make up the rhyme of Fools Circel 9wys, the route which Riddley unintentionally follows. As it turns out, the Mincery interprets the rhyme literally (just as it does with the Eusa story), on their quest to find the "1 Big 1". Thus, the rhyme "Horny Boy rung Widders Bel / Stoal his Fathers Ham as wel / Bernt His Arse and Forkt a Stone / Do it Over broak a bone"[355] is much more than a mere rhyme for little kids, as it captures both Riddley's route to understanding and the gruesome practices of the Mincery "doing the askings".

Will Self does not put as much emphasis on his place names in *The Book of Dave* as Hoban does in *Riddley Walker*, although he does transform the names of existing places, too. After most of England has been flooded in the novel's future narrative, only a few islands and settlements do exist, which one can identify as parts of London and South England, such as Barn (Barnet), Wyc (High Wycombe), Lút (Luton), Bambri (Banbury), Brum (Birmingham) and Nott (Nottingham). The most important, however, is the island of Ham, the part of former Hampstead Heath that has not been flooded. As it turns out, Hampstead is also the place where Dave's ex-wife Michelle is living with her new husband in the present time, and thus the place where Dave buries his book. In this case, the

[355] Hoban 2002, 5.

interpolation between both narratives, allows for a gradual understanding on behalf of the reader.

This short analysis has shown three functions of nomenclature. First, naming is used in several cases as a simple device to convey the prevailing dystopian discourse: Winston Smith embodies the struggle for freedom in world of uniformity, just as Riddley Walker is on a quest to find the truth in a seemingly impenetrable language. Alex's vicious nature is an attack on a world of unemotional complacency, whereas Offred epitomizes the face- and nameless (but not speechless!) victim of female oppression. Furthermore, in our world, a name is a word, which constitutes our subject status and identity. In several dystopias, especially in *The Handmaid's Tale*, this identity is removed as names are imposed upon individuals, but names with no individual value. Offred is merely a designation, not a proper name in the sense we know it. Similarly, in *Brave New World*, many lower castes stemming from so-called Bokanovsky groups bear the same name – they do not have an individuality, as they resemble each other physically and in their function for society, and thus they have no individual names. In other instances, however, such as *Riddley Walker* or *Clockwork Orange*, names do create an identity, as they become allegories of their status and role in society; just like Fister Crunchman is destines to be a 'hevvy', the Walkers, Riddley as well as his father, are chosen to be 'connexion men'.

Bearing a second function, names always draw a connection between the reader's world and the fictional framework of the novel. Of course, the names themselves only have an added value for us readers – there is no character in *Brave New World* for instance that finds Bernard Marx's name peculiar, or that is able to connect him with George Bernard Shaw. Thus, naming is a stylistic device, which only works towards to the reader. As dystopian fictions extrapolates our contemporary society, the mention of familiar, but not quite the same places for instance bridges the gap between both spheres, and is constantly reminding us, that it is indeed our world we are travelling.

All of these examples we just mentioned have one thing in common: their name 'speaks', and nomenclature is another powerful example how the use of language permeates between a stylistic and fictional level, ultimately working towards both ends. Again, the reader is required to pay close attention to such subtle things as the naming of characters, which underlines the diverse application of language in dystopian fiction.

4.2 'Words come first' - extrapolation of contemporary language trends

Up to this point, this study established how the use of language pervades dystopian fiction both on a fictional and stylistic level. It has shown, how language is used to support and emphasize many of dystopia's central concerns, and how incredibly diverse the issues of language are. What is often overlooked, however, even in extensive studies such as the one conducted by David Sisk, is the fact that language is more than just a vessel to illustrate issues of control, resistance, uniformity, and surveillance, to name only a few. Instead I claim that, additionally, in all of the novels discussed in this study, language *itself* is an issue of extrapolation; that the distinct use of language within the dystopian novel is closely connected with the author's contemporary society and language trends. To give an example, one can argue that the dystopian nature of *Brave New World* would still be intact even if Huxley had not included the element of hypnopaedia. But he uses it, not only to further strengthen the theme of state control, but also because he wants to parody the consumerist language emerging in the 1920s. This chapter is intended to uncover some of these trends in language that lie at the bottom of the novels discussed, because they further strengthen the initial claim that language should be considered a theme on its own in dystopian fiction.

Starting with *1984*, its function as a critique on totalitarianism is without a doubt the most common interpretation of the novel. Heavily influenced by Orwell's experiences during the Spanish Civil War in the late 1930s and written shortly after the end of World War II, the "drab, mean world" of Oceania that is depicted in the novel is "instantly recognizable to any of Orwell's contemporaries".[356] In *1984*, Orwell extrapolates the setting of an angst-ridden society and combines it with the impending danger of a totalitarian super power. His intention to provide both a prophecy and a warning of things to come is the backdrop of *1984*'s dystopian nature and the basis for its political discourse. But the novel offers a second interpretation, which is less frequently mentioned, namely *1984* as a critique on language.

[356] Kumar 1987, 296.

Orwell's views on language are widely known, not least because of the theoretical essays that precede *1984*, and whose concerns have found their way into the novel as well. One of the topics he was thoroughly interested in was the distinction between what he called the "demotic speech" of ordinary people and Standard English (I have already referred to this in chapter 4.3): "Standard English, like the upper-class accent, symbolized for Orwell privilege, power, disregard for the people, intolerance. Above all it meant the avoidance and suppression of thought."[357] For Orwell, Standard English was not only full of archaisms and jargon, but also a political tool used almost exclusively by upper classes, government and the media. An advocate of simple, demotic speech, Orwell incorporated his ideas in *1984* by giving the proles their own, unaltered form of English, and as we have seen, Winston's hope lies in the proles and their unrestricted use of language.

Besides class distinctions formed by language, Orwell was also concerned with the use of language in the media. During a two-year stint at the BBC in London, Orwell took part in several radio broadcasting programmes, which probably brought him in contact with "Cablese", a "sort of verbal shorthand, used by journalists to dispatch their messages, which operates on the principle of systematic truncation and condensation of words".[358] Cablese, along with a theory of "Basic English"[359] also found its way into *1984*, as Orwell extrapolates the use of highly automated, emotionless and increasingly reduced speech in the concept of Newspeak. As Syme explains in the novel, "[Newspeak] shall make thoughtcrime impossible, because there will be no words in which to express it. Every concept that can ever be needed will be expressed by exactly *one* word".[360] Of course, Orwell uses Newspeak in order to support the totalitarian state, but even without its political sphere, Newspeak is, first of all, a critique on language theory, as some critics observe: "Orwell's biting satire lent ammunition to critics of all devised languages."[361] Considering these thoughts, one can say that although language (in the form of Newspeak) is without a doubt one of the most important dystopian devices in *1984*, and essentially the basis of the state's orthodoxy, it is also more than a mere supplement of the former: Newspeak on its own is a highly satirical extrapolation of contemporary language trends and linguistic theory, drawn from Orwell's personal experiences.

