Sydney Patterson

Instructor Name

15 January 15, 2020

Comparison Literary Essay-1984 and North Korea

*1984* shows a dystopian society ruled by an oppressive dictator, Big Brother. He uses his power to control the minds of his people to make sure that his power never ends. There are multiple aspects established in the society of North Korea. Orwell’s *1984* becomes a parallel to the world by showing the dystopian society of North Korea under the relentless ruler (Hitchens).

The phrase, “war is peace” has been used by George Orwell in the novel *1984*. They believe that engaging in war will bring peace to the nation. The slogan means that though the country is going through war but people are behaving like there is peace everywhere. They are living peacefully as if nothing happened. It simply means that the party has created this slogan to ensure its power and control over the people. In war time, people unite and focus together on their common enemy and they put less focus on their lives and how unhappy they are. Hence, this creates an easy path for the ruling party.

*He read his slogan that war is peace.* (Orwell).

The purpose of this slogan was to establish everlasting power over the citizens and force them to follow their lead. This motto is written on a government building, “Ministry of Truth” which is in contradiction with the government’s actions. Government removes the thinking ability from its people by oppressing them. They destroy their individuality and independence by inducing fear in environment. By weakening the power and independence of minds, the government forces them to live in a constant terror induced atmosphere. People have to accept everything even if it is illogical.

In the novel, the party deliberately forces its subjects to have faith that war can pave their path towards peace. It brings devotion to the nation and patriotism to the country. War shows that people are sacrificing for their country. This shows their devotion to country and government.

North Korea is just like Orwell’s *1984*. The people are deprived of human rights. At the time when this novel was written, Kim Sung Il set up his government. The living standard of people is terrible. There is a constant shortage of food and ration. North Korea is one of the most militarized societies on Earth. The country spends a huge amount of its GDP on military and there are 1.2 million active soldiers and seven million are in reserve. The country always remains in a state of war and is heavily guarded by the military (Henderson). The media spreads messages of depicting only a one-sided opinion of Kim Jong-un to manipulate citizens and convinces them to join the military force. *If you want to see the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face—forever* (Orwell).

They have a secret police that convicts rebellious citizens, brutally tortures them and exposes them to their worst fears until they submit themselves to the government.

The second slogan of the party is “freedom is slavery”. These contradictory words states that freedom is the cause of pursuing pleasures in life and neglecting all other important matters. People start to fear from stepping out from their comfort zone. This can lead any country to destruction.

*‘Freedom is the freedom to say that two plus two make four. If that is granted all else follows”* (Orwell).

The party breaks down the thinking ability of the citizens and deprives them of rational thinking. They have tuned the people into listening, accepting, and believing anything that they tell them.

They transmit in the society that anyone whoever is independent and not under society’s control then he is unsuccessful. He is never going to achieve success in his life. As mentioned in the novel, a society based on free will of its citizens results in chaos and devastation. The slogan is changeable; if freedom is slavery, then slavery is freedom. The party communicates the message that whoever is ready to submit himself to the society’s collective will, that is the will of the party, will be safe from every danger. He will not lack anything. Society will define what is good and what is bad. Hence, North Korea is a perfect example of *1984*. The citizens live under surveillance of the government and they have to follow every rule of the government. They are not allowed to leave their country. The people are also subjected to follow the instructions for keeping their facial expressions and nonverbal communication. If they will not follow the guidelines, then they are treated as political prisoners and tortured to death. It is an example of enslaving yourself to the government and following their command to free yourself from any harm (Frank). The citizens are not free to live according to their own desires.

The third motto of Big Brother mentioned in *1984* is, ignorance is strength. The citizens are demanded to accept what the government offers them and wants them to accept. They are forced to ignore truth and accept irrationality.

*Orthodoxy means not thinking—not needing to think. Orthodoxy is unconsciousness* (Orwell).

Ignorance helps the government to establish its monopoly in society. This slogan simply means people must stay unaware of the facts. In this way, they would not be able to questions the government. Since the beginning of the novel, the idea of “ignorance is strength” is incorporated. According to Orwell, in his novel, the main idea behind this slogan is “the power of government” (Grade fixers).

People need to pretend to be ignorant. *Few people who confessed to facts had vanished and no one knows that they are alive or dead. Then suddenly they come forth and to accept their crime* (Orwell). There is a similarity between the novel and the dictatorship of North Korea. North Korea is known for its harsh living environment and is subjected to extreme censorship of all kind of information. This measure was taken by Kim Jong- un to secure the loyalty and ignorance of the people. They have developed their own computer operating system to filter the information which they want to show to the world. This computer system is capable of surveillance as well. People’s personal lives are not private in North Korea. They are being watched by the government either by cameras embedded in their television screens or by a huge network of spies around the country. It is evident that they are still living in *1984*. The people of North Korea are given the impression of having access to all the information but in reality, they are only getting what the government wants them to see.

*Whoever is going to take hold of past, the same person would control present and future.* (Orwell).

It means that changing facts in the past made it easier for Big Brother to control his subjects and ask them to act upon his instructions. It is still true in the case of North Korea. The government is controlling its people from an economic and social point of view. That is how they can make their people fear something that they do not even know exists. Furthermore, the Koreans are made to believe that Kim II Sung is the eternal president. Stories claim that his birth caused the change of seasons. Their other believe is that Jing-il can control weather through his mind and thoughts. Moreover, they believe that he started talking when he was just six months old.

**Conclusion**

Immense power and control is what every government wants. Orwell portrayed this effectively in his novel *1984* through the party that manipulates people through fear and ignorance. North Korea and Oceania are both totalitarian governments that destroyed the identity of individuals so that the government can practice their authority on them. The government inculcate in their minds that they are better nation than most the nations around the world. They are lucky ones to have all the privileges and facilities in their lives. But in reality, this nation is deprived of many basic human rights. Millions of Koreans have suffered at the hands of North Korea and now it has developed nuclear arsenal, so they are capable of harming the civilians as well with these fatal weapons. Moreover, Korea creates hate towards other nations in its people. They also brainwash young children to idealize a corrupt and totalitarian government. Another reason for his severe oppression is that he wants to prove to his people that he is capable of operating the country in a similar way as his father. In a nutshell, Korea is still practicing the slogans from George Orwell to show its everlasting power and control over citizens.

# Works Cited:

Frank, Natalie. "The meaning of war is peace, freedom is slavery and ignorance is strength on Orwell's 1984." *Owlcation* (2018 ): 4.

*Grade fixers* . 27 February 2019. 15 January 2020.

henderson, Callum. *vt news* . 2 February 2018. 15 January 2020.

Hitchens, Christopher. "Worse Than 1984 ." *Slate* (2005 ): 3.

Orwell, George. *1984*. London: Harvill Secker , 1949.

Scott, Katie and Caroline Arscott. *Manifestations of Venus: Art and Sexuality*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000.