The (Ab)Use of the Body in Contemporary Anglophone Dystopia

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IZJAVA O AKADEMSKOJ ČESTITOSTI

Izjavljujem s punom materijalnom i moralnom odgovornošću da sam ovaj rad samostalno napravio/la te da u njemu nema kopiranih ili prepisanih dijelova teksta tuđih radova, a da nisu označeni kao citati s napisanim izvorom odakle su preneseni. Svojim vlastoručnim potpisom potvrđujem da sam suglasan/na da Filozofski fakultet Osijek trajno pohrani i javno objavi ovaj moj rad u internetskoj bazi doktorskih radova knjižnice Filozofskog fakulteta Osijek, knjižnice Sveučilišta Josipa Jurja Strossmayera u Osijeku i Nacionalne i sveučilišne knjižnice u Zagrebu.

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To all the women in my life, for teaching me everything I know.

To my husband, for showing me how far I can go.

Above all, to Ljubica. In all the years we have worked together, I have come to realise it is no coincidence you have the same name as my mother.

Thank you.

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

With its scintillating displacement techniques which expose disturbing socio-political and cultural truths, dystopia is among the most socially charged genres to ever exist. Embedded in its predecessor, utopia, since ancient times and the now-classic philosophical and political texts, dystopia has closely followed and responded to all major changes in the history of humanity. Initially constituting philosophical discussions on alternative organisations of states and societies, dystopia has more or less subtly underpinned scientific and technological leaps since the Renaissance and became, in the twentieth century, a distinguished literary genre which openly "fus[es] two fears: the fear of utopia and the fear of technology" (Beauchamp 53). Inaugurated with the "canonical dystopian trilogy" (Jameson qtd. in Greenberg and Waddell 6), made up of Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We* (first English translation in 1924),[1] Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932), and George Orwell's *1984* (1949), dystopia is commonly defined "as the opposite of 'utopia', the bad place versus what we imagine to be the good place, the secular version of paradise" (Claeys, *Dystopia* 4). Often futuristic, literary dystopia is thus a hellish vision of society marked by criticism of the present state, which has also surged in film and other media in the twenty-first century.

The prevalence of dystopian visions in the last two centuries, frequent to the point that they entered the realm of popular culture and became a subgenre of young adult fiction, resulted mainly from the thwarted impetuses of Enlightenment; specifically, its blind faith in the supremacy of rationality and humanity, and the rapid development of science and technology (Booker, *Dystopian Impulse* 6). Contrasting the scientific and technological discoveries and innovations since the seventeenth century, which promised the limitless progress and advancement of human life, the major phenomena that marked the modern age showed that intellectual and technological advancements do not necessarily ensure improved humanity (Walsh 27; Vieira 18). Supported by rampant totalitarian regimes and two World Wars, which exhibited ingenious technology in the service of *in*humanity, the additional modern crises of overpopulation and pollution have led to what the seminal dystopian critics Gregory Claeys and Lyman Tower Sargent call "an unparalleled outpouring" of dystopian texts, which "attempt to confront the new realities of modernity" (209). Predicting the horrors of the machines' technological rule over humans and the loss of

[1] Zamyatin wrote the novel between 1920 and 1921, but it was not published in the Soviet Union until 1988.

individuality in favour of conformity and capitalist profit, dystopia has maintained its appeal to this day. The recent Covid-19 pandemic, echoing many apocalyptic scenarios imagined by writers and screenwriters long before its global outbreak in 2020,[2] has also proved that dystopian visions of the future and their farsighted social commentary are still as relevant as ever. As such, dystopia is a worthy field of study due to its ongoing relevance and popularity since it provides valuable insight into both the existing and developing social, cultural, political, technological, and other phenomena.[3]

Moreover, violence – in both its physical and psychological form – has always been a driving force in literature (Fifield 116). From the classic pagan and Christian texts, the "creative ways in which to inflict and suffer pain" have long inspired literary authors, yet they have become "particularly interesting" in the modern age (116). Dystopia is among the modern literary genres which draw profusely on violence and suffering.[4] In fact, violence is said to be the key topic in dystopian visions (Claeys and Tower Sargent 525). Repressive totalitarian societies in many literary dystopias focus on the clash between the encroaching governmental control and (ab)use[5] of individuals who comprise those societies, and who often try to rebel against the oppression in more or less violent ways. The target of various manifestations of these dystopian regimes is the individual human body, which is severely controlled and restricted in its everyday life and often exposed to abuse such as branding, torture, rape, and execution. With the exception of Huxley's *Brave New World*, which includes a highly physical and technological (ab)use of individuals before birth, performed through a literal production of human beings on assembly lines by way of genetic engineering, but refrains from explicit physical violence set on inflicting pain (Walsh 98) on adult individuals, the "canonical" dystopias by Zamyatin and Orwell (Baccolini and Moylan 1)

[2] For instance, Stephen King's *The Stand* (1978), Dean Koontz's *The Eyes of Darkness* (1981), Emily St. John Mandel's *Station Eleven* (2014), and Steven Soderbergh's film *Contagion* (2011), to name just a few.

[3] In his book *From Utopia to Nightmare* (1972), Chad Walsh puts dystopia at the intersection of literature, sociology, politics, psychology, philosophy, ethics, and theology (12).

[4] This dissertation uses the term *modern* in the sense of *contemporary* or related to the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, and not *Modernist*. Likewise, it applies Foucault's description of postmodern societies to contemporary societies in the selected corpus of novels, since all of them are contemporary (written from the 1970s onwards), but not necessarily *Postmodernist* (featuring specific postmodernist style of narration and themes).

[5] This dissertation explores the specific ways in which the dystopian use of individuals turns to abuse and employs the ambiguous term (ab)use to allude to the intertwined nature of utopian and dystopian texts and their regimes, which may envision forms of social organisation that contribute to a productive and useful way of life for individuals, but whose methods are often revealed to be oppressive and abusive. Also, the term (ab)use is used due to the recognition that in civilised societies there must exist certain socio-political rules and that individuals must contribute in order for the society to function, but that the useful societal mechanisms are often underpinned by the desire for control and (capitalist) profit, thus transforming use to violence and abuse.

employ violence in the form of psychological torture, restriction of movement, and death penalty aimed at individuals straying outside the imposed societal limits.

However, even though dystopias, Orwell's in particular, have become synonymous with explicit violence, critics such as M. Keith Booker argue that these dystopias, and others that have followed, are actually "focused less on the bodies of its subjects and more on their minds" (*Dystopian Impulse* 74). This means that psychological torture, terror, control, and manipulation take precedence over explicit violence, torture, and murder. This corresponds to Michel Foucault's view that contemporary societies have replaced the sovereign-based system and its exercise of power by publicly torturing and executing its transgressors, with the "calculated management of life" (*History of Sexuality* 139–40). As a consequence, more insidious ways of control are exercised within the system's many institutions, but without deliberate public displays of violence and executions. Accordingly, Booker argues that the canonical dystopian regimes in *We* and *1984*, and especially in *Brave New World*, are capable of physical violence and torture, "but they rely primarily on psychological tortures, and even these are administered under a veil of secrecy that works far differently from the spectacular public punishments . . . as a warning to potential opponents" (*Dystopian Impulse* 73). Thus, these canonical regimes rule through constant surveillance, physical restriction, psychological intimidation, peer pressure, and above all the proclaimed necessity of protecting life, while they see the death penalty as bad and undesirable, to be avoided at all costs. These other, subtler, forms of (ab)use in contemporary societies are termed by Foucault as biopolitics, a set of practices which aim "perhaps no longer to kill, but to invest life through and through" (*History of Sexuality* 139).

Yet, just because they are – at times, but not always – performed away from the public eye and presented as necessary for the protection and welfare of society, the biopolitical mechanisms of (ab)use are not any less violent nor destructive in their effects on the individual's body. In fact, as this dissertation argues, many contemporary dystopias merge the public spectacle of physical torture present in the old systems and the biopolitical "invest[ment]" of life (Foucault, *History of Sexuality* 139), which results in explicit and violent oppression that glorifies rape, mutilation, and death of the body under the pretence of protection. The aim of this dissertation is to show that dystopias of a recent origin – more precisely, selected Anglophone dystopian novels from the 1970s to 2010s – provide a more explicit depiction of the mistreatment of the body in terms of violence to which an individual's body is exposed. Forgoing traditional regimes with more or less

familiar rulers or enemies which, albeit in theory, at least offer the possibility of another way of life if the individual removes themselves from society or overthrows the government, contemporary dystopias focus on the internal mechanisms of subjugation that are instilled in the minds and bodies of contemporary individuals, disabling thus any chance of escape. More to the point, in many contemporary dystopian novels, physical violence, torture, and death are no longer considered detestable punishments for individuals straying or rebelling against the regime. Violence and abuse have become a desirable, necessary, and even celebrated way of functioning in the contemporary world. In certain dystopias to be analysed in this dissertation, a spectacular, gory death is glorified, and presented as the ultimate goal toward which individuals should strive, as violence suffuses their daily lives, and propels them toward destruction. Additionally, in the early canonical dystopias, being punished by death was a result of not being suitable or useful within society. Now, the biopolitical notions of utility and protection of life are, paradoxically, often achieved through death, therefore making death a social goal. Based on these and other observations, this dissertation will explore the ways in which selected contemporary Anglophone dystopian novels portray the (ab)use of the bodies of individuals pertaining to societies they depict to show that their treatment, under the guise of protecting life, is even more explicit, violent, and cruel than in the canonical dystopias.

The same hypothesis will be applied to the analysis of young adult dystopias since they often exhibit bleakness and violence that surpass the ones in their adult counterparts, despite the fact that, according to Carrie Hintz and Elaine Ostry, young adult fiction should be marked by hope and entertainment due to their young and therefore impressionable audience (7). Considering the overlap of rebellious individuals as central figures in both dystopias and young adult literature, the subgenre has exploded into "the most obvious phenomenon in the twenty first century" (Claeys and Tower Sargent 525), which requires critical attention. As such, young adult dystopia is a worthy topic of research because its many renditions offer insights into how young adults (should) navigate the increasingly technologised, dehumanised, and violent contemporary world.

To support the claim that contemporary Anglophone dystopias, for adults and young adults alike, portray more explicit instances of body (ab)use, this dissertation will mainly, but not exclusively, employ philosophical, sociological, and psychoanalytical theories by Michel Foucault, Louis Althusser, Hannah Arendt, and Sigmund Freud. Specifically, the dissertation will use Foucault's notions of "docile bodies" (*Discipline and Punish* 135), "the public spectacle" of

torture (Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 7), the "*Panopticon*" (200), and "*biopolitics*" (*History of Sexuality* 139, emphasis in the original). In addition, Foucault's systemic production of docile bodies and the transfer of power in contemporary societies from the figure of the sovereign to multiple institutions representing invisible powers that be (*History of Sexuality* 135–37) will be compared to Althusser's ideological "interpellation" of social institutions with the aim of "constituting subjects" (188) and exerting power over them. Next, Foucault's discursive approach to sexuality will be contrasted to Freud's view of sexuality as a natural (human) instinct. Put simply, the opposing attitudes according to which sexuality is manipulated by the State by being either encouraged (as per Foucault) or suppressed (as per Freud) will be used to explore the contemporary dystopias' take on human sexuality as a form of (ab)use and exploitation of individuals.

In connection to that, Freud's notions of "life drive" or Eros and "death drive" or Thanatos (*The Ego and the Id* 37–38) will be particularly useful, as well as the "unconscious" and the relationship between the constituents of the three-part human psyche: ego, id, and superego (11–22). The analysis will employ these terms to explain how contemporary regimes manipulate individuals toward self-destruction and present death as something to be desired. Finally, Hannah Arendt's discussions on power and violence, found in her book *On Violence* (1970), will be used to explore whether violence and power truly oppose each other, as she claims (56), and whether contemporary biopolitical regimes truly avoid violence in their (mis)treatment of individuals and their bodies despite the omnipotent biopolitical investment of life (Foucault, *History of Sexuality* 139). All concepts crucial for the analysis of the selected corpus of seventeen contemporary Anglophone dystopian novels will be explained in detail in the next chapter of this dissertation, titled "Dystopia and the Body in Literary Theory," in order to establish the methodological framework for analysis.

Furthermore, the chapter will establish key generic terms; namely, the definition of *dystopia* as related to its predecessor, *utopia*. It will then outline the historical development of the dystopian genre and the causes of its upsurge and elaborate on the specific traits of dystopian societies related to *violence* and *(ab)use* of its individuals, based on the works of seminal dystopian critics, such as M. Keith Booker, Krishan Kumar, Gregory Claeys, Lyman Tower Sargent, Fatima Vieira, Raffaella Baccolini, and Tom Moylan. In addition, the chapter will give an overview of the concept of *body* in literary theory, and of its treatment in canonical literary dystopias, with an emphasis on physical violence through the above-mentioned Foucauldian theories on discipline and biopolitics,

and Arendt's notion of violence as "antithetical" to power (Arendt 56; Frazer 185). Finally, the chapter will delineate Foucault's take on the discursive power of sexuality and Freud's notion of sexual repression. This is to pave the way toward the analysis of the treatment of sexuality and procreation in the selected corpus of contemporary dystopias.

By employing the said key terms and theories, the third chapter of this dissertation, "The (Ab)Use of the Body in Contemporary Anglophone Dystopia," will give a detailed analysis of the (ab)use of the body in six contemporary adult dystopias: J. G. Ballard's *Crash* (1973), P. D. James's *Children of Men* (1992), David Mitchell's *Cloud Atlas* (2004), Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* (2005), Don DeLillo's *Zero K* (2016), and Naomi Alderman's *The Power* (2016), in six corresponding subchapters.

The first subchapter, titled "J. G. Ballard's *Crash*: Car Crashes as *Spectacular* Fetishes," will merge the already-existing Freudian psychoanalytical analyses of the novel with the dystopian tradition. This will help to explore the view that violence is not only the means of treating a contemporary human body by the capitalist and consumerist systems, but also an inherent desire of contemporary individuals who are in turn numbed by the dystopian commodification and loss of individualisation. In arguing that contemporary dystopias are ever more violent, *Crash* will be juxtaposed to the equally capitalist and consumerist society of Huxley's *Brave New World* in order to show how the same topic – the society's physical and psychological usage of bodies – can rely on the pleasure principle in an almost opposite way. While Huxley's dystopia relied exclusively on the principle of Eros and eliminated overt gore and violence, *Crash* will be shown as merging Eros and Thanatos to provide a much more violent rendition of the same concept, where sex rules the lives of contemporary protagonists, but in such a manner that it exacts them to desire violence and death, not avoid them.

The second subchapter, "P. D. James's *Children of Men*: The Young's Violent Delights and the Old's Violent Ends," will rely on Foucault's theories of biopolitics and spectacle to analyse "a world where over-population together with science and technology which are used solely for human's comfort drive the species to the brink of extinction" (Çetiner 651). In a dark twist on the Huxleyan society, which encourages citizens to have sex but forbids them from procreating, James envisions a world in which citizens are encouraged to have sex in an attempt to regain the lost ability to procreate. The inability to procreate and the resulting lack of desire for sex have caused hopelessness and extreme forms of violence to become society's main guiding principles in this

contemporary dystopia. Ruled by the self-appointed government that pretends to protect its citizens, this fictional society is made up of the sadistic Omegas, the youngest generation on Earth, who habitually torture and kill people in the streets, the criminals who are either sent to penal colonies and experience abuse far worse than their crimes or are employed as police officers, the severely exploited immigrants with no civil rights, and the senior citizens, who are either urged to commit suicide on their own or in a State-condoned mass spectacle. Set in a police state that condones everyday violence and murderous public spectacles and punishes citizens by death not for opposing the system but for the simple *sin* of growing old, James's contemporary dystopia will be shown as exceeding in brutality Orwell's hidden "torture chamber[s]" (Walsh 112).

The third subchapter, "David Mitchell's *Cloud Atlas*: Bodies as Food for Biopolitical Capitalism," will focus on the dystopian sequence of this postmodernist novel, "The Orison of Sonmi~451." In it, the exploitation of female clones within the corpocracy of Nea So Copros, or the twenty-second century fictional Korea, will be explored with the help of Foucault's postulates on biopolitics, docile bodies, public spectacle of torture, and execution. On the one hand, Foucault's claims of the biopolitical investment of life in the form of constant monitoring, restriction of free will and movement, and docility with the aim of utility (*Discipline and Punish* 25) will be observed in relation to the cloned servers of Papa Song Corp "dinery" (Mitchell 187). On the other hand, the Corp's regular execution of clones and recycling of their bodies for further capitalist use will be compared to the biopolitical view of death as undesirable and reserved only for the opponents of the regime, as was the case in Orwell's and Zamyatin's canonical dystopias.

The fourth subchapter, "Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*: Human Bodies as Spare Parts," will also analyse the exploitation of human clones by employing Foucauldian notions of biopolitics, docile bodies, utility, and removal of the public spectacle. It also will compare these notions to Althusser's interpellation of contemporary individuals by the State institutions to constitute subjects that enable their own oppression by internalising its mechanisms. Since Foucault elaborates on the societal transformation from the "death-administering" to "life-administering" forces (*History of Sexuality* 136) that control the body of contemporary individuals, the aim is to show that Ishiguro's contemporary dystopia adheres to the State-regulated methods of control, such as removal of the public spectacle of torture and biopolitical emphasis on the protection of human health and life, but that it nevertheless "administers" death. Secluded from mainstream society, the clones are simultaneously punished and rewarded by death since dying for

the well-being of the people who will receive their organs is the clones' utmost form of achievement and fulfilment of the need for utility in this contemporary dystopian society. Hence, the aim of this subchapter is to show that *Never Let Me Go*, as a contemporary dystopia, depicts a more violent abuse of the body as well as a changed attitude to death, which is presented as desirable for contemporary individuals.

The fifth subchapter, "Don DeLillo's *Zero K*: Dying Sooner is Better," will also discuss the attitude to death in this contemporary dystopia as well as the mechanisms of abuse under the guise of life protection; specifically, the biopolitical treatment of the human body in relation to trying to control death as yet another organic (human) process. Aiming to prevent death through technological manipulation, that is, the cryonic freezing and removal of organs from the body, including the brain, DeLillo's dystopia criticises another human-life contingency being overtaken by science and technology. Allegedly voluntary for those who wish to experience a new dimension of reality, the process will be revealed as a biopolitical manipulation that uses dystopian strategies of violent spectacles and psychological torture and intimidation. Additionally, Freud's theory of the death instinct as a return to a previous state of quietness (Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* 56), available through death, will be used to unmask the dystopian mechanisms behind the cryopreservation project which make the mutilation and death of individuals' bodies desirable.

The sixth and last subchapter devoted to adult dystopias in this dissertation will be "Naomi Alderman's *The Power*: (Wo)Men Rapists, Murderers, and Tyrants." Building on Margaret Atwood's seminal feminist dystopia *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), Alderman's contemporary dystopia reveals the long-lasting systemic abuse of female bodies by inverting the patriarchal supremacy of men based on their physical strength and concomitant social, religious, biopolitical, and other postulates that paint a negative picture of women. By reversing the established power scale and literally transferring the power into the hands of women, Alderman creates an inverted violent world in which boys are separated from girls for their own protection, in which men are afraid to walk the streets alone at night for fear of female attacks, and in which women wage wars, and torture, rape, and kill men. Replete with violence, which simultaneously exhibits the dystopian nature of both patriarchy and the potential matriarchy, *The Power* criticises the biopolitical manipulation of gendered dichotomies to render certain bodies as superior to others. In other words, the "cultural insistence on a male/female binary that derogates the female body in relation to the male inevitably leads to more intense policing of women's bodies and specific apparatuses

of control" (King 33). Using the Foucauldian lens of biopolitics, updated by feminist criticism, and Hannah Arendt's view of the power/violence dichotomy, the subchapter will show that the allegedly subtle contemporary biopolitical power, which is omnipotent in its effects on the (fe)male bodies, still relies on violence.

The next main chapter, "The (Ab)Use of the Body in Young Adult Contemporary Anglophone Dystopia," will focus on young adult dystopias and their treatment of the body. According to Claeys and Tower Sargent, young adult dystopia is a prominent phenomenon that has marked the current century (525). Since it is also crucial "in shaping the values of children and young people" (Bradford et al. 2) who read it, this dissertation hopes to expand the knowledge related to young readers, their values and position in contemporary society, contributing thus to the area of YA literature too. For this reason, the subchapter "The Popularity of Young Adult Dystopia" will delineate the reasons both why YA literature is so often written in the dystopian genre, with violence permeating young adult texts, and what makes the subgenre so popular. The next three subchapters will provide an analysis of three young adult dystopian series: Scott Westerfeld's *Uglies* (*Uglies* (2005), *Pretties* (2005), *Specials* (2006), and *Extras* (2007)), Neal Shusterman's *Unwind Dystology* (*Unwind* (2007), *UnWholly* (2012), *UnSouled* (2013), and *UnDivided* (2014)), and Lauren DeStefano's *The Chemical Garden* (*Wither* (2011), *Fever* (2012), and *Sever* (2013)), respectively.

The first subchapter on young adult dystopias, "Scott Westerfeld's *Uglies*: Death of the Natural Body," will discuss the futuristic world in which all citizens must undergo a series of mandatory plastic surgeries upon turning sixteen. Transforming people from *uglies* to *pretties*, the procedure is justified as a social mechanism that eradicates prejudice, racism, and illnesses caused by an uneven distribution of attractive physical features among people. However, by employing the Foucauldian theory of biopolitics and docility, the professed "social equalizer" (Barnes 212), that is, the operation, will be revealed as a biopolitical mechanism enforced to subdue and control the population. Apart from abusing the young adults' bodies by exposing them to invasive surgery that alters their physical build and facial features, the government damages their brains in the process and turns them into docile bodies unable to resist oppression. Despite the supposed elimination of prejudice and the consequent protection of society, the surgery will be exposed as a dystopian mechanism with the introduction of *Specials*, people who undergo further surgeries and whose brain chemistry is additionally tampered with. By *killing* their natural bodies and

instincts, the government forces the Specials to seek ways of clearing their minds, which include violent spectacles and self-mutilation. By analysing the combination of body mutilation and capital punishment present in *Uglies*, the subchapter aims to present its abuse of teenage bodies as worse than in canonical dystopias.

The second subchapter, "Neal Shusterman's *Unwind Dystology*: Living in a Divided and Conquered State," will analyse the (ab)use of the body in Shusterman's four-part series. The main form of abuse is referred to as *unwinding*, and it implies a complete dismemberment of a healthy individual's body for the purpose of organ donation. According to this cruel practice condoned by the law passed in the aftermath of a civil war between those condoning abortion and those opposing it, the adolescent population between thirteen and eighteen can be unwound. This means that parents or guardians of problematic and/or unwanted adolescents can legally opt to have them killed by the State, and all their body parts are then used by others, mostly adults, who need them. Since this practice conflates overt abuse in the form of killing and ripping individuals' bodies apart and their use for the benefit of society at large, this subchapter will also rely on Foucault's theory on discipline and biopower, more specifically, on the monitoring and controlling under the pretence of increased humanity of contemporary societies (*Discipline and Punish* 7; *History of Sexuality* 138). In line with the thesis of this dissertation, however, the analysis will show that, although the spectacle of torture is removed from the public, this young adult dystopian society still retains capital punishment and executes individuals. Only now, it does it on a massive scale and presents it as beneficial. Also, aligning with the violent nature of young adult literature (Trites xi), the *Unwind Dystology* will show that teenagers see violence and, paradoxically, self-destruction as the only means of beating the system.

The third and final subchapter on young adult dystopias, "Lauren DeStefano's *The Chemical Garden*: Girls as Commodities for Procreation and Scientific Experimentation," will explore the biopolitical abuse of teenage bodies, mostly female ones, in the post-apocalyptic future. Characterised by the technophobia typical for dystopias and especially prominent in young adult dystopias, *The Chemical Garden* series imagines a world in which a biological virus caused by excessive technologisation of life and genetic experimentation has shortened the human lifespan to twenty-five for men and twenty for women. The radical circumstances demand early procreation in order to save the human species, so girls as young as thirteen are forced to procreate. As soon as they become biologically able to conceive, girls are abducted and forced to marry rich men,

who take on several wives at the same time to improve their chances of obtaining offspring. The polygamous social practice in which several young girls are made to marry one man and bear his children will be explored as yet another biopolitical mechanism which enables this contemporary dystopian society to mutilate, torture, and kill girls for the purpose of medical experimentation with the alleged aim of helping humanity. Based on this additional form of exploitation of teenage female bodies in DeStefano's dystopia, the aim is to show that it surpasses the violence and abuse in canonical dystopias and the seminal feminist *The Handmaid's Tale*.

The young adult dystopian series, which comprise the second part of the corpus of this dissertation, were selected based on Rebekah Fitzsimmons and Casey Alane Wilson's argument in *Beyond the Blockbusters. Themes and Trends in Contemporary Young Adult Fiction* (2020), which calls for the exploration of young adult (dystopian) texts outside the "hypercanon" (ix) created by texts such as *The Hunger Games* and *Divergent*. The aim is to contribute to "demonstrat[ing] that these novels represent not just a teen fad but a broader cultural moment and an emerging subgenre" (Fitzsimmons 5) worthy of academic research, to which this dissertation also strives to contribute.

2. DYSTOPIA AND THE BODY IN LITERARY THEORY

2.1. Dystopia: Terminological Conundrum

Even though dystopia developed as a recognizable literary genre in the early to mid-twentieth century – with its classical renditions such as Zamyatin's *We* (1924), Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932), and Orwell's *1984* (1949) – its roots can be traced way back into literary but also socio-cultural, political, philosophical, and religious history. In essence, the attempt at defining the term *dystopia* necessarily calls for a juxtaposition with its predecessor, *utopia*. While the latter is undisputedly attributed to Sir Thomas More and defined as an imaginary place with an ideal social organisation, based on "the Greek words 'eutopia' (good place) and 'outopia' (no place)" (Abrams and Harpham 378), the definition of dystopia as its antonym is somewhat more complex. Once again coined from "tópos," the Greek word denoting a place, yet now prefixed with "dys," meaning something bad or foul, dystopia represents "a diseased, bad, faulty, or unfavourable place" (Claeys, *Dystopia* 4). Used as such for the first time by John Stuart Mill (5), the term seems a logical opposite to the utopian "good place." However, in literature, there are other terms denoting similar nightmarish visions of a (future) society, such as *anti-utopia* (Baccolini and Moylan 5; Kumar 255), *negative utopia* (Claeys and Tower Sargent 1), and *cacotopia* or *kakotopia*, from the Greek word "kakós," meaning wicked or vicious.[6]

To complicate the matter further, in certain earlier critical texts on dystopia as a vision of an unfavourable future, the term (representing the entire literary genre) is equated to that of utopia. To illustrate, "[t]he problematic nature of Gerber's way of handling these points becomes most clear when he declares that *Brave New World* and *1984* are the 'most successful' . . . English *utopian* novels. He is far from unique, however, in citing anti-utopias as evidence for generalizations about utopias" (Morson 73, my emphasis). While Gary Saul Morson makes a valid point on the obvious paradox in defining Huxley's and Orwell's unfavourable visions of the future as (desirable) utopias, his second claim points to a more complex terminological conundrum, which is the frequent interchangeability of terms *anti-utopia* and *dystopia* in relevant literature.[7] For Morson, the two terms denote separate contents, whereby anti-utopia functions as a hypernym

[6] The latter two terms relating to dystopia can be found in Robert C. Elliott's *The Shape of Utopia: Studies in a Literary Genre* (1970).
[7] For instance, in the works of M. Keith Booker, Krishan Kumar, Ralph C. Wood, and others.

to "'dystopia', a type of anti-utopia that discredits utopias by portraying the likely effects of their realization, in contrast to other anti-utopias which discredit the possibility of their realization or expose the folly and inadequacy of their proponents' assumptions or logic" (Morson 116). In other words, anti-utopias depict the impossibility of ever reaching the desired ideals,[8] while dystopias imagine their realisation but exhibit their downsides. Consequently, literary dystopia is defined as an unfavourable vision of the future "in which ominous tendencies of . . . social, political, and technological order" necessarily reflect "a disastrous future culmination" (Abrams and Harpham 378).

Without delving deeper into the discussion on the semantic differences between anti-utopian and dystopian works, this dissertation will only employ the term *dystopia* to refer to the selected corpus of Anglophone novels used to analyse the (ab)use of bodies in past or future fictional societies based on controversial mechanisms and values. The reason behind this decision is primarily the fact that the term *dystopia* is more frequent in contemporary theory and criticism, but also because there is no difference in the oppressive treatment of the body, which is the main topic of this dissertation, in texts that are termed as *dystopias* or otherwise by different authors.

2.2. From Utopia to Dystopia: The Development of the Genre

Imbued with a strong sense of social critique and anxieties about a possible detriment of positivist science and technology as the most prominent characteristics, dystopias are found in literary and philosophical texts of a much earlier origin than the twentieth century, when the genre was formally established. Most notably, "dystopian critiques of the degradation of contemporary culture go back at least to the time of Jonathan Swift, whose *Gulliver's Travels* was an important predecessor of modern dystopian fiction" (Booker, *Dystopian Impulse* 110). The same period also produced Voltaire's *Candide: Optimism* (1759), a prime example of scepticism toward the Enlightenment faith in human reason and science, which were believed to support the limitless advancement of humanity and the perversion of which has served as the greatest dystopian inspiration. Going even further back, to the fifth century B.C. in ancient Greece, Plato's twelve-book political and philosophical work *Laws* "warns that the innovations brought about by technological advancement might potentially be disruptive and upsetting" (5-6). Mainly

[8] In turn, Chad Walsh uses the term "inverted utopia" for the same type of text, which counters "the idea and possibility of utopia" (26).

characterized as a utopia together with Plato's earlier *Republic*, which in turn inspired More's seminal *Utopia*, *Laws* is especially important because it reveals the reason behind the apparent contradiction in defining dystopias such as *Brave New World* and *1984* as utopias, something to be desired, as seen in Gerber's case in the previous chapter (qtd. in Morson 73). It highlights fundamental similarities between the contents of literary utopia and dystopia based on the motivation and inner workings of their fictional societies. In fact, it indicates that to unveil the mechanisms permeating all dystopias, it is necessary to view them through the lens of utopian ideals.

Thus, the relationship between the two genres is far from being only nominal. Their contents exhibit a number of parallels: the ways of presenting political, socio-cultural, technological, religious, and other phenomena, as well as challenges in the societies they explore. While there is a general consensus on the notable divergence between utopian (positive, favourable) and dystopian (negative, undesirable) ideals and their literary embodiments, from the vantage point of the twenty-first century's (at least declarative) emphasis on heterogeneity and all kinds of liberalism (political, sexual, religious), there are in fact crucial similarities between the two genres' realisation of those ideals. As Gregory Claeys puts it, taking care to emphasise that such a case is not universal but very much close to it,[9] "[i]ndeed, they [utopia and dystopia] might be twins, the progeny of the same parents" (*Dystopia* 7).

To start with, the most representative specimens of both utopian and dystopian literatures "take [their] inspiration from both fantasy and technology" (Booker, *Dystopian Impulse* 1). As for the fantasy element of such texts, of course, there are literary works based on fact rather than fancy that vividly fit one or the other designation. For instance, David Lodge's *How Far Can You Go?* (1980) is not formally defined as a dystopia, but its examination of the Roman Catholic dogmas sharply portrays a "life haunted by the fear of sin and dominated by terror [that] defines the psychology of dystopia" (Claeys, *Dystopia* 95). Still, the locus of either type of literature is typically removed; the societies are set in a more or less distant future (or past) and a faraway place. The reason for this is the "principal technique of dystopian fiction [that] is defamiliarization: by focusing their critiques of society on spatially or temporally distant settings, dystopian fictions

[9] "[W]e have only to acknowledge the existence of thousands of successful intentional communities in which a cooperative ethos predominates and where harmony without coercion is the rule to set aside such an assertion. Here the individual's submersion in the group is consensual" (Claeys, *Dystopia* 7).

provide fresh perspectives on problematic social and political practices that might otherwise be taken for granted or considered natural and inevitable" (Booker, *Dystopian Impulse* 19).[10] Accordingly, the One State and the World State are set in the future but refer to Zamyatin's contemporary Russia and Huxley's Britain. Atwood's state of Gilead in *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) is likewise a then-future projection of the United States that embodied the anxieties concerning female rights in the context of "the growing political power of the American religious right in the 1980s" (162). Consequently, this dissertation will show, for instance, how Naomi Alderman's *The Power* (2016), inspired and mentored by Atwood herself, reflects the still-present concerns about patriarchy by reversing the holders of the "power" and putting it literally into the hands of women. Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* (2005), a curiosity among future visions due to its clone-producing society set in "England, late 1990s" (Ishiguro 3), will be presented as a refraction of modern socio-political reality that is largely dehumanized and spiritually lacking, as was also seen in the canonical book-burning society of Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* (1953). Finally, the issues of both male and female bodies within the framework of patriarchy (infertility, abortion, surgical enhancement) reflected in P. D. James's *The Children of Men* and the young adult dystopian series *The Chemical Garden*, *Unwind Dystology*, and *Uglies* are as hotly contested topics today as they were throughout history, to name just a few examples among the previously established corpus of the novels to be explored in this thesis.

This deliberate displacement from contemporaneity and the paradoxical (yet absurdly successful) aim of being able to point at its inadequacies more clearly is a direct reflection of the genre of utopia. Even though examples of such fictitious removals from reality in literature are many, one again need not look further than More's imaginary island with a nearly perfect socio-political and economic structure to find a "strange" or "exotic" society pointing fingers at the faults of the author's time, that is "the corrupt practices of contemporary Europe" (Starnes 64). In other words, by alienating and twisting what is familiar to their contemporaneity, both utopias and dystopias strive in an almost allegorical way to highlight the shortcomings of a particular society (or in general) and ways of improving the future either by aiming toward an ideal or by purposefully trying to move away from it.

[10] This technique is closely related to the Formalists' "defamiliarization," to Darko Suvin's "cognitive estrangement" as the main literary tool of science fiction, and to Bertolt Brecht's "alienation effect" (see Booker, *Dystopian Impulse* 26, 64).

As for the issue of technology, the similarity between utopian and dystopian texts lies in the fact that both are often conceived as explorations of the rapid advancements in science, mechanisation, and various kinds of engineering (especially in the field of eugenics and bioengineering), most prominently following the Industrial Revolution and World War I.[11] As Claeys and Tower Sargent note, "scientific discovery and technological innovation from the seventeenth century on began to hold out the promise of an indefinite progress of the human species toward better health, a longer life, and the domination of nature in the interests of humankind" (7). In utopias, these improvements are envisaged as beneficial for humankind but can turn out to be negative and used to control or destroy the population. This provides for another curious similarity in the intertwining relationship between utopia and dystopia. In the same way in which it is not at all rare for the use of science and technology envisioned ideally in utopias to go awry, often the decidedly dehumanizing *improvements* in these same areas in dystopias are, at least initially, presented as useful for the greater good of the society. The most illustrious example of heavy apparatus and gadgets employed not only to manipulate the already existing population but also to "produce" human beings as commodities is *Brave New World*. With its "decanting"[12] and a strict, pre-emptive social hierarchy that disables any kind of intellectual, social, or moral development of its citizens,[13] Huxley's fictional society embodies the ever-growing industrialisation and the inevitable fear that "science and technology ultimately threaten to dominate or destroy humanity" (Claeys, *Dystopia* 5), typical of dystopias. Yet, as mentioned, those in charge operate based on the argument that the extreme application of technology in governing human lives was not necessarily conceived with oppression in mind: "the conditioning programs carried out by his World Controllers were at least initially intended to bring happiness to the general population" (Booker, *Dystopian Impulse* 57). To paraphrase a well-known saying: the road to dystopia is often paved with utopian intentions.

This overlap between utopian ideals and dystopian outcomes, that is, dystopian practices posing under the guise of utopia, is the direct consequence of the joint function of the genres, the one of

[11] Examples of such utopias, according to Raymond Williams, are Bulwer-Lytton's *The Coming Race* (1871), Bellamy's *Looking Backward* (1888), and Le Guin's *The Dispossessed* (1974) (206), as well as H. G. Wells's *The Shape of Things to Come* (1933) and Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *Herland* (1915), according to Simon Willmetts (237).
[12] A process that has replaced natural gestation and birth, wherein humans are "hatched" not unlike chickens, rather than born by human mothers.
[13] "We also predestine and condition. We decant our babies as socialized human beings, as Alphas or Epsilons, as future sewage workers or future . . . Directors of Hatcheries" (Huxley 5).

social criticism, since "visions of ideal alternatives have long formed an important part of criticisms of contemporary society" (Booker, *Dystopian Impulse* 3). Even though both utopia and dystopia try to detach themselves from the societies and issues which they actually criticise on the denotative level, their rich connotative layers allow them to expose a variety of societal phenomena that could otherwise be seen as acceptable or perfectly logical (4). This notion of utopia, also inevitably encompassing dystopia, as an agent of social critique is first attributed to Karl Mannheim. In his seminal philosophical work *Ideology and Utopia* (1929), Mannheim saw utopian thought and ideology as "the most important styles of thought in the historical evolution of human societies" (Turner 722). They provide for a contrast, whereby ideology aims to perpetuate the social and political *status quo*, while utopia calls for a change, and it is their interplay that makes up for the importance of the genre which makes it relevant even today (Turner 720–21).

Therefore, utopia and dystopia have since their outset had a complementary aim, but with opposite approaches of criticising the social, political, and other contexts of their time to inspire change.[14] For this reason, Morson sees the ur-texts of utopia, "the *Republic* and *Utopia* serv[ing] not only as positive models for utopia, but also as negative models for anti-utopia" (116), once again confirming the idea that dystopia permeates utopia, as well as that dystopia relies on utopian postulates. In connection to this, the most important parallel that blurs the line between the two genres is the absence of the fundamental rights of man in modern society: individuality and free will. According to Claeys, the basic tenet of this argument is that both utopia and dystopia "exhibit a collectivist ethos. People sacrifice their individual interest to the common good" (*Dystopia* 8). The idealistic main premise of such a state of affairs is nominally positive – personal and social security as opposed to man's unhappiness and suffering unavoidably caused by "the exercise" (38) of free will. Yet, it is not hard to see it being perverted into a typical dystopian exercise of control, even in the best paragon(s) of utopia:

> Modern readers who peer closely into More's paradigmatic text discover much about which to be alarmed. Like the snake in the Garden of Eden, dystopian elements seem to lurk within Utopia . . . Utopia's peace and plenitude now seem to rest upon war, empire, and the ruthless suppression of others, or in other words,

[14] That is why, in addition to the discussion on *anti-utopia* and *dystopia*, there is a discussion on dystopia as an anti-genre that functions as an inversion and a parody of the genre of utopia (see Morson 115–18).

> their dystopia . . . Utopia appears to rely upon relentless transparency, the repression of variety, and the curtailment of privacy. Utopia provides security: but at what price? In both its external and internal relations, indeed, it seems perilously dystopian. (Claeys, *Dystopia* 6)

More's island presents a perfectly organized society in which obedience, work, and common relations are used to maximise the benefit of the collective, and as such it largely corresponds with or, more correctly, grows out of Plato's vision of an ideal social organisation. In the *Republic*, close-knit family and partnering relationships are strongly discouraged in favour of communality: "the wives . . . are to be common, and their children are to be common, and no parent is to know his own child, nor any child his parent" (Plato 382), since the opposite is a potential source of disruptiveness of the communal spirit. Claeys expresses the attitude that the exchange of individuality in favour of a group mind is the root of overlap between the two genres: "Both utopia and dystopia conceive of ideal harmonious groups which privilege close connections between individuals and the unity and interdependence they exhibit" (*Dystopia* 7-8). As such, however, they set the parameters of all future dystopias in that the genre of dystopia eliminates all personal connections between people, making them a crowd easy to manipulate. In other words, dystopia produces individuals without a true sense of individualism, who are encouraged to think, act, and work toward the same (instilled) goals no matter how problematic they are, as seen, for example, in Stalin's and Hitler's real-life regimes.

Lastly, relevant dystopian critics agree that utopia's and dystopia's aim of social critique is mutually encouraging. For instance, commenting on the proliferation of utopian and, as he calls them, anti-utopian texts in the nineteenth century, such as Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, Morris's *News from Nowhere*, and Wells's *A Modern Utopia*, Krishan Kumar says that: "The contest of utopia and anti-utopia was undoubtedly good for the health of both. Response followed challenge, becoming itself a fresh challenge that demanded further response" (252–53). Booker agrees with Kumar by saying that, whereas positive visions of the future point to the unfavourable *status quo*, dystopias as warnings for utopias gone wrong call for an improved progression of events: "Utopian and dystopian visions are not necessarily diametrical opposites. Not only is one man's utopia another man's dystopia, but utopian visions of an ideal society often inherently suggest a criticism of the current order of things as nonideal, while dystopian warnings of the dangers of 'bad' utopias

still allow for the possibility of 'good' utopias" (Booker, *Dystopian Impulse* 15). In the same vein, Eduardo Marks de Marques supports both the notion of the two genres' co-dependence and of their ability to call for change: "If it is agreed that the questions utopia asks may refer to expose both the flaws in contemporary society and possible improvements to it in the future, the line that divides utopia and dystopia becomes virtually non-existent" (32). Hence, due to their interconnected nature, dystopia has been more or less present within utopia since the latter's appearance several centuries B.C., and there are many elements within one or the other that point to their simultaneous existence, allowing for authors and critics to use the terms interchangeably.

Yet, in the late nineteenth century and particularly in the twentieth century, the utopian sensibilities in projecting future or imaginary societies, their organisation, and the individuals' ways of functioning within the community transformed noticeably from representing a desired heaven on earth to hellish dystopian visions. Various literary critics have speculated on the reasons why this shift from idealistic aspirations to omnipresent horror imaginings of the future took place, and the aim of the next section will be to review their arguments and see how they apply to the corpus of contemporary dystopias to be analysed later.

2.3. A Turn toward Dystopia

By now, it is easy to see the logic behind the apparent paradox in referring to one and the same text as a utopia and dystopia by different critics. It is also notable that dystopia is not only a natural progression of the genre of utopia, but that they have coexisted since their inception. There is, however, a palpable "modern turn" (Booker, *Dystopian Impulse* 5) from the rose-coloured utopian visions to pitch-black dystopian prognoses of the future, reflected in the crueller ways in which technological, cultural, and societal developments have taken a toll on humans and their bodies in dystopian literature. Critics have proposed various reasons behind this shift from the slightly apprehensive to horrifying fictional futures since the twentieth century onwards, and the aim of this chapter is to list the main arguments that led to this turn from utopia to dystopia.

As the main reason for the dystopian turn in philosophy and literature, Booker highlights the disillusionment with the postulates of Enlightenment, which was first proposed by Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1947). In particular, Horkheimer and Adorno postulate that the exaltation of reason has resulted in a form of inhumane technocracy that enabled radical anti-Semitism and genocide (2–15; 139–44). Leaning on their insights, Booker

also points to the unprecedented advancement of science and technology, the perversion of communist and socialist ideals embodied by the German and Russian totalitarian regimes, and the culmination of all these developments in the form of the two World Wars as reasons that contributed to the dystopian turn (Booker, *Dystopian Impulse* 6, 18). Influenced by such radical cultural and political upheavals, several major philosophers both predicted and explained the rise of dystopia in their writings: Friedrich Nietzsche, Sigmund Freud, Michel Foucault, and Hannah Arendt, among others. Their perspectives will be significant in the next main chapter of this dissertation, which focuses on the analysis of contemporary dystopian texts.

The uninhibited pessimism and catastrophic predictions of the future, if one were to believe the ever-worsening dystopian portrayals since Zamyatin, Huxley, and Orwell, once again confirm the parallels between utopian and dystopian traditions. Dystopia, as the contemporary world of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries came to know it, grew out of the same ideals that at first fuelled utopian visions in both real and fictional world(s) (Booker, *Dystopian Impulse* 4). According to Booker, the optimism and faith in progress that fed the utopian imagination since the seventeenth century were based on the development of science and technology as "an extension of the Enlightenment belief that the judicious application of reason and rationality could result in the essentially unlimited improvement of human society" (4). It was the demise of those very postulates that caused the initial apprehension related to the blind insistence on rationality and beneficial advancement of science and technology, most famously expressed by Friedrich Nietzsche.

In his *On the Genealogy of Morality*, Nietzsche was among the first to warn against a dogged quest for the one and only truth and the possibility of its misuse to, in fact, enable dogmatism (112–13). In this way, Nietzsche emphasised the worrying compatibility between science and religion in their oppressive tendencies, based on the strict division between what is right and what is wrong, as well as the self-righteous persecution of the latter. This is most vivid in the "new materialist religion" (Booker, *Dystopian Impulse* 51) of *Brave New World*, where Henry Ford has replaced God, and time is measured according to the year of his invention of the Model T (Huxley 20). The lack of trust in science and technology and disillusionment found in the emerging dystopian literature are thus seen as stemming from the modern-time revelation that advanced technology did not make human life easier, but maybe just the opposite. The thwarted ideals were immediately reflected in the lack of physical, practical advantages "for the masses of exploited European

workers who suddenly found themselves harnessed to machines in the service of industry" (Booker, *Dystopian Impulse* 13). Similarly, in his interpretation of Horkheimer and Adorno's critique of Enlightenment, Curtis D. Carbonell ties the said disillusionment specifically to its "failure to save us from dehumanizing capitalism" (114), brought on by the rapid development of technology.

According to Gorman Beauchamp, "technological determinism" (55) is a key characteristic of dystopian literature, whereby technology has spun out of human control instead of providing more freedom, which corresponds to the "dominant philosophy of history found in the dystopian novel and [the view] that dystopists are generally technophobic" (55). Yet, Beauchamp describes two forms of technophobia: the one in which technology surpasses human limits and turns on humanity, and the other, where "ideology controls technology . . . rather than issuing from it" (55). As an example of advanced technology that is not dangerous on its own, but is misused by those in power, Beauchamp lists *1984*. In Orwell's novel, science and technology do not control the people; totalitarian authorities *use* science and technology to control them.

This brings the postulated discussion on the disappointment in Enlightenment to its other main point: the misguided ideal of the limitless power of human reason. Even before the twentieth-century totalitarian regimes reached their peak, proving the disastrous effect of insistent single-mindedness and the lightness with which insistence on *the truth* can be twisted to serve only one('s) purpose, Nietzsche warned against negating the multiplicity and multidimensionality of scientific, political, social, cultural, and other processes that influence the individual and the society as a whole (Nietzsche 112; Booker, *Dystopian Impulse* 6–7). The horrors of Stalinist Russia and Nazi Germany only confirmed these warnings and doubts in the prevalence of humanity and human reason (Vieira 18) as well as in socialist utopias (Levitas and Sargisson 15), purporting the pessimistic outlook on the state of the world and its future that has lasted until today. The pre-conceived advancements in rationality and thus humanity, together with scientific and technological improvement, were most harshly turned back on their head in global warfare. Ground-breaking technological inventions, such as the atomic bomb, with the original aim of protecting human life, were perverted into a more successful means of taking it away. The perfection of guns and ammunition did not lead to more protection but to more bloodshed, becoming thus the perfectly twisted metaphor for dystopia, which finds its echoes in *1984*'s Ministry of Peace, focused on warfare while proclaiming to be concerned with the exact opposite.

