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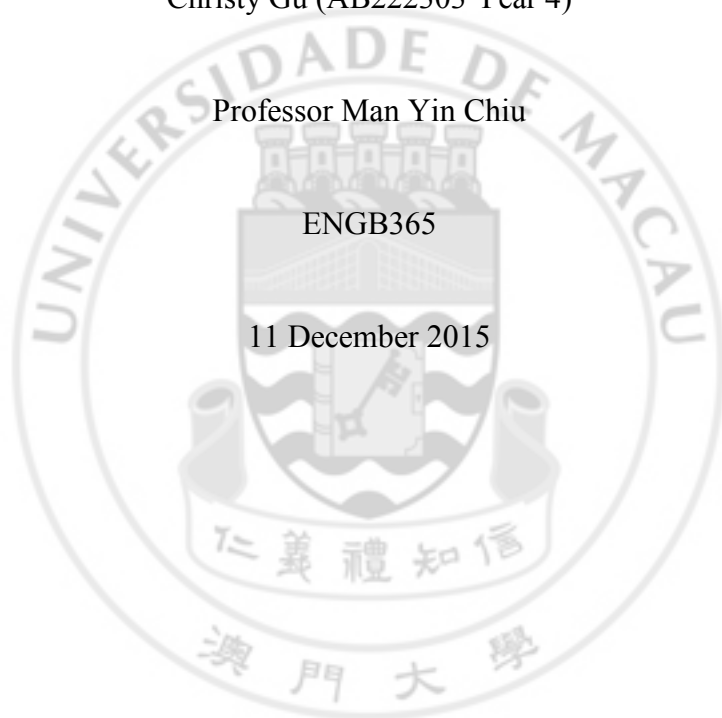
On the Irreconcilable Dualism in *Brave New World*

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Utopia has long been a controversial subject in literature. According to Rothstein, Utopia “[represents] an ideal towards which the mundane world must reach” (3). It provides us with a blueprint showing “what this world could be and what should be worked for” (Rothstein 3). Nonetheless, there exists another kind of Utopia that is more complex in the sense that instead of being a potential paradise to be pursued elsewhere, it in fact represents a world where the blueprint has already been realised but without desirable effects. As a “transformation of this-place”, Utopia of the kind bears far more ambivalence in nature than does the former one (Rothstein 3). *Brave New World* written by Aldous Huxley is a perfect example. Unlike the society in *1984*, which is certainly a dystopia undesirable to the majority, the fictitious society in *Brave New World*, of which the World State enjoys the absolute governance, has

undeniable stability and economic prosperity, the sacrifice of passions and individuality notwithstanding. Admittedly, one can easily draw a long list as to the drawbacks of the World State, such as the tyranny of the perfect system over individuals, the futile lifestyle and false happiness. Quite peculiar is the fact that all the criticism would eventually counteract one another on closer examination.

In the following sections, six controversial aspects involved in the practice of the World State will be discussed respectively for the purpose of illustrating that those antitheses cannot be easily and distinctly settled, whereby the ambivalent nature of this community can be unveiled.

I. For the Greater Cause: Social Stability vs. Individuality

In the World State, people are accustomed to immediate gratification of desires due to the use of Soma, a kind of drug invented to eliminate any time interval between desires and gratification, as well as to maximise potential pleasure. To make a judgement of this practice, the rationale underlying it must be investigated first.

The State's popularisation of this "happy drug" can be seen as a drastic application of Freudian psychodynamic theory to social administration. Freud

proposes that life developments are guided by internal drives that can influence behaviour. According to different focal points to which psychic energy moves, children would go through different developmental stages. It is believed that unsolved problems or unsatisfied needs might cause fixation, meaning that the person in question would have to struggle with certain issues at that stage and carry pertinent characteristics throughout the rest of their lives (Funder 354-366). Of foremost importance here is the implication that the root of numerous conflicts and social problems rests on the long-term repression of humans' desires and delay of their gratification, in which psychological drives relating to sexuality are especially foregrounded by Freud.

