

**People's Democratic Republic of Algeria Ministry of
Higher Education and Scientific Research University
of Ammar Thledji, Laghouat
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of English**



**Totalitarianism and Identity Crisis in a Dystopian Context:
Case Study: Veronica Roth's *Divergent* (2011)**

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for Master Degree in Civilization and Literature

Supervisor:

Prof. Afkir Mohammad

Submitted by:

Cherifi Fatima Zohra

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my beloved father and dear mother for their love, support, and encouragement.

To my one and only sister for her major support during my whole life. To my brothers and sisters in law. To Mustapha, Amina, and Badr Ereddine.

To my dearest uncle Ahmed Ameer who has been there since as long as I can remember, and to his wife Tata Mbarka who had a big influence on my work.

To my family, friends, and colleagues.

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Abstract

Identity crisis is one of the problems that affect humans in the phase of adolescents. It is a depicted theme in young adult and dystopian fiction. This study aims at examining the totalitarian regime and the theme of identity crisis in a dystopian context framing Veronica's Roth's novel *Divergent* (2011) as a case study. It attempts to clarify how totalitarianism is portrayed in the novel relaying on a set of characteristics established by previous authors of dystopian fiction. It also seeks to explore the theme of identity crisis based on what Erik Erickson had suggested in his theory “Stages of Psychological Development”. Moreover, the analysis of the main character's journey of self-quest in the novel paves the way to examine the impact of totalitarian ideology, propaganda and surveillance on Triss's identity crisis. Therefore, this study follows the psychoanalytical approach which seems appropriate to conduct such study. Finally, the study concludes that Triss's identity is a consequence of living under the rule of a totalitarian regime and not a result of her divergence.

Keywords: totalitarianism, identity crisis, Dystopia, Erik Erikson.

Résumé

La crise d'identité est l'un des problèmes qui affectent les humains dans la phase d'adolescence. C'est un thème représenté dans la fiction pour jeunes adultes et dystopique. Cette étude vise à examiner le régime totalitaire et le thème de la crise d'identité dans un contexte dystopique en encadrant le roman *Divergent* (2011) de Veronica de Roth comme une étude de cas. Il tente de clarifier comment le totalitarisme est dépeint dans le roman en s'appuyant sur un ensemble de caractéristiques établies par les auteurs précédents de la fiction dystopique. Il cherche également à explorer le thème de la crise d'identité à partir de ce qu'Erik Erickson avait suggéré dans sa théorie «Stages of Psychological Development». De plus, l'analyse du parcours de quête de soi du personnage principal dans le roman ouvre la voie à l'examen de l'impact de l'idéologie totalitaire, de la propagande et de la surveillance sur la crise d'identité de Triss. Par conséquent, cette étude suit l'approche psychanalytique qui semble appropriée pour mener une telle étude. Enfin, l'étude conclut que l'identité de Triss est une conséquence du fait de vivre sous la domination d'un régime totalitaire et non le résultat de sa divergence.

Mots clé : totalitarisme, crise d'identité, Dystopie , Erik Erikson.

المخلص

أزمة الهوية هي إحدى المشاكل التي تصيب الإنسان في مرحلة المراهقة. إنه موضوع متداول في كتب الخيال الديس توبي و كتب الخيال المخصصة لفئة المراهقين في سن متقدم. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى فحص النظام الشمولي وموضوع أزمة الهوية في سياق ديس توبي استنادا على رواية فيرونیکا روث المعنونة ب "مختلفة" (2011) كحالة دراسة. هذه الأطروحة تحاول أيضا توضيح كيف تم تصوير الشمولية في الرواية بناءً على مجموعة من الخصائص التي أسسها المؤلفون السابقون للخيال الديس توبي. كما تسعى هذه الرسالة إلى استكشاف موضوع أزمة الهوية بناءً على ما اقترحه إريك إريكسون في نظريته "مراحل التطور النفسي". علاوة على ذلك، يمهد تحليل رحلة الشخصية الرئيسية للبحث عن الذات في الرواية الطريق لفحص تأثير الأيديولوجية الشمولية والدعاية والمراقبة على أزمة الهوية التي نعاني منها تريس. لذلك، تتبع هذه الدراسة نهج التحليل النفسي الذي يبدو مناسباً لإجراء مثل هذه الدراسة. أخيراً، استخلصت الدراسة أن أزمة الهوية التي نعاني منها تريس هي نتيجة العيش تحت حكم نظام شمولي وليست نتيجة اختلافها عن مجتمعا.

الكلمات المفتاحية: نظام الشمولية، أزمة الهوية، ديس توبيا، إريك إيركسون.

Table of contents

Dedication.....	I
Acknowledgment.....	II
Abstract	III
Résumé.....	IV
الملخص.....	V
Table of Contents.....	VI
General Introduction	1
Chapter I: Conceptualizing Totalitarianism and Identity Crisis in a Dystopian Literature	
Introduction	7
1. Dystopia in Fiction	7
2. From Utopian Vision Towards a Dystopian Vision.....	8
3. The Rise of Dystopian Fiction	9
4. The Ideology of Totalitarianism.....	12
4.1 Totalitarianism in Dystopian Literature	13
5. Understanding the Issue of Identity Crisis	15
5.1 Erikson Theory.....	16
5.2 Investigating the Question of Identity in Dystopian Fiction	19
6. The Impact of Totalitarianism on Identity	22
Conclusion.....	29
Chapter II: A Dystopian and a Totalitarian Reading of Divergent	
Introduction	30
2.1 An Overview of Divergent.....	30
2.2 Divergent as a Dystopian Novel.....	31
2.2.1 The Futuristic Setting.....	31
2.2.2 Utopian Ideals	33
2.2.3 Science Fiction	35
2.2.4 Loss of Individualism.....	36
2.2.5 Focus on One Character	38
2.3 Totalitarianism in Divergent	40
2.3.1 The One-party Rule	40

2.3.2 The Leader.....	41
2.3.3 The Conspicuous Ideology.....	42
2.3.4 Surveillance.....	43
2.3.5 Propaganda and the Monopoly of Information.....	45
2.3.6 Technological Control and Military Monopoly.....	46
2.3.7 Dehumanization.....	47
Conclusion.....	49

Chapter III: An Examination of Triss’s Identity Crisis in Divergent

Introduction.....	50
3.1 Triss’s Identity Crisis.....	50
3.1.1 Beatrice in the Abnegation Sector.....	50
3.1.2 Triss’s Identity Crisis in the Dauntless Compound.....	53
3.2 The impact of Chicago’s Totalitarian Rule on Triss’s Identity Crisis.....	56
Conclusion.....	65
General conclusion.....	66
Works Cited.....	67

General Introduction

General Introduction

Literature is a mirror of life. It is the humanitarian means of expressing knowledge, thoughts, and experiences of any particular society or movement, in any particular period. Through literature, authors were able to reflect the social, political, and economic aspects of their lives and through literature, readers were able to anticipate and relate to the life of past generations. Therefore, it is thought to be strongly affected by the environment surrounding its production.

In this regard, dystopia as a literary genre came to rise; for the purpose of satire and criticism of the political state of affairs taking place in the twentieth century, authors expressed their denial of the societies they live on, and highlighted their fear of modernity in general. Therefore, dystopia portrays themes of social control and political authority; in addition, it reflects the injustice of systems, warning of technology, and apocalypse, especially, in the period of the two World Wars.

Just like other literary genres, dystopian fiction has undergone many changes due to the changing events and the developments taking place in the second half of the twentieth century. New and contemporary themes were elaborated such as natural disasters, overpopulation, and an increase in usage of science fiction. Moreover, owing to the cultural manifestations people witnessed in this era, the focus on themes like feminism and gender issues had increased, and thus, the genre had welcomed a variety of leading characters to which readers relate especially minorities. Towards the end of the century, the variety has included a new age category in which readers were not accustomed to and that is the “Young Adult” category, that incorporates readers aged between late teens to early twenties. As a result, the dystopian fictional plots changed

General Introduction

from the old, rigid, and pessimistic dystopia to more hopeful and youthful plots to capture the interest of the new readership and respond to their needs.

The growing interest in the subgenre of Young Adults is foreseen as a result of the film adaptations of some of the most famous novels of this genre such as *Twilight*. Aside from the fictional plots, the supernatural elements these novels portray, all share one common feature which is the ability to relate to the reader by the elaboration of young protagonists, who struggle from the same social and psychological issues the teen reader experience in his/her daily life. Therefore, dystopian fiction came to rise again and gain the attention of the young adult population of the 21st century. It is mostly seen as a result of 9/11 events because starting from this year, novelists have shifted their interests towards the portraying darker and gothic themes, science-fiction elements and the theme of space to create fictionalized plots and scenarios similar to the current situations of the time to provide the answers of the “what ifs?” that goes through the minds of the reader. Furthermore, writers of this genre attempt to engage young adults in politics, educate them about society, and draw their attention towards the potential problems lying in the future by highlighting the post 9/11 concerns. Additionally, dystopia seems like an appropriate realm to reflect the psychological issues occurring at the phase of adolescence including phobias, traumas, and identity crises.

Veronica Roth’s *Divergent* is a stellar work of fiction that is regarded as an achievement in the genre. It is the first book of one of the standing trilogies of a young adult- dystopian fiction. The novel takes place in futuristic, post-apocalyptic Chicago, and follows the journey of sixteen years old Triss Prior as she discovers her identity in a society divided into five different factions depending on personality traits and affiliation. The novel elaborates on the themes of government control struggle, rebellion, social structure, conformity, and loss of individuality. *Divergent* (2011) serves as an appropriate

General Introduction

ground to depict the theme of identity crisis within a structured society, ruled by a totalitarian government.

This study aims at examining the themes of totalitarianism and identity crisis in the novel *Divergent* by Veronica Roth. Moreover, it focuses on the cause-effect relation which joins totalitarianism as an ideology and identity crisis as a consequence of such ideology, in a dystopian context, based on particular characteristics and concepts established in literature.

The main problem this study seeks to solve is whether the totalitarianism regime in futuristic Chicago as an external factor affects Triss's identity crisis or not, research questions can be developed as follows: how is totalitarianism portrayed in *Divergent*? How Triss's struggle of identity is showcased in the novel and how did totalitarianism affect Triss's identity?

The thesis this research is built upon goes as follows, the extreme struggle of the protagonist to find her identity is the consequence of living under a totalitarian regime that controls all aspects of life, even society, or the identity crisis which the protagonist suffer from is due to her multiple identities caused by her divergence of the society she lives in.

Belonging to the two literary genres of dystopian fiction and young adult, *Divergent* is a suitable novel to illustrate the modern issue of identity crisis and its impact on the adolescent's formation of identity. Furthermore, this novel presents a proper reading for the application of Erik Erikson's theory of psychological development which will provide an understanding of the protagonist's thoughts and actions during the phase of an identity crisis.

General Introduction

Divergent which was introduced to the world in 2011 has set the stage for many interpretations for Roth's novel, especially for its inclusion of themes of totalitarianism, power, in addition to the theme of an identity crisis. Amanda Wilson's article entitled "So You Want A Revolution" (2014) touches very deeply the questions of control and totalitarianism in the novel. Wilson argues that in the novel, two dominant factions represent governance and control, Erudite and Abnegation. The writer suggests that the Erudite faction wants to seize control of power because of their disbelief inequality, they want the power to be exclusive to the rich so that they instruct those who are deemed unfortunate with what they see fit. On the other hand, Wilson states that the faction that is called Abnegation is Roth's version of Marx's communism. Furthermore, Wilson denotes that the government system practiced in *Divergent* is similar to that of the Russian Leninist Communism, further suggesting that the novel is a mirror to the early communist Russia. She also argues that understanding the Russian revolution and its impact helps in further understanding the work of Veronica Roth's *Divergent*. "Analysis of Conflict in Veronica Roth's Novel *Divergent*" (2013) tried to tackle Veronica Roth's novel from the perspective of conflict in the novel. Penulis Makassar focused on analyzing the work in regards to the protagonist, Beatrice. They aimed at dissolving and closely figuring out the causes that led the character into her crisis of identity. The conflicts they chose to analyze vary from being mental, emotional, and moral, in regards to the state the protagonist was living in which was described as a low class. "Analysis of Conflict in Veronica Roth's Novel *Divergent*" attempted at investigating the causes of these various conflicts, from Beatrice's values and relationships that led her to live her life in constant worry and fear. While Wilson and Makassar approached the work from political and psychological points of view, Nesreen Eldoliefy decided to tackle Roth's novels, *Insurgent*, *Allegiant*, and *Divergent* based on Michelle Foucault's concept of Panopticism

General Introduction

in her article entitled “Societies of Control in Young Adult Literature: The Panoptic World of Veronica Roth's Trilogy Divergent”(2015). Eldoliefy argues that while approaching these works from a Foucauldian vision, shows exactly the kind of world Roth has established, a world where there exists no escape from the prison that is reality. She denotes that the questions of identity are present throughout the entire trilogy. Eldoliefy also states that even though the writings seem to include some potential solutions for social dilemmas, they are a mirage underneath a rotten, oppressive rule that gives no room for a change. For the writer, the novels shed light on the fact that totalitarian rule in these settings imposes some serious consequences for those who choose to rebel against it, making it a repressive, one-sided state with no room for discussions or questions. Besides, Elmira Pirmananda decided to bridge the gap and try to analyze Roth's novel by including Hegemony in relation to the formula of science fiction in her work entitled, “Analyzing Hegemony: Faction System in Veronica Roth's Divergent” (2016). Pirmananda chose to investigate the system of factions in the novel by the inclusion of a thorough analysis of intrinsic and extrinsic elements found throughout the novel. Within the founding's of the study, the writer came to understand that the faction system is applied to gain control over people's lives in the story. The writer also argues that the effect of the hegemony imposed by the dominant party forces people to live in a system of stereotypes, this system causes conflicts amongst people and can lead to unfortunate consequences of the war. After conducting her research, Pirmananda concludes that the system of factions can indeed achieve peace in society. Yet, it seems that there exist only a few researchers who approached the theme of identity in relation to totalitarianism and how can the latter affect the former which is the very goal of the provided research.