[357] Fowler 1995, 28.
[358] Courtine 1986, 71.
[359] Ibid. "Basic English" is essentially the attempt of introducing an international form of English with a highly restrictive vocabulary and simplified syntax.
[360] Orwell, 1989, 55, emphasis in original.
[361] Norman Berdichevksy. 1988. "A Look into the World of 'Utopian' Languages and Their Political Assumptions: Esperanto, Newspeak and Basic English." In: *Geolinguistics* 14, 28.

Huxley's dystopian vision in *Brave New World* is less concerned with governmental totalitarianism (although the World State is essentially a totalitarian society) rather than the role of scientific and technological advancement. It is not surprising that H.G. Well's *A Modern Utopia* (1905) is often mentioned as *Brave New World*'s utopian predecessor, because of its portrayal of an equally scientifically planned welfare state. However, Huxley himself stated that he conceived his novel to rather be a parody of Well's *Men Like Gods* (1923), which turned into something different entirely.[362] Nevertheless, it is the rejection of modern (and especially Western) ideals, such as the widespread optimism in science and reason that lie at the bottom of Huxley's satire: "Fordism", after all, is a parody of early 20th century industrialization and standardization. But then again, as Orwell, Huxley extrapolates concerns with language as well, which are subsumed within the idea of hypnopaedia. As Kumar points out, Huxley had a profound interest in mass advertising, which for him became "an inescapable part of the consumerist society"[363] that emerged during the 1920s. Huxley witnessed not only how slogans and jingles became part of everyday life, but also how the same techniques used for selling material goods were transformed into means of propaganda: "It was a thoroughly modern form of mass hypnosis, working upon human suggestibility […] to condition people unconsciously to act and think as the advertisers wanted them."[364] In this case, the advertisers are the World Controllers who overlook the process of hypnopaedia and make sure that the population's mind is based on nothing but "words without reason"[365]. Lenina Crowne is the character that embodies the state's indoctrination the most, as she is constantly reciting its slogans: "Ending is better than mending", "Everyone belongs to everyone else", "A gramme is better than a damn", "Progress is lovely". In this regard, Lenina can be considered a highly satirized archetype of a mindless and content consumer, which was established from the 1940s onward.[366] Indeed, given its date of publication, *Brave New World* anticipates today's consumer culture in an almost shockingly accurate way, as its parody of omnipresent slogans and jingles has become an integral part of our society.

[362] George Plimpton (Ed.). 1963. *Writers at Work. The Paris Review Interviews*. New York: Viking, 198.
[363] Kumar 1987, 257.
[364] Ibid.
[365] Huxley 2004, 23.
[366] Again, Theodor Adorno's and Max Horkheimer's critique on "culture industry" in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1947) is influential in this regard; their assumption that popular culture can be used to manipulate the population into passivity has certainly been preceded by some of Huxley's ideas.

But there is more to Huxley's extrapolation of consumerist language. In a way, he is concerned with the very same issues that Orwell picked up fifteen years later in *1984*: He describes a banal, impoverished and cliché-ridden language that is completely devoid of any real content and emotions.[367] Essentially, the World State's hypnopaedia predates Newspeak, as both are carefully aimed to eliminate not only any form of subversive thoughts, but any thought at all. The only difference is that Orwell was considering the reduction of language from a more political point of view, whereas Huxley's interests were based primarily on psychology (including behaviourism) and biology, as he stated in his 1946 foreword to the novel: "The only scientific advances to be specifically described are those involving the application to human beings of the results of future research in biology, physiology and psychology."[368] Whatever its application, both Huxley and Orwell were deeply concerned with the use (or rather misuse) of language at their times, and they incorporated their concerns in their dystopian visions. Until now, these concerns have not lost any of their importance.

By the time Anthony Burgess' *Clockwork Orange* was published in 1962, many of the fears that dominated both Orwell's and Huxley's dystopias had shifted. Whereas the first half of the 20th century had been marked by two World Wars and an imminent fear of despotism and totalitarianism, Burgess started his career as a writer in the mid-1950s, in a time when England was driven by modernization and post-war optimism. It is thus not surprising that Burgess moved away from some of the dystopian ideas that had been dominating the works of Huxley, Orwell and Zamyatin, without abandoning it completely: After all, society in *Clockwork Orange* adheres to a distinct, uniform pattern enforced by a political system, and as F. Alexander mentions to Alex towards the end of the novel: "We've seen it all before … in other countries … before we know where we are we shall have the full apparatus of totalitarianism."[369] Nevertheless, totalitarianism only plays a secondary role. Also, while Burgess employs a form of Pavlovian conditioning that is not entirely removed from Huxley's hypnopaedia, the central issue of the novel is moral choice before anything else, and the question, whether an individual should be allowed to choose between good or evil, or whether the state should remove the latter option entirely.

[367] cf. Booker 1994, 59.
[368] Huxley 2004, xxxii.
[369] Burgess 2000, 118.

And yet again, one of the most powerful themes in *Clockwork Orange* is language. We have already identified Nadsat as a performative tool, but we have yet to discover the background behind Burgess' linguistic exuberance. While the contemporary basis of Nadsat may be less obvious than Huxley's interest in the power of advertisements and behavioural conditioning, or Orwell's extrapolation of Basic English/Cablese, there are influences from Burgess' times to be found. For instance, Blake Morrison notes in the foreword to the 2000 Penguin edition: "Always fascinated by slang, dialect, neologism, obscenity and the argot of sub-groups, Burgess was receptive to the new teenage vernacular. But he worried about its ephemerality."[370] Indeed, *Clockwork Orange* was written at the beginning of the British Mod movement, which in itself was considered by some to be an adaptation of the American Beatnik lifestyle.[371] As many sub-cultures, both the Mod and Beat movements brought along their idiosyncratic argot and neologisms, which further distanced them from the "common" population – a fact, that is unmistakably picked up with Nadsat (and further combined with the youth's violent nature). It might be exaggerated to say that Burgess adopted the language of the Beats (or Mods, for that matter) but the conception of Nadsat can certainly be traced back to the language of sub-groups and teenagers in general. Burgess also hinted at the ephemerality of such generational slang within the novel, as Alex is on the verge of dropping Nadsat in the end. However, Nadsat, as seen from the point of its readers, is not ephemeral. Instead of using the *actual* slang of the 1960s (although traces of it can be found, for instance in the use of "like", which became "commonplace in the counter-culture of the 1960s"[372]), Burgess invented a "Russo-Anglo-American patois"[373], which, because of its unique character, had a lasting value that averts the danger of anachronism. Given these thoughts, it is safe to say that *Clockwork Orange* extrapolates (and highly exaggerates) not only the nature of rebellious and dissident teenage gangs, but also the nature of their generational slang.

