

The Past Inside Out: the Paradox of George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

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0. Introduction

As the title *Nineteen Eighty-Four* suggests, temporality is an important factor in the novel. Although the novel is set in the future, it follows the struggle of the main protagonist who looks for the past. In fact, Winston's rebellion aims at the retrieval of the past or history, which is inaccessible in the regime of Big Brother. This hope of Winston is embodied by the glass paperweight, which Winston buys at a junk shop. The paperweight is a glass hemisphere which contains a piece of coral, and what appeals to Winston is the fact that the coral has been protected from the passage of time for more than a hundred years. The image of the past sheltered from the outer threat epitomizes Winston's idealized view of former times. In contrast, the Party monopolizes written documents and, as a result, controls the past. Therefore, it can be said that the novel describes the fight for the past. Focusing on the issue of the past, this essay analyses why Winston persists in tracing the past and what the eventual transformation of Winston implies in terms of the fight for the past.

In order to investigate the points above, it is necessary to examine the dichotomy of the inside and the outside, which is one of the most salient motifs in the novel. As the glass paperweight keeps the past intact, Winston Smith looks for the residual past, which has escaped the control of the Party, while the Party tries to annihilate this distinction and rule the whole domain of history. This dialectic of the inside and the outside is rendered dynamic especially in the brainwashing of Winston, where his former belief is converted. The following sections investigate the issue of the past in relation to this inside–outside dichotomy.

1. The deprivation of temporal foundation

Nineteen Eighty-Four narrates the resistance of Winston Smith against the regime of Big Brother and

Winston's eventual arrest. Interestingly, among various actions against the party, his first step is to get a notebook and keep a diary. This act might appear rather trivial, but in fact it is the crucial moment. His decision to keep a diary has a symbolic meaning, as a series of his subsequent actions mostly aim to regain the past, which is systemically controlled by the party.

Along with the panoptic surveillance system by telescreen and a set of brainwashing techniques, the control of history is an integral part of party rule. One of the reasons why the party monopolizes history is that the continual revision of the past allows the party to legitimize its reign. An important task of the Ministry of Truth, where Winston works as a party member, is to continually rewrite the past in favour of the party. Whenever a contradiction arises between the party's official statement and reality, the party modifies the record of the statement, while distorting the reality by brainwashing techniques such as *doublethink*. By means of continual falsification, the party can insist that it has always been correct; with historical documents monopolized by the party, it is impossible to challenge the party regarding the authenticity of the official history, since there is no evidence of the forgery in the form of hard material:

And when memory failed and written records were falsified – when that happened, the claim of the Party to have improved the conditions of human life had got to be accepted, because there did not exist, and never again could exist, any standard against which it could be tested (97).

As a result, history in the regime is always changing: “All history was a palimpsest, scraped clean and re-inscribed exactly as often as was necessary” (42). As is suggested by the “palimpsest” metaphor, which will be discussed in greater detail later, the manipulation of official history renders the past amorphous and unreliable for Winston.

In addition to history's role as a means of legitimization of the regime, the domination of the past

brings the party another advantage: the uncertainty of the temporal foundation makes the people susceptible to brainwashing. As is argued in some narrative theories, a narrative based on temporal sequences is essential for a person to maintain his or her sense of identity, which can be defined as a felt assurance of the continuance of the self.ⁱ Therefore, if the past becomes amorphous through the manipulation of the party, one's life story becomes instable. In fact, Winston cannot remember his early childhood; as a result, he is unsure of his own life history, or who he is:

[H]e was struggling to think his way backward into the dim period of his early childhood. It was extraordinarily difficult. Beyond the late 'fifties everything faded. When there were no external records that you could refer to, even the outline of your own life lost its sharpness (34).

Important in this passage is that Winston's lack of self-knowledge leads to amorphousness of his life; he has to acknowledge that the contour of his life is blurred. In this respect, Winston is not alone. Using this same manoeuvre, the party is able to transform individuals in Oceania into amorphous masses that can be moulded into a form the party likes. Moreover, in Winston's case, his parents were likely to have been *vaporized*, or secretly arrested, executed, and treated as if they had never existed. With his parents *vaporized*, Winston was in theory born from nobody, for his parents are *non-persons*. Therefore, being nobody's child, Winston is suffering from the loss of his origin. He is tormented by this void, which he wants to fill by regaining the memory of his childhood.

In addition, deprivation of temporal orientation is a basic technique the party employs to brainwash a thought criminal. After his arrest by the Thought Police, Winston is brought to the Ministry of Love, where modern technological torture awaits.ⁱⁱ An important physical characteristic of the Ministry of Love is that it deprives a prisoner of the sense of time. The room where Winston is detained is described as follows:

He was in a high-ceilinged windowless cell with walls of glittering white porcelain. Concealed lamps flooded it with cold light, and there was a low, steady humming which he supposed had something to do with the air supply (237).