This dissertation has followed the psychological approach through collecting data of the protagonist's journey of self-quest and analyzing which circumstances such as

General Introduction

totalitarianism affect or influence their motivations and/or behaviors which in Moreover, This study has also followed the analytical and close reading method which is suitable to conduct such study and to shed light on the relation that joins living under the totalitarian rule and identity crisis sufferance in a dystopian context.

This dissertation is composed of three chapters. The first chapter will be devoted to the theoretical background of the dystopian context with an exploration of totalitarianism, identity crisis and how they are elaborated in this context. This chapter will provide also a conceptualization of the aforementioned variables which will facilitate the process of analyzing the novel and the main character Triss. The second and third chapters will provide the analytical part. Chapter two will examine the dystopian elements of the novel, in addition to the elaboration of totalitarianism and its features. Finally, the third chapter will deal with the inspection of Triss's identity and why she struggles with an identity crisis.

Chapter I: Conceptualizing Totalitarianism and Identity Crisis in a Dystopian Literature

Chapter One: Conceptualizing Totalitarianism and Identity Crisis in a Dystopian Literature

Introduction

This chapter will be divided into three sections. The first section will be background information and contextualization of dystopian fiction. The second part will discuss totalitarianism from two different points of views, as an ideology and as a main literary theme in dystopian fiction. Finally, the third section will provide a theoretical background of the notion of identity crisis with the contribution of scholar Erikson. Besides, this notion will be discussed from a literary scope, as a theme of dystopian fiction.

1. Dystopia in Fiction

Defining dystopian literature means defining dystopian fiction in one way or another. Lyman Sargent puts into word and defines this literature as –a non-existent society described in considerable detail and normally located in time and space that the author intended a contemporaneous reader to view as considerably worse than the society in which the reader lived.¶ (Popisil 11). As suggested, dystopian literature is often placed in a futuristic setting which is worse than the one the author or the reader lives in, expressed into details that vary from one novel to another depending on the author's imagination and the context through which the novel was written. Erika Gottlieb believes that authors of such fiction create these details to criticize the ‘social-political’ system they live in and point out its potential negative futuristic consequences (11). Moreover, the roots of dystopian fiction dates back to the eighteenth century even before it was labeled by its title, when Jonathan Swift wrote his *Gulliver's Travels*, in 1726, a criticism in the form of satire of the European government. It was followed by other works like *The Time Machine*, by H.G.Well and *The Republic of the Future*

by

Anna

Bowman Dodd in the nineteenth century. However, the genre did not gain the fame and popularity it has until the early decades of the twentieth century, due to the life-changing events that people, especially authors experienced. In this regard, Moylan considers dystopian literature as:

largely the product of the terrors of the twentieth century. A hundred years of exploitation, repression, state violence, war, genocide, disease, famine, ecocide, depression, debt, and the steady depletion of humanity through the buying and selling of everyday life provided more than enough fertile ground for this fictive underside of the utopian imagination. (Moylan 14)

2. From Utopian Vision Towards a Dystopian Vision

By the end of the nineteenth century, literature witnessed a reposition from the utopian ideals and morals style of writing to the dystopian pessimistic and warning realms. Skepticism towards utopian morals was the main reason for the degradation of Utopian narratives; it is also because it no longer corresponded with the events taking place in the early decades of the twentieth century. Events such as Two World Wars, the Bolshevik revolution of 1917, in addition to the decline of Nazi and Fascist regimes are examples that lead to the embracing of dystopia. Another major cause of the skeptic and pessimistic point of view towards life and the future was the invention of the atomic bomb as a part of mass destruction weapons. With the ability to erase a whole city such as Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the atomic bomb had manifested humans brutality against each other along with the dark side of science which supposedly aims at humanity benefit only or would simply be the end of it. All these important events have contributed to the rise of the dystopian narratives as being the suitable medium to question humans thinking and action, and criticize the government state and system as well as warning the coming generations about the dangerous outcomes of modernity.

3. The Rise of Dystopian Fiction

Ever since its emergence, dystopian fiction has managed to dominate all other types of narratives until the present day. Although it maintained the main characteristics of the twentieth century's dystopian fiction, it does not mean that this genre has not witnessed any changes or shifts in it. It is actually due to these changes that the dystopian fiction was able to engage in the twentieth-century context and fulfill its requirements. Also, it provided a variety of realms that allowed authors the freedom of imagination and expression to reflect the political and social conditions they lived in and convey their rejection and criticism concerning such conditions.

The twentieth century, regarded as the golden age of dystopian fiction, is also considered the time of political unrest and global anxiety. The political tension gave birth to the First World War and lead people to question the future of the world, hence, the prophecies about the future of the world started to see the light as a mean of providing answers to the worried readership of that time. Jack London's novel entitled *Iron Heel* of 1908 is regarded as a remarkable prediction of the events that preceded the First World War. Although London's work is said to be the –earliest of the modern dystopian fiction, the genre had thrived only after Yevgeny Zamyatin published his pioneer novel *We* in 1924. Originally written in Russian to criticize the collectivism of the Soviet Union and point out the flaws of the communist regime, it is considered as the grandfather of further futuristic dystopian writings and political satire. Before the publication of *We*, the fiction of ideal societies was merely utopian. However, after 1924 this genre took a new approach of depicting the worst and the negative out of the utopian settings, ideals, and beliefs. Dystopia then became defined as a –fictional portrayal of society in which evil, or negative social and political development, have the upper hand. (Claeys 107) Additionally, *We* has influenced many authors and

changed their vision towards utopian beliefs of scientific and political advancements. Authors of that time no longer believed in the positive essence of utopia. Thus, they started criticizing its beliefs of improving life and humanity. Lastly, as a pioneer work of the dystopian fiction, *We* had set the basic themes and characteristics that would come to dominate the dystopian fiction in the years to come. such as urbanization and scientific development, panoptical like government and surveillance, and unresolved ending in addition to the individual conflict against the homogenized utopian State.

Brave New World (1932) by Huxley Aldous, is another paramount dystopian novel of the age. Inspired by *We*, Huxley had continued in the same path as Zamyatin when criticizing the ideas of collectivism above individualism in addition to other aspects of such mass controlling. However, towards the end of the Second World War, the interest of most authors had witnessed a the shift from regime that used conditioning, brainwashing, and class division which disband one's individuality and freedom in a prison-like setting rather than a paradisiacal world it is ought to be, towards political dystopias. The focus of most novels, during this period, was to reflect on the growing powers of Fascism and Communism. Novels that revolve around societies ruled by totalitarian governments started to prosper. Although different, the majority of these novels showcased the authors' fear and concern over such establishments in an attempt to warn humans of the unjust nature of these systems and their negative consequences on countries all around the world. In this sense, George Orwell wrote his outstanding novel *1984*. Written in the shadows of the World Wars, Orwell's remarkable novel mainly discusses the horrors of totalitarianism on freedom of rights, individualism, and humanity in general. Similar to Huxley's *Brave New World*, *1984* draws inspiration from Zamyatin's *We*. Yet, what distinguishes this piece of work from any other novel is the detailed examination of the basic aspects of a totalitarian state. These aspects include surveillance

highlighted by ‘Big Brother’, monopoly of media and information as well as coercion and conditioning.

After the end of the Second World War, dystopian fiction evolved and welcomed a diversity of themes inspired by the political and social changes that took place all over the world. The negative effects of mass consumerism and means of entertainment on the culture of the modern individual as depicted in *Fahrenheit 451* (1959). Overpopulation, mass famine, and cannibalism all lead to chaos and war that is depicted in *The Wanting Seed* (1962). Furthermore, this was a period where authors expressed their growing suspicion of technology due to the creation of Sputnik 1, the space ship, along with the invention of the first personal computer. These technological improvements had allowed more integration of science-fiction elements within the dystopian fiction. Thus, themes as artificial intelligence developing consciousness and taking over humanity, apocalypse, and cyborgs came to dominate the dystopian fiction as it is illustrated in *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968). Moreover, from the 1970s onward, the variety of dystopian themes has even broadened to include new contemporary themes such as feminism, racism, Christian fundamentalism, and sexuality. As an example, Margaret Atwood’s novel entitled *The Handmaid’s Tale* (1985) portrays a feminist point of view to the struggle of women and gender role in totalitarian societies. Atwood’s novel is considered as a critique of the extremist views of groups within the United States. Today, dystopian fiction is getting increasingly popular mainly because of its association with the Young Adult genre of fiction. The reason behind the growing number of dystopian novels directed to teens and adolescents is their ability to appeal to a large audience of readers. It is also due to the embodiment of a young protagonist whom they can relate to, in a coming-of-age plot full of engaging themes such as self-discovery, self-reliance, and rebellion. As it is the case with the series of *The*

Hunger Games (2008) by Suzanne Collins, *Uglies* (2005) by Scott Westerfeld and predominantly *Divergent* (2011) by Veronica Roth.

4. The Ideology of Totalitarianism

While studying Totalitarian regimes in both examples of German Nazi and the Soviet Union, Hannah Arendt determines four fundamental characteristics that a totalitarian state exhibits. The first of which is the atomization of masses, which involves the state of the class being replaced by the state of mass. She argues that in a system of classes, the individual is free to form personal connections. However, this is not possible in a state of masses; the system of totalitarianism makes it a difficult task for people to trust each other due to the fear that is placed by the regime that makes them distinct from each other. Atomization of masses is one of the strategies of totalitarian regimes to maintain complete control over the masses and ensure their support. Furthermore, Arendt explains the importance of masses' support in preserving power as follows:

The totalitarian regimes as long as they are in power and the totalitarian leaders so long as they are alive command and rest upon the masses' support up to the end. Hitler's rise to power was legal in terms of majority rule and neither he nor Stalin could have maintained the leadership of large populations, survived many interior and exterior crises and braved the numerous dangers of relentless intra-party struggles if they had not had the confidence of the masses. Neither the Moscow trials nor the liquidation of the Rahm faction would have been possible if these masses had not supported Stalin and Hitler (306).

Another characteristic is the one mass party structure headed by a charismatic leader who claims infallibility. Moreover, political parties in a totalitarian rule are substituted by ideologies and movements, that is to say, ideological groups such as Nazis or the Communist party do not function in the same way as democrats or republics, but rather they are considered as a group of people that are gathered under the banner of strong ideology and a claim of special knowledge of what is right and favorable for the welfare of all. Furthermore, totalitarianism tends to strip the power away from the army and hand it to the police, an example of this would be Hitler's Gestapo and how much authority it held, similarly, the Russian KGB also had a parallel gigantic state of power to isolate, intimidate, and align all those whom the regime deems menacing. With the help of technological advancement that favored the regime in terms of espionage surveillance. In addition, the total control of mass media is another type of restriction displayed by the system to prevent ambivalence and complexity.

Finally, Totalitarian regimes tend to strive for the biggest, which means they all seek to dominate not just one country or continent, but the entire world, and with every step they take, they seek even more. All in all, Arendt believes that all these pieces come together to form the puzzle that is Totalitarianism. Apart from this, she claims that totalitarian systems must be dismantled to their essence to figure out whether they can be tackled and be compared to other forms of government.

4.1 Totalitarianism in Dystopian Literature

The fight against the totalitarian regime is indubitably a frequent theme in dystopian literature. The last century has been undeniably bloody, and thus, it is natural that our perception of Dystopia largely revolves around the evils of the totalitarian regime. In the same

sense that Hannah Arendt responded to the tyranny of Nazism and Stalinism in *The Origin of Totalitarianism*, authors responded to these ideologies through their work of fiction where they shed light on their political critique embedded within their resisting characters.

Totalitarianism in dystopian literature is mainly illustrated in the futuristic setting and characterized by the extreme oppression and despondence. The exaggeration of themes and projection of government is popularized by authors like George Orwell and Aldous Huxley reflecting the adverse outcomes of totalitarian ideologies if not repressed (Bergman 249). since the traces of these unjust systems still exist till the present day. In this regard, Orwell claims: "totalitarianism, if not fought against, could triumph anywhere." (Orwell and Angus 502).

It is worthwhile mentioning that the most influential novels of dystopian literature are in fact a totalitarian fiction. Starting with *We*, set in the futuristic universe designed by the panoptical-like government to facilitate surveillance, this novel discusses individual desires, personal freedoms, and identity. *We* is the literary accusation of Zamyatin against the Stalinism he once grew up in. *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley is another totalitarian fiction in which natural reproduction, individual thought, and independent agency have been abolished. Huxley's novel is a description of the consequences that resulted from society's abnormality. It is also considered as a devastating examination of the horrors of totalitarian governments. Furthermore, George Orwell's *1984*, is regarded as the most famous dystopian piece of fiction in the preceding century. It is by all means a detailed manifestation of what a totalitarian government is. *1984* is a novel that talks about the concepts of memory manipulation, nationalism, and surveillance. It is the source of some well-known totalitarian concepts such as, '*Room 101*', and '*Big Brother*'. In addition *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood and *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury are portrayals of contemporary problems with the integration of a totalitarian setting. Whereas Bradbury's novel reflects the

meaning of free speech, public happiness, and censorship, Atwood's novel offers a valuable discourse on feminism, gender, and individuality.

As a conclusion, although dystopian fiction has gone through some important modifications, totalitarian fiction kept most of its main features. The total state maintaining power and full control over –the Other, the alien and the subversive (Gottlieb 35). Following a series of contradictory ideologies followed by those who –surrender their freedom willingly to a government or other authority offering them security and freedom from uncertainty, danger, fear, hunger, etc. (Weiss 126) except for the struggling protagonist who is rebelling against a God-like leader who tries to ensure the supposed welfare of citizens when it actually accents their prison hood.