Picking up where other thinkers, artists, and critics have started, Claeys pins the disappointment in scientific progress to the Great War, which proved that the leaps in knowledge and technological improvements did not necessarily contribute to the humanness of humanity: "Urbanization and rapid technical innovation also proved very unsettling. World War I then demonstrated that, just as science and technology provided humanity's greatest triumphs, its collective angst ironically also reached a crescendo" (*Dystopia* 15). As suggested earlier, Claeys also includes the dehumanizing potential of technology and the horrors of WWI in his analysis of the emergence of contemporary dystopia, yet he sees those only as a peak of the anxieties of a much earlier origin. His line of argumentation for the noticeable literary and philosophical turn from utopian to dystopian sensibilities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as given in *Dystopia: A Natural History* (2017), refers to a thousand-years-long, natural progression of fear and the effects of group psychology.

In addition to the notion tying the early twentieth-century collapse of utopian ideals toward "skepticism and dystopian thinking" (Booker, *Dystopian Impulse* 7) to severe disappointment in the scientific promises of the Enlightenment and perversion of technology that took place in World Wars, the pessimistic worldview and anxieties can also be seen as the phenomena that have always existed in society and have only had different shapes throughout history (Claeys, *Dystopia* 15). Linked to dystopia are the "collective fears" which have changed throughout history, since "we collectively progress from natural to socially compounded forms of fear" (9). Initially conceived as "primordial symbols of evil both without and within" (9) in the form of various deities, monsters, spirits, and demons, many fears are slowly forgotten and their perceived manifestations are erased from the collective consciousness over time. However, others survive and often take on a different form. They are "reinvented, or rediscovered as inner monstrosity, or replaced in later modernity by fear of the science and technology we have created, of the recreation of our selves in the image of our machines, and of their eventual domination over us" (9). Claeys explains that, just as religion, as a predominant worldview up until the Enlightenment era, (has) had its share of evils to be feared and fought against, the (post)modern world permeated with science and technology has its own. What is permanent in all that is only the fear; its core remains the same even if its manifestations and expressions fluctuate (9). Replacing the Dark Age with its set of otherworldly phenomena to be feared, the dark side of science and technology inspires fears of their own.

Finally, Booker builds his argument of the disillusionment with the scientific reasoning of Enlightenment on Horkheimer and Adorno's idea that reason is not limitless nor empowering, but that it can be and often *is* used as a tool of power (*Dystopian Impulse* 7). This perspective provides a connection to one of the main tenets of Michel Foucault's thought, widely applicable to dystopian fiction. It is one according to which knowledge (science) generates power and can be used not only as a means of liberation,[15] but as a means of oppression, and that the newer (capitalist) systems and the position of the body within them are not the results of enlightened minds and tendencies, but only of the more insidious methods of (ab)using the body (Foucault 221; Booker, *Dystopian Impulse* 73). Again, the most illustrious example of such a system is *Brave New World* with its use of highly advanced knowledge, science, and technology not for the sole benefit of individuals, but for that of the system. It results in control and oppression of *bodies* that make up the society even before birth. The science represented in both Zamyatin's and Huxley's novels is, as Booker terms it, "of an insipid kind" (*Dystopian Impulse* 50), as it is not based on experimentation and innovation with the aim of improving individual lives, but only maintaining pre-set rules on the proscribed behaviour of the citizens-turned-malleable-bodies.

2.4. The Body and its (Ab)Use as the Backbone of Dystopia

Now that the relationship between *utopia* and "its mocking rival" (Walsh 24), that is, *dystopia*, has been established, another two key terms necessary for the analytical part of this dissertation need to be delineated: the *body* and its *(ab)use*. This subchapter examines several theoretical approaches to body and violence, as provided by Michel Foucault, Sigmund Freud, Louis Althusser, and Hannah Arendt, as well as the literary representations of (ab)use perpetrated against the bodies of individuals in canonical dystopias. In turn, this will help show how contemporary dystopias appropriate and build on the existing forms of (ab)use in the genre.

Since much of contemporary theory seems to be informed by Foucault and thus views the body as a "site of discourse and power" (Coffey 21), rather than a mere biological fact, the body and its treatment appear as both a complex and common topic in literary and other works. The emphasis on the body, however, as the intersection of many ideological, social, political, cultural, and other phenomena, was not always present in its current form. According to Andrew Edgar and Peter

[15] Booker also makes sure to note Bacon's contribution to the link between knowledge and power (*Dystopian Impulse* 4).

Sedgwick (2008), despite the attempts of David Hume and a few other empiricist philosophers, before and during the Enlightenment period and until the mid-nineteenth century, when Karl Marx brought about "some awareness of embodiment" (30), the discursive and analytical interest for the body was overruled by the one occupied with the mind. The Cartesian dichotomy of the mind versus the body (Edgar and Sedgwick 29) viewed the latter only as the physical expression of the main substance, that is, the mind. Following this dichotomy, the body was often considered "a mere auxiliary . . . a vehicle or object that houses the mind or the soul" (Hillman and Maude 1). As a result, the issues pertaining to the biological body were left to historians, pathologists, and medics (Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 25), separating the *lowly* body from the *high*, philosophical and artistic, spheres reserved for the mind. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, American pragmatism introduced the concept of the body to philosophy, only for the concept to be developed in the twentieth century by Heidegger (Edgar and Sedgwick 30). Still, the socio-cultural, political, and literary theory waited almost until the end of the second millennium (Irigaray 1985; Eco 1986; Turner 1984) to engage with the body on a more profound level in their discussions (Edgar and Sedgwick 30–31).

Finally, in the 1970s, the body became a central point of interest in the form of "Body Studies" (Hillman and Maude 2), mainly through Foucault and feminist critics such as Judith Butler, Donna J. Haraway, Susan Lee Bartky, Simone de Beauvoir, and so on. The inauguration of the body as "the visible carrier of self-identity" allowed for different research perspectives on the body "determined by considerations such as gender, sexuality, ethnicity or social class" (2). Out of the plethora of theorists and philosophers such as Mikhail Bakhtin, Fredric Jameson, and Pierre Bourdieu, who all saw the body as a product shaped by the forces of culture (2), for the purposes of this dissertation and its exploration of the treatment of the body in contemporary dystopian novels, the theoretical concepts formulated by Foucault, Althusser, and Baudrillard will be most useful.

As stated earlier, Foucault is said to have "foregrounded the centrality of the body in his discussion of knowledge, power and the regulation of physical difference and desire" (Hillman and Maude 2). Perhaps the easiest way to approach the subject of the body in contemporary philosophy and literary theory is to use Foucault's phrase "technology of the body" (*Discipline and Punish* 26), although he does not provide a singular "theory of the body anywhere, or even a unified account of it, and his conception of it has to be discerned from his genealogical books and

articles" (Oksala 107). Even though Foucault's term "technology of the body" evokes the physical or physiological, that is, material aspects of the body, the "technology" in question permeates the body by thoroughly governing all its behaviours and produces material effects on the body, but it is not merely physical. This technology is made up of the immaterial knowledge of the body, which does not "exactly" relate to "the science of its functioning" (Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 26); instead, it deals with ways which enable "mastery" over it. In that sense, the technology of the body, as a "multiform instrumentation" (26), is closely related to Foucault's concepts of micro-physics as well as discourse(s), which likewise restrict and govern the actions of the individual/body. Despite being invisible, their "tools or methods" are undeniable, recognizable through their effects (26). Finally, according to Foucault, in contemporary societies, the body is viewed "not as a property, but as a strategy," and is exposed to "power relations" (26, 25), which manipulate and (ab)use it in a multitude of ways.

Since the aim of this dissertation is to show that contemporary dystopian novels, from the 1970s onwards, depict physical harm done to individual bodies in more explicit ways than canonical dystopias, the analysis will focus on the types and purposes of violence committed against characters. There are two types of violence as understood in this dissertation; the first type is *literal*, explicit violence, which aims to damage or destroy the body through the use of violent treatment or force: injuring, mutilating, or killing of individuals. The second type of violence to be reviewed here and analysed in the next chapter is *connotative*, performed with a noticeable lack of physical force and brutality, yet aimed at severe control of the subject and his or her body by limiting the access to vital knowledge, restriction of movement, instilling inferiority, and psychological intimidation.

In *Discipline and Punish* (1975), Foucault elaborates on both types of violence inflicted on the human body by discussing the historical transformation of methods of punishment. Illustrating the shift from cruel corporal punishments in 1757 to a humane prison timetable in 1837, he asserts that in a span of several decades, the body ceased to be the target of disciplinary punishments due to the "the disappearance of the tortured, dismembered, amputated body, symbolically branded . . . exposed alive or dead to public view" (*Discipline and Punish* 8). No longer inflicted on the body of the condemned, the cruel treatment is said to have transformed from "an art of unbearable sensations punishment . . . [to] an economy of suspended rights" (11). In other words, Foucault claims that control and (ab)use of the body by the powers that be are still very much present in

contemporary society, only in different and subtler ways. In the context of historical and economic changes in the structure of society (from medieval to feudal to communist and socialist, and later capitalist structures), the contemporary body is no longer seen as dispensable and thus easily convicted to (a painful) death, whereby the convicted and executed individual serves to others as an example of what happens if they transgress against legal or social rules (Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 87, 221). Instead, the value of the body and its, often unconscious and involuntary, contribution to maintaining the system are obtained in different and more perfidious ways.

By replacing the gruesome physical and capital punishment with *finer* forms of (ab)use, the contemporary society eliminates torture and execution as public spectacles (Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 7). This means that physical violence, blood, and gore are no longer desirable markers of social and political power exercised on the individual body. Although this is presented "too readily and too emphatically" (7) as the direct consequence of enlightened humanist tendencies, Foucault claims that it actually serves an additional political purpose. For one, it prevents the general society's sympathy toward the condemned who is being punished and the potential revenge or rebellion against the government it might provoke (50). In this vein, many of the early twentieth-century dystopias that are now considered "the great defining texts of the genre of dystopian fiction" (Booker, *Dystopian Impulse* 20) portray state regimes that control and manipulate their populations in both mind and body, but when it comes to the overt violent manifestations of such practices, such as torture and execution, they are not explicitly violent nor death-oriented. This is because, according to Foucault, modern power is not focused so much on the ability to take an individual's life but to foster and control it. Torture and death by the system are seen as the last resort, as something bad and undesirable at all costs.

Hence, the canonical dystopian regimes engage in the outdated, exemplary public spectacle of punishment only to "remind the populace of the ability of official power to inflict its will on the bodies of its subjects" (Booker, *Dystopian Impulse* 74), and they do so very rarely or not at all. The former case is confirmed by the occasional hangings of political opponents in *1984* and "ceremonial occasions" (Walsh 99) in *We*, and the latter can be seen in *Brave New World*, in which the misfits are punished by being "gently spirited away to a distant island reserved for kindred souls. There [they] can carry on Platonic dialogues and be harmless" (96). The aim of these regimes is to instil psychological control to the point that physical restrictions and punishment are no longer necessary. Even when they are implemented, the torture or death brought on by the regime are

aimed only at transgressors, those who refuse to follow the rules. A more detailed analysis of this condition in canonical dystopias such as *1984* and *Brave New World* will be provided within the next few paragraphs. For now, it is useful to remember Orwell's "Room 101" (Orwell 244) and the psychological manipulation and terror which occur there in the form of threats of violence aimed at the protagonist, rather than any form of physical violence or execution. Despite the lack of freedom and one's critical thinking that the canonical dystopias impose on their population, individuals are still allowed to stay alive if they conform to the system, which is its very aim.

Hence, the treatment of the body in (post)modern society best corresponds with Foucault's notion of utile "docile bodies" (*Discipline and Punish* 135). If one were to distil the entire volume of *Discipline and Punish* to one main point, it would be the following: instead of punishing criminals who are deemed socially unfit by torturing and executing them, the (post)modern society opts for their allocation to a different function (prison life), and a thorough discipline in order to make them useful in a certain way. Abandoning physical torture, mutilation, and public execution as punishing practices, utility and efficiency through exercise (137) become the new principles of socio-political organisation. Seeing the execution of transgressors as a waste of an exploitable workforce, (post)modern society discontinues the physical elimination of individuals in favour of developing new ways to put their bodies to use (149–50), thus turning them into docile bodies or "subjects" (Althusser 188). In doing so, what the society does eliminate, whether partially or in their entirety, are individuality and free will. In theory, there is little reproach to the idea of taking away personal freedom to control the behaviour of those who severely transgress[16] societal norms by, for instance, raping or murdering others (as is the case in Anthony Burgess's dystopia *A Clockwork Orange*). Yet, Foucault warns that it is not only the criminals who are turned into docile bodies in contemporary society but its members at large. By comparing the modern society and its well-established institutions, such as families, hospitals, armies, schools, and the police (*History of Sexuality* 141) to prisons, Foucault points out "the carceral nature of modern societies" (Booker, *Dystopian Literature* 23).

Such a view of family and school as institutions that discursively shape and restrict an individual can be compared to Louis Althusser's idea of Ideological State Apparatuses. In his seminal text titled *On the Reproduction of Capitalism. Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses* (1971),

[16] Notably, Foucault recognises that those earlier punishment practices had their shortcomings in the form of punishing falsely accused people and of the gruesome punishment at times exceeding the crime (*Discipline and Punish* 9).

Althusser exposes the school, the Church, and other institutions of the state as possessing the knowledge or "know-how," which transfers to the individuals and their bodies and "ensure[s] *subjection to the ruling ideology*" (236, emphasis in the original). These invisible powers, the discovery of which results in "the body emerg[ing] as a discursively organized product of institutionalized knowledge and control" (Hillman and Maude 2), function mainly through practice. In other words, by disseminating ideological knowledge to individuals, the state produces and reproduces their docility through the subjects' internalisation and acceptance of their "subject" position (Althusser 188). Since the ideological apparatuses entail school, the subject-making practice is all-encompassing, considering that "[n]o other Ideological State Apparatus . . . has a *captive* audience of *all the children of the capitalist social formation* at its beck and call . . . *for as many years* as the schools do, eight hours a day, six days out of seven" (146, emphasis in the original). The subjects constituted in school (as well as in the family) will go on to occupy the positions of either the exploited or "agents of exploitation" (145), unaware that both positions are entrenched in ideology. Accordingly, the loss of individuality in contemporary society is not a collateral sacrifice reserved for individuals who transgress against social and moral norms; rather, it is applied – in the true sense of the passive verb form, as an action performed by an unknown subject[17] – systemically to the entire population in order to control it.

In his *History of Sexuality* (1978), Foucault gives a name to this practice that is focused on controlling and disciplining the body. This is the "*bio-politics of the population*" (139, emphasis in the original) or "bio-power" (140). In line with it, "the right of death" (136), which used to belong to the sovereign, is transformed in (post)modern society to subtler and more insidious power mechanisms, which refrain from explicit physical punishments and the exercise of the sovereign's power by sentencing one to death. Yet, this does not make the influence of biopower any more benign, nor does it eliminate death in its entirety. As Ángel M. Díaz Miranda notes, "[b]iopower is the motor that moves forward the genocidal aspects of late capitalism. As biopower is inscribed within the subject, it 'resets' its bearer from his or her identity by transforming them into either consumers that agglomerate everything in sight, or into objects, prime resources to be

[17] This unknown subject is best defined through knowledge that Foucault claims it possesses: "the political technology of the body" (*Discipline and Punish* 26). Such knowledge does not relate to the ways in which a body functions, but the ways which enable the "mastery" over the body. He acknowledges that this technology is not a systematic discourse but a "multiform instrumentation," thus it is applicable to any particular entity, institution, or system. Yet, its "tools or methods" (26) are undeniable, recognizable through its effects.

exploited" (Díaz Miranda 162) or destroyed. For Foucault, the mechanisms of biopolitics are necessarily connected to the development of capitalism (*History of Sexuality* 140–41), allowed by "the controlled insertion of bodies into the machinery of production and the adjustment of the phenomena of population to economic processes" (141). In other words, through biopolitics, the human body becomes a commodity like any other, to be used, reshaped, and repurposed.

The capitalist exploitation of the body, tied closely to the consumer culture, calls for the inclusion of Jean Baudrillard's take on the issue. In his book *The Consumer Society* (1976), Baudrillard links the notions of production and consumption of objects to human bodies. Namely, he "focuses on the implication of the *homology* between bodies and objects, which he suggests specifically characterises the body in consumer culture" (Fraser and Greco 268). The body is seen primarily as an object of the highest value, the "Finest Consumer Object" (Baudrillard 129), but still an object, something to be desired, remodelled according to certain standards, and consumed. Baudrillard's view of contemporary political, social, and cultural attitudes toward the body as a thing made for consumption, according to which "the reappropriation of the body in consumer culture is no less alienated than the exploitation of the body as labour power" (268), will be especially notable in contemporary young adult dystopias, where the transformation of the body with the aim of enhancing physical appearance to fit in with the society compares to the mutilation brought on by traditional physical torture.

According to Foucault, before the seventeenth century, the power of a sovereign in deciding between life and death was absolute, as a form of legacy from ancient times (*History of Sexuality* 135). Then, "framed by classical theoreticians" (135), it became no longer "absolute and unconditional . . . but [exercised] only in those cases where the sovereign's very existence was in jeopardy" (135). If their life or rule were threatened, the sovereign could "wage war" and indirectly put individuals under their rule in mortal danger. In the case of rebellion or transgression of laws, "a direct power over the offender's life" could be exercised and the death penalty exacted (135). Foucault sees this form of power "exercised mainly as a means of deduction . . . a subtraction of mechanisms" (136). Put simply, the power made itself known to its subjects by limiting and taking away their rights and possessions, and even their life. It was "a right of seizure: of things, time, bodies, and ultimately life itself; it culminated in the privilege to seize hold of life in order to supress it" (136). The exercise of power by deduction or curbing the vital rights of subjects is visible in Orwell's *1984*. There, death penalties and elimination of political opponents were used

as protection measures in the interest of the sovereign, that is, Big Brother, as well as to maintain the peace in the State of Oceania. To dissent against societal rules put the individual in danger of losing their life.

However, "since the classical age the West has undergone a very profound transformation of these mechanisms of power" and "'[d]eduction'. . . [is] . . . no longer the major form of power" (Foucault, *History of Sexuality* 136). Now, the life that is protected at all costs is no longer the sole life of a sovereign but the life of the population. Accordingly, biopower or the "life-administering power" (136) has replaced the death-administering power. Instead of being "dedicated to impending [individuals], making them submit, or destroying them" (136), the ruling power in the (post)modern societies is now concerned with "working to incite, reinforce, control, monitor, optimize, and organize the forces under it: a power bent on generating forces, making them grow, and ordering them" (136). By ingraining itself into contemporary citizens, biopower encroaches on and controls "all biological aspects of life including aging, reproduction, and thought processes" (Díaz Miranda 159). In other words, biopolitics controls every aspect of individuals' lives under the pretext of protecting it.

Huxley's *Brave New World* is the key example of a canonical dystopian society which eliminates overt violence and torture and replaces it with subtler, biopolitical forms of (ab)use "whose highest function was perhaps no longer to kill, but to invest life through and through" and which is "directed toward the performances of the body, with attention to the processes of life" (Foucault, *History of Sexuality* 139). Consequently, all explicit forms of violence such as murder, rape, mutilation, torture, and workforce exploitation are eradicated from Huxley's futuristic *civilised* society. As Claeys corroborates in "The Origins of Dystopia" (2010), in such a society "there is no need for mass brutality" (115) because the biopolitical system of control is entirely effective. Huxley's dystopian regime focuses on pleasure, deliberately keeping all of its members occupied with pleasant thoughts, behaviours, and activities all the time. The citizens are encouraged to lead a peaceful, carefree life, which consists of effortless activities that satisfy bodily needs and prevent deep emotional stimulation, which could inspire citizens to engage in violence of any kind, especially physical violence. Nevertheless, this successful elimination of typical oppression and overt violence from everyday life by the World State is replaced with another form of State control.

According to the biopolitical "function of administering life" (Foucault, *History of Sexuality* 138), the society of *Brave New World* is divided into castes, and each member of each caste is given a job position in accordance with their physical and mental capabilities. From Alpha Pluses, the highest caste employed at the highest ranks, to intermediate intellectuals and lab workers who are glad for their lesser workload, all the way to the semi-moron Epsilons as lift operators, and Gammas and Deltas in between – everyone has a predetermined purpose. More importantly, they are genetically engineered prior to birth in order to be born as belonging to a particular caste. The World State government ensures peace and constant happiness by eliminating all taboos about sexual instincts and promiscuity. In promoting slogans such as "Every one belongs to every one else" (Huxley 34) from as early as six years of age and by preventing pregnancies through free contraceptives, the government allows and even urges people to engage in sexual relations all the time, which is another biopolitical mechanism that corresponds to Foucault's discursive view of sexuality. Apart from the ongoing sexual stimulation, the citizens are also encouraged to take copious amounts of soma, a hallucinogen that protects their sense of happiness against all potential negativity.

Hence, when discussing the ways in which dystopias depict the use of bodies or forms of violence inflicted on the body to control or torture, disable or enhance, clone and/or tear it apart, the idea that Huxley's pleasure-oriented society, which rejects warfare, murder, and torture, asserts "an even more thoroughgoing domination over [its] citizenry" (Booker, *Dystopian Impulse* 57) than those in *We* and *1984* might seem dubious. Yet, while eliminating the pains of everyday life and violent excesses on the one hand, the proposed ultimate freedom in *Brave New World* is, on the other, only inverted slavery so insidious that it need not use force. The Foucauldian production of docile bodies (*Dystopian Impulse* 49) allows for easier manipulation by making the citizens not only unaware of but even complicit with their oppression. It is precisely those alleged freedoms that are given to Huxley's citizens, the unrestricted sexual urges and drug use, which keep them subdued all the time. Additionally, the technological advancements that allow for elaborate and time-consuming leisure go hand in hand with the eugenic *production* of individuals relegated to malleable embryos, which takes place even before they enter society as live babies and a priori curbs any development of individuality. Even if traces of it do emerge, but only within the highest

social rank's few members,[18] the heavy social and psychological conditioning based on the pleasure principle strongly supports predestination by preventing the slaves of the system from ever questioning it.

The inability of ever-happy people in Huxley's dystopia to even recognise their oppression for what it is, as opposed to individuals in Orwell's "demonic nightmare" (Walsh 98), testifies to the omnipotence of biopolitics, next to which "totalitarianism would no longer be required" (Greenberg and Waddell 6). Moreover, its lulling effect of pleasure and the pretence of protection and welfare can be seen as more pervasive and destructive on the body than "the boot eternally on the helpless face" (Walsh 107). It is because the terror-oriented societies at least allow for the possibility of rebellion in the mind of an individual, which is caused by fear, dissatisfaction, and severe sexual repression experienced in their everyday life, whereas in Huxley's world of constant sexual and hallucinogenic stupor, one finds neither time nor, more importantly, the *need* to consider a different state of affairs because the biopolitical mechanisms are presented as the ultimate sources of protection and welfare.

Following the increased dystopian insistence on the life preservation of subdued individuals with the aim of using their bodies for political purposes and control, the logical assumption would be that death will be eliminated altogether in contemporary dystopias and replaced by a variety of subtler ways in which the body is (ab)used, which, as this dissertation will show, does not turn out to be the case. Likewise, the removal of the spectacle of torture, which Foucault observed in the (post)modern society, is not done entirely, as evident from novels such as Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games,* where young individuals are selected to fight like gladiators in violent spectacles. In fact, many contemporary dystopias merge the public spectacle of physical torture of the old systems with the biopolitical "invest[ment]" of life (Foucault, *History of Sexuality* 139), resulting in explicit violent oppression that glorifies rape, mutilation, and death of the body under the pretence of protection.

2.5. Sexuality and Reproduction in Dystopia

When discussing sexuality in theory and literature, Sigmund Freud and Michel Foucault are the two pillars whose theories are seminal for the issue as pertains to this dissertation. Since the control

[18] Their biological make-up is still modified, since they are made into Alpha Pluses, but their *production* stops there, while lower castes are further treated in different ways to reduce their intellectual and other capabilities.

of sexuality plays a major part in fictional dystopias as a form of (ab)use of individuals, it is necessary to delineate both Freud's and Foucault's views on societal attitude to sexuality. Although they both agree that the system takes decisive measures to steer human sexuality toward its own interests, their theories on the way such social control is achieved are almost polar opposites. As Booker explains, while Freud believes sexuality is a naturally occurring instinct and a powerful driving force of the human psyche which can be used for other, more politicised purposes, Foucault sees sexuality as a socially and ideologically engineered practice (*Dystopian Impulse* 12).

On the one hand, by contrasting the uninhibited sexual instinct with the civilised society, Freud argues that there is a "tendency on the part of civilization to restrict sexual life" (Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents* 51). This is because sexuality is believed to have a subversive potential, and, seeing the powerful sexual instinct as a danger to the social order, the system resorts to what Foucault later termed the "repression hypothesis" (*The History of Sexuality* 10).[19] This is the restriction of sexual relations between individuals. However, if regarded as a natural instinct, Freud believes that sexuality cannot be eliminated entirely; it can only be channelled toward other purposes. In his terms, only the "shifting" or "sublimation" (*Civilization and Its Discontents* 48–49) of the sexual instinct can take place. Instead of being free and developing its subversive potential, sexuality is redirected to spheres that are useful to the state, such as science, art, or politics. Therefore, the sexual urge is viewed as being necessarily manipulated by society and those in charge of it to prevent the disruption of the system. According to Freud, the only accepted manifestation of sexuality is its function of "propagating the human race" (51), and is tolerated as such "because there is so far no substitute for it" (52). As for pleasure, "[p]resent-day civilization makes it plain . . . that it does not like sexuality as a source of pleasure in its own right" (52).

The sublimation or redirection of the sexual instinct is frequently employed by the literary dystopian regimes. The canonical example of the sex-suppressive regime is found in *1984*, with its Junior Anti-Sex League (Orwell 11) and social propaganda that discredits all sexual activities except those practised for procreation, which are then explicitly referred to as "'duty to the Party'" (70). Likewise, in Zamyatin's *We*, the "strict bureaucratic regimentation of sexual conduct"

[19] The claim that sexuality is a socially subversive phenomenon is by now well-grounded in the works of various psychoanalytical, feminist, queer and other scholars, who have followed and reacted to Freud's ideas in various ways, including Michael Foucault, Judith Butler, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Herbert Marcuse, and Gayle Rubin, to name just a few.

(Booker, *Dystopian Impulse* 53) forces citizens to first obtain a permit for sexual activities from the State before indulging in them. At the same time, the inciting sexual energy, aggression, and passion are (mis)directed toward the dictatorial rulers. As Herbert Marcuse interprets it, "society must impose [sublimation of instinct] on individuals in order to transform them from bearers of the pleasure principle into socially utilizable instruments of labor" (34). Freud's recognition of the repression of sexuality and intimate relationships by the state is underpinned by utopian and dystopian texts even in ancient times: "[T]his fear of passion as a threat to social stability as an important element of attempts to envision an ideal society dates back at least to Plato's *Republic*" (Booker, *Dystopian Impulse* 53), and is likewise present in young adult dystopias of today. Most notably, Lauren Oliver's *Delirium* trilogy (2011–13) depicts a society where love is regarded as a deadly disease that can cause people to lose their minds, threaten the established social order, and therefore, it must be eradicated through surgery.

Contrary to this, Foucault does not view sexuality as a natural instinct that must be repressed by the system to prevent people from recognising its subversive potential: "Sexuality must not be described as a stubborn drive . . . and of necessity disobedient to a power which exhausts itself trying to subdue it and often fails to control it entirely" (*History of Sexuality* 101). Instead, Foucault claims that sexuality corresponds to the notion of a discourse (*History of Sexuality* 103; Bristow 153) and thus shapes the identity and behaviour of individuals in contemporary societies in the interest of the system. Also, Foucault disagrees with Freud's view that the state must subdue sexuality in order to retain its power; in Foucault's opinion, the state exerts its power by encouraging sexuality (*History of Sexuality* 103). This means that the system construes the sexual desires of individuals and then uses these desires against them in order to subdue them. As Joseph Bristow puts it: "Rather than assume, as sexology and psychoanalysis do, that sexuality is a surging hydraulic force that Western culture struggles to repress, Foucault exposes what this particular belief about eroticism tells us of the ways power is distributed, mediated and produced within modern culture" (154). Foucault proclaims such a "deployment of sexuality" to be "the most important . . . technology of power" (*History of Sexuality* 140). He also terms this carefully devised use of sexuality in the interest of power as "administration," whereby sex is "a thing one administer[s]" (24), not an instinct to be sublimated.

The most blatant example of sexuality administered at the hands of a state regime is *Brave New World*'s encouragement of promiscuity. In Huxley's dystopian society, sexual encounters cease to

be a private and intimate matter between spouses and lovers and promiscuity becomes a social practice that must be practiced regularly, otherwise one is considered "[o]dd, odd, *odd*" (Huxley 75, emphasis in the original). Encouraged in excess by the state, sexual activities are used to keep the citizens occupied and prevent them from recognising their subversive potential. In addition, Huxley's treatment of sexuality eliminates even the procreation aspect. His highly *civilised* society regards procreation as disgusting: "The very notion of a live birth or of a 'viviparous mother' is considered obscenely repellant, while the notion of a 'father' is regarded as a kind of scatological joke" (Booker, *Dystopian Impulse* 53). The close connection between Huxley's societal encouragement of sexuality and consumerist society is not a coincidence. According to Baudrillard, whose theory on consumerism influenced Foucault (Ritzer 22), sexuality becomes the main vehicle of consumption in contemporary society (Baudrillard 134–36). Baudrillard's view of sexuality encompasses both the natural instinct and the artificially created "eroticism in its more commercial form," used to "control and subvert the explosive potential of desire" (Ritzer 22).

The overemphasis of Huxley's dystopia on sexuality is also connected to Freud's theory, that is, his concept of the pleasure principle. According to Freud, striving towards pleasure and avoiding displeasure have a crucial role in the functioning of the human psyche as well as human behaviour. Initially, in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920), Freud presented his theory on instincts through the opposition of the "ego" on the one hand and the "libido" on the other (38). The ego denotes instincts "serving the self-preservation of the individual" (Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* 45),[20] while libido is the sexual instinct coinciding "with the Eros . . . which holds all living things together" (44). The main difference between the self-preserving ego and the sexually uninhibited libido is the fact that the ego, although still oriented at pleasure, calls for and allows a delay in seeking satisfaction, while the libido demands immediate gratification. Based on this, libido is linked to the "id," the unruly part of the human psyche, which is entirely self-serving and often overcomes the ego. By Freud's definition, the pleasure-seeking id governs one's behaviour in "a direction such that its final outcome coincides with a lowering of [unpleasurable] tension – that is, with an avoidance of unpleasure or a production of pleasure" (1). This is to say that everything humans do in life is aimed at avoiding discomfort and attaining (sexual) satisfaction.

[20] Freud also links ego to "the reality principle," first termed in his *Two Principles of Mental Functioning* (*Beyond the Pleasure Principle* 4).

It is at this point that Foucault's view of sexuality as something "administered" and Freud's view of the id's uncompromising pursuit of pleasure converge within the intentionally promiscuous society of Huxley's *Brave New World*. Set on attaining comfort and pleasure, the futuristic society avoids pain and suffering at all costs, both momentary, as Lenina takes drugs to avoid seeing the raging sea on her field trip (Huxley 79), and ideologically, for instance, by banning Shakespeare and all literature that features descriptions of violence (169). For this reason, the only instances of explicit violence in Huxley's dystopia are seen in the Savage Reservations, set far away from the civilisation of the World State. Employed by the regime, the pleasure principle, even though it does not bring pain nor exposes the citizens to explicit violence or torture, is a form of manipulation and suppression of their individuality since everyone who does not wish to engage in hypersexual social behaviour is ostracised. As Booker notes, that is "a subtle form of tyranny and subjugation" (*Dystopian Impulse* 48). In that sense, Huxley's dystopian novel represents the starting point of the hypothesis stated in this dissertation that violence becomes more explicit with each rendition, as evidenced by blackmail and psychological torture in *1984*, beatings and murders in *A Clockwork Orange*, rape and stoning in *The Handmaid's Tale*.

Later, Freud complicates the ego/libido dichotomy by expanding it to Eros, the life instinct, and Thanatos, the death instinct or death drive:[21] "The upshot of our enquiry so far has been the drawing of a sharp distinction between the 'ego-instincts' and the sexual instincts, and the view that the former exercise pressure towards death and the latter towards prolongation of life (*Beyond the Pleasure Principle* 44). By recognising that there are instincts and behaviours exhibited by humans that contradict the life-preserving instinct, Freud asserts that the desire for pleasure does not entirely dominate the human psyche:

> If such a dominance existed, the immense majority of our mental processes would have to be accompanied by pleasure or to lead to pleasure, whereas universal experience completely contradicts any such conclusion. The most that can be said, therefore, is that there exists in the mind a strong tendency towards the pleasure

[21] According to Joseph Bristow, "in the original German, Freud employs the word *Trieb* rather than *Instinkt*. *Trieb* roughly translates as drive, while *Instinkt* correlates with the biological sense of instinct. There are ongoing debates among students of Freud's work that focus on whether one should refer to sexual 'drives' or 'instincts', especially since his theory of sexuality sought to detach itself from biological determinism. [On this issue, see Bowie 1991: 161.]" (61). Since the tendency of the instinct/drive is the same in the context of this dissertation, the author uses the terms indiscriminately.

> principle, but that that tendency is opposed by certain other forces or circumstances. (Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* 3)

Specifically, these other forces deal with behaviours that are not focused on the preservation of life but on the opposite of it: (self)destruction. After having determined such tendencies, Freud forms them into the concept of "death instinct" (*The Ego and the Id* 38) or Thanatos (xxii). The death instinct operates on the principle saying that *"the aim of all life is death*" (*Beyond the Pleasure Principle* 32, emphasis in the original). Accordingly, Freud believes that the inherent desire driving all humans is to return to the original, "*old* state of things, an initial state from which the living entity has at one time or other departed and to which it is striving to return" (32). In other words, the aim is to return to death. Since life is considered a state that comes after that original state of non-life, humans are believed to be striving to return to it by dying. As will be seen in the analytical chapters of this dissertation, the convergence between sexuality, pleasure, and death is a motivation as powerful as it is deadly, which largely shapes the identities and behaviours of individuals in contemporary dystopias.

As a part of the discussion on sexuality and reproduction, it needs to be highlighted that misogyny and the mistreatment of the female body are also very common themes in dystopias.[22] Foucault's theory of the body as the "target for . . . mechanisms of power" (*Discipline and Punish* 155) and Freud's views of sexuality are once again useful here since both Freud and Foucault influenced all the prominent feminist critics who deal with female embodiment, such as Julia Kristeva, Judith Butler, and Donna J. Haraway. However, voicing the general feminist criticism of Foucault's work, Angela King notes that there is a lack of a gendered analysis of bodies in Foucault. Emphasising "the female body as a particular target of disciplinary power" (King 29), she calls for the "challeng[ing] of traditional dichotomous gender norms" (38) and social gender constructs to reveal the biopolitical mechanisms present in contemporary society which enable the (ab)use of female bodies specifically.

By perpetuating the binaries of mind/body, culture/nature, and male/female, wherein the "[m]an is mind and represents culture: the rational, unified, thinking subject" and the "woman is body and

[22] This dissertation is not focused on the feminist readings of dystopian novels, which is why feminist critics' arguments are not elaborated on in detail. However, where relevant, their assertions will be referred to in order to complement Foucault's, Freud's, and others' theories.

represents nature: irrational, emotional and driven by instinct and physical need" (King 31), women and women's bodies have been perpetually conceived as inferior to men and men's bodies. Such a view of women as unruly and instinctual has resulted in the "practices of containment and control" (Bordo qtd. in King 31) in every aspect of political, social, cultural, and religious life for centuries. At the same time, as King explains, the disciplinary and biopolitical production of the necessarily docile female body has rendered it "feeble and passive, literally a receptacle for the desires of the male and incubator of his offspring" (31).

The unjust treatment of women and their bodies is evident in dystopias from *Brave New World* onward, although its dystopian world commodifies both male and female bodies and liberates them from traditional reproduction. Namely, Jonathan Greenberg notices "the masculinist bias" in Huxley's dystopia, according to which all power positions belong to men, "while women are invariably shown in roles such as nurses, teachers, and factory workers" (111). The most vivid example of female exploitation and (ab)use based on sexuality and procreation is, granted, Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), which describes a religion-based state that negates women's rights in order to exploit them as child-bearers for infertile married couples in high social positions.

Similarly, in other recent dystopias, women are either continually exploited for childbearing, as in Joanne Ramos's *The Farm* (2019), or denied that privilege because natural childbearing and motherhood are replaced by radical social organisation, like in Lois Lowry's young adult *The Giver* (1993). In contemporary dystopias which this dissertation analyses, however, childbearing is not specifically thematised, but other forms of long-lasting patriarchal exploitation and (ab)use are put to the fore, such as appropriation of intellectual ideas, denied freedom of expression, sexual violence, and sexism in everyday discourse. According to Angela King, the biopolitical treatment of women and women's bodies is not any more subtle than it was in the previous system, which included public spectacles of torture: "Foucault identified torture as a characteristic of pre-modern times, whereas for women this form of spectacular discipline has extended well into the modern period" (King 34). It is the task of the next two analytical chapters to observe and describe these contemporary biopolitical forms of (ab)use.

3. THE (AB)USE OF THE BODY IN CONTEMPORARY ANGLOPHONE DYSTOPIA

3.1. J. G. Ballard's *Crash*: Car Crashes as *Spectacular* Fetishes

Due to their function of social critique, dystopias have always been controversial, both for pointing out faults in the systems they comment on and for startling estrangement metaphors they employ to, ironically, make the objects of their criticisms more conspicuous. To capture the growing fears and horrors in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, dystopian authors have engaged in a sort of gradation of their visions, with each being more explicit and violent in its treatment of individuals and their bodies. If one takes the early dystopia *Brave New World*, which initially appalled the audience with blasphemous consumerist rituals, child promiscuity, and technological manipulation of the human body, as the first degree or the positive of dystopia, then J. G. Ballard's *Crash* (1973), the first novel to be analysed in this dissertation, can be seen as its more disturbing comparative. This is because of the novel's heavily explicit, symphorophiliac[23] content: depictions of sexual arousal and copulations inspired by car crashes and concomitant injuries, for which Ballard was proclaimed "beyond psychiatric help" and his publisher advised against publication (Smith, "Sex and Wheels").

Unlike canonical dystopias, later recognised even by the wider public as ironic voicings of concern for the direction in which the (post)modern values were taking off, the "penetrating critique of the contemporary urban condition" (Sellars 5) exhibited in *Crash* has yet to overcome the shock-factor it creates outside close academic circles. As Zadie Smith noted about *Crash* in 2014, more than forty years since the novel's publication, "it's easy to be shocked the first time you read Ballard" ("Sex and Wheels"). This is because the early dystopias' take on the perverse potential of technology for controlling and exploiting the human body is pornographic only in the connotative sense of the word. Contrary to that, *Crash* brings to life a literal, violent fusion of human sexuality and technology. In the simplest dystopian terms, it shows how technology takes over the human body and its deepest urges, to live and to have sex, and twists them into

[23] According to John Money, "symphorophilia" is "a paraphilia of the sacrificial/expiatory type in which sexuoerotic arousal and facilitation or attainment of orgasm are responsive to and contingent on stage-managing the possibility of a disaster, such as a conflagration or traffic accident" (qtd. in Pranzarone, "Dictionary of Sexology").

(auto)destructive perversions. The observation on the disturbing quality of Ballard's novel thus stands even today, when the boundaries of the publicly available sexual and violent content in both literature and reality are pushed to previously unimaginable limits. This supports the thesis of this dissertation on the increasingly uncensored portrayals of violence and (sexual) abuse of the body in dystopian literature since the genre's establishment. With *Crash* as the dystopian comparative, resulting from Ballard's destructive vision of the mid-twentieth century technological developments and their socio-cultural effects, the dissertation's further chapters on later novels, ending with Naomi Alderman's *The Power* (2016) as the (chronological) dystopian superlative, will further illustrate the broadening of the range of portrayed (ab)use of the human body in the selected corpus. In contemporary dystopias, death and physical violence inflicted on the body are no longer punishments to be exacted for not adhering to the totalitarian society. Here, they are part of the society and are represented as desirable.

Apart from its chronological precedence, *Crash* is the first novel in the corpus of adult dystopias to be analysed since the objects of its criticism are the same mainstays of the Western society criticised earlier by Huxley, only now in more explicit ways. These mainstays are the expansive consumerism and technologisation of life, as well as its mediatisation and focus on instant gratification, all intersecting in the modern individual body, with its sexual and violent tendencies and expressions. According to Ballard, these mainstays and tendencies converge in the single most influential element of the technologically advanced era: the car. He notes, "[i]f I were asked to condense the whole of the present [twentieth] century into one mental picture I would pick a familiar everyday sight: a man in a motor car, driving along a concrete highway" (Ballard, "Deep Ends").[24] In his view, the car embodies all the dominant aspects of life, both individual and social: "our sense of speed, drama and aggression, the worlds of advertising and consumer goods, engineering and mass-manufacture, and the shared experience of moving together through an elaborately signalled landscape" ("Deep Ends"). In depicting the corrosive influence of these developments on humans, however, the metaphorical estrangement in *Crash* goes above and beyond to form "the first 'pornographic novel about technology'" (Smith), with elaborate fantasies of, among others, uteruses being pierced by metal gear-shifters to incite the splashing of semen

[24] As Matek and Pataki have already noted in their article "From 'Crash!' to Crash: Adapting the Adaptation" (2017), in thematising car crashes, Ballard's work largely relied on the ideas promulgated by the futurists, more specifically, by Tommaso Marinetti (305–06).

across the instrument panel (Ballard, *Crash* 3). By "taking what seems 'natural' – what seems normal, familiar and rational," in this case, the car as the stock element of everyday life, the novel "reveal[s] its psychopathology" (Smith) by exploring the car's sexual potential.

Put simply, *Crash* is an acute portrayal of modern humans' thwarted dream of advancing technology exclusively to their benefit. In keeping with the dystopian genre, the novel exhibits the downsides of the car becoming a staple of contemporary life and the ways in which it has come to control human minds and bodies. Against all the benefits that the invention of the car entailed, such as numerous forms of leisure and freedom, it has "brought with it a train of hazards and disasters, from the congestion of city and countryside to the serious injury and deaths of millions of people" (Ballard, "Deep Ends"). In addition to air, land, and noise pollution, and the ever-increasing amount of time humans are forced to spend in these mechanical entrapments, Ballard recognises their mutilating and murderous potential as the greatest detriment to the human body. In fact, he is concerned with the social and cultural affinity toward that destructive potential, which arises from the power that the drivers obtain once they sit behind the wheel. As James Ballard, the author's namesake and protagonist of *Crash*, asserts, driving a car is "almost the only way in which one can now legally take another person's life" (Ballard, *Crash* 36). Yet, although driving implies access to power in both mutilating or killing and being mutilated or killed in a crash, the prospect does not scare the characters; it arouses them and becomes the centre of their sexual pursuits.

Ballard's "marriage of sex and technology" (*Crash* 128) sanctified by violence demands for the novel's examination within the theoretical framework of psychoanalysis, which will provide for the first half of this chapter. Granted, this has been done before by various critics and researchers (see, for example, Luckhurst 2005; Vanhannen 2019; Cord 2017; Francis 2011), but this chapter aims to add to the discussion a dystopian dimension, as established by M. Keith Booker in *The Dystopian Impulse in Modern Literature* (1994). Specifically, it will juxtapose the Freudian notions of id and death drive with the physical and emotional desensitisation of individuals as a result of the excessive mechanisation of life, which is a characteristic of the dystopian genre. An additional aim is to view Ballard's treatment of the body with regard to Foucault's claims on the disappearance of the public spectacle of violence and elimination of physical torture in favour of

subtler forms of (ab)use in contemporary society (*Discipline and Punish* 7–8).[25] It will be shown how, even though contemporary consumerist systems, as depicted in dystopian literature, no longer torture and kill off individuals to maintain the repressive social order, they do manipulate and abuse their bodies in a publicly spectacular way.

To start with, the combination of sexual desire and violence that permeates the actions of Ballard's characters corresponds to Freud's unconscious "id," the largest domain of the human psyche concerned exclusively with (sexual) satisfaction: "[T]he pleasure principle . . . reigns unrestrictedly in the id" (Freud, *The Ego and the Id*, 19). Guerin et al. add that the "id is, in short, the source of all our aggressions and desires. It is lawless, asocial, and amoral. Its function is to gratify our instincts for pleasure without regard for social conventions, legal ethics, or moral restraint" (157). Public homosexuality,[26] anal and wound fetishes, even "hints at paedophilia" (Francis, *The Psychological Fictions* 109), attempts and executions of wounding and killing, all convey the lack of social and moral restraint in *Crash*. Despite their transgressive, immoral, and even criminal nature, these actions are never challenged, only welcomed, especially by their victims. In line with this, Ballard's novel exceeds Huxley's vision by showing that the utter surrender to natural (sexual) instincts is even deadlier than their systemic suppression because it leads to self-annihilation: "Unchecked, [the id] would lead us to any lengths – to destruction and even self-destruction to satisfy its impulses for pleasure" (Guerin et al. 157). Since the novel starts with the suicidal crash of one character and ends with the same intent of another, the workings of the id and its clash with human civilisation are clear.

The psychoanalytic charge in *Crash* is not only attributed to the novel by its critics, but, according to Samuel Francis, it also exhibits Ballard's "enthusiastic embrace of psychoanalysis," supported by the author's public belief in Freud's work as a scientific discipline ("'A Marriage of Freud and Euclid'" 1, 7). Apart from sexuality being the locus of the human psyche and behaviour, as the major testament to Ballard's reliance on psychoanalysis, Francis sees the juxtaposition of the human body and its (sexual) functions with science, specifically geometry. He calls it "the abstraction of sexuality" (10), which is an elimination of humanity from erotic encounters,

[25] "Foucault does not deny that no longer ripping criminals apart is an advance. But the darker converse of the 'gentler' way is its penchant for total control. On one level, this is signalled by a switch from brutal, but unfocused, physical punishment to less painful but more intrusive psychological control" (Gutting 80–81).

