

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
UNIVERSITY MOHAMED BOUDIAF-M'SILA

FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES

OPTION: LITERATURE & CIVILIZATION

N:



DOMAIN: FOREIGN LANGUAGES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

STREAM: ENGLISH LANGUAGE

**Dystopia, Empowerment, and Resistance in Yoko
Ogawa's *The Memory Police*.**

**Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Master Degree.**

Candidates:

Ms. Lina Berra
Ms. Nadine Belqyes MEZRAG

Supervisor

Ms. Amel BENIA

Defended before the following jury

Ms. Sabah FARRAH	University of M'sila	Chairperson
Ms. Amel BENIA	University of M'sila	Supervisor
Dr. Houria MIHOUBI	University of M'sila	Examiner

2021/2022

DECLARATION

We hereby declare that the dissertation entitled; “Dystopia, Empowerment, and Resistance in Yoko Ogawa’s *The Memory Police*” is our own work and all the sources we have quoted have been acknowledged by means of references.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the name of Allah the Compassionate, the Merciful

First of all, we faithfully thank Allah, for blessing and helping us in realizing this work.

We are gratefully thankful to our supervisor **Ms. BENIA Amel**, for her time, patience, critical insight and intellectual guidance.

We would also like to show our great appreciation to the examining panel for their valuable comments on this dissertation. Your precious comments will greatly improve our work.

Special thanks are extended to all our teachers, professors and lecturers who had accompanied us during this exceptional academic year; we will forever be indebted to the enormous intellectual contribution you candidly imparted.

Finally, enormous appreciation is addressed to our families for having given us unfailing support, faith, and motivation.

DEDICATION

To my grandmother, whose love has nourished and sustained me for longer than I can remember.

To my beloved parents. Without each of you, I would be nowhere near the person I am – and the person I am still working on becoming. There are not enough words in the world to express my appreciation, but I think this is a good start. I owe you everything.

To my brothers and sister **Islam, Ilyas and Farah** for their unconditional love and support throughout my life.

To my friends **Rania, Asma** and my partner **Lina**. Thank you for being the greatest friends anyone could ever ask for.

Nadine

DEDICATION

With great honor, I dedicate this work to my amazing parents who worked so hard to see me strong and successful, and who have been my source of strength and support.

To my loving brothers and sisters, **Riadh, Mohamed, Zakariya, Radhia and Rayenne** who stood by my side in every step of the way with their unconditional love.

To my incredible nephews **Islem and Naim**.

To my best friend Achwaq whose constant warmth and companionship I could not repay and my precious partner **Nadine**. I love you guys.

To my one of a kind supervisor **Amel BENIA**, all my teachers and the person who made me get over anything in this world, thank you.

Lina

ABSTRACT

Dystopian literature often aims to provide visions of possible futures where humanity as a whole can be endangered. Such writers, regardless of language and ethnicity, aim to warn readers of the possible threats to privacy, security, and freedom. This dissertation, therefore, examines the notion of what dystopia and totalitarianism have meant to individuals throughout the history of development of a dystopian society by examining Yoko Ogawa's *The Memory Police*. It examines Ogawa's unique portrayal of a dystopian society and a totalitarian government. It further aims to investigate the tropes used by the "Memory Police" in erasing objects, abstract concepts, animals, plants, and above all, the memory of those same things. Through censorship, torture, and surveillance, the totalitarian government of the unnamed island succeeds in slowly erasing and even eroding human bodies of the characters. Additionally, this study takes a closer look at how the totalitarian government of the island embodied in the "Memory Police" affects individuals including their ways of resistance and leads to subtle ways of empowerment against the regime.

Key Words: Dystopia, resistance, totalitarianism, totalitarian government, empowerment, Yoko Ogawa.

Table of contents

DECLARATION	I
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	II
DEDICATION	III
DEDICATION	IV
GENERAL INTRODUCTION	1
Chapter One:	7
Theoretical Background: Dystopian Literature and Totalitarian Governments.....	7
Introduction:	8
1. Dystopia and Totalitarian Governments:	8
2. Mass Control and Surveillance:	19
3. Dystopian Literature:.....	22
4. Characteristics of Dystopian Literature:.....	24
5. Dystopia's Evolution in Fiction:	26
6. Apocalypse of The Word:	27
Conclusion:	27
CHAPTER TWO:	29
Totalitarian Governments and Tools of Resistance in Yoko Ogawa's <i>The Memory Police</i>	29
Introduction:	30
1. About The Author:	30
2. About The Novel:	31
3. The Influence of Anne Frank on Yoko Ogawa:	33
4. Coping and Resistance against Totalitarian Regime: Empowerment in <i>The Memory Police</i> :..	36
5. Writing as a Resistance Tool:	47
Conclusion:	51
General Conclusion	53
Works Cited.....	56
ملخص.....	61

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

One can gain a better understanding of life by reading great literary works. They help a person in taking a deeper look at the various aspects of life. Literary expressions, in their various forms, have the ability to transform one's perspective on life in a variety of ways. That is why, readers are always inspired by biographies of great people, real-life stories of courage, sacrifice, and other positive virtues. Such works allow the public to gain insight into the lives of great people.

Throughout the decades, literature has been chiefly about the profound connection between the piece of writing and the historical and cultural realities. Countless authors and writers believe that within literature lies the force that transforms the reader towards the conditions of human beings within a society. These authors, often aim to raise the awareness of readers towards certain issues that can affect human beings in fundamental ways. Thus, this dissertation endeavors to examine dystopian literature and totalitarian government in Yoko Ogawa's *The Memory Police*, as this genre is becoming more and more popular by the day and even more relevant to our contemporary society.

In 1962, Yoko Ogawa was born in Okayama. Ogawa is a famous Japanese writer that influenced many readers and writers of our time. She started writing at a very young age, and began publishing her works at the age of twenty-six. One of Ogawa's most famous novels is entitled *The Memory Police*. It is a dystopian novel that is her fifth book to be translated into English in 2019. She transmuted her imagining and influence of Anne Frank's world into it. The story is about a mystery island with its own set of laws where things are disappearing quickly, and so are the memories associated with those things. The protagonist is a young woman attempting to keep her career as a novelist alive, when she realizes that her editor is in danger from the "Memory Police." she devises a strategy to shelter him beneath her floorboards. As terror and grief surrounds them, they hold to her writing as the only way to preserve the past.

This novel is considered as one of the most vivid and haunting works of dystopian literature. Therefore, the primary focus of this study will be the aspect of dystopia and how the author approached the issue of totalitarianism, censorship and government control. In this novel, the author paints a picture of a novelist on an island under the control of the memory police. This characterization has roots to reality to some extent. This research will seek to demonstrate how an unknown totalitarian government is imposing its force and causing the people of the island to collectively forget and lose their attachment to objects or concepts as a social system.

Within this context, the aim of this study is to accentuate a new research area that is related to the importance of resistance tools such as writing and storytelling. It is intended that the research findings will provide an insight into the realities of a totalitarian government and its role in censoring a society. In order to attain the above-mentioned aims, a set of objectives should be achieved, and the central objective of this study is to unfold governmental oppressions within a totalitarian society that is depicted in the novel.

This dissertation seeks to provide answers to the following main question: How does a literary work of fiction such as the *Memory Police* portray aspects of dystopian literature and totalitarian governments? In order to answer this question, this study will attempt to answer the following sub-questions: How did elements such as totalitarianism and oppression help shaping the resistance mechanisms against this kind of governmental control? Does Yoko Ogawa predict outer influences in her work *The Memory Police*? In addition, can the main characters succeed in breaking silence and use their voice? Furthermore, this study is going to address the representation of dystopian characters in the novel as subaltern subjects and their quest for a voice under the umbrella of intersecting oppression of totalitarianism and censorship. Precisely, it underlines issues of the marginalized subjects.

Many researchers have shown interest in this novel, and in Yoko Ogawa's literary corpus for their investigation. Among the researchers who have attempted to investigate Yoko Ogawa's treatment of dystopian literature and totalitarian government in her novel is Madeleine Thein. In her article "*The Memory Police* by Yoko Ogawa – Profound Allegory of Loss" (2019), Thein provides a depiction about an island where disappearance is a way of life. She claims that Ogawa's work is a masterpiece that meditates on totalitarianism and resistance as well as the rhythms of life and death. This study argues that *The Memory Police* is a work of art, a deep pool that may be perceived as a tale or an allegory, as a threat or an enlightenment. Madeleine Thein claims that Yoko Ogawa's novel is a story that lets us view things differently, opening up concepts in subtle ways, knowing that all moments of comprehension and grace are temporary. However, this study is both political and personal, and it offers no guarantees.

Another researcher who has shown interest in this topic is Julian Lucas in his research under the title "Read Receipts' On: Two Dystopian Novels Predict the Surveillance State" (2019). In this study, the researcher summarized the story by stating that the story is a series of disappearances and a gradual communal dementia that is turning the island into "absences and holes." People wake up to vanished objects by whether destroying them or losing memory of them, as for those who don't forget, they are visited by the Memory Police, who enforce the disappearances by hauling off families and removing valuables while leaving no trace of their presence. In addition, the researcher claims that Yoko Ogawa's novel is famous for its exploration of loneliness, due to the fact that she draws inspiration from "The Diary of Anne Frank".

In the same sphere, Motoko Rich devoted her research entitled "Yoko Ogawa Conjures Spirits in Hiding: 'I Just Peeked Into Their World and Took Notes'" (2019) to study the relationship between Yoko Ogawa and Anne Frank by describing how Anne influenced Ogawa's writing. Moreover, Motoko states that in order for Ogawa to get inspired, she would

crawl, notebook in hand, into a drawer or beneath a table wrapped with a blanket to simulate Anne's physical confinement.

In this regard, a better understanding of the depiction of dystopia and totalitarianism can be achieved through positioning *The Memory Police* in the area of dystopian theories and its concepts of dystopia and totalitarianism, mass control and censorship, surveillance and punishment, and apocalypse of the word as tools that have been applied to interpret the sheets of the novel. In addition, to give a further explanation of Yoko Ogawa's use of elements such as setting and characters to highlight her stance toward dystopia and totalitarianism. Moreover, to gain a better knowledge about the topic, a literary reading of *The Memory Police* was considered as a basis in conducting this work as well as other theoretical works.

This thesis will be divided into an introduction, two main chapters and a conclusion. The first chapter entitled is "Dystopian Literature and Totalitarian Governments in Yoko Ogawa's *The Memory Police*". It is devoted for the theoretical framework. To begin with, dystopian theories are properly tackled all along in this chapter in order to investigate the main concepts of the work. This study attempts to explain dystopian and totalitarian concepts proceeding with the characteristics of each and their stance in literature. Moreover, it deals with the process of mass control and censorship in a dystopian society in order to provide a more detailed insight. In addition, it focuses on dystopian literature and its characteristics since it is where the novel stands, and continues to explain dystopia's evolution in fiction. Last but not least, the study investigates the apocalypse of the word as it represents an important aspect of dystopian literature.