5. Understanding the Issue of Identity Crisis

Throughout time, the concept of identity has gained the interest of many scholars in psychology, anthropology, and other fields of humanities. Yet defining this concept remains a difficult task to accomplish. In this regard, Philip Gleason stated,

The meaning of –identity as we currently use it is not well captured by dictionary definitions, which reflect older senses of the word. Our present idea of –identity is a fairly recent social construct, and a rather complicated one at that. Even though everyone knows how to use the word properly in everyday discourse, it proves quite difficult to give a short and adequate summary statement that captures the range of its present meanings. (Feanon 1)

Moreover, influenced by postmodern times and multiculturalism, today, there exists a variety of definitions of identity following the growing issues of race, class, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, citizenship, and other social categories (1).

5.1 Erikson Theory

The concept of identity crisis was originally coined by psychologist Erik Erikson in his theory *Psychological Development of Human Beings* (1958-1963). He stated that personality evolves through eight different stages of psychological development, from infancy to adulthood. During each stage the individual experiences a psychological crisis which is defined as –a turning point when both potential and vulnerability are greatly increased, a time when things may go either well or not well depending on one's life experiences (Hamacheck 355). Individuals must solve the crisis of each stage to move on to the succeeding stage as a part of their development. All stages are considered pivotal for the maintenance of a healthy psychological cycle because, at the end of each stage, the individual acquires a new virtue that is essential for the ego¹ to solve the subsequent crisis. Such virtues are hope, will, purpose, competency, fidelity, love, care, and wisdom. In this theory, Erikson focuses on the ego being the center of development instead of the id². He also emphasizes the factors that affect the development of the personal identity amongst which are the family, peers, school, and other social environments (354).

The fifth stage of psychological development is the one associated with adolescents, in which individuals face what is known as an identity crisis. Erikson defines it as –a time of intensive analysis and exploration of different ways of looking at oneself (Tiwari 6). Overcoming this crisis is considered the most important task in adolescence because it determines the future of the adolescent as an adult. If he succeeds in solving the identity, then he will –experience the feeling of [his] own and complete identity and [he is] able to build and maintain important relationships (Seppänen 8). In case he fails, he will feel –isolated and

¹ The ego is the one of the three divisions of the psyche in psychoanalytic theory that serves as the organized conscious mediator between the person and reality especially by functioning both in the perception of and adaptation to reality (Mariam Webster).

² The id is one of the three divisions of the psyche in psychoanalytic theory that is completely unconscious and is the source of psychic energy derived from instinctual needs and drives (Mariam Webster).

lonely (8). The theory applies to humans as well as literary characters especially the protagonists of young adult literature who struggle to find their identity and their role in the society they live in (7).

Another important element in the formation of identity is the cognitive development of the mind (Erikson 245). It is considered as a crucial stage. Because, first, it takes place in the early years of adolescence, and second, it allows adolescents to think about the decisions and the commitments they are about to make in advance. Jean Piaget entitles it the –formal operation

The youth can now operate on hypothetical propositions and can think of possible variables and potential relations – and think of them in thought alone, independent of certain concrete checks previously necessary. As Jerome S Bruner puts it, the child now can –conjure up systematically the full range of alternative pos-sibilities that could exist at any given time (245).

In humble language, the individual at this age knows how to think of his future actions and their outcomes, taking into consideration his future commitments including his "personal, occupational, sexual, and ideological commitments" (245). Thus, deciding about their future and making primary commitments increases the need of the young adolescent to build a permanent identity, which will define him, until he forms his actual identity by the end of the fifth stage of psychological development.

Forming an identity begins at childhood when the child sets a ‘life plan’ of the roles he will occupy when becoming an adult, he builds expectations that will be a part of his identity in the future. When picturing himself as an adult at this very young age, the child begins to be influenced by the individuals surrounding him. Therefore, –family, neighborhood and school stand as –experimental identification (Erikson 161) for the child’s future identity. Childhood has a great impact on the adolescent’s psychological development, developing virtues such as

hope, will, and purpose as a child will allow the adolescent to build a permanent identity to fit in the society. Whereas, developing virtues like mistrust, shame, and guilt will result in adolescents who do not know what to do or how to fit in society (161).

Erikson regards adolescence as the last stage of childhood (Erikson 155). It is also thought of as a transitioning phase for the child and his gateway to maturity because completing this stage means the individual can figure out who he is, and engage in relationships with his peers and accommodate to being part of his society. The ability to accomplish all these tasks adds to the individual's sense of identity and leads him to make life-long commitments (155). Thus, adolescents need "moratorium" which is –more or less sanctioned intermediary periods between childhood and adulthood, often characterized by a combination of prolonged immaturity and provoked precocity (156). It is an experimental period of different social roles, in which individuals opt for alternative roles to occupy different groups to identify with, free of family attachment or any other type of obligations before he can settle with what suits him. In this regard, Erikson says that adolescents need to –test extremes before settling on a considered course (235-236). Moreover, the moratorium is a time of self-exploration and search for values and ideologies that define the individual and help him extract his own identity, by the end of it, even if these ideologies contrast the ones his society believes in. Erikson expressed the preceding when he defined the moratorium as a time of –experimentation with identity images which includes a –play with the inner fire of emotions and drives (158). The individual may not be conscious of his moratorium and will only realize it after he experienced it. However, if defined early, the individual will not only fail the moratorium but also fail the recognition of his own identity, as he is forced in role occupation too early which will result in role confusion of the individual within his society (158).

The social environment is one of the three main factors that affect the individual's identity development, in addition to the biological and psychological factors, as suggested by Erikson (qtd.in Hammacheck 345). The social environment including culture and the social system the individual grew up stands upon ideologies and beliefs that are mostly set by the previous generations and transmitted to the next. These ideologies, if it is not approved of by the youth, then it will be refused and be rebelled against it along with the system upholding them, which is justified by the youth's mistrust of society and the social system they live in. Erikson also argues that if the adolescents feel that the society they're in is forcing their hands tied, they more often than not resist it. He also suggests that the possibility of the adolescents coping in the society they are in depends primarily on that society's ability to accept their choices. Adolescents tend to admire the feeling of freedom, whether it is clothing, ideas, beliefs, etc. Thus, when the society refuses to accept this freedom, they tend to resist it and rebel against it, and hence, they develop a sense of mistrust. Erikson refers to the inability to settle on an identity is the common reason for adolescents to misbehave. To recover from this sense of identity crisis, adolescents often resort to form groups and stereotypes of their own, something that does not interfere with the ideology of their identity. These groups are often opposed to adults and their beliefs in young adult literature (Seppänen 11).

5.2 Investigating the Question of Identity in Dystopian Fiction

Most of the existing totalitarian realms in dystopian literature are created in association with the existing totalitarian systems that were established at the time. Authors such as Zamyatin and Rand portray themes and characteristics obtained from the Russian collective government they grew up within their novels *We* and *Anthem*, and continue to inspire other authors such as Orwell to follow the same path as them in his famous dystopian novel *1984* which is written in correlation to Nazi Germany under Hitler's rule. The popularity of this genre had showcased the fear of these writers and their concern towards the

influence of this tyrannical system on the governing system around the world. It also shed light on the dangers humanity may face as a result of totalitarianism.

The common danger these novels try to warn the reader from is the notion of collectivism which emphasizes the idea of pluralism over individualism. It –is taken to extreme in these works for the purpose of satire and storytelling|| and ensured –through the education of the masses that they are not important as anything more than parts of the whole|| (Ferris 4). This theme is highly manifested in Rand’s *Anthem* when the author identified all his characters using numbers like ‘Equality 7-2521’ or when he replaced the pronoun ‘I’ with ‘We’ and the adjective ‘my’ with ‘our’ which not only diminishes the character’s identity and his individuality but reinforces the ideas that the individual’s existence is about serving the state, the state’s benefit is favored against the personal benefit and thus, all personal desires are restricted or provided for the goal of serving it solely (Ferris 4). As a result, the individual living in such realms loses the identity that indicates him as a person and his individuality that differentiates him from the rest. This will eventually enforce the conformity of all individuals and the loss of diversity among them.

With the emergence of the new literary genre of Young Adults encouraged by the attention of teens, new themes were to take the lead in literature, themes that would correlate with this new readership, and capture their attention. Amongst these themes were the search for self, self-development, and identity crisis with ‘the coming of age’ plot. The focus on these themes has added to the rise of the young adult genre. Thus, the issue of identity became frequently discussed and depicted in various ways in correlation to the aim of the author. According to Robyn McCallum, identity in most young adult literature is depicted as –essential, unique, internally fragmented or socially constructed|| (67). Either portrayed in a certain way in a novel or all in one novel, identity remains personal, unique, and a way of a character’s ‘stable subjectivity’ (68).

McCallum further discusses the different strategies used by authors to best highlight the formation of identity in young adult literature. One of which is the internalized dialogue which is a common strategy since most young adult novels are written in the first-person perspective in the attempt of immersing the reader in the plot, showcasing the character's consideration of morals and ideologies of the society he grew up in, or the character's mental journey of discovering himself. Furthermore, placing the protagonist in a new and different environment is also regarded as one of the authors' strategies to -foreground the social construction of subjectivity, ... but also to assert an essentiality of self (McCallum 69) where they experience a -temporal, cultural or psychological displacement or marginalization (68). In sum, the displacement of a character will lead him towards new challenges that will indicate a lot about his new identity and assert the fact that identity is an assemble of -complex ideas' formed in a different situation in various ways (Seppänen 13).

Recently young adult fiction has witnessed an inclusion of many dystopian elements to the main plot and since both genres share some major similarities, the merge between dystopian and young adult literature brought about some of the most successful and influential novels of the century. Hintz and Ostry think that this success was because dystopia has several functions in young adult literature (1). Dystopian fiction teaches the adolescent reader about his society and helps him indicate his role as a part of it. Moreover, it encourages him to change himself by giving him the authority to be a critic in a setting where most people are trouble makers, making it the duty of adolescents to bring about a solution. Being a pedagogical genre (8), it also warns the reader about the dangers of technology, environment degradation, and disasters but most importantly, the importance of individuality. In this regard, Hintz and Ostry add that dystopia is a suitable realm to depict personal and social traumas adolescents go through, for providing themes such as surveillance which resembles parents' surveillance of their child. They even went further to state that dystopia is a metaphor

for adolescence (9) since most problems existing in dystopia seem identical to the problems an adolescent may face in this phase. Thus, it is most convincing when Hintz and Ostry argue that dystopia "mingles well with the coming-of-age novel, which features a loss of innocence (9).

6. The Impact of Totalitarianism on Identity

Many dystopian novels portray governments with the ultimate power to rule, oppress, and control every aspect of life. The aim of this power is to regulate people and enforce their ideology on them. To achieve their goal, totalitarian regimes opt for many methods, one of which is discipline. The notion of discipline is a focal point in Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* (1975). It is essential and a very common theme in dystopian fiction, because it facilitates controlling citizens of every level, in all spheres of life. The aim of such discipline is to monitor people physically and mentally to ensure order in society. In his book, Foucault discusses how discipline functions in a given society and how it grants power for those in the rule. He claims that discipline is used to –to produce subjected and practiced bodies, docile bodies that can be –manipulated, shaped, and –trained to serve the state (136-138).

In literature, discipline is portrayed through 'routine'; the dystopian system that monitors time, movement, appearance, and occupation, with little individuality allowed. Famous examples of this notion are the well-celebrated Dystopias *We* and *1984* where all individuals live the same life, act the same way, and have the same job, all according to a schedule put by the government for the people to follow. Such a mechanism is defined as –heart and pulse of Onestate, (Zamyatin 12) which it operates everybody's work in union so they work as a whole and can be easily monitored and ordered. According to Foucault, This prison-like life is beneficial for the system, because, first it increases the productivity of workers which will be beneficial for the system economically; and second, it guarantees people's obedience to the state and the ideology promoted by the government without opposing any

threats in the process. He states –discipline increases the forces of the body (in economic terms of utility) and diminishes these same forces (in political terms of obedience) (138). When fallen in the routine trap, people start accepting the system slowly and following it willingly as it becomes a part of their life. For example, in *We*, most citizens are not aware of the disadvantages their system has brought upon them. As a result, the discipline allows voluntary submission to the regime ideals; therefore, behavior which composes a big part of identity becomes controlled according to the state and against the individuals will. All individuals start behaving in the same way which makes them identified by the same behavior just like robots, dispossessed by their humanity and individuality, This most significant with the fact that characters in *We* are labeled with numbers instead of names like, D-503.

Following the same routine as the rest of the citizens in the state gives the individual a sense of sameness with others. After falling in the routine of living the same life and sharing the same beliefs derived from the overall ideology, it becomes harder to differentiate from the others and thus, build a personal identity that distinguishes one individual from another. Moreover, the routine results in draining workers physically that little energy is left for creativity, critical thinking, and focusing elsewhere besides work. They are preoccupied with the routine and fulfilling their tasks to the amount of not questioning the justice and the integrity of the system. Thus, the government ceases the chance, with the help of propagandist ideas about peace, wealth, and bringing the welfare of the state. Citizens thus, begin to trust the system and get convinced of their duty to serve the state. In the process, individuals sacrifice their personal identities to the collective identity that joins all citizens as a whole.

Propaganda is another operative tool used to affect citizen's intellectual thinking, convince them with the legitimacy of the regime, and help in strengthening the power of the ideology and its capacity of controlling all aspects of life, including the social function of each citizen. Through the propaganda of ensuring peace and improving human life by being a

good citizen, individuals become ‘subjected’ to the totalitarian ideology. This phenomenon is discussed in Louis Althusser’s work *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses* (1970) where he stated that humans when unintentionally exposed to a certain ideology, become a ‘subject’ as they start acting upon the ideology and perceive life according to the state beliefs (157). He further adds that the ideology is what dictates the social status of individuals; how they see themselves, how they function, and their relationship with others, in contrast to their humanistic nature (155). Subsequently, totalitarian ideologies result in an identity formed by the state and imposed on citizens. Once subjected, all the citizens start to act similarly which encourages conformity and weakens individuality and any chance of rebellion or breaking the law. Thus, in his description of Dystopia, Martin Kessler states that totalitarian ideologies result in a ‘destruction of individual identity in objective reality’ (qtd. in Gerhard 32).