On the basis of this finding, the World State tries to guarantee the immediate gratification of any possible desires in virtue of the promotion of drugs and promiscuity. Natural impulses are finally allowed to freely play; the concept of temptation no longer exists for they do not need to hold themselves back at any moment. These all sound very appealing. Only it would totally go wrong when the principle of opposite is taken into consideration. According to Freud, at oral stage, the

extent to which the baby's needs are satisfied influences the way they interact with the world later on. Although the satisfaction of needs is quite important for infants to develop a sense of trust towards the world, a baby for whom every need is satisfied immediately may still be maladaptive: the excess of gratification would also lead to fixation (Funder 354-357). In other words, the said person would be stuck with the infantile, id-dominant stage, without a trace of ego and superego. That is exactly what the citizens in the society are: being infantile in the whole life. After all, it is certainly much easier to control a country full of big infants. How can an infant be expected to act or even think in defiance of the ideology advocated by the World State?

However, by suggesting that the State intends to infantilise its people for the purpose of maintaining social stability, it does not necessarily follow that the World State can thus be simply dismissed as tyrannical and evil. After all, one can hardly deny that in virtue of this strategy, the society depicted in this novel is indeed unprecedentedly prosperous and peaceful. It should also be acknowledged that despite the author's dramatisation, the so-called "for a greater cause" has been observed by our society for quite a long time. In that case, apart from the apparent usefulness, the

morality of the World State's act must be decided if we are to license such practice. In the following parts, the State's act will be examined on the basis of two disparate frameworks.

To start with, according to Kantian moral philosophy, the answer to this question must be negative. For Kant, "the only thing that is intrinsically good, or good-in-itself, is the good will" (Kant 474). He claims that both the full mastery over what to do and the motivations underlying one's actions are to be taken into consideration.

Furthermore, he proposes a formula named "Categorical imperatives" to judge an action, which basically conveys the doctrine that people are supposed to "act only according to that maxim whereby you would will it to be a universal law" (Salazar, pars. 30-31). Interestingly, in this case, the reverse holds true for Utilitarianism, which establishes its theory upon a unique standpoint: what makes an action right or wrong "depends and only depends on the results the act caused" ("consequentialism", pars.

2). Utilitarianism harbours the idea that "Ought and ought not as well as right and wrong are defined by conformity and unconformity to the principle of utility respectively" (Bentham, 13). The so-called principle of utility proposed by Bentham

is concerned with the potential for the action to augment or diminish the happiness of the party concerned (11-12).

In the light of the above deontological framework, the argument Kant would offer is that the act of the World State seriously violates the categorical imperatives. Its subordination of healthy personal development and the right to choose one's own life to the preservation of social stability is not in conformity with the Formulation of Universal Law, nor does it accord with the Formulation of humanity. Initially, this act cannot be possible for everyone to will it and still achieve the purpose of the maxim in that no one would want to be infantilised forever. Secondly, in the attempt of taming people for a greater cause, the state apparently fails to treat humanity as an end in itself and never simply a means to achieve something else.

In contrast, by means of a series of measurements of this act (i.e. to sacrifice the welfare of individuals for the development of the state) and by subtracting the pleasure produced by the act from the pleasure arising from the alternative, Utilitarians are more likely to achieve a conclusion that the pleasure of preserving the overall stability and prosperity of the society outweighs that of preserving personal

development.

In sum, at this stage the morality of the said practice varies drastically in accordance with different theories.

II. Freedom and Free Will

At the first glimpse, one would hasten to denounce the World State for its deprivation of individual freedom. With its strict castes being at work, namely, Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta, and Epsilon, there is no hope escaping the class you are destined to or doing anything beyond what your caste prescribes you to (Huxley 3). It is true that people appear to have absolute freedom within their castes. To take an example of Alphas, they are assigned works in proportion to their abilities; they can and are in fact encouraged to take holidays whenever they feel the need. It is also true that unlike people in *1984*, these citizens are not in constant surveillance: they are never forbidden to think and to speak. However, despite the professed desirable vision the World State shows, the question remains: *is it real freedom?*

It is tempting to jump into the negative answer for the reason that people there are in fact predestined to think in the fashion the government chooses for them: they are

conditioned to believe in whatever the government tells them through hypnopaedia and make them their own values (Huxley 20). That being said, to reach a fully satisfactory answer, it is of paramount importance to deconstruct the concept of “freedom” into different parts to see whether the World State indeed violates any of them.