Russell Hoban highlights another concern in *Riddley Walker*. He chose a post-nuclear disaster setting for his novel, in which civilization has been set back its Iron Age beginnings. Of course, published in 1982, *Riddley Walker* was not the first novel to employ such a setting. During the decade after WWII, with the Cold War leading to nuclear armament, a whole genre of post-apocalyptic science fiction appeared, which spawned

[370] Burgess 2000, xvi.
[371] Simon Frith & Howard Horne. 1987. *Art into Pop*. London: Methuen.
[372] Burgess 2000, xi.
[373] Ibid., xvi.

popular works like Pat Frank's *Alas, Babylon* (1959) Nevil Shute's *On The Beach* (1959) and Walter Miller's *A Canticle For Leibowitz* (1960). Especially the latter, despite not being a dystopia proper, is often considered an influence on *Riddley Walker*, because it hypothesizes in a similar way "that there will be major changes not only in habits of living, political structures, and religious beliefs, but also in language."[374] As we have discussed, Riddley's use of an artificial language conveys much of the novel's dystopian concerns: delusions of progress, the cycle of history and, at last, the power over interpretation and myth are all heavily dependent on the novel's language. As with *Clockwork Orange*, much of the medium becomes the message, and in order to enhance the effect, Hoban decided to "corrupt the language in what seemed to be a natural way."[375] The result is Inlish or, as David Dowling calls it: Nukespeak.[376] Nukespeak seems to be a particularly accurate term, as the novel's vernacular extrapolates the language of a certain nuclear discourse that has becoming increasingly popular up to the 1980s, and which is highly dependent on euphemisms and rarefaction. Jeffrey Porter asserts: "The predominance of positivist models of discourse, those which separate value from fact, conceals the motivated ground which unavoidably supports all acts of expression."[377] Porter continues to augment his argument by referring to examples of political jargon, such as "Ground zero" (the point of an explosion), "Triad" (a nuclear arsenal), and acronyms like NORAD.[378] These terms are abstract and free of value, deflecting from the facts they describe. *Riddley Walker*'s linguistic world of paronomasia and allegories is a satirical response to these developments, as words have mutated and lost their initial meaning, leaving society clueless of their actual nature. The void of knowledge is instead filled with myths and interpretation, as different fractions try to uncover the dangerous truth behind the "Saul and Peter" (saltpeter), the "inner fearents" (interference) and "fissional seakerts" (the secrets of nuclear fission). Hoban's novel extrapolates the instability of language, especially in regards to a scientific discourse that tries to conceal, irritate and deflect from the issues at hand. Thus, *Riddley Walker* becomes "a critique of nuclear consciousness"[379]:

[374] Maynor 1984, 18. Therefore, they consider the novel to stand "squarely in the post-apocalyptic tradition of SF" (Ibid.)
[375] Ibid., 20.
[376] Dowling 1988, 182.
[377] Porter 1990, 461.
[378] "Ground Zero" is an especially interesting example if seen in a post-9/11 context: After 9/11, the term has gained immense popularity and with it a new connotation, as it became a synonym for a place of mourning, despair and death, which goes beyond its original, purely factual denotation, further proving the "fissility" of our language.
[379] Porter 1990, 459.

> Inscribed in its myths, dreams, and, above all, in its language, the metaphor of atomic decay turns Riddley's world into an "isotrope" of our own, reminding us how "fissile" our nuclear culture and language are. As part of the quantum rhetoric of Riddley's story, the metaphors and puns of postatomic man remind us that language is deeply implicated in the way we relate to our world. Using words to divide the universe into discrete entities leaves man demoralized by his efforts to master reality, especially when his misnomers conceal the relations among these parts.[380]

In the end, Hoban leaves us readers with the question of how we can decide what is right or wrong if we do not even have the words to accurately describe reality. In the face of nuclear annihilation, language has become as unstable as the atom – and Hoban's Nukespeak serves as an allegorical example.

Moving on chronologically, Suzette Haden Elgin's *Native Tongue* and Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* were written and published in 1984 and 1986, respectively. At the core of both novels lies a concern with equality and the subjugation of women, which has led most critics to file the novels under the category of feminist dystopia, a sub-genre of dystopian fiction that became increasingly popular at the beginning of the 1980s. As Peter Fitting argues, there has been a shift from feminist utopia, a tradition that can be traced back to Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *Herland* in 1915, to feminist dystopia towards the end of the 1970s.[381] Unfortunately, Fitting fails to provide substantial reasons for this shift, such as developments and issues emerging from the second wave of feminism between the 1960s and 1980s, and especially one particular issue: the establishment of a new discourse on language and gender.[382] It is safe to say that both Elgin and Atwood were aware of these new developments. After all, Elgin's field of linguistic research involves the issue of "gender speak", and Atwood had explored gender stereotypes since her first novel *The Edible Woman* in 1969.

One of the concerns emerging from the feminist movement that found its way into both novels was the assumption, that many languages, including English, were essentially androcentric, which results in an unequal balance of power, leading to subjugation, repression or marginalization of women. *Native Tongue* and *The Judas Rose* are

[380] Porter 1990, 468.
[381] Fitting 1990, 142.
[382] Of course, issues of language and gender predate the second wave of feminism, but as Ann Weatherall claims, it only developed as a field of research during the 1960s and 1970s. (Ann Weatherall. 2002. *Gender, Language and Discourse*. New York: Routledge, 3). See also Cameron 1992 for an introduction to the field of feminism and linguistic theory.

extrapolating this theory of an androcentric language by introducing Langlish as an evolved form of English. As I have explained in chapter 4.1.4 while talking about language and thought, Langlish epitomizes a man-made language, because it lacks the ability to "express lexically the perceptions of women"[383]. Instead, women are reduced to mere commodities. From the very start, they are referred to as "creatures"[384], which have "specifications"[385] but no feelings. Similarly, in *The Handmaid's Tale*, women are classified according to their function and given a specific colour of dress. The handmaids are nothing but "two-legged wombs"[386], their only purpose being breeding. In both novels, women are no longer considered subjects on their own; they have lost their subject status, which is also reflected linguistically: The fact that handmaids do no longer have a proper name, but only a patronymic referential such as Offred or Ofglen, is one of the most striking and effective tools to demonstrate the relationship between power and language in the novel.