On the other hand, the second chapter entitled "Totalitarian Governments and Tools of Resistance in Yoko Ogawa's *The Memory Police*" begins with a discussion about the author and the novel. Furthermore, it highlights the influence of Anne Frank on Ogawa's writings, giving her the freedom to express herself. In addition to that, the study explores coping and

resistance against totalitarian regimes, by analyzing the coping mechanisms within the context of the novel. In the end, it seeks to provide answers and to fill the gap that is tackled in this work.

Chapter One:

Theoretical Background: Dystopian Literature and Totalitarian Governments

Introduction:

Being the flexible human expression that it is, literature has always been the target of various preconceptions. By approaching literature critically, one is able to look beyond the text and dig further into the author's viewpoint and the context in which it was written. This chapter endeavors to explain the theoretical background of this dissertation. The first part of the chapter is invested in discussing the theories of dystopia and how dystopia is used as theory to interpret this topic. Moreover, it tackles concepts as Dystopia and Totalitarian Governments along with the clarification of both of their features such as mass control and surveillance. After that, the second part of the chapter is devoted to the meaning and the purpose of Dystopian Literature along with its characteristics and Dystopia's evolution of fiction. The last part of the chapter explores a significant concept in the dystopian area which is The Apocalypse of The Word. By providing a solid theoretical foundation, this chapter can help us comprehend how these viewpoints and ideas are applied in Ogawa's *The Memory Police*, which will be tackled in the second chapter.

1. Dystopia and Totalitarian Governments:

1.1. Dystopia:

Many people have attempted to create the perfect place on Earth since very long time. They attempted to imagine an ideal world where everything is in order. From Plato's fantastic Republic, ruled by philosopher monarchs, to the different religion's promises of joy in the hereafter. Through their works and ideas, great minds, intellectuals, philosophers, and writers from various decades created the vision of this perfect world and gave it practical qualities (Rahmouni 2). The Utopian genre, as defined by writers, is a body of literature that exclusively addresses mankind's quest for perfection. Writers and authors have been applying and

conceptualizing their ideas of perfection and what the ideal world would look like since ancient times, and via this utopian genre, they have given this image the term of utopia (22).

Even if it might appear difficult to achieve such completeness and an idealistic picture of the world, the world's growth in politics, science, and technology has made it feasible, and dreams have become a reality. However, this growth has a terrible impact on the planet, and the lovely dreams have turned into nightmares. At that point, a new genre emerged, dystopia, which sought to replace, critique, and question the ideal reality. This advancement in science and technology brought about new and terrible developments in the world, which called into question utopian thought and shaped dystopian characteristics (2). While Utopia refers to an ideal place, Dystopia refers to one that is not quite right; it is the opposing of Heaven and Hell, right and wrong, positivity and negativity (9). It prompts us to investigate the comparable religion prehistories of the two conceptions, which are dominated in the Christian tradition by thoughts of Eden and Heaven on one hand, and Hell on the other (Claey 146).

To better understand the concept dystopia, a thorough grasp of its antecedent "Utopia" is required. A utopia is a term coined by Sir Thomas More in his book *Utopia* to depict a fictional country that exists in a certain time and space. This fictitious utopia is ideal, and its inhabitants live in peace with no disputes or issues (More xix). Dystopia, on the other hand, is everything that is the polar opposite of Utopia. A dystopia, according to Fátima Vieira is "a utopia which goes wrong" (16).

Dystopia is an imagined place, set in a particular time and place, that is morally, socially, and politically flawed, with oppression, brutalization, poverty, and a slew of other issues, as defined in A dictionary of new English, 1963-1972: the antithesis of utopia and "the place where everything is bad or a condition in which everything is evil." A society that is characterized by

human misery, such as poverty, oppression, disease, and congestion, according to the Random House dictionary of the English language from 1987 (Rahmouni 7).

In a speech to the House of Commons in 1868, John Stuart Mill coined the word dystopia for one of the first times. When discussing the government's stance toward Ireland (Valdez 1), he says:

I may be permitted, as one who, in common with many of my betters, have [sic] been subjected to the charge of being Utopian, to congratulate the Government on having joined that goodly company. It is, perhaps, too complimentary to call them Utopians, they ought rather to be called dys-topians, or cacotopians. What is commonly called Utopian is something too good to be practicable; but what they appear to favour is too bad to be practicable. (Public and Parliamentary Speeches 248)

Dystopias, in Mill's view, are not plans for the imperial and national governments of the decades ahead but rather are current projects. This speech was given not long after his publication of *England and Ireland* (1868), in which he promoted "revolutionary measures" in Ireland, the redistribution of Irish property to the tenant population. In his description of utopia and dystopia, Mill combines the moral and practical conceptions of what is "good" or "bad," not using the terms to envision a far-off future, but rather to redefine concepts of "practicality" such that they are connected to moral sensibility as well. By extending the boundaries of what is feasible in the present or the near future, his use of the word dystopia was intended to reshape thoughts about change rather than to represent a dramatic break from the present as a means of criticizing modern society (Valdez 2), because dystopias have a tendency to provide a "bleak view of the future" that is highly doubtful of attempts for massive social reform. According to Phillip E. Wegner, dystopian literature is the antithesis of literary utopias

and reclaims naturalism's persistent skepticism about both current society and human capacity, reflecting this negativity into well-created alternate or future human societies (3).

But, If we look back in history, we can clearly see dystopian writing in ancient Greek writings, as claimed by Booker: “by the late seventieth and early eightieth centuries, writers like Johnathan Swift were writing works that were centrally informed by dystopian energies” (Booke 5) Thus, despite the fact that Orwell's *1984* was what actually got the genre rolling, the dystopian atmosphere of literature was not left behind with its publication. So, contrary to what we would believe, dystopia and dystopian ideology have a history that predates the twentieth century (Rahmouni 10). However, according to the majority of critics, dystopian literature emerged in the twentieth century as a result of the pessimism brought on by totalitarianism and the world war (Valdez 2).

Dystopian Society:

Citizens of a dystopian society do not live life to the fullest, as they should; they live in squalor, in poor physical and moral conditions. It has a "fictional picture of a society in which bad, or negative social and political processes, has the upper hand," with phrases like "anti-utopia" and "negative utopia" thrown in for good measure (Claeys 107).

a) Limited Freedom:

Being a citizen of a dystopian society implies you do not have the freedom to think, question, or make decisions. The dystopian government strives to eliminate the concept of "free will" among its residents by being involved in their everyday lives and monitoring and spying on them using advanced technological equipment. Even when the government provides information, it is first scrutinized and controlled. It limits the thinking of its citizens by imposing rigorous restrictions and harsh penalties on anyone suspected of daring the state (Rahmouni 13).

b) A Leader:

There has to be a leader or concept worshiped by the citizens in any dystopian society. The state creates this personality or concept to provide a rational sense of control and authority. As we know People must admire and love the figurehead, who embodies power in a dystopian society, even if they have never observed him or had any actual interaction with him (13).

c) Individuals and Society:

The dystopian society is depicted as one that is built on the basis of social classes. There are always two main classes: the elites, which is represented by the ruling power and the totalitarian government, and the lower class, which includes everything that is not part of a higher class. It usually denotes those who are oppressed. This society is a fantasy of a flawless world in which everything is monitored and inspected in accordance with strict guidelines. People live in peace and are aware of their responsibilities and rights. All of this, however, is an illusion because the natural world has been expelled and replaced by yet another fake one (14).

Dystopian Elements:

Readers frequently run into one or more of these in dystopian writings: a detailed and well-defined setting, a person or organization in control, a strong protagonist who is changed by his or her surrounding circumstances, and a depressing conclusion (Spisak 56). The dystopian world is clearly portrayed right from the start of the story. By employing distinctive dialogue that represents the culture of the novel, the author defines the setting. Most of the characters in the novel lost their capacity for independent thought due to the oppressive force that permeates it. The oppressive force's weakness must be revealed for the protagonist to recognize it and implement a strategy to draw attention to and expose it as a crucial plot point

(Ryan 7). The protagonist frequently has a family member or someone of his environment who pushes him to adopt a fresh perspective in order for the character to discover the fatal weakness (Marina 13).

The conformity that virtually erases all evidence of unique thinking or behaviors is another recurring theme in dystopian literature. Due to a society's embrace of conformity and a belief that variation leads to conflict, the dystopian society lacks independent thought (Basu, Broad, and Hintz 3). The repressive forces in the dystopia argue that no issues will arise if everyone is in agreement and there is no conflict with one another. When the main character learns that conflict can contribute to bring about change and produce beneficial results, conformity is challenged, and the character is seen by the state as a danger to society (4). Conformity demonstrates what happens when a government crosses the line between uniformity and mindless loyalty (Marina 13).

In dystopia, physical control or enslavement is a frequent occurrence. One of the most dominant themes in dystopian literature is totalitarianism, as shown in works like *Fahrenheit 451*, and *The Memory Police* (Ryan 9). An image of governments that degrade their citizens and foster a sense of necessity that puts people in debt perpetually is created by mind control, financial restrictions, and emotional limitations (Basu, Broad, and Hintz 4). The constraint even extends to controlling people's thoughts through the use of government-mandated medicines and other mind-altering drugs (Ryan 9).

Dystopia is primarily distinguished by the reliance on technology on the expense of nature, and the repressive power employed to govern the people as well as. The expansion of technology and industry threatens human potential because of the environmental degradation that comes along with increased building and production (Sugarman 110). people who read these dystopian writings understand that there is a problem with the existing tendency to hurt

the environment, but they also realize that there are methods to continue to survive, giving them a sense of optimism even in the worst-case scenarios (Basu, Broad, and Hintz 3). They can listen to the advice from environmental dystopias, put away their tablets and cellphones, and fight for improvements in the murky air around them because there are many negative effects related with the destruction of the natural world (Ryan 10).

Because of its importance, the dystopian novel's rich setting is established from the very first word. It is essential for the author to explain the setting using unique speech that reflects the culture of the novel because the reader does not currently reside in the place being portrayed (Spisak 56). However, in some other dystopian stories the narrator tells the story at the same time he is living in it (Marina 14).

A Competent Protagonist is a major element in dystopian literature. The main character of the novel frequently comes from a family that can remember life before the dystopian present, which inspires the character to adopt fresh perspectives (Spisak 57). The narrator does not always have exceptional abilities, but his or her thoughts and ideas are so extraordinary and different from others that people start to jump on board. This character has the ability to see things from other perspectives and persuade people of his or her way of thinking to accumulate followers (58) (Marina 14-15).

Depressing conclusion is another frequent occurrence in dystopian writings. Many dystopian novels conclude with a tiny glimpse of optimism for the reader, even though the protagonist or the afflicted society are not given happy endings (Marina 15). The heroine typically has to sacrifice up a big aspect of his life or end up by losing somebody or something that means a lot to him in the endings, which are rarely particularly happy (Spisak 58-9).