[26] In UK, homosexual acts were legalised only in 1967, and even then only if conducted in private, while public displays of homosexual love or desire were still treated as a public offence at the time ("Regulating Sex and Sexuality").

manifested through a correlation between the organic (for instance, female breasts) and the mechanical (a gear-shifter design). To illustrate, Ballard's descriptions of sexuality are said to be "persistently figured in geometrical terms" (Francis, "'A Marriage of Freud and Euclid'" 10), as when the right-angled position of Vaughan's arm is related to the chrome roof while he is touching a girl's thighs or when a design of James's mechanical harness is likened to his hospital nurse's curves (Francis, "'A Marriage of Freud and Euclid'" 10; Ballard, *Crash* 115). This insistence on "mathematic measurability" and "reproducibility of experimental data" (Francis, "'A Marriage of Freud and Euclid'" 10), consistently applied in *Crash* to one the most organic of all human processes, sex,[27] is seen as Ballard's reflection on the criticism aimed at Freud's positing of psychoanalysis as a scientific discipline. The criticism in question concerns the empirical skewness and the issue of reproducibility attributed to psychoanalysis (Francis, "'A Marriage of Freud and Euclid'" 3–5). Yet, Freud rejected this criticism since he considered it (as did Nietzsche) a dogged scientific and technological pursuit of rationality and positivism, a typical dystopian tendency inimical to humanity (Booker, *The Dystopian Impulse* 8–9). Thus, these repetitive "geometrical-sexual experiments of alienated protagonists" in *Crash* point to but also against the destruction-laden science purported by compulsivity, which Freud recognised as the major symptom of "death instincts" (Francis, "'A Marriage of Freud and Euclid'" 9–10), or the death drive.

Defined as the "task . . . to lead organic life back into the inanimate state" (Freud, *The Ego and the Id* 38) and the urge to repeat traumatic events, contrary to the pleasure/life principle of Eros (Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* 29),[28] the death drive or Thanatos as a destructive compulsion can be recognised in the very opening of *Crash*. In it, Vaughan's death in a gruesome car crash (running his car from an airport flyover onto a bus full of airplane passengers)[29] is presented as the culmination of "rehearsals" of his own death (Ballard, *Crash* 1). As his scar-ridden

[27] Freud also defines sex as the "greatest pleasure attainable to us" (*Beyond the Pleasure Principle* 56).

[28] "The manifestations of a compulsion to repeat . . . exhibit to a high degree an instinctual character and, when they act in opposition to the pleasure principle, give the appearance of some 'daemonic' force at work. In the case of children's play we seemed to see that children repeat unpleasurable experiences for the additional reason that they can master a powerful impression far more thoroughly by being active than they could by merely experiencing it passively. Each fresh repetition seems to strengthen the mastery they are in search of" (Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* 29).

[29] Apart from merging aviation and automotive infrastructures as embodiments of the technological advancement in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the symbolism of this scene in portraying the car as the "purest expression" (Ballard "Deep Ends") of this advancement might be inferred from the frequent National Safety Council statistical comparison of the probabilities of dying in an airplane crash and a car-crash, with the latter being eighty-six times higher (Jenkins).

body can attest, Vaughan was intent on reaching the literal climax of his life in a car crash that would simultaneously wound and kill the actress Elizabeth Taylor, an unsuspecting object of his technofetishist obsession. Despite the apparent depravity of Vaughan's mind, in the urban dystopian world of *Crash*, this is not a curiosity. It is a way of life, a mentality possessed by others in the novel as well. Although focused on a small group of protagonists, this mentality denotes Ballard's view of the general, real-life technosphere as a "pathological enactment of unconscious desires . . . shared by the populace at large, a communal psychology investing automotive technology with all its most destructive and libidinal drives" (Francis, *The Psychological Fictions* 109). Indeed, Helen Remington, widowed in a head-on collision with James, engages in a sexual affair with him not despite but *because* he killed her husband in a car crash:

> A powerful sense of eroticism had sprung up between me and this bereaved young woman, almost as if I unconsciously wished to re-conceive her dead husband in her womb. By entering her vagina among the metal cabinets and white cables of the X-ray department I would somehow conjure back her husband from the dead, from the conjunction of her left armpit and the chromium camera stand, from the marriage of our genitalia and the elegantly tooled lens shroud. (Ballard, *Crash* 35)

Similarly, James's friendship with Vaughan revolves around their pursuit of collisions, both the ones staged in laboratories and real-life accidents: "During the months that followed, [we] spent many hours driving along the express highways . . . a zone of nightmare collisions. Listening to the police broadcasts on Vaughan's radio, we moved from one accident to the next" (*Crash* 4). The repetitive and compulsive actions resulting from the death drive are obvious, as the protagonists actively seek to participate in car crashes and derive pleasure from them. However, the instigating (Freudian) traumatic component may be more difficult to uncover.

Namely, it can be recognized in the convergence of the typical dystopian attitude to technology, termed by Beauchamp as "technophobia" (62), and the origin of Freud's death drive, and their reflection on the human body. The Thanatotic desire is said to derive from the "death of affect" (Francis, *The Psychological Fictions* 96), which is an emotional numbness due to the overload of sensory stimulation present in contemporary society (Keep et al.). This corresponds to the main fear of modern dystopian visions or "mechanomorphism": the fear that humans will be so

overtaken by technology that the machine will become "the measure of all things, the model for man to emulate" (Beauchamp 59). It is enough to remember Zamyatin's mathematical precision in figuring emotions in *We* to recognise that which Booker calls the "dehumanizing potential of [sciences and] technology" on the human body (*The Dystopian Impulse* 26). In *Crash*, even before meeting Vaughn, who reveals to him the sexual potential of crashes and related wounds, the protagonist is clinically detached, focused only on the physical, *mechanical* aspect of life. Numbness in James's perception of the world, apart from his constant preoccupation with emotionless sex, is evident in multiple instances: in describing conventionally repulsive bodily functions, such as vomiting, as "magic" and linking them to oral sex described as the *drawing* of mouth against his penis (Ballard, *Crash* 9–10); in musings on his wife's affairs as sources of masturbatory fantasies (23); and in figuring bodily sensations such as pain as a mechanical "bite of the windshield glass" (68). The emotional detachment and focus on the physical, intertwined with technology, is most vivid in the content of James's thoughts and actions, but also in his expression. In line with that, Ballard's sterile writing style in *Crash* results from the "[inverted] power balance between people and technology, which in turn deprives his characters of things like interiority and individual agency. They seem mass-produced, just like the things they make and buy" (Smith). In that sense, James's disposition reveals itself as the typical technological overwhelm and displacement of human experience in favour of the *mechanical*, prevalent in dystopian literature.

Despite his technology-oriented fetishism throughout the novel, that James's experience is a trauma is recognisable in his sublime impression of technology: a sense of pleasure mixed with fear.[30] Early in the novel, after his first car crash, James explicitly notes the technological potential for violent destruction. The overarching metal infrastructure and the onslaught of thousands of cars he sees from his apartment balcony awaken in him: "an undefined sense of extreme danger, almost as if an accident was about to take place involving all these cars . . . this coming autogeddon" (Ballard, *Crash* 94). This does not, however, prevent him – nor anyone else in the novel – from continuing to participate in traffic or in car crashes. In fact, he becomes dependent on the mechanical stimulation of traffic to climax during sex: "a water-board maintenance truck approaching . . . drummed against the doors of my car. This surge of excitement drew the first

[30] For more on the notion of the sublime in *Crash*, see Regina Seiwald's 2018 article "Between the Natural and the Artificial: The Sublime Sexual Sensation of Car Crashes in J. G. Ballard's *Crash*" (412–25).

semen to my penis. Ten minutes later, when the truck returned, the vibrating windows brought on my orgasm" (Ballard, *Crash* 69). The same sexual reliance on the technological landscape goes for Vaughan, who, during intercourse, "responded to different types of street furniture and roadside trim . . . heading inwards towards the city on the fast access roads, his rhythm became faster . . . as if some scanning device in his brain was increasingly agitated by the high office blocks" (130). Since the novel begins with Vaughan dying in a car crash and ends with James planning his auto(motive)destruction, it allows for viewing James as the positive to Vaughan's superlative loss of conventional body and sexual instincts in favour of those overridden by technology.

In that sense, James's and Vaughan's compulsive engagement in traffic-related violence and sexuality conveys the trauma of contemporary dystopian individuals, which is the loss of control over their lives and bodies due to a growing mechanisation of life. In turn, by participating in crashes, they are trying to regain the lost control. In Francis's view, their car-crash fetishism is the "psychological response to a machine landscape in which 'the human inhabitants . . . no longer provided its sharpest pointers, its keys to the borderzones of identity' (*C*, 48–9)" (*The Psychological Fictions* 110). The increased desensitisation of the body, in straying from the conventional sexual satisfaction and perception of pain, also aligns *Crash* with the genre of dystopia. Stripped of individuality and emotionality, what humans are relegated to in the novel is their physicality, satiated only by technological means. The objects of their sexual desire are no longer other people but cars and their physical manifestations on the human body: wounds and scars. As Mark Dery notes, "[t]he body is erotic only when it intersects with technology or the built environment" ("Sex Drive"). Consequently, it is impossible for the characters to climax without mechanical stimulation (James) or even mutilation (Vaughan) brought on by participation in traffic. The car, the symbol of all technology, has literally penetrated the human body and made it dependent on itself; to remove the car from *Crash* would render all its characters impotent. The outcomes of this technological predilection, according to Ballard's novel, are destruction and death. Beauchamp agrees, claiming that the most horrifying technological threat "is not that man's mechanical creations will come to rule over him like some alien power, but rather that he will so completely introject the ethos of technology that his highest aspiration will be to become a machine himself" (62). While copulating with Helen Remington, despite the musings on reviving her husband, James feels in her uterus "a dead machine" (Ballard, *Crash* 69), her diaphragm, which exemplifies the typical dystopian attitude to technology as inherently inimical to (new) human life.

The Freudian propulsion toward oblivion, which is the death drive, is thus equated to Ballard's characters' wish to become dead like the machine(s).[31] In discussing the significance of death in the context of psychoanalysis, Lois Tyson explains that fear of death equals fear of intimacy but also fear of risk (22–23). So, it seems that the characters' collective absence of fear of death is the direct reversal of the cause of fear of intimacy; since they have no possibility of achieving true intimacy, they are free from the fear of death as well.

Even though Freud's and Foucault's approaches to sexuality generally contradict each other, sexuality in *Crash* can also be refracted through Foucault's notions of discourse and biopower. Booker explains that Freud views sexuality as a natural, life-preserving instinct with subversive socio-political potential that is to be *sublimated* to maintain civilisation (*Dystopian Impulse* 12). For Foucault, sexuality is not an instinct but a part of social, political, and other practices to be *administered* with the same purpose (*History of Sexuality* 24). To consider sexuality in *Crash* through the Foucauldian lens, as a phenomenon that is attributed and not inherent, is to say that the "new sexuality born from a perverse technology" (Ballard, *Crash* 7) in the novel shows how anything can be *made* into an object of sexual desire, even a car. As Foucault argues, "the power exercised on the body is conceived not as a property, but as a strategy, that its effects of domination are attributed not to 'appropriation', but to dispositions, manoeuvres, tactics, techniques, and functionings" (*Discipline and Punish* 26). Following that, sexuality is only one tool, among many, in the exercise of power. In his interpretation of Foucault's take on sexuality, Bristow notes: "Acutely conscious of how powerful concepts such as sexuality come to dominate our lives, Foucault examines the political fabrication of influential beliefs which profess that erotic behaviours, identities and styles are fundamental to human existence" (9).

When considering *Crash* from that angle, the sexual potential that Ballard's characters derive from cars and technology in general is not a result of its liberation from a latent state. It is a result of the purposeful, systemic inscription of sexuality *in* the car and its intertwining with the human body by means of social and political discourses. On that note, Zadie Smith asks: "What else do we imply when we say that the purchase of a motorbike represents a 'mid-life crisis', or that a large car is compensation for a lack of endowment?" ("Sex and Wheels"). Similarly, Roy

[31] Incidentally, in David Cronenberg's 1996 film adaptation of *Crash*, wedding bands that exhibit James and Catherine's marital status are prominent during every sex scene, between the two of them and with others, which also points to the idea that their legal and emotional union has been degraded to a "dead" piece of metal.

Christopher ponders: "[A]ren't cars always already sexualized? The metaphor is close at hand: pistons and spark plugs, revving and thrusting, hands gripping curves and contours galore" (52). Even without the sexual connotation, it is widely acknowledged that a car can represent its owner as a person of a certain status within a particular social and economic milieu. The sexual dimension is emphasised here because it resonates with (Ballard's support of) a psychoanalytic view of sex as the central point of human nature and because it provides for the most profound estrangement metaphor of this dystopian vision of contemporary society and its values.

In the context of violence perpetrated against contemporary bodies, in his *Discipline and Punishment*, Foucault argues that the (post)modern society eliminates gruesome violence and the spectacle of the tortured body from the public eye, not necessarily out of humanity but because it might evoke sympathy, in favour of subtler ways of control (7–8). In *Crash*, the spectacles of violence and gruesome wounds and mutilations incite deep excitement and desire: "[T]he lungs of elderly men punctured by door handles, the chests of young women impaled by steering-columns, the cheeks of handsome youths pierced by the chromium latches of quarter-lights. For him these wounds were the keys to a new sexuality born from a perverse technology" (Ballard, *Crash* 6). According to Ballard, wounding and death of the body cease to be shied away from in contemporary consumerist society; they become the potential that humans strive to achieve, especially before an audience:

> "Vaughan – has she ever been in a car-crash?"
> "Not a major crash – it means that everything lies in the future for her. With a little forethought she could die in a unique vehicle collision, one that would transform all our dreams and fantasies. *The man who dies in that crash with her*…" (Ballard, *Crash* 116, my emphasis)

Hence, the mutilation and/or murder spectacle is both expected and socially encouraged, and the (self)abuse that happens in the process is considered a reward. Contrary to the "vaporisation" as the primary form of death of individuals in *1984*, which emphasises one's erasure from public records rather than their public torture and execution, in addition to rare and exemplary public hangings (Orwell 25–26), and the instantaneous natural death as the only accepted form of death

in the urban civilisation of *Brave New World,*[32] Ballard's dystopia purposefully makes a spectacle out of dying. As Smith concludes, "[t]here is a convergence between our horror of death and love of spectacle: 'On the roofs of the police cars the warning lights revolved, beckoning more and more passers-by to the accident site [Ballard 79]'" ("Sex and Wheels"). Additionally, while the two protagonists are cruising the nightly roads in search of car crashes and mutilated victims, their main aim is not to help but to procure the material for their perverse fantasies. A case in point is a car crash which James and Vaughan come upon and in which a bleeding woman is trapped in her vehicle, before an ambulance has arrived. Vaughan's first instinct is to record the woman's wounded state in order to sexually exploit it later: "As a police car approached, its emergency beacon pulsing along the overhead motorway, Vaughan ran back for his camera and flash equipment" (Ballard, *Crash* 5). Only after he had taken many pictures of her did he proceed to comfort the victim. The way in which Vaughan uses the technological instruments in this particular scene – the radio to detect crash locations and the camera to record the gory aftermaths – is again reminiscent of the perversion of technology often portrayed in dystopias.[33]

This shows that the spectacle of the abused body, contrary to Foucault's claims, is still very much at play in Ballard's dystopian depiction of the seventies, but also that the portrayals of mutilation and death will only be more explicit in later dystopias. To use Sellars's words, "[a]nticipating Marshall McLuhan and Jean Baudrillard, Ballard demonstrated how encroaching advertising and mass consumer culture played on submerged desire, implanting new, artificial subjectivities to create a schizophrenic underclass" (5). Forty years later, the technological and digital potential has expanded beyond recognition, bringing with it limitless prospects for its misuse. To draw a parallel, if the embodiment of the seventies' culture and consumerism for Ballard was the car, were he still alive in these highly digitalised times, it might be possible to imagine him writing another pornographic novel, only now about a mobile phone.[34] The

[32] "Youth almost unimpaired till sixty, and then, crack! the end" (Huxley 95).

[33] With his description, Ballard foresees the paparazzi industry as well as the current impulse to record everything with a smartphone, catastrophic events in particular, such as the car crash in which Princess Diana lost her life, which lead to a glorification of either the perpetrator or the victim. As David Lodge writes, as "the well-attested reports of the paparazzi clustered round the crushed Mercedes like carrion crows, shooting photos of the dead and dying occupants through the windows instead of giving assistance, aroused widespread anger and disgust. Here, at the scene of her death, the various images of Diana – the divinity, the icon, the culture-heroine, the victim – were violently forced together" (Lodge 123).

[34] The British anthology TV series *Black Mirror* (2011–23), created by Charlie Brooker, is one of the most vivid examples which deal with the effects of technology, artificial intelligence, and technophobia in the twenty-first century. Likewise, Don DeLillo, whose novel *Zero K* will be analysed in this dissertation, often dwells on "[t]he speed

(self)abuse of the body, which Ballard envisioned from the then-emerging technologies, and the spectacle of bodily harm have now evolved into the form of cosmetic surgeries and deaths[35] as a direct result of using smartphones to manipulate human minds and bodies. Ballard wrote *Crash* long before the invention of smartphones, but his "foreshadowing of western culture's latter-day fixation upon violence as entertainment" is rightly called "prophetic" (Livingstone) to this day.

To conclude, Ballard's *Crash* shows how the initially utopian commodities, the car and the entire automotive infrastructure, have overtaken humans and their bodies, infiltrating everyday life and the (un)conscious desires in a true dystopian fashion. Whether liberated from its inherent state, as per Freud, or inscribed on the individual by the socio-political discourse, as per Foucault, the sexual potential of the car and technology at large is the consequence of the dystopian desensitisation of humans. Instead of all kinds of freedom, what the car and other fast-developing technologies have brought to individuals is the loss of self, resulting in the perversion of natural instincts, such as survival and sexual instincts, and propulsion toward (auto)destruction.

3.2. P. D. James's *Children of Men:* The Young's Violent Delights and the Old's Violent Ends

Huxley's canonical vision of the "happily brainwashed world" (Walsh 95) has rightly been disturbing its readers to this day with its pessimistic outlook on human powerlessness in the face of rampant science and technology. From the perspective of the continuation of the human race, however, P. D. James's post-apocalyptic contemporary dystopia *Children of Men* (1992) tackles the topic from an even bleaker perspective. Whereas the highly eugenic society of *Brave New World* treats human embryos as any other capitalist commodity, obtaining them *ex vitro* from extracted eggs and sperm and optimizing them on conveyor belts, Huxley's *producers* still rely on the one advantage that human bodies have over technology. This is the power to create life by producing fertile sex cells. James's dystopian world likewise explores the effects of overreaching technology on human life, yet its dark account of the future deprives human bodies of the power

of technological progression, including the emergence of the internet and mobile phones" (Maffey and Teo 2) that have come to rule the contemporary individuals' lives. Both of these are preceded by Stephen King's *Cell* (2006), equally graphic in representing death and violence caused by a cell phone signal.

[35] According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's National Center for Statistics and Analysis, "[t]he number of people injured in distraction-affected crashes in 2014 was estimated at 431,000 (18% of all the injured people). An estimated 33,000 people were injured in 2014 in crashes involving cell phone use or other cell phone-related activities, 8 percent of all people injured in distraction-affected crashes (National Center for Statistics and Analysis 1–3).

to procreate. Set in the then-future of 2021, the novel imagines the aftermath of the "Year Omega" (James 7) or 1995, when the last humans were born and the entire world population was rendered sterile. Without the ability to procreate and provide new generations necessary for the functioning of society, the focal British society has become characterised by oppression and violence. Consequently, powers that be employ various forms of exploitation to ensure the limited young and able-bodied human resources for the remaining population. The aim of this subchapter is to analyse the system's ensuing abuse of individuals' bodies in the distinctly dystopian world of *Children of Men* to show that the State's contemporary biopolitical treatment of bodies under the pretext of protecting life is even more inhumane, violent, and deadly than the former death-administering power as a punishment for transgression against the sovereign's law (Foucault, *History of Sexuality* 135).

In the well-established dystopian tradition that feeds on technophobia (Beauchamp 55), focused on the human overreliance on technology, *Children of Men* is dominated by the disappointment in science and technology's power and their effects on the human body. The post-Enlightenment recognition that techno-scientific advancements are not necessarily the answer to all human problems and the consequent disappointment with these previously exalted phenomena (Booker, *Dystopian Impulse* 4–7) are present here in relation to the issue of infertility. In the novel's introduction, comprised of Theodore (Theo) Faron's first-person diary entries, the protagonist refers to the "universal disillusionment of those whose god has died" (James 7), meaning that "technology was [their] god" (6).[36] This dismay comes from the inability of the human race around the globe to find, despite the help of its allegedly omnipotent science and technology, not only the cure but also the cause of the mysterious phenomenon that has made everyone sterile. Again, if, in theory, Huxley's World Controllers decided to stop their eugenic processes and let the remaining fertile members of the society procreate, they could do so,[37] but in *Children of Men*, the people have no chance of regaining fertility since they cannot determine what has caused this failure of the human body in the first place.

[36] Granted, the exaltation of the technological deity necessarily evokes Huxley's Fordism.

[37] Chad Walsh notes that the majority of female members of Huxley's society is "prenatally sterilised" (93), while others are taught to use contraception. The women whose reproduction function is not stunted before birth belong to Alpha and Beta castes, which are left to develop on their own, while all others are stunted. Thus, just as with deliberate curbing of reproduction, the entire genetic engineering process could be stopped.

Theo's account of the global efforts to find the cure also indicates the dystopian disappointment in Enlightenment ideals of employing scientific and technological improvements to better humanity and living conditions for all. This resonates strongly with the two World Wars and weapons of mass destruction, which Claeys considers the major reasons for the boom of dystopian literature in the last two centuries ("The Origins of Dystopia" 115–22). In their struggle to find the cure for infertility, the countries are not united even though all of them are plagued by the same issue. On the contrary, countries around the world are separated more than ever, apprehensive of one another and striving to reach success and exploit it on their own. Notably, those best known for their intelligence and cutting-edge science and technology are regarded with the highest level of suspicion: "In particular we watched Japan, half-fearing that this technically brilliant people might already be on the way to finding the answer" (James 8). Likewise, the novel makes an explicit reference to the betrayed ideal that an increase in human knowledge will increase one's humanness and display the boundless power of human rationality.[38] As Theo notes of Xan Lyppiat, his cousin and the dictatorial Warden of England, "it struck him for the first time that he had, perhaps, misjudged Xan for the most naïve of reasons; he couldn't believe that a man who was highly intelligent . . . could be evil" (157).

The frequent dystopian perspective that high intelligence and intellectual development do not beget a more humane life, as well as that a hedonistic lifestyle does not guarantee peace, is most vividly embodied by the "barbarian Omegas" (16). The once-hedonistic and procreation-free population found in Huxley's *Brave New World* has now turned into bloodthirsty beasts who ritually burn and kill innocent people (256). The Omegas, the last generation which bore the hope of procreation, were monitored and indulged their whole life, which has inevitably led to their infamous violent behaviour: "[A] regime which combines perpetual surveillance with total indulgence is hardly conducive to healthy development. If from infancy you treat children as gods they are liable in adulthood to act as devils" (James 15). Picture perfect yet sterile and incapable of sympathy, the Omegas are the paragon of the typically perverted Enlightenment hopes and ideals of perfected minds and bodies found in dystopias. The entire generation is brilliant but "also cruel, arrogant and violent" (14), and groups of them, called the Painted Faces, torture and kill

[38] This is likewise connected to Foucault's thought, which challenges the "paradigms of western thought taken for granted since the Enlightenment . . . [and] critiques the classical ways of thinking about the subject as a rational, unified being with a fixed core or essence" (King 32).

people in rural areas. In Theo's encounter with them, they beat a member of his group in a particularly gruesome, *spectacular* ritual for which they are infamous around the country: "[T]he Omegas were holding their torches aloft in a circle . . . arms wielding their clubs, rose and fell in a ritual ballet of death. Even from this distance it seemed to Theo that the air was splintered with the smashing of Luke's bones" (James 260). The result of this regularly performed violence is a "head . . . battered into a mess of blood, skin and cracked bones" (262). The government condones the Omegas' violence by absolving them for the crimes of torture and murders they commit. Namely, "when an Omega is caught he is offered immunity if he is prepared to join the State Security Police, whereas the rest of the gang, no more guilty, are sent on conviction to the Penal Colony on the Isle of Man" (14), a lawless place so brutal that only the sanguine people like them can survive.

The ironic dystopian approach to Enlightenment in James's dystopia is also found in the sudden antagonism toward animals. Since the now-infertile human beings are incapable of doing "what animals do without thought" (James 7),[39] the basic postulates of Enlightenment – human reason and its allegedly limitless power – are turned on their heads. Indeed, humans are different from animals based on the capacity for reason, but for "all our knowledge, our intelligence, our [scientific and technological] power" (7), humans are no longer able to ensure procreation. In fact, the rapid development of science and technology, with concomitant issues of overpopulation and pollution affecting the human bodies, are suggested as the reasons which have caused global infertility. As Niğmet Çetiner notes, "it is hinted that the cause of this almost Biblical catastrophe is the dramatic increase in human population and human-induced activity leading to pollution" (651), which is an ever-increasing issue in today's world. Furthermore, the overuse of technology is considered the reason for low sperm quality. By citing Luján et al. (2019), Çetiner notes that it is estimated that by 2045, only one half of the male population will remain fertile, and that there is a scientifically proven correlation between the usage of mobile phones and laptops and a decrease in fertility (653).

The bleak prospect of a short foreseeable future without procreation is shown by eliminating sexuality as a natural instinct. In an additional contrast to Huxley's and even Ballard's pleasure-

[39] The sudden supremacy of animals over humans also alludes to Nietzsche, in whose "writings the human being is decentered, loses his status as a privileged being, which stems from superiority due to his rationality (the pride of the intellect)," thus inspiring posthumanism (Tuncel 88).

seeking societies, in which sex is the universal *modus operandi* of the system's subjugation of the population, James's procreation-deprived State employs similar methods to urge people to engage in sexual activities, only these methods no longer work. As Theo says, "[our] interest in sex is waning . . . despite the efforts of the Warden of England, through the national porn shops, to stimulate our flagging appetites" (James 9). Opposing the earlier dystopian regimes' treatment of human reproduction to contribute directly to the regime, that is, Huxley's restriction to procreate naturally and Orwell's separation of pleasure from procreation, the prohibitions in *Children of Men* are no longer valid nor necessary. The state-encouraged "sensual substitutes" (9) or sensual massages have lost their utility; when the natural ability to procreate was lost, the urge to indulge in sexuality was lost together with it. Apart from the useless porn shops, the only sex-related method of control imposed by the State are semen testing and gynaecological exams (83) to determine whether there still exists a fertile individual. While the regime's purpose of encouraging or prohibiting sexual activities in classic dystopias was to keep their populations subdued, here, the proclaimed governmental aim is to keep humanity alive. As the Warden asserts: "Man has no hope of reproducing himself if he doesn't copulate" (146).

At the brink of human extinction, one certainly cannot vilify the intention of sustaining the population as an abusive or cruel dystopian mechanism. However, the State's fertility testing of younger healthy men and women is not entirely innocuous in nature; it is a means of biopower which, according to Foucault, strives to "incite, reinforce, control, monitor, optimize, and organize the forces under it" (*History of Sexuality* 136). As Theo learns in a private conversation with the Warden, the rigorous testing in search of fertile individuals does not apply to the entire population since the "world had become increasingly intolerant of physical defects" (James 56), even some minor ones such as deformed fingers. The State insists on testing only the physically healthy men and women while disregarding the potential offspring of the unhealthy and even of those who are deemed unfit for political reasons. This includes the immigrants, the convicts (who may or may not have committed a crime for which they were convicted), and, above all, the (slightly) defective people, in case that they miraculously manage to conceive. In fact, Julian's and Luke's fertility and the ensuing race-saving pregnancy have gone under the radar because they are both "reject[s]" (265) in the eyes of the State: Luke for his childhood epilepsy and Julian for her deformed left hand (55). So, the struggle is not for life in general but for a conditional, "able-bodied existence" (Marks de Marques 43). Those with deficiencies might produce offspring that is dependent and

not entirely useful to the state, and "this dystopia cannot tolerate unable and disabled bodies" (James 41). This means that the State, despite being faced with extinction, still polices its citizens and strives to achieve Foucauldian utility or usefulness as the basic principle of a contemporary, biopower-oriented society, and not the indiscriminate continuation and welfare of the human race. According to Díaz Miranda, "[a]mongst the destruction, paradoxically, biopower wants to conserve life by regulating it" (160).

Through such "eugenics . . . [the State] . . . allows for a differentiation between citizens and non-citizens by actively inserting the former in the bureaucracies imposed by the State" (Díaz Miranda 159). Put simply, the State makes a clear division between the insiders and the Others, whereby the privileged, younger and able-bodied minority which still might produce offspring are indulged at the expense of the politically unfavourable majority. In the same way that the government openly encourages sexuality, recreation is used to enhance pleasure and health among the able-bodied to increase the chances of procreation. As a result, the once-expensive forms of recreation available only to the richest members of society, such as golf, are now free and exercised within the interest of the State. As Theo notes: "All are free, this is part of the Warden's promised pleasure" (James 9). Theo confirms the biopolitical background of the society's focus on health; he runs every day and is "just as obsessed with the functioning of [his] body" (10) as everyone else is. However, that their indulgence is not free of charge after all and that these seemingly pleasurable activities are only a means of the biopolitical governing principle can be seen in the fact that healthy individuals are prohibited from emigrating (83) since that would mean a loss of viable human resources for the State.

More importantly, the dystopian society in *Children of Men* employs much more sinister mechanisms of biopower, which is notable through explicit violence perpetrated against human lives and bodies. Since pleasure has failed as the guiding principle of the State and its Warden, society is governed by violence. Apart from the above-mentioned condoning of the Omegas' cruelty and barbaric behaviour, there are several instances of violence present in *Children of Men* that make James's contemporary dystopia harsher in terms of its abuse of bodies than in the classic dystopias. These forms of violence are the exploitation of the "Sojourners" (James 45), the young and able immigrants from poor countries who come to work in England; the "Penal Colony on the Isle of Man" (14), where the convicts are sent; and the worst of all biopolitical mechanisms, the "Quietus" (67) spectacle or the State-encouraged mass-suicide of the aged members of society.

All these forms of State-imposed violence and control reflect Foucault's notion of biopower. In other words, the oppression and use of force are all carefully devised and executed "in the name of life necessity" (*History of Sexuality* 137), and the main point of State mechanisms is to ensure utility.

That "equality is a political theory not a practical policy" in the so-called "egalitarian Britain" (James 9) is first notable in the case of the Sojourners. They are the young and capable Omegas and older generations imported from poor countries to do the menial jobs for the British. That is, cleaning the streets and sewers, but mainly taking care of "the incontinent, the aged" (83). Although the Sojourners are doing their "dirty work" (83), the British population's xenophobia and racism toward the immigrants are obvious. When Theo talks to his friend Jasper, the old man says that the Sojourners are criminals and deserve to work at such degrading jobs where they can be monitored at all times (68). In the same manner, Theo's ex-wife Helena sees nothing wrong in the unjust treatment of the immigrant workers who have no civil rights or citizenship in Great Britain, who are forced to live in camps and cannot bring their families with them, and are deported to their home countries once they reach the age of sixty and cease to be useful to the State. When challenged on these issues, Helena says: "They get a better deal here than they'd get back home. They're glad to come. Nobody forces them" (168). The reason for Sojourners' importing is to achieve the Warden's alleged promise of "security, comfort, pleasure" (84). This once again aligns with Foucault's biopower, whereby usefulness to the system and not humanity is the guiding principle of the system. The immigration practice is a form of exploitation for the privileged or, as Julian terms it, "legalized slavery" (James 83; Wood 284), whereby the immigrants "have to be strong, healthy, without criminal convictions. We take the best and then chuck them back when they're no longer wanted. And who gets them? Not the people who need them most. The Council and their friends" (James 83). Díaz Miranda sees that as a convergence of dystopia and capitalism: "It is a matter of volume, of the wealthiest class capturing as many resources as it can" (163). The use of these imported human resources is thus not distributed equally, but it is reserved for the privileged minority, which reduces the entire mechanism to an obvious form of exploitation by posing as general welfare.

Another social group that experiences an even more violent treatment, next to which the exploitation of the immigrants seems "benign" (Wood 284), are the condemned. Systematically denied a fair trial and deliberation of a jury, they are sent to the "Penal Colony on the Isle of Man,

to which all those convicted of crimes of violence, burglary or repeated theft are now banished" (James 14). In line with Foucault's removal of the punishment from the public view, the inhumane treatment of the condemned is unknown to the general public, and the State is intent on keeping it that way: "The island is run by a gang of the strongest convicts. They enjoy cruelty and on Man they can beat and torture and torment and there's no one to stop them and no one to see" (90). When challenged by the protagonist on whether they know of the "murders, the starvation, the complete breakdown of law and order" that are happening in the Penal Colony, the Warden responds: "We do. The question is, how do you know?" (135). The ruling party's interest in Theo's source of knowledge reveals that the practice is carefully hidden since no one who is sent there can escape to tell his or her story of the "monstrous inhumanity reign[ing]" (Wood 284) there. The Council's reasoning behind the cruel place of punishment is the following: "If people choose to assault, rob, terrify, abuse and exploit others, let them live with people of the same mind" (James 136). The rhetoric is powerful and, one might argue, somewhat just. However, the unjust treatment and the savagery to which the humans in the Penal Colony are exposed there exceed the crimes they have committed, which is what Foucault criticises in the old, death-administering regimes (*Discipline and Punish* 9).

A case in point is Miriam's brother Henry, who got convicted because he robbed and pushed an Omega woman (87). She fell and claimed that he kicked her while she was on the floor. Based on the act of violence, the State-favoured Omega's false claim, and the lack of jury since people no longer care to participate in the legal duties, Henry was sent to the Penal Colony for life, as one always is, regardless of the crime committed (88). After managing to escape, he returned emaciated and terrified and recounted the violence, cruelty, and even cannibalism (90) that took place on the island, only to be taken again by the State Security Police and killed. Yet, Henry's death is viewed as preferable to living in the State-condoned nightmare that is the Penal Colony. Therefore, when Henry's sister claims that she can never tell of the cruelty of the Penal Colony of which she learned from her brother and says that him dying is "better than being sent back on that island" (92), one can see the confirmation of Foucault's claim on the elimination of the *public* spectacle of the tortured body of the condemned (*Discipline and Punish* 50) in contemporary society. However, the violence and torture persist in this contemporary dystopia, and they align with his description of the older, sovereign-based systems in which the punishment of criminals at times "exceed, in savagery, the crime itself" (9).

The widely accepted justification of the Penal Colony propagated by the State is that they are removing the criminals who have once caused people to live their everyday lives in fear (James 136–37). Yet, the fear and horror that the State claims to have exterminated by punishing the criminals for their acts of violence are still present. Even more so, people are afraid of being punished by cruelty and death for lesser crimes, as seen in Henry's case, but also for one of the most natural human processes: getting old. Hence, the most violent instance of the State's enactment of biopower and the necessity of utility of individuals in contemporary (dystopian) society is the treatment of the aged in *Children of Men*. Specifically, the State regulates suicide by both prohibiting and encouraging it. On the one hand, the State prohibits suicides of the younger and middle-aged people, brought on by the fear of Omega and the impending "brunt of an ageing and decaying society's humiliating but insistent needs" (James 11). The regime tries to discourage people from taking away their lives by handing out fines to their living relatives and family. Again, urging people to stay alive and to encourage others to stay alive is not an instance of "humanitarian feelings" (Foucault, *History of Sexuality* 138), but of sheer interest of the State for useful individuals. In other words, the State's prevention of younger people's suicides is not motivated by welfare; it serves to punish the self-elimination of *useful* people who are to participate in the interest of the State by taking care of the old or by potentially procreating. Resorting to suicide to avoid the burden of taking care of the old also exhibits the utter lack of usefulness and compassion for the old people, which is a behaviour exhibited by the protagonist himself. Apart from running every morning and being obsessed with his well-being, Theo is terrified and repelled by the older population when he visits a hospital due to a mandatory survival course (James 46). As he says, he was not there to help but to gain knowledge "should the need arise, [where] he could with some cunning lay his hands on drugs" (46).

On the other hand, the State demands the suicide of aged citizens, who are no longer useful for labour or procreation. Even if they once had the ability to procreate, they have now lost it due to old age. This is the first instance of the old people's lack of utility in the interest of the State since the Warden and his Council are intent on sustaining only the healthy and suitable for procreation. Another instance of the older people's lack of usefulness, which aligns even more with the Foucauldian biopolitical systems, is their need for everyday physical support. As a method of providing comfort to its own younger citizens who might be able to procreate after all, the State relieves them from the obligation to care for the aged and dependent citizens by importing the

Sojourners instead. Although these immigrants "work for a pittance" (James 83) and have no civil rights, they represent a cost to the State. For these reasons, the old citizens are deemed a burden and the State encourages their ritual suicide. The relatives of those who abide by the State receive substantial financial compensation when the "incapacitated and dependent old . . . kill themselves" (11). As Wood sees it, what "once meant to go in peace, to be quit honourably of life through noble death, has become a euphemism for extermination" (284–85). Apart from the uncompassionate attitude to older people, the novel's portrayal of such a practice raises the question that plagues contemporary real-life moral discussions on euthanasia and its potential capitalist exploitation.[40] If one might earn money from taking another person's life, however young or old that person may be, the chance of wrongdoings increases. People are rid of their personhood, and life becomes a commodity. Unlike *Brave New World*'s State-programmed, sudden death at the age of sixty after a lifetime of perfect health and indulgence (Huxley 95), people in *Children of Men* are urged to kill themselves or, implicitly, to kill others for a double benefit: not having to take care of them and a financial reward.

The public mass-suicide is called the Quietus (James 67), and it is the cruellest dystopian practice in the novel, which corresponds to Foucault's biopolitical argument of "genocide [as] indeed the dream of modern powers" (*History of Sexuality* 137). The Quietus and its violent nature, disguised as an act of mercy through which the State helps "the aged [who] choose to die in company" (James 140), is what proves that the Warden and his Council's rule over Britain is not a lesser evil in the existing apocalyptic conditions, but a true dystopian dictatorship. In this vein, Ralph C. Wood notes how "there is no ambiguity about why Xan calls himself the Warden of England: He presides over a country that has become a prison" (282). Making the same reference, Marks de Marques adds that the (prison) Warden's "power lies exactly on the restraint of individual, bodily actions that may jeopardize the collective project" (40). Hence, while the ruling party claim that the Quietus is "of course, absolutely voluntary" and that those who are committing suicide need to verify their decision by signing a "triplicate" (James 135), the protagonist's first-hand account of the event proves otherwise.

Despite the claims that the ritual is a continuation of the spontaneous decision of a group of old people who had, at one point in the past, decided to take their own lives by jumping off a cliff,

[40] Ralph C. Wood notes that, apart from euthanasia as one of the "vexing issues of our time," James's dystopia also thematises "nuclear power, environmental disaster, terrorism, racism" (277).

thus inspiring others to claim their faith in the same way (James 134), Theo notices that the "whole event, which seemed so haphazard, so spontaneous, must have been carefully organized" (105). He recognises this based on the fact that the aged are brought to the site of suicide in the company of a small army of people, "officials, the nurses, the soldiers, even the bandsmen" (106–07). Additionally, the State Security Police monitor the event the entire time, and the boats taking the suicides to the sea include "two soldiers in each of the boats [who], as the old women entered . . . bent down presumably either to shackle their ankles or to attach weights" (106). All the participants – the police, the military, and the hospital staff – exemplify the "carceral nature of modern societies" (Booker, *Dystopian Literature* 23) as they necessarily evoke Foucault's observation on the similarity between the organisation and functioning of prisons as well as armies and hospitals (*History of Sexuality* 141).

Furthermore, the presence of police officers and soldiers escorting the old to their allegedly voluntary deaths speaks clearly against spontaneity. The presence of a music band confirms that the event is indeed *orchestrated*. Although not explicitly stated, the band are obviously there to silence the screams of the old who choose to protest. In addition, the band are said to play "cheerful songs, melodies from the time of his grandparents, the marching song of the Second World War" (James 105), as well as religious hymns. The marching songs also represent the hypocrisy of the State's biopolitical mechanism in sentencing its older population to death and presenting it as mercy since such songs are used to spur the heroic sentiments in soldiers before war battles, which is another form of state-condoned ritual of death. In this, James's dystopia evokes the motto of Oceania "War is peace" (Orwell 29), and Foucault's claim about the genocidal tendencies of modern systems "because power is situated and exercised at the level of life, the species, the race, and the large-scale phenomena of population" (*History of Sexuality* 137).

An incident in which an old woman – the wife of Theo's friend – is obviously fighting against dying shows that the ritual is, in fact, a murder. Jumping in the water and trying to reach the shore, all the while "screaming, a high, piercing whistle like a tortured animal" (James 107), the woman is followed by a soldier and "with the butt of his pistol, struck . . . viciously on the side of the head" (107) until she dies. Everyone who tries to prevent this "*absolutely voluntary*" event (135, my emphasis) becomes a victim of physical violence of State representatives as well, which once again disproves the alleged voluntariness. Consequently, when Theo tries to help the woman, the soldier from the boat incapacitates him (108). He survives the intervention, but the only reason why the

soldier does not let him drown or kill him in the process is because, at fifty, Theo is still young and capable of procreation, and thus useful to the State. Moreover, older people negate the Quietus; a case in point is the lady from the bed and breakfast the protagonist stayed in a while witnessing the event (James 115). Younger people are unaware of what it truly is, just as Theo was before he was approached by the dissenters. Upon learning the truth, Theo states before the Warden and the Council: "What I saw was murder. Half of the suicides looked drugged and those who did know what was happening didn't all go willingly" (133). Contrary to the State's propaganda that by organising these serene rituals with "a boat slowly pulling away into the twilight" (67), they are only giving a "comforting . . . touch of a human hand" (135) to those who wish to die with dignity and in company, Theo claims that the only helping hand the women he saw dying got was his, which is to say that the ritual is actually a State-ordered mass-murder (mass-drowning) of people and not the humane ending of their lives. The old have done nothing wrong, they have not transgressed any law; they are guilty only of being live (human) beings and of their body getting old and incapable. Yet, they are being punished for that because, in contemporary society, old bodies are useless, and usefulness is the guiding principle (Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 137). As Marks de Marques confirms: "The aging body, be that of British citizens, be that of the Sojourners – foreigners allowed into Britain to work in hard labour or menial jobs and who face compulsory deportation at the age of sixty – has no room or function whatsoever" (42–43).

The mask of humanity behind which the notorious Quietus operates constitutes "mass persuasion and coercion" (James 141). The aged are encouraged to eliminate themselves from society to ensure a more comfortable life of "promised pleasure" (9) for the younger population and a better use of limited resources. In this, James's dystopia vividly evokes the interconnectedness between utopia and dystopia, whereby utopia is achieved at the expense of someone else's living nightmare.[41] In particular, the old and the immigrants have to suffer for the benefit of the young and the capable, that is, of those useful to the State. In connection to the old age and the practice of Quietus, the everyday life in the State shows that its propagation of suicide as a voluntary practice is only an illusion. There are two instances in which Theo recognises this. The first is his conversation with an old woman who runs a bed and breakfast in the town where the Quietus is held: "I haven't had a B and B for four months now and one feels so useless. There's

[41] Another such example would be Ursula K. Le Guin's short story "Those Who Walk Away from Omelas" (1973), presented as a utopia which enables general welfare at the expense of a single child and its nightmarish reality.

nothing worse than feeling useless when you're old" (James 114). The second instance is even more telling, and it represents Theo's interaction with an old custodian while going to see the Warden:

"It's good to see you, sir. How are you?"

> The question seemed to increase Yule's nervousness . . . He said: "Oh, very well, yes, very well, thank you, Faron. I'm managing all right. I do for myself, you know. I live in lodgings off the Iffley Road but I manage very well. I do everything for myself . . . I'm no trouble to anyone." (James 119)

The "retired Classics don from Merton" (119) is at first terrified by Theo's words because he caught the man almost dozing off on his job, and later by the insinuation that he might be too old to do his job, while Theo's words were only a simple act of courtesy. The interaction thus directly opposes the "freedom from fear" motto propagated by the State (128) and shows the old people living in constant fear of having to commit suicide because they are no longer as useful to the State as they once were. As will be seen in further sections of this dissertation and other contemporary dystopias, death becomes a desirable aim for the citizens of contemporary dystopias as both a method of adhering to the system and as the only form of rebellion against the system's comprehensive power. As Theo asserts toward the end of the novel of those who were killed, "they're all beyond the Council's reach. Every time a victim dies it's a small defeat for tyranny" (333).

In conclusion, although the dystopian regime in *Children of Men* somewhat tries to mask its cruel mechanisms as the necessary measures for the protection of life and survival of the human race, the function of these mechanisms is not that of general welfare. In earlier dystopias, capital punishment was either eliminated, as is the case with *Brave New World*, or exercised only in the cases of transgression against the regime's rules, like in *1984*. In P. D. James's contemporary dystopia, however, physical violence and the death penalty are condoned parts of the system, applied most often to those who are no longer useful to society. While in earlier dystopias, individuals could, at least in theory, relinquish their politically unfavourable tendencies and choose to serve the system to avoid the death penalty, here, the reasons for State-condoned violence and execution cannot be avoided because they stem from inherently human processes, such as ageing.

Apart from a small number of real criminals, whose cruel treatment in the Penal Colony might be justified even though it sometimes exceeds the severity of their crimes, the foreign immigrants or the Sojourners, the unjustly convicted offenders, and especially the old people are all exploited and their bodies violently abused by the State. Used for their labour potential and exposed to physical violence, the immigrants are sent back to their home countries as soon as they turn sixty and can no longer work. Even worse, the aged citizens are drugged and murdered for one of the most natural human processes, that of getting old. Presented as merciful and voluntary acts aimed at protecting the lives of the young and abled, all these forms of abuse align with Foucault's concept of biopower and the alleged increased humanity in the light of Enlightenment, propagated with transformed punitive measures, which actually allow for a more profound control of individuals bodies and "wholesale slaughter in the name of life necessity" (Foucault, *History of Sexuality* 137), which is not as explicit in earlier, canonical dystopias.

3.3. David Mitchell's *Cloud Atlas*: Bodies as Food for Biopolitical Capitalism

As a postmodernist novel, David Mitchell's *Cloud Atlas* (2004) is a hybrid of several genres, including a dystopian sequence about the female clone or Sonmi~451, titled "An Orison of Sonmi~451." [42] In this sequence, Mitchell depicts the abuse of female[43] clones in a futuristic "corpocracy" (188) of Nea So Copros, which has replaced the North and South Koreas. Consisting of six storylines that follow as many reincarnations of the same soul, recognisable by a comet-like birthmark on their body, the novel's timeline spans from the mid-nineteenth century, marked by colonialism and slavery, to the post-apocalyptic future plagued by cannibals in the twenty-fourth century. Although the entire novel rests on the anti-Enlightenment sentiment of thwarted faith in the progress of humanity and human values, which, as established earlier in this dissertation, is an outlook that corresponds strongly with dystopian fiction (Booker *Dystopian Impulse*, 6), only its dystopian storyline, "An Orison of Sonmi~451," will be analysed in detail in this subchapter. This

[42] Other storylines, which will not be analysed in this dissertation, include historical fiction, mystery, and SF, all featuring different characters, time periods, cultures, and language styles.