Firstly, the elementary freedom, to borrow a term from Schopenhauer, is “physical freedom”, by which he refers to “the absence of material hindrances of any kind” (32). A man can be called free if his movements issue from his own will. On this matter, there is no doubt that the citizens in the State enjoy absolute freedom: not only are they allowed to travel to wherever they want, there is even no hindrance whatsoever on any potential journeys due to the advance of technology.

The second kind of freedom is the freedom to choose. The caste system in the World State is often accused of confining people’s freedom on this level. Different people are differently conditioned to believe certain things corresponding to their predestined castes for the purpose of making everyone perfectly contented with the status quo. According to the controllers’ logic, they are happy. However, in so doing,

the World State “destroys the existence of a free agent and thus the possibility of any further free choices and acts by that agent” (Dudley and Engelhard 92). People in the State do not have real freedom because they are deprived of the right to choose in the first place. It is quite similar with what Kant calls “false promise”. False promises are immoral in the sense that you are actually cheating that person into accepting one offer by deliberately omitting the accurate and sufficient information about alternatives. Thus, the conditioning of minds practised by the State in effect “deprives [them] of the opportunity to exercise [their] humanity in freely setting [their ends]” (Dudley and Engelhard 92).

As a matter of fact, the debate hitherto over the State’s removal of the freedom to choose can be boiled down to its infringement of free will. Free will “would be of a kind that was determined by nothing at all”; acts of free will “would thus have to come forth simply and originally out of itself, without being brought about necessarily by preceding conditions...without being determined by anything at all...”

(Schopenhauer 36). As mentioned above, for the citizens in the World State, all the beliefs and consequent acts are in accordance with the doctrines inoculated by the

authority through sleeping education on the basis of castes. For instance, for Alphas like Henry and Lennia, theoretically speaking, they can do this thing, if they will, (say, having intimacy with each other), and just as well do that thing, if they will (e.g. talking to each other the whole night instead). However, are they really capable of willing the one as much as the other? Probably not. The education Lenina received conditions her to believe that if two people hold mutual affection, they must have intimacy with each other; and it must be done without delay. That's why she cannot understand the behaviour of Bernard and John. In that case, it seems that indeed she *can* choose to talk about books with John instead of having intimacy if she *wills*, but the fact is: she *could not will*.

The most ingenious and accordingly most frightening practice of the World State is therefore revealed here: it endows its citizens with “relative absolute freedom” and in effect cuts off their potential desire for the freedom of the will: in appearance, no matter what caste the person is in, if he *wills this one*, he can do it; if he *wills that one*, he can do it too (Schopenhauer 47). However, thanks to the biological manipulation and hypnopaedic conditioning, he *could never will* the one as much as the other. It

never occurred to him to will the other one; it therefore would never come to his mind to fight for whatever is lost to him for the stability of the State.

Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that the insistence on the possession of free will is built upon the premise that there *is* a perceptible and objective reality outside; and the obtainment of such knowledge is of great importance in our understanding of the world. However, what if there is no such thing as “external reality”? What if the world exists only in accordance with individuals’ inward conscious experience, or in other words, “construals” (Funder 441)? George Kelly proposes that there are various paired construals in individuals’ minds, assembling together to form “personal constructs”, in terms of which their overall perception of the world can be built and of which future experiences are to be perceived (qte. In Funder 454). If one applies these ideas to the operation of the World State, the former argument against the State’s practice would become unjust. “ ‘I suppose Epsilons don’t really mind being Epsilons,’ she said aloud. ‘Of course they don’t. How can they? They don’t know what it’s like being anything else’ ” (Huxley 64). It is true that people in the State are implanted with carefully modified construal according to the castes into which they

are chosen to be delivered. But it does not really matter whether or not their acquired perception about the external world is right or accurate (if there were one at all), as long as they have *a* perception, sticking to it and feeling satisfied with it from end to end.