1.2. Totalitarianism:

One of the ideas that gained the most traction in the twentieth century was totalitarianism, which has been rooted in the tragedies of contemporary warfare, tyranny, and genocides since 1945. It was first used by Mussolini's opponents in Italy after World War II, but it has since come to mean the Soviet Union's and Nazi Germany's dictatorships as well (Bensahla 11).

Totalitarianism is fundamentally an authoritarian political regime or system of government that tries to control practically every aspect of people's public and private life. It is notorious for imposing total control over the subjects' political, social, and cultural lives. In order to indoctrinate the people with the state's official doctrine, limit individual rights, and employ police repression to instill fear among the masses and crush any act of disobedience, a totalitarian government is typically ruled by one mass party headed by a strong and obsessive tyrant (11). Totalitarianism, according to Jay Bergman, is a genetic concept that applies to nations in which politics were prioritized, privacy was totally absent, and the citizen was mainly doomed to an eternal state of powerlessness due to the lack of institutions that would have shielded him from the state (248).

In *Arendt on Totalitarianism*, American sociologist Robert Nisbet acknowledges that German-American philosopher Hannah Arendt's 1951 book, her greatest masterpiece, provided the term "Totalitarianism," which it had not before, a whole new currency and appeal. She provides a rational examination of how this type of tyranny functions in *The Origin of Totalitarianism*, an apparent declaration of her belief in the infamous political term. She characterized it as an intellectual and psychological preoccupation with the goal of eradicating the world, as we know it and reforming it into a strict, almost delusional social structure (Snyder 285).

Totalitarian Government:

A dystopian society is one in which authority is concentrated in the hands of the ruling governmental body. This government oppresses and governs its population, despite the fact that it does not need to be represented by a single person. This oppressive government or state takes the shape of a totalitarian dictatorship or is divided into large bureaucratic entities that possess and control a technology and scientific sector that is well advanced. According to Claey It demands and generally exacts complete loyalty from its citizens...and relies on technological breakthroughs to secure social control (109).

Because they have no other option, the enslaved majority must follow and worship this totalitarian state. By restricting people's freedom and inserting what it wishes to be implanted, this state instills fear and horror in their hearts and minds (Rahmouni 15). According to Baccolini It demonstrates a keen interest in history and, more specifically, in controlling it, which frequently entails rewriting and even erasure...information about the past and present is tightly controlled and manipulated by those in power (115).

The government of Orwell in Nineteen Eighty-Four, in which the party and big brother are the absolute power, is one of the greatest illustrations of totalitarian governments in dystopian fiction. According to David Seed, The term "Orwellian" had become a standard identifier of totalitarian regimes typified by rigorous mechanisms of imposing state power (84). In any dystopian society, totalitarian government is a necessary foundation upon which the Dystopia can build a well-destroyed society. In any dystopian novel, totalitarianism is a prevalent theme (Rahmouni 15).

Characteristics of Totalitarianism:

In his article "What is totalitarianism?" Robert Longley states a set of characteristics of totalitarianism, after conducting a research about all the aspects of the concept. According to Longley, totalitarian states share some common features, despite their differences. All these

nations share two distinct characteristics: an overarching ideology that addresses all elements of life as a method of achieving the nation's ultimate purpose, and a unique, powerful political party that is typically ruled by a tyrant.

Since there is only one program, all citizens are required to participate in the political system, particularly voting. All aspects and activities of government are under the authority of the ruling party, such as the use of a secret police force to violently stifle dissent. The government is riddled with duplicity of responsibilities and functions, resulting in an unfathomably complicated bureaucracy that gives the misleading impression of a non-existent balance of powers antithesis of totalitarian governments.

In a totalitarian government, all residents must be devoted to the state ideology. They must embrace and serve a unified apocalyptic philosophy aimed at overthrowing a dark and corrupt old system and replacing it with a new, ethnically pure utopian society. Totalitarian ideology demands a nearly fanatical and complete personal commitment to a single charismatic leader, rejecting all traditional kinds of political orientation—liberal, conservative, or populist. Unwavering and complete devotion to the regime's ideology and leader is required. Absolute loyalty to authority is demanded and enforced by threats of imprisonment and physical violence. Citizens are informed that they are constantly being watched. Independent thinking is discouraged and openly mocked as a possible danger to the ideology's goals. All fundamental liberties, such as freedom of expression and assembly, are forbidden and punishable.

All forms of mass media, including art and literature, are under the authority of totalitarian governments. This control allows the government to produce a steady stream of propaganda aimed at "gas lighting" the public and preventing them from realizing their condition is hopeless. The billboard designed by the totalitarian government featured in George

Orwell's classic novel *1984*, which is littered with clichéd, perplexing catchphrases, typifies this propaganda: "War is peace. Slavery is freedom. "Ignorance is a strength."

All Totalitarian regimes own and control all areas of the economy, including capital and all productive capacity, in order to achieve their predatory military objectives. As a result, capitalism's personal economic incentives are rendered unworkable. Individual citizens are theoretically unencumbered by the individual thought and effort necessary to thrive in a capitalistic system, allowing them to focus entirely on advancing the regime's political aims.

Terrorism and oppression in Societies led by authoritarian rules make people living in a constant state of war. The donning of party uniforms and the employment of positive metaphors for terrorists such as "storm troopers," "freedom fighters," or "labor brigades" are used to celebrate domestic terrorism carried out in support of the dictatorship against dissidents. Totalitarian governments try to persuade everyone that they are citizen soldiers in an eternal war against an often ill-defined bad adversary in order to obtain broad support for their ideology.

Totalitarianism in Literature:

One common theme in literature is The challenges and crimes committed against a totalitarian rule , in the same way that Hannah Arendt reacted to the brutalities of authoritarian governments like Stalinism and Nazism in *Origin of Totalitarianism*. Many different writers chose to respond to such authorities' doctrines via fictional works that shed light on totalitarian communities and their hopeless yet resilient characters (Bensahla 15).

The genre portrays the type and level of brutality imposed on people by oppressive governments and is portrayed in a futuristic civilization marked by excessive oppression and despair. Novelists like George Orwell and Aldous Huxley popularized this discourse by

simulating the effects of a horrific future on humanity if dictatorship was not promptly defeated (Bergman 249). Just as Orwell asserted: “totalitarianism, if not fought against, could triumph anywhere.” (Orwell and Angus 502).

It is important to note that many fictional depictions of totalitarianism feature a mysterious leader of the One State, idolized by his followers and guarded by a loyal police force. In doing so, the defiant hero fails to restore fairness to the fallen world and instead builds an asylum nation with continual and obligatory monitoring for inhabitants who naively accept their imprisonment and the uneven structure of the society. These dictatorial ideas are key components of the widely used dystopian literary genre (Bensahla 16).

2. Mass Control and Surveillance:

The surveillance society is one that is controlled and governed via the use of surveillance-based tactics. Surveillance entails knowing information about one's movements and actions monitored by devices for the benefit of the organizations and governments that govern our society. This information is then filtered, screened, and classified before being utilized to make decisions that influence our chances in life. These judgments affect our rights and access to benefits, labor, products and services, and criminal justice, as well as our safety and well-being and movement in public and private settings (The Surveillance Society 2006).

Certain kinds of surveillance have always occurred as humans kept an eye on each other for mutual protection, moral caution, and clandestine information gathering. Nonetheless, around 400 years ago, 'rational' approaches began to be applied to organizational processes, gradually replacing the informal social networks and restrictions on which everyday business and governance had previously depended. Ordinary social relationships were made unimportant so that family ties and personal identities would not interfere with the overall stability of these new institutions known as “bureaucracies.”(The Surveillance Society).

Considering surveillance society as a result of modernity allows us to avoid two traps: seeing surveillance as a malicious scheme conceived by bad forces and viewing it as purely the product of new technology. However, putting monitoring into correct perspective does not imply that everything is well. All it means is that we must be cautious in recognizing critical concerns and watchful in drawing attention to them (The Surveillance Society).

a) Surveillance:

The phrase "surveillance society" was initially introduced in 1985 by communication professor Oscar Gandy in relation to sociological analysis, and was further developed in the writings of David Lyon (Wood 179). "Since time immemorial, people have 'watched over' others to check what they are up to, to monitor their progress, to organize them, or to care for them," says David Lyon of surveillance as a transversal narrative and a part of public discourse (22). Surveillance is a contradiction in that it is most typically linked with crime, national security, censorship, restraint, and the prying eye; nonetheless, individuals find societal gain in surveillance when it concerns welfare, salary, or general safety (5- 222). The current definition of surveillance comes from institutions like the government and the army, which have a history of military and war-related operations and monitoring aimed at achieving "national security, military supremacy, or the defeat of an aggressor" (29). Surveillance was employed by the military to develop successful armies of soldiers, and it was utilized by states to organize and control populations in new and different ways, with new purposes and with other new techniques.

This had a significant impact on the state and enterprises in terms of organizing work environment and health care, among many other things, as well as on individual subjectivity. The state's control was organized with the goal of building a link between an individual's will and desire and the demand for control, restriction, and resource utilization (Sørensen et al 185).

Surveillance, on the other hand, has grown to be concerned with all aspects of life, having evolved in such indirect ways that it has become an organizationally necessary and pervasive component of social life (Lyon 24). Taking this into account, surveillance should be viewed as a form of social control that is handled by society's conformity with the current social system, which, according to Lyon, is "intrinsically bound up with power," as people are increasingly held under surveillance and 'watched' (4- 26). Surveillance and authority might thus be considered to go hand in hand, rather than being synonymous with each other (Kaleta and Sørensen18).

b) Punishment:

Foucault traces the evolution of punishment and discipline in the 18th and 19th centuries in his book *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1977), from a public spectacle aimed at producing pliable and obedient bodies through violence, maiming, pillory, and execution, to something that took place out of the public eye during the 19th century, as public discipline and punishment were considered shameful and revolting (Smith 9). Though punishment and discipline remained necessary, society sought more humane and effective techniques of dominance. This was done by replacing brute force with surveillance and monitoring (Foucault Discipline 73). Punishment has therefore shifted from being primarily concerned with causing pain to establishing authority and supremacy. (Foucault Discipline 9-15).

As a consequence, punishment was defined as a method of encouraging individuals to conform and correct their irregular behavior, rather than as a means of punishing them physically. Surveillance, control, discipline, and classification of society and its members were employed to accomplish this. When one examines Foucault's contention that the rise of the prison system and state punishment is concentrated on "the body as the subject of discipline,"

this becomes clear. This may be characterized as the assumption that processes of power and monitoring, whether actual or imagined, shape and discipline the body. As a result, the body may be viewed as both a component of social production and a limitation, as well as a tool and a result of control (Edgar et al 32). Rather than depending on external constraints or visible punishments, Foucault thinks that modern social systems engage in disciplinary processes that "ensure that life continues in a regularized manner" (Lyon 7).