[43] The dystopian section of Mitchell's novel analysed in this subchapter has a female protagonist, whose fellow servers are all female, which points to a targeted exploitation of female bodies. However, in the novel, Mitchell does not discuss the sexual abuse of clones specifically, as does the film adaptation of *Cloud Atlas* (2012), directed by the Wachowski sisters and Tom Tykwer. The film shows Yoona~939's being (ab)used by Seer Rhee, who later executes her for rebelling against sexual harassment by a group of consumers in the diner. Consequently, this subchapter, which focuses only on the novel, also refrains from such analysis.

two-part story, which comprises the fifth and seventh sequences in the matryoshka-like narrative (Schneeberger 544),[44] tackles the issue of the treatment of bodies in contemporary dystopia, which is the main focus of this dissertation.

The analysis of this dystopian sequence, delivered in the form of an interview with the titular character, the artificially produced "fabricant" Sonmi~451 (Mitchell 189), will employ the Foucauldian notions of biopolitics, docile bodies, utility, and spectacle of torture. This is to show that the abuse of the clones' bodies in the highly-technologised future of Nea So Copros includes a biopolitical control and subjugation with the aim to "reinforce, control, monitor, optimize, and organize" life, but also "to seize hold of life in order to suppress it" (Foucault, *History of Sexuality* 136). In other words, the aim is to prove that the clones are turned into docile bodies through a strict regimentation of their everyday lives, which is in line with Foucault's view of the contemporary systems' biopolitical treatment of individuals. However, the clones are also murdered by the system, both as a form of punishment for rebelling and as the ultimate form of utility, which constitutes an even crueller treatment of their bodies than in canonical dystopias by Huxley, Zamyatin, and Orwell.

To start with, "The Orison of Sonmi~451" introduces the readers to Sonmi~451, a clone turned revolutionist, awaiting her execution. Before being executed by the system for learning and denigrating its sinister inner workings, Sonmi~451 is asked to recount her life at Papa Song's, one of the many restaurants in Papa Song Corp which employs, or rather exploits, the cloned servers. Like other Sonmis and other clone types – Yoonas, Hwa-Soons, and Ma-Leu-Das (Mitchell 188) – Sonmi~451 is created solely to serve the mainstream human society, whom they call the "purebloods" (189). The futuristic food chain Papa Song's is reminiscent of the real-world fast food restaurants such as McDonald's, and the exploited clones' only promised future is to become consumers as the pureblood humans they serve. Once they repay their "Investment" to Papa Song, a holographic leader reminiscent of Big Brother, by earning twelve stars for each year of their servitude, the clones are promised the reward of enjoying life in a consumerist heaven on a Hawaiian beach (Mitchell 190).

[44] The novel consists of eleven sequences in total, five of which are split into two parts, with their second parts delivered in reverse order after the sixth sequence, which is uninterrupted. In other words, the sixth sequence functions as a sort of structural mirror, reflecting the following structure of the sequences: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1.

Relying on the consumerist ideal of *Brave New World*, Mitchell's references to Huxley are overt. The clones are artificially produced from embryos "genomed in wombtanks" (340), evoking Huxley's decanting. Despite the many Asian automobile brands, everyone in Nea So Copros drives a "ford" (191). In connection to Huxley's Fordian religion exalted by the "sign of the T" (Huxley 69), the above-mentioned reward for the clones' docility is referred to as "Xultation" and is celebrated by the successful clones making "the sign of the dollar" and "genuflect[ing]" in a mock-religious consumerist ceremony called the "Star Sermon" (Mitchell 190). Other mass-produced brands have also become naturalised in language; everyone wears "nikes" (200) instead of sneakers, drinks "starbuck" (341), uses "sonys" (193) instead of mobile phones, and they "kodak" and "nikon" (338, 204) events, meaning to photograph and record (Sorlin 76). What is more, in a metatextual reference, Huxley and Orwell are presented as "Optimists" (Mitchell 220) for their treatment of individuals,[45] suggesting that this dystopia treats them even worse. Indeed, Heather J. Hicks notes that "[i]n Mitchell's future, the treatment of clones is emblematic of a more pervasive dehumanization of the 'corpocratic' regime, which construes its population as 'consumers' rather than [Huxley's] 'citizens'" (20).

Despite the commodification of all individuals and the corpocratic conditioning towards consumerism as the only way of life worth pursuing, the clones are relegated to an even lower status in society. Their "substrata" (Mitchell 218) social status, which allows for their systemic exploitation and execution by the widespread notion that the clones lack a soul, disables them from leaving the restaurants in which they serve. The lack of a soul is, in fact, the lack of a chip, which is implanted into purebloods' index finger and allows them to operate technology such as lifts and payment registers in dineries (Mitchell 188; Hicks 20). Paradoxically, this means that in this consumerist society, humans without chip implants are less valued than humans with chip implants. Thus, even though Sonmi~451 later proves herself to be even more intelligent than a pureblood by singlehandedly completing her secondary education in just fifty days (Mitchell 220) and sensitive to philosophical, metaphysical knowledge, she and her cloned "sisters" (193) are valued only as docile and utile bodies. The entire dinery "cosmology" (189) functions as a Panopticon, whereby the fabricants are overseen by Seers and Aides (188) at all times. The clones' daily routine includes hibernating in capsules until "yellow-up" (188), which has replaced the sun. This means that, during their short twelve-year lives, the clones are constantly kept underground

[45] Incidentally, Washington's work is "translated" to *Satires on Democracy* in the Nea So Copros (Mitchell 220).

and never let out of the building. The only available exits, the elevators, can be operated only by purebloods or humans with souls. Since clones are made to be soulless, they are unable to do so and consequently cannot escape.[46] Thus, the biopolitical treatment of bodies turns individuals into capitalist commodities. As per Díaz Miranda, the "eugenic process goes hand in hand with biopower, which in turn is utilized as another tool of late capitalism" (160).

The clones are treated as automatons, with "every day of [their] life in Papa Song's as uniform as the fries [they] vended" (Mitchell 187). Since they are deprived of sunlight, they are conditioned to wake up with the help of a "stimulin" gas, after which they are forced to clean their bodies in the hygiener and steamer, and wear clean uniforms (188). The biopolitical optimisation of the body and docility are combined with the clones' utility. After cleaning themselves up, the uniformed servers enter Papa Song's diner, where they are made to recite their duties in a religious-like ritual called "the Six Catechisms" (188). After this docile-making ritual, the clones' real work starts: "For the following nineteen hours we greet diners, input orders, tray food, vend drinks, upstock condiments, wipe tables, and bin garbage" (188). Such a treatment is what Foucault sees as "the controlled insertion of bodies into the machinery of production and the adjustment of the phenomena of population to economic processes" (*History of Sexuality* 141). The only value of the clones' lives and bodies consists in labour; that is, being able to contribute to the economy of the corpocratic system.

In opposition to, for instance, Huxley's brainwashed clones, whose daily routine includes pleasurable activities such as sex and sports – although these are equally imposed on the population, according to Walsh (95) – the clones in *Cloud Atlas* are deprived of any activity outside of serving and readying themselves for serving. Their (working) week consists of ten days instead of the regular seven-day week, and resting is officially considered to be a "time-theft" (Mitchell 188). Even the time which the clones spend sleeping, which could be seen as an opportunity for them to rest, is carefully monitored with the aim of achieving docility. This is notable in the instance when Sonmi~451 witnesses the death of her Seer while she should be sleeping and returns to her capsule in fear of being discovered. Sometime later, she notes that, although the servers are supposed to be woken up to start their workday, the corpocracy representatives deprive them of the stimulant that day because they do not want them to see what is going on (207).

[46] The issue of the chip/soul allows for Mitchell's novel to be read from the transhumanist perspective, however, this is not the focus of this dissertation.

The fact that the clones' sleep is not a regenerative activity but another biopolitical method of control and subjugation is also notable through the use of "Soap" (Mitchell 189). As Foucault argues, subjection is not necessarily achieved by "violence or ideology . . . it may be subtle, make use neither of weapons nor of terror and yet remain of a physical order" (*History of Sexuality* 26). Containing "[a]mnesiads and soporifix" (Mitchell 205), Soap is a drug, the effect of which keeps the entire population of fabricants subdued. Another nod to Huxley and his soma, the Soap has a stupefying effect on its users since it "deadens curiosity" (189). Yet, unlike the "harmless narcotic, producer of beautiful visions, and essential to the happiness of the people" (Walsh 94) in *Brave New World*, the effect of Mitchell's drug is not to grant its users happiness or pleasure. The clones are obliged to imbibe Soap because it keeps them hibernating for a specific amount of time determined by their overseer, but also to erase all the knowledge they acquire that is not in the direct service of the clones' function. As Sonmi~451 explains, the fabricants are taught only a limited number of words, which they use to communicate with the consumers while serving them; everything else they learn on the job is erased by the Soap (Mitchell 191). This disables the clones from achieving a higher level of awareness necessary for the recognition of slavery they are subjugated to and relegates them to servitude throughout their lives. Those who recognise their subjugation and protest against it are punished, as Sonmi~451's fellow clone's case proves. According to Sandrine Sorline, "[t]he fabricant Yoona-939 became a suspect when she started using 'irregular speech' and 'finer-tuned' words. Language must conform to the mould sanctioned by Papa [Song]" (7).

The subjugation of individuals through language which allows for the systematic exploitation of their bodies can be viewed through the ideological lens provided by Louis Althusser. According to him, the ideological state apparatuses function by limiting the knowledge and lexicon of the lower classes through institutions such as schools, churches, and workplaces, thus "reproducing the labour-power . . . [and] its submission to the rules of respect for the established order be reproduced at the same time" (Althusser 51). The overseers' curbing of the fabricants lexicon allows them to keep the fabricants docile and exploited in the interest of the system since, as Althusser asserts, "for the agents of exploitation and repression, reproduction of its capacity to handle the dominant ideology properly" is achieved through "the domination of the dominant class 'verbally'" (51).

In addition to being a biopolitical tool which helps keep the clones docile, erasing their vocabulary beyond the one needed for serving and keeping their body in hibernation when needed, the Soap has an additional, much more sinister characteristic. The "ultimate organic machinery" (Mitchell 341–42), that is, the genetically engineered fabricants, can only stay alive if they regularly consume Soap. Without it, "a fabricant xpires after forty-eight hours," which allows the "manufacture and supply [to remain in] the Corp's monopoly" (341). Therefore, even if the clones wanted to run away from the exploitative corpocracy and the obligation of taking the mind-numbing Soap, their only alternative is to commit suicide. As the first clone to become aware of the modern slave trade enabled by the Papa Song Corp, Yoona-939 admits that: "I would end my life now, but all the knives in this prison are plastic" (192). This means that the corpocracy is not in charge only of the clones' lives but also of their deaths, extending the biopolitical concern with individuals' life processes.

Even more to the point and in support of the "wholesale slaughter in the name of life necessity" (Mitchell 137), the production of the Soap needed to keep the clones alive is what simultaneously kills them. Namely, when the clones reach Xultation upon completing a successful twelve-year service, they are allegedly freed from servitude and promoted to a consumer lifestyle in Hawaii. Only, the Xultation is revealed by Sonmi~451 to be a cruel deceit; the only thing awaiting the clones after the completion of their work obligations is a gruesome death. In this light, Xultation is yet another "ideological apparatus that vouchsafes their obedience as they head to slaughter" (Beaumont 9). Mass-murdered and mutilated on a "slaughterhouse production line" which resembles "sadistic visions of hell" (Mitchell 359), the clones' bodies are dismembered, processed, and recycled to produce Soap. In this way, their body is treated as the ultimate commodity, a raw material used to produce new batches of Soap: "What more economic way to supply this protein than by recycling fabricants who have reached the end of their working lives?" (359).

The dismemberment of the clones' bodies which takes place in *Cloud Atlas* simultaneously opposes and confirms Foucault's thesis on the disappearance of the tortured body as a spectacle (*Discipline and Punish* 8) in contemporary (dystopian) societies. On the one hand, the "biopolitical excess" (Hortle 263) consisting of murder and subsequent mutilation is performed in secret, which corresponds to the biopolitical treatment of the system's effect on the body to avoid the recognition of cruelty and creation of a martyr (Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 8), and this indeed happens to Sonmi~451 after she secretly visits the slaughterhouse. Hence, she "becomes a martyr on behalf

of all fabricants" (Hicks 24). On the other hand, the same savage horrors that had befallen the bodies of condemned individuals in sovereign-based societies are shown to be still happening within the futuristic slave trade of Nea So Copros. Only now, violence and mutilation are incorporated into the biopolitical postulates under the guise of life protection (Foucault, *History of Sexuality* 137), which culminates in the form of socially sanctioned cannibalism. Namely, Soap, made from the clones' bodies and given to clones as a form of sedative, is also used to produce the food eaten by the pureblood consumers in Papa Song's dineries. This results in what Díaz Miranda sees as the aim of biopolitics, which is "to push forward the annihilation of not only the Other [in this case, the clones], but the citizens of the State inasmuch as their inscription into the capitalist system will make them consumers of products that will cause ill-effects on their bodies" (160). While Díaz Miranda makes that conclusion in his analysis of *Children of Men*, it can also be applied to *Cloud Atlas* since the mind-numbing effect of the Soap is evident in the purebloods' rampant consumerism, which, unknowingly, makes them consume even themselves.

Indeed, apart from the clones as the lowest social class in the futuristic corpocracy of Nea So Copros being abused in the cruellest of ways, upon escaping Papa Song's dinery with the help of a pureblood, Sonmi~451 learns that the consumers outside the sealed restaurants are likewise exploited. They are forced to incessantly consume to retain their souls' value because the "Catechism Seven" instructs that "'A Soul's Value is the Dollars Therein'" (Mitchell 341). Next, they undergo "facescaping" treatments (218), that is, extensive plastic surgery to modify their bodies and faces to retain value in the appearance-oriented society. Finally, the consumers who move "downstrata" (218), that is, lose their social position due to an unsuccessful adherence to the consumerist rules, must move to the slums, where they become the "*untermensch*" (332, emphasis in the original). There, they are exploited as organ donors for healthy body parts, which is a particularly cruel form of biopolitical abuse under the guise of protecting life, to be discussed in more detail in the next subchapter on Kazuo Ishiguro's dystopia *Never Let Me Go*.

Apart from the biopolitical "instrumentalisation of . . . life" (Beaumont 2) manifested as incessant control and exploitation of the clones in *Cloud Atlas* while they are alive, their bodies are abused in death to create more Soap to keep the rest of them in line. The murder of the clones and the recycling of their bodies are elements that make Mitchell's contemporary dystopian treatment of the body even more violent than Huxley's use of corpses to produce phosphorus and Orwell's vaporisation of rebels since the murder and abuse of the clones' bodies are not done only

in the case of transgressors but generally. In canonical dystopias, death by execution was reserved only for the opponents of the system, whether they were truly guilty or not, but not the general population, which is already subdued. Here, however, death is not only a punishment for a straying individual. In *Cloud Atlas,* death by execution is the final *reward* for all the clones, whether they try to rebel or perform their serving duties impeccably. In fact, their loyalty to Papa Song and denunciation of problematic behaviour by other clones can help them gain the twelve stars sooner, speeding up their death: "If a server reports a sister's deviance, she is awarded one star from the deviant's badge, and Xultation comes a year nearer" (Mitchell 190). The pitting of clones against each other while referring to them as "sisters" (193) but without any true sisterhood is reminiscent of *1984*'s "Brotherhood" (Orwell 72).

What likewise makes this contemporary dystopia crueller than the earlier ones is the overt violence and the spectacle of capital punishment. While Xultation, a hellish execution deliberately presented as a heavenly retirement, is kept secret both from the clones, who must undergo it, and from the general public, the rebels' execution is public and contrasts the Foucauldian claim of the biopolitical removal of the death spectacle (Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 50). When Yoona~393 rebels by acquiring and sharing her secret knowledge of Papa Song's abusive treatment of the clones with Sonmi~451, she is brutally beaten by their Seer Rhee in front of other clones to serve as an example. When Yoona~393 tries to escape in an elevator by taking a pureblood boy as a hostage, she is violently executed by enforcers in the restaurant full of consumers. Although the clones' bodies are fitted with metal collars that can kill them without visible blood and gore, when the "elevator doors opened . . . Yoona~939's body was already a pulp of gun holes" (Mitchell 202), and her fellow clones are forced to clean up her blood. The spectacle of capital punishment is thus obviously still present and is even more violent than in canonical dystopias, such as Zamyatin's *We*. There, the rebels are "tortured to death in the huge glass bell from which the oxygen is slowly exhausted" (Walsh 100), while in Orwell, they are mostly psychologically tortured in secret chambers, and Huxley's transgressors are "gently spirited away" to Iceland (96).

In conclusion, David Mitchell's *Cloud Atlas* is a postmodernist novel which consists of six stories that imagine different societies in the period of almost five hundred years. Its dystopian section, which is analysed in this dissertation and which depicts the abuse of the titular clone and her sisters in the corpocratic united Korea, now called Nea So Copros, shows that the futuristic,

highly-developed and technological world that relies on biopolitical postulates is not all that different from the 1850s slave trade, which is the frame-narrative of the novel, in its treatment of individuals' bodies. In fact, its cruel subjugation, exploitation, conditioning, and recycling of the clones testify to the harsher treatment of individuals' bodies in this contemporary dystopia than was the case with Huxley's clones. On the one hand, Mitchell's clones are executed by the system in either spectacles of violence if they rebel against their docility, or in secret, as a result of the biopolitical mechanism of exploitation, which poses as a means of protecting contemporary life. Thus, instead of the biopolitical capitalism at work in Nea So Copros being "a power bent on generating forces, making them grow, and ordering them, rather than one dedicated to impeding them, making them submit, or destroying them" (Foucault, *History of Sexuality* 136), it incorporates violence, murder, and mutilation of its inhabitants into its allegedly protective postulates.

3.4. Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*: Bodies as Spare Parts

As with the previous subchapter, which deals with the exploitation of clones in *Cloud Atlas*, the dystopian world of *Never Let Me Go* (2005) explores the systematic abuse of highly intelligent cloned individuals and their bodies.[47] Due to this similarity, the novel's analysis given in this subchapter will also use Foucault's notions of biopolitics, utility, docile bodies, and spectacle to show that Ishiguro's dystopian society is intent on protecting *normal* human life, as opposed to the clones' posthuman life,[48] which results in severe abuse of the clones' bodies and their literal murder. Needless to say, the novel has already been researched from the dystopian (Toker and Chertoff 2008; Varmazi 2016; Tink 2016; Maleska 2019; Matek and Pataki 2019) and biopolitical perspectives (Yan 2019). Yet, in line with the thesis of this dissertation, the main focus here will be on the mutilation of the body and death as the ultimate biopolitical methods of achieving utility

[47] According to Paul Sheehan, cloned bodies are often present in accounts of the imaginary future because, apart from becoming reality, they fulfil the "dream of human perfectibility . . . spurred by a faith in technological progress and in the principle of abstract, rational deliberation" (245). However, both Mitchell's and Ishiguro's treatment of clones are permeated with technophobia, the fear of scientific and technological advancement in regard to (post)human life through abuse and exploitation, which is typical in dystopian literature.

[48] Ljubica Matek and the author of this dissertation argue in their article "Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* as a Posthumanist Dystopia" (2019) that the novel features posthumanist (the clones') and transhumanist ("normal" humans') bodies at the same time, with a view of the posthumanist critique of the limiting *humanist* definition of what it means to be a human (body) (4). This dissertation, however, will not analyse the novel from the perspective of post- or transhumanism.

in contemporary society. This is to prove that *Never Let Me Go* exhibits a notable transformation from death being a punishment exercised against individuals who stray against societal rules, which was the case in canonical dystopias, to death being presented as a method of preserving life and a desirable fact in this contemporary dystopia. Moreover, the analysis will juxtapose Louis Althusser's "interpellation" (190) by the State-governed institutions and Freud's take on sexuality as a subversive natural instinct with Foucault's views on these respective issues, in order to exhibit the systematic abuse of contemporary individuals' bodies whilst allegedly protecting their lives.

In accordance with the Foucauldian view of biopolitics, a thorough administration of life and the individuals' utility (*History of Sexuality* 136–37) are the main guiding principles of contemporary societies. These principles are readily evident in Ishiguro's fictional society, made up of *normal* humans and clones. The first and foremost marker of the clones' utility is their medical merit. As per Matek and Pataki (2019), by being "artificially produced," the clones are forced to, "without exception and before reaching middle age, undergo a number of surgeries in which their vital organs are taken from their bodies for the benefit of the people they were modelled from" ("Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*" 5). In this way, mainstream society is now able to cure previously terminal diseases, such as cancer, neurological and heart diseases (Ishiguro 258). The violent fact that the cure comes from literally taking away the clones' lives is revealed only later in the novel to both the afflicted clones and the readers. This aligns with the dystopian strategy of manipulating the truth (Toker and Chertoff 164), exercised by the clones' guardians who represent the exploitative mainstream society, referenced as the "mysterious absolute authority 'them'" (Yan 596). In turn, "they" arise from what Foucault recognises as the decentralisation of power in contemporary societies as opposed to the old, sovereign-based, regimes (*History of Sexuality* 135–37), and Louis Althusser's "interpellation" or the ideological "constituting [of] subjects" (188) by contemporary institutions, which conceal their inner workings through a severe restriction of knowledge. Consequently, even before the clones become aware of their doomed fates, the organisation of life at Hailsham, the boarding school in which the cloned protagonists reside, exhibits the biopolitical principle of utility or the need for them to contribute within their social circle.

The novel represents a collection of memories recounted by Kathy H., starting with those of her and her friends', Ruth and Tommy's, early days at Hailsham. Specifically, she remembers one of the incidents in which Tommy, first her friend and later boyfriend, was bullied by the rest of the

clones in the boarding school. Agreeing with her peers, Kathy pinpoints as the reason for Tommy's bullying his lack of utility: "[E]veryone *did* think it was his fault" (Ishiguro 28, emphasis in the original). The fault in question is the boy's inability and later unwillingness to produce amateur works of art, which are regularly traded by the students at the "Exchanges" (15) or collected for the cryptic Madame's "Gallery" (31). This type of productive work gave a vague sense of purpose to children and adolescents in the boarding school; namely, their lives were shrouded in some kind of vague mystery because they had little idea about themselves and the world outside of the boarding school. Because of the constant dystopian "abuse of linguistic tropes to naturalize [the] violence" (Tink 30) to which the clones will eventually be exposed, the youngsters are not familiar with the greater purpose of their artistic production. Still, they are governed by the notions of utility and the production of material possessions, guarding trivial objects and bad poetry they obtained as their most prized "treasures" (Ishiguro 15) because this gave them some form of identity. Kathy's narrative explicitly ties the utility in the form of material artistic output to the position within the clones' social circle: "[H]ow you were regarded at Hailsham, how much you were liked and respected, had to do with how good you were at 'creating'" (16). Also, despite the fact that the clones have no direct access to the outer, mainstream society, they are acquainted with the principle of utility that likewise governs it. Although the young protagonists can only speculate about the function of their artistic creations since they are left in the dark even regarding their own life purpose, they seem to possess knowledge of how the mainstream society operates. To use Tommy's words: "Maybe [Madame] sells them. Outside, out there, they sell everything" (31).

The clones' amateur works of art are in fact Hailsham's attempt to prove to the mainstream society that the clones are intelligent and spiritual beings, or in other words, that they have a soul, just like the regular humans (Matek and Pataki, "Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*" 15). But, as James Tink ascertains, even though the art which the young clones are encouraged to produce "testifies to a residually spiritual . . . notion of an immaterial, transcendental value to the individual self," it is nevertheless "presented as something linked to material traces and outputs" (28). This shows that, even within the confines of their cloned society, the individuals are expected to prove utile and produce something, a *body* of work of some kind, which is then claimed as a private possession by other clones at Hailsham. As Kathy remembers: "'It's all part of what made Hailsham so special', [Ruth] said once. 'The way we were encouraged to value each other's work'" (Ishiguro 16). The clones' utility by way of artistic production thus serves as a cruel omen of what

is to come since, once they become adults, they are forced to be useful to society by giving away parts of their bodies. Such a treatment of the human clones and their bodies as a "dehumanised . . . class of objects to be purchased in an exchange of goods" (Maleska 128) is one of the key biopolitical points in the novel, and this subchapter will return to it later on.

Other inner workings of the Hailsham boarding school, which the clones inhabit until the age of sixteen, also correspond to the Foucauldian notions of biopolitics and control. In particular, the rigorous tracking of "the performances of the body, with attention to the processes of life" (*The History of Sexuality* 139). The attention to the clones' processes of life manifests in that they are constantly overseen and governed by "the guardians" (Ishiguro 5) and "the monitors" (42), and are taught how to behave and what to think. The function of their boarding school, which includes education and communal activities as well as "some form of medical [checks] almost every week" (13), corresponds to Foucault's idea of modern societies as a form of prison (*History of Sexuality* 141). In line with it, the formative institutions such as schools, hospitals, and armies, which govern contemporary individuals' lives on a daily basis and nominally serve to protect them, include adherence to detailed schedules, designations of separate groups, and constant surveillance. Because of that, these institutions resemble prisons in their organisation and function according to strict timetables and (un)spoken rules (*Discipline and Punish* 140). Accordingly, Ishiguro's clones are divided into the "Infants" (Ishiguro 21), "Juniors" (30), and "Seniors" (15) based on their age (and knowledge), with an additional designation of the "carers" (3), who *care* for the clones in their organ-giving phase. These designations function simultaneously as terms for groups found in real-life schools and other social institutions, but in this dystopia, they denote specific "ranks" or "levels" (Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 159). This is because the clones in these different phases of life are kept strictly apart in order to curb their knowledge on their final destination, as well as to prevent them from personally witnessing the abuse the donors are going through (Matek and Pataki, "Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*" 7).

In his article "Posthuman Biopredicament: A Study of Biodystopia in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*," Kai Yan likewise notes the similarity between the organisation of the clones' activities at Hailsham and prisons: "Like prisoners these students are regularly let out for 'exercise' . . . lest their bodies or minds be undermined for lack of vigor or stimulation during the disciplinary process" (598). However, Yan omits an obvious yet very useful parallel between Foucault's and Althusser's attitudes on the formative institutions in contemporary societies. Specifically, just as

Foucault recognises similarities between the organisation and socio-political function of prisons, armies, hospitals, and schools alike, Althusser emphasises the role of these State-governed institutions in the making of "subjects": "[T]he school (but also other state institutions such as the Church or other apparatuses such as the army, which is as free and mandatory as school, to say nothing of the political parties, whose existence is bound up with the state's) teaches 'know-how', but in forms that ensure *subjection to the dominant ideology*" (51–52, emphasis in the original). This is why the organisation of the clones' lives entails a detailed interference with their daily functioning and thought processes under the guise of "teaching," in order to turn them into subjects or docile bodies.

Furthermore, the boarding house exhibits the features of the Panopticon (Yan 597), an architectural "mechanism" which "make[s] it possible to see constantly and to recognize immediately" (Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 200). Namely, Hailsham is described as being built "in a smooth hollow with fields rising on all sides. That meant that from almost any of the classroom windows in the main house – and even from the pavilion – you had a good view of the long narrow road that came down across the fields and arrived at the main gate" (Ishiguro 34). The building's panoptic design that allows for constant surveillance of the clones' actions is compounded by the social and psychological elements of peer pressure. Apart from spending time in classrooms, the clones sleep in communal dorms and hang out in common rooms, which means that they virtually have no privacy. As Kathy notes: "I suppose this might sound odd, but at Hailsham, the lunch queue was one of the better places to have a private talk" since the "'[q]uiet' places were often the worst, because there was always someone likely to be passing within earshot" (22). Combined with a rule that they must leave their dorm rooms open at all times except whilst sleeping (71), these situations, seemingly innocuous for a boarding school, allow for the biopolitical "supervision of the smallest fragment of life and of the body" (Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 140).

Above all, contemporary society's biopolitical investment in life and the emphasis on utility are evident in the strict maintenance of the clones' health. All the clones are instructed from an early age to "never take changes with [their] health" (Ishiguro 84). For instance, they are forbidden from smoking[49] and are, once they reach the teenage age, warned against engaging in careless sex to

[49] Mark Romanek's film adaptation of Ishiguro's novel emphasises this "political investment of the individual body and an invisible manipulation of the collective mind" (Yan 597) of contemporary individuals by choosing to present

avoid contracting sexually transmitted diseases. Yet, this is where the Foucauldian "calculated management of life" (*History of Sexuality* 140) and society's painstaking attention to individuals' health are revealed as the most hypocritical dystopian mechanisms of control and not general welfare. The guardians' goal to keep the young clones as healthy as possible is commendable, but it is not the clones who will benefit from maintaining their own health. They must follow all the rules and stay healthy for those who will receive their vital organs, making the clones "nothing but holding units for spare parts" (Yan 596). This difference between the clones and the ordinary humans, as well as the clones' need to strictly follow the health-related rules, are explicitly communicated to them. Miss Lucy, one of the guardians, therefore says: "[Y]ou must understand . . . that for you, all of you, it's much, much worse to smoke than it ever was for me" (Ishiguro 71). This makes the exploitation of Ishiguro's clones even crueller than that of Mitchell's clones in *Cloud Atlas* because, there, both the humans and the clones are unaware that they consume the executed clones' bodies in the form of Soap. Here, both the clones and the humans know that their vital organs will be taken by the people they were cloned from. This betrays the fact that the biopolitical concern for the clones' health is yet another method of manipulation with the aim of docility and utility. As Kalina Maleska points out, the "overprotection and exaggerated concern for the students' health" turn out to be only "a business investment" (128).

Similar to Huxley's genetically engineered citizens in *Brave New World*, the clones are modified to prevent their reproduction, which allows them to indulge in sex without the fear of unwanted pregnancies (Ishiguro 72). While Maleska sees such a treatment of sexuality as a pure Foucauldian, biopolitical means of manipulation, it can be argued that this is not the only way to view it. Namely, she claims that society has dehumanised and devalued the clones' interpersonal relationships through sterility and the consequent encouragement of promiscuity (Maleska 132). In that sense, sexuality is seen as something to be employed by society in line with its interest, in this case, the prevention of thinking and possible rebellion, which is frequent in dystopias (Matek and Pataki, "Kazuo Ishiguro's Never Let Me Go" 7). However, the novel's portrayal of sexuality turns out to be more effective when explained as the earlier mentioned interplay between a natural human instinct that possesses subversive potential against the imposed societal control and yet

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the headmistress Miss Emily's warning about cigarette butts found as the introduction to the boarding school setting. The authoritarian figure addressing the *uniformed* population of students is simultaneously a common scene from school-life, with education and care at its centre, and it also evokes the dictatorial addressing of Big Brother to the docile population in Orwell's *1984*.

another means of control, respectively. Since the clones are only partially instructed on the issue of sex and are forced to contend with their sexual urges on their own, Ishiguro's novel, in fact, exhibits both attitudes to sexuality.

While the Foucauldian interpretation of sexuality is true for the older clones at the Cottages, where they are free from the guardians' constant surveillance and can have sex with whomever they want, their early teen years at Hailsham are not like that. There, the sexual awakening of the clones is curbed by the explicit instructions according to which they must suppress their sexual urges since careless sexual conduct could endanger the health of their organs that are to be donated (Ishiguro 82). This testifies to (the clones') sexuality being regarded as a natural instinct with a potentially subversive charge which must be controlled and subdued by mainstream society. The control exercised by the guardians in this aspect might seem subtle, but it is very much present. Hence, Kathy notes that, while sexual relations between the clones were not forbidden at Hailsham, they were not actually given the time and space to indulge in their sexual urges: "[W]hen it came down to it, the guardians made it more or less impossible for any of us actually to do much without breaking rules . . . we had the distinct impression we'd be in trouble if the guardians caught us at it" (Ishiguro 93). Even later, at the Cottages, Kathy is – in her own view – plagued by her sexual instinct because her educators did not teach her that strong sexual urges are a natural adolescent occurrence. For this reason, she believes she must be modelled from a prostitute and is looking for her "original" in pornographic magazines: "I get these really strong feelings when I want to have sex. Sometimes it just comes over me and . . . it's scary. . . . So I thought if I find her picture, in one of those magazines, it'll at least explain it" (179). This corresponds to Freud's view of sexuality as a natural human instinct which society wants to restrict due to its subversive potential.

However, the novel simultaneously displays the societal use of the clones' natural instincts against them. Since the clones' genetic engineering, which makes them sterile, does not affect their sexual urges, the clones develop as regular human children and are naturally preoccupied with sex during their adolescent years. It is this particular knowledge and the suppression of sexuality at Hailsham that the guardians use to manipulate the adolescent clones on the key aspect of their lives: the donations that they will undergo. A much older Kathy recognises that their sexual education was employed as a detractor to keep them docile and not entirely aware of their violent fate:

> [W]hen the guardians first started giving us proper lectures about sex, they tended to run them together with talk about the donations. At that age—again, I'm talking of around thirteen—we were all pretty worried and excited about sex, and naturally would have pushed the other stuff into the background. In other words, it's possible the guardians managed to smuggle into our heads a lot of the basic facts about our futures. Now, to be fair, it was probably natural to run these two subjects together. If, say, they were telling us how we'd have to be very careful to avoid diseases when we had sex, it would have been odd not to mention how much more important this was for us than for normal people outside. (Ishiguro 81–82)

This knowledge of the sexual instinct's power to overtake the teenagers' minds and its deliberate use to steer them away from the cruel truth of their upcoming deaths, aided with unrestrained time and space for sexual relations in their later teenage years, is more in line with Foucault's vision of the contemporary society's employment of sexuality, rather than with its instinctual nature. As a result, Ishiguro's guardians' manipulation of the clones' sexual instincts is a decisive dystopian mechanism performed through the interplay of two approaches to sexuality, which corresponds to both Foucault's and Freud's theories on the societal treatment of sex. Even worse than in *Brave New World,* first the curtailment and later the forbearance of the clones' sexual desire are meant to hide not only the fact that the clones' lives are under the strict control of the mainstream society but also that they are doomed to a very slow and painful death.

Most importantly, the clones' death due to organ harvesting confirms the claim that biopower functions with a view of protecting (chosen) life, but that at the same time, it does not dispense with the "death penalty" (Tink 23) in contemporary society. When discussing the practices of societal (ab)use of the body in *Never Let Me Go*, the irony surrounding the capital punishment of the unfit or straying individuals in canonical dystopias is especially poignant. Produced to "creat[e] a disease-free society thanks to the organs they provide at the peak of their health" (Matek and Pataki, "Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*" 6), the clones simultaneously embody the elimination from the mainstream society for which they are deemed unfit, and they serve a purpose to that same society. As Paul Sheehan concludes, "[l]ike Frankenstein's monster in reverse, the clones' posthuman bodies are disassembled, and their vital organs used to prolong life in the human body-economy . . . [under] the biopolitical directives that force them to live narrowly determined,

truncated lives" (Sheehan 256). The clones' de facto execution by the system does not come as the result of punishment for their opposition to societal norms. On the contrary, their death at the hands of the system is the ultimate confirmation of the clones' utility to society and their greatest accomplishment. That is why, instead of *dying*, they "complete" their docile life (Ishiguro 99), and their completion presents a comprehensive fulfilment of their purpose to give all their vital organs to the people their bodies were made for.

In connection to that, certain clones, such as Tommy, feel proud for being a good donor (Ishiguro 223), suggesting that their indoctrination about their social role was thorough. The higher the number of donations, with four being the maximum, the better the donor, and those who reach that number are celebrated and "treated with special respect" (Ishiguro 273). The emphasis on these numbers is likewise a (capitalist) dystopian method of abuse and exploitation since not all clones are able to undergo the same number of donations, making the term more nuanced. A clone who "completes" upon his or her first donation or the first in a line of surgeries where they take their organs still fulfils his or her purpose of the docile subject, but less so than the one who undergoes three or four donations. This is because society placates its moral dilemmas by making the clones want to complete, "thereby making [death] bizarrely desirable" (Matek and Pataki, "Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* 7 – 8). In contemporary society's technologically-assisted race toward longevity, the natural human body is thus mutilated and destroyed to make way for the enhanced body. This attitude will also be seen in the following subchapter, on Don DeLillo's *Zero K* (2016).

Thus, the main transformation in relation to canonical dystopias is the attitude to death that "they," the representatives of the contemporary (dystopian) system, instil in their docile subjects. This challenges Foucault's assertion on the avoidance of death-administering power in favour of life-administering power in contemporary societies since *Never Let Me Go* "offers a speculative and dystopian idea of a politically-instituted death sentence" (Tink 23). Even though Ishiguro's dystopian novel "does not . . . involve the theme of capital punishment, or a motif of a single, pre-calculated moment of execution, still less a guillotine or scaffold" (27), the inescapable donations of their vital organs still kill the clones. However, in opposition to the claim that the system eliminates the clones and "deems them expendable" (Tink 28), it is the clones' lives that are expendable to society, but their bodies are not expendable at all. Their bodies are vital for mainstream society's longevity. This is the reason why, toward the end of the novel, the Madame

explains that Hailsham's attempts to prove to mainstream society that the clones have souls and should be treated as ordinary human beings have failed. It is because the health- and longevity-obsessed mainstream society does not want to give up the practice of taking the clones' vital organs, used as human spare parts.

Such a violent method of exploitation makes the afflicted clones' potential methods of rebellion even more self-destructive. In canonical dystopias such as Zamyatin's, Huxley's, and Orwell's, to rebel would mean to live a private life characterised by independent thinking and action, meaningful intimate relationships, both physical and emotional, and, essentially, without being sentenced to death if one tries to oppose the system. In *Never Let Me Go*, the (cloned) individuals are forced to die at the hands of the system not because they are going against it, but precisely because they are serving it. The clones' dying *for* the system means that the only way they can rebel against it is by harming their own body or taking their own life before being mature enough for donations.[50] Since "[t]heir bodies . . . are [literally] appropriated by others" (Escudero Pérez 9), the clones' suicide would be the greatest act of rebellion, making their biopolitical and allegedly life-protecting oppression even more violent than in canonical dystopias.

Finally, there is one more Foucauldian element of biopolitics present in contemporary society which can be observed within the abusive social practice of organ-taking in *Never Let Me Go*. It is the removal of the public spectacle of torture and violence (*Discipline and Punish* 50). Since the humans who exploit the clones are aware of the violent and unethical nature of their practice, the clones are kept away from mainstream society, and the organ donations they are forced to undergo are conducted away from the public eye. The "recovery centre[s]" (Ishiguro 3), in which the clones are eviscerated and dismembered, are even more secluded than the boarding schools. Just like in Orwell's Ministry of Love in *1984*, where no one is loved but only tortured, the clones do not *recover* in the recovery centres. They are only waiting for further donations and eventual death. The testament to the novel's (dystopian) elusiveness in relation to this violent practice is the designation of these supposedly helpful centres in Mark Romanek's film adaptation, where their role is more explicit. In the film, the centres are called "completion centres" (*Never Let Me Go* 00:31:02), and their cloned users are seen missing an eye or a leg and suffering because of their upcoming death. But, in the novel, this is only hinted at, which confirms the notion that the

[50] The novel does not allow for a possibility of some kind of underground life or refuge, like the life among the proles in *1984*, or a secret society of dissenters, such as the Book People in Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*.

mainstream society does not wish to see the torture and abuse the clones endure in those centres; in fact, Kathy never mentions such predicaments of her donors, although she, as a carer, certainly witnesses them on a regular basis.

In summary, Kazuo Ishiguro's novel *Never Let Me Go* (2005) imagines a dystopian misuse of technological and scientific advancements for the exploitation of the human body. Set in a world where human cloning is both technologically perfected and massively conducted, the novel centres on a group of young clones from Hailsham, one of the many English boarding schools inhabited by clones, and exhibits Foucault's observations on biopolitics, docile bodies, and utility, which result in the violent oppression and abuse of the clones' bodies. What makes Ishiguro's dystopian society more violent than those in canonical dystopias is the literal murder of its cloned protagonists to protect ordinary human life. Since biopolitical utility is the main principle on which the (novel's) society rests, both within the clones' circles and in the mainstream, the clones have to be docile and maintain good health to later provide their *originals* (the people they were cloned from) with vital organs, which effectively ends the clones' lives.

Even prior to fatal donations, the organisation of the clones' lives corresponds to Foucault's recognition of the prison-like nature of contemporary institutions such as schools, hospitals, and armies, as well as approximates Althusser's idea of the interpellation of the subjects in order to make them subservient to the system. The clones' treatment is biopolitical in the sense that their life is strictly regulated by the powers of authority and is completely out of their hands. Their abuse is removed from the public eye and takes place in secluded boarding schools and recovery centres, devised to make the clones believe they are being protected and respected while they are being exploited and killed. Besides the literal murder of the clones, who are proven to be entirely human except for the method of their birth, the more violent nature of this contemporary dystopia is also reflected in the clones' only methods of rebellion against the system: self-mutilation or suicide. This is in line with the thesis of this dissertation that the death sentence is not eliminated from the contemporary (dystopian) society of *Never Let Me Go* and that violence committed against its individuals is crueller than in canonical dystopias.

3.5. Don DeLillo's *Zero K*: Dying Sooner is Better

Zero K (2016) is not the first novel in which Don DeLillo explores the "technological influx that overtakes contemporary life," but in it, the author brings the human relationship with technology

to an extreme (Medeiros Casteluber and Manganelli Fernandes 521, 519). It does so by imagining the outcome of a proclaimed scientific and technological elimination of human mortality through cryopreservation. Drawing on the postulates of posthumanism and transhumanism[51] and their reconfiguration of what it means to be human within the ever-expanding technosphere, the novel depicts a severe technological manipulation of the human body in an attempt to overcome death as the most limiting biological process. Already available in real life,[52] cryonic preservation has the purpose of "freezing, immediately upon death, of people who have suffered from rare or incurable diseases . . . to store the body and prevent decomposition until a cure for the cause of death can be found" (Gordon qtd. in Furjanić, "The Spectre of Death" 494). While a successful process of de-freezing the cryopreserved individuals is still to be achieved in real life, meaning that any cryopreserved individual will remain *unalive* for the foreseeable future, major transhumanist critics, such as Nick Bostrom, assert that cryopreservation needs to be "made available . . . for those who desire it" (qtd. in Laguarta-Bueno 126). Although in *Zero K*, the cryonic suspension is initially presented as a choice made only by those eager to overcome incurable illness or disability, a closer analysis of the novel reveals many instances of dystopian manipulation behind the enterprise, which correspond to the biopolitical (ab)use of the body under the guise of protecting life.

By imagining a negative outcome of the proclaimed technological enhancement of the body, *Zero K* functions as a dystopian critique of both contemporary society's blind reliance on technology as its main driving force and the preoccupation with longevity. Just as with Ballard's *Crash*, DeLillo's "obsession with death and technology" (Medeiros Casteluber and Manganelli Fernandes 522) can be analysed with the help of Freudian psychoanalysis. In particular, it will be useful to employ the notion of the death drive as an inherent human instinct to return to the state

[51] According to Tuncel, posthumanism criticises the traditional postulates of Western thought on human nature, while transhumanism strives towards the scientific and technological advancement of "intelligent life beyond it currently human form" (83). Both of these approaches are readily notable in *Zero K*, although this thesis does not focus on such readings. Hence, Furjanić (2021) and Philipp Wolf (2022) align its cryonic practice with the transhumanist use of technology to overcome the biological human notion that is death. In turn, Medeiros Casteluber and Manganelli Fernandes discuss *Zero K* as a posthumanist novel based on its long lasting Cartesian divorce of the mind and body (519).

[52] Dr. James Bedford is the first man to have undergone cryonic preservation in 1967, after being diagnosed with incurable cancer at the age of 73. He still resides in the cryonic chamber in the Alcor's Scottsdale facility in Arizona (see Dowd 2022; Darwin 1991).

of "quiescence" (Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* 56),[53] in which humans are deemed to exist before birth and once again after death. In addition, justified as a method of protecting life by ensuring immortality, DeLillo's individuals' embracing of the technology-assisted death – in that the individuals are willing to surrender their bodies to be physically mutilated and genetically modified by the cryonic facility – will be explored through the lens of Foucault's biopower and its destructive implications. Hence, this subchapter aims to portray *Zero K* as a contemporary dystopian novel in which an elite group of scientists, relying on the postulates of death drive and biopower, manipulates individuals into desiring death and undergoing a process which renders them as good as dead while purporting to protect their life. In this way, the body is made into a commodity, which serves to perpetuate the technocratic capitalist society represented by DeLillo.

Cryonics facility called the "Convergence" (DeLillo 7) is developed by an elite group of scientists, who claim to have eliminated death as well as the physical and mental decay which occur post-mortem. Rooted in the attitude that death is "a cultural artifact" (71) and no longer inevitable for the human species, the isolated underground cryonic facility situated somewhere between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan (29) offers technologically sustained preservation of human bodies. This is done with a transhumanist view that the future science and technology will "have developed methods to cure the unfrozen individual of a previously incurable disease, reverse the ageing process, or in another way improve the well-being of the previously frozen person" (Furjanić, "The Spectre of Death" 494). By focusing on these latter aspects of cryopreservation, which propose a subsequent de-freezing of regenerated individuals, *Zero K*'s transhumanist "vital minds" (DeLillo 64) propagate it as a means of reaching immortality. In their words, they wish to "stretch the boundaries of what it means to be human – stretch and then surpass" (71). The ultimate dream of eternal life, previously attainable only symbolically through religious faith, is now announced as physically achievable through "vitrification, cryopreservation, nanotechnology" (141). However, the entire "cryonics facility and its endeavour" (Laguarta-Bueno 129) can be seen as a dystopian enterprise, employing psychological manipulations and abusing the individuals' bodies in a way that is reminiscent of the corporal punishments of the former, sovereign-based,

[53] This state matches Jacques Lacan's concept of the Real (see *Écrits* 2006). Lacan elaborated on Freud's ideas, shifting the focus from the body to language, which is why Lacan's approach was left out from the dissertation's methodological apparatus.

system described by Foucault (*History of Sexuality* 135–37), but even more so because they pretend to be utopian ideas aimed at protecting life, whereas the opposite is revealed to be true.

