



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

**VARIATION OF DYSTOPIAN CONTROL SYSTEMS IN SELECTED NOVELS BY  
HUXLEY, VONNEGUT, AND DELILLO**

**RUZBEH BABAEE KHORZUGHI**

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**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,  
in Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**July 2014**

## DEDICATION

*To my dear wife, Farahanaz  
and*

*My parents, Behjat and Siamak*

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment  
of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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**Chair: Associate Prof. Wan Roselezam Binti Wan Yahya, PhD.**  
**Faculty: Modern Languages and Communication**

During a time of emergence of new technologies, six outstanding pieces of dystopian fiction appeared from three unconventional writers: Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, and *Ape and Essence*; Kurt Vonnegut's *Player Piano*, and *Slaughterhouse-Five*; and Don DeLillo's *White Noise*, and *Cosmopolis*. The present thesis investigates the dystopian essence of these narratives from the perspectives of technological advances and human manipulation. It is an exploration of the ways in which these texts represent the formation of dystopia and the manipulation of human being through technological developments in cyborg culture from the early twentieth century to the early twenty-first century. My reading of dystopia is an investigation of well established critical materials by such scholars as Tom Moylan, Chad Walsh, Mark R. Hillegas, M. Keith Booker, and Erika Gottlieb among some others. Throughout the analysis, I highlight human manipulation via technology in these six dystopias through the theories of Donna Haraway, Michele Foucault, Katherine Hayles, Dani Cavallaro, Norbert Wiener, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari.

This study examines chronologically the idea of human manipulation in cyborg culture that promised us utopia through a combination of the human and the nonhuman, or humans and machines. But, the utopian desires of cyborg culture have led to dystopian societies in which human dignity is devalued. In this study, I consider human manipulation through biopower (disciplinary systems), cybernetics, and cyberspace as postmodern control systems that have trapped human beings in technological, mechanized, and simulated environments.

I also attempt to show the variations in technological dystopian societies in selected dystopian narratives. I examine Huxley's selected dystopian novels via the concept of biopower that manipulates people and turns them into docile bodies with disciplined minds. I investigate Huxley's *Brave New World* and *Ape and Essence* to show how mind manipulation will guarantee and reinforce body manipulation. For Huxley, in order to convert human beings into docile productive bodies, their minds must believe in the righteousness of the actions of the body.

Moreover, I propose cybernetics as a significant control system while investigating and understanding dystopian fiction. In this study, I examine the ways in which individuals in the dystopian societies of *Player Piano* and *Slaughterhouse-Five* are

manipulated and exploited via cybernetics in the mid twentieth century. Cybernetics marginalizes human beings and turns them into intelligent machines and thoughtless consumer bodies. Cybernetics imposes a quite different kind of control over individuals. It is not a form of control that directly confines freedom of action; instead it is a subtle electronic control that affects human mind.

Furthermore, I suggest that DeLillo's *White Noise* and *Comopolis* are dystopian narratives about human body control in cyberspace in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. DeLillo demonstrates that the visible world is generated via a hidden informational world. He also suggests this invisible informational world is influenced by the visible world. Therefore, technology can manipulate the body based on particular cultural requirements. DeLillo shows that cyberspace creates simulation and hyperreality in order to entrap the human body. For DeLillo, in cyberspace people become disembodied and enmeshed into pattern, access, megalomania and paranoid schizophrenia.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**PERBEZAAN TENTANG SISTEM KAWALAN DYSTOPIAN  
DALAM NOVEL HUXLEY, VONNEGUT, DAN DELILLO**

Oleh

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Semasa kewujudan teknologi baru dunia, enam fiksyen *dystopian* ulung muncul daripada tiga penulis bukan konvensional: *Brave New World*, dan *Ape and Essence* oleh Aldous Huxley; *Player Piano*, and *Slaughterhouse-Five* oleh Kurt Vonnegut dan *White Noise*, dan *Cosmopolis* oleh Don DeLillo. Kajian ini menganalisis sifat *dystopian* terhadap usaha ini melalui kemajuan teknologi dan manipulasi manusia. Ia merupakan satu penyelidikan cara usaha ini mewakili pembentukan *dystopia* dan manipulasi manusia melalui perkembangan teknologi dalam budaya *cyborg* dari awal abad kedua puluh hingga awal abad kedua puluh satu. Tafsiran saya tentang *dystopia* adalah ekstrapolasi daripada bahan-bahan kritikal yang mantap oleh sarjana terkenal seperti Tom Moylan, Chad Walsh, Mark R. Hillegas, M. Keith Booker, dan Erika Gottlieb. Keseluruhan analisis menunjukkan manipulasi manusia melalui teknologi dalam enam fiksyen ini melalui teori Donna Haraway, Michele Foucault, Katherine Hayles, Dani Cavallaro, Norbert Wiener, Gilles Deleuze dan Felix Guattari.