Ideology, propaganda, and state control being essential characteristics of dystopian fiction are regarded as fundamental for reinforcing the regime's power. This can be traced in mind manipulation that results in citizens’ overconfidence of the state’s ability to govern and the system’s capacity of serving their benefits. Although literary totalitarian regimes are mostly unjust and dehumanizing, few characters realize this fact, and sometimes the protagonist is the only character to know. Thus, he takes it upon himself to bring change to the world he lives in, by taking down the system in the rule. Yet, for other characters, it is either an obligation to live in such a system or it is a preference as they are fascinated by the system established. D-503 is an example of the latter category of characters. He is absorbed with the structural lifestyle the novel takes place in and labels it as ‘ideal nonfreedom’ (Zamyatin 6). For such characters, freedom is perceived as a ‘primitive state’ (3) that allows chaos in human life and compares it to ‘beast’-like living. Moreover, he believes that the barbarian lifestyle of his ancestors is in fact the fault of the governments of the past which did not interfere and put order into their life (15). Through these beliefs D-503 is seen as an

embodiment of a passive dystopian citizen who fails to see beyond the mind manipulation committed by the totalitarian he lives with.

Ensuring the process of routine and discipline requires another fundamental aspect of dystopian fiction, which is the constant surveillance of all citizens living within the state. Surveillance is a very serving tool for totalitarian states because it guarantees citizen's function according to their benefit, application of the rules, and most importantly it allows the authorities to watch all actions and thoughts processed by any given individual within the state to prevent rebellion and revolt. The concept is thoroughly explained by Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* through the Panopticon Schema. Foucault believes that the Panopticon Schema works on both society and prison because it allows the power of the state to be –visible and unverifiable (201). The schema functions by keeping the prisoner under constant observation of an inspector. The prisoner must always be aware of the source he is being observed from; however, he –must never know whether he is being looked at any one moment, yet he –must be sure that he may always be so (201). The process of the schema is considered as an important factor in the environment of prisons and societies because it makes the human body –docile due to –the induced paranoia of not knowing when one is being watched. As explained by James A. Tyner in his article entitled –Self and Space, Resistance and Discipline: A Foucauldian Reading of George Orwell's 1984 in which he discusses surveillance in *1984*, being aware of the surveillance he is surrounded with, the body begins to discipline itself because of the uncertainty of him being watched or not and the mind starts regulating its actions accordingly which is another aim totalitarian states want to achieve through surveillance (qtd.in Gerhard 52, 54). In this regard, Foucault calls it –the centers of observation watching everything is a prominent characteristic of dystopian novels and although very different in nature and form, they all aim at monitoring –monitor what the body

is doing, so that one day the body will be so disciplined that it will start regulating the actions of its own volition and become the subject of self-surveillance (Gerhard 53).

The consequences of living under constant surveillance and its effect on the human mind can be traced in George Orwell's *1984*. The protagonist Winston Smith who is followed by the telescreen in each step he takes, all the time describes this center of observation as, "The telescreen received and transmitted simultaneously. Any sound that Winston made, above the level of a very low whisper, would be picked up by it" (Orwell 6). Winston further states the Panopticon characteristic of surveillance in Oceania as follows; "There was of course no way of knowing whether you were being watched at any given moment . . . It was even conceivable that they watched everybody all the time. But at any rate they could plug in your wire whenever they wanted to" (6). Aside from the restricted freedom the telescreen offers, the lack of privacy and the paranoia of getting caught doing an irregular act or thinking outside the norms; surveillance in Oceania has resulted in "a regimented, predictable, hyperorderly society, one that negated human will, spontaneity and creativity, generating total conformity via corporeal control" (Gerhard 55).

In the Dystopia of *We* surveillance takes another form because unlike the single party embodied in "big brother" watching everyone in *1984*, in *We*, everyone is watching the other. This is achieved through the establishment of full glass buildings to ensure transparency between individuals and to make it "easier for the Guardians to carry out their burdensome, noble task" (Zamyatin 19). Thus, "nothing can go unnoticed and unobserved by the state's omnipresent gaze" (Gerhard 55). *We* is also regarded as an example of Foucault's Panopticon model where "the network of disciplinary mechanisms" is "everywhere and always alert, running through society without interruption in space and time" (Foucault 209). In other words, every citizen of Onestate represents a disciplinary mechanism allowing surveillance much presence in the life of the state, without much interference on the behalf of the

government. Finally, through surveillance, totalitarian governments were able to control all aspects of life, personal or public, actions were monitored and even thoughts were restricted. Tyner further adds; -thoughtcrimes, facecrimes and ownlives were rigidly policed and enforced,|| and to think your own thoughts that somehow challenged the ideology literally meant annihilation|| (qtd. in Gerhard 57). Individuals living under totalitarian rule became identified by what the government imposes on them. Personal identity cannot exist by the restriction of freedoms of behavior, thought, occupation, and appearance. Conformity increases in such context and this encourages collectivism which defines people as a whole instead of individuals.

In dystopian contexts, individuals are physically exploited through the routine to reach their full productivity and absolute submission to the totalitarian government (Gerhard 61). They become -docile and obedient|| (Foucault 214) both in mind and body that they fail to realize the exploitation they are going through, in all spheres of life, or any unjust act made by the government. Thus, they fall into the ideology trap and believe in the government's ability to run their lives and trust it with their future. At last, to keep everything under control and guarantee citizen's full submission, the government involves a heavy security system that invades their public and private life to control their thinking and their actions (62). As a conclusion, the collective overpowers the individual in dystopian worlds (39). -Well which stands for the whole is empowered on the expense of -Ill because individuality is seen as a threat; it maintains different thinking in contrast to the whole. Therefore, through their individuality, people are able to stand against the system rule and point out his flaws and unjust crimes against humans. Moreover, in between the clash of the collective and the individual identity, some characters develop an identity crisis as they do not know what to act upon; the collective identity imposed on them, or the threatening individual identity.

In Zamyatin Dystopia, the protagonist D-503 suffers an identity crisis due to a duality of thinking. When fallen in love with I_330, D-503 starts writing a diary where he is confronted with his own feelings and emotions, brought back to his instinctive self; a new personal side of him. D-503 acknowledges such a split in his identity when he admits it as following; -There were two me's. One me was the old one, D-503, Number D-503, and the other . . . The other used to just stick his hairy paws out of his shell, but now all of him came out, the shell burst open, and the pieces were just about to fly in all directions (Zamyatin 56). D-503 also acknowledges the fact that his identity goes against the ideology of the state therefore, he is not free to act upon his new identity which is considered as selfishness in a place where - humans resemble lifeless robots, worship the principles of reason and forego their personal ambitions for the collective happiness,|| (Gerhard 71). Standing against the government resembles weighing a gram to a ton (Zamyatin 111). Although the new identity has brought him close to his inner self, helped him point out the flaws in the government and how it manipulates citizen's mind; D-503 finds it hard to acknowledge it fully which why his crisis intensified. The protagonist became torn between his individual identity and the collective one imposed on him. In his article entitled -Deceptions of the Self in Zamyatin's Well, Michael Berman discusses D-503's search for his inner self and state, -structurally, the novel unfolds in a strange place between the individual and the social order|| where D-503's language -slides from argument to confession, to narration, revealing trends and conflicts that rage within his own self-understanding, paralleled by the society of Well (qtd. in Gerhard 73). Berman further discusses the protagonist's -struggle over self-identity|| to be both the loyal mathematician and the poet who rebels to seek his own identity is in fact D-503's trial to break from the collective ideology imposed on him through finding his inner self out of his social one (Gerhard 75). Furthermore, the protagonist's intense crisis of identity is shown through this scene when he says:

I'm in front of a mirror. And for the first time in my life, I swear it, for the very first time in my life, I get a clear, distinct, conscious look at myself; I see myself and I'm astonished, like I am looking at some -him.¶ There I am—or rather, there he is:...it turns out I never knew what was there. And from that -there¶ . . . I am looking at myself, at him, and I am absolutely certain that he, with his ruler-straight eyebrows, is a stranger, somebody else, I just met him for the first time in my life. And I'm the real one. IAM NOT HIM. (Zamyatin 59)

Through this quote, D-503's inability to identify with an identity is apparent especially, through the use -he¶ instead of -I¶; it clarifies his struggle of maintaining who he really is. The one who is -subjected¶ by the ideology of Onestate, the number who is regulated and monitored according to the state, and the one fascinated by the -ideal nonfreedom¶ lifestyle.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a literary background of dystopian fiction including the definition, shift, and the rise. It has also provided both a theoretical and a literal background of the concepts of totalitarianism and identity crisis, which will facilitate the analysis of the novel based on what has been established in this chapter. The next chapter will discuss these two concepts and how they are portrayed in a dystopian context which in this case is the novel

Divergent

by

Veronica

Roth.

Chapter II: A Dystopian and a Totalitarian Reading of Divergent

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Introduction

The following chapter will deal with the analysis of Veronica's Roth novel *Divergent*. The first section of the chapter will be devoted to the characteristics that make *Divergent* a dystopian novel and a suitable core for depicting the impact of totalitarianism on Triss's identity crisis. The second section will deal with Totalitarianism and how it is elaborated in the novel based on particular notions that were mentioned in the first chapter such as, ideology, propaganda, and surveillance.

2.1 An Overview of Divergent

Divergent by Veronica Roth is considered as one of the highly celebrated Young Adult trilogies of the decade. Roth is one of the earliest authors who contributed to the resuscitation of the Young Adult and dystopian genre of fiction. Her novel tells the story of Beatrice Prior who lives in futuristic Chicago, where society is divided into five different factions, through what is known as the "faction system". At the age of sixteen, Beatrice and the rest of the teens living in Chicago must undergo an "aptitude test" which will guide them to choose the faction they belong to and the one to live in for the rest of their lives. Not adapted with her inborn faction, Triss joins the dauntless, yet she faces new challenges that push her to question her self, beliefs, and her abilities to live, not only in the dauntless compound but the whole faction system. This encourages her to rebel against the establishment and the Erudite: who are trying to overthrow the Abnegation from governing Chicago, claiming that they have the right and the merited knowledge to be in charge. In this process, Triss, unfortunately, loses both her parents, who died while rescuing her. However, she is able to figure out her own identity,

form a strong relationship with her boyfriend “Four”, rejoins her brother “Caleb” and manages to escape from being captured by the dauntless army.

2.2 *Divergent* as a Dystopian Novel

Although varied and very different in themes, the fictionalized worlds, and the characters they portray; all dystopian novels share the same distinct characteristics and themes which distinguish them from the rest of the literary genres of fiction. Without the inclusion of such themes and characteristics, it is hard to classify a novel as dystopian fiction.

2.2.1 The Futuristic Setting

The setting in terms of time, location, and everything that contribute in the background of the story is considered as one of the most important characteristics of dystopian fiction because it separates this sort of fiction from other types of fiction such as, realistic fiction, which usually showcases a close-related time frame and a similar environment to the one we live in, unlike dystopian fiction which portrays mostly a futuristic, very developed and a bad version of our world. Nathan Bransford argues that a setting of any fictional novel consists of three main elements: unfamiliarity, dynamic, and established upon norms, values, and beliefs. However: since the setting plays an important role in a dystopian novel, it may include other characteristics like being the antagonist for the main character, shares history with the current world and represents a stage that shed the light for the main character. Finally, it is common for a dystopian novel to start with an illustration of the system and the society constructing the imagined realm and then shifts to the main character who would slowly bring the change for his world.

In *Divergent*, the story takes place in post-apocalyptic futuristic Chicago, in an unknown time frame of “great peace” which is estimated about a hundred years after a war,

which we do not know about. Accordingly, Marcus, leader of the ruling faction, Abnegation, says, “It has been this way since the beginning of the great peace, when the factions were formed” (Roth 21). Although a hundred years have been since the end of the war, Chicago is still in recovery phase which is apparent in Beatrice’s description of the city, “Renovation moves slowly through the city, which is a patchwork of new, clean buildings and old, crumbling ones. Most of the new buildings are next to the marsh, which used to be a lake a long time ago.”(21). As explained by the protagonist, most of futuristic Chicago is either destroyed or in complete ruins. Although the story is set in the future, there exist only a few transportations means in the city because first, they had been demolished, “There are places where the road has completely collapsed, revealing sewer systems and empty subways that I have to be careful to avoid,” (22). Second, because the city is surrounded by a fence that isolates it from the rest of the world. Triss describes as following, “In front of me is a chain-link fence with barbed wire strung along the top. When I walk forward, I notice that it continues farther than I can see, perpendicular to the horizon, past the fence is a cluster of trees, most of them dead, some green” (69).

The preceding shows the unfamiliarity of Chicago in comparison to the current one. Yet, we know for sure that it is Chicago because of some recognizable landmarks of the city such as, the Ferris wheel at Navy Pier, the Hub which is actually the Willis Tower, and the „bean“ which resembles the Cloud Gate at Millennium Park. As a conclusion, the setting of *Divergent* is dystopian to a larger extent because of the characteristics already mentioned, the setting of the novel can also be regarded as dystopian because of the dynamic change it portrays. The environment in *Divergent* changes from the state of peace to rebellion throughout the time frame of the story. Moreover, Chicago is established on the belief that ensuring peace requires humans division into factions, and valuing the notion of “faction over blood” (Roth 30). Therefore, the crumbled state of the city and the type of values they admire

makes Chicago stand as an antagonist facing the main character in her journey and as a stage that portrays Triss's effort of changing this world to a better place. Finally, *Divergent* indeed explains the system and how it operates, in the society of the city, at the beginning of the novel.