Generally speaking, *The Handmaid's Tale* works slightly better in terms of extrapolation and didacticism, because it is much closer to our contemporary society than the future setting of *Native Tongue*. Offred still remembers episodes from her past, which roughly dates back to the 1980s – the time the novel was written. At one point, Offred remembers the day her credit card was frozen. As she tells her husband, he reacts neither surprised nor shocked, but rather patronizes her, completely ignoring the fact that his wife's status as an equal member of society has just been taken away: "Hush, he said. You know I'll always take care of you. I thought, Already he's starting to patronize me."[387] It is only one of many episodes within the novel that show how little distance there is between the dystopian future and our contemporary society, and how women were already marginalized *before* the Republic of Gilead came into being, and are, possibly, already marginalized in our very own society.[388]

At last, there is another aspect to be found in both novels that has its roots in contemporary language theory and politics: The portrayal of religious beliefs and interpretation of religious texts. Sisk notes the rise of the Christian Right in the USA during the 1970s, who

[383] Deborah Cameron. 1992. *Feminism & Linguistic Theory* (2nd Edition). New York: Palgrave, 153.
[384] Elgin 2000, 17.
[385] Ibid., 35.
[386] Atwood 1998, 136.
[387] Ibid., 179.
[388] Of course, since the publication of *The Handmaid's Tale*, post-feminism has rejected many of the concerns raised by the second wave of feminism.

were against the separation of church and state and who adhered to a literal Biblical translation. Indeed, both novels seem to have incorporated this development by founding its societies along the lines of religious fundamentalism: The Catholic Church exerts great power over the people outside the linguist's household in *Native Tongue,* and Gilead is clearly a Christian theocracy, established after a right-wing revolution. Furthermore, a literal, and ultimately androcentric interpretation of the *Bible* seems to be the basis for religious discourse in both cases. The reason for this, in line with feminist theory, can be explained by referring to Dale Spender's influential work *Man Made Language* (1980):

> Spender's work attended to the powerfulness of those who can exercise some degree of control over language. People with public speaking rights, those who record and communicate ideas and the information-rich are all in a position to exercise some power over language – to use the power of language to promote particular social and cultural beliefs and suppress others.[389]

Spender adds a gender aspect, which found its way into both of the novels at hand. As men are the only ones who have "public speaking rights", they can promote their "social and cultural beliefs", thus leading to further suppression of women. In other words, as long as men have control over public language, including religious texts, women will be subjugated. Thus, the theory of a man-made language and the androcentric nature of religious and political discourse that can be found in both novels seem to be influenced by feminist linguistics of the late 1970s and early 1980s.

At last, interpretation and religion plays an important role in the last and most recent novel discussed in this study as well. Will Self's *The Book of Dave* is certainly not part of the feminist dystopian tradition, although its future society depicts several issues of inequality, based on Dave Rudman's increasingly misogynist attitude. But all in all, Self's novel does not offer entirely new insights on the topic of language, but rather picks up some of the subjects we have just discussed: The implementation of a new language and the portrayal a theocratic society whose values are based upon Scripture. Along with *Brave New World*, *The Book of Dave* is arguably the novel that works mostly along the lines of satire – a fact, which is first of all proven by its language: Mokni is essentially a mockery of Cockney English, enriched with terms from a taxi-driver's vocabulary (also a form of slang exclusively to a sub-group). Whereas *Riddley Walker*, an obvious influence for Self's

[389] Weatherall 2002, 3-4.

novel, shows the transformation and misinterpretation of language in a bleaker, more political and scientific context, *The Book of Dave* chooses a lighter, more mundane path. This does not mean, however, that the novel should be considered 'dystopia light'; its central concerns are no less serious. Although the grotesque nature of Dave's Book and the almost childish character of Mokni will make us readers chuckle, its dystopian integrity remains intact. At the bottom of Self's dystopia linger the same questions we are facing while reading *Riddley Walker* or *The Handmaid's Tale*: How much of our thoughts, values and everyday life is controlled by language and texts, and who has the authoritative power to interpret them? Combined with a subtle extrapolation of 'Blatcherite' England (a term used by the Guardian's John Harrison in a review of the novel[390]) and family values (or rather the lack thereof), it is the dependence on a single text and its language that serves as the novel's dystopian backdrop.

4.3 'Beyond control' - dystopia's susceptibility to language

As the end of this study approaches, one last question remains: why, after all, is dystopian fiction so keen on incorporating issues of language? As shown in the introductory chapter, several critics have acknowledged the use of language, but hardly anyone offers an explanation on *why* this is the case. Is language merely a contrivance that is used in order to support broader, more general issues, or is dystopian literature particularly open for language concerns? Of course, at this point of this analysis, it should be obvious that I am going to propose the latter, and I have already addressed and identified several points that allow us to explain why this is the case. With regards to the forthcoming conclusion, I want to pick up some of these points again in order to answer the last and certainly important question.

In order to explain the phenomenon at hand, one has to refer back to the history of the dystopian genre first. David Sisk, in order to sustain his theory that every dystopia foregrounds issues of language and control, links the rise of the dystopian novel with the growth of mass media and the emergence of new forms of control:

[390] John Harrison. 2006. *The gospel according to Dave*. The Guardian Online. [Online source]

> The twentieth century has witnessed a rapid rise in the number and quality of dystopian fictions, not only because people are becoming more aware of the implications of language controls, but also because the growth of mass media and new information technologies has provided more avenues through which such controls can be installed. Such media are not the source of oppression they merely multiply the effective outlets for official propaganda and thought control.[391]

For Sisk, mass media, propaganda and language control are connected. He grounds his assumption primarily on Noam Chomsky's model of "propaganda dissemination", which claims that all Western democracies impose a subtle form of control on society by deliberately suppressing or channelling information according to the views and aims of governments and power groups.[392] Sisk's connection is consistent with our findings: At the beginning of this study, while tracing the history of dystopia, we found dystopia proper to be a fairly recent phenomenon within the field of anti-utopian literature, which emerged as a genre on its own only towards the end of the 19th century. Later, we identified the relationship between power and the control of language as one of the most recurrent and important uses of language in dystopian fiction (see chapter 3.1). Given these facts, it is not beside the point to draw a connection between the emergence of dystopia as a genre and the rise of mass media, which, in return, lead to new issues in the field of language and authoritative control. And indeed, if one takes a closer look at Chomsky's views in regards to media and power, they will certainly sound familiar by now:

> [The] media's institutional structure gives them [the purpose] to turn people into submissive, atomized individuals who don't interfere with the structures of power and authority but rather serve those structures. That's the way the system is set up and if you started deviating from that, those with real power, the institutions with real power, would interfere to prevent that deviation. Now that's the way institutions work, so it seems to me almost predictable that the media will serve the role of a kind of indoctrination.[393]

It is not hard to find examples of Chomsky's institutional power in dystopian fiction: The World State's use of slogans and unconscious conditioning, the Party's orthodoxy, propagated via telescreens, the worldcasts in *Clockwork Orange*, the deliberate misinformation spread by the government in *Riddley Walker* – issues of indoctrination and control are just as omnipresent in dystopian fiction as the existence of "submissive,

[391] Sisk 1997, 164.
[392] Ibid., 165.
[393] Noam Chomsky. 1991. "Language, Politics, and Composition". In: *Journal of Advanced Composition* Vol. 11 No. 1. [Online source]

atomized individuals". And as it turns out, Chomsky's theory is not too far removed from Foucault's discursive framework that we established earlier: Foucault also refers to institutional power that shapes and controls certain discourses, with the exception, that these institutions are also object to the power of discourse itself. Whichever theory one prefers, it is possible to say that an increased application of media, propaganda and authoritative or institutional power in the 20th century has opened the door for concerns with language in dystopian fiction.

But then again, there is more behind this relationship than an increasing awareness of the "implications of language controls" that Sisk mentions. To maintain my argumentation that control is an important, but not exclusive issue in this regard, I would rather argue that the awareness of implications of language *in general* was increasing during the 20th century. As the previous chapter has shown, a wide array of linguistic theories and contemporary trends in language usage have found their way into dystopian fiction: Besides propaganda dissemination, there is neo-Pavlovian conditioning, advertisements, slang and youth speak, feminist notions of a man-made language, authoritative interpretation, language and social class, and the instability of language itself to be found. Of course, not all of these concepts are necessarily "new" in the way that they were only discovered during the 20th century.[394] However, the emergence of modern linguistics and language theory in the last 100 years has arguably led to a newly formed consciousness of the power of language. Dystopia's disposition to these concerns is only logical, if one remembers its dependence on contemporary issues. Unlike anti-utopian literature, which criticizes and satirizes distinctly utopian schemes, dystopia's points of attack are based on contemporary societies and actual developments and concerns. Thus, the rise of linguistic theory during the 20th century has shed a new light on the implications and power of language, and dystopian writers have been keen on incorporating or extrapolating them in their dystopian societies.

However, dystopia's susceptibility to contemporary issues is not the only reason that explains the recurrent use of language. Another explanation, albeit closely linked to former, can be found within its didactic mission. The reason why dystopias extrapolate contemporary concerns is, first of all, to warn of a possible future that might come about if

[394] For instance, rhetoric is a "technology of persuasion" that dates back to Ancient Greece and possibly back to the invention of language itself. Rhetoric, propaganda and interpretation are all forms of language control that can be traced back throughout the centuries. (cf. Joseph, John E. 2006. *Language and Politics*. Edinburgh: UP, 110ff.)

no further action is taken. This didactic purpose lies at the very core of each dystopian novel. In order to illustrate how this relates to language, it is useful to refer to a fairly recent study by John E. Joseph first, who draws another connection between the rise of propaganda and media, and its influence on our view on language:

> [The period after WWI] saw a popularization […] of anxiety about propaganda, especially that generated by governments, but also by commercial interests. […]
> The new reality of disembodied voices entering ordinary people's homes from some central broadcasting authority coincided with the diffusion of the notion of the 'unconscious mind' into middle-brow, then general cultural awareness. This began in the early 1920s and accelerated over the following decades […].[395]

First of all, this supports the relationship between language and thought control as stated above. What is more important, however, is Joseph's mention of fear and anxiety. Indeed, many dystopias are trying to stimulate the reader's innermost fears. This does not mean that dystopia is sensationalistic, but rather that its "educational value rests on its power to shock".[396] In other words, to achieve the intended didactic effect, many dystopian authors are playing with the reader's apprehensions. In this regard, the portrayal of propaganda is highly effective: Propaganda is a form of controlling thought and language, and we fear its consequences. Until today, propaganda has a mostly derogatory connotation, which is arguably the result of its 'misapplication' over the past century – a prominent example being its use by the National Socialists. Of course, propaganda is only one of many forms of how language is controlled in dystopian fiction, but all serve the same, didactic purpose: they stimulate our fear that language, and with it our thoughts, can be controlled and manipulated. It is for the same reason that several dystopias employ artificial languages, which, while not being linguistically accurate, demonstrate how language can be transformed and used to different ends. Novels such as *Riddley Walker* and *Clockwork Orange* challenge our notions of language acquisition as a difficult task by proving how easily we adopt words, phrases and even grammar just by reading the novel.[397] They are demonstrating how the very same processes that are depicted within the novel can happen to us as well – how we are ultimately at the mercy of the language around us. If this anxiety is combined with recent developments, dystopia's mission is likely to succeed.

[395] Joseph 2006, 116-117.
[396] Sisk 1997, 163.
[397] Sisk 1997, 170.

Sisk concludes: "Clearly, twentieth-century dystopian writers have foregrounded issues of controlling language because they believe that a substantial number of their readers already share these fears and that their fictions will be both more affective and more enduringly meaningful if based on such warnings."[398] Thus, another reason for dystopia's tendency to include language concerns is the fact that language can be used as a vessel to enhance its educational value.