One might well contend that it sounds like bullying logic. On closer consideration, however, one is rather likely to find it hard to deny that the misery and anxiety people in pre-modern days (i.e. people in our society) would constantly experience has never derived from the monotonicity of choice. On the contrary, it is always the diversity and uncertainty of choice that should be to blame. The World State in that sense seems to have resolved this problem once and for all. An Alpha is made to do Alpha's work; an Epsilon is made to do Epsilon's work. An outsider might think the work of Epsilon dull and dirty, but it is not the case with Epsilons themselves. For an Epsilon, doing that kind of work is not a sacrifice because it is guaranteed by his conditioning that he would not think otherwise. For him, there is and will always be only one way to follow, and it is the best and happiest way for him to go through life. Horrible it might seem to a person outside the State, the simple fact is, people from all castes

there conceive themselves as happy and contented: when one is conditioned to believe that it is the only and the best path for him, he would not know there are indeed alternatives. Consequently, he would not be plagued with thoughts such as “what if”.

Furthermore, the project implemented in the State seems to have settled completely the two fundamental problems perplexing human beings since the dawn of human civilisation, namely, “why am I here?” and “what should I be doing?”

Jean-Paul Sartre suggests that existential anxiety consists of anguish, forlornness and despair. Anguish is a result of the inherent imperfections in choice (pars 11-12). No matter how careful you are in calculating and comparing, eventually there is still something missing in your choice, which might be found in the alternative. The feeling of forlornness derives from the burden of responsibility as to the choice (Sartre pars 13). There is no one, even God, can free you from self-choice. From

Sartre’s point of view, even if God informs you of your mission or predestination, the final decision as to whether or not to follow the pointed path still rests upon you. In other words, you are forlorn with your own decision, and you must live with that. At last, despair results from the uncontrollability of reality. You feel helpless and lost

because it seems that most of the outcomes are unforeseen and unchangeable (Sartre pars 16).

With the above groundwork in mind, we will now examine how the gloom over human life presented by phenomenologists finally dissipates due to the brilliant resolution offered by the World State.

“The world’s stable now. People are happy; they get what they want, and they never want what they can’t get. They’re well off; they’re safe; they’re never ill; they’re never afraid of death... they are so conditioned that they practically can’t help behaving as they ought to behave ” (Huxley 194).

What Mustapha Mond (the controller of the World State) describes above is perfect evidence of the dissolution of Existential anxiety. In virtue of biological manipulation and sleep-teaching, the State has already made every choice for its citizens. In other words, they are free from the responsibility of choice. Moreover, if one is conditioned to believe that he or she definitely belongs to the current circumstance, the so-called “anguish” will no longer exist in that there is only one option for them. They would not constantly wonder “what if”, simply because they are conditioned to accept the

status quo happily and unquestionably. As for the feeling of despair, the said society is certainly not the place in which despair can strike root, not when predictability has become the most pronounced feature there. To put it another way, thanks to the accurate types and amount of chemicals in every bottle, as well as the matched education later on, one can literally predict the life of a person to the letter: “each one of us goes through life inside a bottle”, as stated by Mond (Huxley 195). No one would ever go beyond the life prescribed by the initial procedure. Therefore, the feeling of helplessness in the face of chaotic life is finally wiped out. With the three components being resolved, it would no longer be groundless to claim that in this brave new world, existential anxiety is eradicated for the first time in the course of human history.