It is believed that surveillance and power are designed to form a connection, or more accurately, to create a schism between an item and a person. According to this, "surveillance is required to be carried out 'properly,' 'for legitimate purposes,' and 'only when necessary.'" (Walle and colleagues 197). Michel Foucault sees the government as an all-powerful and all-monitoring organization that contributes to the pervasive image of the state as a participant in 'panoptic' surveillance (Barry 169). Moreover, Foucault feels that "modern society is itself a 'disciplinary society' in which power techniques and strategies of power are always present." (Lyon 26). Though it began in specific institutions such as jails, armies, and factories, Foucault contends that its influence penetrates the essence of social life (Kaleta and Sørensen 20-21).

3. Dystopian Literature:

Dystopian literature is a subgenre of speculative fiction that developed in response to Utopian writing. A dystopia is a fictitious community or civilization that is dehumanizing and terrifying. A dystopia is the polar opposite of a utopia, which is a flawless society. In contrast to utopian literature, dystopian literature investigates the negative effects of political and social institutions on humanity's future. It is the contrary of utopia: a society in which human lifestyles are very unsafe owing to lack, authoritarianism, or fear. Human anguish in the form of misery, injustice, sickness, overpopulation, environmental damage, or violence characterizes a dystopian community.

Dystopias are communities in terminal crisis, involving characters battling environmental disaster, technology domination, and government control. Dystopian novels can provoke readers to reconsider contemporary social and political conditions, and in certain cases, they can even empower people.

Dystopian novels that have an informative message usually explore themes like anarchism, oppression, and mass poverty. Margaret Atwood, one of literature's most celebrated authors of dystopian fiction, thinks about it like this: "If you're interested in writing speculative fiction, one way to generate a plot is to take an idea from current society and move it a little further down the road. Even if humans are short-term thinkers, fiction can anticipate and extrapolate into multiple versions of the future."

Dystopian fiction is significant in literature; it is a method of educating and alerting humanity about the dangers of present social and political institutions. For example, Margaret Atwood's 1985 novel *The Handmaid's Tale* is set in Gilead, a dystopian United States. It warns against patriarchy that is oppressive. Dystopian stories are more inventive and need a higher suspension of disbelief. For example, in George Orwell's allegory *Animal Farm*, a bunch of pigs revolt against their human farmer. The Russian Revolution inspired the farm animals' ascent to power. In addition, they can express the author's thoughts. H.G. Wells' 1895 novel *The Time Machine*, for example, mirrored Wells' socialist beliefs. The plot revolves on a Victorian England scientist who constructs a time machine and discovers the dangers of a capitalist society. Finally, it sometimes can be sarcastic criticisms of current events. Anthony Burgess's 1962 novel *A Clockwork Orange*, for example, is a societal parody of behaviorism. It takes place in a futuristic world with a violent adolescent subculture. A totalitarian government safeguards society by enforcing good conduct and outlawing aggressive urges (theMasterClass staff).

4. Characteristics of Dystopian Literature:

a) Government Control:

Government plays an important part in dystopian fiction. In most cases, there really is no government or an authoritarian controlling entity. For example, the world is completely under government supervision in George Orwell's *1984*. Big Brother, the fictitious tyrant, imposes ubiquitous supervision on the people who live in the three intercontinental superstates that remain after a world war. In addition, there is Suzanne Collins's 2008 young adult series *The Hunger Games* takes set in the imaginary planet Panem, a futuristic republic on the remains of North America. The Capitol, Panem's authoritarian government, rules the population and controls the majority of the country's wealth. Each year, children from Panem's 12 districts are chosen to compete in the Hunger Games, a televised death battle (theMasterClass staff).

b) Technological Control:

In dystopian literature, advanced science and technology go further than tools for enhancing ordinary life. Technology is frequently represented as a dominating, ubiquitous force and is frequently utilized as a fear-mongering method. For example in Aldous Huxley's 1932 novel *Brave New World*, it tackles the risks of technology. To manage reproduction and citizen behavior, the governing World State employs sophisticated conditioning technology. Also, in *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* By Philip K. Dick is set in a post-apocalyptic San Francisco following a nuclear war in 1992. This 1968 novel, which inspired the film *The Blade Runner*, examines the hazards of modern technology. There are android machines that are unrecognizable from humans, and catastrophic annihilation has resulted in the creation of mechanical animals (theMasterClass staff).

c) Environmental Disaster:

Dystopian books are frequently set in regions that are uninhabitable, have been ruined, or are on the verge of being destroyed. *The Maze Runner* is a James Dashner novel series about how a dystopian planet was destroyed by enormous solar flares and coronal mass ejections. In first novel of the collection, a bunch of adolescent boys are trapped in an imagined world called The Glade and must navigate its ever-changing maze. *The Road*, published by Cormac McCarthy in 2006, is a post-apocalyptic novella about a father and son traversing the wreckage of America following an apocalyptic catastrophe (theMasterClass staff).

d) Survival:

In dystopian environments, tyrannical forces and devastation frequently leave the citizens to fight for themselves. For example, Stephen King wrote *The Running Man*, which was initially published in 1982 under the nickname Richard Bachman. The novel, set in 2025, tells the story of an underprivileged man living under an authoritarian regime who participates on a life-threatening game show to earn money to support his family. Also, there is *Lord of the Flies* which is a 1954 novel by William Golding about a group of schoolboys who are dumped on a tropical island after their jet is shot down during a hypothetical nuclear war. As the lads attempt to construct a civilization and battle for life, conflicts arise (theMasterClass staff).

e) Loss of Individualism:

The question is how should community needs be weighed against individual needs. There are many dystopian futures that show the risks of obedience. For example, Ray Bradbury's 1953 novel *Fahrenheit 451* depicts a firefighter whose mission it is to

burn books. Because of book censorship, this future civilization is more interested in technology and amusement as well as an incapacity to think independently and creatively. *The Giver* is a 1993 young adult novel by Lois Lowry about a society that has no suffering because everyone has been converted to "Sameness." The narrative follows a 12-year-old child who is chosen to be the society's Receiver of Memory and will preserve the community's memories related to the commencement of "Sameness." (theMasterClass staff).

5. Dystopia's Evolution in Fiction:

The fascination of fiction is found in its connection to reality. Although fictional works frequently deviate from reality, an author's writing is constantly affected by her real experiences and ideas. Given this, it is simple to see why dystopian writing gained traction during the Great Depression, yet the genre has evolved as it has over the previous century. The concept of dystopia initially originated as the polar opposite of Sir Thomas More's utopia - a world free of strife. A dystopia is the polar opposite of a utopia, which is a state of peace and harmony. Despite the fact that the terminology have been around for a long time, their definitions have remained essentially constant. A dystopia, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, is "an imaginative location or state in which everything is as horrible as possible." (Katrina Tablang).

In opposition to present dystopian novels, which are typically directed at young adult readers and feature adolescent characters, early dystopian literature was written for adults who had grown skeptical of Utopian ideas as a result of political upheaval and rising fear about the future. Stories like Jack London's *The Iron Heel*, a 1908 book depicting a worker insurrection and revolution, were created in reaction to mounting political tensions as World War I approached. Similarly, Yevgeny Zamyatin's 1921 novel *We* represented a communal fear of authoritarian governments following the emergence of fascism during World War I (Tablang).

6. Apocalypse of The Word:

Along with the fast growth of technology in modern society and the ever-increasing speed of everyday life, the value of literature and the written word is frequently regarded as declining as younger generations become less interested in it. Nevertheless, proof abounds that the importance of literature remains profound even in today's society, and it is merely a matter of informing and inspiring the future generations to pursue the old heritage that is the written word (Katie King).

Many people are drawn to literature because it allows them to escape reality and immerse themselves in another universe. Without leaving your chair, you may feel the deepest peril or the highest ecstasy of love within a book. The danger is not real, but the passion is, and writing may be remarkable as a result. It gives the reader sensations that would be impossible in reality, and the study of other points of view in characters whose characteristics are possibly unfamiliar to the reader aids in the development of an open and aroused mind. The fact that fictitious literature has little reality only adds to its importance since it allows both the author and reader to address difficult or contentious subjects with more ease. Death, crime, war, and love may all be explored in their fullest since no real-life harm is done (King).

Conclusion:

To conclude this chapter, the context that embraces dystopia and totalitarianism is of many branches. In other words, the dystopian and apocalyptic horrified events highlight the tension in the novel; such events are of multi anticipations: Mass and government control, totalitarianism, censorship, surveillance...etc. In addition, all of these tensions have pushed many zealous writers to create this new genre of dystopia in order to expect the worst or the

best. Eventually, the iconic work of Yoko Ogawa has historical bounds that paved the way to emerge the foundations for a near possible future.

CHAPTER TWO:

**Totalitarian Governments and Tools
of Resistance in Yoko Ogawa's *The
Memory Police*.**

Introduction:

This chapter aims at tracing the dystopian and totalitarian stances in Yoko Ogawa's *The Memory Police* through applying and projecting the information found and analyzed in the first one such as Dystopia and Totalitarian Governments, Mass Control and Surveillance, Dystopian Literature. Firstly, it starts with an explanatory section about the author and the novel. Additionally, it introduces an analysis about the influence of Anne Frank's experience on the novel. Lastly, it deals with the issue of a governmental oppression and the usage of the hidden room and writing as a resistance tool.

1. About The Author:

Born in Okayama, Japan, Yoko Ogawa attended Waseda University in Tokyo before becoming a professional writer. Ogawa has produced over forty fiction and nonfiction works since 1988 and has received every major Japanese literary prize. Her works are all written in Japanese, but several of her best-selling titles, including *The Housekeeper* and *the Professor*, *The Diving Pool*, and *Revenge*, have been translated into English and many other languages. (*August's Author of The Month*)

Ogawa is unique in that she has also written award-winning nonfiction. She collaborated with mathematician Masahiko Fujiwara to publish *An Introduction to the World's Most Elegant Mathematics*, a book about the beauty and appeal of numbers, in 2006. Yoko Ogawa presently lives in Ashiya, Japan, with her husband and kid. She grew up in a single-family home owned by a branch of Konkōkyō, a Japanese religion that evolved from Shinto beliefs. The author lived with all her relatives near the church where her paternal grandfather was a priest. Her mother's family also believed in Konkōkyō. (*August's Author of The Month*)

Mohandas argues that Ogawa's collection of work, like the surprise of her storytelling approaches, is very diversified and spread throughout a variety of genres. For example, she co-wrote *An Introduction to the World's Most Elegant Mathematics* with mathematician Masahiko Fujiwara in 2006 as a reflection on the incredible beauty of numbers. In that year, she released *The Diving Pool: Three Novellas*, a dark fiction collection, and her popular fiction work, *The Housekeeper and the Professor*, a story of love, friendship, and family, was made into a Japanese film named “The Professor's Beloved Equation” (Mohandas).