But stimulating fear and anxiety is not the only way for dystopian fiction to fulfil its didactic intent. After all, there are two sides to a coin, both of which we have already identified: If there is a form of control and suppression, there is likely to be resistance and rebellion. It is no coincidence that all of the novels we have discussed either end on an optimistic note (*The Book of Dave*, *Native Tongue*, *and Clockwork Orange*) or leave enough room for speculation (*Brave New World, The Handmaid's Tale*, *1984*), especially if one considers the paratextual material in some cases. Just as we identified language control to be a recurrent theme, the theme of language as a tool for resistance and individual freedom is equally important. Foucault's assertion that power always produces resistance within can also be applied to our matters at hand: Despite the efforts of authoritative powers such as the World State, the Inner Party, the PCO, the Mincery or the Commanders of the Faithful to take control over language, there is always, even within the utter bleakness of *1984*, an element of freedom in language itself. Herein lies the true didactic purpose of dystopian fiction: Although it plays with our fears and apprehensions, it always leaves a glimpse of hope, a way out, the possibility to reverse the trends before it is too late. Hence, no application of language control in the novels discussed herein – not even Newspeak – is wholly succeeding. It lies in the very heart of language itself that it can be used as a two-edged sword, that it cuts both ways, and it is this versatility that makes language particularly suitable for dystopia's intentions: It allows readers to extrapolate contemporary concerns, stirs their anxieties and fears, and at the same time, offers a possible way out.

Most of the points just mentioned are primarily dealing with dystopia's use of language as a plot device. But as there are also several distinct stylistic uses of language, one has to ask why dystopian fiction does repeatedly use artificial languages or paratextual material, to

[398] Sisk 1997, 164.

name only two of the instances we identified. Unfortunately, within the limits of this study, I can only provide assumptions. For instance, one of the reasons for dystopia's disposition to artificial languages or inclusion of extraneous material might be found in the permeable nature of the dystopian novel. Unlike other forms of fiction, dystopia draws it influences from a wide array of literary currents, which allows for little restrictions in terms of style, structure or narrative mode, and its close proximity to science fiction allows the surpassing of genre boundaries. Dystopia allows for a creative use of language, voice and different, even contradictory forms of texts. It can be assumed that language's versatile use within the novel's plot is also mirrored in the novel's form and structure, and certainly, our claims of a performative effect of language teaching, or deliberate disjunction of a reader's expectations and values seems to support this thesis. However, in order to provide an extensive analysis of dystopia's stylistic characteristics, one would have to do a comparative study on its own with a bigger corpus of texts.

What the second part of this study has proven, however, is that language is not only a plot device, but that its implications go well beyond the text itself. In the forthcoming conclusion I will propose how these findings are going to challenge the prevailing role of language in literary research.

5. Conclusion

The preceding journey from the characteristics of dystopia's "nightmare future" to its widespread use of language, the evolution of speech and the extrapolation of contemporary issues has reached its conclusion. Now it is time to connect the findings of the previous analysis with the initial claim. At the beginning of this study, I observed that despite a conspicuous prevalence of language concerns in English dystopian fiction, only few critics consider language to be a recurrent theme or motif within the genre. My intention was to point out this apparent deficiency, and to demonstrate that language should indeed be considered a crucial element in dystopian literature. In order to prove this hypothesis, I deliberately decided to analyse dystopian works covering a long period of time and different traditions within the literary genre of dystopia. After all, only if language concerns can be found throughout the genre, will it eventually be considered a recurring theme and not just a fluke or fortuity. Of course, given the limited scope and small corpus of this work, not all relevant aspects in regards to language and dystopia could be included. However, based on the findings, it is safe to say that despite the vast differences in application, language seems to be indeed an integral part of dystopian fiction. With the preceding analysis at hand, it is possible to identify three major functions of language: A supportive function, a mediatory function and a didactic function, which, if taken together, account for most applications of language in dystopian fiction.

In order to elaborate these functions in detail, it is useful go back to the very beginning of this thesis first. I took David Sisk's extensive study as a starting point and adopted his division in fictional and stylistic use of language for the subsequent analysis. However, Sisk's claim that dystopias have to emphasize issues of either control or resistance by the means of language in order to be dystopias turned out to be too restrictive, especially if applied to the dystopian genre as a whole. One only has to imagine *1984* without the concept of Newspeak, or any other aspect of language that we discussed; it would still be an extrapolated, futuristic society ruled by a totalitarian power, still be undesirable, and still retain its didactic purpose. Clearly, Sisk's thesis needed to be modified, and I have proposed a model based on Michel Foucault's discourse theory instead. I deduced that in every dystopian fiction one or several predominant discourses act as focal points: In *1984*, this is arguably a political one, whereas *The Handmaid's Tale, The Book of Dave* and

Native Tongue are foregrounding discourses of both religion and suppression of women. *Brave New World*, on the other hand, foregrounds science and consumerism, and *Clockwork Orange* moral choice and, possibly, youth. What all novels have in common however, is that the respective discourses are not only subject to power struggles within itself and with other discourses (which are in fact crucial for dystopia's critical purpose and the possibility to change things), but that these discourses are often enough dependent on the use and control of language. In other words, discourses in dystopian fiction are often enforced *by the means of* language. This is what I would like to refer to as language's supportive function; it supports, enhances and reinforces many of dystopia's central discourses and themes, as the first part of this study has proven: The establishment of an authoritative power for instance, at the same time a recurrent theme and usually part of a political discourse, is often supported by the means of language. To refer back to the example above, although *1984* would still be considered dystopian without the employment of Newspeak, the novel's dystopian effect is profoundly enhanced by its existence. Correspondingly, in *Native Tongue*, the introduction of a distinctive androcentric language called Panglish and its counterpart Langlish/Láadan serves to further elaborate the discourse of women's suppression (and at the same time proposes a possible way out).[399] In *The Handmaid's Tale*, a theocratic discourse has taken away women's subject status and deprived them of any means to express themselves. The physical subjugation is supported by a linguistic deprival as well, as women (and especially handmaids) are not allowed to read, write or even speak freely. Furthermore, in both feminist dystopias as well as in *Riddley Walker* and *The Book of Dave*, a ruling power group is enforcing their orthodoxy through the use of Scripture and written texts, while at the same abolishing the use of any literature that might be subversive.

On the other side, language often lies at the core of another important dystopian theme: the theme of liberation and resistance to an oppressing regime. All of the novel's protagonists turned out to be avid users of language, who become increasingly aware of the power of language. In the case of Offred, Winston and the women in *Native Tongue*, language becomes a refuge, which allows memories of a previous time and the formation of independent and subversive thought. On the other hand, Riddley and Symun use their

[399] However, it has to be noted that *Native Tongue* and *The Judas Rose* are probably the only dystopian novels discussed herein that are primarily *about* language, given the fact that their plot evolves around the creation and spread of Láadan, and even the subplots, such as the failing attempts of the government to interface their children with aliens, are based on language concerns. Language is more than a mere support in this case.

vernaculars to present and master the world around them, and Alex uses Nadsat to distance himself from society's uniformity, by supporting his narrative with a distinctive voice. Language is, as Bakhtin claims, a "two-edged sword", and by wielding it, dystopia's most important schemes are revealed and supported, thus enforcing language's prevailing role.