Since available instances of criticism do not discuss *Zero K* primarily as a dystopian novel,[54] this section will analyse its elements through a distinctively dystopian lens since they are crucial in reading the novel through the psychoanalytical and biopolitical perspectives. To start with, as with all totalitarian regimes found in canonical dystopias, the underlying premise of *Zero K*'s technological manipulation of the body through cryopreservation is presented as a utopian enterprise that will put an end to terminal diseases. The nominally progressive rhetoric of its creators finds its main justification in the case of Artis Martineau, the protagonist Jeffrey Lockhart's stepmother, who is "suffering from several disabling illnesses" but mainly "multiple sclerosis" (DeLillo 8). Incurable and debilitating, the illness is threatening Artis's life and undermining its quality, prompting her to opt her body for cryopreservation since she would soon die anyway. As Ross, Artis's husband and Jeffrey's father, comments, "She could live weeks longer, yes, but to what end?" (30). During his stay in the facility to see his stepmother off to her "second life" (20), Jeffrey encounters another instance in support of cryonic preservation. This is a severely deformed boy who is able to utter only "broken" (94) inarticulate sounds. While decidedly sceptic throughout the novel, the encounter prompts Jeffrey to reconsider his view of the prospect: "In his physical impairment, the nonalignment of upper and lower body, in this awful twistedness, I found myself thinking of the new technologies that would one day be applied to his body and brain, allowing him to return to the world as a runner, a jumper, a public speaker" (94). The cryopreservation process is therefore envisioned as a helping means for the terminally ill and the disabled to relieve them of current suffering. This recalls Foucault's postulate of biopower, whereby "methods of power and knowledge [assume] responsibility for the life processes and [undertake] to control and modify them" (*History of Sexuality* 142), rendering nature irrelevant.

Furthermore, besides the elimination of "unnecessary suffering" (Garreau 231) caused by illness, the Convergence promises "the second life" (DeLillo 20), that is, a future treatment and

[54] In his doctoral dissertation, Furjanić notes that Paul Sponheim terms the novel as dystopian (*Transhumanizam kao paradigma čitanja* 200), and Philipp Wolf sees it as "a narrative that portrays a dystopian projection" (164). Furjanić himself offers a section titled "Konvergencija – distopijski prostor" (*Transhumanizam kao paradigma čitanja* 202), which translates to "The Convergence – A Dystopian Space" (my translation), but his dystopian reading of the novel concerns only the development of the simplistic futuristic language reminiscent of Orwell's Newspeak and the interpretation of the voice Artis hears in her preserved state as belonging to the facility representatives, refusing to defreeze her even when the technology becomes available (202). However, none of the said authors provide an overview of the dystopian elements that constitute the novel.

cure of the now incurable illness. It encourages the process with the aim of "the enhancement of human intellectual, physical, and emotional capabilities" (Garreau 231), as promised by the extensive use of technology on the human body, including the brain. Thus, Artis's reliance on the technological manipulation of her body aligns with the transhumanist vision of advanced human development propagated by the leaders of the Convergence. This "special unit" (DeLillo 76), which garners individuals willing "to prematurely undergo cryopreservation," lends the novel its title, "Zero K" (112), and allegedly prepares them for a return in a more advanced future. Artis's previous experience after an eye surgery, when she witnessed an enhanced vision of the world available to her "[n]ever before, ever" (DeLillo 45), convinced her that the natural, technologically unenhanced human vision offers "only a measure of information, a sense, an inkling of what is really there to see" (45). For this reason, Artis has faith in new technologies and is ready to embody "a clinical specimen" and have a part of her "body replaced or rebuilt . . . atom by atom," which will enable her to "reawaken to a new perception of the world . . . a deeper and truer reality" (47). However, the image of cryopreservation as a scientifically and technologically assisted pathway to an upgraded, posthuman experience is a dystopian ruse, which Jeffrey recognises as a "mass delusion . . . superstition and arrogance and self-deception" (50).

This is confirmed by "a haunting intermezzo in which we hear Artis's thoughts after she's already in her pod" (Fischer), presented as a six-page chapter which separates the two parts of the novel, "In the Time of Chelyabinsk" (DeLillo 1) and "In the Time of Konstantinovka" (163).[55] The short chapter follows Artis after she has undergone the cryopreservation and been situated in her pod and consists of two lines of narration, one of which presumably belongs to Artis and the other to an unidentified subject. This second line of narration is interpreted by various researchers as belonging to either Artis herself (Glavanakova 104) or a Convergence employee (Furjanić, *Transhumanizam kao paradigma čitanja* 202). Whichever interpretation is closer to the truth, it nevertheless shows Artis's "monochromatic and repetitive thoughts" (Fischer), which betray the fact that the advanced state of consciousness promised by the facility representatives is pure

[55] According to Glavanakova (2017), the city of Konstantinovka, located in the Ukrainian Donetsk Oblast, was in 2014 the target of conflict between pro-Russians and the Ukrainians, thus the said title evokes "recent traumatic events based on perverse nationalist fervor, imperialistic leanings, ideological strife, and authoritarian ambitions" (94). It may be suggested that these actual, historical political tensions and imperialistic desires contributed to DeLillo's view of the specific location as dystopian and appropriate for the setting of his novel. It is particularly distressing to note that, at the moment of writing this subchapter, in June 2023, the ongoing war between Russian and Ukrainian forces has been fought since February 2022, yet this only testifies to the relevance of dystopian texts and the almost-clairvoyant vision of dystopian writers.

deception. Artis and all other "heralds" (DeLillo 141) who choose to follow her example and undergo premature cryonic preservation in the hope of a safer and enhanced future, will be "trapped in an eternal nightmare, [their] mind[s] flickering in . . . brain-in-a-vat torture" (Chancellor). According to Chancellor's interpretation of DeLillo's dystopia, the scientific and technological endeavour to exterminate natural death is just one big biopolitical trans/posthumanist "Death Sentence" ("Death Sentences").

Even without the negative outcome of the cryonic preservation that the reader witnesses with Artis, there are other elements that point to the dystopian character of the cryonic project. For instance, the cryonic suspension is propagated as a refuge from everyday violent horrors and the impending apocalypse. Introduced in the chapter titled "In the Time of Chelyabinsk" (DeLillo 1), which references the 2013 meteor strike in Russia, in which an estimated thousand people were injured (Matson), the project is intended to deal with the threat of the apocalypse, specifically, the "ecological crisis, terrorism, [and] diminishing resources" (Fischer), as well as looming world wars, since "[c]atastrophe is our bedtime story" (DeLillo 66). Indeed, Jeffrey's experience with Stak, his girlfriend's son, exhibits the ever-increasing violence of the contemporary world. The teenager is said to participate regularly in the "thriving" online business of placing bets, which both concern and incite acts of terrible violence, such as airplane crashes, terrorist attacks, and assassinations (193–94). As per the boy's mother: "The bet makes the event more likely . . . Ordinary people sitting at home. A force that changes history" (194). As a culmination of life determined by violence, Stak meets a brutal death as a volunteer soldier, witnessed by Jeffrey by way of a broadcast on a hallway screen of the facility (263–64).

According to Philipp Wolf, the boy's death being shown "in the halls of the 'Convergence' is part of its manipulative strategy" (138), which is yet another dystopian mechanism. In fact, all broadcasts on the massive hallways screens, through which the visitors of the Convergence are regularly reminded of the apocalyptic prospects such as floods, tornadoes, and fires, have the function of "manipulat[ing] the sensuous apparatus" (Wolf 140) of their viewers. That the broadcasts are a part of the more profound dystopian strategy combined with surveillance can be seen in Jeffrey's obligation to wear an electronic wristband, which grants him access to few facility areas and the removal of which alerts security (DeLillo 10). The high-tech wristband is used for opening doors within the facility and is also a tracking device. This becomes obvious the moment Jeffrey displays scepticism towards a particular apocalyptic broadcast, thinking "that it might be

digitally generated" (Wolf 141). Initially mute, the broadcast suddenly becomes louder and turns into a real-life stampede in the facility hallway: "[A]nd then they came wheeling around the corner charging in my direction, the running men and women, images bodied out, spilled from the screen. I hurried to the only safety there was, the nearest wall" (DeLillo 153). Since Jeffrey is mainly alone while viewing the terrifying broadcasts, and there are no cameras around him, this means that his vital signs are monitored by the electronic wristband, betraying a lack of agitation due to his scepticism toward the displayed horror. This incites the physical manifestation of the broadcast in order to assure Jeffrey that the horrors he has been seeing are definitely real and that he will succumb to them if he decides against the Convergence. Together with the facility leaders' propagandist speeches on the insecure state of contemporaneity (68–73), all these features constitute a dystopian strategy based on instilling "the widespread belief that the future . . . will be worse than the past" (200).

Seen in this way, the manipulative speeches "that approach brainwashing" (Medeiros Casteluber and Manganelli Fernandes 525) and the intimidating images are similar to the propaganda used by Orwell's regime in *1984*. Yet, there, the effect on the body was a state of constant terror to convert the straying individuals into trusting the system and avoiding the death penalty. In *Zero K*, the effect of the Convergence is to push them toward death by presenting the technologically-assisted death as a blessing and an extension of life in an advanced dimension. Hence, while in canonical dystopias the biopolitical mechanisms could indeed be seen as life-affirming, here, they are death-affirming. In addition, the broadcasts can be interpreted as Foucault's "public spectacle of torture" (*Discipline and Punish* 7), which he claims to have been removed from contemporary society but which obviously exist. However, the gruesome events, mutilations of the body, and death that once occurred in public spaces to scare the onlookers into docility and submission are now available on these digital screens. Maffey and Teo confirm the contemporary (dystopian) media's suggestive character through their violent coverage (3). In fact, they assert that "[t]echnology becomes the way through which characters experience these concerns and, in turn, produces a society whereby disaster is seen as a spectacular event, both consumed and desired by society" (2).

The desires towards disaster, destruction, and death are necessarily connected with the Freudian death drive (*The Ego and the Id* 38). Hence, although Jeffrey is sceptic toward cryopreservation and recognises the suggestive broadcasts for what they are, his reactions to the fake feeds

nevertheless align with the psychoanalytical interpretation of the desire for death as a subconscious human wish to transition from the state of uncertainty, which is life, to the state of certainty found in death, since "the most universal endeavour of all living substance [is] namely to return to the quiescence of the inorganic world" (Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* 56). In aiming to increase one's anxiety and encourage them to submit themselves to cryopreservation, the broadcasts are feeding into that particular wish. A case in point is Jeffrey's reaction to the broadcast depicting three self-immolating monks (DeLillo 61–62). Namely, when one of the monks performing the deadly ritual by dousing himself in kerosene at first fails to light his match that would set him aflame, unlike the two burning monks surrounding him, Jeffrey feels distress for the man's failure at reaching death. As he says later, "I wanted him to light the match. It would be unbearable for him, one blackened match-head after another, to sit between his comrades while they burned" (DeLillo 61). Simultaneously, the event evokes Freud's observation on the "herd instinct" (*Group Psychology* 81), a common denominator of totalitarian dystopia:

> [H]ow much every individual is ruled by those attitudes of the group mind which exhibit themselves in such forms as racial characteristics, class prejudices, public opinion, etc. The influence of suggestion becomes a greater riddle for us when we admit that it is not exercised only by the leader, but by every individual upon every other individual. (82)

The dread and the feelings of "incomplete[ness]" (83),[56] which plague individuals when they are alone, apply even in the issue of death. The cryonic facility representatives are aware of that, so they use dystopian mechanisms to encourage people to die prematurely in a "cult-like mass suicide by virtue of cryonics" (Parker).

The death instinct is further notable in the case of Ross Lockhart, the protagonist's father, and other "heralds" (DeLillo 141), that is, the people who are not ill, physically disadvantaged, nor dying, but who wish to partake in the promised advanced future, influenced by the cryonic

[56] Freud is not the only psychoanalyst who recognizes this phenomenon. Erich Fromm also notes that the human "separateness is the source of intense anxiety. Beyond that it arouses shame and the feeling of guilt" (8). Jeffrey's interpretation of the monk's inability to set himself aflame with the other monks thus corresponds to the view that an individual "would become insane could he not liberate himself from this prison and reach out, unite himself in some form or other with men, with the world outside" (Fromm 8), even in death.

facility's propaganda. Choosing to die earlier, on one's own terms, is seen as an expression of power. As Ross notes, "choosing to die too soon . . . would have been the kind of surrender in which I gain control instead of relinquishing it" (DeLillo 143). Indeed, one of the Convergence leaders expresses the same outlook: "We are born without choosing to be. Should we have to die in the same manner?" (252). This way, the clients who choose to undergo the process and have their body eviscerated and preserved for an undefined moment in the future are spurred into believing the story about gaining power and control through death. This goes to show, once again, that according to this dystopian enterprise, death is seen as desirable, as the ultimate reflection of one's power: "And because this is the song-and-dance version of what happens to self-made men. They unmake themselves" (145). Unaware of the manipulation by the dystopian propaganda, Ross is convinced that to die prematurely in order to be cryopreserved is a reflection of his own ability to conquer natural death. The entire facility, its architecture, and its design are devised to evoke the "look and feel of the stored dead" (Wolf 144), with many silent hallways and closed doors. The propagators of the cryopreservation point to the similarity of residing in the pods and the state of "quiescence" (Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* 56) that humans strive to return to through death: "Isn't the pod familiar to us from our time in the womb?" (DeLillo 76).

Other relevant elements of the alleged utopian enterprise are soon dismantled as a deceitful dystopia in which the "utilitarian become[s] totalitarian" (147). Specifically, the advanced science and technology, "which, instead of impelling humanity to prosper, [have often] . . . been instrumental in the establishment of dictatorships" (Vieira 18) found in dystopias. Consequently, when a propagator of the cryopreservation muses: "Does technology have a death wish?" (70), their aim is to warn against the destructive power of technology. However, as Medeiros Casteluber and Manganelli Fernandes observe, at the same time they claim that the advanced technology developed and employed in the facility is "the only path to a new world and a new form of transcendence" (518). Since "the Convergence is supposed to function as a refuge from technology" (527), by promoting the heavily technological manipulation of the body, its propagators engage in the recognisable Orwellian "*doublethink*" (9, emphasis in the original) and are recognised by Philipp Wolf as "technocrats" (150).

Next, the process involves the highly contested issue of euthanasia – a "chemically prompted" (DeLillo 50) death of those who decide to have their bodies preserved. For this reason, when Jeffrey asks his father: "Is [Artis] dying naturally or is the last breath being induced?" (29), his

father's reply implies that Artis will first be euthanised in order to undergo cryopreservation: "You understand there's something beyond the last breath. You understand this is only the preface to something larger, to what is next" (DeLillo 29). To reach the promised enhanced way of life, therefore, an individual must first succumb to the technologically enabled death. The process of death brought on by technology becomes desirable at the expense of ordinary human life, with distinct biopolitical echoes. Artis and all others who undergo the cryonic process are urged to die literally as a means to protect and upgrade their life. But, as the protagonist is informed, the "most interesting thing [about the process] . . . was the fact that the temperature employed in cryostorage pods does not actually approach Zero K. The term, then, was pure drama, another stray trace of the Stenmark twins" (143).[57] The Stenmark twins is a fictional name the protagonist gives to a pair of the cryopreservation leaders. He lets the reader know that the presentation is not the same as fact, as is also witnessed by the propagandist speeches. The protagonists' fabrication of names is emphasised several times, but his actions are not at all different from the practice of the Convergence leaders, who fabricate the vision of an advanced life to be achieved by undergoing the artificial death that is cryopreservation.

Most importantly, the cryonic preservation involves a severe dehumanisation and mutilation of the body. The bodies are kept in cryonic pods and their organs are extracted, including the brain: "[S]tripped of their essential organs . . . preserved separately, brains included, in insulated vessels called organ pods" (DeLillo 140). This supposedly allows for full preservation of bodily functions of all organs, as well as, according to the leading figures behind the procedure, full consciousness, which the readers recognise as false. The bodies' vital functions are sustained with the help of "super-insulated plastic tubes" (140). In what the sceptic protagonist Jeffrey calls "canning and curing," as if people were reduced to pieces of meat, the once-unique human beings become: "laboratory life-forms shaved naked in pods" (142) and fully dehumanised. In the words of Medeiros Casteluber and Manganelli Fernandes, they become the "empty framework of lives beyond retrieval" (141).

The facility works hard to provide the contrast between the ostensibly undesirable old-fashioned life and death and the innovative approach to them. All around the facility, one can witness the "mannequins" (DeLillo 51), life-sized dolls that have a function of encouraging cryopreservation.

[57] Namely, the cryopreserved individuals are said to reside in pods set to "a unit of temperature called absolute zero [kelvin], which is minus two hundred and seventy-three point one five degree celsius" (DeLillo 142).

According to Wolf, "[e]xcept for the pods in themselves, this is probably the most malicious, insidious and manipulative *ars mortem* installation" (158) found in the facility. In the underground crypt within the compound, the mannequins seem "mummified, desiccated" (DeLillo 133; Wolf 157). Representing the real-life victims of violence and various catastrophes, they "make a good contrast to the immaculately naked bodies in the pods" (Wolf 157), whose immaculate condition should inspire encouragement of cryopreservation. The mannequins are supposed to point to the gruesome nature of non-technologically controlled death with their "ruined faces . . . and shriveled hands . . . faint stink of rot" (DeLillo 133), as opposed to the perfectly neat cryopreserved bodies. However, in continuation of his argument, Wolf quotes DeLillo's description of a mass grave reminiscent of world war holocaust: "figures submerged in a pit . . . in convoluted mass, naked, arms jutting, heads horribly twisted, bared skulls . . . neutered humans men and women stripped of identity, faces blank" (134), but the seeming order of cryopreserved bodies in neat rows of body pods are equally "neutered" and "stripped of identity." They are shaved, naked, and their bodies standardized: "The exposed bodies are bereft of all personhood and character, brought entirely into line, shaven and trimmed into smooth homogeneity. Eyes closed and appropriately illuminated they are diminished to mere skin surface" (Wolf 159). As per Medeiros Casteluber and Manganelli Fernandes, "the lack of distinction in the treatment of plastic and human bodies in art form serves as just a prelude to the objectification of the body as an accessory, disposable and replaceable" (524). This leads to the conclusion that the insistence on achieving longevity is a dystopian enterprise which dehumanises and mutilates the contemporary individuals' bodies in ways that are even worse than the former, punishment-oriented societies. There, the bodies of the *condemned* underwent decapitation, dismemberment, and discontinuation of life; in this dystopia, which might become the trans/posthuman future,[58] all bodies are encouraged to undergo the same violence, yet under the guise of enhancement and protection.

Despite that, *Zero K* can be viewed as belonging to what Raffaella Baccolini and Tom Moylan define as "critical dystopias . . . texts that maintain a utopian impulse" (7). Namely, in addition to his critique of the overreliance on technology to manipulate human bodies in both life and death, DeLillo offers an alternative: accepting "illness and [natural] death as integral parts of being human" (Laguarta-Bueno 127). This is confirmed by the last scene in the novel, in which Jeffrey,

[58] Indeed, the massive mannequin-like appearance of filtered or literally surgically-enhanced faces and bodies on social media points to the probability of this claim.

having bid farewell to both Artis and his father in the Convergence facility, returns to New York and rides a bus during a sunset. Entranced by the natural visual spectacle, he hears inarticulate yet obviously delighted cries from a disabled boy (DeLillo 273–74) and muses on the need to accept the imperfection of the human body and mortality as integral parts of what makes one human.

To summarise, in *Zero K*, Don DeLillo envisions a bleak future based on the technologically and scientifically supported premise of the ostensible extension of human life beyond death. Initially presented as a utopian enterprise that helps the terminally ill and the disabled overcome their difficulties, the cryopreservation enterprise is soon revealed to be a dystopian mechanism that takes away life prematurely while claiming to protect and enhance it. The human desire for a long and healthy life is taken advantage of by a corporation that is motivated by profit or the need for live subjects for their experiments (or both) and that relies on biopolitics to acquire it. Thus, the allegedly voluntary process of dying to obtain a better life at some later point in the future is not reserved for only those who need it; it also includes the healthy (and wealthy) people who decide to undergo the process even if they are not sick or disabled in any way.

The novel's protagonist, Jeffrey, and all others who find themselves in the Convergence facility are further manipulated and scared into surrendering to the cryonic process for a promised better future by being shown the violent phenomena that could end their life in the outer world. The dystopian manipulation includes constant violent media streams in the hallways as a form of psychological torture and the Foucauldian spectacle of violence. Under the pretext of the protection of life, the scientists behind the Convergence project manage to achieve their biopolitical aim of controlling life processes and hide the fact that none of the users of the cryopreservation will have reached a higher level of consciousness in their pods nor will their upgraded bodies be awoken to an advanced reality. Instead, the users are condemned to running in circles "as a malfunctioning machine" (Medeiros Casteluber and Manganelli Fernandes 528), entirely dehumanised: decapitated and dismembered. Hence, the biopolitical violence in this contemporary dystopia, which is still perpetrated against the human body just as in the sovereign-based systems, effectively discontinues their life while being purported as a means to improve and protect it.

3.6. Naomi Alderman's *The Power*: (Wo)Men Rapists, Murderers, and Tyrants

Mentored by the queen of feminist dystopian fiction, Margaret Atwood herself, Naomi Alderman's contemporary dystopia *The Power* (2016) is referred to on the back cover by the publisher as "*The Handmaid's Tale* for the twenty-first century." The recent popular TV adaptation of Atwood's 1985 novel by Hulu (2017–ongoing)[59] and an even more recent development with the American Supreme Court overturning Roe v. Wade in June 2022 testify to the fact that stories of the systemic negation of female bodily autonomy and (ab)use of the female body need not be radically updated to be relevant in this day and age. Nevertheless, *The Power*'s original take on the same set of issues, the mistreatment of women and their bodies, from an opposing perspective that envisions a female-dominated world where women first gain physical power over men and consequently all other kinds of power, justifies both the critical recognition[60] and further research. As Angela King notes, Alderman's dystopian vision of an alternative future in which women oppress men is fit for discussion as the current society "is far from gender neutral and in fact constantly seeks to reiterate the polarization of the sexes through these 'techniques of gender'" (33), which justify the violence inflicted on and abuse of female bodies.

Hence, this subchapter will employ the Foucauldian theory on biopower and its disciplining effects on the female body, which serve to perpetuate the patriarchal dichotomies of male/female, mind/body, and culture/nature to construe women as inferior to men (King 30). The aim is to show that, by inverting the traditional power balance resulting from the existing biopolitical forms of male oppression of women, *The Power* describes violence and (ab)use of men committed under the pretence of necessity and protection of women.

As with every dystopian novel analysed so far in this dissertation, *The Power*'s depiction of women as the physically stronger sex begins as a utopian vision. The utopian impulse for liberation from patriarchal oppression comes from the mutation of the female body, a development of an organ called the "*skein*" (Alderman 20, emphasis in the original) in teenage girls across the globe. Attached to their collarbone, the skein suddenly allows young women to "discharge electric current [from their hands] and pass this ability on to older women" (Warchał 89). When used for

[59] *The Power* has also been recently adapted to TV. On 13 March 2023, Amazon Prime Video released nine episodes of the first season, starring Toni Collette (Margot), Halle Bush (Allie), Ria Zmitrowicz (Roxy), Toheeb Jimoh (Tunde), and Zrinka Cvitešić (Tatiana Moskalev).

[60] *Goodreads* lists the following award and nominations: Women's Prize for Fiction (2017); Orwell Prize Nominee for Longlist (2017), James Tiptree Jr. Award Nominee for Longlist (2017), and Tähtivaeltaja Award Nominee (2020).

protection, the power manifests itself by incapacitating or electrocuting its recipient while marking their body with blue, tree-like scars from burst capillaries, which evokes images of injured women, victims of (domestic) abuse. In other words, the novel imagines a world in which women have the biological upper hand, which results in the physical and social oppression of men, defamiliarising thus the mechanics of real-life discrimination and abuse, and shining light on the absurdity and injustice of female oppression.

Exhibiting traits of a postmodernist novel, *The Power* contains two narrative lines, which seem to function as a book within a book. One storyline is epistolary and represents the conversation between Neil Adam Armon, a fictional writer who sends his manuscript for evaluation to a renowned writer named Naomi Alderman. Armon's name is an anagram of Alderman's name, whereby the real Alderman engages in a metatextual exploration of both the limits of authorship and of gender power relations. It may also be seen as Alderman's recognition of how writers help and influence one another, as Atwood has helped her. The other storyline represents the content of Armon's manuscript, which is the actual plot of the novel and contains multiple points of view. *The Power* thus follows the stories of Roxy Monke, a British gangster's daughter who witnesses the brutal murder of her mother; of Allie, a mixed-race American girl sexually abused by her religious extremist foster father; of Margot Cleary, an American mayor competing against the sexist governor Daniel Danon; and of Olatunde (Tunde) Edo, a Nigerian male journalist who supports the female liberation movement. Thus, besides focusing mainly on women afflicted by "domestic abuse, neglectful families or underprivileged backgrounds," the novel also shows the transformation of the "underprivileged, impoverished or exploited" (Warchał 91) women worldwide, most notably, the oppressed women of Saudi Arabia, India, and Moldova, "the world capital of human sex-trafficking" (Alderman 93). In this way, with women now being able to counter their oppressors, the awakening of female power[61] is envisioned as a utopian "opportunity for a social revolution and a chance for women to take their lives and political power into their own hands, organise, and take over oppressive institutions" (Warchał 91), which enable a social, religious, and biopolitical subjugation and abuse of women and their bodies through systemic violence rooted in men's physical strength.

[61] The origin of the female power is not scientifically confirmed in the novel, and the possible causes range from the theory of the "aquatic" origin of the human race, since the power found in women is similar to that of electric eels, to a worldwide infection of water with a chemical substance during WWII, to a religious omen of the impending apocalypse (Warchał 89–90).

In line with Angela King's article "The Prisoner of Gender: Foucault and the Disciplining of the Female Body" (2004) and her observation that the Foucauldian disciplining of the body is necessarily amended by the feminist criticism,[62] "'woman' has been discursively constructed (condemned) as inferior yet also threatening to man" (30). While men are said to be ruled by the mind and culture, women are seen, based on the female reproduction-related bodily functions and fluctuations, as "irrational, emotional" (King 31). For this reason, various authorities attribute to women a "perpetual need of containment and control and [of being] subjected (condemned) to particular disciplinary techniques" (30). According to these established patriarchal postulates, women are deliberately construed as the weaker (yet unpredictable and dangerous) sex based on their bodies, which must submit to the physically, morally, and rationally superior men. This means that the power imbalance, which favours men based on their physical strength and "capacity do to violence" (Alderman qtd. in Sawyer), is systemically and restrictively applied to women in other aspects of life as well: social, political, religious, and so on.

Such effects of the patriarchy and disciplining of the female body, which meet "power, or abundance in a woman's body . . . with distaste" (Bartky 132), are evident in *The Power* in the form of everyday sexism at one's workplace, as is the case with the news anchors Tom and Kristen (Alderman 19, 63) and the male governor's patronising attitude to Margot (85, 89). They are also seen in intimate relationships in which men expect women to serve them, as Tunde, the only male protagonist, does with his female crush at the beginning of the novel (Alderman 14), in instances of either attempted or successful femicide and rape, which family members perpetrate on Roxy (234–37), her mother (11), and Allie (30), respectively, and in the above-mentioned sex-trafficking in underdeveloped countries. The represented utter physical and ideological subjugation of women provides a context for a radical change of gender relations that *The Power* imagines.

Alderman's futuristic inversion of the power scale in favour of women only brings these long-standing injustices and abusive treatment of women to the fore. As she herself says, "in my world, nothing happens to a man that is not happening to a woman in the world we live in today. So if we find my world to be a dystopia, then we are already living in a dystopia" (qtd. in Neary). When the

[62] Both Angela King and Joseph Bristow comment on Foucault's lack of a gendered lens in his analyses of the biopolitical treatment of the body (King 30; Bristow 153), providing an important supplement to his seminal observations on the systematic socio-political control over individual's bodies, based on which the major feminists such as Judith Butler, Simone de Beauvoir, Donna J. Haraway, Susan Lee Bartky, and so on developed their critical theories.

power starts awakening in teenage girls, the male-dominated governments instruct them to just be calm and keep "*breathing*" (Alderman 102, emphasis in the original). Alarmed at the prospect of being overruled, they ask of women to basically do nothing while the efforts are undertaken by the patriarchal institutions to curb their power, such as organising military forces to subdue female rebellions or trying to develop a vaccine. In biopolitical terms, the women are ordered to be docile, to "'keep it under control, don't use it [the power], don't do anything, keep yourself nice and keep your arms crossed'" (102). The irony of Alderman's vision is even more notable when men, scared and angered by the displays of female superiority and the inability to contain the female power, suggest that they be murdered: "[T]hey should shoot those girls. Just shoot them. In the head. *Bam*. End of story" (85). In the regions where the male oppressors severely negate women's rights and restrict them in everyday activities such as walking the streets on their own or driving cars (58), the empowered girls are indeed killed as a consequence of the detrimental discursive binaries which construe women as unruly and dangerous. Yet, women continuously suffer from the exact same type of "irrational" violence at the hands of men that they are accused of now. A case in point are the two Saudi Arabian twelve-year-old girls: "An uncle had found them practising their devilry together; a religious man, he had summoned his friends . . . somehow they [the girls] had both ended up beaten to death" (Alderman 56). Similarly, in the first instance of female backlash upon gaining power, performed by a Nigerian teenager against an old man making advances at her, the girl's effect on the man – his twitching and foaming at the mouth – is compared to that of a snake and the girl is accused of witchcraft: "That is how a witch kills a man" (17). Both of these reactions to the female display of power convey the religious undertone of patriarchy and biopower, which, for centuries, demonises women and condones their abuse and even murder.

According to Claeys, misogyny is a frequent motif in dystopias because the genre criticises the inner workings of ideological systems, such as religious dogmas that perpetuate the traditional power dichotomy: "Men were encouraged to hate women for inflaming their own sinful desires. Women were cloaked with shame by the very definition of their gender and Eve's original act of disobedience" (*Dystopia* 15–16). Alderman problematizes this issue through the character of Allie, who later in the book assumes the role of Mother Eve, the charismatic leader of a new religious movement centred on women. In one of her empowering sermons, Allie/Mother Eve warns of the misleading teachings that have for centuries rendered women inferior by declaring them "unclean" and reinforcing the narrative of their "impure" bodies (Alderman 115; Warchał 92). An additional

challenging of the religious dogmas which misrepresent women as weaker than men occurs by means of a mysterious female voice in Allie's head, which can be compared to conscience or (a male) God's voice. While never receiving a confirmation from the voice that "She" is indeed God, Allie concludes that it must be, so she starts calling Her "Mother" and forms a religious cult in Her name. The now-transformed, matriarchal world allows Allie to reinterpret the Bible and put an emphasis on female superiority: "So the one who creates is greater than the thing created . . . So which must be greater, the Mother or the Son" (Alderman 80). When, later on, the voice urges Allie to "intentionally hurt and manipulate others" (Warchał 93) and support a global war,[63] which traumatises and kills men and women indiscriminately, its appropriation reveals the interpretation-prone, ideological side of dogmas. In other words, the newly-established matriarchy becomes a "violent female theocracy" (Yebra 1) enabled by the misuse by those in the position of power for their own interests and supported by other institutions entrenched in power.

In other words, those in power will use all means available to perpetuate their privileged status. The fictional writer of the novel, Neil Adam Armon, concludes as much of the oppressive nature of powers that be, in his case, the women: "For more than two thousand years, the only people re-copying were nuns in convents . . . they picked works to copy that supported their viewpoint and just let the rest moulder into flakes of parchment. I mean, why would they re-copy works that said that men used to be stronger and women weaker?" (Alderman 336). The systemic negation of men's rights in the futuristic matriarchal world entails (ab)use in all questions of power, from the freedom of expressing dissent with one's opinion to questioning outright sexual abuse. According to Christine Jarvis, both Neil's and Naomi's letters,[64] which exhibit female dominance and sexism while framing the fictional narrative, "illuminate the performative and discursively constructed nature of gender: centuries of repetition of humiliating and subordinating bodily acts have led to a collective belief that the dominance of women is grounded in male and women's biology and psychology" (129). Alderman's dystopia unpicks these long-reiterated performative acts enabled

[63] Allie encourages Roxy to kill the police officers who came to arrest the two of them and the rest of the newly-converted girls at the convent (114), after Sister Veronica, the headmistress, reported the girls for cult-making behaviour, whom Allie likewise kills (82). Later on, as she gains worldwide recognition, Allie "fake[s] 'miracles' when she sends the electric current through the bodies of people with different diseases to temporarily ease the pain" (Warchał 93), pointing to the possible space for manipulation behind ideological beliefs and figures.

[64] The fictional framework sets the story a few thousand years in the female-dominated future, in which Neil is seen as apologetic and charming in his letters to an experienced novelist Naomi, who suggests to Neil that he publish the novel under a female pen-name, echoing a female character's appropriation of Tunde's journalistic material (Alderman 267) and his recognition of a charming rhetoric as the only strategy to negotiate with the powerful women (272–73).

by the patriarchal system, which allow for one gender's more or less violent mistreatment at the expense of the other. As will be seen throughout this subchapter in analysing the manipulation of historical and social truths by matriarchal institutions, it is just as justified to imagine a deliberately subdued historical account of societies in which "[m]en have evolved to be strong worker homesteadkeepers, while women – with babies to protect from harm – have had to become aggressive and violent" (Alderman 333).

The premise of *The Power* lies exactly in the appropriation and reversal of the historically, socially, and biopolitically construed "truths" about women and their relation to nature and society. These "truths" attribute the unruliness and unpredictability of nature to women, for which they "have to be" controlled within society. Since Alderman's women have all the power now, their connection to nature is not an expression of inferiority but of superiority. To illustrate, in the moments before discharging the electric charge from their hands, the women are said to "suggest the connection of the power with non-human nature . . . [through a] smell like wet leaves after a storm or ripe fruit" (Alderman 24; Warchał 90), and elsewhere, Tunde feels "the scent of orange blossom" (Alderman 14). Moreover, lighting storms are found to be particularly inciting for the activation of female power by causing an "itchy feeling" in one's skein (75). Allie, in whom nature and the female power converge most notably, recognises the extent of her power by watching eels in an aquarium and the way they "'remote control' the muscles in their prey by interfering with the electric signals in the brain" (40). Later on, when she forms a religious cult with her peers at a Christian convent, Allie's most powerful displays of power connect her body to the ocean and water (114).

The omnipotent female nature is also contrasted with man-made technology. Women suddenly have the power to destroy cars and armoured vehicles as well as to fight bare-handed against armed soldiers by "fus[ing] the firing pins inside the barrels" and "cook[ing] the electronics of the vehicles" (Alderman 61), making them state that men and their "mechanical power cannot compare with what we [women] have in our bodies" (189). Likewise, Margot approximates the sudden awakening of her skein and its dormant *natural* power to an overwhelming swarm of winged ants:

> [O]ne day every summer . . . the house at the lake would swarm with them, thickly upon the ground, clinging to the timber-clad frame, vibrating on the tree trunks, the

> air so full of ants you thought you might breathe them in. They live underground, those ants, all year long, entirely alone. They grow from their eggs, they eat what – dust and seeds or something – and they wait, and wait. And one day, when the temperature has been just right for the right number of days and when the moisture is just so . . . they all take to the air at once. (Alderman 21)

Margot is another character whose clash with the ideological systems reveals the abuse of female bodies. Namely, the fictional society employs a biopolitical control which entails sanctioning in the case of determined abnormality, all under the guise of social protection and welfare. This becomes obvious in the instance of Margot's testing of her skein. As a woman holding an important political position, she is forced to undergo the national mandatory test to determine whether her body has the ability to discharge the electric current. If discovered, the activity of Margot's skein will mark her as an "abnormal" individual, a "monster . . . [whose] very existence is a breach of the law at both levels," that of nature and society (Foucault, *Abnormal* 55–56). This is precisely where Foucault's observations on the systemic treatment of abnormal bodies are justly updated by the feminist gendered lens. Specifically, "the female body [being] subjected to the scrutinizing gaze of the human sciences far more than the male," whereby "[e]very hint of abnormality has been thoroughly and enthusiastically ferreted out and classified by numerous 'experts' eager to provide indisputable proof of its inherent pathology" (King 31). Consequently, during the process, Margot is assured by the technician that the entire building she works in has to undergo testing and that she is not "singled out," but when she asks whether the testing applies to men too, Margot learns: "Well, no, not the men" (66). This reveals the patriarchal biopolitical mechanism under the guise of welfare that justifies the abuse of the female body. The development of the skein on the female body is regarded as a "*weirdness*" (Alderman 153, emphasis in the original) and a "terrible deformity" (21), which must be sanctioned by the old, male-dominated social order.[65] Subsequently, the discovery of electrostatic activity in Margot's body would cause her to be sanctioned in order to protect "the children and the public" (66) from potentially

[65] That the skein is not treated as a means of power by men, but only an additional proof of the female abnormality and violation of social codes, is seen in the fact that "there have been boys who have been murdered for showing their skein" (Alderman 153). As Christine Jarvis asserts, "[s]keins may appear to define women physically, and their lack to define men, but these demarcations are socially constructed, as the few men born with skeins are shunned and punished" (121), as is the case with Jocelyn's boyfriend Ryan.

dangerous female individuals like her. The medical system and its control over the body are, under the aim of proclaimed protection, exercised in the same way as the legislation, confirming Foucault's view of modern societies as sophisticated prisons (*History of Sexuality* 141). In other words, if one rejects being tested, they are presumed guilty and removed from their public function: as "your continued eligibility for your government position is dependent on your agreement to be tested" (Alderman 66).

Both Margot's treatment during the procedure and her successful deception of the testing equipment show the susceptibility of the biopolitical system to manipulation and misuse of power. In the current world, powerful men abuse their power, which is supported by patriarchy. In Alderman's dystopia, it is powerful women who abuse their power, supported by the matriarchal turn of the society. After Margot is cleared for further political career and following an incident with her daughter Jocelyn, who hurts a boy due to a lack of control over her new abilities, Margot suggests that the government should invest in training camps for girls to teach them how to use their power in a "safer" way (Alderman 88; Warchał 93). But Margot knows, and later proves, that this is not the only intention of such public treatments of bodies. Margot herself "agrees [to] the informational campaigns explaining that this technology will keep our sons and daughters safe. It's Margot's name, when you come right down to it, on the official documentation saying that this testing equipment will help save lives. She tells herself, as she signs the forms, that it's *probably* true" (Alderman 69, emphasis in the original). Moreover, the introduction of these alleged safety measures in the form of testing and training camps is presented as an explicit form of protection of society: "The work they're doing right here – trying to keep everything normal, to keep people feeling safe and going to their jobs and spending their dollars on weekend recreational activities – this is important work" (70). What they are in fact doing is "not affirmative of life and community-building but monetised for financial and political gain" (Warchał 94), which is later also seen with Roxy and her involvement in drug dealing.

This is where the utopian potential of female power becomes a dystopian ruse and excuse for gender-inversed, yet again systemic, violence in Alderman's contemporary dystopia. At first, Margot's training camps for girls, *NorthStar*, are indeed used for the benefit and protection of society. They provide job positions and give the girls a place to use their powers constructively, without endangering the public. In this way, they decrease the number of violent incidents in schools and other public places and enhance the general feeling of safety (Alderman 148).

However, when Jocelyn accidentally electrocutes a male intruder, the camp guards deliberately instruct her to fabricate the truth behind the incident: the boy has threatened her with a gun, and she used her power to protect herself and the rest of the girls at camp. For this, she is proclaimed "a hero, soldier" (Alderman 211) on national television. The same happens to Margot, her mother, after the physical overpowering of her political nemesis, Daniel Danon, at the elections for senatorial position. Margot shocks Danon, and her display of power is welcomed as a sign of strength, not of unruly emotionality and violence. Thus, the violent displays of power previously performed by men and now appropriated by women are celebrated with "the female body [being] appropriated and repurposed as a lethal weapon" (Warchał 93). According to Arendt's view of power, the "exercise of power needs no justification, because it is a condition of politics and polity" (Frazer 185; Arendt 42–55). Because the now-matriarchal system supports the displays of female power, even the violent, or especially the violent ones, both Margot and Jocelyn are seen as contributing to society despite manipulation and unethical behaviour.

The girls trained at camps soon become soldiers used by the United States national army and are sent to "aid" the female efforts in Bessapara, the newly-created women's republic, which is a likewise "violent dictatorship, [only now] led by a woman" (Warchał 93), Tatiana Moskalev. Moskalev's matriarchal regime assumes the violent patriarchal postulates exercised against women and turns them on men. The men have now become the ostracised and weaker Other, exposed to violent abuse, torture, and murder at the hands of women. Hence, in the second half of the novel, the female power is not used only "as a defence mechanism against former oppressors, but also as a deadly weapon" (93) to likewise oppress, torture, rape, and kill. On the one hand, this opposes Foucault's observation that contemporary wars have ceased to be "waged in the name of a sovereign who must be defended" (*History of Sexuality* 137) because it is Moskalev who "encourages violence and introduces [severe] restrictions" in their daily lives (Warchał 95). On the other hand, Moskalev's rhetoric on her efforts and her act of joining forces with Margot, who becomes a U.S. senator in the meantime, and Mother Eve, who wishes her Gospel to bring liberation to all women across the globe, both nod to the biopolitical "need" for violence and murder to achieve the alleged aim of protecting life. As Foucault termed it, waging of wars "on behalf of the existence of everyone; entire populations . . . mobilized for the purpose of wholesale slaughter in the name of life necessity," making "massacres . . . vital" in contemporary politics

(*History of Sexuality* 137). Hence, in her support of Moskalev's dictatorial rule over Bessapara, Allie/Mother Eve teaches:

> "We don't have to ask ourselves what the Saudi Royal Family will do if they win this war," she says. "We've already seen it. We know what happened in Saudi Arabia for decades, and we know that God turned Her face from it in horror and disgust. We don't have to ask ourselves who is on the side of justice when we meet the brave fighters of Bessapara – many of whom were trafficked women, shackled women, women who would have died alone in the dark if God had not sent Her light to guide them." (Alderman 190)

Female violence and torturing of men are now justified as a necessary means of protecting the previously terrorised and exploited women against male oppression. As Jarvis asserts, "women's aggressive capacities through the reproduction of individual and collective acts of cruelty and its justification through discourse presenting the coercion of men as necessary for the success of humanity" (130). Finally, Alderman's *The Power* is dystopian because in disrupting the "traditional power dynamics" (Bhagat), it discloses the numerous oppressive mechanisms that abuse women and female power, but also because it thwarts the utopian ideal of a more peaceful world if ruled by women who employ the same means of rule as men have. In their displays of power, women go beyond the righteous rage of being oppressed for centuries. They torture, mutilate, rape, and kill indiscriminately; women become sadists just because they can (Bhagat).

In connection to (female) acts of cruelty, one can also note that the spectacle of torture is present, which goes against Foucault's claims on the elimination of public spectacles of torture (*Discipline and Punish* 50). Namely, in the dictatorial women's republic, violence is visible and spectacular: "[T]hings [are] happening in Bessapara that Jos can't really believe. Torture and experiments, gangs of women on the loose in the north near the border, murdering and raping men at will" (Alderman 258). In addition to this spectacle of torture, traces of Freud's death drive can also be noticed in *The Power*. While running for his life and hiding in the woods from the women and authorities, since he has no legitimation, Tunde surreptitiously witnesses a rape and a murder spectacle: "The blind woman at the fire was all the women who had nearly killed him, who could have killed him . . . In that moment, he longed to be the one with his wrists clasped. He longed to

kneel at her feet, his face buried in the wet soil. He wanted the fight over, he wanted to know who won even at his own cost, he wanted the final scene . . . And when she killed him, it was ecstasy" (Alderman 270).

The ending of the novel, which is framed by the concluding exchange between the fictional writer Neil Adam Armon and Naomi, speaks of the overt female abuse exerted over men as a thing of the past, in particular the deliberate abortion of male babies and "curbing" or the mutilation of their genitals (Alderman 338). At the moment of corresponding, the abuse is relegated to sexism and appropriation of intellectual property as lesser forms of mistreatment. This would correspond to Arendt's attitude that violence and power "are not the same [but that they] . . . are opposites; where the one rules absolutely, the other is absent" (56). If female supremacy has been established, there is no need for overt violence, torture, and murder. However, the biopolitical perspective of the former, seemingly innocent forms of abuse – especially in the context of this dissertation – points to the conclusion that power does not exclude violence, and that the biopolitical "positive influence on life, that endeavors to administer [and] optimize" it (Foucault, *History of Sexuality* 137), can result in an (ab)use equally or even more cruel than in the traditional systems.

To conclude, in Naomi Alderman's transformed world, women literally hold all the power in their hands by releasing electricity from their bodies. This newly-awakened power is at first welcomed as a means of female empowerment because it grants women the physical power to defend themselves against (male) oppressors. The female power disrupts the long-established convergence of biological, political, administrative, and religious postulates in favour of male supremacy and rendering women as inferior. By showing women traverse from the artificially construed need for docility to taking charge and manipulating the power to get their own way under the guise of protection, the novel points to the real-life exploitation of power on the side of patriarchy. Simultaneously, as the need for protection of women against male oppression escalates to violence, torture, mutilation in the form of public spectacles of rape and murder, the biopolitical principles of protection and welfare at the expense of a marginalised social group are revealed to be just another method of control, subjugation, and exploitation.

As can be seen from the present and the previous subchapters on contemporary adult dystopias, the Foucauldian theory of biopolitics and the Freudian death instinct are useful for revealing the mechanisms which allow contemporary society to (ab)use individuals' bodies. These theoretical

postulates will also prove useful in the analysis of young adult dystopias and their mistreatment of teenage bodies, which often surpass the violence and abuse of bodies displayed in adult dystopias.

4. THE (AB)USE OF THE BODY IN YOUNG ADULT CONTEMPORARY ANGLOPHONE DYSTOPIA

4.1. The Popularity of Young Adult Dystopia

The palpable turn from utopian visions to dystopian nightmares evident in adult literature is also present in literature for young adults. According to Bradford et al. (2008) and their *New World Orders in Contemporary Children's Literature. Utopian Transformations*,[66] since the last decade of the twentieth century, "the utopian imaginings of ideal communities have been largely supplanted by dystopian visions of dysfunctional, regressive, and often violent societies" (9). The reasons for such pessimistic and violent tendencies permeating literature that should be both entertaining and pedagogical (Fitzsimmons and Wilson xii; Hintz and Ostry 7) to its young readers can be found in the many crises that have marked the last century, instilling unrest and fear in young adults regarding their future. Starting with the 1960s and the "youth, race, and gender revolutions" as a backlash against the post-WWII period with its "hypocrisies, inequalities, and restrictions" (Bradford et al. 133) and continuing with armed conflicts between the 1980s and 2000,[67] the literature for the young has notably focused on the nuclear holocaust, pollution, and global warming (7). In an age already marked by a lack of safety, anxiety, and fear of the future, the September 11 attacks and their aftermath have additionally worsened the bleak outlook among the young when it comes to both their present and the future. Finally, climate change, environmental destruction, rapid advancement of technology (Ludwig and Maruo-Schröder 15), and the postmodern degradation of traditional value systems are all increasingly reflected in recent literature for young readers.