Mohandas also claims that Yoko Ogawa is mostly famous for her dystopian novel, *The Memory Police*. She claims that she is also a brilliant author of Japanese horror; she employs a frightening kind of ordinary psychological horror, frequently blending dread with an undercurrent of dark comedy and philosophical remarks. Her skill to confound expectations by stitching horror into the details lends her work a disturbing feeling of realism, making it stand out from the crowd. For example, in her works *Hotel Iris: A Novel* and *The Diving Pool: Three Novellas*, she explores themes like broken families and sadomasochism with brutal precision, combining tension and unpleasant environment to seek gloom in the most common of things. Ogawa's style of horror, however, is not surveillance or "shock horror"; rather, it is a fascinating insight into the human mind, searching questions instead of conclusions (Mohandas).

2. About The Novel:

The Memory Police is a Yoko Ogawa Novel which was translated twenty-five years ago in 2019, this work has attracted attention by speaking particularly well to our twenty-first-century circumstances and lifestyle. Stephen Snyder's 1994 adaptation of Ogawa's *Hisoyaka Na Kesshō* was a nominee for the National Book Award for Literature in Translation and is now on the International Booker Prize long list. It has attracted new readers as a universal narrative

about memory and loss, and it is being understood in the English-speaking world as part of the dystopian literature movement (Itakura Kimie).

The Memory Police by Yoko Ogawa is a more recent entry into the genre, with a futuristic twist. The government is tasked with making stuff disappear, both from the Japanese island and from the memory of their community. They employ hidden technology innovations to carry out this socio-cultural amnesia by erasing goods, memories, businesses and professions. Through its faceless Memory Police Department, the government achieves a type of mass mind control (Michael Adam Carrol).

The Memory Police begins by removing simple items such as ribbons and stamps before moving on to municipal infrastructures such as the island's ferry system, keeping anybody from leaving the island. We do not know much about the deployed biotechnology, but it invades the island's society with extreme precision. However, after each usage, "things [go] back to normal, as though nothing has happened, and no one can even recall what it was that disappeared." The government is thereby dismantling the city's physical and cognitive industrial means (2019).

Julia Shiota explains in 'The Dangers of Forgetting' that in Yoko Ogawa's story, the unnamed island is a gloomy, unsettling place where things mysteriously vanish. The lost objects range from everyday goods such as hats and perfume to creatures such as flowers and birds. The island's citizens are continuously aware that something is about to disappear and not knowing what it is. When something goes missing, the people who live there lose all emotional ties, memories, and even understanding of whatever the object was. They embrace the disappearance, destroy the object if possible, and resume their lives (Shiota).

The plot revolves on an author who wishes she could recall everything she has lost and hides her editor, whom she refers to as R, when the Memory Police find he is immune to mind control. R is separated from his wife and child while in hiding and his connection with the

author becomes into something more intimate. R attempts to assist the author in recalling her family while she concentrates on writing. He shows her the banned images and perfume she has been keeping hidden in the basement. However, her sensory recollections fail her (Carrol).

The mother of the unnamed narrator remembers every lost thing and stores many of them in a set of drawers in their basement. When the narrator was a little girl, her mother showed her some of these artifacts and tells her about the memories associated with everyone. When she sees these artifacts that should no longer exist, the narrator, who bears the weight of the disappearances, feels nothing but nothingness and perplexity. The Memory Police eventually take away the narrator's mother as well. The story follows the narrator's struggle against the disappearances and her responsibility to help her editor, who, like her mother, can keep his memories, from the Memory Police (Shiota).

3. The Influence of Anne Frank on Yoko Ogawa:

The fiftieth anniversary of World War II was quickly approaching; when *The Memory Police* was originally published, it increased debates regarding Japan's participation in the war, specifically crimes committed by the Japanese empire. Japan has long battled with recognizing past crimes and its colonialism of the Asian mainland and other Pacific countries. Julia Shiota claims that one of the most prevalent refrains used by Japan to avoid accountability has been to blame all wartime conduct on the government and military at the time. As a result, she argues that “The general populace is thus painted as unwilling participants or as individuals duped into the wartime project. It is easy to brush off responsibility when it was those people back then who were ‘the problem’” (Shiota).

The title “Memory Police” is one of the novel's most stunning imagery. Ogawa's work centers on the organization's totalitarian purpose, reflecting on the novel's translation's timeliness given the rise in worldwide fascism in recent years. Julia Shiota explains that it is

difficult to miss the echoes of Nazi Germany and the persecution of Jews that Ogawa relies on in her work, especially when it comes to the Memory Police and the imagery of the narrator's secret refuge that she constructs within her home to hide her editor. Ogawa dedicated two of her own works to Anne Frank's life, due to the fact that she was obsessed by Anne Frank's Diary: an essay collection, "Recollections of Anne Frank", and a memoir, *Recollections of Anne Frank* in 1995 and *Visiting Anne Frank*, for young readers in 2011. As part of her study, Ogawa had a live experience in which she visited the hidden annex in Amsterdam, touching items formerly owned by Frank, feeling how bodies fit within such small spaces (Shiota).

In a particularly persuasive passage, in which the Yoko Ogawa shows how the protagonist overthinks her worries about R when the memory police rushed into her house looking for him while he was hiding in the hidden room, the protagonist narrates that:

But the whole time they were there, my mind focused on the second floor. Every sound frightened me, even those that had nothing to do with R – the distant moaning of the sea, honking horns, the wind – and I found myself studying their faces intently. But they showed no signs of suspicion. In fact, at times I myself felt that the hidden room must have emerged from a fevered dream and that my preoccupation with it was nothing more than some sort of hallucination. (*The Memory Police* 160-161)

Here the protagonist expresses anxiety and fear of getting caught by the memory police to an extent of her thinking the whole situation is not real and all what she has been through is nothing more than hallucinations.

The narrative is certainly relevant to today's concerns about the surveillance state, manipulation of the media, and totalitarianism. When she wrote it, Ogawa felt she was paying homage to Anne Frank's *The Diary of a Young Girl*, which had a tremendous impact on her as

a teenager. Itakura Kimie explains that one thing it taught her was that she had been given the freedom to express herself verbally. Yoko Ogawa expresses her feelings in regards to this matter:

For me, reading *The Diary of a Young Girl* was the reason I became an author. On the day, the editor moves to the secret room, it's raining heavily. This was the same for Anne Frank and her family. As everyone lowered their heads and hurried through the downpour, nobody challenged their rapid pace toward the hiding place. My scene was meant to pay homage to Anne. (Yoko Ogawa, personal communication, March 10, 2020)

In this interview, Ogawa expresses her sentiments to what Anne and her family went through by demonstrating it through her own characters. She states that Anne's diary is what inspired her to become a writer in the first place.

Ogawa desired to incorporate Frank's experience into her own fiction. She believed that by writing about someone who had so many things removed from her for no cause, the repressive aspect of society would organically emerge. At the same time, she felt compelled to write about memories that had faded. Originally, these were independent concepts, but they were linked at some point, and she opted to write a novel set on an island. Ogawa states in an interview:

In the story, the vanishings lead to despair, but as an author I found satisfaction in writing those scenes—for example, when the birds fly off into the distance or when the river is covered with fallen rose petals. These moments of disappearance came to me vividly, and the enjoyment of setting them down helped me keep writing to the end of the book. (Yoko Ogawa, personal communication, March 10, 2020)

Ogawa reveals that a great deal of her novel was influenced by Anne's deprived life. She lost a lot of her simple rights including her freedom and independence.

4. Coping and Resistance against Totalitarian Regime:

Empowerment in *The Memory Police*:

The Memory Police, by Ogawa, portrays the totalitarian government invading and erasing the memories of the citizens of an unnamed island. Keeping memories of the past is seen as a form of resistance to the government. The government can easily change the facts and control the population's mind when memories are controlled. Government ideology and propaganda will be part of the created "truth" about the present. The protagonist's state of repression, on the other hand, further drives her to maintain memories and stories of the past as forms of resistance.

According to Hania Sholkamy, the process of empowerment is described as one in which those who are oppressed and dominated decide to get resources and participate in crucial social decision-making (Mukhopadhyay et al 88). The multiple meanings of the term 'empowerment' stem from its numerous historical backgrounds and applications. By 1994, Srilatha Batliwala defined empowerment as “the process of challenging existing power relations and of gaining greater control over the sources of power” (130). In discourse about power and empowerment, the empowerment team casted it as ‘increasing the capacity of individuals and groups to make choices and to transform these choices into desired actions and outcomes (Alsop 4).

In Yoko Ogawa's *The Memory Police*, the concept of empowerment is portrayed through the characters' activities in regaining control over the problems that worry them in their totalitarian society, as well as acquiring heightened understanding in setting priorities that

directly influence their lives (Soon Seng and Chandran 115). “I had only to surrender to each new disappearance to find myself carried along quite naturally to the place I needed to be” (*The Memory Police* 311). People in the story cope with their authoritarian government’s oppression in their way they always find a way how to live after each disappearance, they adapt to all the changes, change their professions, and forget their past passions and lives before. They have to work around the disappearances and cope or else the memory police will come knocking on their door. And that is actually seen throughout the novel from the beginning to the end as a facet of empowerment.

The people exhibit agency in dealing with their upsetting situations when confronted with a repressive totalitarian government that steadily destroys everything that important to the inhabitants, be it physical items or memories. They start by learning how to live on despite their losses. They proceed, get new employment, and carry on with their lives. Additionally, the people's disregard for the disappearance of goods encourages creativity and innovation, which once again demonstrates their unwavering will to survive. In a manner, this behavior can be seen as a component of their coping strategy (115). The protagonist made it clear that people are capable of forgetting anything, and coping with whatever disappearance they face. She is wondering if her father did not die, would he change his birds passion with another one? She can not imagine him with another passion in life.

However, many people she knows have done it unconsciously, they get up in the morning having the feeling of loss in their hearts knowing something have just faded from their memories and lives “When I opened my eyes I could sense something strange, almost rough, about the quality of the air. The sign of disappearance” (*The Memory Police* 16). And then they gather all together in one place to get rid of it for good from the island, and each of them takes his path to do anything but that disappeared thing without complaining or even talking about it, as if they are used to all of it, they just find their way to continue living on this damned island.

Just as when hats disappeared her neighbor, who was a hat maker simply began making umbrellas, and so is the case with all the other people who lost their professions because of this curse of forgetting.

In the narrator's words, When the hats were disappeared, the milliner who lived across the street began making umbrellas. My nurse's husband, who had been a mechanic on the ferryboat, became a security guard at a warehouse. A girl who was a few years ahead of me in school had been employed at a beauty salon, but she quickly found work as a midwife. (*The Memory Police* 9) . She states how it is a typical process for the inhabitants of the island to cope immediately. In fact, they are obliged to find their way after each disappearance; otherwise, they find themselves hunted down by the memory police, barging through their doors taking them away from their families. So, they have nothing to do but to continue living under all circumstances, leaving behind all what needs to be left.