But if one were to consider language merely a vessel to support more general themes and discourses, the proposal of language as a theme on its own would hardly stand a chance. There must be more to the use of language, and this is why I stepped outside the sphere of the novel's plot in the second part of the study and took stylistic and structural issues into account. Certainly, the most striking application in this regard is the introduction of an artificial language, but as we have seen, there are other, equally important ways to incorporate distinctive language use as well. As I was explaining the outline of this study in chapter 1.2.3 with the help of a simple illustration, I stated that there is never a clear cut between stylistic and fictional concerns of language, even though some novels seem to contain only one or the other. In most cases however, one does in fact feed upon the other. This is what I would like to call language's mediatory function; mediatory in the sense of serving as a connecting link between two parts. These two parts can refer to fictional and stylistic issues, or the novel and the reader. As we have seen, the employment of artificial languages is not a stylistic *tour de force*, but it serves in all cases a distinct function, that is intrinsically connected with the dystopian idea. In the case of *Riddley Walker*, *Clockwork Orange*, and to a lesser degree *The Book of Dave*, the use of an artificial language draws the readers actively into the dystopian future. As readers have come to terms with the vernacular they experience, their notions of language acquisition are challenged, and their prevailing discourses disrupted; they have to take Riddley's or Alex's story for granted, even if they are unreliable narrators, and thus, unconsciously, they become objects to the same language, discourses and views as the characters. This is what we referred to as a performative use of language.

But not only artificial languages produce this effect: The use of what I called "disjunctive" paratexts also has a mediatory function, because it makes the readers question and reevaluate the dystopian narrative, taking their own experiences and apprehensions into account. And at last, even a simple reflection upon the character's names may provide a hint of the discourse at hand. Language has the ability to mediate between different levels; to be part of the plot and at the same time work towards the reader.

These assertions also lead to the last part of the study, in which I approached the reasons for dystopia's prevalent use of language. As shown, language concerns are in fact closely related to two of dystopia's most important characteristics identified earlier (which is why I chose to trace the development and nature of dystopian genre before conducting the main analysis): Extrapolation and didacticism. First, I asserted that because of dystopia's inherent need to extrapolate contemporary issues, and the emergence of linguistic theory in the 20th century, most dystopian fiction do extrapolate, if to a varying degree, contemporary concerns with language as well. In some instances, such as *1984*, which also serves as a critique on Basic English, *Brave New World* and its satirical depiction of slogans, or *Native Tongue*'s inclusion of a gendered language, it may very well be said that there exists an additional discourse – a discourse of language. This may not always be the predominant discourse, as one has seen, but in many cases, it still can be considered a discourse of its own. The struggle between control and liberation by the means of language certainly seems to support this notion; if one considers discourse to be a permanent power struggle, then the same struggle manifests itself in language and through the means of the same: If there are concerns of control or resistance, there is, in basically all cases, some form of language application at the bottom.

At last, this thesis tackled dystopia's susceptibility to language. I assumed that there must be a reason why dystopian fiction, unlike other forms of fiction, makes such extensive use of language. The study has shown that language is a powerful device to illustrate and highlight the didactic intention of the dystopian genre. Herein lies what I would like to call language's didactic function. Dystopian fiction needs to make its readers think, to get them to critically assess the dystopian plot, and language is the most powerful device in this regard. Combined with the findings of an increasing interest in language theory that went along with the emergence of the genre, we found out that there had been an increased consciousness on the power of language. Propaganda is arguably the most important example in this regard, but there are other forms as well, ranging from new media technology to gendered, public language and scientific language. As the awareness of language (and its misapplication) grows, so does its ability to frighten us. This is the point that connects dystopia's central ambitions with language. More than ever, language is known as a powerful device and is thus particularly useful to carry dystopia's criticism. As language is used to illustrate many general concerns of dystopian fiction, it becomes a didactic tool. A totalitarian, distant society might appear frightening, but there is nothing as

striking as experiencing a different application of language, or the realization that language was used to create it. But as one can see, at the same time, language also offers a way out of the dystopian misery. Since language can never be entirely controlled, its existence also contains hope. Thus, language enforces both dystopia's desire to 'shock' and its intention to show that things can *still* be avoided. To conclude this, the intensity of all of the dystopian novels discussed herein is profoundly strengthened by the very fact that language lies at the bottom, and that dystopia's educational purpose is severely heightened, as language is not an abstract entity, but something very real and very close to us readers.

These functions, the supportive, the mediatory and the didactic put together form a network, a matrix of language concerns in dystopian fiction. Even though not all novels make the same use of every function to the same degree, it is the interaction between them that allows identifying language as a recurrent theme. Since language is such an elusive and widespread concern, not only in dystopian, but in every form of fiction, it is often overlooked, but at the same time, it is its diverse and multifaceted nature that makes it so applicable for dystopian fiction. Sure, it is not a clear-defined theme such as surveillance or the establishment of a hierarchical order, and it may not always hit one in the face straight from the beginning. And yet it works on different levels and towards different ends, which are in return connected to the very nature of dystopian fiction: Language touches our apprehensions, it evokes our attention, it conveys contemporary trends and criticism, and, at last, it always offers a "way out".

Of course, this study is by no means definitive. It is now up to additional studies to take the notion of a generalized theme of language one step further and apply it to other dystopias that are, at least on the surface, not particularly concerned with language. However, if my claim is correct, these studies will ultimately encounter one or more of the language functions I proposed in their texts as well. After all, at their core, all dystopias are concerned with human nature. And what is more human than our precious ability to use language and to form abstract thoughts? Language defines our human existence, our perception of the world, and our relationship with others. Referring back to Angela Carter's quote from this study's epigraph: Language is power, culture and life. It means domination and liberation at the same time, and it is so vast that we will probably never uncover all of its secrets. In short: language prevails, and in dystopian fiction particularly.