Although the socio-political, economic, cultural, and other crises, which have caused countless children to become victims of "poverty, kidnapping, slavery, and prostitution" (Bradford et al. 135), inform all of young adult literature, not only the texts which fit the designation *young adult dystopia*, it is this particular subgenre that has been the most prominent field of young adult literature in the last two decades. Considered "the most obvious phenomenon in the twenty first

[66] Even though the title of the book implies that it analyses children's literature only, the discussions include both texts for children and young adults, specifically dystopias, such as Lois Lowry's *The Giver* (1993) and M. T. Anderson's *Feed* (2002).
[67] See Bradford et al. 6–7.

century" (Claeys and Tower Sargent 525), young adult dystopia has boomed at the close of the millennium with "huge blockbuster[s]" (Fitzsimmons and Wilson ix), such as Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games* and Veronica Roth's *Divergent* series. The reasons for this can be found in the above-mentioned bleak sentiments concerning visions of the future, aggravated by the socio-political climate of the postmodern age with an increase of "control, restrictions, surveillance and the necessity to conform," due to which "growing up today can actually feel very similar to living in a dystopian society" (Ludwig and Maruo-Schröder 16).

There are other, inherent, reasons for the massive popularity of young adult dystopias, which dominate both bookstore shelves and movie theatres. These reasons are found in the many parallels between the genres of dystopia and young adult literature. First and foremost, the main parallel between dystopian and young adult literatures is their "pervasive commitment to social practice" (Bradford et al. 2). In other words, both genres depict imaginary societies with the aim of raising their readers' awareness of the state of their current one. Dystopia has been inextricable from social criticism since its inception in ancient philosophy, and activism as part of young adult culture can be traced back as far as the 1960s, thus making the subgenre of young adult dystopia "a productive place to address cultural anxieties and threats as well as to contemplate the ideal" (Hintz and Ostry 12). Understanding the "ideal" to mean "challenging the imperfect tradition," young adult dystopia justifies its appeal by depicting young adults' clash with the traditional, conservative outlook on the inner workings of society, identity, sexuality, gender, and so on.

In close connection with social criticism and agency characteristic of both genres is the function of didacticism: "Dystopia . . . concerns itself overtly with the communication of an informative and instructive message. In addition to providing a didactic focus on the social and the historical, these fictions repeatedly foreground the political and the cultural in an explicit and didactic manner" (Millward 34). Similar to dystopias serving as cautionary tales by emphasising the issues and dangerous tendencies of their contemporaneity, literature for young adults has always been "crucially implicated in shaping the values of children and young people" (Bradford et al. 22). In providing teenagers with a strong commentary on how to question, challenge, and even disrupt the established value systems that dictate their lives, young adult dystopias take on the "subversive" character, which is a key trait of young adult literature (Trites 2).

Another common point between dystopia and young adult literature is the protagonist, who must be a rebel figure or at least a self-proclaimed outcast. Rebekah Fitzsimmons claims that

"[t]eenagers make natural protagonists for dystopian novels because they are expected to rebel and push boundaries" (Fitzsimmons 4). Since the aim of young adult literature is to allow teenagers (both as protagonists and as readers) to question the established power systems and learn to navigate or disrupt them, this aligns strongly with the dystopian imperative of questioning the inner workings of real-life societies through fictional ones. In connection to teenagers perceiving themselves as the misunderstood and mistreated outcasts in a conformist society, the genre of dystopia pushes the perceived restrictions and injustices "to the extreme, building a fictional world devoted to critiquing aspects of society that seem fundamental and unchangeable, and exposing the teen reader's place in the real-world equivalent of that system" (Fitzsimmons 4). Moreover, both genres are "preoccupied with the formation of subjectivity – that is, the development of notions of selfhood" (Bradford et al. 12). Young adult protagonists must learn to assert their own identity by recognising and more or less successfully subverting the oppressive world around them, which is also the role of dystopian protagonists.

The most important parallel between dystopia and young adult literature that is central to the topic of this dissertation is the position of the body in the two genres. The body is "[s]ituated at the nexus between the aims and characteristics of young adult fiction as well as those of the dystopian genre . . . as a key site on which the struggle between the personal and the political is played out" (Ludwig and Maruo-Schröder 17). Therefore, the effects of the ideological systems that a young adult dystopian protagonist must challenge and subvert are often reflected in the (mis)treatment of their bodies, as are the ways in which young adults oppose the systems. In depicting the oppression and abuse teenagers suffer at the hands of their respective dystopian regimes, young adult dystopias are said to heavily rely on violence (Claeys and Sargent 525). All the above-mentioned clashes between individuals and dystopian societies, which are taken to extremes in young adult dystopia, are also exaggerated when it comes to the body. Consequently, the violence and abuse inflicted on individuals' bodies in young adult dystopia invariably result in either literal or figurative death of the *natural* human body: "Almost obsessively, teenage bodies are subjected to (social) control in these novels as they are modified – improved and mutilated – or even produced 'from scratch'" (Maruo-Schröder 51). By combining the old-fashioned "regime[s] defined by extreme coercion, inequality, imprisonment, and slavery" (Claeys, *Dystopia* 5) with biopolitical mechanisms of control, surveillance, and pervasive investment of life to the

point of death (Foucault, *History of Sexuality Vol. 1* 139), the young adult dystopias often surpass the violence and abuse of bodies displayed in adult dystopias.

In relation to the abuse of young adult bodies, the typical dystopian technophobia is a prominent topic in the subgenre of young adult dystopia (Panaou 73). Instead of exploring the "productive . . . [or] empowering aspects of science" (73) and technology, the texts often focus on their shortcomings and dangers. In her chapter within *Female Rebellion in Young Adult Dystopian Fiction* (2014), one of the seminal anthologies on the subgenre, Sara K. Day concurs with this observation, claiming that dystopian literature, and thus young adult dystopia as well, "is nearly always tied to anxieties about technology" (52). That the effects of technophobia are regularly reflected in the (mis)treatment of teenage bodies in young adult dystopia is confirmed by Basu et al., who note that "biotechnology destabilizes conceptions of humanity and the boundaries of the human body" (12).

The technophobic attitude of contemporary young adult dystopias in connection to the abuse of the body will be notable in the next two subchapters, on Neal Shusterman's *Unwind Dystology* and Scott Westerfeld's *Uglies*. In Shusterman's contemporary young adult dystopia, advanced science and technology are used by the regime to allow for the legal mass murder of teenagers and appropriation of every part of their bodies for bettering the lives of other people, while Westerfeld's regime employs scientific and technological alterations of the body to make everyone aesthetically pleasing, but also to permanently alter their brain in order to keep them docile. The abuse of the body represented in both of these series of novels clearly echoes the Foucauldian biopolitics, which will be the main theoretical framework for the exploration of the issue in Shusterman's and Westerfeld's novels.

While both of these young adult dystopian series portray the mutilation and/or murder of male and female teenagers alike, which is one of the reasons why these precise series were chosen for analysis in this dissertation,[68] the subgenre is predominantly written by, for, and about women (Claeys and Tower Sargent 525). As a result, the mistreatment of female bodies is often a

[68] Other reasons include the fact that, although *The Hunger Games* is perhaps the most vivid example of the presence of public spectacles of violence and death in contemporary dystopias (with its televised fights to death), it has already been thoroughly researched in academic discourse. Next, the said series is usually taken as the one which sparked the commercial viability of young adult dystopian fiction, but it was actually due to Westerfeld's *Uglies* (Donnelly 1). Finally, Fitzsimmons and Wilson (2020) have urged for an expansion of the academic studies on young adult literature "beyond the selected blockbusters" and the limited hypercanon they have formed (ix) with the aim of a more diverse representation of young adult literature, to which this dissertation will hopefully contribute.

prominent topic. Building on the feminist tradition of Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), contemporary young adult dystopias with female protagonists fill "the gap left in Atwood's novel" in its lack of exploration of the dystopian regime's control of female bodies and sexuality affects teenage girls (Urquhart 1).

The teenage female body "has long been the site of contradictory cultural expectations and demands" (Day 75). Simultaneously child-like and woman-like, but not entirely either, teenage girls' bodies demand protection and elicit fear and anxiety due to their power potential. Since the teenage female body "unsettles the ostensibly clear boundaries" imposed by traditional society, its sexuality is traditionally presented as something which "must be controlled by implicit or explicit rules and regulations" (75). In this way, the treatment of teenage girls' bodies in young adult dystopias often emphasises the problematic nature of patriarchal dichotomies that render men superior and reasonable, and women unpredictable, dangerous, and in need of being regulated and subdued.[69] In that context, Lauren DeStefano's *The Chemical Garden* (2011–13) series will be particularly interesting to analyse in the last subchapter of this dissertation due to its depiction of teenage girls, some of them as young as thirteen, being forced into polygamous marriages for the purpose of procreation in the post-apocalyptic future where a deadly virus kills women at twenty and men at twenty-five years of age.

As will be seen in the young adult dystopias to be analysed in the next chapter, young adult dystopias portray the "dominant culture wedded to violence and control" (Basu et al. 5). This means that violence has become not only an extension of the dystopian regimes, but also a *modus operandi* for dystopian teenagers in challenging or subverting the dystopian regimes. Foucault's postulate according to which "one has to be capable of killing in order to go on living" (*History of Sexuality* 137) is emphasised among the protagonists of many renowned young adult dystopias. Katniss Everdeen of *The Hunger Games* is the first one to come to mind, together with *Divergent*'s Tris Prior, as well as Todd Hewitt from *Chaos Walking*, who must "commit murder and become a man" (Seymour 638). However, the mutilation, torture, and killing of the body are not reserved only for the teenagers' enemies. As Roberta Seelinger Trites asserts, "the increased objectification of the teenage body . . . leads many adolescents to perpetrate acts of violence against the Self or Other" (xi). This means that self-harm and suicide often become the only means of subversion

[69] See pages 37 and 38 of this dissertation.

available to young adults in contemporary dystopian regimes, which once more connects these tendencies to the Freudian death drive, as the next three subchapters will show.

4.2. Scott Westerfeld's *Uglies*: Death of the Natural Human Body

Westerfeld's young adult dystopian series, which consists of *Uglies* (2005), *Pretties* (2005), *Specials* (2006), and *Extras* (2007), delivers a vision of an oppressive society in which individuals are systematically abused through technological alterations of their bodies.[70] Proclaimed as unacceptable, natural human appearance and abilities are eradicated by mandatory plastic surgeries performed by government officials. To become a full-fledged member of this futuristic society, everyone at the age of sixteen, until which point they are considered ugly, undergoes an "extensive bodily remodelling" (Donnelly 30), which turns them into standardised "pretties" (Westerfeld, *Uglies* 4). The obligatory social mechanism is justified based on the argument that the unequal distribution of attractive physical features among people of the past was the main source of prejudice, injustice, and suffering: "Before the operation, there were wars and mass hatred" (272) with people killing each other "over stuff like having different skin color" (44). The high-tech body manipulations that make everyone equal have also purportedly eliminated individual unhappiness and life-threatening diseases such as anorexia (199). Finally, by being based on "[r]enewable energy, sustainable resources, [and] a fixed population" (346), Westerfeld's post-apocalyptic society is propagated as an antidote to the past generations' rampant destruction of nature and oil exploitation.

However, as the sixteen-year-old Tally Youngblood learns during the course of the series, the beautification procedure is not practiced only as "the great social equalizer" (Barnes 212). While the dystopian regime uses cosmetic surgeries to make all the citizens look the same and prevent inequality, what it also does is alter their brains to make people unable to recognise or resist the repressive practices within the society. In the words of Will Shetterly, "the pretty operation actually [makes] people docile" (206). Consequently, as with adult dystopias analysed in the previous chapter, this subchapter employs Foucault's notions of biopower and docile bodies to

[70] The main heroine in the first three instalments is Tally Youngblood, and the heroine in *Extras* is Aya Fuse. According to Ostry, "*Specials* is advertised on the cover as 'the final volume in the highly acclaimed *Uglies* trilogy'" ("On the Brink" 112), but this section includes the analysis of *Extras* because it aligns with the argument of this dissertation on the biopolitical abuse of the body.

describe the control and explicit abuse of human bodies in Westerfeld's young adult dystopia. The aim is to show that the dystopian regime of *Uglies* severely abuses its citizens and mutilates their bodies under the guise of protecting and improving their lives. Moreover, since the series ends with the heroines, Tally Youngblood and Aya Fuse, accepting their technologically transformed bodies instead of reverting to their natural bodies, the analysis suggests that the contemporary young adult dystopia of *Uglies* aligns with the thesis of this dissertation regarding the physical torture and mutilation of the body being presented as a means of wellbeing and pleasure.

Similar to Huxley's canonical dystopia, *Brave New World*,[71] Westerfeld's futuristic society promotes an alleged utopian ideal of hedonism. In a world where advanced science and technology have enabled an extensive manipulation of inborn human features, both physical and intellectual, everyone has the opportunity to become a "pretty" and move to "New Pretty Town" (Westerfeld, *Uglies* 3). There, they can enjoy a carefree life characterised by equality, prosperity, and fun activities such as incessant partying in luxurious high-tech mansions named after celebrities like Greta Garbo (10) and Rudolph Valentino (*Pretties* 18). While *Brave New World*'s genetic engineering takes place before the citizens are born, that is, "decanted" (Huxley 6), with further state mechanisms and forms of manipulation focusing on the evocation of pleasure, individuals in *Uglies* must undergo the operation that involves genetic engineering at sixteen, after many years of being exposed to ridicule and peer pressure for their natural looks, which is socially construed as unacceptable ugliness. As David, an outsider to "Uglyville" and its biopolitical propaganda, says to Tally: "[T]he worst damage is done before they even pick up the knife: You're all brainwashed into believing you're ugly" (Westerfeld, *Uglies* 276). Since Westerfeld's teenagers constantly make each other insecure by inventing nicknames based on their perceived flaws, such as "Skinny" (*Uglies* 36), "Shorty" (96), and "Nose" (18), most of them embrace the operation which will mutilate their body but also make it socially acceptable.

Equipped with interface rings, talking rooms, hoverboards, and other advanced software, which are all presented as means of protection and entertainment,[72] the uglies' favourite pastime is the

[71] Although Westerfeld has never listed *BNW* as an influence, there are obvious parallels between the two dystopian worlds, such as the hedonist propaganda, pleasure gardens, the savage reservation, and the figure of the savage. Also, based on the antagonist's, Dr Cable's, view on human beings as an inherently destructive force in need of subjugation (Westerfeld, *Pretties* 135), and the fact that Westerfeld's later series is titled *Leviathan* (2009–11), it is possible to see the influence of Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan* (1651).

[72] For instance, interface rings are used for accessing elevators and high-tech living areas, and are also "supposedly [meant] to help find anyone who got lost or injured outside a smart building" (Westerfeld, *Pretties* 80).

experimentation with "morphological models" (Wilkinson 10) of their future faces. In Tally's world, the constant highlighting of one's attractive appearance and perfect facial features causes young adults to be "programmed into thinking anything else is ugly" (Westerfeld, *Uglies* 82) and to yearn for surgical alterations to their bodies. In this, *Uglies* is an overt critique of contemporary overreliance on technology, superficiality, and the danger of the hyperreality promoted by the (social) media, where filtered and enhanced images are presented as actual. The exposure of children and teenagers, whose brains are still under development and their self-esteem largely tied to other peoples' opinions, to growing up among surgically altered faces and bodies that impose on them unattainable and unnatural beauty standards causes irrevocable damage to their self-perception and self-esteem. According to Rohrich and Cho (2018), young adults between thirteen and nineteen constitute four percent of all cosmetic surgeries done in the United States, and the number is rising rapidly (3).[73] The most common procedures are rhinoplasty, female breast augmentation, and male breast reduction, the causes of which are directly related to the influence of social media, the practice of posting *selfies*, bullying, and comparison with others (3). The extent of psychological and physical damage of such naturally unattainable looks being presented as natural is testified by the French government's 2023 movement to pass a law on the mandatory disclosure of the use of filters and other appearance-enhancing techniques on social media (Khatib). The fact that the first instalment of *Uglies* was published in 2005, the year when YouTube was first launched (Fitzsimmons and Wilson xvi) and Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat were not yet available or not as popular among teenagers, makes Westerfeld's prescient dystopian vision of the future all the more relevant today.

By brainwashing children and teenagers into thinking they must undergo surgery to become legitimate members of society, Westerfeld's dystopian regime turns them into docile bodies. According to Foucault, a docile body is "subjected, used, transformed and improved" (*Discipline and Punish* 136) by the powers that be. The bodies of uglies-turned-pretties correspond to that definition since the procedure performed on them represents an extensive manipulation of their

[73] In 2000, Mary H. McGrath and Sanjay Mukerji wrote about an increase in the teenage population undergoing plastic surgeries with the aim of improving their "body image," and listed as the most common procedures the "rhinoplasty, ear surgery, reduction mammoplasty, surgery for asymmetric breasts" (105), among others. Many recent studies confirm the continuous rise in the number of teenagers around the world who undergo such procedures (see, for instance, Ng et al. 2014 and Dean et al. 2018).

natural looks and genetic material for the purpose of socialisation. During the operation, the bodies are:

> [O]pened up, the bones ground down to the right shape, some of them stretched or padded . . . nose cartilage and cheekbones stripped out and replaced with programmable plastic, skin sanded off and reseeded like a soccer field in spring . . . eyes would be laser-cut for a lifetime of perfect vision, reflective implants inserted under the iris to add sparkling gold flecks to their indifferent brown . . . muscles all trimmed up with a night of electrocize and . . . baby fat sucked out for good? Teeth replaced with ceramics as strong as a suborbital aircraft wing, and as white as the dorm's good china? They said it didn't hurt, except the new skin, which felt like a killer sunburn for a couple of weeks. (Westerfeld, *Uglies* 97)

In addition to the more or less painful mutilation of people's bodies to fit the social requirements, the main dystopian element of the body-altering practice is the "chemical brain damage designed to turn citizens into shallow, empty-headed drones" (Blasingame 694). The government's tampering with the individuals' brains prevents people from rebelling because they become interested only in benign pastimes, such as partying and fashion. Tally is first made aware of the effects of "brain lesions" (Westerfeld, *Uglies* 276) in the Smoke, a place where natural uglies, people who have never lived in the dystopian cities of Uglyville or New Pretty Town, and the runaway rebels, such as Tally's friend Shay, reside (195). The body transformation, the propaganda that precedes it, and the brain fog that follows it are all dystopian mechanisms of making people docile, which go beyond pure psychological manipulation. By having all their potentially incendiary memories from the past physically erased, the pretties lose "any power of their own. Their identities are constructed for them" (Wilkinson 16), and they become "perfect" citizens – obedient and unquestioning.

The case in point is Tally Youngblood, the protagonist of *Uglies*, *Pretties*, and *Specials*. After the government tracks her down in the Smoke as a runaway and operates on her, Tally cannot remember her real thoughts before she was supposed to undergo the operation, and all she has are implanted memories: "All those weeks that Tally had been lost in the wild, all she'd ever wanted was to be back here with Peris, pretty in New Pretty Town" (Westerfeld, *Pretties* 14). Yet, the

readers know that this is false. It is the now-pretty Tally's surgically altered brain that prevents her from remembering the truth. She was not *lost* in the wild nor eager to return; Tally changed her mind on the operation after joining the rebels. She wanted to stay an ugly and with them, but these "memories wouldn't come. Thinking about those times was like banging her head against a wall" (64). The lobotomy-like erasure of one's memories and identities in the *Uglies* series can thus be viewed as a crueller and more explicit form of violence than in, for instance, Orwell's *1984*, where the erasure of history as a method of manipulation takes place *outside* the people's bodies, that is, by means of indoctrination. The mainly psychological manipulation of Oceania's citizens is achieved by the incessant alteration and fabrication of data in newspapers. For Walsh, the "equivalent of a lobotomy" (108) in *1984* is the restrictive language, but here, the government officials perform an actual lobotomy on the citizens. Likewise, whereas the brain-stunting effect of soma in *Brave New World* is temporary, and the drug must be taken constantly to have a lasting effect on the highest social classes, the brain chemistry of all Westerfeld's pretty and later special citizens is altered permanently and – if one takes into account the series' end with Tally refusing to be turned back to an ugly – irrevocably.

That the allegedly utopian enterprise of uniform physical appearances is only a dystopian form of oppression is also evident in the punishments delivered by the regime to those who oppose the surgery. As opposed to the happiness-oriented *Brave New World*, where the rebels are "gently spirited away to a distant island" (Walsh 96), the transgression against the societal rules in *Uglies* is punished by a forced transformation to pretties or death. For instance, Tally's best friend Shay, who rejected the thought of "being required to have fun" (Westerfeld, *Uglies* 49) even before she knew for a fact that the surgery would make her docile, is caught and operated on against her will. The same applies to Tally with her second operation, which turns her into a Special, a superior version of pretties. Furthermore, Az, David's father and a doctor who had discovered the truth about the brain lesions that "degrade the intellect and reinforce conformity and compliance" (Panaou 70), is killed for wanting to disclose that fact (Westerfeld, *Uglies* 388). This shows that Westerfeld's contemporary young adult dystopia uses violence and mutilation of the body to achieve docility and utility (Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 137). In this, it is much more violent than earlier dystopias. On the one hand, the regime of *1984* also kills its dissidents and rebels, but they are specific individuals, not the entire population; rather, it resorts to psychological manipulation or indoctrination as its principal method of control. On the other hand, the regime of

Brave New World performs a lobotomy on all of its citizens, either by enhancing the Alpha Pluses' brains or damaging the lower classes' brains, but refrains from inflicting physical torture and capital punishment on its straying individuals. In *Uglies*, the regime relies on both the biopolitical manipulation of one's body and explicit torture and murder as regular methods of control.

The hypocritical nature of this self-proclaimed civilised society is further revealed through a high degree of segregation (Panaou 67) and prejudice based on the state of individuals' bodies, which the officials claim to have eradicated by the introduction of the equalising operation. The society perpetuates the differences between the uglies, who have not yet undergone surgery, and the pretties, who are conditioned to despise the uglies' unaltered physical appearance as if they were carriers of an infectious disease: "What was worse in New Pretty Town . . . [y]our mansion burning down, or an ugly crashing your party?" (Westerfeld, *Uglies* 21). The uglies are thus forced to a segregated lifestyle in ghettos – communal dorms – together with other unaltered citizens, and they are severely punished if they decide to sneak into New Pretty Town to mingle with the pretties. At the same time, the pretties are also targets of animosity. The non-conforming uglies ostracise them as "malleable, stupid" (Wilkinson 11), testifying to a deep divide between the two factions despite the proclaimed goal of eliminating inequality.

Moreover, although the pretties are made docile to fit the societal rules, they are under even more scrutiny and surveillance than the uglies. Namely, all the commodities of a high-tech world available to pretties, such as speaking rooms and elevators, eye-scanners and hoverboards, are simultaneously used as tracking devices, evoking the notion of Panopticon and the Foucauldian remark on the prison-like nature of contemporary society (*History of Sexuality* 141). In *Uglies*, when Tally is forced to become a spy in the Smoke, she is given a metal pendant equipped with an eye scanner, with the help of which she can disclose the location of the rebel settlement and be brought back to civilisation. Even when Tally learns about the regime's lies and throws the pendant into a fire to protect the rebels, the gadget betrays her position to the officials (*Uglies* 306). This proves that the pendant was not meant for Tally's protection at all, but for the government's control of both her and the other rebels' movements. In *Pretties*, Tally and her boyfriend Zane no longer have removable interface rings but permanent interface "cuffs" on their hands (104), which allow the "decision-makers to control everyone and monitor all interactions" (McDuffie 149). In turn, the pretties resort to anorexia in their attempt to remove the cuffs by starving themselves, which is one of the issues the society claims to have exterminated. Moreover, the officials implant a tracker

in Zane's tooth without his knowledge (Westerfeld, *Pretties* 352), which helps them track Tally down once more. Hence, all the high-tech devices available to both uglies and pretties presented as helping means are actually the government's controlling devices, which help create a sort of digital Panopticon.

Despite the official propaganda of equality, not even the pretties are all uniform and equal. The notable ageism purported by the regime is witnessed in Tally's disgust with natural-looking older people she sees in the Smoke or in the magazines from the past: "[H]ere was the wrinkled, veined, discolored, shuffling, horrific truth, right before her eyes" (*Uglies* 197). However, even the pretties, the socially condoned group, are divided according to their age into new pretties (young adults who had just been operated on), middle pretties (middle-aged people), and late pretties (older people). Additionally, Donnelly emphasises the racial "blindness" of the society and its obvious problematic nature: "[I]t is suggested that a society which mandates the physical appearance of the populace will become homogenously white, but the text never registers the disturbing racial consequences of this imagining" (31). Even though the regime's aim is equality, the results are still oppressive in that they are "in keeping with culturally determined ideals of Western . . . beauty" (Balsamo 58).[74]

The main representatives of inequality among the pretty-made nation are the "Special Circumstances" (Westerfeld, *Uglies* 103) or simply the Specials. They are the highest class of pretties and "the city's spies, soldiers, and police. They're humans who have been given heightened senses . . . made stronger and faster than anyone else . . . changed to look superior and frightening" (Shetterly 204). Represented by the ruthless Dr Cable, the Specials are actually the technocrats who control the entire society, including the rebels' settlements. They track down the citizens who try to avoid the mandatory, pretty-making operation, work on exterminating the rebels outside the controlled cities, and even resort to murder (as with David's father). They eventually proclaim war on every other settlement in their wish to conquer the "ugly" world, thereby breaking the peace-making premise of the surgery.

The Specials echo the tech-savvy Thought Police represented in *1984*, only they undergo the body-altering procedure themselves. This provides them with "extreme physical differences"

[74] Mary Jeanette Moran concurs that "the images of beauty" present in Westerfeld's series, even though they are "not solely Caucasian, do have a Western bias" (124). However, she argues for the universality of the series when it comes to all cultures that overemphasise physical beauty.

(Shetterly 204) and superhuman abilities such as advanced strength, speed, vision, hearing, and implanted "skintennas" (Westerfeld, *Specials* 4), with which they can communicate with other Specials. As the newly-special Shay informs Tally at the end of *Pretties*, "I can hear your heartbeat, can feel the electric buzz of that jacket trying to keep you warm. I can smell your fear" (366). Despite the alleged organisational foundation being peace and equality, the Specials are there to instil fear and detract the individuals from resisting the official propaganda. As Vedrana Čerina notes in relation to *A Clockwork Orange*, the "criminals are recruited as police officers. By turning the police into a criminal body, the government fosters violence in a wish to incite paranoia and achieve the citizens' docility through fear" (9, my translation). The same applies to Specials, who recruit the "Crims" (Westerfeld, *Pretties* 107), the most daring members of society who perform cruel tricks on each other.

The Specials' argument on the need to control the population and make it docile is the following: "We *art* under control, Tally . . . Left alone, human beings are a plague. They multiply relentlessly, consuming every resource and destroying everything they touch. Without the operation, human beings always become Rusties . . . Outside of our self-contained cities, humanity is a disease, a cancer on the body of the world" (Westerfeld, *Pretties* 135–36). The hypocrisy of the body-altering regime can be seen in the constant berating of the destruction of nature caused by the previous generations, the so-called Rusties, who had been killing animals for food (208), destroying forests, and littering (*Uglies* 92). On the one hand, Tally's government teaches the population that the previous generation had a detrimental habit of technologically manipulating and destroying nature, and suggests that it should be left alone in its *natural* state. As Tally concludes at one point: nature does not require a surgery to be "beautiful" (230). On the other hand, that same government, which denounces the previous generation for manipulating nature, now technologically manipulates and destroys *natural* humans. Human minds and bodies are not allowed to develop naturally in this world but are tampered with and made "docile [and] stupid" (Wilkinson 11) by the regime. The ironic contrast between the need to preserve nature and the extensive apparatus that alters and subdues human nature is vividly emphasised by references to "*phragmipedium panthera*," the flower called a "white tiger orchid" (Westerfeld, *Uglies* 181), which was engineered by people in the past and has spread to annihilate itself and everything

around it.[75] Although the rolling white fields of it look "so beautiful, so delicate and unthreatening" (*Uglies* 182–83), just like the surgically enhanced pretties, "[t]hey turned into the ultimate weed. What we call a monoculture. They crowd out every other species, choke trees and grass" (181–82). The said monoculture resonates with the pretty-making system, which allows no space for individuality and eventually leads to self-annihilation: "[S]omething powerful and destructive created by men that men could not control, a symbol that says careless change can have terrible consequences" (Shetterly 200). This exhibits technophobia that is characteristic of dystopian literature (Beauchamp 55) but also of young adult dystopian literature (Panaou 73).

Moreover, due to extreme bodily modifications, the Specials are made to be similar to animals. Designed to live in the open and hunt rebels, they look like wolves due to fangs and claw-like nails, they can smell humans from kilometres away, and they work best in packs. As Tally concludes, "being a Special wasn't just about strength and speed; it was about being part of a group, a clique . . . always reminded of the powers and privileges they shared, and of the sights and smells only their superhuman senses could detect" (Westerfeld, *Specials* 184–85). Ironically, in the same way that they accuse the Rusties of destroying nature, the Specials are bent on exterminating the natural humans or "random[s]" (24), as they call them, since they consider them randomly put together by nature. The Specials are allegedly cured from the pretty-induced fog, but their prejudiced thoughts and behaviours toward pretties testify to brain manipulation as well. For one, they call the pretties "confused and muddled . . . bubblehead[s]" (8) because pretties are not sharp-minded and unemotional hunters like them. After Tally's second operation and transformation into a Special, she realises that her superior physical abilities have caused her to despise everyone who is not like her. This is most vivid with her boyfriend Zane, whom the malfunctioned cure for prettiness left with brain damage and tremors.[76] In Tally's Special eyes, "designed to spot weaknesses" (194), Zane is a cripple, and when she sees the trembling of Zane's hands, she feels "repulsion . . . The war in her brain wouldn't end until he was a Special – his body as perfect as her own" (140–41).

[75] As David explains to Tally, "[a]fter enough orchids build up in an area, there aren't enough hummingbirds to pollinate them . . . So the orchids eventually die out, victims of their own success, leaving a wasteland behind. Biological zero" (Westerfeld, *Uglies* 182).

[76] The cure consists of two pills: one for implanting "nanos" (Westerfeld, *Specials* 16) into one's brain to remove the surgery-induced lesions, and the other for stopping the nanos from multiplying. If not taken together, the nanos "wind up eating the rest of your brain" (16) and causing irreparable damage.

Having been brainwashed in line with the regime's ideology, Tally feels uneasy in another non-controlled city, Diego, where "[w]hole cliques wore the same skin color, or shared similar faces, like families used to before the operation. It reminded Tally uncomfortably of how people grouped themselves back in pre-Rusty days . . . and made a big point of hating anyone who didn't look like them" (Westerfeld, *Specials* 221). Despite once being a rebel herself, Tally believes she "sees" that "the Smokies . . . weren't revolutionaries; they were nothing but egomaniacs, playing with lives, leaving broken people in their wake" (47). All the Specials are also brainwashed into thinking that by being made "non-random, above average… almost beyond human" (45) they are created to save the world. Yet, as Tally overcomes the Specials' brain modification by independent thinking, she becomes aware of the fact that the Specials are just as destructive to other forms of life as they were taught in school about the Rusties.

The dystopian mechanisms employed by the regime in Westerfeld's novels are similar to those found in canonical dystopias, although the methods used are more openly violent. A more explicit and crueller treatment of (young adult) bodies in this young adult series can also be seen in the violent methods of the regime's opponents. The surgery is a State-imposed instrument to control both the minds and bodies of young adults who undergo the surgery, but also to make them wish for the mutilation and death of their natural bodies. Panaou sees that as "a consequence of the initial knowledge imbalance" (68) by referring to the Foucauldian premise that knowledge is power (67). But even when the balance of knowledge between the control-seeking government and rebellious protagonist(s) is disrupted in favour of the young adult protagonists, their bodies are still manipulated. According to Panaou, Tally convinces Dr Cable, her enemy and a government representative, that she is intent on undergoing surgery to become as pretty as everyone else, when in fact, her aim has changed: "Tally's decision to become Pretty is not inspired by the body-enhancing ideology that dominates both her world and many contemporary societies" (Panaou 68). In reality, Tally no longer wants to be pretty so that she can fit in; she wants to become a pretty so that David's mother, who is also a scientist, can test the cure on Tally (68). Yet, the result is the same in that the heroine's body is transformed and no longer natural. As Panaou concludes, "she is donating her body to Science" (68). Thus, regardless of whether Tally undergoes the surgery to appease the system or to oppose it, her body is mutilated all the same. For her, the only available way to oppose the system is not to avoid their bodily manipulation, but to undergo

it and *then* fight to reverse it. This means that young adults accept violence perpetrated against their bodies as a *modus operandi* against systematic violence.

The explicit abuse of the young adult body, not only by the regime but by teenagers themselves (Trites xi), can be seen in several instances in this young adult dystopia. First of all, in *Uglies*, upon joining the rebels in the Smoke and learning about the deliberate brain alterations that "make it hard for them to even think straight, let alone defy authority" (Rallison 113), Tally willingly undergoes the bone-crushing and brain-damaging surgery in an attempt to dismantle the regime's surgical abuse of bodies. In *Pretties*, by taking an untested medicine against the brain lesions, Tally risks becoming ill or "brain-dead" (Westerfeld, *Pretties* 95), which eventually happens to her boyfriend Zane. Moreover, after Tally and her friends are made into "conformist and obedient" pretties (Panaou 68), they often engage in risky behaviour and self-abuse in order to try to oppose the encroaching regime. For instance, Tally and Zane starve themselves because they wish to get rid of tracking devices on their hands, but also because hunger helps them fight the "pretty-minded haze" (Wasserman 21) caused by the damage to their brains (Westerfeld, *Pretties* 61). At one point, Zane is willing to risk his bones being melted to remove the interface cuff, and he also deliberately breaks his hand by punching a metal slab in order to get medical care while hiding the fact that he has taken the cure for brain lesions. According to Robin Wasserman, the only way for Westerfeld's young adult opponents of the regime to achieve clear-headedness is through "extreme experiences" (27), such as violent spectacles or self-abuse rituals. For instance, to send out the message of resistance, Tally and her friends use alcohol to break the ice they are skating on and fall through to a stadium below (Westerfeld, *Pretties* 111–12). This tendency to self-harm in order to derive pleasure from echoes Freud's death drive as the inherent human desire for (self-)destruction (*Beyond the Pleasure Principle* 44). However, the teenagers' violent and self-destructive actions are only seemingly acts of rebellion; as Dr Cable informs Tally, the government actually lets the uglies perform tricks to see who will "graduat[e] to Special Circumstances" (134), meaning that their freedom is only a semblance, a carefully monitored ploy to achieve utility, and that violence is still employed for the benefit of the regime.

Granted, the most violent self-practice among young adults is devised by Shay, who "starts cutting herself" (Wilkinson 27). Shay becomes the leader of the "Cutters" (Westerfeld, *Pretties* 176), the *special* Specials who embrace violent self-mutilation as a way of trying to cure themselves of brain damage "since injury also sharpens their minds" (Rallison 113). Tally also

becomes a Cutter because, for her, "self-injury is a natural way to cope with being something that, even by the standards of her city, is not natural" (Shetterly 205), meaning the radical transformation of both her mind and body.[77] In opting to stay a Special at the end of the series, Shay also accepts self-mutilation as a way of life even though she does not have to. This shows that extreme and explicit violence is not reserved only for the dystopian powers that be but also for the citizens who oppose the regime and find violence and self-abuse to be the only forms of resistance. This will also be seen in the next section, which analyses an even more violent young adult dystopian series, Neal Shusterman's *Unwind Dystology*. There, "the Clappers" use chemicals to alter their blood and turn their bodies into anti-government explosives, detonated upon clapping their hands and dying in the process (Shusterman, *UnSouled* 16). All this is to prove that explicit violence and (spectacular) abuse of the body are staple elements of contemporary dystopias (Claeys and Tower Sargent 525), despite the claims of the elimination of violent torture (Foucault, *Discipline and Punishment* 7) and "mass brutality" in contemporary biopolitical regimes (Claeys "The Origins of Dystopia" 115).

According to Basu et al., "Westerfeld's sophisticated science fiction novel *Uglies* argues to some degree for a return to an organic, pretechnological state, where protagonists need to resist interference with their bodies and accept their natural appearances" (9). However, both Shay's and Tally's decision to remain Specials by refusing additional surgeries, which would turn them back into ordinary humans, point to the death of the natural body in this young adult dystopia, despite its proclaimed celebration of it. The death of the natural human body and its insufficiency in Westerfeld's series is also confirmed in the fourth and final instalment, *Extras* (2007). There, the protagonist is a fifteen-year-old Aya Fuse, who is growing up surrounded by the "reputation economy" (Westerfeld, *Extras* 32), which causes people to turn themselves into "surge-monkeys" (7) and "manga-heads" (15).

More specifically, in a highly futuristic world, years after Tally Youngblood's time, enhancement surgeries are no longer obligatory by the system, but young adults indulge in them because surgery enables them to achieve fame and with that, prosperity and wellbeing. In a world where the most important thing is to accumulate enough followers and views to reach the celebrity

[77] According to Hall and Place (2010), there has been an increase in self-harm practices, specifically cutting, among adolescents: "Over recent years there has been a growing concern about how young people are coping with the pressures of modern society, and one particular focus has been self-harm through cutting" (623).

ranking as close to number one as possible, "obscurity" (Westerfeld, *Extras* 65) is a horror that everyone works hard to avoid. To that end, young adults undergo surgeries which transform their natural vision into an "eyescreen" (21), on which they can follow the latest celebrities all the time. Some of them also have "infrared vision" (4) implanted, allowing them to see in the dark. Since everyone is vying for everybody else's attention, people constantly upgrade their physical appearance through surgeries; they are therefore nicknamed *surge-monkeys*, whereas *manga-heads* are the ones who undergo surgeries that make people resemble manga characters. Even though people can live a normal life without undergoing surgery, their enhanced bodies and concomitant attention allow them to acquire expensive gadgets and visit exclusive events, so they deliberately mutilate their bodies to become as famous as possible. In this, Westerfeld's young adult dystopia is incredibly prescient, considering that the plastic surgery industry has expanded from Hollywood stars, whose physical appearance is crucial for their livelihood, to ordinary people vying for the attention of thousands of followers on social networks, such as Instagram.

One can argue that what makes *Extras*'s treatment of the human body worse than in canonical dystopias, such as Huxley's, is the fact that young adults can choose to live a normal life without surgical enhancements, but the psychological manipulation through (the search for) pleasure is so intense that it prevents them from opting out of *killing* their natural human body in favour of creating an enhanced one. Additionally, the Foucauldian spectacle can also be observed in this final instalment, since Aya and "the Sly Girls" (Westerfeld, *Extras* 28), an underground group of girls who perform dangerous tricks, ride fast-trains and risk their lives in other ways to garner views and followers. Once again, this can be related to real-life and social media's influence on dangerous challenges that young adults are exposed to and which they engage in due to their wish to become famous.

To summarise, Westerfeld's *Uglies* series depicts a futuristic dystopian world in which the death of the natural body is encouraged through mandatory surgery imposed on everyone from the age of sixteen. Allegedly eradicating inequality, racism, and diseases caused by different physical appearances among people, the operation represents a biopolitical mechanism of control because it is justified with the intention of protecting and improving society. A typical dystopian instrument, the surgery actually helps the regime turn people into docile bodies by damaging their brains and making them focused only on mindless activities, such as partying. What makes this dystopia's abuse of the body worse than canonical dystopias is that it combines the biopolitical

abuse of the body through surgery with psychological brainwashing of people into thinking that their natural body is ugly and that it must be upgraded or entirely transformed in order to be socially acceptable. Those who oppose the regime are executed in the old-fashioned, death-administering method, which shows that Westerfeld's dystopia combines the biopolitical use of the human body with explicit violence. Additionally, once they undergo surgeries, young adults turn to spectacles of violence and self-abuse to try and gain some clarity in their chemically damaged brains. The portrayal of young adults' readiness to risk their lives in order to rebel against the system through self-harm and (the Foucauldian) spectacles of violence will be even more extreme in the next section, in which Shusterman's teenagers embrace self-mutilation and suicide as a way of opposing the system.

4.3. Neal Shusterman's *Unwind Dystology*: Living in a Divided and Conquered State

Shusterman's young adult dystopian series (2007–14) is replete with explicit violence, relying on the premise that is disturbing even in the context of this particular genre. Namely, in the novels, it becomes legal to kill one's teenage children. The five-part[78] series depicts the aftermath of the Heartland War, the fictional Second Civil War in the United States between the "Life Army" and the "Choice Brigade" (Shusterman, *Unwind* 223), or the pro-lifers and pro-abortionists. The war was brought to an end with the introduction of a law called the "Bill of Life" (224). At first proposed as "a joke [that] would shock both sides into seeing reason" (223–24), the newly-established law condones *unwinding*: a practice according to which "human life may not be touched from the moment of conception until a child reaches the age of thirteen. However, between the ages of thirteen and eighteen, a parent may choose to retroactively 'abort' a child" (*Unwind* n. pag.). In other words, abortion is no longer legal, but parents or guardians can at any given moment give the state the right to perform a surgery killing their perfectly healthy teenage children or wards and to distribute their body parts among other people, usually adults, without any legal repercussions.

[78] The first four instalments in Shusterman's series – *Unwind* (2007), *UnWholly* (2012), *UnSouled* (2013), and *UnDivided* (2014) – are novels. The fifth and last instalment, *UnBound* (2015), is a collection of short stories, co-authored by several other contributors next to the original author. Since the title of this dissertation points to the analysis of contemporary dystopian *novels*, the author has excluded *UnBound* from the present analysis.

Apart from being the only reachable compromise between the two warring sides (Stewart 163), unwinding is justified based on several accepted beliefs that are presented as utopian, as is the case with many disturbing dystopian practices, starting with Huxley's eugenics. Instead of the subjects' bodies being manipulated to fit their living purpose, as is the case in *Brave New World*, the teenagers in *Unwind* fulfil their purpose by having their bodies dismembered and dying. First of all, the society of *Unwind* sees the practice as utopian by positing that the Unwinds "aren't really dead" (Shusterman, *Unwind* 167) since each appropriated part of the teenagers' bodies remains alive in someone else. As parts of other living people, the Unwinds are claimed to be still alive, only "in a divided state" (24). Next, unwinding is seen as a necessary, utilitarian means of improving the life of the general society since it provides replacement organs, otherwise obtained from the occasional organ donors. With the help of a scientific and technological advancement that is "neurografting – the technique that allows every part of a donor to be used in transplant" (224), unwinding has allowed for many serious injuries, deadly diseases, or painful effects of ageing to now be eliminated: "A cancerous colon could be replaced with a healthy one. An accident victim who would have died from internal injuries could get fresh organs. A wrinkled arthritic hand could be replaced by one fifty years younger" (224). Finally, Shusterman's society recognises unwinding as a moral contribution to its functioning since certain young adults are chosen to be unwound by their parents or guardians due to their socially inept, most often violent, behaviour at school or at home (5; 225; 333). In this way, unwinding seemingly helps reduce delinquency. Additionally, some children are raised to be unwound for religious reasons: as sacrificial lambs or "tithes" who will "serve God, and mankind" (31–32) by peacefully accepting their role and relinquishing their life in favour of those who need their body parts. In that sense, teenagers are seen as subjects "squeezed between" Ideological Apparatuses of family, school, and church to keep them docile and "wrapped in the ruling ideology" (Althusser 251).

The frequent dystopian motif of technophobia, that is, the use of advanced science and technology to the detriment of humanity instead of its advancement, is obvious in this young adult dystopian society (Maruo-Schröder 48) since the scientific advancement is used to kill a part of the population. Shusterman makes explicit references to this throughout the series by comparing the fictional Janson Rheinschild, the key figure in the invention of the technology that made unwinding possible, to the real-life inventor of the atomic bomb, J. Robert Oppenheimer (*UnSouled* 1). In the second instalment, a character concludes: "[T]he man who created the first

nuclear bomb – turned against it in the end and became the bomb's greatest opponent. What if Rheinschild was the same, speaking out against unwinding, then was silenced – or worse – was silenced before he even had the chance to speak out" (Shusterman, *UnWholly* 397–98). Rheinschild's technological and medical advancement, which would allow the dying to continue living and create a better world, was similarly misappropriated and is now bringing death to one in two thousand teenagers every year in this dystopian society (6). Consequently, its violent and abusive regime rests on Foucault's notions of (post)modern control and biopolitical use of individual bodies under the guise of advanced humanity (*Discipline and Punish* 7). Taken to the extreme, the individuals' "efficiency" (137) or usefulness within this particular society is achieved by giving away vital body parts. Accordingly, the dismembered bodies – internal organs, but also limbs, eyes, teeth, and so on – are taken from the maladjusted or simply unwanted adolescents and given to others, more conforming members of society, since it is necessary for everyone in contemporary society to serve a purpose. As Díaz Miranda notes, "[t]he use of biopower by the system and its claim that it protects life gives way to the subjugation of the body and the control of all the aspects that make us human" (168).

Concerning this, it is possible to juxtapose Shusterman's "system of forced organ donation" (Wohlmann and Steinberg 26) with Ishiguro's clones in *Never Let Me Go* (2005). Both the adolescent Unwinds and Ishiguro's clones represent outcasts "since not fitting in is every Unwind's problem" (Shusterman, *Unwind* 200). They are likewise used in their prime years to cater to the benefit of mainstream society and lose their lives in the process. What makes Shusterman's young adult dystopia even crueller is the fact that the victims of the regime are aware of their mistreatment, but even more so the fact that the teenagers in Shusterman's novels are sent to their deaths by their parents. While Ishiguro's clones are, throughout their childhood, subjected to ambiguous explanations of the way their lives will end, preventing them from recognising the cruelty up until the point just before the mandatory organ-giving stage, Shusterman's "harvest camps" or the formerly called "unwinding facilities" (*Unwind* 265), are not that secret. In fact, the teenagers often call them the "Chop Shops" (271). Yet, just like Ishiguro's slaughterhouses, Shusterman's harvest camps are intent on easing the guilty conscience of both the general public and of the parents who give up on their children and send them to be unwound. One particular camp, Happy Jack Harvest Camp, is thus located among the "sedating forest views" in "beautiful

Happy Jack, Arizona" and is headed by perpetually smiling staff in "comfortable shorts and Hawaiian shirts" and "sunshine yellow" surgeons' scrubs (Shusterman, *Unwind* 265).