2.2.2 Utopian Ideals

When discussing utopian ideals Michael Caines states, "There is a fine tradition of Utopias going terribly wrong when people tried to put their ideals into practice" (*The Independent*). Most literary Dystopias may easily overlap with Anti-topias, which are regarded as the opposite of Utopias in the sense that the worlds they portray are bad and that the citizens within it live an undesirable life. However, the difference between these two worlds is the fact that Dystopias are originally designed as Utopias. Thus, Dystopias are regarded as Utopias that have gone wrong or mad. Additionally, perceived as an illusion to a perfect society, Dystopias are the suitable literary genre to shed the light on the negative aspects of utopian ideals such as social structure, equality, in addition to, individuality that is traded with security and permanence.

At first glance, *Divergent* represents a perfect society and a well-managed lifestyle put according to the utopian perspective and this is most apparent in the system of faction. The system was created to ensure peace among its members by avoiding any type of conflicts caused by people's differences, as it is dictated in the Erudite faction manifesto:

Ignorance is defined not as stupidity but as a lack of knowledge. Lack of knowledge inevitably leads to a lack of understanding. Lack of understanding leads to a disconnect among people with differences. Disconnection among people with differences leads to conflict. Knowledge is the only logical solution to the problem of conflict. Therefore, we propose that to eliminate

conflict, we must eliminate the disconnect among those with differences by correcting the lack of understanding that arises from ignorance with knowledge. (Roth 24)

To maintain the great peace, the system of faction also assures equality among its members. Creators of the system believed that if any citizen of Chicago chose a faction and devoted himself to serve it and to focus on its principals then, everyone will be equal with the other. This belief is highly manifested in the Abnegation morals of life. Because of their commitment to selflessness, “Those who blamed selfishness made Abnegation.” They share one lifestyle and because of that, all of their households are similar to one another. In this acclaim, Beatrice describes the Abnegation sector as; “The houses on my street are all the same size and shape. They are made of gray cement, with few windows, in economical, no-nonsense rectangles. Their lawns are crabgrass and their mailboxes are dull metal...., but to me their simplicity is comforting.” (23). Abnegators believe that the best way to achieve selflessness, rejection of vanity, and serving the other is through equality. Beatrice further adds:

The reason for the simplicity isn’t disdain for uniqueness, as the other factions have sometimes interpreted it. Everything—our houses, our clothes, our hairstyles—is meant to help us forget ourselves and to protect us from vanity, greed, and envy, which are just forms of selfishness. If we have little, and want for little, and we are all equal, we envy no one. (23)

Another fundamental ideal attained in the novel is the security which is mostly embodied in the fence surrounding the city border. The fence of Chicago is composed of chains of barbed wire and contains a wide gate guarded by armed Dauntless soldiers. With such security, the government eliminates all chances of war with what exists outside the

fence, and all citizens feel protected from any external threat. Finally, there exist other utopian ideals within the state of futuristic Chicago from which we mention safety, resulted from the extinction of crime in the city; “The headline reads: “Brutal Murderer Finally Apprehended!” I stare at the word “murderer.” It has been a long time since I last read that word,” (Roth 18). Since murder and other types of crimes have vanished in the city, newspapers rarely reported such subjects. Thus, Beatrice was surprised to see a picture of a criminal charged for murder, in her aptitude test.

2.2.3 Science Fiction

Fictional technology composes a big part of dystopian fiction and that is why both genres often overlap with each other in one novel. Dystopian fiction usually depicts a very developed technology in contrast to the current world. It can be embodied in time machines, robots, technological reproduction of human beings, flying cars, spaceships and ...etc. frequently, technology is seen as a tool that serves human beings and facilitates their lives, in general. Yet, in dystopian fiction, it is mostly the opposite, where they represent it as the downfall of the modern world or the reason for its degradation. It depends on the author's point of view who is concerned about the negative consequences it may bring to the world (Popisil 15).

The world Roth has created, although unfamiliar, is a very developed one. The aptitude test and the fear landscape are great examples of the development Chicago has reached in the time of *Divergent*, because thanks to Erudite researches and studies, instructors can put the initiates into hallucination test, interfere in the test and see what is going on inside the mind of the test-taker, all through serum intakes, wires, and electrodes. Four explains the simulation process as follows:

The serum will go into effect in sixty seconds. This simulation is different from the aptitude test, he says. In addition to containing the transmitter, the serum stimulates the amygdala, which is the part of the brain involved in processing negative emotions—like fear—and then induces a hallucination. The brain’s electrical activity is then transmitted to our computer, which then translates your hallucination into a simulated image that I can see and monitor. (Roth 123)

From a utopian perspective, all the aforementioned ideals, in addition to science fiction, have contributed to ensure peace and make a perfect society in futuristic Chicago. However, from a dystopian point of view, one may presume that these ideas are the downfall of the *Divergent* world. Moreover, this novel is thought of as Roth’s attempt to show the failure of such ideals in perfecting human beings and making the world a better place, because due to enforced conformity, equality, and structure, the society suffers from the next characteristic exemplified in the loss of individualism.

2.2.4 Loss of Individualism

Loss of individualism is regarded as a common theme in the dystopian fiction. It is the result of the lack of personal choice and loss of control over physical appearance to help diminish citizen’s individuality and emphasize community service. Therefore, it is easy for any secondary character to fade in the background of the story and appear as nothing more than a part of the whole.

In *Divergent*, this characteristic appears in more than one element, the first of which is the core constituent of the novel which is the faction system. Starting with the aptitude test, where sixteen years old dependents are allowed only one opportunity to choose a faction, out of five factions, for the rest of their lives. In case a dependent failed to choose the appropriate

faction for him, he/she will have to face the citizen's ultimate fear and that is disqualification, in other words, factionless.

The government of Chicago focuses on the factions that represent the people as a whole instead of the members composing it. Thus, the faction has a strong effect on individuals. First, it indicates their morals according to what Beatrice said before taking her aptitude test, "Faction customs dictate even idle behavior and supersede individual preference. I doubt all the Erudite want to study all the time, or that every Candor enjoys a lively debate, but they can't defy the norms of their factions any more than I can." (Roth 14). It restricts their behavior according to these norms. For example:

"Dauntless tables across the room. They are laughing and shouting and playing cards. At another set of tables, the Erudite chatter over books and newspapers, in constant pursuit of knowledge...A group of Amity girls in yellow and red sit in a circle on the cafeteria floor, playing some kind of hand-slapping game involving a rhyming song". (14)

Behavioral restraint is seen as extreme because members are not allowed to do whatever they want; Beatrice who belongs to Abnegation is not allowed to show curiosity or ask questions during dinner because it is considered as a betrayal to her faction's values. Also, other members of different factions will not normally behave like members of other factions. In other words, they will not sing like Amity, read like Erudite, or run and jump like Dauntless. Another act of neglecting the individuality of the members is dictating the jobs of initiates based on their faction function. The former is highlighted in Marcus speech as follows:

Abnegation has fulfilled our need for selfless leaders in government; Candor has provided us with trustworthy and sound leaders in law; Erudite has supplied us with intelligent teachers and researchers; Amity has given us

understanding counselors and caretakers; Dauntless provides us with protection from threats both within and without. (30)

The provided jobs stated in the speech are the only options offered for citizens. They do not have the chance for personal choices or preferred occupations. Finally, the government goes beyond to control the overall appearance of each faction, for instance, when describing a Candor Beatrice says: “The Candor man wears a black suit with a white tie—Candor standard uniform. Their faction values honesty and sees the truth as black and white, so that is what they wear” (11). the same goes for the rest of the factions. Dauntless “are pierced, tattooed, and black-clothed” (12). Amity “are dressed comfortably, in red or yellow” (12). Whereas, Abnegation wear their unnoticeable gray clothes, and Erudite wears their striking blue outfits.

2.2.5 Focus on One Character

Amongst the crucial characteristics of dystopian fiction is the focus on the main character’s journey for bringing change to the world. The protagonist is usually put in a world where there is an unjust system or a community that is already established. He/she has to bring change to this world by rebelling against those in rule, often embodied in one prominent leader, or some cases he has to escape to find a rational world in contrast to his own. The protagonist generally knows the injustice existing in his world unlike the other passive characters in the novel. Moreover, he/she portrays the reader’s thoughts and opposition toward the government ruling the world he lives in. lately, dystopian fiction is mostly representing adolescent protagonist who engages the reader through their perspective of the story.

In her novel, Roth tells the story in Beatrice's perspective which explains the use of first-person central narration. The story begins on the day of the aptitude test when sixteen years old Beatrice must undertake a test based on simulation inside her mind to help her

choose the faction she belongs to. She is scared of the test result which may indicate that she does not belong to her inborn faction, because for Beatrice “choosing a different faction means I forsake my family”(Roth 21). Moving forward, after the test, the protagonist discovers that she does not belong to one faction, but two others, making her a “divergent”. Beatrice is selfless like Abnegators, brave like Dauntless, and intelligent like Erudite. She is advised by her instructor Tori to not share her results with anyone, “This is different. I don’t mean you shouldn’t share them now; I mean you should never share them with anyone, ever, no matter what happens. Divergence is extremely dangerous.” (20). Those who resemble Beatrice have the ability to think in “several different directions” which makes controlling them a very difficult task to obtain, especially that faction leadership enforces their members to think and act in a certain way. With her abilities that surpass the other member’s abilities, Beatrice is capable of figuring out the Erudite plan to overthrow her inborn faction, Abnegation, with the help of Dauntless soldiers. Thus, she rebels against the leaders of Erudite and Dauntless and saves Abnegators from being eradicated.

As a conclusion, all the previously stated characteristics are considered as pillars to the dystopian genre of fiction. They define it and distinguish it from all other types of fiction. To most scholars, these characteristics portray the political, social, and cultural opinions of their authors influenced by the period they lived in or the society they grew up in. Therefore, the genre is thought to borrow heavily from the real world of readers. Although most dystopian fiction novels share all the mentioned characteristics, that did not affect the diversity of plots, characters and the realms the dystopian fiction welcome every day. Yet, one cannot easily ignore the fundamental feature of the dystopian novels and that would be the totalitarian government controlling the fictionalized world of an author. It is seen as the reason other characteristics exist from the first place such as loss of individualism, dehumanization, and

enforced equality. The next section will be dedicated to the projection of totalitarianism in *Divergent*, which will contribute to the classification of Roth's novel as dystopian.

2.3 Totalitarianism in *Divergent*

English author George Orwell and the Russian Yevgeny Zamyatin are considered as the most influential novelists of dystopian fiction. Their both works were written in the shadows of the tyrannical systems of Nazi Germany and the communist Soviet Union. Although coming from different origins, these pivotal works elaborate the same standards of a totalitarian state. For a corrupt or an idealized government to be considered as totalitarian, it must fulfill the following criteria:

2.3.1 The One-party Rule

Totalitarian governments are characterized by a strong central power that offers limited political freedom for other political parties, lacks competition and opposition for any other opponents. Accordingly, the totalitarian government supports one political party only. When comparing totalitarianism to authoritarianism, Radu Cinpoes suggests the following: "the authoritarian state still maintains a certain distinction between state and society. It is only concerned with political power and as long as that is not contested it gives society a certain degree of liberty. Totalitarianism, on the other hand, invades private life and asphyxiates it" (popisil 11). This type of government differs from other types through the fact that it controls all aspects of life to enforce its ideology on the citizens of the state.

The government of futuristic Chicago is directed by one political party exemplified in the Abnegation faction. Ever since the establishment of the system of factions, Abnegation was chosen to fulfill the task due to their commitment to selflessness. Although fairly selected by the system, Abnegators run the state and take decisions solely with little intervention from

other factions. This is evident when Beatrice described her father's job as an Abnegator leader, "The city is ruled by a council of fifty people, composed entirely of representatives from Abnegation,..... Representatives from each of the other factions can speak in the meetings on behalf of a particular issue, but ultimately, the decision is the council's" (Roth 25). However, after Dauntless attack on the Abnegation sector, Erudite became the governing faction demanding that it is their right to rule due to their claim of knowledge despite the other faction and because they are considered as the intelligent faction amongst the others.

2.3.2 The Leader

In her description of Dystopia, Chris Ferns stated, "This unjust society is ruled by a small, power crazed elite, often with a figurehead or a concept that is worshipped by the citizens of the society" (qtd.in Jaspers 8). The leader in a totalitarian setting is often associated with Adolf Hitler or Josef Stalin. This character is a God-like figure who maintains an immense power over the citizens and the state. He is obeyed and favored by passive characters and he is seen as a symbol of heroism. One of the reasons the leader possesses such power is the propagandist descriptions of his strength of upholding peace and bringing the welfare of the state.

After bringing her plan to life, Jeanine Mathews appointed herself as the new leader of futuristic Chicago. She believes she is the legitimate to rule instead of Abnegators because she regarded as the most intelligent among the other member of her faction who is "selected based on her IQ score." (Roth 26). Her possession of unlimited information, and most significantly, her successful experiments such as, the aptitude test, contributed to the permanence of the faction system. Consequently, she became the representative of discipline, peace, and intelligence. Jeanine Matthews is described as a charismatic leader through Triss's perspective, "Her glasses are askew, and her eyes are empty of feeling,.....she probably

wears the glasses out of vanity rather than necessity” (218). Moreover, Triss goes far by describing her intelligence as the following:

She presses her palms together. I see no vicious glee in her eyes, and not a hint of the sadism I expect. She is more machine than a maniac. She sees problems and forms solutions based on the data she collects...and that is what makes her so terrifying—because she is smart enough to solve anything, even the problem of our existence. (220)

Another quality that makes the leader of Erudite so powerful is her popularity in Chicago. This is evident when Triss goes to meet her brother Caleb and says: “A portrait on the opposite wall catches my attention. It is twice my height and four times my width and depicts an attractive woman with watery gray eyes and spectacles—Jeanine” (180). From the latter, we deduce that Jeanine is a well-known leader unlike the other leaders from other factions that were not mentioned by Triss throughout her journey. Finally, Matthews embraces features that allow her to be considered as a totalitarian leader such as, her charismatic personality, her intelligence, her popularity in addition to her opposition to any type of rebel, and departure of the ordinary.