According to Soon Seng and Chandran, the protagonist records innovative, healthful, and hardworking approaches to coping with the devastating impacts of trauma, like recommitting to physical activity or establishing a support structure for trauma survivors (115). She forgets that she herself is a victim as well on this island, but it is her way to cope helping others providing them with food and home so they can feel a bit safer. It all started by helping the Inui Family, because they were part of the minority group who can retain memories (just as her mother and her editor R). The protagonist claimed, "I know what will happen if I'm found out, but if I do nothing, I know I'll lose a person who is important to me. Just like I lost my mother" (*The Memory Police*). Her help to others always made her feel better, taking her to think about her mother, she did the thing she wished people had done to her mother, protected her from the memory police, and kept her safe somewhere.

When her east neighbors were taken by the memory police, she adopted their dog; somehow, she felt that it was her call to take care of 'Don' that was his name. In fact, it is her love to provide help that pushed her to adopt Don; it is her way of coping in this island, by helping others. She stated, "Since the nights were cold, I made him a bed from an old blanket and let him sleep in a corner of the entry hall. It occurred to me that I was giving Don all the love and care I wished I could give to the couple who had been his owners, the boy who had been hidden in their house, the Inui family, and Mizore, their cat" (*The Memory Police* 175).

Her biggest help was to her editor R, with the help of the old man. After the research that was conducted by the memory police about those who could remember, R is in a great danger. She stated, "He's my editor. The first person who reads my work. He is the friend who knows the self that I put in my novels better than anyone else"(83). So she have nothing to do but to hide him in the secret room in her house, the one in which her mother used to hide the disappeared things from the island, in her words " If I was going to protect R, I needed a place far removed from the outside world" (83) . With the help of the old man, she managed to keep R safe under the floorboards of her house.

The unnamed old man, used to be the narrator's nurse's husband. Before boats and ferries disappeared the old man was ferry mechanic, and throughout the story, he lives in the big abandoned boat. In fact, he knew the protagonists parents and have known her since she was a child, and still by her side as a good friend and a good listener whenever she needed him, he was a kind and a loving person. The old man was the only one the protagonist went to ask for help when she was hiding R, and he agreed immediately before even knowing what the matter was. As stated by protagonist, "We discussed everything in detail, going over the plans for preparing the hidden room and hiding R, making sure we had missed nothing" (86). She and the old man have done everything they can to provide R a good place to live in, keeping him away from the memory police and all the threats outside.

The protagonist being able to cope to whatever circumstances makes her character strong and her resiliency stronger. It is her choice to keep living despite all what happened especially the death of the old man, which is a heartbreak to her, she did everything she could to save him but it was too late. However, she has to be strong, and continue living. And this is actually, what makes her resilient, her determination to cope whatever faces her. Therefore, the protagonist uses her memories and her heartbreaks as a motivator, pushing her to keep defying the government with a strong personality in the face of difficulties. She turns her wounds into power, stops grieving over her losses, waiting for hope to brighten the cavity in her heart. In that context, the narrator claims:

Passing my nights this way did not relieve the anxiety I'd felt since the old man's death, but it was better than weeping in my bed. Occasionally, these flashes of recognition were sparked by some object two nights in succession—once it happened three times in one night—but then I might go four nights without encountering even one. I began to wait for these brief moments with increasing impatience, seeing them as luminous sign posts that would lead me to R. And I, too, hoped the light would illuminate the cavity in my heart. (*The Memory Police* 244)

In this regard, it is vital to talk about the resiliency of people in terms of how they deal with challenging circumstances. Since empowerment is a journey rather than a final outcome, it is crucial to identify their contributions (Luttrell, Cecilia, et al 5). The citizens of the island are frightened when their body parts start to disappear. It is the left leg that disappeared first of all body parts. They get up one morning unable to do the simplest things in life; not being able to stand up. As stated by the protagonist, “it was then I finally realized what had disappeared: my left leg“(299). This time it is different, a loss they have never seen coming, people are so scared not knowing what to expect, what to do or how to live after that one, as

stated by the woman who lives across the street “A lot of unexpected things have disappeared, but never anything as shocking as this... What’s going to happen to us?”(300). But that is not what happened, they can cope despite all the fears they have, it gets easier with time and they become accustomed to that kind of loss, said by the protagonist “Gradually we became accustomed to living without our legs”(306). People are really resilient, they can overcome whatever loss they experience, and prepare themselves for the next loss to knock on their doors.

After legs, people lose their right arms. But this time they are less concerned, because they have seen it coming. They even think that it is better than many other disappearances, because it does not require burning or sending them floating in the river. As the narrator expresses, “The disappearances of body parts were, in fact, easier and more peaceful than earlier ones, as no one had to gather in the square to burn the objects or send them floating down the river”(310). Of course, these recent disappearances brought significant changes to their daily activities; however, they have no other choice than coping.

The disappearances did not stop with the legs and arms, people on the island have lost many other body parts as well, but that does not stop the narrator from writing. She knows one day she would disappear so she writes to leave a trace of her behind on the island, as she claimed: “ I’m glad. I’d like to leave behind some trace of my existence”. Eventually, all body parts of the citizens’ disappear and they were left only with their voices. But they felt free, they were no more constrained by the memory police they can go whatever they want. Even in these darkest times, people of the island adapt to whatever they experience, and profit from life until the last minutes of it, as stated by the protagonist:

When our left legs first disappeared, we were thrown off balance and didn’t know how to manage. But once our entire bodies were gone, no one seemed particularly upset. They seemed more coherent now that they had fewer parts,

and they adapted easily to the atmosphere of the island, which was itself full of holes. They danced lightly in the air like clumps of dried grass blown along by the wind. (*The Memory Police* 270)

This passage really demonstrates how they regained their courage to keep going after the hardships, not looking for the things they lost. How they embrace their situation, without even being upset. And that is the thing, being grateful for what they have, so they can stay motivated.

In contrast to the narrator and the Old Man, R grants remembrance a more significant role. He has still have his memory, which would explain this. He nevertheless continues to inspire and motivate both the Old Man and the protagonist. He persuades them that no one should ever give up attempting to retrieve their memories since memory is the essence of a being, a component of one's soul, and it bears one's identity. His never-ending efforts and resilience might be considered as a type of empowerment, motivating them to keep battling against the difficulties (Soon Seng and Chandran 117). He says when talking to the protagonist “Memories are a lot tougher than might think. Just like the hearts that hold them.”(*The Memory Police* 134). From the beginning to the end of the novel R continues encouraging the narrator to write to keep her memories, according to him that is how to keep the bond. In fact, his words give the protagonist power to move on, whenever she is weak, even after the death of the old man and the complete disappearance of the bodies. He tries to motivate the protagonist by saying: “You may think that the memories themselves vanish every time there’s a disappearance, but that’s not true. They’re just floating in a pool where the sunlight never reaches. All you have to do is plunge your hand in and you’re bound to find something. Something to bring back into the light. You have to try. I can’t just stand by watching as your soul withers” (*The Memory Police* 177).

R goes on to say that, “The meaning isn’t important. What matters is the story hidden deep in the words. You’re at the point now where you’re trying to extract that story. Your soul is trying to bring

back the things it lost in the disappearances” (245). As mentioned previously, R keeps motivating the protagonist to write despite everything that has happened. For him, the importance does not lie in the meaning of word by itself, it is the whole story build up all together that matters. The way that can keep every memory they lost alive, is to write it on papers and make it eternal. Just as her mother found her way of preserving the memories by saving the vanished items in the figures she created.

About these hidden things R asserts that: “I truly believe they have the power to change you, to alter your hearts and mind. The slightest sensation can have an effect, can help you remember. These things will restore your memories” (231). He believes her mother’s creations can help bring back what she lost. The feeling they create in her soul, can be the motivator for her to remember and bring back all the lost memories. R for example, rationalizes as he picks up the manuscript pages off the desk: “These exist here and now, no doubt about it. As do the characters written on them. A mind that we cannot see has created a story that we can. They may have burned the novels, but your heart did not disappear” (231). As one of the few characters who still preserve intact memories, it is admirable how he does his best to make the protagonist believe that she can still retrieve the memories and the sensations, that they have been silenced but not erased.

The editor persuades the narrator that she can still recall certain memories concerning the vanished objects, because memories are made up of mixed world effects and the person's own beliefs and expectations, as Foster explains (13). To put it another way, a memory is created by the person who did live it. As a result, the protagonist reclaims her autonomy and resolves to complete her work in order to maintain her memory. She mentions that: “Though it was not so long ago that novels had disappeared, I had taken an extraordinarily circuitous route to bring the story to this point” (*The Memory Police* 269). Her determination to preserve the

memories she has is what pushes her to struggle to keep writing even after the disappearance of novels, and not only surrender to the losses.

The characters were awkward, written with my left hand, the lines growing weak and shaky and in places vanishing altogether, as though the words themselves were weeping...I had no real confidence that this was the story R wanted, but at least I had reached the end of the chain of words. I had completed the one thing I would be able to leave to him. (*The Memory Police* 269)

Empowerment is a path that encompasses more than just fighting the oppressive authority that has been oppressing an individual or group. As previously stated by Srilatha Batliwala, empowerment is a process (5). And that is what the protagonist is experiencing, she focused on the process of her writings even though it is not her best work, but that does not stop her from taking the path of empowerment by using words and stories. Eventually, she completes the one thing she can leave behind as a legacy, and reaches the end of it.

At the end of the novel, after all the disappearance, the protagonist's body (all the bodies of people as well) completely vanish. The one thing she is left with is her voice, the one thing the memory police cannot take from her, or hunt her for, as she says "of course, how could they go on hunting people who are no more than voices?" (330). After the entire struggle she is finally liberated, because now she is only a voice that can slip through everything, be everywhere without feeling the burden of the body or the island. It is a peaceful end for her with just "a voice".

There is no need to lift the heavy trapdoor [of R's hidden room], since I was now able to slip through the narrow crack around it. In that sense, the complete disappearance of my body was actually a form of liberation. Still, if I was not careful, my unreliable and invisible voice might be swept away with the wind. "It's peaceful with just a voice," I said.

“With just a voice, I think I’ll be able to accept my final moment calmly and quietly, without suffering or sadness” (*The Memory Police* 273).

In fact, this can be seen a metaphor for the oppressed people in authoritarian governments. These people have neither power over their governments, nor control over their lives. The only thing they posse is their voices, which they can use to reach any place they desire, and to regain their rights in society. The dictatorial rules have taken from them everything else, so they choose this type of empowerment, using the voice as a weapon against these totalitarian regimes.