It is not my intention to defend that the practice of the State does not violate the definition of the acts of free will, which it undoubtedly does. Instead, I am merely suggesting that we might have been too harsh on the state’s regulations: is it fair to accuse the state of denying its citizens free will when actually there exists no free will in the first place? It is true that we are not living in a world that is so perfectly

controlled by the government as in the *Brave New World*. Yet we are still influenced or even determined by numerous things in the world. Biologically, we are determined by our genes, neurons, brains and so forth; psychologically, we are determined by our “thrown-ness”, that is, the time, place and circumstances we happen to be born into (Funder 443). Moreover, the values we have long held are in truth the values propagated by certain ideologies; sometimes the idea might not come from your heritage culture (the culture you are born into), but it can definitely find its prototype in another one. And if one believes in what prevails in tragedies, there might even be the forces of chaos influencing the life course of humans. All the factors being taken into consideration, it seems so hard to prove that one can really have one’s own unaffected wills or thoughts. We tend to believe that what makes you who you are is your self-choice when confronting challenges, not the other way round. It makes us so uncomfortable to think that it is actually who we are (i.e. our inner characters or personalities in modern term) that drives us to that particular choice. Because in doing so, we are admitting that there is no free will; we are as good as throwing our own fates upon the mercy of an unfathomable transcendental force, leaving with ourselves

only the feeling of helplessness.

Such being the case, would it not be more desirable to let a state that can at least assure humans of stability and peace take over, rather than leave ourselves at the disposal of forces of chaos merely for the rather childish adherence to intangible principles (i.e. the insistence on possessing free will).

III. Science

Another common criticism of the World State is its suppression of the pursuit of truth, in other words, its eradication of scientific spirit. Where the World State is concerned, humans' ceaseless devotion to finding out Truth is precisely the evidence for life's chaotic and deceptive nature, which is just the opposite of the stable and predictable life advocated in this society. In that case, in the name of maintenance of happiness and stability, science, as well as art, have no room to exist (Huxley 198).

Science thereby has been debased to serve only the advance of technology and mass production. Barr therefore condemns the state for denying humans' free spirit and their inclination to question, to imagine and to seek truth, which he believes are the essence that distinguishes human beings from other creatures (847).

Nonetheless, arguments of the kind would be cast shadow if the nature of Truth should be held up to scrutiny. Nietzsche excoriates in *the Joyful Wisdom* the dualism inherent in the so-called science spirit. He comes up with two arguments to illustrate. At first, embodiment of freethinking as it is, the pursuit of science in principle should not have contained any a priori conviction; yet the attempt of it in fact bears the assumption that a kind of Ultimate Truth indeed exists, which is quite self-contradictive. Secondly, Nietzsche suggests that people seek Truth in that they do not want to live in deception that is usually deemed harmful. However, no one can be positive that “unconditional distrust” is indeed less unpleasant and less harmful than “unconditional trust” (JW 344). Therefore, it is concluded that humans’ endless pursuit of Truth is irrational and uncondusive. When applying this kind of idea to the operation of the state, one is rather likely to begin to wonder if it would actually be more pragmatic, given the irrationality and futility of science spirit being exposed above, to simply observe the State’s policy (i.e. the subordination of science to pure practical technology), than to plunge into something full of self-contradiction.

IV. Religion

Equally tricky in this novel is the issue concerning religion. In later chapters, there is a philosophical debate involving the abolition of God between Mond and John. “It is the fear of death and of what comes after death that makes men turn to religion”, said Mond, “we feel the need to lean on something that abides, something that will never play us false – a reality, an absolute and everlasting truth” (Huxley 205). On his account, the fear of the fluctuation of life compels man to turn to God. Apparently, in the real world, the nature of life is never certainty but flux: “Yet even the stream into which you step a second time is not the one you stepped into before”. The very thought of things’ undergoing constant change frightens the common to the extent that they feel obliged to find a permanent anchor so as to survive from the vicissitude of life. The absence of a promise of comfort and security therefore provides the soil in which Religion can flourish.

Following the logic above, it seems only natural that God would come to his own termination under the governance of the World State. With the State’s perfect stability and predictability, as well as the long-lasting youth and vitality ensured by advanced technology, God for the first time becomes useless and redundant. Therefore, it indeed

seems that in this society God is dead; or at least the Metaphysical God is dead (in comparison with the values of God). In strictness of speech, God does not die a natural death; it is murdered by the State. Since God is representative of an ideology that is in the sheer opposite of the happiness and mass consumption in the World State, its death actually becomes imperative: it must die. If the citizens were absorbed into the contrast between the gloominess of the real life and the comfort in the afterlife, they would not have interest in the here and now; if they were to observe asceticism, the society's economics, which is built upon consumerism, would inevitably slip into collapse.