2.3.3 The Conspicuous Ideology

The existence of one political party at the expense of others demonstrates the connectivity of one prominent ideology, adopted by the party and enforced on the citizens. The majority of citizens living in a totalitarian state are fooled by such ideologies which usually aim at the benefit of the citizens and the welfare of the state, whether it is guarding peace, creating a perfect society, or granting wealth for every individual living under the system...etc. Yet, there is an exception in a fictional dystopian novel that depicts a

protagonist aware of the real intention of the leader and those in power, such as D-503 from *We* and Equality-72521 from *Anthem*.

The ideology defended by the faction system is the insurance of peace among the faction, avoiding war with what exists beyond the fence. However, with the change of leadership, the ideology has changed according to Jeanine's interests. According to her saying, she plans at keeping the faction system running in futuristic Chicago without the existence of the Abnegation faction, "We are tired of being dominated by a bunch of self-righteous idiots who reject wealth and advancement, but we couldn't do this on our own. And your Dauntless leaders were all too happy to oblige me if I guaranteed them a place in our new, improved government." (Roth 219). Furthermore, she clarifies that an "improved government" means a government "working toward a world in which people will live in wealth, comfort, and prosperity" free of factionless who are considered as a drain of resources (219). Nevertheless, Jeanine's real selfish interest is exposed by Tobias who deduced from her saying; "I am sure that once the remains of your old faction are absorbed into the Dauntless army, Candor will cooperate and we will finally be able to get on with things" and that her plan "involves the widespread manipulation of an entire faction and the systematic murder of every political leader [they] have." (220).

2.3.4 Surveillance

The most effective tool used in totalitarian regimes to execute discipline is constant surveillance. It serves the totalitarian leader on many levels and keeps citizens at check and limit their freedom of behavior, it ensures their submission to the system and the ideology imposed on them, and foremost. It provides much power and control to the leader, in rule, by offering all the citizens' detailed life. Hence, all information is available to him whenever he needs them in his selfish affairs. Surveillance in totalitarian regimes is characterized by the

presence of spies amongst people, the establishment of various developed tools like Closed-circuit television, and most significantly the existence of buildings constructed by the glass to provide transparency.

Surveillance is a very prominent theme in *Divergent* which is elaborated from the start until the end of the novel through transparent buildings, such as, the upper-level building which is a symbol of transparency which indicates the quality of buildings constructed in futuristic Chicago. It is described as, “Like all the other buildings around it, it is made of glass and steel.” (Roth 11). Furthermore, surveillance is apparent ever since Beatrice was an Abnegation member. She was constantly watched whether by her parents, in the Abnegation sector. This is evident in the third chapter when she is sent home earlier than usual, Beatrice declares, “I decide not to take the bus. If I get home early, my father will notice when he checks the house log at the end of the day, and I’ll have to explain what happened.” (21). Likewise, after Abnegation is accused of corruption by Erudite, Beatrice asserts scrutiny by her peers at school, “Their eyes follow me to the edge of the hallway. This sort of thing has been happening to others in my faction for months now” (12). After moving to the Dauntless compound, surveillance evolves, taking into consideration that the security of the city is the responsibility of Dauntless, in particular. Four, Triss’s instructor keeps warning her that all her moves are watched by the leaders of the faction by saying, “I’m not going to say this again, so listen carefully... They are watching you. You, in particular.”(161). Finally, even after the war against Abnegation, Jeanine put her in a cell to watch her being divergent, “I am alone in it. Well, almost—a small video camera is attached to one of the concrete walls.” (223).

2.3.5 Propaganda and the Monopoly of Information

Propaganda is another fundamental criterion of a totalitarian state. For a leader to stay in power and maintain control over people, he has to use terror, and falsify information to manipulate people's minds. This is characterized by total control over the media. Similar to surveillance, propaganda is another method used by those in power to convince people of their ideology and make them trust the leader's choices. It is commonly achieved through terror. Therefore, to gain the masses' support, totalitarian regimes are willing to do whatever it takes such as, falsifying information, rewriting history, and manipulating people through persuasive discourse.

Divergent contains all the previously mentioned strategies starting with falsified information. The novel elaborates many false ideas about the world and life in general. For instance, living without the system would cause conflicts that would lead to war, "My mother told me once that we can't survive alone, but even if we could, we wouldn't want to. Without a faction, we have no purpose and no reason to live" (Roth 19). Through the system of faction, humans are able to eradicate their bad qualities that would lead to their dismay (Roth 29), and living within the fence protects citizens from war, yet no one knows what exists outside the fence (69). Moreover, Triss just like other characters of the novel seems to know only a few things about the past and her ancestors (Roth 24), because a look into the past will point out the flaws of the government and the system they live in, and how life was different before the establishment of the system and the fence and mostly remind them with their humanistic side that was neglected by the system of factions (Gerhard 84). Finally, all leaders of Chicago use persuasive lines in their speech to manipulate people and use their fears against them to ensure the continuity of peace and the system of faction. For example, before the aptitude test both Jeanine and Marcus give speeches about the importance of the aptitude test and how making the right choice can serve both individuals and the system at the same

time; “Therefore this day marks a happy occasion—the day on which we receive our new initiates, who will work with us toward a better society and a better world.” (Roth 30), “In our factions, we find meaning, we find purpose, we find life....Apart from them, we would not survive.” (30) and “The future belongs to those who know where they belong.” (30).

2.3.6 Technological Control and Military Monopoly

Whereas the previous methods are used to enforce the regime’s ideology on people’s mindset, technological control, and military monopoly allow such ideologies to be adopted by these people and employed in their lifestyle, through the whole state. The full management of an army is a well-known quality of totalitarian states. The army ensures the law and makes certain that people are following as well. Technological control, in contrast, is usually found in dystopian fiction only since current technology is not yet able to condition people and blindly mechanism them.

In *Divergent*, technology is all monitored and controlled by Erudite for being the only faction allowed to develop it and bring it to life. The aptitude test, which is Jeanine Mathews’s most celebrated achievement, is, in fact, an induced hallucination serum that put the character into multiple situations to decide which faction he affiliates to according to his reaction; and how he responds to the challenges put in the test. Through the same concept Erudite have invented a few other mind-altering serums to fulfill their aims of controlling people and ensuring discipline in society (Roth 220). Each faction leadership has a serum permitted for them by the Erudite to use it on the members of their faction to uphold their virtue and not a departure from it. For example, Candors use the truth serum to protect their virtue of honesty. Amity uses peace serum for members finding difficulties in keeping calm and peaceful behavior without their awareness or permission (288).

Furthermore, to achieve her plan of taking over Chicago, Jeanine made a deal with Dauntless leadership to give her full control of the members of their faction to be her soldiers. Through simulation serum designed for Dauntless members to overcome their fears, she was able to develop it into a mind-controlling serum to manipulate Dauntless and monitor them through the serum to attack the Abnegation sector and take control of the city (Roth 212). Erik a Dauntless leader describes the injected Dauntless as, “Oh, they can see and hear. They just aren’t processing what they see and hear the same way,” says Eric. “They receive commands from our computers in the transmitters we injected them with....and carry them out seamlessly” (216).

2.3.7 Dehumanization

Dehumanization is not just a common characteristic in a totalitarian state but a consequence of the previously mentioned criteria. It is also a recurrent theme in dystopian fiction; the collective ideology of totalitarian systems aims at affecting the individual mentally and physically to turn him into a robot-like creature or a slave, that lives to serve the state only. It crushes his individuality, his identity, and treats him as nothing more than a part of the whole. In this regard, Sharon Stevenson states:

The evil in a dystopia is usually a faceless, all-encompassing state, bureaucracy, or belief system that annihilates or restricts some set of values the readers believe are indispensable to both their own and the characters’ ability to function as fully dignified human beings. (Roth 131)

In the novel the main dehumanizing factor is the system of faction and what deranges of it as Beatrice state:

Decades ago our ancestors realized that it is not political ideology, religious belief, race, or nationalism that is to blame for a warring world. Rather, they

determined that it was the fault of human personality—of humankind’s inclination toward evil, in whatever form that is. They divided into factions that sought to eradicate those qualities they believed responsible for the world’s disarray. (29)

In Chicago, people are structured according to personality traits. Once they choose a faction, they are enforced to act upon the norms and to uphold one main virtue. Virtues vary according to the faction, Abnegation maintains selflessness. Therefore, every abnegator must not be selfish (Roth 31). Every Dauntless must be brave, and has to overcome his fears (31), Candors must not lie, those who belong to Amity must be peaceful and kind, and Erudite must always seek knowledge (31). If any member of these factions went against the norms of his faction and contradicted the virtue, he would be conditioned through serums to guarantee the structure in society (45). Initiates who fail to join the faction and uphold its virtue are degraded to “factionless”. Beatrice describes factionless as, “To live factionless is not just to live in poverty and discomfort; it is to live divorced from society, separated from the most important thing in life: community.” (19).

As a conclusion, humans in *Divergent* are treated like robots; they are sorted in factions according to their function, the faction controls how they behave, how they dress, and what to function. All of the mentioned goes against human nature because humans cannot neglect other virtues their lives nor live and act upon one particular one. For example, Candors cannot live their whole life through honesty and Dauntless cannot be brave all the time. Moreover, factionless who live like homeless people in Chicago are the result of their failure in adjusting life according to the system or the faction norms that is also considered as dehumanizing, since they deprive them of the basic elements every human being needs, such as, nutrition, shelter, and occupation (Roth 21). „Faction over blood” is also an imposed notion that demands an individual’s full devotion to his faction over his family and this also goes

against human nature. Lastly, dehumanization is mostly apparent in injecting the Dauntless members without their permission and awareness to fulfill Jeanine's goals in starting a war against Abnegation.

Conclusion

This chapter provided an overview of Veronica's Roth novel Divergent. Moreover, the analysis of the novel proved the novel is dystopian. The analysis has also provided some characteristics that help to showcase totalitarianism as the main theme in the novel with characteristic such, as the ideology, the propaganda, the leader, conditioning, and coercing in addition to surveillance. The following chapter will provide an analysis of the novel from a different angle focusing on the protagonist's journey in the novel and the causes that lead her to suffer an identity crisis.

Chapter III: An Examination of Triss's Identity Crisis in Divergent

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Introduction

This chapter will be divided into two parts. The first part will be devoted to the exploration of the protagonist's identity crisis in the novel and how does Triss come to experience it. The second part will concern how totalitarianism affected Triss's identity throughout her journey of self-discovery based on three main concepts: the totalitarian ideology, the propaganda, the surveillance, and the concept of the moratorium as suggested by Erik Erikson in his theory *Psychological Development of Human Beings*.

3.1 Triss's Identity Crisis

The main subject of Veronica's Roth trilogy *Divergent* is depicting Beatrice's journey of identity quest. Until she is acquainted with her true self by the end of the trilogy, Triss goes through many struggles and conflicts with her inner self that helps her identify who she really is. This is especially apparent in the first novel where Triss finds it hard to adapt to the environments she once grew up with and the one she transforms to and takes the blame on herself thinking that the problem lies within her instead of other factors.

3.1.1 Beatrice in the Abnegation Sector

The first environment that caused Beatrice's identity crisis is her inborn faction, Abnegation. Being Abnegation inborn has caused Beatrice many difficulties while trying to figure her true self. In *Divergent*, deciding on a faction means deciding upon an identity; therefore Beatrice's initial problem with herself was her inability to adapt to the norms and the lifestyle of her faction, and this is apparent from the beginning of the novel. Beatrice's

Chapter III An Examination of Triss's Identity Crisis in Divergent

struggle of adaptation is the result of living a much-disciplined lifestyle with constant surveillance and oppression to behave in a certain way; a lifestyle that does not suit her preferences and her human nature, in general.

Out of the five factions existing in futuristic Chicago, Abnegation is the faction that stands for selflessness. Abnegators are those who blame selfishness (Roth 30), a very innate characteristic of human beings. To achieve high levels of selflessness or the “art of losing oneself” Abnegation leadership has put certain rules and norms for its members to follow, yet for some members, such as Beatrice, these rules are quite hard to obey. For example, members are not allowed to look at the mirror every day as a sign of rejecting vanity. Beatrice is allowed to see herself in the mirror once every three months (10). When she had the mirror opened for her, Beatrice had to restrain herself from looking too long but she failed due to her curiosity and expected her mother to punish her for doing so (Roth 10). Moreover, in Abnegation, Beatrice is not permitted to see her full self, for example, she is expected to hide her beauty behind her gray conservative uniform, show less affection in the presence of others or any type of physical attachment because according to her faction norms physical contact is powerful and they should be wary of it. A lot of other luxuries that other faction experiences are considered as self-indulgent in Abnegation such as, eating all sorts of food except for vegetables, celebrating birthdays, or taking place in a bus or an elevator when there are other people from other factions around. Abnegators must sacrifice all of these to achieve selflessness. Furthermore, Beatrice is not restricted in her behaviors only, but in her thoughts too; she cannot be the sarcastic girl she is because other members like her family do not appreciate it (23), she must suppress her curiosity in the presence of members from her faction and other factions. This is apparent in the aptitude test scene when she asks Tori the Dauntless instructor and then regret it immediately (16), or when she is scolded by her mother and brother for keeping asking questions during dinner time for since she has to offer her

Chapter III An Examination of Triss's Identity Crisis in Divergent

silence as an act of selflessness (26). All of the aforementioned are the challenges Beatrice had to go through every day as a member of the Abnegation faction. It is what makes the Abnegation hard lifestyle that Beatrice had to label it as “the obligation life”.