In this completely artificial space, there is no natural cycle of day and night, as Winston "knew instinctively, the lights would never be turned out" (241). Consequently, Winston repeatedly asks himself how long he has been

confined; he wonders that "[i]t might be twenty-four hours since he had eaten, it might be thirty-six" (237). Also, when he saw the extremely thin figure of himself in a mirror, he is horrified to realize that "he must have been in this place longer than he had imagined" (285). After depriving the temporal foundation in this way, the party begins to brainwash. In short, deprivation of the sense of time is an integral technique used by the party to brainwash people, within or without the Ministry of Love.

It is in this context that Winston starts to keep a diary. In a world where the party monopolizes and tampers the past, writing a personal version of history is a highly political act. Keeping evidences of the party's forgery, Winston tries to undermine the foundation of its rule. Yet, there is also a personal reason for keeping a diary. Unable to remember his parents, Winston is desperate to find his origin and understand who he is. His desire to know the true history is founded on his aspiration to retrieve his own life history.

2. Nostalgia

Many passages in the novel show Winston's attachment to the past, and as the story develops, Winston's desire for the past intensifies. In the first chapter, Winston writes on his diary "DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER", but after the entrance ritual to the Brotherhood, he cheers "To the past" instead of O'Brien's suggestion of "To the confusion of the Thought Police? To the death of Big Brother? To humanity? To the future?" (184). His rebellion becomes almost identical with the search for the past. In this way, the novel is permeated with the struggle for the past, which functions, as Howe points out, as an impressive element in the novel.

Winston's struggle for the past is not immune from nostalgia. One of the reasons why Winston longs for the past is that the past age is different from the present. As his diary is dedicated "*To the future or to the past, to a time when thought is free, when men are different from one another and do not live alone – to a time when truth exists and what is done cannot be undone*" (30), Winston refers to the past as an age when there was no falsification of the past and there was truth. In a sense, his passion for the past can be regarded as a longing for the Golden Age.

This idealized view of the past is most apparent in his fascination with Charrington's junk shop in the

prole district. This shop, where he bought his diary, has a variety of old curiosities that are worthless in the Big Brother regime. Winston knows well that possessing such items is highly dangerous, but the oldness of things, or the sense of the past, strongly appeals to Winston. Among various junk, one thing he particularly likes and purchases is a glass paperweight, which, according to Charrington, is at least one hundred years old:

It was a heavy lump of glass, curved on one side, flat on the other, making almost a hemisphere. There was a peculiar softness, as of rain-water, in both the colour and the texture of the glass. At the heart of it, magnified by the curved surface, there was a strange, pink, convoluted object that recalled a rose or a sea anemone. (98-99)

The paperweight is a glass hemisphere containing what looks like a rose or a sea anemone. This unfamiliar item from the past has an exotic beauty for Winston, yet the greatest charm for him is the sense of the past the paperweight evokes: “What appealed to him about it was not so much its beauty as the air it seemed to possess of belonging to an age quite different from the present one.” (99) In other words, Winston likes the paperweight simply because it was made in the age when, as he wrote in his diary, “*truth exists and what is done cannot be undone*”. The sense of the past also comes from the paperweight’s form: the hemisphere of glass covers and protects the rose-like coral, a reminiscence of the past, and keeps the past intact through the passage of time. In other words, the paperweight is a symbol of a peaceful past secluded from a tyrannical power.

Encapsulating the past, the paperweight is a microcosm of Charrington’s shop itself. In particular the upstairs room of the shop, which Winston rents as a hiding place, is analogous with the paperweight. The room is equipped with old-fashioned furniture from the former age and, as the absence of a telescreen suggests, it appears to be free from the invading power of Big Brother. Looking at the room, Winston feels as follows:

[T]he room had awakened in him a sort of nostalgia, a sort of ancestral memory. It seemed to him that he knew exactly what it felt like to sit in a room like this, in an armchair beside an open fire with your feet in the fender and a kettle on the hob: utterly alone, utterly secure, with nobody watching you, no voice pursuing you, no sound except the singing of the kettle and the friendly ticking of the clock. (100)

Winston thinks the room contains “ancestral memory” in the same way as the paperweight holds the past within.

Therefore, for Winston, the room is a kind of museum where extinct things are kept and displayed: “The room was a world, a pocket of the past where extinct animals could walk. Mr Charrington, thought Winston, was another extinct animal” (157). If Charrington is an extinct animal, Winston himself is an endangered animal looking for sanctuary, as the novel was originally intended to be titled *The Last Man*.