Yet, in spite of the aesthetically pleasing environment and the friendly staff who assist the Unwinds before and during their procedure, frequent protests such as graffiti written on the walls of facilities show that these "kid-conscious and user-friendly" (265) state mechanisms are "NOT FOOLING ANYONE" (266, emphasis in the original) with their utopian façade. By the time children in *Unwind* reach thirteen, the age when they become eligible for unwinding, they are already acquainted with the general notion of this social practice and what it means for them. Despite the ideological efforts by the state and the church to convince them that their lives will continue, only in a different form, the young adults know what will happen to their bodies in the medical centres, even if the specifics of the procedure itself represent a mystery. In *Never Let Me Go*, the organs that are being taken and the clones they belong to remain carefully hidden from mainstream society, indicating that the beneficiaries of the organ-taking practice are aware of its depravity. The institutions in which Ishiguro's clones grow up and die are isolated from the mainstream society because the recipients of their organs do not wish to see the clones' humanity and suffering while undergoing surgeries. Likewise, the knowledge of what will really happen to them is kept away from the clones, while the young adult dystopian society of *Unwind* does not try to hide the results of its inhumane practice among those on the receiving end.

To illustrate, early on in the first instalment, there is an older man who openly acknowledges that he has reaped the benefits of unwinding and received an arm from an adolescent Unwind, which allows him to perform card tricks he did not learn on his own:

> The trucker rolls up his sleeve to reveal that the arm, which had done the tricks, had been grafted on at the elbow.
> "Ten years ago I fell asleep at the wheel," the trucker tells him. "Big accident. I lost an arm, a kidney, and a few other things. I got new ones, though, and I pulled through." He looks at his hands, and now Connor can see that the trick-card hand is a little different from the other one. The trucker's other hand has thicker fingers, and the skin is a bit more olive in tone. (Shusterman, *Unwind* 13–14)

Hence, unlike Ishiguro's dystopian society, which exhibits Foucault's notion of removing violent practices from the public eye in fear of evoking sympathy toward the "condemned" (*Discipline and Punish* 50), who are guilty only of their posthuman origin and considered socially and morally inferior, the treatment of Shusterman's young adults shows a more explicit approach to violence. The dismemberment of unwilling Unwinds is an accepted practice, discussed at every turn. In addition to using the bodies of (adolescent) citizens under the guise of humanity, which is present in both adult and young adult dystopias, the society of the *Unwind Dystology* also retains the public spectacle of gory violence and physical punishment, in contrast to the Foucauldian argument that these are removed from contemporary society (*Discipline and Punish* 7). Although not as literally as in *The Hunger Games*, the most popular young adult dystopia, which fully relies on "torture as a public spectacle" (Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 7) to maintain the imposed social hierarchy and totalitarian exploitation of its subjects, the *Unwind Dystology* also provides a public display of its cruel social practice of dismembering young people by means of the recipients' public testimonies about the origin of the parts received. In fact, these testimonies resemble advertisements for the practice: "ThinkFast® is a living implant the size of a dime inserted discreetly behind the ear, augmenting your memory with millions of healthy young neurons harvested from prime Unwinds" (Shusterman, *UnDivided* 35).

The series starts with the trio of protagonists – Connor Lassiter, Risa Ward,[79] and Jedediah Levi Calder (Lev) – depicted following their parents or guardians' decision to unwind them and further describes their struggle for survival in this dystopian society. Connor is opted for unwinding by his parents, who see the decision to legally murder their teenage son as the only alternative to his violent behaviour. At sixteen, Connor has already stayed at a disciplinary school several times for fighting with his parents and school peers (Shusterman, *Unwind* 5). Risa, being an orphan and living in a State Home, is chosen to be unwound because her guardians believe she has reached her potential in the state home (22). A fifteen-year-old with only "very good . . . *but not excellent*" piano-playing skills (22, emphasis in the original), she has to make room for younger orphans with a higher chance of finding a family. The third protagonist, Lev, is a "tithe" (Shusterman, *Unwind* 31), brought up since birth as the youngest among ten children to embody the one-tenth designated for charity, which his family has always given the church. Both Lev and his family view his unwinding as a sacred act, a Christ-like sacrifice (Stewart 161). Whereas the reasoning behind the

[79] Risa's surname comes from her being a ward at a State Home; she shares it with all other wards.

former two protagonists' unwinding order relies on the typical utopian-turned-dystopian premise of disregarding individuality for the benefit of the larger community, in Lev's case, the additional religious element to his sacrificial position evokes the parallels that M. Keith Booker's draws between the classic dystopian "monologic totalitarian regime[s]" and Christianity (*Dystopian Impulse* 12, 30, 51). Shusterman explicitly confirms this attitude, noting that "giving the finest of the flock back to God is a tradition as old as religion itself" (*Unwind* 280).

Following the trio's escape from adults who decided to unwind them and their fight to stay alive until eighteen, the *Unwind Dystology* delineates two sides of the dystopian society. The first one is the mainstream, which enforces unwinding onto the non-conforming or unwanted young adults and murders them for the benefit of socially adept people, most often adults. The other side is the niche society that strictly opposes unwinding. Called the "sanctuary" (Shusterman, *Unwind* 31), this niche society works to help the Unwinds reach legal adulthood,[80] when the Bill of Life can no longer claim their life. As this section will show, both parts of the society resort to control and violence over individual's bodies and testify to the prison-like organisation and function of modern societies (Foucault, *History of Sexuality* 141).

To maintain its dubious practice, *Unwind Dystology*'s mainstream society has developed several mechanisms of control over young adults. First and foremost, there are "Juvey-cops" (10), a specialised police department for taking charge of adolescent fugitives scheduled for unwinding. The department operates with the help of ordinary citizens, who have the obligation to inform the authorities if they see the fugitives themselves, evoking the Foucauldian notion of Panopticon (*Discipline and Punish* 200) since young adults know that everyone they come across can report them to the authorities. The society has also developed special medical facilities in which the unwinding takes place. Those are the said harvest camps, which also align with the notion of the Panopticon by reinforcing constant surveillance and internalised self-regulation. For instance, despite the presence of seemingly harmless recreational spaces in camps and the encouragement to the young adults to use them for pastime, they are, in fact, equipped with cameras, which "meant that someone, somewhere, was studying each of the Unwinds in that game, taking notes on eye-hand coordination, gauging the strengths of various muscle groups" (Shusterman, *Unwind* 268). Therefore, when Risa notes that the basketball court available at the camp "wasn't to keep the

[80] At first, the Bill of Life refers to children between thirteen and eighteen, but later in the series, the legal age is brought down to seventeen, making seventeen-year-olds no longer eligible for unwinding (Shusterman, *Unwind* 325).

Unwinds entertained, but to help put a cash value on their parts" (Shusterman, *Unwind* 268), she evokes Huxley's elaborate gaming apparatus devised specifically to fulfil the social purpose of keeping people healthy and mindlessly entertained. Yet, here, the purpose of the Foucauldian "comprehensive measures, statistical assessments, and interventions" (*History of Sexuality* 146) is much more sinister. The regime tracks one's physical abilities, which it will literally take away and use elsewhere, while killing the original bearer of these features.

Apart from the notion of the Panopticon, surveillance and the obligatory usefulness within society inevitably resonate with Foucault's connection between biopower and capitalism (*History of Sexuality* 140). According to Díaz Miranda, there is an inextricable link between biopower and eugenics, "which in turn is utilized as another tool of late capitalism" (160). In the contemporary society of *Unwind Dystology*, the individuals' bodies have become the(ir) most valuable currency, and the practice "became big business" (Shusterman, *Unwind* 224; Stewart 163). As the Unwinds in the harvesting camp comment, the authorities "lose a ton of money if one of us turns eighteen, because then they've got to let us go" (Shusterman, *Unwind* 275). Teenage individuals' body parts are viewed through the profit-oriented lens: "eyes so green . . . [they] will go for a high price" (281). There is also a capitalist hierarchy developed among the available body parts based on their desirability and affordability: "[A] deaf ear is better than no ear at all, and sometimes it's all people can afford" (Shusterman, *Unwind* 269). As Stewart points out, "once the capitalist machine begins churning, for organs from unwinds are in high demand, contemplating a different solution is no longer economically feasible" (164).

Thus, the profit made of body parts does not belong to young adults scheduled for unwinding. They are supposed to maintain the best health and form not for themselves, but for other people who will receive their body parts. For instance, when it was discovered that his blood levels of triglyceride were too high, Lev was supposed to exercise in order to be a good organ donor (Shusterman, *Unwind* 281). Similarly, in a scene where the Unwinds are taken to the procedure, their treatment by the authorities involves taking care of their physical appearance for the benefit of body-part recipients: "Kids who walk the red carpet have guards flaking them on either side, with firm grips on their upper arms – firm enough to restrain them, but not enough to bruise them" (274). The capitalist profit based on the teenagers' bodies is present in both mainstream society and the black market of "parts pirates" (Shusterman, *UnWholly* 218), which develops as a consequence of introducing the unwinding practice.

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault claims that the decentralisation of power made for its more recent ubiquity and that the physical mutilation of the body is replaced by "the economy, the efficiency of movements, their internal organization; constraint bears upon the forces rather than upon the signs; the only truly important ceremony is that of exercise" (137). The aim is no longer to torture and kill but to control the body and its activities. However, (young adult) dystopias such as the *Unwind Dystology* show that contemporary dystopian novels – informed by practices that (have) take(n) place in the contemporary, non-literary world[81] – combine the exercise and physical restraint with the physical mutilation of the body, as is the process of unwinding. This confirms the thesis of this dissertation that contemporary dystopias employ a harsher treatment of human bodies than earlier ones and that young adult dystopias are often more explicit in their representations of abuse of the individuals' bodies. As Gregory Claeys and Lyman Tower Sargent assert, overt "violence is a major theme in young adult dystopia" (525), even if contemporary young adult regimes are based on biopolitics.

The mechanism of peer pressure is also present in the mainstream dystopian society of the *Unwind Dystology*, as evident in the case of the Admiral, a father who had his son, Harlan, unwound due to his position in the newly regulated society: "As one of the fathers of the Unwind Accord, I was expected to set an example" (Shusterman, *Unwind* 225). The societal mechanisms are swift and efficient, and the procedure is irreversible: "They had taken Harlan right out of school to the harvest camp, and rushed him through. It had already been done" (225). Unlike the non-conforming citizens of, for instance, *1984*, who were either eliminated from society or detained and terrorised psychologically to adhere to the rules of their totalitarian society, which happens to Orwell's protagonists Winston and Julia, the teenagers in *Unwind Dystology* are not even given a chance to conform, because most of them do not even know that they will be unwound. This is kept a secret from everyone except the tithes. Once their unwinding order is signed, they are forced to undergo the procedure. The teenagers are simultaneously eliminated, made into examples of punishable behaviour, and made useful for their body parts, whereby the latter aspect of unwinding aligns with what Foucault recognizes as the contemporary societies' use of individuals under the guise of increased humanity (*History of Sexuality* 138).

[81] According to Susan Louise Stewart, although the *Unwind Dystology* does not have any Jewish characters, "mass incinerations or gassings," it is still "a symbolic Holocaust narrative in its imagery and many allusions to the Holocaust" (167). In the twenty-first century, the most vivid example of dystopian practices of the abuse of the body would be the organ black market.

For Foucault, with the development of biopower, the main purpose of the system ceased to be the elimination of unfit subjects through death. Instead, brought about by the "disqualification of death" (138) or capital punishment, the purpose of the system is said to be an all-encompassing monitoring of life of the entire population, including the criminals (139). The reason behind it is the contradiction which would ensue if the state was to administer death penalties while claiming to "ensure, sustain, and multiply life" (138). Indeed, in earlier dystopias such as *Brave New World* and even *1984*, capital punishments are rarely employed. The focus is on psychological manipulation by way of pleasure or pain to avoid the elimination of unfit citizens from society, not on their torture and death ordered by the state (Booker, *Dystopian Impulse* 74; Claeys "The Origins of Dystopia" 115; Walsh 98). This means that the individuals' bodies become the property of the state not only in the case of transgression against the rules but also in everyday life. Accordingly, by running away, Shusterman's Unwinds become felons because they are stealing the "*government property*" (*UnWholly* 264, emphasis in the original). However, the true horror of Shusterman's young adult dystopian society is the fact that death penalty for not fitting in is *still* employed by the regime, but it is done under the pretence of society's betterment, both by eliminating unfit members and by curing different ailments. The only form of utility that unconfirmed teenagers are granted in this society is by "their whole-body 'donations'" (Stewart 160) and dying. Thus, while in earlier dystopias, the death penalty was avoided and usefulness was favoured, the utility in this dystopia is achieved precisely through the death penalty.

As suggested earlier, the other part of this dystopian society opposes the mainstream practice of unwinding. Presented as a refuge from the "unforgiving world" (Shusterman, *Unwind* 215), which kills healthy adolescents, the niche society consists of individuals and places that enable the Unwinds to survive "in an undivided state" (32) until the age when they will be exempt from the Bill of Life and its fatal stipulation. The main location of this other side of society is "the Graveyard" (195), which is ironic as its purpose is to save teenage lives. Founded away from civilisation, on the site where abandoned airplanes are disposed, the anti-unwinding fraction provides endangered teenagers with shelter and food, and secures them a job position as well as fake identification until they reach eighteen or, later, seventeen. The Graveyard is a curious biopolitical space because it does offer salvation to the Unwinds, but, except for the fact that it does not schedule and execute the murders of young adults, its organisation and functioning are similar to the mainstream system.

Namely, it is a militarized society based on hierarchies of power that comes with a set of strict rules that almost make it parallel to the unwinding facilities: "Just as the airplane graveyard was Heaven disguised as Hell, harvest camp is Hell masquerading as Heaven" (Shusterman, *Unwind* 268). Governed by a former military man, "a decorated Admiral of the United States Navy" (213), the place closely resembles an army: "the rules in the Graveyard are strict. All activity takes place in the fuselage or under the wings, unless it's absolutely necessary to go out into the open" (197). The teenagers who seek shelter there are forced to "Stay in line!" (209) at all times. Moreover, the parallels between the totalitarian nature of Christianity (Booker, *Dystopian Impulse* 30), as evident in the notion of the human tithe, and the functioning of dystopian regimes are seen even in the Graveyard: "The Admiral has a list of his ten supreme rules, posted in each and every plane where kids live and work" (199). The rules set by the admiral resemble Foucault's timetables for prisoners (*Discipline and Punish* 7), but they are called among his wards "The Ten Demandments" (Shusterman, *Unwind* 199), echoing the Biblical Ten Commandments and likening the Admiral's position to God, which is also typical for tyrannical dystopian societies and atrocities done in the name of religion (Booker, *Dystopian Impulse* 11).

The goal of all these rules, of course, is to keep the escaped Unwinds alive, otherwise they would be caught by the mainstream authorities and legally killed. Still, it is hard not to notice that in exchange for their lives, the teenagers' freedom is severely limited. To be able to stay in the Graveyard and remain protected, they have to follow the army-like lifestyle "both literally and figuratively, under his wing" (Shusterman, *Unwind* 198). This cannot help but remind the reader of Atwood's phrase "under His eye" (285) in the dystopian theocracy of *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985). The organisation and functioning of the Graveyard thus confirm Foucault's view of modern societies as prisons (Booker, *Dystopian Literature* 23), where the apparent division between prisons and the rest of the society is, in fact, not easily recognisable. The Unwinds are respected in the Graveyard because "SURVIVING HAS EARNED [THEM] THE RIGHT TO BE RESPECTED" (Shusterman, *Unwind* 197).[82] However, the Admiral also states "YOUR LIFE IS MY GIFT TO YOU. TREAT IT LIKE ONE" (198), which instructs the adolescents to either follow his rules or risk death. They are openly discouraged from rebelling against the niche social order because "TEENAGE REBELLION IS FOR SUBURBAN SCHOOLCHILDREN" and they should "GET OVER IT" (199). The freedom from state-imposed death which young adults gain

[82] All capital letters in the given quotes are used in the original.

in the Graveyard is only secured if they are willing to commit their lives to following the (biopolitical) rules.

More to the point, the strict organisation and the need for utility are recognised by teenage inhabitants of the so-called sanctuary. In return for the "gift" of their lives, the Unwinds must provide some kind of value in exchange and contribute to the Graveyard's "power structure" (Shusterman, *Unwind* 217). As a consequence, the young adults are the ones who do all "[t]he real work" (198) in this place. Evoking once again Foucault's view of schools, armies, and hospitals as governed by the same set of rules as prisons (*History of Sexuality* 140), "[t]he kids are grouped in teams best suited for their jobs, their ages, and their personal needs" (Shusterman, *Unwind* 199). That their lives and bodies are being not only saved, but also comprehensively shaped by the social discourse is visible through the figure of their leader. The Admiral is said to have earned his position of authority due to a "lifetime of experience molding military boeufs into a coherent fighting force has prepared the Admiral for creating a functional society out of angry, troubled kids" (199). It follows that the teenagers run away to save their own lives from the unjust governmental law, but they are willing to oblige severe control and a restricted lifestyle, which will "mold" them in order to survive. As Risa, one of the three protagonists, believes: "The Admiral was an odd bird, but he'd done something no one else had been able to do for her since she'd left StaHo. He'd given her back her right to exist" (202). Put simply, without obeying the strict rules, the young adults would die, and they know it. The strict rules and control of their bodies are, therefore, willingly accepted in exchange for survival, which makes the biopolitical regime at the Graveyard a benevolent, life-preserving one.

The army-like place that ensures the Unwinds' survival also coincides with the notion of the Panopticon. The teenagers note that "there are video feeds from the meeting canopy, just as there are feed all over the yard, so everyone knows he's watching. Whether or not every camera is constantly monitored, no one knows, but the potential for being seen is always there" (Shusterman, *Unwind* 204–05). This is an obvious reference to Foucault's potential for monitoring, which instils the internal mechanisms of self-regulation and adherence to the rules. The exchange of freedom from death for usefulness is also notable in the fact that the adolescents in the Graveyard are expected to work with no pay: "Amp doesn't let them know the salary, because there is none. The Admiral gets paid, though" (205). Connor is the one who sees through that: "Work call infuriates Connor. He never puts his hand up, even if it's something he might actually want to do. 'The

Admiral is using us . . . Don't you see that?'" (Shusterman, *Unwind* 205). Indeed, the reply "I'd rather be used whole than in pieces" (205), proves that the young adults are aware of the fact that their body is used in exchange for ensuring survival in this niche society that protects them from the hostile mainstream society:

> "This place isn't a refuge, it's a slave market. Why doesn't anyone see that?"
> "Who says they don't see it? It's just that unwinding makes slavery look good. It's always the lesser of two evils."
> "I don't see why there have to be any evils at all." (206)

Likewise, in accordance with the thesis of this dissertation that the violence and (ab)use of bodies in contemporary dystopian societies become not only the means to keep the (young adult) citizens under control, but also a means which ensures their survival, the Graveyard's elaborate system of control includes violence. The violence represented by the mainstream unwinding practice is supposed to offer a clear-cut distinction between the two parts of society, the one that does not let the adolescents survive and the other side which does. Only, this is not the case. Explicit violence is present in the niche society as well, and it is justified as a means of survival and a necessary method of protection among the designated Unwinds.

In mainstream society, Connor is forced to do many violent things to other people in order to survive. He causes a car crash that kills the driver of a bus and leaves many people injured; he kidnaps Lev (Shusterman, *Unwind* 208), and shoots a Juvey-cop with his own weapon used for tranquilising runaway Unwinds (261). Based on all this, Connor is deemed "a celebrity" and "the king of the Unwinds" (270, 271) at the Graveyard. His confrontations with the Admiral help Connor to elevate his position further in the Graveyard's ruling hierarchy. As the Admiral says to him: "[T]here's no question that you're a loose cannon, but more often than not you're aimed in the right direction . . . So even [when you're fighting], you're fixing things" (Shusterman, *Unwind* 212). While Connor sees himself changing and becoming calmer, the violence is still present and even desirable. The key pact that the teenager makes with the Admiral, whom he initially distrusts, is only reached after a threat of violence. When Connor is called to join the Admiral in his private abandoned jet, the adult welcomes him with a gun in his hand, hinting at what can happen to him if he disobeys. Connor is distrustful of the man's intentions and authority at first, so their

negotiation is stilted and leads nowhere. Only after Connor confronts the Admiral for being "a slave dealer" (Shusterman, *Unwind* 213) in the Graveyard and the user of the set of teeth of an unwound individual, both of which the Admiral honestly disproves, do they reach an agreement and Connor starts trusting the man's authority. Namely, "[i]n spite of the Admiral's tone of voice, he feels less and less intimidated by him" (214). In the second instalment, *UnWholly* (2012), when Connor becomes in charge of the Graveyard, he also resorts to kidnapping and violence to liberate the designated Unwinds from their families (71–80). Thus, even in the supposed refuge from the violent mainstream society, authority and respect are commanded by violence.

Moreover, the protagonist(s)' journey actually comprises a series of acts of counter-violence. Connor's reunion with Lev, who, under the influence of the ideology, did not want to escape his unwinding at first, is also marked by violence, which, paradoxically, allows their friendship to progress. Connor punches Lev as soon as he sees him again for betraying them before the authorities because "[i]t's the only thing that will ever make things right between him and Lev" (Shusterman, *Unwind* 209). The violent act helps reunite the three protagonists since Risa is the one in charge of medical assistance at the Graveyard. Thus, Connor instructs Lev: "C'mon – I'll take you over to the medical jet. I know someone who'll take care of that eye" (209). Soon after, Lev's departure from the brainwashed tithe, who used to be unable to survive on his own, is portrayed through his threat of violent retribution to Connor if he hits him again:

> "I hit you because I owed that to you."
> "I know. I deserved it, and so it's okay," says Lev. "But don't you *ever* hit me again, or you'll regret it."
> "I'll hit you," says Connor, "if you deserve it."
> . . .
> "Fair enough." (Shusterman, *Unwind* 210)

Therefore, violence becomes justified and a *modus operandi* in this society, which the teenagers accept, engaging in a violent rebellion and responding to violent countermeasures. Furthermore, Connor stops the righteous angry mob at the Graveyard so that he "grabs a metal pole and smashes it against the wing over and over" while yelling, "You've destroyed everything! . . . You should all be unwound, every single one of you! YOU SHOULD ALL BE UNWOUND!" (251–52). As

Seelinger Trites claims, the objectification of their bodies causes teenagers "to perpetrate acts of violence against the Self or Other" (xi).

Indeed, the part of the novel which most supports the thesis of this dissertation, that the treatment of individuals' bodies in contemporary (young adult) dystopias exhibits much more explicit instances of violence than in earlier dystopias, is the self-destruction of young adults. Just as Unwinds are ready to be violent to each other in order to escape unwinding, they are also ready to be violent to themselves. Since their own body is their only source of power – "Roland doesn't have a weapon, he doesn't need one. He's his own weapon" (Shusterman, *Unwind* 278) – the only way in which the young adults can oppose the system is to self-destruct. The acts of explicit violence that the teenagers commit against themselves are seen as better, although they have the exact same result as the ones done by the government, because the teenagers opt to commit them themselves. In other words, self-harm and death by suicide become desirable as a means of rebellion in this contemporary young adult dystopia.[83] To go against the system, the adolescents are ready to self-mutilate and risk dying on their own terms. The proneness of Shusterman's teenagers to self-harm and death once again corresponds to the Freudian concept of death drive. The Thanatotic desire toward destruction (*Beyond the Pleasure Principle* 44) is evident in the teenagers' celebration of the prospect of self-mutilation. The self-mutilation of the body is seen as a welcome method of asserting their own will against the system, and although the body does not *die*, it becomes useless – and therefore dead – to the regime. For instance, a teenager announces that he intends to jump off a roof if the authorities threaten to catch and unwind him. Apart from risking death anyway, his hope is to "save" himself by becoming disabled: "'I'll sure get busted up real bad. See, they can't unwind you like that; they have to wait until you heal. By then I'll be eighteen and they will be *screwed*!' He high-fives the drummer, and they laugh" (Shusterman, *Unwind* 275). Likewise, when Risa is left handicapped from the waist down at the end of the *Unwind*, her disability represents for her a far better choice because she knows it will save her from being unwound by the state. Hence, when Connor states that he is sorry for what happened

[83] Suicide is also present at the end of Veronica Roth's young adult dystopia *Divergent*, where the protagonist comes to terms that it is the best course of action, although according to the genre conventions, there should be hope for the teenage protagonist (Fitzsimmons 6). Namely, the purpose of young adult literature, including dystopia, is to show teenagers navigating the complex contemporaneity, and not resorting to death while they are still young and able to influence the world around them for the better. Texts like *Unwind* break these conventions offering a bleak view of society.

to her, she consoles him: "'Don't be!' . . . This way I get to stay whole.' She smiles at him triumphantly. 'So you're not the only one who beat the system!'" (Shusterman, *Unwind* 321).

Moreover, the Unwinds are willing to exchange death at the hands of the system for a more violent death or disabling injury on their own terms: "Because he'd rather be killed with a furious hand than dismembered with cool indifference" (278). The death drive is especially evident in the case of the teenage Starkey, the antagonist who first appears in *UnWholly* and who pleads with Connor, "Kill me, Connor. I want you to. I *need* you to" (*UnDivided* 263, emphasis in the original), just before he undergoes the unwinding procedure. Connor eventually agrees to kill Starkey, and his merciful murder[84] is viewed by Starkey as a more desirable choice than the state-imposed death through unwinding.

An extreme case of self-inflicted violence and death drive outside the mainstream society in *Unwind Dystology* is found with the Clappers. A fraction of designated Unwinds, including the former tithe Lev, use undetectable chemicals to turn their blood into an explosive and perform a ritual suicide by clapping their hands (Shusterman, *UnSouled* 16). By blowing themselves up at harvest camps, in order to, according to their view, beat the unwinding system, the Clappers self-destruct by destroying their bodies forever. They also commit murder or cause mutilation of teenagers or other people who find themselves in the vicinity, making them collateral victims of the Clappers' violent rebellion against the system. Even Lev, the Clapper who did not clap, ruined his body by introducing explosive chemicals to it, which damaged his organs enough to "make them useless to anybody but [him]" (*UnWholly* 173). This has also stunted his growth and physical development, making him "perpetually trapped at the age of thirteen" (173). However, Lev is happy with his self-inflicted impaired body because, in his opinion, it is still better than being unwound by the state (174). Consequently, in this young adult dystopia, suicide and death are more desirable than dying at the hands of the system, which makes for an explicit and violent fusion of the Freudian death drive and the Foucauldian spectacles of violence. In that sense, contemporary dystopias and young adult dystopias prove more violent than classic dystopias.

In conclusion, Neal Shusterman's *Unwind Dystology* (2007–14) shows that in contemporary dystopian regimes, which rely on biopolitical postulates, violence and capital punishment are not

[84] It is impossible not to think of current discussions on euthanasia and differing law regulations related to it that reveal different attitudes to (the ill) body, its ownership, and biopolitical measures enforced to regulate these issues (see, for example, Picón-Jaimes et al. 2022).

entirely eliminated. Instead, violence permeates society, both the mainstream one and the niche faction outside of it. Teenagers who do not conform to the rules of society are ostracised and punished by death, but through their state-ordered death, they are simultaneously made useful. The rest of the society profits from the organs obtained by unwinding, tying the biopolitical principles of this dystopian society with capitalism. The dystopian practice of unwinding is presented as a utopian enterprise to protect the general society from volatile teenagers and to improve the health of conforming citizens, but the reasons for unwinding are often based on capitalist profit. The methods that Shusterman's young adults use to rebel against and "beat the system" (*Unwind* 321) are often just as violent and self-destructive as the abuse inflicted on them by the state. Hence, this contemporary dystopia aligns with the thesis of this dissertation by showing that bodies are mutilated and killed either by the state or by the individuals themselves as a method of rebellion, making self-mutilation and suicide desirable among Shusterman's teenagers.

4.4. Lauren DeStefano's *The Chemical Garden*: Girls as Commodities for Procreation and Scientific Experimentation

In line with the view that the human body is central to young adult dystopias because they "speculate about the future developments of current attitudes to the human body . . . [and] 'cultural inscriptions' with which our bodies are 'formed'" (Maruo-Schröder 51), *The Chemical Garden* (2011–13) explores the biopolitical mechanisms that enable the abuse of bodies, mostly female, in a post-apocalyptic future. Evidently inspired by Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), DeStefano's young adult dystopia portrays the socially condoned polygamy that turns teenage girls into "servant[s] and . . . unwilling bride[s]" (*Wither* 352) used for reproduction. Permeated by the fear of scientific and technological overdevelopment, which is a staple of the dystopian genre emphasised in young adult dystopias (Panaou 73), *The Chemical* Garden portrays the explicit abuse through commodification and scientific experimentation on mainly female bodies under the pretence of the improvement of life quality for the general society. This subchapter will show the abuse of female bodies with the help of Foucauldian biopolitical theory on docility, utility, and sexuality, as well as through the Freudian theory of the death instinct, since death is perceived as the only, and at times even preferable, alternative to the compulsory genetic alteration of girls' bodies in this contemporary young adult dystopia.

Throughout *The Chemical Garden* series, which consists of the novels *Wither*, *Fever*, and *Sever*, the abuse of human bodies is justified as a means of protecting society as a whole. Before the protagonist's, Rhine Ellery's, time, when global wars and diseases caused by the excessive technologisation of life were destroying the world population, people were "soothed . . . with promises of protection, promises that . . . could separate them from such devastation" (DeStefano, *Sever* 245). These promises included the elimination of toxic apparatuses and practices such as signal towers and tanning booths, as well as chemicals being released into the water, yet these promises were mostly founded on a different manipulation of the bodies, that is, genetic engineering. Using the same advanced science and technology, the society went on to create "the perfect generation of children that would be less susceptible to common bacteria" (246). Advanced technology has also made it possible for scientists to "eradicate cancer and other genetic ailments entirely" (247), granting people a long and healthy lifespan. However, once the members of this genetically impervious "first generation" (DeStefano, *Wither* 8) reached maturity, a fatal flaw in their engineering was discovered. Both the bodies of "their children, and their children's children" (9) turned out to be infected with a virus that causes all of them to die at a very young age: men at twenty-five and women at twenty (8). This unforeseen development has caused the society to divide itself into two factions: "pro-naturalism" (178), whose proponents believe that the world is coming to an end because of the abuse of science and technology and that everyone should die, and "pro-science" supporters (*Wither* 178), who believe that the virus can be cured if invasive genetic experimentation on human bodies continues. Both factions can be seen resorting to violence, mutilation, and murder while professing to protect the society at large.

Rowan, the protagonist's twin brother, embodies the pro-naturalists by regularly bombing hospitals and research centres in which experiments on people are conducted in order to find a cure. In doing so, Rowan claims that he is only trying to protect people from unnecessary suffering that research and experimentation bring since they have not resulted in the cure for the lethal virus: "[P]eople die every day in experiments. . . . the world has fallen apart hoping for answers that won't come. All of these research labs – they've been recycling the same experiments for years" (DeStefano, *Sever* 236). Only, the bombings Rowan and other pro-naturalists resort to are likewise killing people, both the possibly unethical researchers and innocents in and around the research centres at the time of the attack. Rowan and Rhine's late parents, who had been researchers, have also died in one such attack (DeStefano, *Wither* 178). The bombings and the many attacks of pro-

naturalist "terrorists" (*Sever* 130) before Rowan represent what Foucault describes as a public spectacle of violence (*Discipline and Punish* 7). In one particular bombing, which is broadcast on national television, Rowan detonates a research centre in front of a huge crowd of people, and his act of violence is celebrated by them going "absolutely wild . . . with applause," and "chanting [his name] with passion" (DeStefano, *Sever* 224). Rowan justifies his acts of violence that injure and kill people by presenting them as a means of protection from the overly technologised world, which sees human lives and bodies as commodities: "They are preventing more generations of suffering. He says that destroying these laboratories will end fruitless human experimentation" (223).

Yet, Rowan is actually a pawn of Rhine's father-in-law, Vaughn Ashby, who, on the other hand, embodies the biopolitical, pro-science approach. Vaughn's biopolitical activities that enable the explicit abuse of mostly female bodies are supported by the state in the general wish to ensure procreation as early as possible.[85] Although a doctor and a scientist, Vaughn condones bombings of public research centres and hospitals while conducting experiments in the basement of his mansion. When called out for this hypocrisy by Rhine at the end of the series, Rowan justifies the biopolitical mechanism of instilling control into people: "'Let me tell you about people . . . They need to be lulled into compliance because they'll only rebel against it if they're forced. Of course I don't believe this research is pointless – not all of it, anyway" (DeStefano, *Sever* 235). This showcases the dystopian lack of "need for mass brutality" (Claeys, "The Origins of Dystopia" 115) when effective biopolitical mechanisms are in place. Even though the pro-nature activists cause suffering, mutilation, and killing of people and are condemned because of it, the pro-science activists – embodied by Vaughn and his experiments – cause all these things in equal, if not worse, measure. Yet, these biopolitical experiments are presented as a necessity which will lead to a cure. While Vaughn's experimentation eventually does result in the discovery of a cure, his exploitation of girls' bodies for the purpose of experimentation testifies to the fact that his biopolitical mechanisms, and in turn, those of the society on the whole, are deeply unethical and more focused on the subjugation and abuse of female bodies than on bettering the society. The institution of

[85] That the practice of forceful "gathering" of girls to become brides is a widely-accepted practice and not a singular display of Vaughn's cruelty is confirmed in *Fever*, the second instalment of the series, when Rhine manages to run away from the Ashby manor and encounters a circus-turned-brothel for girls who were not chosen as suitable brides. Rhine notes that the circus is "a prostitution den of unwanted girls that Gatherers couldn't sell to House Governors, or who simply had nowhere else to go" (9). Vaughn's kidnapping of and experimentation on girls is a biopolitical practice engaged in by all the rich and powerful men in this society.

marriage is equally *abused* as it becomes a sphere for exploitation of and experimentation on women, and as such, it serves a biopolitical function.

First and foremost, Vaughn's experiments underpin the social practice of polygamous teenage marriages. By manipulating his son Linden into marrying several unwilling young women in order to obtain grandchildren, Vaughn is actually trying to procure subjects, rather than family, and uses his daughters-in-law for scientific experiments. As Rhine notes in *Wither*, all the wives are only "bodies for Vaughn to dissect" (DeStefano, *Wither* 278). In this way, Vaughn combines the "long-standing issues and traditional patterns" (Maruo-Schröder 48), which allow for the exploitation of female bodies for the purpose of breeding, with the abuse of the bodies through their modification and mutilation (51) for biopolitical purposes. Both the treatment of women as "breeding machines" (DeStefano, *Sever* 69) and as "research fodder" (85) include explicit violence and suffering.

To illustrate, in order to be exploited for childbearing, the girls are abducted from the streets or their homes by "the Gatherers" (DeStefano, *Wither* 57). Taken in dozens, the girls are blindfolded, drugged with gas, and driven in vans to a solitary spot, where their future husbands select only a few of them to force into polygamous marriages. The rejected girls are never returned home, but are murdered by the abductors. Such treatment of women shows that they are only viewed as breeding material, not individuals. As Rhine remembers her captivity throughout the series: "I still hear the gunshots in my nightmares. I'm still haunted by the lost stare in Jenna's eyes when she thought of her sisters" (*Sever* 241). Jenna is another victim of the cruel social practice and Rhine's "sister-wife" (*Wither* 59), whose real-life sisters were killed after Linden rejected them as his future wives. Hence, in the dystopian world of *The Chemical Garden*, the only alternative for the girls who are not chosen to become brides is to die a violent death and be left "on the sides of roads, rotting" (*Wither* 2). Although both young men and women are condemned to premature death due to the virus, the choice between becoming a wife and birthing children or dying a violent death testifies to the inferior position of women and them being relegated to only a body, "primarily a reproductive body" (King 3). Likewise, the difference in the ages when men and women succumb to the virus – with women being five years younger – echoes the biological fact that women have a shorter fertility period, which is then transferred to the social sphere and used for devaluing women as they grow older since reproduction is seen as their prime useful trait. Conversely, men are valued for their reproductive and other abilities much longer.

The attitude that the world is a dangerous place for girls and that they cannot ensure a livelihood outside of marriage can also be witnessed in Rhine's life before she is forced to become one of Linden's wives, but also after she manages to escape Vaughn's mansion for a short while. Before the abduction, while still living with her brother Rowan, Rhine was forced to use guns to protect herself from burglars and the Gatherers, and although they had to earn their livelihood in some way, Rowan always prohibited Rhine from leaving the house alone for fear of her being abducted and either killed or trapped in a polygamous marriage (DeStefano, *Wither* 11). Indeed, Rhine was abducted while searching for a job to help sustain herself and her brother. Later, after being forced to marry and managing to escape, Rhine is captured by Madame, an older woman who runs a brothel-like carnival, and exploited in a form of voyeuristic prostitution (*Fever* 9–10). Namely, Rhine's exploitation does not entail sexual relations, but "Madame's perverse displays" (263) in which Rhine kisses Gabriel in front of an audience.[86] Nevertheless, the treatment of other women in Madame's carnival affirms the view of women as bodies to be used for sex and breeding: "She turns them into prostitutes and makes it so they can't leave. And if the girls have babies, that's a good thing for her because she can use them like slaves" (*Sever* 181). Rhine's sister-wife Jenna is likewise said to have used her body for prostitution to survive. As she says, "[H]ow else could girls like us get by?" (*Wither* 141). Hence, in DeStefano's young adult dystopia, unmarried women are treated as prostitutes or slaves for the benefit of their captor or owner, but once they are married, their bodies are abused in even crueller ways for the ostensible good of the whole race.

To start with, although girls are necessary for the propagation of the human race, they are treated as replaceable objects to be bought and used at (rich) men's leisure: "Most Governors have at least three wives, sometimes seven – one for every day of the week" (DeStefano, *Wither* 67). The girls are forced into becoming wives and bearing children, which they "never wanted" (26). Such abuse of the female body for its biological function is made vivid through the character of Cecily, another sister-wife of Rhine's, who is only thirteen years old. Cecily's docility is ensured primarily because she is an orphan, and she would have died of hunger as many orphans did in front of people's houses while trying to break in and find food (*Wither* 29), but also because Cecily is so young and unequipped to understand what is truly asked of her. Upon being made to marry Linden, Cecily reads books on pregnancy and childcare, but her lack of understanding is evident in the frequent

[86] Gabriel is a teenage servant at Vaughn Ashby's manor, whom Rhine falls in love with while there, and who helps her run away.

instances when she asks Rhine to help her pronounce unfamiliar words. These words are mostly connected to the girls' reproductive exploitation, such as "amniocentesis" and "gestation" (*Wither* 84, 193). Later in the narrative, when Cecily becomes pregnant, her frail thirteen-year-old body barely survives the pregnancy and the birth of the baby, only for her to soon become pregnant again. Her second pregnancy ends in a miscarriage and almost kills her, causing the matured Cecily to conclude at the end of the series: "I was never anything but an incubator for his [Vaughn's] grandson" (*Sever* 342).

Forcing Cecily to become pregnant again despite the fact that it is detrimental to her thirteen-year-old body is revealed as Vaughn's doing when Linden, Vaughn's son and Cecily's husband, admits upon her miscarriage: "We shouldn't have tried for another baby so soon. My father said it would be okay, but I should have seen it was too much for her" (*Sever* 83). Although this indicates that Linden's father abuses him too, by manipulating Linden into exploiting the young girls' immaturity and powerlessness and raping them, the explicit (sexual) abuse is directed at the female body. Moreover, the father's control over the son's sexual activities echoes Foucauldian ideas of sexuality being administered – repressed or encouraged – in line with the ideology's demands (*History of Sexuality* 24, 140). In this way, DeStefano's young adult dystopia portrays an even worse treatment of the female body than was the case in earlier dystopias. Although the exploitation of women as "two-legged wombs" (Atwood 212) appears in *The Handmaid's Tale*, too, the women are at least of a childbearing age and their bodies are capable of carrying and delivering babies without risking their lives. Here, the abuse starts at thirteen, with a tendency to include even younger girls. As the ten-year-old Deirdre, one of Vaughn's youngest victims warns Rhine, "Soon he'll try artificial insemination . . . From what I understand, the Housemaster thinks he's found a way to speed up fertility and gestation, so girls can bear children before natural puberty" (DeStefano, *Fever* 290). Therefore, the biopolitical character of women's abuse arises from the fact that they are controlled and subjugated for the ostensible purpose of sustaining the survival of society as a whole by ensuring progeny. The unquestionable immorality of such a practice is made worse by the fact that the powers that be turn to exploiting and abusing children as well.

Furthermore, even though Cecily is "pampered" during her pregnancy and, together with Rhine and Jenna, fed extravagant meals, dressed and bathed by personal maids (*Wither* 35), *The Chemical Garden* makes it clear that their "lavish prison" (168) is a prison nevertheless. The young wives

are placed under house arrest, and their movements are severely restricted. At first, they are locked in their rooms and punished for their transgression if they manage to sneak out in the hallway (DeStefano, *Wither* 19). Once they are allowed to leave their room, they can only move around the "wives' floor" (60), with all windows firmly locked. The wives are not allowed to visit the garden unless they are chaperoned by the "Housemaster" or "Governor" (49, 16), that are Vaughn and Linden, and they are never allowed to leave the mansion unless their status is that of "the first wife" (16). After Rose, Linden's first wife, dies upon turning "the lethal age" of twenty (2), Rhine becomes the first wife and obtains an elevator key from her husband, granting her a higher level of freedom. Still, this does not allow her to move around the house whenever and wherever she wants (249). Toward the end of the series, Rhine realises that her semblance of freedom, both inside and outside of the mansion, was only an illusion because Vaughn has implanted trackers into the legs of all Linden's wives (*Sever* 29), which allows for the surveillance of their every movement and evokes the ideas of both Panopticon (Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 200) and prison (*History of Sexuality* 141).

Despite the fact that the status of the first wife grants certain freedoms and a better social position, it still reveals the treatment of girls as commodities and trophies. In Angela King's words, the society construes women as "feeble and passive, literally a receptacle for the desires of the male and incubator of his offspring" (King 31). In *The Chemical Garden*, the rich husbands show off their beautiful, young, first wives at lavish parties broadcast on national television, but the reality of being a wife is anything but privileged. Namely, the women are hostages forced to display fake affection for their captors – husbands. As Rhine asserts at one such party: "None of the wives mention the security guards by the door, who will probably tackle us to the ground if we try to leave without our husbands" (DeStefano, *Wither* 217). Indeed, the husbands have obtained their wives by means of kidnapping and buying, rather than courting, and they continuously treat women as "object[s] to be looked at, used, and also discarded" (Ludwig and Maruo-Schröder 18).

Even while the world is crumbling down, women must play a socially condoned role. As Linden warns Rhine before their first public outing: "Smile. Look interested. Pretend to drink. *And shine like a star*" (DeStefano, *Wither* 213). Granted, he means that she should act in a docile manner that will allow men to evaluate her physical qualities and attractiveness. In this, Foucault's notion of docility and utility (*Discipline and Punish* 25) are upgraded by feminist criticism to explain the social construing of women as primarily reproductive bodies (King 30–31). The main thing Rhine

as a wife is valued for is her utility, that is, the ability to birth a baby: "They call me sweetheart and honey and ask when I'm going to have a baby of my own" (*Wither* 217). In addition, Linden warns Rhine that that men will want to talk to her and kiss her hand, and that she must let them (215). This indeed happens, and many men compliment Linden based on Rhine's physical attributes, specifically, her eyes: "Better keep this one close to you. Don't know where she comes from, but I bet there's not another like her" (218). They were not impressed by Rhine's conversation or other skills, only by her body. The irony, besides the fact that the man's recognition of Rhine's uniqueness is based on her pretty body, is that Rhine actually feels "like a replacement" for Linden's first wife, Rose (213), who was also a blonde with fair skin and light eyes. The notion of Rhine's personality – the possibility that she is an individual with feelings and a mind of her own – is non-existent because, like any woman, she is dispensable. Her replaceability is confirmed when another man, Vaughn's brother Reed, insists on calling Rhine "Rose," because she looks just like her (*Sever* 18). Therefore, the only purpose of a live woman in this young adult dystopia is to be a pretty and docile wife who will give birth to babies.

The biopolitical, "scrutinizing gaze of the human sciences" (King 31) that is more focused on women than on men is also notable in DeStefano's young dystopia. Namely, Rhine's most distinct physical attributes, her "heterochromatic eyes" (*Wither* 64), are what caused Linden and Vaughn to select her among a dozen girls they first abducted, making her an "investment" for which her owners "paid good money" (63). Linden bought Rhine for her eyes to be his pretty plaything, and Vaughn recognised them as a sign that Rhine is one in a set of twins, together with Rowan, created with a special purpose of experimentation. As both their parents were doctors and geneticists themselves, they engaged in *in vitro* fertilisation to obtain twins whose genetic engineering would allow them to survive ailments which kill others and thus make them more resilient to experimentation (*Sever* 280). This means that the protagonists' bodies were abused even prior to birth by their own parents; in fact, the parents have foreseen that Rhine and Rowan's bodies will be experimented on. It follows that Vaughn's abusive experimentation is simply a continuation of the systematic experimentation and torture performed on bodies; indeed, the body is created in this dystopian society in order to be abused.

Yet, Vaughn's scientific experimentation in search of the cure is the most violent abuse of the female body portrayed in this contemporary young adult dystopia. The "most invasive experiments" (*Sever* 261) to which Rhine is subjected in Vaughn's basement are performed in

secret, in line with the postulates of biopolitics (Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 9), just as those he performs on her two sister-wives, Rose and Jenna, and many other female victims. Additionally, such biopolitical abuse of female bodies is not devoid of pain and suffering. Specifically, Rhine is drugged and tortured in Vaughan's basement in the name of science. Specifically, she is restrained and stuck with "needles in [her] eyes" (DeStefano, *Sever* 233) during his experiments in search of a cure. It is only Rhine's impervious genetically engineered body that allows her to survive the abuse of medical experimentation on it, while all the other girls who are subjected to it eventually die. In this, the novel exposes the ambiguous nature of scientific experiments on people. Even when experimentation is conducted for the greater good, it always seems to occur on the very border between the ethical and unethical, and dystopian novels foreground the latter, prompting the readers to question both fictional and existing practices.

One of those girls who die due to abuse performed in the name of science is Rose, Linden's first wife. Rose is first forced to conceive a child by Vaughn, although she opposed the notion because she did not want the baby to be experimented on (DeStefano, *Wither* 201), which eventually happens. After childbirth, Vaughn informed Rose that she had given birth to a stillborn, but both she and a servant had heard the baby's cries and knew that the baby was alive (202). Significantly, Rose's baby was a girl, and, testifying to the fact that it is mainly the female body that is abused in this young adult dystopia, she is murdered by Vaughn to be experimented on. Vaughn is shown dissecting mainly women: Rose, her daughter, Rhine, Rhine's servant Deirdre, and Jenna. The biopolitical notion of (female) docility and utility is employed here even in death because girls' bodies are not only made utile to society for procreation but also experimentation. So, on the one hand, Vaughn embodies a dystopian strand of utilitarianism. As Rhine asserts, "Vaughn is all about finding a use for things, people, bodies – nothing is wasted" (*Wither* 233). On the other hand, he embodies the notion of sexist science, that is, "men's malevolent interest in [the female] body . . . an object of science and/or sex, stripped of personal agency" (Matek 145). Indeed, according to Angela King, "woman . . . is inferior but also unknowable, enigmatic and disquieting. She represents that which must be investigated and dissected until her secrets are relinquished. Consequently, the female body has been subjected to the scrutinizing gaze of the human sciences far more than the male" (3). By murdering them, Vaughn turns girls into bodies to be dissected and dominated even in death, and, as Matek establishes in her reading of *Venus*,

the "chilling indifference" of scientists toward women's exploitation, experimentation, and death proves that "they do not perceive [a woman] as a human being" (136).