As a matter of fact, Empowerment is seen in the protagonist’s character. She is a normal citizen that sacrifices everything to protect her parents’ legacy. She took the risk of hiding someone like R, who is able to maintain his memories, and is considered as a violation of the system of the memory police. Also, she is never hesitating about helping anyone who needs help. Through all of it, the narrator manages to reach the end after all the ups and downs that faced her, and the next passage is the proof of her succession. Her editor assures her: “of course it will. Each word you wrote will continue to exist as a memory, here in my heart, which will not disappear. You can be sure of that. I’m glad. I’d like to leave behind some trace of my existence on the island.”(*The Memory Police* 270). Despite the fact that she is on the verge of disappearing, she insists that: “I hope my memory will live on forever here, through you” (273). At the end of the novel, she is not concerned about anything anymore, the only thing that occupies her mind is the memory she is leaving in R’s heart and mind, and the writings that she struggled to accomplish. Since R is one of the fewest people who can remember and survived, she is hoping that her memory will live with him forever. For her he is a friend that can always carry her in his soul, and bring her memories back through his.

The secret room in the protagonist’s house can be considered as a resistance tool in the novel as well. The narrator explains in the opening of the narrative that her mother keeps some

of the disappeared things in a hidden hiding place to keep old memories. The room is situated “behind the staircase to an old cabinet with rows of small drawers” (*The Memory Police* 4). Her mother's talking about these long-forgotten things delights her, and she claims that “it made me happy to imagine a time when all these things had a place here on the island” (5). The narrator's mother's memories are written in the secret hiding place, triggering the protagonist's memories of the missing things. her mother's “secret room,” where she keeps her memories of the past, foretells the secret hiding spot she has arranged for R. the protagonist states that “If I was going to protect R, I needed a place far removed from the outside world” (67). She safely hides R under the floor with the assistance of the Old Man. The narrator's memories of the vanished objects are reborn in the secret space they create. Through R, the narrator, and the Old Man's collective memory, the projected space forms a space of remembering. Their exposure to the vanished things in the secret room reinforces sentiments and emotions associated with the past. They can plan their war against the Memory Police and remember about the past in this projected space (Soon Seng and Chandran 111).

The journey of resistance started from the very beginning in that secret room. Before even the birth of the protagonist, her mother started her defiance by hiding all those forbidden things in there. And when it is time, it is the duty of the protagonist to protect her mother's legacy. Despite their fears of being discovered and seized by the memory police, the protagonist suggests to spend more time in the room working on their memories: “Perhaps it was necessary to rid oneself of everything that was superfluous in order to immerse completely in this airless, soundproof, narrow space shrouded in the fear of discovery and arrest” (*The Memory Police* 119). According to the protagonist, being outside of the hiding room will do them no good, so it was better if they stayed in with all these things that trigger their memory and bring back the loss of it.

The protagonist processes hiding R because of his ability to remember all the details, in their island of disappearances. She is concerned that, “things are disappearing more quickly than they are being created” (52). Therefore, the narrator is considering herself in charge of defying the memory police. First, with the help of the old man, they arrange the room and hide R to protect him from the threat of being captured. Because for them, he is the person who holds the island’s truth, so keeping him safe means keeping all the information they lost about the island. Also, working on maintaining the protagonist’s memory through writing a story that reflects everything. When he was hiding in the secret room, R motivates her to start writing again “You mustn’t burn your manuscript, you must go on writing novels, that way the bond will remain.” (216).

He goes and ask “Don’t we have all the memories preserved here in this [hiding] room? The emerald, the map, the photograph, the harmonica, the novel--everything. This is the very bottom of the mind’s swamp, the place where memories come to rest” (232). R is making the protagonist see the things that help her overcome the obstacle of forgetting. he assumes that her memory is still there, just with a little of help she can get hold of it again, maybe through interactions with the vanished objects: “You may think that the memories themselves vanish every time there’s disappearance, but that’s not true. They’re just floating in a pool where the sunlight never reaches. All you have to do is plunge your hand in and you’re bound to find something. Something to bring back into the light.” (*The Memory Police* 177).

5. Writing as a Resistance Tool:

In dystopian fiction, writing serves as an empowering or liberating force that allows the protagonist to regain self-control, and to recover their authority in a totalitarian society, explains Julia Gerhard (64). It should be recognized that writing is an act of resistance in and of itself. Because individuality is silenced by ideology and self-restraint in a dystopian world,

and people's actions and thoughts are continuously controlled, writing sets a serious threat to the government: it allows for individual expression, identity, and power of which empower people and encourage them to think more critically.

According to Julia Gerhard, writing not only invites a foreign thinking that can contest and undermine the legitimacy of the Government, but also makes it possible for that thinking to circulate and spread, putting the stability of the government in a serious danger . As a result, writing is forbidden and regarded as a crime in the majority of dystopian literature. Therefore, everyone who chooses to take such a chance and engage in writing already violates the law and endangers their citizenship. Writing itself constitutes a kind of resistance because it is against the law of the land (66).

In Yoko Ogawa's novel *The Memory Police*, words are a central form of expression. The language's word choice is slowly being reduced, demonstrating the significant harm that language limitations may do to society. Love, pleasure, grief, and other essential values that we cherish as a society are steadily fading. How can we convey, let alone comprehend, the notion of "love" if there is no longer a term for it? How can we know the notion existed if there is no written record of it? Ogawa's story emphasizes the essential need of language as a means of expression in this way.

For the novelist, writing is considered a priority despite all what happened. Since she is writing to keep her memory and her legacy, it must be about life on island, depicting it in another story. She is now writing a narrative that centers on a typist who loses her voice and communicates through a typewriter. She points out the potential of self-death by the meaninglessness of existence that naturally follows the implementation of totalitarianism, whether imposed by the memory police or a jealous lover within the story of the typist. As this

particular section from the protagonist's work demonstrates, her situation is similar to that of her imaginary character since both are "silenced" by a totalitarian system:

In the past few days I've begun to feel my body growing more distant from my soul. It is as though my head and arms, my breasts and torso and legs are all floating somewhere just out of reach, and I can only watch as he plays with them. And that, too, is because I have lost my voice. When the voice that links the body to the soul vanishes, there is no way to put into words one's feelings or will. I am reduced to pieces in no time at all. (*The Memory Police* 166)

In this quote, the typist exhibits a depressive psychological condition that she is unable to overcome just like the narrator. Her concept of self-identity and being are vividly portrayed, reflecting the protagonist's own circumstances. The typist feels detached from her body in the same way that the protagonist feels disconnected from her essence. The typist loses her voice as a result of her tormentor; the tormentor is linked to the protagonist's memory loss. (Soon Seng and Chandran 113). Losing her voice gave her a sense of helplessness and granted power to the jealous lover over her. She felt controlled, which is similar to the protagonist's story. Things disappearing was a kind of power imposed by a controlling and a totalitarian government.

The protagonist pictures dystopian space via her own fiction in the hopes of regaining her sense of identity and preserving a piece of her memories. The fictional character in her novel reflects her oppressive position, as seen by the typist's statement, "I was obviously upset when I first realized I'd lost my voice, but my anxiety was even greater now at having lost my typewriter" (*The Memory Police* 127). The author emphasizes the link between them even more when she says, "When you lost your voice, you lost the ability to make sense of yourself" (132). To put it another way, losing one's voice and memories is equivalent to losing a part of one's

identity. The transmission of culture from one generation to the next via memory is the major source of our identity and sense of belonging to a place. In this place, on the other hand, the government has entire authority over the memory process. The lexical terms, as well as the semantic and pragmatic traits of the residents, have been entirely erased from their memories.

As a result, the story's silent typewriter character is employed to figuratively portray her heightened anxiety. The narrator is literally expressing her inability to write due to her memory loss; she is mentally prepared to fade into oblivion at some time, just like the typewriter. The narrator concedes that being a novelist on this island is difficult, when, “words seem to retreat further and further away with each disappearance” (*The Memory Police* 82); when novels are the next item on the list to be dematerialized, the problems increase. During the time while the novel was disappeared, she finds that, “the word ‘novel’ itself is getting harder to pronounce. That is how you know the disappearance is taking hold. It will not be long now until I will have forgotten everything. Remembering is impossible” (176-177). The authoritarian administration's intention to suppress freedom in order to retain their own rule on the island is clear from the absence of language and novels. (Soon Seng and Chandran 114).

Despite their anxieties, the narrator and R are determined to document their experiences in order to maintain them. When both books and words disappear, the protagonist struggles to find words in her writing, but she persists and scribbles a few words on a scrap of paper: “One night I made an effort to write some words on the manuscript paper. I wanted to leave a record of what I saw in the dimly illuminated void of my memories. It was the first time I had done such a thing since the novels disappeared” (*The Memory Police* 244).

The protagonist is defying the memory police through her novels without any memories of words or books. She struggles to write, even if she cannot produce more than one line, she never stops writing and spent all the night working to make some progress. That one line is

actually a big accomplishment for her and for R, who is motivating her to keep going with her writings and never forget her goals.

R is regularly consulted by the female protagonist concerning her troubles in the writing process. Despite the challenges she is facing, R encourages her to keep working on her project. R teaches the protagonist memorization skills for writing her story. He claims, “You mustn’t burn your manuscript. You must go on writing novels. That way, the bond will remain” (*the memory police* 176). The story itself is a mirror of the world she was familiar with. R feels that the narrator's writing acts as a form of self-preservation, allowing her to reconnect with long-forgotten memories. It is a coping strategy for the narrator to maintain her awareness and sense of self, as well as a kind of resistance to the totalitarian regime. The protagonist declares that, “I’d like to leave behind some traces of my existence on the island” (270). Through the writing process, the narrator is able to reconnect with her lost memories, which acts as empowerment for her. In her narrative, the protagonist's quest to maintain her memories of the past and present uses this approach to resist the Memory Police's repressive laws.

Conclusion:

This chapter gave a main focus on the totalitarian oppression and the influence of Anne Frank’s experience, aiming at providing analysis of both the writer and the characters behavior. Throughout the analysis, it is given that Ogawa has depicted the damaging effects and the bad consequences of a totalitarian government. She explores how totalitarianism has made characters live in a dystopian society, trying to break through traditions and fight mass control and censorship, using writing as a resistance tool. All the memories controlled by the memory police are part of the characters’ identities and cultures. By erasing them, the government is preserving total control over every single individual. The progressive disappearance of the

characters' and their body parts is symbolic of how totalitarian control erodes the individual characteristics of a society and of individuals to practice their ideologies.

General Conclusion

By reading Yoko Ogawa's novel, *The Memory Police*, one can see how ideas can be translated across different mediums. This novel mirrors much of the messages surrounding dystopia and totalitarianism's concerns. The current thesis has presented and combined two linked concerns? The first one focused on the representation of how a government has total control and censorship over a society in the novel. The second corner contends with resisting a totalitarian regime, mainly with characters' identity construction through writing.