Therefore, when Winston rents the room and has a rendezvous with Julia there, he is symbolically entering the glass paperweight. The room is a tiny world secluded from the danger of the outer world, just as the coral is protected by the glass of the paperweight:

The inexhaustibly interesting thing was not the fragment of coral but the interior of the glass itself. There was such a depth of it, and yet it was almost as transparent as air. It was as though the surface of the glass had been the arch of the sky, enclosing a tiny world with its atmosphere complete. He had the feeling that he could get inside it, and that in fact he was inside it, along with the mahogany bed and the gate-leg table, and the clock and the steel engraving and the paperweight itself. *The paperweight was the room he was in, and the coral was Julia’s life and his own, fixed in a sort of eternity at the heart of the crystal* (my italics, 154).

The room provides a sense of timelessness. As the hemisphere of the enclosing glass protects the past inside, Winston and Julia, like endangered animals in a sanctuary, can find refuge in the room surrounded by furniture of the past age. This image and structure of the glass paperweight symbolize Winston’s nostalgic attachment to the past.

3. The quest for residual memories

Although it is clear that Winston yearns for the past, we must still ask what kind of past he is looking for. Obviously, the past Winston is fascinated by is completely different from the party’s official history. In investigating this point, the metaphor of a “palimpsest” is crucial: as cited above, “All history was a palimpsest, scraped clean and re-inscribed exactly as often as was necessary” in the Ingsoc world. Although the metaphor of a palimpsest primarily refers to the continual revision of history by the party, it also suggests a survival of erased memories. As we know, in literary theory a “palimpsest” refers to the multiple-layeredness of a text; even if a text is erased to write anew, the erasure is not

complete and the previous text is still to some extent discernible. In other words, despite repeated rewriting, on a palimpsest one can still see layers of former texts beneath the latest version. This is true of the palimpsest metaphor in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*; Winston is, as it were, reading a palimpsest for the residue of erased memories, trying to reconstruct the true history from the fragmented remains.

Winston's first step towards this goal is to go to a prole district. He regards proles as a subversive power, as he wrote in his diary that "*if there is hope [. . .] it lies in the proles*" (72) – a statement that recurs throughout the novel. *Proles*, the lower-class labourers, constitute "85 per cent of the population of Oceania" (72), but not being party members, they are rather neglected by the party, while party members are strictly controlled. As the party's slogan "Proles and animals are free" (75) clearly shows, proles are equated with animals. Yet, it is in their animal-like vitality that Winston finds a hope for subversion of the Big Brother regime. Likewise, he is attracted to Julia who embodies "the animal instinct, the simple undifferentiated desire: that was the force that would tear the party to pieces" (132). For Winston, the hope lies in the untamed "animals" rather than the tamed party members.

When he returns to the prole district, Winston's idea is that proles might also have subversive memory. Their area looks like a slum, but in this chaotic aspect Winston finds hope: it seems to Winston that the residual memories are hidden in the promiscuity of the district with a "cobbled street of little two-storey houses with battered doorways which gave straight on the pavement and which were somehow curiously suggestive of rat-holes" (86). Thinking that "[i]f there was anyone still alive who could give you a truthful account of conditions in the early part of the century, it could only be a *prole*" (90), Winston dares to go into a proles' pub, although it is prohibited for a party member to go to the area. Finding an old man in the pub, Winston persistently asks him many questions relating to the past. Although the result turns out to be disappointing, Winston hopes that he can find true history, intact from the falsification of the party, as Charrington's shop in the district contains the residues of the past.

In choosing the old *prole* for the research of hidden history, Winston is resorting to folkloric power. With written records systematically falsified, his only alternative for reclaiming the past is to look for the residue of memories in the oral narrative of old people.

While the official history is connected with hegemony and authority, a narrative by a survivor of the former age is a type of folkloric heritage. The oral history may lack material evidence, but it has first-hand experience and emotional genuineness. Because of this, Winston thinks he might be able to find traces of the erased past in oral history.

This emphasis on the oral narrative reverberates with Winston's attachment to the nursery rhyme "Oranges and Lemons". As Kawabata argues, the song plays a very important role in the novel, not only because it appears frequently in the text, but also because the song and the way children play with the song prophesize the eventual catastrophe of Winston's adventure (40-42). "Oranges and Lemons" is introduced into the text with a wide blank in the lyrics; Winston first came to know the song through a conversation with Charrington, but Charrington does not tell him the whole lyrics. Winston is only told the beginning, "'Orange and lemons', says the bells of St Clements", and the ending, "Here comes a chopper to chop off your head" (102). Attracted to the rhyme, Winston persistently tries to fill the gap in the lyrics, as he struggles to find the traces of the erased in history as a palimpsest, aiming at the reconstruction of the true history.