Although being born to an Abnegation family, Beatrice is aware of her failure in overcoming the everyday challenges she faces as an Abnegator. However, with the coming of the day she takes her aptitude test, she starts to think seriously about her future faction that will define her identity, she starts pointing out her troubles in adapting to the faction ideals and being identified with it, even though it is the faction where her family belongs. It is at such instances that Beatrice's crisis intensifies between who she is and whom she ought to be, a struggle between the overall identity of Abnegation and her real identity that she is not aware of, for instance, when describing her mother and how successful she is when losing herself, which is an essential value of Abnegation, she admits that she cannot say the same about herself (10). When confronted with the fact that she has to forsake her family, Beatrice is uncertain of her decision of transforming to another faction, “On these mornings when my brother makes breakfast, and my father's hand skims my hair as he reads the newspaper, and my mother hums as she clears the table—it is on these mornings that I feel guiltiest for wanting to leave them.”(10). another manner that helped Beatrice figure out her irrelevancy is by comparing herself to her brother. Caleb who is one year older than Beatrice is described as selfless by nature (24). He is always ready to help and always preferring others of himself (14) which is why he sees himself better than Beatrice and claim the right to scold her when she breaks the rules (26). Watching her family living in harmony, Caleb helping others, and her faction caring for others makes Beatrice happy, yet she finds it hard to do it herself. She expresses it on her way back after the aptitude test and says, “I fall in love with this life all over again. It's only when I try to live it myself that I have trouble. It never feels genuine”(21). Beatrice had tried to love the Abnegation lifestyle and was ready to give up her

Chapter III An Examination of Triss's Identity Crisis in Divergent

future to live with her family, yet it is at times when she is reminded of the Dauntless faction that her identity is blurred once again, "I hear a train horn,... But I know it when I hear it. It sounds like the Dauntless, calling me to them." (24). When admitting her desire to transform to Dauntless, it only increases her inability to deciding upon an identity, she clearly expresses it as follows:

It will require a great act of selflessness to choose Abnegation or a great act of courage to choose Dauntless, and maybe just choosing one over the other will prove that I belong. Tomorrow, those two qualities will struggle within me, and only one can win. (27)

As she expected, Beatrice struggled to the last minute before choosing to be a Dauntless especially, after her brother joining the Erudite, when she felt that her brother have left her no choice of transformation, and she should be the kid that stays (32).

3.1.2 Triss's Identity Crisis in the Dauntless Compound

Although Triss has chosen the Dauntless to be her new identity and the faction to belong to, her new faction has caused her many distresses. She had to go through a big change that will indicate how the Dauntless lifestyle differs from the Abnegation's, an attempt the attempt by the author to displace Triss away from her family where she faces new challenges that will determine her journey of self-quest. Moving from the quiet and peaceful life of Abnegation to the loud and brutal life of Dauntless has been Triss's biggest problem which resulted in her identity crisis, especially, after the change in Dauntless leadership six years ago. Initiate exams became more competitive and more brutal (127) which causes many initiates to quit, fail, or suicide out of fear of being factionless. Being a Dauntless became something Triss is not sure of but has to earn it, otherwise, she will end up being a factionless, something she fears more than death itself (36).

Chapter III An Examination of Triss's Identity Crisis in Divergent

In Chicago, the Dauntless faction is the one responsible for the security of the city (12). Thus, being a Dauntless member requires bravery, their most cherished virtue, and overcoming cowardice (106). Achieving braver in the Dauntless compound goes through three different stages, in each stage, Triss and the initiates are challenged to the extreme to teach them how to react amid fear and evaluated accordingly in terms of strength and bravery. In stage one which is primarily physical, Triss learns how to shoot with a gun, how to fight for survival, and how to throw knives. In stage two which concerns emotions, Triss learns how to face her fears through simulation. Finally, stage three which is mental because it joins the physical skills learned at stage one and the readiness from stage two. The last stage is passed through a simulation called “fear landscape” where initiates are aware of being in a simulation and their mission is to react properly to move on with the simulation. All of the initiation stages are considered important to Triss's identity formation because during which, she learns a lot about the norms of her new faction such as, the high level of competition over ranks which pushes Triss to deal with her friends as opponents. Moreover, the vicious treatment of Dauntless to their opponents as they show no signs of mercy in any type of fighting situation; for example, when Triss succeeded in taking the first rank in the second stage, Peter, Drew and even her close friend Al was ready to kill her by throwing her in the chasm. Additionally, Triss comes to know about the corruption found in her faction due to the existence of ruthless leaders like Eric and Max in the leadership of the Dauntless faction. This is apparent after the night her peer initiate Edward got stabbed in the eyes for ranking first in stage one; when no one reported the stabber and when the faction leadership did not make any attempt of punishing him or ensuring justice, instead Edward lost his rank and became factionless .

Chapter III An Examination of Triss's Identity Crisis in Divergent

After joining the Dauntless faction Triss identity crisis has become more complicated than it was when she was an abnegator. Triss at first was struggling between her inner self which was not identified yet and the identity obliged on her by the abnegation faction. However, finding out about her Divergence and becoming Dauntless meant a crisis between two identities her abnegation and dauntless ones. Once entering the Dauntless compound, Triss's efforts are all directed to build her new identity when she realizes that she doesn't know what identifies her? "The phrase "do whatever you like" sticks in my mind. At home, I could never do what I wanted, not even for an evening. I had to think of other people's needs first. I don't even know what I like to do" (43). Or when she admits she lacks all the necessary features of building an identity; "But I will find new habits, new thoughts, and new rules. I will become something else."(51). However, the task seemed more difficult than she thought when Triss struggles between her new and old self, she keeps thinking of the reaction of parents when it comes to her actions as she still feels like she needs their approval (45), this is manifested while Triss is learning how to use weapons, "My family would never approve of me firing a gun."(48), or when she keeps defending them in front of the initiates because of the accusing articles about her faction being corrupt (129). Moreover, Triss's struggle is also seen at moments when she thinks that she finally belongs to Dauntless yet she keeps acting like herself especially when her friend Christina tells her that her Abnegation side is showing (48). In this situation, Triss's crisis of defining herself is most clear because she believes she is a Dauntless but acts like an Abnegator. Moving on, when training becomes vicious and the battle over ranks and survival continues, Triss enters a phase when she doesn't know who she is anymore; the Dauntless is not the one it should be. Hence, she becomes a member who pushes her old self to becoming someone she does not want to be; she is violent, careless and shows no hints of guilty when facing an opponent. Triss expresses her new image as:

Chapter III An Examination of Triss's Identity Crisis in Divergent

I look at my reflection in the small mirror on the back wall and see a stranger. She is blond like me, with a narrow face like mine, but that's where the similarities stop. I do not have a black eye, and a split lip, and a bruised jaw. I am not as pale as a sheet. She can't possibly be me, though she moves when I move. (67)

With the coming of stage three, Triss moves so fast in ranks; which she regards as fast for her benefit. Therefore, she goes to Tori, the aptitude test instructor who told her about her Divergence for the first time, seeking answers about what it means to be a divergent (135). This adds up to Triss's distress as she no longer knows who she fully belongs to; the Abnegation who are too selfless for her or the Dauntless who are too ruthless? This pushes her again to question her identity as follows "Am I wired like the Abnegation, or the Dauntless?" (163).

3.2 The impact of Chicago's Totalitarian Rule on Triss's Identity Crisis

Ever since Beatrice came to the world, she has been living not through her own will but according to the ideology of the totalitarian state she grew up in. The most protected ideology that people of Chicago live upon is thoroughly represented in the system of faction; a system that divides society into five different factions according to personality traits. The selfless are abnegation, the brave are dauntless, the honest is candor, the kind is amity and the intelligent are erudite. Each faction has its contribution to the city of Chicago, Abnegation are the governing faction, erudite is the one responsible for knowledge; they provide teachers and researchers, Amity is the responsible for producing food through planting and providing stuff for hospitals, candor is the one ensured with law, they provide lawyers and judges, and lastly, dauntless who protect the city and guarantee its security. Choosing a faction out of the five factions means choosing a distinct lifestyle that will determine your identity, thoughts,

Chapter III An Examination of Triss's Identity Crisis in Divergent

actions, appearance, and occupation which facilitate government controls over the life of its citizens, the system monitors all aspects of life and does not allow much freedom in it; through choosing ceremony, sixteen years old adolescents are able to choose one of the five factions to belong to for once in their life to decide about their future, they won't be given any other chance and their old faction will not welcome them afterward. Members of each faction live the same life, therefore, little individuality is prohibited; they are enforced to believe in the same ideals and act upon it. Faction is all that it matters; it has a sacred value protected by the notion "Faction over blood" which means even family members are forsaken for the sake of the faction. Therefore, anything that may threaten its unity must be annihilated that is why members of different factions are not to interact with each other. Moreover, any strange action or thought is fought by the government that is why Divergence and factionless do not belong in the system. Divergence is the ability to conform to all factions whereas factionless is the failure of conforming to a particular one. Factionless according to the protagonist live like homeless people deprived of shelter, food, and most importantly community which brings life together in futuristic Chicago.

The system of faction, the heart of futuristic Chicago's ideology exists to serve the state benefits even if it is on the expense of citizens. Dividing people into different groups facilitates the control of the government and strengthen its power over the individual. The government monitors all aspects of life in Chicago and this is manifested in the lifestyle of each faction. For example, the Dauntless faction that values bravery are the faction principle of security, members of the faction have few options of jobs because it all relates to the security of the city; they cannot work in fields other than security. Moreover, all members must be brave and courageous, they must protect the city, and wear black only. They are the only faction allowed to get tattoos, use weapons, and displace using the train (11). The same goes for other factions but with different values, jobs, appearance, and luxuries. Such

Chapter III An Examination of Triss's Identity Crisis in Divergent

disciplined categorization is found to monitor people physically and mentally and turning them into docile bodies that live to reach their full productivity to serve the state. Furthermore, when citizens become disciplined they turn to docile bodies that obey the rules put by the government and trust its ideology in bringing the welfare of the state. This is highly demonstrated in *Divergent* where all people believe in the system's ability to bring peace and preventing war from occurring again in Chicago.

The Abnegation sector, where Beatrice has grown up, is a much-disciplined environment. Beatrice's life runs through a strict schedule that she cannot deviate from, she always wears the same gray robes and slacks she and her mother pick every six months (215), and goes to school with her brother Caleb and returns at the same time. When coming early after her aptitude test, Beatrice tries to elongate her way to return at the time she arrives at every day, or else she will be interrogated by her parents for coming on her own (21). Once at home, Beatrice has other duties to fulfill like preparing dinner, sitting with her parents, and offering them her silence so she can hear what they are saying without arguing (25). After dinner, Beatrice joins her family in the family room and then heads to her room (25). In her house, she is given little time to herself whether to stay by herself or to pursue any hobby because it is considered selfish according to the Abnegation values. The previous shows how Beatrice is so very much involved in the Abnegation lifestyle and how docile she is to the faction norms, she preoccupied to fulfill her duties to question their legitimacy and righteousness.

Being docile to the partial ideology of the faction and the bigger ideology of the state leads Beatrice to be consumed by the communal identity and obstruct her from defining her individual identity. When she is trying to be selfless, Triss is restraining her true self, the selfish one that does not belong to her inborn faction. Moreover, Triss' inability to indicate her identity is caused by the limited freedom and individuality offered by her inborn faction.

Chapter III An Examination of Triss's Identity Crisis in Divergent

Thus, she suffers from an identity crisis as she cannot adapt to being an Abnegator and cannot define what identifies as a person. This is deduced from her first day at the Dauntless compound when her new faction offers her freedom to do whatever she wants (43), Triss express her lack of identification as follows, "The phrase "do whatever you like" sticks in my mind. At home, I could never do what I wanted, not even for an evening. I had to think of other people's needs first. I don't even know what I like to do. (43). or when she expresses her desire of finding "new habits, new thoughts, new rules. I will become something else." (51). At last, it seems that Beatrice's communal identity as an Abnegation member is restricting her inner self from being identified. This is seen as a result of living under a totalitarian regime that imposes certain collective identities on different individuals within the state.

In the dauntless compound, Triss moves to a new environment with a new ideology that challenges her old identity that still upholds into abnegation values. Triss comes to know that the Dauntless lifestyle is more ruthless for her liking but instead of fighting it, she chooses to be docile to it if she is to gain her membership. With the new rules put by the new leadership, becoming a member turns out to be a hard accomplishment and living in a dormitory that includes both boys and girls with the use of weapons with high chances of hurting one's self. Moreover, initiation exams keep getting harder as initiates begin a series of vicious competition over ranks; combats including massive injures and fights to the point of fainting (64), stabbing and hurting, and even kidnapping other initiates for taking their ranks and succeeding in moving through stages (145-147). Fear of degrading ranks and fear of becoming factionless leads Triss to accept Dauntless ideology and act upon it even if it means forsaking and going against the values her old faction, "I can't even think of life as a Dauntless. All I can think about is making it through initiation." (49). However, this task proves to be difficult for her since Triss has already been suffering an identity crisis. Beatrice who had difficulties with being Abnegation member-only, now, has to struggle between

Chapter III An Examination of Triss's Identity Crisis in Divergent

Abnegation and Dauntless because both identities matter to her, her old faction that includes her parents, and her new faction which is always fascinating to her. Yet, combining both identities seems impossible for her since she lives in a totalitarian state that allows only one collective identity to identify any member of a particular faction and annihilates divergence which is what identifies Triss in particular. She has to suppress her ability to affiliate to all factions and conform to the collective identity of the Dauntless faction to survive. Triss who presents human nature through her divergence had to seek answers from Tori and her mother to know about her true self, nevertheless, Triss had to hide her identity from her friends and family out of fear that she will be murdered by those in power. Triss has to suppress her divergence because she represents their biggest threat that would prove the failure of their ideology and the system of faction in bringing peace and welfare to futuristic Chicago. Triss's ability to uphold all the five virtues shows how restricting and how unfair it is that it brings identity crisis and frustration to some individuals. Moreover, being divergent means that the system cannot control Triss or condition her to whomever it requires because Triss is able to manipulate all types of stimulation thanks to her ability to think in five different ways instead of one. Subsequently, Triss exemplifies how dehumanizing the system of faction is, and how it flights human nature and individuality to hold power and stay in the rule.