Up to now, the successful termination of the belief in God in the World State is beyond doubt. We are now in a position to discuss the next question: is the practice (i.e. the eradication of God) really conducive or not?

On this matter, John apparently abhors the idea of the abandonment of God, or more specifically, the Christian God. He insists that God has value in itself. For him, God provides the reason for endurance, courage, self-denial, chastity, and so forth (Huxley 208-209). His desperate speech in the novel is indeed affecting. If one thinks

carefully, however, it follows that his argument is based on the presupposition of humans' original sin and their need of salvation, which is rather questionable in itself. Moreover, Christianity depicted in this novel seems unable to offer its disciples comfort and tranquility at all. To take an example, in the latter chapters, John is determined to live an ascetic life through voluntarily denying himself anything pleasant and comfortable. When he discerns a trace of enjoyment in working, he would even rush to whip himself mercilessly, as if in so doing he proves that he deserves the atonement of God. Furthermore, it is when he has toiled for hours that he would feel like he is entitled to some rest. He loves Lenina; yet he harshly beats her away when she fails to fit into the mould of chastity and modesty prescribed by Christianity, and even denies her and himself as well the last chance to mend things together and try a fresh start, even though it only throws him into the abyss of agony and alienation. It is not so hard then to detect the morbidity and obsession in this kind of mentality. Here, not only does Christianity fail to function as a comfort, it even comes to destroy its people's chance of ever being happy, which inevitably casts shadow over this religion and obliquely does some credit to the World State's practice

as to the renunciation of God.

Moreover, if human beings indeed inherit original sin because of the disobedience of Adam and Eve, then it is the creator who should be to blame, a weak creator who vents his frustration on his creation for the reason that the creation has exceeded his expectation. God being a harsh and vindictive existence, humans are in every right not to live their lives in the constant fear of disappointing him; instead, God must be killed for becoming a disappointment for human beings. Just as Zarathustra exclaims, “Better not god, better to produce destiny on one’s own account... better to be God oneself” (Nietzsche, TSZ 274).

To sum up a bit, if indeed neither the belief in God nor the God per se is desirable, it is only natural and justifiable for the people in the World State to abolish them all together.

Now that we illustrate that in appearance the World State is doing the right thing by abolishing Christian God, in the following parts, the hypocritical nature of the State will be brought to light through revealing its deliberate replacement of Christian God by an equally menacing replica. To start with, a subtle distinction must be

pointed out. When Mond talks about the uselessness of God, he refers only to the specific God in Christianity. What one can argue here is that far from eradicating the unconditionally religious belief humans once shared, the World State invents another deity to keep people in control. Parallels between the new god (i.e. Ford) and Christian God are not wanting in this novel. For instance, the rituals in Solidarity Service at the Fordson Community Singery bear great resemblance with those in the community celebration at the Reservation (Huxley 97). People in the World State develop extremely high worship to their Ford just in the same manner as people in pre-modern time did to their Christian God. In that case, it seems fair to pronounce that there is no progress whatsoever in the World State; everything is but illusion.

Nevertheless, to make things more complicated, in the attempt to diminish the World State's aforementioned achievement on renouncing Christianity by arguing that there is in truth no difference between the two worlds considering their equally blindly religious beliefs, one actually runs a great risk of putting him/herself into an irreconcilable dilemma. In other words, should we admit of this interpretation suggested by the aforementioned argument, it would turn out to be that whenever we

mock their values, we are no more than mocking the values of ours.

To be sure, lots of people might protest immediately that the formal resemblance on the surface means nothing. The reason why the homage to Ford in the World State is nonsensical is that what humans need is a sympathetic and sacrificing God, not a commercialist substitute. However, I will then argue that this kind of assertion is merely self-deception.