The commodification of girls is confirmed by their ability to be replaced once they die: "Our bedrooms will be filled with new girls after we're dead and gone" (DeStefano, *Wither* 299). In fact, some girls even desire death, which echoes the Freudian theory of the death instinct (*Beyond the Pleasure Principle* 56). A case in point is Jenna, who wants to die and join her murdered sisters in death instead of living in a polygamous marriage. In a conversation with Rhine, Jenna refers to death as something she's always wanted. While the sister-wives are watching a soap opera, whose actors change all the time because they die at twenty and twenty-five, Jenna romanticises death: "He's just been given a death sentence . . . what better time to make a move on the love of his life?" (DeStefano, *Wither* 244), and she accepts its fast approach. As Rhine concludes, "[e]ven if her body becomes one of Vaughn's experiments, she doesn't care" (250). Yet, even in death, female beauty is necessary. While dying a painful death, which causes her to cough blood and bleed from the bruises all over her body, making her look and smell like she is "rotting from the inside out," Jenna "doesn't want anyone to witness her dying in such a hideous way" (305). Her death is revealed to be a murder performed by Vaughn, because the girl's inability to bear a child prevented her from fulfilling her procreation function. Again, she is seen as an object, a body, rather than a person. Moreover, Vaughn justifies Jenna's murder both by utilizing her dead body in experimentation and by saying: "Before any of you were married to my son, you underwent a physical examination, and that's when I realized that she wasn't perfect on the inside as she was on the outside" (*Sever* 345). Death instinct is also notable on a larger scale in *The Chemical Garden*. The pro-naturalists are said to be at peace with the notion of dying and the human race becoming extinct: "There are people out in that world who don't want an antidote. People who think the world is ending and it's best to let the human race die out. And they'll kill those who try to save us" (*Wither* 178). They believe that it is only "natural to let the human race end" (178).

In conclusion, Lauren DeStefano's *The Chemical Garden* is a contemporary young adult dystopia that explores the commodification of bodies, mostly female ones, in the post-apocalyptic future in which a virus kills all women at the age of twenty and men at the age of twenty-five as a result of flawed genetic engineering. Using the lack of time for procreation and the imminent extinction of the human race as a biopolitical excuse, society condones horrific abuse of young girls by kidnapping and forcing them into polygamous marriages or by murdering them if they are

not chosen as wives fit for procreation. Unlike in *The Handmaid's Tale*, where the exploitation of female bodies with the aim of childbearing is relegated to adult women, DeStefano's young adult dystopia shows girls as young as thirteen exploited and abused by rape, involuntary IVF, multiple pregnancies and childbirths. The biopolitical aspect of the abuse of female bodies is evident in its justification. The society emphasizes the need for female utility by procreation and by otherwise remaining docile subjects to their husband and other men. What makes the abuse of the female bodies in this contemporary young adult dystopia worse than in canonical dystopias is that female bodies are mistreated not only in life, but also in death. The surveillance and control to which girls are exposed during their involuntary marriages continue in the form of scientific exploration with the aim of finding a cure for the virus. Namely, once a wife dies or is murdered for not being docile, her body is used for scientific experimentation. In this way, DeStefano's dystopia reveals the biopolitical mechanisms disguised as necessary scientific actions, which relegate women to wombs to be exploited by men, even at the expense of their (young) lives.

5. CONCLUSION

Dystopias have been so frequently published and/or filmed in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries that they have become a popular culture phenomenon present on every bookstore shelves and both film and TV screens. Suffused with violence, dystopian visions of the future most often portray as the target of this violence the body of an individual, exposed to the encroaching effects of ever-increasing developments in science and technology, mixed with the capitalist commodification of human bodies. The aim of this dissertation has been to analyse seventeen contemporary dystopian novels, six for adults and eleven for young adults (one trilogy and two tetralogies), in order to show that their treatment of individuals' bodies is more violent and explicit than in the early, canonical dystopias, such as Zamyatin's *We*, Huxley's *Brave New World*, and Orwell's *1984*.

The theoretical framework used for the analysis of contemporary dystopias relies mainly on Foucault's biopower, or the shift from the death-oriented toward the life-oriented display of power in contemporary societies. The aim has been to show that, despite Foucault's claims on the disappearance of the spectacle of violence and the tortured or mutilated body of the condemned, which was observed in early dystopias (Booker, *Dystopian Impulse* 74; Claeys "The Origins of Dystopia" 115; Walsh 98), contemporary dystopias still depict mutilations and violent deaths of the body. However, in line with the Foucauldian definition of biopower as the positive force that seeks to monitor and control human life in its most minute details by creating docile bodies, all instances of torture, mutilation, and killing of protagonists are presented as positive, even desirable aims toward which they should strive and which enable the protection and welfare of society. This attitude towards death, in which it becomes a form of utility as opposed to being a form of punishment in early dystopias, was merged with Sigmund Freud's theory of the death instinct, according to which individuals strive to return to a peaceful state that precedes birth and is attained by death. Additionally, the Foucauldian view of sexuality as a discourse construed and administered by society was used together with the Freudian notion of sexual repression to show how contemporary dystopian societies both repress and encourage sexuality in order to manipulate and abuse individuals.

Although feminist reading was not the primary theoretical approach in this dissertation, the interpretations of texts that represent the abuse of female bodies specifically included feminist observations on the biopolitical mechanisms enabling docility and reproductive exploitation of

women. In connection to that, Arendt's views on power and violence as antithetical forces were used to show that, although men are historically linked to violence more than women based on their physical superiority, power is a social construct, and in these contemporary dystopias, it still relies on the ability to perform violence. Finally, Althusser's theories on Ideological State Apparatuses and individuals as subjects were used together with Jean Baudrillard's argument on the capitalist commodification of human bodies as objects for consumption to explain the mutilation, killing, and recycling of contemporary individuals.

The analysis of the first subchapter, "J. G. Ballard's *Crash*: Car Crashes as *Spectacular* Fetishes," employs Freud's psychoanalysis and Foucault's notions of biopower and spectacle to explain the treatment of human bodies in the novel. The analysis has shown that the capitalist forces merged with biopower provide for a violent indulgence of the sexual instinct, which results in spectacular mutilation and killing of the body as a consequence of car crashes. Even though Freud's concepts of Eros and Thanatos, or life instinct and death instinct, seem more fruitful for the discussion of the technology-infused sexuality of Ballard's protagonists as an uninhibited sexual instinct, the chapter has shown that Foucault's claim on the administration of sexuality by contemporary society enables the detection of social forces that guide the protagonist to violent self-destruction while seeking pleasure in car crashes. Finally, the application of the Foucauldian spectacle of torture has shown that contemporary dystopias retain violent spectacles of tortured bodies and death, as well as that death becomes an individual's desired outcome in contemporary dystopias, unlike in early dystopias, where the focus was on longevity and death was avoided unless an individual transgressed against the regime's rules.

The second subchapter, "P. D. James's *Children of Men*: The Young's Violent Delights and the Old's Violent Ends," has also employed the notions of biopolitics and spectacle as well as that of utility. By doing so, it has shown that James's contemporary dystopia also construes the mass death of individuals as a desirable outcome. Set in a world where humans have lost the ability to procreate, the newly-established dystopian regime of England closely monitors its population and forces the aged to either commit suicide or executes them in a public ritual called the Quietus. The Foucauldian *condemned* are no longer dissidents of the regime; they are old people who are undergoing the natural and irreversible process of ageing. Additionally, the duty to procreate is limited only to able-bodied English people, while immigrants and people with any kind of physical disability are excluded from the monitoring practices. Thus, the biopolitical regime in *Children of*

Men exploits, tortures, and kills the bodies of individuals by disguising mass murder and control of the healthy population as social welfare in these dire times.

The third subchapter in the corpus of adult dystopias, David Mitchell's *Cloud Atlas*: Bodies as Food for Biopolitical Capitalism," focuses on the dystopian segment of the novel, which depicts the future corpocratic new Korea, called Nea So Copros. The chapter analyses the exploitation and abuse of cloned female servers by employing Foucault's notion of biopolitics, with an emphasis on docile bodies' utility, as well as the spectacle of torture. The analysis has shown that the biopolitical control and restriction of movement and free will among the clones correspond to biopolitical monitoring and optimisation of life forces in contemporary societies. However, the analysis has also shown that the clones are subjugated by the corpocratic system not only in life, but also in death. While the rebel clones are murdered by the system representatives in public displays of violence to serve as examples, just like in canonical dystopias, all other clones are also executed for the benefit of the system, only now in private. Thus, the ultimate form of biopolitical utility for each and every clone is dying and having their body recycled in order to produce food for other clones and *regular* humans. This points to a more violent treatment of individuals in Mitchell's contemporary dystopian sequence than of straying individuals in Huxley's and Orwell's dystopias.

The fourth subchapter, "Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*: Human Bodies as Spare Parts," also analyses the exploitation of clones through the Foucauldian lens of biopolitical docility and utility. Ishiguro's clones are systematically conditioned into becoming docile bodies and forced to maintain good health until their mid-twenties, when they are killed in order to give their vital organs to the naturally-born people they were modelled from. Although the clones' literal executions are hidden from the public and presented as a biopolitical means of bettering society, the clones are victims of the regime nevertheless. In the previous subchapter, on *Cloud Atlas*, the truth of the clones' execution at the hands of the system was kept a secret from them since Mitchell's clones were manipulated into thinking that, instead of dying, they are about to receive a reward for their good service. In *Never Let Me Go*, the clones' reward is *death*, and they are aware of it. Dying and giving their organs to their *originals* is presented as the ultimate form of the clones' biopolitical utility, their greatest achievement, once again construing death as a desirable outcome for individuals in contemporary society and evoking Freud's concept of the death drive.

The fifth subchapter, "Don DeLillo's *Zero K*: Dying Sooner is Better," likewise combines the Foucauldian concept of biopolitics and Freud's theory of the death instinct to analyse the biopolitical enterprise that allegedly helps the terminally ill and the disabled by encouraging them to undergo cryopreservation and promising them a return to life in an improved state. By analysing the psychological manipulation of human bodies prior to the process of cryopreservation and the physical mutilation during it, the subchapter reads these mechanisms as dystopian instances of the biopolitical abuse of the body. Namely, the visitors of the cryonics facility are exposed to violent, fear-mongering content, such as war reports and natural catastrophes, to urge them to undergo cryopreservation on the one hand, while on the other, their bodies are shown as decapitated, eviscerated, and their brains irrevocably severed from their bodies once they are preserved. The entire enterprise is revealed to be a ruse which takes away people's lives prematurely while claiming to protect and enhance them, again showing that contemporary dystopias construe death as a desired outcome for individuals. Even though the biopolitical treatment of the body in DeLillo's novel eliminates pain and suffering during the processes of *becoming dead*, and stops portraying it as a punishment, the effect on the body is the same – the body is mutilated, dismembered, and an individual's life is discontinued.

The sixth and last subchapter on adult dystopias analysed in this dissertation is "Naomi Alderman's *The Power*: (Wo)Men Rapists, Murderers, and Tyrants." In the novel, the newly-awakened female power of emitting electric charge from their hands disrupts the long-established convergence of biological, political, administrative, and religious postulates in favour of male supremacy. Replete with explicit violence, which simultaneously exhibits the dystopian nature of both patriarchy and the potential matriarchy, *The Power* was shown as a critique of the biopolitical manipulation of gendered dichotomies to construe certain bodies as superior to others. In other words, through depictions of explicit violence and torture spectacles in the form of beatings, executions, rapes, and mutilations perpetrated against men, Alderman has pointed to the biopolitical postulates which enable such abuse of women in patriarchal societies. Building on the Foucauldian lens of biopolitics, updated by feminist criticism, and Hannah Arendt's view of power and violence dichotomy, the subchapter has shown that the allegedly subtle biopolitical treatment of bodies, which is omnipotent in its effects on the (female) bodies, still relies on violence and the spectacle of torture. The portrayal of girls who rape, torture, and murder in Alderman's *The Power* opens up a space for what has been analysed in the next chapter of this dissertation, "The (Ab)Use

of Body in Young Adult Contemporary Anglophone Dystopia," since contemporary young adult dystopias are argued to be imbued with violence, perpetrated both against teenagers and by them (Trites xi).

The first subchapter on contemporary young adult dystopias, "Scott Westerfeld's *Uglies*: Death of the Natural Human Body," explores the abuse of teenage bodies in the form of mandatory plastic surgery that turns everyone from *uglies* to *pretties* on their sixteenth birthday. Justified as a means of eliminating wars and diseases caused by prejudice, racism, and the generally uneven distribution of socially attractive physical qualities, the surgery involves a thorough mutilation of individuals' bodies. By employing the Foucauldian theory of biopolitics and docility, the allegedly equalising social mechanism, that is, the beautification process, is revealed as a biopolitical mechanism enforced to subdue and control the population. Namely, apart from exposing teenage bodies to invasive surgery that changes their physical appearance, the procedure is devised to chemically damage their brain and make them docile. By combining physical and physiological manipulation in the form of ridiculing young, unaltered people by brainwashing them into believing they are ugly, the government makes them desire the death of their natural body. In turn, by killing their natural bodies and instincts, the government forces the transformed individuals to seek methods of clearing their fuddled minds, and these methods most often include violent spectacles and self-mutilation, such as cutting oneself or jumping from buildings. In opposition to early dystopias, which resort to either genetic engineering and psychological manipulation but without execution (*Brave New* World) or psychological torture and execution of dissidents (*We*, *1984)*, *Uglies* can be seen as more violent in its treatment of individuals' bodies. This is because Westerfeld's young adult dystopia combines the physical torture and execution of dissidents, the mutilation and subjugation of conforming individuals, and their psychological manipulation, which makes them want to retain their transformed bodies and brains. Additionally, it shows them engaging in self-mutilation.

The second subchapter, "Neal Shusterman's *Unwind Dystology*: Living in a Divided and Conquered State," analyses the explicit (ab)use of the body in Shusterman's four-part series. The titular unwinding implies a complete dismemberment of the teenagers' bodies, justified as a biopolitical means of conflict resolution between pro-abortionists and pro-lifers, on the grounds that those who are unwound still live in other people who receive their body parts. Since the cruel practice combines overt abuse in the form of killing and ripping individuals' bodies apart for

organs and their use for the benefit of society at large, the subchapter has also relied on Foucault's theory on discipline and biopower, more specifically, on Foucault's notions of social control and the use of the body under the pretence of increased humanity. The analysis has shown that, although the spectacle of torture in Shusterman's young adult dystopia is removed from the public, this nightmarish society still retains the capital punishment and executes individuals. Only now, it does so on a massive scale and presents it as a form of biopolitical utility. Aligning with the violent nature of young adult literature, the *Unwind Dystology* has also shown that teenagers see not only violence against others, but also self-mutilation and suicide as the only means to beat the system, which resonates with Freud's idea of the death drive.

The third and final subchapter on young adult dystopia, "Lauren DeStefano's *The Chemical Garden*: Girls as Breeding Machines and Research Fodder," explores the biopolitical abuse of teenage girls' bodies for the purpose of procreation and scientific experimentation. The interpretation makes use of Foucauldian ideas of constant surveillance, docility, and control of sexual impulses, as well as of Freud's theory of the death drive. Using the lack of time for procreation as an excuse for biopolitical control, since a deadly virus kills all men at twenty-five and women at twenty, this dystopian society condones explicit abuse of young girls by forcing them into polygamous marriages or by murdering them if they are not chosen as wives fit for procreation. Unlike in *The Handmaid's Tale*, where bodies of adult women are exploited with the aim of forced childbearing, DeStefano's young adult dystopia borders on taboo as it shows girls as young as thirteen exploited in multiple pregnancies and childbirths, with a tendency to lower further the age limit for sexual and reproductive abuse of female children. Furthermore, female bodies are mistreated not only in life, but also in death. The surveillance, control, and torture to which girls are exposed during their forced marriages continue in the form of scientific exploration with the professed aim of finding the cure for the virus. In this way, DeStefano's dystopia reveals the biopolitical mechanisms disguised as necessary scientific actions, which relegate women to wombs to be exploited by men.

The analysis of these six adult and eleven young adult dystopian novels has confirmed the hypothesis that contemporary dystopias exhibit a more explicit, violent, and abusive treatment of the body than do the canonical texts that established the genre. The discoveries made by this dissertation can be distilled into three main points as recognized in the analysed texts: the presence

of violent spectacles and executions by dystopian regimes, the view of death as desirable and utilitarian, and self-mutilation and suicide as the only available forms of rebellion.

First of all, contemporary dystopian societies still retain the explicit and physical forms of violence such as mutilation, torture, beatings, rape, murder, and execution. For instance, in *Crash*, individuals are numbed by the capitalist commodification of human life and body and the overemphasis on sexuality to the point that they deliberately expose their bodies to suffering and mutilation in spectacular car crashes. In *Children of Men*, the loss of connection between sexuality and procreation results in a violent society that beats and ritually murders innocent people on the streets, in the Penal Colony, and murderous mass spectacles. In *Power*, women revert the physical power scale in their favour and indulge in beatings, rapes, and executions of men despite the possibility of ruling differently. *Cloud Atlas* and *Zero K* use spectacles of violence to incite docility and conformity within the dystopian society, and all the young adult dystopian series depict explicit violence performed on the body both as a form of oppression and rebellion.

Next, in canonical dystopias, the literal, physical death is considered undesirable. Individuals are condemned to death if they are unfit for or utile to the regime. In other words, if they are rebels and oppose the regime. According to Foucault's biopolitical postulates, contemporary societies have replaced the death-administering power of the sovereign with strict optimisation, monitoring, and control of life. The loss of life by the death penalty constitutes, therefore, a loss of a carefully created docile body, which is exploited to reinforce the system and should be avoided. The rule of biopolitical regimes in canonical dystopias is to psychologically manipulate and subdue straying individuals in order to make them useful for the regime. Contrary to that, in contemporary dystopias, death becomes a part of the regimes' rule and a purpose for the individuals. In contemporary dystopias, violent death is either presented as the ultimate pleasure one strives towards, as witnessed in *Crash*, or death is glorified as the ultimate form of utility imposed on unwilling or unassuming individuals to promote (another's) life, as notable in *Never Let Me Go*, *Cloud Atlas*, the *Unwind Dystology*, and *The Chemical Garden*. There, the lives are discontinued and the bodies are dismembered to sustain other bodies or to foster science. Death in general and death of the natural body are also seen as desirable in *Zero K* and *Uglies*, where individuals can keep their natural bodies and way of living but opt for the technologically enhanced ones instead, hoping for a better life. However, the enhancements make them either brain-dead or inhuman. The mutilation of the body in the process of beautification or cryopreservation resembles, for instance,

medieval forms of torture, but the elimination of pain *during* the process allows it to be presented as desirable.

In short, in the early dystopias, the emphasis was on being useful to society in order to avoid death; in contemporary dystopias, to die means to be useful. This proves that, under the guise of humanity and human betterment, contemporary dystopias that operate on biopower are crueller in their abuse of individuals' bodies. In connection with that, the reason for which one was *condemned* to death has changed. In contemporary dystopias, those condemned to death are no longer the rightfully nor wrongfully convicted criminals. For instance, in *Children of Men*, the ones sentenced to death by suicide or mass murder are the aged people, whose only sin is undergoing the irreversible and natural process of ageing. In *Cloud Atlas* and *Never Let Me Go*, those are clones whose bodies are recycled or repurposed for further consumption. In young adult dystopias, the teenagers are condemned for being unwanted or nonconforming members of society, as in *Unwind Dystology*, or they are pretty young girls in *The Chemical Garden* who must either procreate or serve as bodies for scientific experiments.

As a final point, that violence is a *modus operandi* in contemporary dystopias, despite the Foucauldian claim that biopower subdues and controls the life of individuals to the extent that violent regimes are unnecessary, can be seen in the forms of resistance available in these texts. While in canonical dystopias rebellion implies disengagement with psychological and physical manipulation by the regime and a life outside the dystopian parameters, in the selected contemporary dystopias, especially the young adult ones, the only alternative is to die. For instance, in *Unwind Dystology*, since their healthy bodies are to be appropriated by society, the Unwinds resort to self-mutilation and suicide, as seen with the Clappers, because that means they will "defeat" the system, while, in *Uglies*, the Specials resort to self-mutilation by cutting. Similarly, the only way to "beat" the system available to the clones in both *Cloud Atlas* and *Never Let Me Go* is to commit suicide and ruin their bodies for future users because the clones' lives are not valuable to the system, only their bodies.

Ultimately, all the analysed contemporary dystopias exhibit technophobia and negatively comment on the technological and scientific developments that change societal attitudes toward the human body. They do so by imagining either a natural apocalypse caused by overtechnologisation or the radical extent to which technology will be able to manipulate the human body. This dissertation has established the existence of a gradation of types and forms of

violence committed against the human body in that contemporary Anglophone dystopias tend to be more explicit and violent than earlier ones. The gradation results from the analysis of the (ab)use of the body by the regimes in contemporary Anglophone dystopian novels, based on theories and ideas by Foucault, Freud, and others, which provide a methodology elucidating power relations, human drives, and the uses of violence. The existence of such a gradation can be tested against any national dystopian literature and other media, such as film and TV series. Sadly, the recent violent developments in Ukraine and the Gaza Strip indicate that spectacles of violence, mutilation of the body, and mass murders are still present in actual contemporary (democratic) societies that, as modern biopolitical societies, should be focused on the monitoring and protection of life. Since social criticism is inherent to dystopias, as is their prophetic quality, this may account for an even more gruesome and abusive treatment of individuals in future dystopian texts, the analysis of which can rely on the theoretical postulates and methods provided in this dissertation. Because science and technology continue to develop and threaten both the environment and the natural state of the human body, one can expect that future dystopian visions and their literary renditions will be even more violent and cruel in their (ab)use of the human body. Alternatively, there may be a turn away from the now-popular dystopian novels toward genres that imagine human life in different representational modes. Finally, this dissertation also points to other possible directions in further research of the selected (and other) literary dystopias. Namely, the dystopias' representation of technology as a means of manipulation of the body invites new readings from the perspective of transhumanism and/or bioethics, whereas the profit-making subtext of the exploitation of the body suggests a possibility for further research from a Marxist perspective.

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ABSTRACT

Motivated by the contemporary hyperproduction of dystopias, this doctoral dissertation explores the biopolitical violence performed on the human body in seventeen contemporary (1973–2016) dystopian novels for adults and young adults. These include J. G. Ballard's *Crash*, P. D. James's *Children of Men*, David Mitchell's *Cloud Atlas*, Kazuo Ishiguro's N*ever Let Me Go*, Don DeLillo's *Zero K*, and Naomi Alderman's *The Power*, as well as young adult dystopian tetralogies, Scott Westerfeld's *Uglies* and Neal Shusterman's the *Unwind Dystology*, and Lauren DeStefano's trilogy *The Chemical Garden*. Drawing on the dystopian critics' attitude that canonical dystopian regimes, such as those in *We, Brave New World,* and *1984,* rely on the Foucauldian biopolitical and psychological control of their populations, thus protecting life without explicit violence or capital punishment – except for the rare incorrigible dissidents – this dissertation shows that the selected contemporary dystopias exhibit societies which combine the biopolitical monitoring of subjects with explicit and often spectacular violence that is no longer reserved for criminals, but for the entire population.

In combining Foucault's theories on biopolitics, discipline, and sexuality with Freud's psychoanalysis and death drive, Althusser's concept of the Ideological State Apparatuses, and Baudrillard's commodification of human bodies, the analysis shows that biopolitics, which is said to foster life of contemporary individuals rather than take it away, in fact, enables a much more profound abuse of individuals and their bodies. Contrary to Foucault's observations on the removal of the public spectacle of torture, the violence, mutilation, and mass murder of individuals in contemporary dystopias, especially those for young adults, are revealed to be just as gruesome and deadly as the old, death-administering systems, and at times even more so. This is because in contemporary dystopias, death becomes a desirable form of utility, and self-mutilation and suicide are the only available forms of rebellion.

Keywords: utopia, dystopia, young adult dystopia, body, violence.

SAŽETAK

Potaknuta suvremenom hiperprodukcijom distopija, doktorska disertacija istražuje biopolitičko nasilje nad ljudskim tijelom u sedamnaest suvremenih (1973.–2016.) distopijskih romana za odrasle i mladež. Analizirani su romani: *Sudar* J. G. Ballarda, *Djeca čovječanstva* P. D. James, *Atlas oblaka* Davida Mitchella, *Nikad me ne ostavljaj* Kazua Ishigura, *Zero K* Dona DeLilla, *Moć* Naomi Alderman te, zasad neprevedene na hrvatski jezik, distopijske tetralogije za mladež, *Uglies* Scotta Westerfelda i *Unwind Dystology* Neala Shustermana i trilogija *The Chemical Garden* Lauren DeStefano. Polazeći od stava distopijskih kritičara M. Keitha Bookera i Chada Walsha da se kanonski distopijski režimi u romanima *Mi*, *Divni novi svijet* i *1984.* oslanjaju na foucaultovski biopolitički nadzor i psihološku torturu i kontrolu građana, te se s navodnim ciljem zaštite života odriču eksplicitnog nasilja i smrtne kazne – osim u rijetkim slučajevima nepopravljivih disidenata, a i tada potajno – disertacija pokazuje da suvremeni distopijski režimi u odabranim romanima spajaju biopolitički nadzor pojedinaca s eksplicitnim i često spektakularnim nasiljem koje više nije rezervirano za prijestupnike, već obuhvaća cjelokupnu populaciju. Štoviše, smrt postaje glavni utilitaristički motiv suvremenih distopijskih režima, a samoozljeđivanje i suicid jedine metode otpora suvremenih pojedinaca.

Teorijski okvir za analizu suvremenih distopija počiva na Foucaultovoj ideji biomoći ili biopolitici, odnosno odmaku od sustava usredotočenih na iskazivanje moći kroz tjelesno mučenje i smrt osuđenika te prijelaz na nadzor i kontrolu *života* pojedinaca u suvremenim društvima. Cilj je pokazati da, usprkos tvrdnji o nestanku spektakla nasilja i mučenog ili osakaćenog tijela osuđenika, suvremene distopije i dalje prakticiraju sakaćenja i nasilnu smrt. Međutim, u skladu s foucaultovskom definicijom biopolitike kao pozitivne sile koja nadzire ljudski život u najsitnijim detaljima stvarajući tako *pokorna tijela*, svi slučajevi mučenja, sakaćenja i ubijanja protagonista predstavljaju se kao pozitivni, poželjni ciljevi kojima oni sami trebaju težiti i koji omogućuju dobrobit društva. Takav stav o smrti, prema kojem ona postaje utilitarna, a ne kazna kao u kanonskim distopijama, promatra se kroz prizmu nagona smrti i težnju pojedinaca da se, prema Sigmundu Freudu, vrate u stanje spokoja koje prethodi rođenju i postiže se smrću. Nadalje, analiza objedinjuje Foucaultov koncept seksualnosti, kao diskursa koji društvo konstruira i njime upravlja, i freudovski koncept seksualne represije ili društvenog potiskivanja seksualnosti, kako bi pokazala da suvremena distopijska društva istodobno potiskuju i potiču seksualnost radi manipuliranja pojedincima i mučenja njihova tijela. Premda teorijski okvir disertacije ne uključuje feminističku

kritiku, gdje je potrebno, uvode se feminističke rasprave o biopolitičkim mehanizmima koji omogućuju pokornost i reproduktivno iskorištavanje primarno ženskih tijela. Nastavno na to, teorijska rasprava Hanne Arendt o dihotomiji moći i nasilja rabi se kao dokaz da je moć, iako su muškarci povijesno povezaniji s nasiljem na temelju svoje tjelesne nadmoći, društveni konstrukt i da se u suvremenim distopijama i dalje oslanja na sposobnost prakticiranja nasilja. Najzad, Althusserova teorija o ideološkim državnim aparatima i pojedincima kao podložnim subjektima rabi se zajedno s argumentom Jeana Baudrillarda o kapitalističkoj komodifikaciji ljudskih tijela kao potrošačkih predmeta kako bi se objasnilo sakaćenje, ubijanje i recikliranje suvremenih pojedinaca. Utemeljen na tim teorijskim postulatima, analitički dio disertacije kronološki je podijeljen na dva korpusa: šest distopijskih romana za odrasle i tri distopijska serijala za mladež.

Analiza prve distopije za odrasle, *Sudara* J. G. Ballarda, spaja Freudovu psihoanalizu te Foucaultove pojmove biopolitike i spektakla kako bi objasnila nasilje nad ljudskim tijelima u romanu. Premda se Freudovi koncepti *Eros* i *Thanatos*, odnosno nagon života i nagon smrti, čine plodonosnijima za tumačenje tehnološkog fetišizma Ballardovih protagonista kao neobuzdanoga seksualnog instinkta, poglavlje pokazuje da Foucaultov koncept seksualnosti kao diskursa koji društvo kreira i potiče razotkriva društvene sile koje protagoniste potiču na samosakaćenje i samouništenje u prometnim nesrećama u svrhu postizanja seksualnog užitka. Primjena foucaultovskog pojma spektakla mučenja na roman *Sudar* pokazuje da suvremene distopije zadržavaju nasilne prizore izmučenih tijela i smrti te da smrt postaje željeni ishod pojedinca, za razliku od ranih distopija, usredotočenih na dugovječnost i izbjegavanje smrtne kazne osim u slučaju opiranja režimu.

Analiza *Djece čovječanstva* autorice P. D. James također se temelji na pojmovima biopolitike, spektakla i utilitarnosti te zaključuje da se i u Jamesinu distopijskom romanu masovna smrt prikazuje kao društveno poželjna. U postapokalipsi nastaloj zbog nagle i neobjašnjive sterilnosti svjetske populacije, engleska vlada nadzire svoje stanovništvo i prisiljava starije osobe na samoubojstvo ili ih pogubljuje u masovnom ritualu. *Osuđenici* o kojima je govorio Foucault više nisu samo kriminalci i disidenti, nego starci čija je „krivnja“ tek prirodan i nezaustavljiv proces starenja. I poman nadzor mladih i zdravih koji bi razmnožavanjem mogli spasiti društvo od izumiranja razotkriva se kao biopolitičko nasilje jer obuhvaća samo zdrave Engleze, a imigrante te osobe s i najmanjom tjelesnom invalidnošću isključuje iz prakse nadzora. Nasilje je prisutno i u svakodnevnom životu među Omegama, pripadnicima posljednje generacije, te kriminalcima

izloženima izgladnjivanju, kanibalizmu i općenito nasilju koje premašuje ozbiljnost njihovih zločina, a na što je Foucault upozoravao kao na odlike pred-biopolitičkih režima. Dakle, suvremeni distopijski režim u *Djeci čovječanstva* iskorištava, muči i ubija, predstavljajući ritualna masovna ubojstva i kontrolu zdravog stanovništva kao nužnu društvenu skrb u postapokaliptičnom dobu.

Analiza trećeg romana, *Atlasa oblaka* Davida Mitchella, fokusira se na distopijski segment romana o futurističkoj korpokratskoj novoj Koreji, Nei So Copros. Ponovno kroz Foucaultov pojam biopolitike, s naglaskom na pokorna tijela i utilitarnost, analizira se zlostavljanje kloniranih poslužiteljica u korpokracijskom restoranu. Zaključak je da tjelesna kontrola i ograničavanje slobodne volje klonova odgovara biopolitičkom nadzoru i optimizaciji života u suvremenim društvima. Međutim, analiza pokazuje da sustav ne iskorištava klonove samo za života, već i u smrti. Iako pobunjene klonove predstavnici sustava ubijaju u javnom iskazu nasilja da bi služili kao primjer, kao i u kanonskim distopijama, oni ubijaju i sve ostale klonove za dobrobit sustava, samo u tajnosti. Njihova tijela odgovaraju Baudrillardovu konceptu komodifikacije i *konzumacije* ljudskih tijela kao najobičnijih potrošačkih proizvoda. Iz toga slijedi da su krajnji oblik biopolitičke utilitarnosti smrt klonova i recikliranje njihovih tijela za proizvodnju droge pomoću koje sustav upravlja živim klonovima i hrani obične ljude, što ukazuje na nasilniji tretman pojedinaca u ovome romanu nego prema Huxleyjevim klonovima i Orwellovim disidentima.

Tretman klonova i njihovih tijela kroz foucaultovsku prizmu biopolitičke pokornosti i utilitarnosti analizira se i u poglavlju o distopiji *Nikad me ne ostavljaj* Kazua Ishigura. Ishigurovi klonovi sustavno su uvjetovani da postanu pokorni i održavaju zdravlje do srednjih dvadesetih godina, kada ih sustav ubija i njihove vitalne organe daje prirodno rođenim ljudima za čiju su dobrobit stvoreni. Iako su pogubljenja klonova skrivena od javnosti i predstavljena kao biopolitička metoda za boljitak i dugovječnost društva, njihov tretman uključuje sakaćenje i ubijanje. Dok se u *Atlasu oblaka* istina o pogubljenju klonova čuva u tajnosti te su Mitchellovi klonovi uvjereni da će, umjesto smrti, biti nagrađeni za svoj trud i rad, nagrada za Ishigurove klonove *jest* smrt, i oni su toga svjesni. Umiranje i davanje organa ljudima od kojih su klonirani njihova je društveno nametnuta svrha i čini ultimativni oblik njihove biopolitičke utilitarnosti i njihovo najveće postignuće, pri čemu se smrt ponovno nameće kao poželjan ishod za pojedince suvremenih distopija.

U petom distopijskom romanu, *Zero K* Dona DeLilla, analizira se biopolitički pothvat koji navodno pomaže neizlječivo bolesnima i hendikepiranima, potičući ih da se podvrgnu krioprezervaciji do obećanog povratka u život u poboljšanom stanju nakon pronalaska lijeka za bolesti od kojih pate. Pritom se u analizi foucaultovski biopolitički postulat o očuvanju života kombinira s freudovskim nagonom smrti jer određeni segment društva u romanu manipulira ljudima u svrhu boljega života, za koji se ispostavlja da je zapravo smrt u krioničkoj kapsuli. Analiza psihološke manipulacije ljudskim tijelima prije postupka krioprezervacije i tjelesno sakaćenje tijekom njega te mehanizme DeLillova distopijskog režima čita kao instance biopolitičke zlouporabe tijela. Naime, posjetitelji krioničkog pogona izloženi su nasilnom i zastrašujućem sadržaju, kao što su izvještaji s bojišnica i prirodne katastrofe, kako bi ih se nagnalo na krioprezervaciju kao jedini oblik dugoročnog preživljavanja. Međutim, njihova su zamrznuta tijela prikazana kao obezglavljena, izvađenih organa i mozgova nepovratno odvojenih od tijela, čime se pothvat razotkriva kao obmana koja ljude preuranjeno gura u smrt. Uporabom Foucaultove biopolitičke teorije, analiza romana utvrđuje kako se diskurzivnom manipulacijom tvrdnjama o zaštiti života i u ovoj suvremenoj distopiji smrt konstruira kao poželjna. Iako tretiranje tijela u romanu eliminira bol i patnju tijekom umiranja, te korisnici usluge krioprezervacije na smrt prestaju gledati kao kaznu, učinak je na tijelo isti – ono se sakati, komada i pojedinac umire.

Šesta i posljednja analizirana distopija za odrasle jest *Moć* Naomi Alderman. Iznenadna i neobjašnjiva moć koja ženskim tijelima omogućuje da odašilju strujne udare remeti davno uspostavljeni splet bioloških, političkih, administrativnih i religijskih postulata u korist muške nadmoći. Prepuna eksplicitnog nasilja, koje kroz distopijski karakter fiktivnog matrijarhata razotkriva nasilnost (suvremenog) patrijarhata, *Moć* kritizira biopolitičku zlouporabu rodnih dihotomija kako bi se tijela jednog spola tumačila kao nadređena nauštrb drugoga. Prizorima eksplicitnog nasilja i spektakla mučenja u obliku ženskog premlaćivanja, smaknuća, silovanja i sakaćenja muškaraca, Alderman fikcijom ukazuje na biopolitičke postulate koji omogućuju jednako zlostavljanje žena u stvarnim patrijarhalnim društvima. Oslanjajući se na foucaultovski koncept biopolitike, upotpunjen feminističkom kritikom, te raspravu Hanne Arendt o odnosu moći i nasilja, analiza pokazuje da tobože suptilni biopolitički pristup tijelu uvelike (zlo)rabi ženska tijela te i dalje pribjegava nasilju i spektaklu mučenja.

U prvom analiziranom distopijskom serijalu za mladež, *Uglies* Scotta Westerfelda, proučava se sustavno zlostavljanje tijela putem obveznih estetskih operacija kojima se svi tinejdžeri iz *ružnih*

pretvaraju u *lijepe* i time prihvatljive članove društva. Opravdana kao lijek za bolesti i ratove izazvane predrasudama, rasizmom i neravnomjernom razinom tjelesne privlačnosti kod pojedinaca, operacija zapravo uključuje temeljito sakaćenje pojedinaca. Uporabom foucaultovske teorije o pokornim tijelima, uljepšavanje prikazano kao sredstvo postizanja društvene ravnoteže razotkriva se kao biopolitičko nasilje i nadzor jer, osim što radikalno manipulira tijelima tinejdžera, zahvat uključuje lobotomiju. Spojem takve tjelesne i psihološke manipulacije kroz ismijavanje prirodnog izgleda mladih i uvjeravanjem da su *ružni*, sustav ih tjera da požele smrt svojeg prirodnog tijela. Tako *ubijenih* prirodnih tijela i osakaćenih mozgova, preobraženi *lijepi* okreću se nasilnim spektaklima i samoozljeđivanju kako bi razbistrili pomućene umove. U tome je smislu Westerfeldov serijal proročanski jer svjedočimo sličnim praksama i posljedicama u suvremenom društvu. Nasuprot kanonskim distopijama, koje rabe eugeniku i psihološku manipulaciju ali bez pogubljenja (*Divni novi svijet*) ili psihološko mučenje i pogubljenje disidenata (*Mi, 1984.*), serijal *Uglies* nasilnije tretira tijelo pojedinca. Tjelesno mučenje i pogubljenje disidenata, sakaćenje i nadzor pokornih pojedinaca te psihološka manipulacija koja neprirodno čini poželjnim nametnuti su dio svakodnevnice, a jedina metoda otpora jest samoozljeđivanje.

Drugi analizirani distopijski serijal za mladež, *Unwind Dystology* Neala Shustermana, prikazuje eksplicitnu (zlo)uporabu tijela tinejdžera kroz komadanje i donaciju organa kao apsurdno biopolitičko rješenje sukoba između zagovornika pobačaja i zagovornika prava nerođene djece. Takvo nasilje koje rezultira smrću mladih opravdano je tezom da raskomadani tinejdžeri i dalje „žive“ u primateljima njihovih organa. Budući da ta okrutna praksa spaja eksplicitno zlostavljanje, ubijanje i komadanje pojedinaca te njihovu uporabu za dobrobit društva, analiza se oslanja na Foucaultovu teoriju o nadzoru i biomoći, odnosno na sustavnu kontrolu, manipulaciju tijela i smrt pod izlikom društvene dobrobiti. Analiza pokazuje da se spektakl mučenja u odvija u tajnosti, ali se javno promovira kao pozitivna društvena praksa. Prema tome, Shustermanovo distopijsko društvo prakticira smrtnu kaznu kao masovni fenomen s ciljem ostvarenja biopolitičke utilitarnosti. U skladu s otporom protagonista i nasiljem kao glavnim odrednicama književnosti za mladež, serijal također prikazuje kako tinejdžeri vide samoozljeđivanje i samoubojstvo kao jedinu metodu otpora sustavu, što pak odgovara freudovskome nagonu smrti, prisutnom u svim analiziranim distopijama za mladež.

Treći i posljednji odabrani distopijski serijal za mlade, *The Chemical Garden* Lauren DeStefano, proučava se kroz prizmu biopolitičkog zlostavljanja tinejdžerica u svrhu

razmnožavanja i znanstvenog eksperimentiranja. Pojavom smrtonosnog virusa koji ubija svu populaciju u ranim dvadesetim godinama, DeStefanino distopijsko društvo kao jedino rješenje za rapidno odumiranje stanovništva vidi eksplicitno zlostavljanje mladih djevojaka s ciljem prisilnog razmnožavanja ili eksperimentiranja u potrazi za lijekom. Za razliku od Atwoodine *Sluškinjine priče*, gdje je iskorištavanje s ciljem prisilnog rađanja zadaća odraslih žena, DeStefanina distopija za mladež prikazuje surovije društvo koje prisiljava djevojčice od jedva trinaest godina na uzastopne trudnoće i porođaje, s tendencijom da se dobna granica dodatno snizi. Štoviše, sa ženskim se tijelima loše postupa i u smrti, kada se rabe za znanstveno eksperimentiranje u svrhu pronalaska lijeka za smrtonosni virus. Uslijed tih okolnosti, mnoge djevojke pokazuju frojdovski smrtni nagon jer smrt vide kao jedini mogući spas od eksploatatorskoga biopolitičkog režima.

Analiza svih sedamnaest romana potvrđuje hipotezu da suvremene distopije prikazuju eksplicitniji i nasilniji tretman tijela u odnosu na kanonske, pri čemu je smrt često poželjnija od života. Iz ovoga istraživanja proizlaze tri glavna zaključka: suvremeni distopijski režimi prakticiraju spektakle nasilja, mučenja, silovanja i pogubljenja nad općom populacijom, a ne samo nad kriminalcima i disidentima, što je bio slučaj u ranijim distopijama; smrt postaje utilitarna i poželjna među suvremenim pojedincima; samoozljeđivanje i samoubojstvo istodobno su *modus operandi* društva i jedini dostupni oblici otpora, čime nasilje postaje temeljni oblik funkcioniranja književnih likova u tim romanima. Dakle, biopolitički režimi suvremenih distopija uz sustavni nadzor i kontrolu života populacije prakticiraju sakaćenje, mučenje i ubijanje koje predstavljaju kao metode za postizanje opće dobrobiti, nadilazeći tako zlostavljanje tijela u kanonskim distopijama koji se ograničavao na eugeniku i psihološku manipulaciju ili psihološko nasilje, a tjelesna eliminacija bila je rezervirana za nepopravljive odmetnike. Takav razvoj distopijske proze potvrđuje njezin proročanski karakter jer su književni prikazi društvenog nasilja nad pojedincem prethodili sličnim pojavama u stvarnom društvu, što se vidi napose kroz komodifikaciju tijela, poželjnost estetskih operacija, učestalije samoozljeđivanje mladih i problematiku eutanazije. Omogućena naglim i nezaustavljivim razvojem znanosti i tehnologije, biopolitička (zlo)uporaba tijela pojava je koja će u budućnosti potencijalno poprimati sve veće razmjere kako u književnosti, tako i u stvarnom životu, stoga ova disertacija može poslužiti kao polazišna točka za daljnje rasprave o biopolitičkim distopijskim mehanizmima nasilja nad tijelom koji se predstavljaju kao utopijski.

Ključne riječi: utopija, distopija, distopija za mladež, tijelo, nasilje.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Jelena Pataki Šumiga was born in 1991 in Đakovo. In 2014, she graduated *summa cum laude* in Croatian and English language and literature at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Osijek. Since 2020, she has taught seminars in *Survey of English Literature I* and *Contemporary British Literature* at the Department of English. She is a member of the YA Studies Association, Utopian Studies Society Europe, Croatian Association for American Studies, the Executive Committee of the Center for Popular Culture at FFOS, and a co-editor of its scholarly blog *Fractals*. She has presented at fifteen international conferences and published ten (co)authored papers, co-organised two scientific conferences, and co-edited *Breaking Stereotypes in American Popular Culture* conference proceedings (2023). She is a proof-reader in the Center for North American Studies project *Translation of Affirmative American Plays from English to Croatian*. She is a member of the executive committee of FUZ&JA, the science popularisation project, and has co-organised *Career Week 2022*, *PhD Round 2023,* and *PhD Café* for PhD students of the Faculty. In addition to research in the field of literary studies, she is a successful conference interpreter and literary translator with a membership in the Society of Croatian Literary Translators. She has translated more than sixty novels from English to Croatian.

Recent publications:

"Unwinding the Nuclear Family Ideal of Blockbuster YA Dystopia." *IJYAL,* vol. 4, no. 1, 2023, pp. 1–21.

Matek, Ljubica, and Pataki Šumiga, Jelena. "The (Ab)Use of Language in Twentieth Century British Dystopias." *Language, Literature, Power*, edited by Biljana Mišić Ilić et al., Faculty of Philosophy in Niš, Serbia, 2023, pp. 359–70.

All publications:
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ŽIVOTOPIS

Jelena Pataki Šumiga rođena je 1991. u Đakovu. Godine 2014. diplomirala je *summa cum laude* Hrvatski i Engleski jezik i književnost na Filozofskom fakultetu Osijek, gdje od 2020. radi kao asistentica na Katedri za književnost engleskog govornog područja i surađuje na kolegijima *Pregled engleske književnosti I* i *Suvremena britanska književnost*. Članica je međunarodnih udruga YA Studies Association i Utopian Studies Society Europe, Hrvatskog udruženja za američke studije te članica upravnog odbora Centra za popularnu kulturu na FFOS-u i suurednica njegova popularno-znanstvenoga bloga *Fractals*. Izlagala je na petnaest međunarodnih skupova i objavila desetak (su)autorskih radova, suorganizirala dva znanstvena skupa i suuredila zbornik *Breaking Stereotypes in American Popular Culture* (2023.). Lektorica je projekta *Prijevod afirmativnih američkih drama s engleskoga na hrvatski jezik* Centra za sjevernoameričke studije. Aktivna je u popularizaciji znanosti kao članica upravnog odbora FUZ&JA-e, sudionica organizacije *Tjedna karijera 2022.*, organizatorica *Doktorske runde 2023.* te suorganizatorica *Doktorskog caféa* i suvoditeljica *Otvorenog četvrtka*. Osim znanstvenim radom, bavi se konferencijskim i književnim prevođenjem te je članica Društva hrvatskih književnih prevodilaca s više od šezdeset prevedenih romana s engleskoga na hrvatski.

Najnoviji radovi:

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Matek, Ljubica; Pataki Šumiga, Jelena. „The (Ab)Use of Language in Twentieth Century British Dystopias.“ *Language, Literature, Power*, ur. Biljana Mišić Ilić i dr., FF u Nišu, 2023., str. 359–70.

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