The system of faction is a sacred ideology for futuristic Chicago's citizens. The government has accomplished the following through propaganda. Propaganda which stands for false information or facts to promote a particular point of view exists thoroughly in Divergent and everyone seems to believe it, starting with the fact that human nature is the evil causing wars in the past. Therefore, ancestors created a system of factions to prevent war and fight human nature by upholding one particular virtue and living life upon preserving it. Five virtues were decided, selflessness, honesty, intelligence, kindness, and bravery. Those who believe in the same virtue must be gathered into a group, labeled as a faction, to live in

Chapter III An Examination of Triss's Identity Crisis in Divergent

harmony with each other. Little interaction is allowed between these groups to avoid any type of conflict. Life in futuristic Chicago relies on the factions coexistence because without them, people will not survive and war will take place again. Faction matters more than family which means factions take the place of a family. Thus, members have to do all they can to protect their faction and preserve it. People who don't have the qualities to belong to the system of faction must be thrown out of the system as they present an obstacle in keeping the peace to be factionless while divergence must be annihilated because it brings chaos to the system. The state of Chicago uses propaganda to control people mentally. This is achieved through manipulating citizen's thinking and using their fear of war against them to convince them of the legitimacy of the system of faction and its capacity of ensuring harmonious peace in futuristic Chicago, in addition to hiding the past and using persuasive discourse as it has been mentioned previously.

Ever since the establishment of the system of faction, citizens of Chicago are exposed to propaganda that manipulates their minds and turned them into subjects to its ideology. When people are subjected by an ideology, they start acting upon it willingly without much interference from the government and without much arguing or questioning. *Divergent* propaganda has succeeded in convincing people with the necessity of the system which explains why all the characters in the novel trust the system and do not question its establishment. This is the case with Triss, she trusts the system and believes all the propaganda about it which suggests that she is subjected by the ideology of the state and the faction. This is most apparent after her transformation to the Dauntless compound, where she keeps showing uncontrollable behaviors from her old Abnegation self like showing frigidity when exposed to intimacy (48) or when she clean the dormitory when no one volunteered to do it (109), pure Abnegation reaction. It also explains her identity crisis as to why she cannot let go of her old identity and why after spending some time with the Dauntless that she starts

Chapter III An Examination of Triss's Identity Crisis in Divergent

to act both like Abnegation and Dauntless member. The previous is thought to be a result of being subjected by the ideology rather than her divergence because if it was the case, then Triss should project other values such as kindness and intelligence but she shows only selflessness and bravery being the only two ideologies she was exposed to. Triss's identity crisis when her Abnegation and Dauntless self can be seen as consequences of being subjected by two ideologies and being expected to act according to one of these ideologies only. The task seems difficult taking into consideration the time frame Triss had to give her old self and adopt her new one; it happened so fast that Triss could not keep up with the change.

Another criterion as to why Triss suffered an identity crisis is a fact that the totalitarian regime and the system of faction deprived her of a „moratorium“ (Erikson 156) which a time frame in which adolescents search and experience the appropriate values and notions essential for becoming an adult. The moratorium is a necessary time for adolescents to know about what they want to be as grown-ups without all the duties adults must fulfill. For Erikson, the moratorium is regarded as obligatory because for young adults to manage their multiple identity elements into oneself (128). Triss belongs to a dystopian world that does not offer her such an identity formation stage instead she is expected to develop her identity according to what the faction she chose at a very young age in the choosing ceremony indicates, without much thought or experience during the process. Therefore, once she became a Dauntless initiate, Triss is expected to act and think in a certain way no matter what her background or old faction suggests. From the previous, one can deduce the fact that “identity is a social construction that is used to keep the people in control.” (22) rather than an individual property developed by human beings.

In the Dauntless compound, Triss finds herself in a new environment where she changes from the modest, selfless, and none curious Beatrice to a free, confident, and

Chapter III An Examination of Triss's Identity Crisis in Divergent

powerful Triss. However, her transition happened so fast that leads her to identity confusion. Triss was quickly subjected by the Dauntless ideology out of fear of being factionless, she did not have the time to think of how violent and ruthless she became. She became someone unknown to herself that is why when she stands against the mirror she says:

I look at my reflection in the small mirror on the back wall and see a stranger. She is blond like me, with a narrow face like mine, but that's where the similarities stop. I do not have a black eye, and a split lip, and a bruised jaw. I am not as pale as a sheet. She can't possibly be me, though she moves when I move. (67)

It is at such moments that Triss relays on the faction to indicate who she is instead of herself.

One final totalitarian aspect that added to Triss's identity crisis is surveillance. In *Divergent*, surveillance is present from the beginning until the end of the novel. It fulfills a huge part of Dauntless's job of maintaining the security of the city. The Dauntless compound has a separate location dedicated to surveilling the city inside and outside the fence. They are always present to watch the citizens and the factionless in case of a rebellion or a conflict. Moreover, surveillance is more present in the Dauntless compound and Erudite headquarter, where each leadership had planted cameras and small microphones in the hallways to watch the members and initiates to assess their behaviors and thoughts through their actions and the conversations they held. Surveillance aims at empowering the leadership of factions by keeping citizens under constant control, and through "panopticon schema" they ensure docile bodies that discipline themselves and regulate their actions as required by the state. It results in conformity and loss of individualism.

Throughout the novel, Triss is constantly a subject of surveillance. It starts in the Abnegation sector where she is watched by her parents and her brother all the time. Triss had

Chapter III An Examination of Triss's Identity Crisis in Divergent

a schedule to follow; when she overlaps she knows she will be scolded. Therefore, she is careful about her behaviors and actions. Moreover, in *Abnegation*, Triss is used to be watched all the time and scolded whenever she makes a mistake, that she becomes subjected and conditioned according to the *Abnegation* norms. This is highly manifested when she expects her mother to scold her for looking too long in the mirror; "I sneak a look at my reflection when she isn't paying attention...Her eyes catch mine in the mirror. It is too late to look away, but instead of scolding me, she smiles at our reflection. I frown a little. Why doesn't she reprimand me for staring at myself?"(10). or when she thinks Christina will get punished for continuous questions; "I close my eyes and wait for the reprimand. She needs to learn to stay quiet" (43). Triss in this situation shows how curiosity was banned and how opinions were restricted in her old faction. It also shows that it happened regularly which explains why Triss finds it hard to find her identity when she did not have personal opinions and special interests that differentiate her from others. Furthermore, in *Dauntless*, surveillance increases around initiates to the point that they need to be accompanied by a *Dauntless* to be able to go out of the compound. After leaving the compound to see her brother Caleb, Triss is captured by *Erudites* and taken to Jeanine Matthew's office to question her after she suspects that she is divergent, and then once she comes back, she becomes the center of surveillance. She is even told so by Four who warns her and tells her; "They are watching you. You, in particular." (161). this pushes Triss to suppress her divergence which her true identity and act according to the communal identity of the *Dauntless*. Not being able to explore her identity and acting upon it intensifies her identity confusion as she does not know what divergence really means. This is exemplified when Four addresses her multiple identities and she argues as following; "I don't have an answer to that, and I don't even know if he's right about me. Am I wired like the *Abnegation*, or the *Dauntless*? Maybe the answer is neither. Maybe I am wired like the

Chapter III An Examination of Triss's Identity Crisis in Divergent

Divergent." The use of the word "maybe" clarifies Triss's uncertainty about her divergence and her identity in general.

Conclusion

This chapter explored how did Triss suffer from an identity crisis during her time at the Abnegation sector and after her transformation into the Dauntless compound. Furthermore, this chapter examined how living in a totalitarian state affected Triss's identity crisis focusing on the impact of ideology and propaganda on Triss's psyche, how the loss of moratorium led to her identity confusion, and how Surveillance affected Triss's behavior and restricted her from being the divergent she is.

General conclusion

General Conclusion

This dissertation attempted to portray how totalitarianism and identity crisis are elaborated in the dystopia of Veronica Roth, *Divergent*. Moreover, it discussed the impact of totalitarianism on the protagonist's identity crisis through the concepts of ideology, propaganda and surveillance.

This dissertation aimed to provide background information and a contextualizing of dystopian fiction. Dystopian fiction is defined as the type of fiction that portrays humanity's worst fears. It usually showcased as negative and pessimistic. It came as reaction to many socio-political events that took place in the last century. Therefore, it gained an enormous attention of readers from different time periods. Dystopian fiction is usually inspired by the literal totalitarian regimes the world had once embraced, such as Nazi Germany and Soviet Union. As a result, dystopian fiction thoroughly illustrates collectivism, socialism and social structure in its novel's, such as *We*, *Brave New world* and *1984*. Finally, dystopian fiction is usually seen as a suitable corpus to portray psychological distress, mental disorders and a coming of age plots.

Furthermore, this work tried to examine totalitarianism from literary lens in dystopian fiction. Totalitarianism is regarded as an essential theme in Dystopias because it promotes the world going mad, apocalyptic prophecies and humanity destruction and there is not a better way to portray the following without oppressive governments taking control over everything. Thus, totalitarianism deals with government taking ultimate control over the state and its citizens. Their control includes all spheres of life from society, and politics to economics. The totalitarian government is led usually by a charismatic leader who regulates the system and spread its ideology to the people. People who live under a totalitarian regime are surveyed all the time, dehumanized, treated like robots and deprived of their individuality. To reach such

General Conclusion

mass control over people, totalitarian government focus on spreading their ideology using propaganda and constant surveillance to make sure all citizens are monitored the way the government want them to.

Moreover, this study attempted to investigate identity crisis according to Erik Erikson theory of Psychological *Development of Human Beings and identity crisis* as theme of dystopian fiction. The theoretical background introduced an overview of adolescence which is the fifth of eight stages of development, the kind of psychological change that occurs during this phase such as identity crisis and what elements impacts it the most from which this dissertation discussed, the environment and the moratorium. Additionally, through dystopian fiction it is apparent that identity crises are a side effect of individualism loss and conformity spread in oppressed societies. It is a common theme of the popular young adult's literature that includes dystopian fiction nowadays.

This dissertation also sought to investigate the relationship between totalitarian system and identity crisis in the existing literature. It seemed that there is a strong connection between the environment the character lives in and the crisis of identity he suffers from through the concept of docile bodies and Panopticon schema brought by Foucault in his book *Discipline and Punishment* .in addition, subjected individuals as suggested in “ideology and ideological state apparatuses” written by Louis Althusser . D-503 is an example of characters that lost their individual identity out of living in a structured society under totalitarian rule and constant surveillance. It seemed that out of all totalitarian characteristics, the routine, the ideology, the propaganda and surveillance are the one that affected his identity crisis the most.

Totalitarianism as a theme is thoroughly present in *Divergent*. Most of the common characteristics of totalitarianism are covered in the novel, the ideology embodied in the system of factions, the single party rule of Abnegation, constant surveillance and the

General Conclusion

monopoly of weapons of the Dauntless faction, the charismatic leader presented by Jeanine Matthews and conditioning and coercion of serums such as happiness serum of Amity and truth serum of Candor. All of which, they prove that the state and the system in *Divergent* is totalitarian. Additionally the focus on Triss's journey of self-quest, the setting, the post-apocalyptic era and futuristic time frames, the science fiction element such as hallucination serums and the structured society that lost the individuality of its people all contribute to deal with futuristic Chicago as a suitable Dystopia and a suitable totalitarian state to investigate the impact of totalitarianism on identity crisis formation in a dystopian context.

Divergent is regarded as both a young adults and dystopian novel, therefore, the focus will be on one main character and in the case of *Divergent* that is Beatrice Prior. The novel follows Beatrice's journey into becoming Triss the divergent starting from her life back in the Abnegation sector to her transformation to the Dauntless compound and continues with the war breakout. During her time in Abnegation sector and Dauntless compound, Triss suffers many identity crisis depending on the situation she is put through. When her curiosity is banned or her selfishness is showing, Triss identity crisis increases as she doesn't consider herself an Abnegation member. Her inability of adapting to the Abnegation lifestyle proves her that she doesn't belong to her family faction which causes her distress and lead her to question her own identity. When she chooses to become a Dauntless and split up with her brother and family, Triss is once again struggling with adapting to her new faction, her old identity keeps showing and that adds to her confusion about who's she really is. With the increase in violence and brutality of initiation exams, Triss finds herself in a new environment that is very different than the Abnegation sector, an environment that pushes her to be someone she is not acquainted with. Moreover, finding out that she is a divergent only increases her identity crisis since divergence is mysterious to her; no one seems to know what it is and Tori refuses to tell her what it is. It is when the war breaks out and Triss meets her

General Conclusion

mother that she is able to know what divergence is, yet until that moment of revelation, Triss is always in a crisis of identification.

Finally, from the study conducted, one can deduce that although Triss is an adolescent that normally goes through identity crisis, and although her divergence means her ability to identify as five different identities according to the system of faction, Triss identity crisis is a result of her living in a totalitarian state. She is deprived from individuality, expression of opinion and thoughts, and obliged to adapt to the collective identity of the faction she's been part of, all of which adds to her distress about her true self and increases her identity confusion. As a conclusion, in a dystopian context where Triss lives under the control of a totalitarian regime, her identity crisis is pushed to the extreme that she is incapable of establishing her true self all by herself.

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