Kronologi kajian ialah mengkaji idea manipulasi manusia dalam budaya *cyborg* yang menjanjikan kepada kita utopia melalui gabungan manusia dan bukan manusia, atau manusia dan mesin. Tetapi, keinginan utopia budaya *cyborg* telah membawa kepada masyarakat *dystopian* yang kurang nilai maruah manusia. Dalam kajian ini, saya menganggap manipulasi manusia melalui *biopower* (sistem disiplin), sibernatik, dan ruang siber sebagai sistem mengawal pascamoden yang manusia telah terperangkap dalam persekitaran teknologi, jentera, dan simulasi.

Saya juga cuba untuk menunjukkan variasi teknologi masyarakat *dystopian* dalam beberapa penceritaan *dystopian*. Saya mengkaji beberapa novel *dystopian* Huxley yang dipilih melalui konsep *biopower* yang memanipulasi manusia yang sentiasa menurut perintah dan berdisiplin minda. Kajian saya mendapati bahawa Huxley dalam *Brave New World*, dan *Ape and Essence* mendedahkan bahawa, untuk mencapai sepenuhnya kawalan terhadap manusia, kedua-dua badan dan minda mesti dimanipulasi. Huxley menunjukkan bahawa manipulasi fikiran akan menjamin dan

mengukuhkan manipulasi badan. Bagi Huxley, untuk menukar manusia sentiasa menurut perintah dan produktif, fikiran mereka harus percaya kepada kebenaran dan perlakuan tubuh badan.

Selain itu, saya mencadangkan bahawa sibernatik sebagai sistem kawalan signifikan dalam penyelidikan dan pemahaman fiksyen *dystopian*. Dalam kajian ini juga, saya melihat cara individu dalam masyarakat *dystopian* melalui novel *Player Piano, and Slaughterhouse-Five* dimanipulasi dan dieksploitasi melalui sibernatik pada pertengahan abad kedua puluh. Sibernatik menganaktirikan manusia dan berubah menjadi mesin pintar dan pengguna tanpa fikiran. Sibernatik melaksanakan jenis kawalan yang agak berbeza terhadap individu. Kawalan ini berdasarkan formula yang tidak ketara termasuk minda dan jiwa dalam batas waktu yang ditetapkan seperti yang mereka rancang dan inginkan. Sibernatik bukan kawalan yang secara langsung yang membatasi kebebasan tindakan, dan tidak juga memaksa individu untuk mempunyai adab yang telah ditetapkan, kerana pada dasarnya kebebasan moden mementingkan penghormatan, sebaliknya ia adalah satu kapilari elektronik dan kawalan sibernetik, yang berkaitan dengan pedagogi yang merangsang keperluan, yang konsumsi dan keinginan golongan pemerintah.

Selain itu, saya mencadangkan bahawa karangan DeLillo *White Noise* dan *Comopolis* adalah kisah *dystopian* terhadap kawalan tubuh manusia dalam ruang siber pada akhir abad kedua puluh dan awal abad kedua puluh. DeLillo menunjukkan bahawa dunia boleh dilihat dihasilkan melalui dunia maklumat tersembunyi. Beliau juga mencadangkan dunia maklumat yang tidak kelihatan dipengaruhi oleh dunia nyata. Oleh itu, teknologi boleh memanipulasi badan berdasarkan keperluan budaya tertentu. DeLillo menunjukkan bahawa ruang siber mewujudkan simulasi dan *hyperreality* untuk memerangkap tubuh manusia. Bagi DeLillo, ruang siber orang menjadi *disembodies* dan bertukar menjadi corak, akses, *megalomania* dan *schizophrenia paranoid*.

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