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Appendix

Zusammenfassung in deutscher Sprache

George Orwells Roman *1984* aus dem Jahre 1949 gilt gemeinhin als einer der Klassiker dystopischer Literatur. Auch wenn das tatsächliche Jahr 1984 inzwischen Vergangenheit ist, hat Orwell's Entwurf einer repressiven, totalitären Gesellschaft bis heute nichts an Aktualität eingebüßt. Konzepte wie „Big Brother" oder „doublethink" sind in unseren alltäglichen Wortschatz übergegangen, und Orwells Roman bildet auch weiterhin *das* Vorbild für viele aktuelle Dystopien. Doch nicht nur Orwells Darstellung eines düsteren, futuristischen Überwachungsstaates, in dem eine Gruppe von Machtinhabern versucht, sowohl die Vergangenheit als auch die Gedanken der Bevölkerung zu steuern, verkörpert wichtige Leitmotive dystopischer Literatur. Auch die Rolle und Anwendung von Sprache in dieser Zukunftsvision hat nachhaltig seine Spuren in dystopischer Literatur hinterlassen, auch wenn diese Rolle in der Forschungsliteratur häufig übersehen wird. Zwar befassen sich regelmäßig Kritiker mit dem Aspekt von Sprache in Romanen wie *1984* oder Aldous Huxleys *Brave New World*, allerdings gibt es kaum komparative Studien, die Sprache als ein eigenes, zentrales dystopisches Motiv sehen, sondern Sprache in der Regel in andere Aspekte subsumieren.

Die vorliegende Arbeit, befasst sich mit genau dieser Unzulänglichkeit. Anhand von acht dystopischen Romanen in Englischer Sprache, die allesamt in den letzten 80 Jahren erschienen sind, wird die Rolle von Sprache herausgearbeitet, und ihre Relevanz für das Genre der Dystopie deutlich gemacht. Die verwendeten Werke sind, in chronologischer Reihenfolge: Aldous Huxleys *Brave New World* (1932), George Orwells *1984* (1949), Anthony Burgess' *Clockwork Orange* (1960), Russell Hobans *Riddley Walker* (1980), Suzette Haden Elgins *Native Tongue* (1984) und *The Judas Rose* (1987), Margaret Atwoods *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), sowie Will Selfs *The Book of Dave* (2006). Die Romane sind bewusst gewählt, um einen größtmöglichen Rahmen und Zeitraum abzudecken, der zudem unterschiedliche Strömungen und Traditionen innerhalb des Genres der dystopischen Literatur aufgreift.

Bevor die eigentliche Textanalyse beginnt, werden zunächst Entstehung und Charakteristika des dystopischen Konzeptes erläutert. Die Studie blickt kurz auf die Entwicklung der Utopie, dem Gegenkonzept von Dystopie, von der Klassik zur Moderne und verfolgt anschließend die Entstehung anti-utopischer Tendenzen bis hin zum Auftreten der Dystopie, einer speziellen Unterkategorie anti-utopischer Literatur, im späten 19. Jahrhundert. Darauf basierend werden einige der wichtigsten Leitmotive vorgestellt, die im weiteren Verlauf auch in Verbindung mit Sprache eine maßgebliche Rolle spielen. Zu guter Letzt wird auch auf die Problematik der Organisation und Klassifikation von Sprache in der folgenden Analyse eingegangen. Nicht nur ist Sprache an sich ein weitreichender Begriff; auch die Verwendung von Sprache in den einzelnen Romanen ist sehr unterschiedlich geprägt. So sind beispielsweise Romane wie *Riddley Walker, Clockwork Orange* und *Book of Dave* komplett oder zu weiten Teilen in einer eigenen, fiktiven Sprache verfasst, die verfügt, dass der Leser seinen Interpretationsrahmen anpassen muss. In anderen Romane dagegen, wie in *Brave New World, The Handmaid's Tale* oder *1984,* spielt Sprache dagegen fast ausschließlich auf der Handlungsebene eine Rolle. Eine umfangreiche Analyse erfordert es, alle Aspekte des Sprachgebrauchs abzudecken, auch wenn der begrenzte Rahmen dieser Arbeit es nur zulässt, die wichtigsten Aspekte in dieser Hinsicht abzudecken.

Aus den unterschiedlichen Formen des Sprachgebrauch, in dem sich auf Sprache sowohl als Schrift- wie Sprechmedium bezogen wird, geht auch der Aufbau der Hauptanalyse hervor: Im ersten Teil wird auf die Rolle von Sprache auf der Handlungsebene eingegangen. Es wird, unter Zuhilfenahme von Michel Foucaults Diskurstheorie, gezeigt, wie Sprache auf der einen Seite von einer autoritären Macht oder Institution verwendet wird, um bestimmte Diskurse durchzusetzen, die Stabilität der dystopischen Gesellschaft zu garantieren und das Äußern von kritischen Gedanken abzuwenden. Auf der anderen Seite, analog zu Foucaults Diskurs-Begriff, wonach ein Diskurs immer auch seinen Widerstand produziert, wird Sprache in einigen Romanen jedoch als gegenteiliges Medium eingesetzt; als ein Medium zur Befreiung und Wahrung der Individualität. Die wechselseitige Beziehung wird ausgiebig analysiert. Im dritten Analysepunkt wird die Beziehung zwischen sozialer Klasse und Status aufgedeckt.

Die zweite Hälfte der Studie wendet sich von der Handlungsebene ab und konzentriert sich auf stilistische und strukturelle Aspekte. Es wird gezeigt, wie Sprache von den Autoren benutzt wird, um die dystopische Erfahrung zu verstärken, wie die Einbindung

von fiktiven Sprachen, Para- und Intertextualität sowie Namensgebung als stilistisches Mittel verwendet wird, das im Gegenzug zwei der wichtigsten Charakteristika dystopischer Literatur hervorhebt: Zum einen die didaktische Absicht, mit der Dystopien vor einer möglichen (und unweigerlich schlechteren) Zukunft warnen, falls keine Gegenmaßnahmen ergriffen werden, und zum anderen, wie Dystopien gezielt Aspekte aus der Zeit der Autoren aufgreifen, und diese in den Rahmen der Handlungsstruktur extrapolieren. Basierend auf dieser Annahme werden zum Abschluss einige Sprach- und kulturtheoretische Ideen aufgegriffen, die ihren Weg in die einzelnen Werke gefunden haben, und somit einen eigenen Diskurs von Sprache im dystopischen Roman ermöglichen.

Zum Abschluss der Arbeit werden die Ergebnisse aufgegriffen und im Hinblick auf eine mögliche Repositionierung von Sprache in der Forschung des dystopischen Romanes evaluiert. Es werden drei bestimmte Funktionen von Sprachgebrauch anhand der Analyse erschlossen und abschließend vorgeschlagen, Sprache zukünftig als eigenes Motiv innerhalb dystopischer Literatur zu sehen, da der Aspekt von Sprache in den hier diskutierten Texten unweigerlich mit der Absicht und Form der Dystopie in Einklang steht.

Frankfurt am Main, 22.10.2009