To start with, from John's perspective, which is also the perspective of a lot of readers, their God is static and unchangeable. Since the same God is nowhere to be found in the World State, it must follow that God is eventually dead there. However, as Mond incisively points out to John: God just "manifests himself in different ways to different men" (Huxley 206). Put it another way, the World State never succeeds in getting rid of God; God now is merely in a different appearance.

In order to support the statement, it must be marked that God is not just a specific figure but symbolic of a whole value system in terms of which people construct their understanding of the world and themselves. In that case, as long as men still define themselves according to external values, God will still be in his reign; as long as men

still cannot affirm a life with their own measurements, God would never be dethroned from his supremacy. The citizens' absolute faith that they doubtlessly belong to one caste and therefore must live a life in accordance with the values designed specifically for that class, as well as their unquestioned zeal for Ford, is the best evidence for their being slaves to something alike God in Christianity. They need to believe in Ford, because they need the very system Ford represents to maintain a familiar and predictable world for them. Quite ironically, those citizens can find a remarkable parallel to Christians: Christians need to believe in their God because they need Christianity to help them escape the real world that is full of suffering, to render the present suffering more endurable by wishing for a heavenly afterlife. For both of the groups (people in the Word State and people in Christian societies), they believe in the systems because they have to; they cannot live without them. However, they could not be said to be freed from something (blind faith in God in this case) when they have not proven that the thing is merely useful but not essential to them. It is only when they have already survived without that belief that they can affirm that God (whatever forms he is in) is no longer the master over them. To sum up, it should

become clear now that people in the World State is not even remotely getting close to the repudiation of God.

The claim that God is not dead but just changes his manifestation can be further testified by people's reaction in the World State. Suppose God were indeed dead in the World State, considering the drastic overturn of the very foundation upon which people have constructed their "meaningful" lives, the State's cheerfulness at present is in truth morbid. Instead of falling into chaotic state, the society in the State has arrived at an ultimate stability that no one society in history had ever managed to get close to. It therefore follows the only explanation: God, or at least the slavish core values represented by God still linger around the State, sustaining the common's daily lives. As a matter of fact, the unnatural cheerfulness pervading in the World State echoes exactly the common's limbo state that the madman in the market observes and thus feels so desperately to smash (Nietzsche JW 125).

From what has been discussed above, we can conclude that Christians' seemingly sublime belief in God bears no difference (both in appearance and in essence) from the citizens' worship to Ford in the State. If we consider their worship to Ford absurd;

it therefore must follow that our belief in our God is equally absurd. That being the case, can you still find the courage to say that the value system in the World State is completely ridiculous?

V. Caste System

For most readers, citizens in the World State are prejudiced and lack of compassion. Nevertheless, there is still something peculiar in the hypnopaedic conditioning that cannot be easily dismissed. When Lenina and Henry pass by a crematorium, responding to Lenina's question, Henry says: "All men are physic-chemically equal. Besides, even Epsilons perform indispensable services" (Huxley 63). It seems that the sleeping education they have received, which is doubtlessly "racist" in the views of ours, is in a subtle way acknowledging people in lower castes. For instance, Betas are conditioned to believe that Epsilons are ugly and stupid; they would turn away and refuse to play with them (Huxley 22). But in the meantime, they believe every caste has its indispensable responsibilities to the society; in other words, they are of the opinion that "what is, is right". It never occurred to them to try to change people from other castes according to their standards.

Interestingly, the way the society conditions the people to behave seems coincide with what Nietzsche proclaims in “The Ugliest Man”, where God is murdered by the ugliest man for God’s gazing at him “unblinking and through and through” (*TSZ* 276).

Without God’s sympathetic gazing, the ugliest man would never have come to the knowledge that ugliness is something shameful, something deserving compassion.

God, different from the World State citizens who accept each other as who they truly are and acknowledge the diverse but equally important self-values, seems unable to stand anything that diverges from his perception about the world, about good and evil.