The ending of dystopian novels is usually sad and the loss is felt collectively. Yet in *The Memory Police*, the loss feels calm and collected, as if each resident faces their own personal apocalypse. The novel offers no straightforward answers, it acknowledges its relevance. It also captures the isolation of life nowadays as our ecosystems, languages, and presumably our future fading at an accelerating rate before we can even comprehend it. In today's world, our collective memory appears no quite a goldfish swimming in a bowl. Wherever yesterday's news is consumed by today's hypocrisy. Although printed some years ago, *The Memory Police* has stood the test of time and stands relevant even today because societies still suffer from such ideologies. In short, Yoko Ogawa is a great novelist who united her works and characters with her philosophy and point of view inventively.

Thus, this dissertation has supplied insights into how Ogawa has offered a different representation of how totalitarian governments can quietly erase and control social, cultural, and personal aspects of life. The first chapter, entitled 'Theoretical Background on Dystopian Literature and Totalitarian Government' has tackled the theoretical background of this work. It is split into four interconnected parts. The first part has attempted to examine and understand the concept of dystopia, totalitarianism, mass control and censorship, which is morally, socially, and politically flawed, with oppression, brutalization, poverty, and a slew of other issues. Secondly, this chapter has treated dystopian literature as a speculative fiction that began as a

response to utopian literature. The last part tackled the apocalypse of word being a central form of expression and the power of immortality they hold.

The second chapter analyzed Yoko Ogawa's *The Memory Police* within the chosen corpus. Thus, by putting the selected corpus under scrutiny, the current research approached novel perspectives and presented them in the work. Ogawa has portrayed the governmental oppression as a social dilemma. From the onset of the novel, she has shown that society started to resist and cope using writing as a tool against the totalitarian regime. Furthermore, this chapter has highlighted how the author has broken silence of oppressed individuals living within the walls of governmental control.

Based on this study, this research shed light on how writers continue to depict the negative effects and sides of a totalitarian government. It demonstrated how much is destructive and what can happen if individuals are trapped in such society. These governments may claim that they are seeking a utopia, but they end up creating dystopia instead. After all, people cannot be happy or satisfied until they reach their freedom.

Works Cited

Primary Source:

Yoko, Ogawa. *The Memory Police*. Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2019.

Secondary Sources:

“The Memory Police by Yoko Ogawa Review – Profound Allegory of Loss.” *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 23 Aug. 2019, www.theguardian.com/books/2019/aug/23/the-memory-police-yoko-ogawa-review.

Admin. “The Importance of Literature and the Written Word.” *Laura Thomas Communications*, 3 Apr. 2014, laurathomascommunications.com/importance-of-literature-and-the-written-word/.

Alchive. “The Dystopian Trend in Young Adult Literature | Teen Ink.” *Www.teenink.com*, 19 Jan. 2013, www.teenink.com/nonfiction/academic/article/522108/The-Dystopian-Trend-in-Young-Adult-Literature/. Accessed 29 June 2022.

Andrews, Meredith. “The Memory Police.” *National Book Foundation*, 20 Nov. 2019, www.nationalbook.org/books/the-memory-police/#:~:text=When%20a%20young%20woman%20who,way%20of%20preservin,g%20the%20past.

Arendt, Hannah. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, new ed. New York and London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich (1973).

August's Author of the Month: Yoko Ogawa - *Mcnallyrobinson.com*. www.mcnallyrobinson.com/editorial-5760/August's-Author-of-the-Month-YOKO-OGAWA.

Basu, Balaka, and R. Katherine. "Broad, and Carrie Hintz." *Contemporary Dystopian Fiction for Young Adults: Brave New Teenagers* (2013).

- Bellot, Gabrielle. "1921 · 1946 · 1984 · 2018 a Genealogy of the Totalitarian Novel." *Literary Hub*, 7 Aug. 2018, lithub.com/from-1921-to-1946-to-1984-to-2018-a-genealogy-of-the-totalitarian-novel/. Accessed 30 June 2022.
- Bensahla, Sarah. *Totalitarianism between Fiction and Reality in George Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-Four*. 2019, dspace.univ-tlemcen.dz/bitstream/112/14639/1/sarah-bensahla.pdf.
- Bergman, Jay. "Was the Soviet union totalitarian? The view of Soviet dissidents and the reformers of the Gorbachev Era." *Studies in East European Thought* 50.4 (1998): 247-281.
- Booker, M. Keith. *Dystopian Literature: A theory and Research Guide*. Westport (Connecticut); London: Greenwood, 1994. Print
- Carroll, About Author Michael Adam. "The Memory Police by Yōko Ogawa." *The Ploughshares Blog*, blog.pshares.org/the-memory-police-by-yoko-ogawa/.
- Claeys, Gregory, ed. *The Cambridge companion to utopian literature*. Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- . "News from somewhere: Enhanced sociability and the composite definition of utopia and dystopia." *History* 98.330 (2013): 145-173
- Desai, Madhura. "The Memory Police: Yoko Ogawa: Book Review: Dystopian Fiction |." *The Literary Circle - Book Reviews and Book Recommendations*, 30 Oct. 2020, theliterarycircle.com/book-review-the-memory-police/amp/.
- Ferro, Michael A., and Gina Balibrera. "Yoko Ogawa's The Memory Police and the Dangers of Forgetting." *Michigan Quarterly Review*, 26 July 2021, sites.lsa.umich.edu/mqr/2021/07/yoko-ogawas-the-memory-police-and-the-dangers-of-forgetting/.

Gerhard. "Control and Resistance in the Dystopian Novel: A Comparative Analysis."

ScholarWorks, 1 Jan. 1970, scholarworks.calstate.edu/concern/theses/44558f01z.

Longley, Robert. "What Is Totalitarianism? Definition and Examples." ThoughtCo, Feb.

17, 2021, thoughtco.com/totalitarianism-definition-and-examples-5083506.

Lucas, Julian. "'Read Receipts' on: Two Dystopian Novels Predict the Surveillance State."

The New York Times, The New York Times, 15 Aug. 2019,

www.nytimes.com/2019/08/15/books/review/read-receipts-on-two-dystopian-novels-predict-the-surveillance-state.html.

Marina, Juwita. "DYSTOPIAN CHARACTERISTICS IN THE GIVER NOVEL BY LOIS LOWRY." (2018).

MasterClass. "What Is Dystopian Fiction? Learn about the 5 Characteristics of Dystopian

Fiction with Examples - 2022." *MasterClass*, MasterClass, 9 Sept. 2021,

www.masterclass.com/articles/what-is-dystopian-fiction-learn-about-the-5-characteristics-of-dystopian-fiction-with-examples#whats-the-difference-between-utopia-and-dystopia.

Mill Stuart, John, et al. *Public and Parliamentary Speeches*. University of Toronto Press,

1988, http://oll-resources.s3.amazonaws.com/titles/262/0223.28_Bk.pdf. oll-resources. Accessed 25 June. 2020.

More, Thomas. *Utopia: Thomas More*. Open WorldCat, United States, Feather Trail Press,

2010, www.worldcat.org/title/utopia-thomas-more/oclc/774426854. Accessed 27 June 2022.

Moylan, Tom, and Raffaella Baccolini, eds. *Dark horizons: Science fiction and the dystopian imagination*. Psychology Press, 2003.

Nisbet, Robert. "Arendt on totalitarianism." (1992): 85-91.

Ogawa Yoko Born in Okayama Prefecture in 1962. Recipient of many literary awards.

“Writer Ogawa Yoko's Stories of Memory and Loss.” *Nippon.com*, 30 May 2020,
www.nippon.com/en/people/bg900133/writer-ogawa-yoko%E2%80%99s-stories-of-memory-and-loss.html.

Orwell, George. *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters, Volume IV – In Front of Your Nose*. Edited by Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus. London: Secker & Warburg, 1968.Print.

Rahmouni, Malak. *Investigating Dystopia in William Golding's Lord of the Flies*. Diss.

Rich, Motoko. “Yoko Ogawa Conjures Spirits in Hiding: 'I Just Peeked into Their World and Took Notes'.” *The New York Times*, The New York Times, 12 Aug. 2019,
www.nytimes.com/2019/08/12/books/yoko-ogawa-memory-police.html.

Ryan, Devin. *ScholarWorks at WMU Emerging Themes in Dystopian Literature: The Development of an Undergraduate Course*. 2014.

Seed, David. *Science Fiction: A very short introduction*. Vol. 271. Oxford University Press, 2011.

Snyder, Louis L. “Review” *Jewish Social Studies*.(1951) : 257-259.

Spisak, April. "What Makes a Good Dystopian Novel?." *The Horn Book Magazine* 88 (2012): 55-60.

Sugarman, Sally. "Outer Space, Inner Worlds: Science Fiction and The Adolescent Imagination." *Young Adult Literature and Culture* (2009): 109-117.

Surveillance Society Summary 2006 - Ico. ico.org.uk/media/1042391/surveillance-society-summary-06.pdf.

Tablang, Katrina. “The Evolution of the Dystopian Novel.” *The Science Survey*,
<https://thesciencesurvey.com/arts-entertainment/2021/11/15/the-evolution-of-the-dystopian-novel/>.

- Valdez, Jessica R. "'Our Impending Doom': Seriality's End in Late-Victorian Proto-Dystopian Novels." *The Journal of Modern Periodical Studies* 9.1 (2018): 1-29
- Vieira, Fátima, and Gregory Claeys. *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge, 2010.

ملخص

غالبا ما يهدف الأدب الديستوبي إلى تقديم رؤى للمستقبل المحتمل حيث يمكن أن تتعرض البشرية ككل إلى الخطر. يهدف هؤلاء الكتاب، بغض النظر عن اللغة والعرق، إلى تحذير القراء من التهديدات المحتملة للخصوصية والأمن والحرية لذلك، تبحث هذه الرسالة في مفهوم ما يعنيه الديستوبيا والشمولية للأفراد عبر تاريخ تطور المجتمع الديستوبي من خلال فتح ص "شرطة الذاكرة" اليوكو أو غاوا . ويدرس تصوير أو غاوا الفريد للمجتمع الديستوبي والحكومة الشمولية . كما يهدف إلى التحقيق في المجازات التي تستخدمها "شرطة الذاكرة" في محو الأشياء والمفاهيم المجردة والحيوانات و النباتات ، وقبل كل شيء ، ذاكرة تلك الأشياء نفسها .من خلال الرقابة والتعذيب والمراقبة، تتجس الحكومة الشمولية للجزيرة التي لم يتم تسميتها في محو الجثث البشرية للشخصيات ببطء وحتى تأكلها .بالإضافة إلى ذلك ، تلقي هذه الدراسة نظرة فاحصة على كيفية تأثير الحكومة الشمولية للجزيرة المتجسدة في "شرطة الذاكرة" على الأفراد بما في ذلك طرق مقاومتهم وتؤدي إلى طرق خفية للتمكين ضد النظام.

الكلمات المفتاحية: ديستوبيا، مقاومة، الشمولية، حكومة شمولية، تمكين، يوكو أو غاوا