It is exactly the compassion and “good-intention” God shows in the face of the ugliest man that debases the said person’s pride and self-values. Following this logic, the citizens actually express their equal respect for all human beings inasmuch as they show no compassion for people from lower castes: they acknowledge the legitimacy of those people’ existence. Without privileged people’s sympathetic staring, people from lower castes would never feel inferior about their own existence. Their “ugliness” would never be a disease yet to be cured.

In sum, paradoxical though it seems, instead of imposing a unitary standard of

value judgement upon different groups in the society, people in the World State is displaying enormous tolerance towards difference, much better than compassion, of which the essence is but an insult to humanity.

VI. Repression

As already mentioned in the first section, in the World State, the citizens are encouraged to take in Soma to suppress sporadic negative feelings and to maximise possible pleasure. However, at that stage we only talked about infantilisation caused by immoderate satisfaction, as well as the immoral implication in the policy. Let us put aside for a moment the concern with morality of this policy. Here I will continue to argue that even if one agrees with the State's initial motive, it does not follow that this kind of administrative philosophy should become flawless henceforward. Quite the reverse, the blind eagerness to observe the implication of Freudian theory so as to ensure a stable personal development would eventually turn out to be counterproductive in practice.

To start with, the State's attempt to use "happy drug" to eliminate every possible repression is in essence repression of another kind, which is in fact far more

dangerous and menacing than the previous one. This novel provides a detailed case study of the possible consequences following the abuse of Soma. Coming back from the Reservation, John's mother finds herself unable to cope with the marginalisation inflicted upon her by the community. She therefore resorts to Soma in order to forget the agony along with maladaptation and depression. With the increase of doses of the drug, she gradually loses normal functions essential in daily life as well as contact with the real world, irretrievably sliding into a state which one would call surviving rather than living. She finally dies from respiratory failure.

Considering the horrific result of the use of Soma, it would not be illegitimate to wonder what goes wrong with the seemingly alluring invention that guarantees immediate gratification. To start with, intentionally or unintentionally, in the practice of the popularisation of Soma, the State becomes negligent in the potential consequences of unresolved psychic conflicts, which are totally beyond the control of external drugs. People rely on Soma to avoid direct confrontation with any possible emotional problems; since drugs of the kind can do no more than repress people's emergent unpleasant feelings or impulses, which are in essence symptomatic of

deeper psychological problems, back to the unconscious, those deliberately neglected conflicts are consequently accumulated there, consuming people's mental energy that could have been spent elsewhere, generating an unhealthy psychic state. More specifically speaking, here the World State's practice in effect intrigues Defence mechanisms (Denial and Repression in this case), a kind of psychological schema created by the agent to alleviate the anxiety brought about by the psychic conflict (Funder 381-385). Over time, those repressed problems would be irreversibly internalised and result in Depression. Suffering from such a mental disorder, naturally those citizens would try to increase the doses to regain psychic equilibrium, which will only keep increasing with later drug habituation. That being the case, people are doomed to suffer a slow death with organ or respiratory failure, not to mention the torment of ever-aggravating psychological problems.

Moreover, the conformist lifestyle along with internal repression in the State has already presented to the citizens two perilous problems, namely, vegetativeness and adventurousness, both of which are discerned and yet disregarded by the State. Instead, the State just invents new ways, such as feelies and injection of epinephrine,

to cancel out the side effects. If this kind of existential psychosocial pathology is the price paid for the stability and happiness, one might as well claim the right to be unhappy, just as John's declaration: "I don't want comfort. I want God, I want poetry, I want real danger, I want freedom, I want goodness, I want sin" (Huxley 211).

VII. Conclusion

With the six controversial themes being thoroughly examined from disparate perspectives, hopefully it should be established by now beyond reasonable doubt that every practice implemented by the World State in this novel creates in itself irreconcilable dualism. We are now in a position to conclude that seemingly straightforward plots and characters notwithstanding, *Brave New World* is in truth an extremely complicated and ambivalent novel. Any attempts to reach a final verdict on the virtues of this conceived world would inevitably fall into self-contradiction.

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