Winston is fascinated by the song because he thinks the rhyme has folkloric power with its evocation of the past orally passed on. "Oranges and Lemons" is a well-known example of English oral tradition, but in the world of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* it has been reduced to a residue of the past, which most people have forgotten. That is why the rhyme is as important as the glass paperweight for Winston, who believes that the residual is a clue to the erased past. In fact, the rhyme has strong power to evoke the past:

It was curious, but when you said it to yourself you had the illusion of actually hearing bells, the bells of a lost London that still existed somewhere or other, *disguised and forgotten* (my italics, 103)

The song recreates the sound of bells in the mind of Winston. More importantly, the rhyme suggests the survival of the erased; the song gives Winston the impression that the old London is not lost, merely hiding in a "disguised and forgotten" form. As history is a palimpsest where the erased is not entirely lost, the residue of old London might be found somewhere in the city as a palimpsest. This is why Winston unconsciously believes that by discovering the lyrics of "Oranges and Lemons", he will be able to uncover the forgotten history.

The folkloric is the soil of history where Winston looks for traces of the erased, while the Party controls the latest layer of official history.

Winston's search for the residual is also oriented to himself, for residual history is hidden inside his mind too. First of all, his discontent with the regime derives from the fact that he cannot forget the former versions of history. Whereas others appear to be without doubt regarding the contradictory official statement of the party, Winston does remember the past to some extent and detects the contradiction. In other words, Winston suffers from an incomplete erasure of memory in his own mind, where traces of the past survive. Moreover, his inability to forget impels him to look for his origin. As argued above, being a son of *non-persons*, Winston is deprived of an origin. Nevertheless, Winston vaguely remembers his lost family, especially his mother. This residue of memory drives him to pursue the part of his memory that is lost. As Reilly argues, the novel focuses on a man seeking his true self (116), yet in order to find his true self, Winston needs to find the true history. He is desperate to recover the erased part of his memory like a palimpsest. In doing so, he is trying to rediscover and reconstruct his own life history.

In the quest for the residual inside Winston's memory, dreams are of peculiar importance. As in a Freudian theory, dreams in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* convey Winston's repressed memory. It is through his dream that the reader can understand that Winston's search for an origin is concerned with a sense of guilt. One day Winston has a dream of his mother, which is related to the reason his mother disappeared: "Winston was dreaming of his mother. [. . .] He could not remember what had happened, but he knew in his dream that in some way the lives of his mother and his sister had been sacrificed to his own" (32). The dream shows that Winston feels guilty for the fact that he is the only survivor in the family. Also, it is important to note that he is not certain what actually happened when they disappeared. His dream evokes his unconscious memory, but it is very vague – like erased letters on a palimpsest. Therefore, relying on the residual, Winston tries to retrieve the complete memory of his childhood.

If the dream is a container of the residual, it is not strange that the dream resembles the glass paperweight. When Winston has another dream about his mother, it is narrated using the image of the paperweight. Staying with Julia in the upstairs room of Charrington's shop, the dream brings Winston a revelation about his mother:

It was a vast, luminous dream in which his whole life seemed to stretch out before him like a landscape on a summer evening after rain. *It had all occurred inside the glass paperweight*, but the surface of the glass was the dome of the sky, and inside the dome everything was flooded with clear soft light in which one could see into interminable distances. *The dream had also been comprehended by – indeed, in some sense it had consisted in – a gesture of the arm made by his mother*, and made against thirty years later by the Jewish woman he had seen on the news film, trying to shelter the small boy from the bullets, before the helicopters blew them both to pieces (my italics, 167).

It seems to Winston that the dream, which is an epitome of his whole life, takes place inside the glass paperweight. As he can see the inner object through the arch of the glass constituting a microcosm, his whole life can be seen at a glance in the realm of the dream. Winston knows this dream is a residue of his memories hidden in his unconsciousness, as he thinks "[i]t was a memory that he must have deliberately pushed out of his consciousness over many years" (167-168). Like the party controlling the official history, Winston himself, who is not totally immune from the party's brainwashing techniques, has been monitoring his conscious memory and repressing part of it; however, the dream reveals the unconscious residue of his memory.

In the passage above, we should also note that the gesture of the arm corresponds to the image of the glass paperweight. The figure of a mother protecting a boy with her arm recalls the glass hemisphere sheltering the past inside. Importantly, among various things Winston saw in his dream, what impressed him most is the gesture of the arm: "The dream was still vivid in his mind, especially the enveloping, protecting gesture of the arm in which its whole meaning seemed to be contained" (171). As his whole life is condensed in his dream, which he feels takes place in the glass hemisphere, his whole dream is epitomized in the arch of the arm. Here can be found a *mise-en-abîme* of the symbolical structure. In the room, which is a macrocosm of the glass paperweight, he has a dream which corresponds to the image of the paperweight. Among these overlapping images, what is common is not only the fact that they contain the residue of the past, but also the sense of being protected from the outer threat.

In this *mise-en-abîme*, the residual and the inviolable inside are intermingled and constitute the

philosophical basis of Winston's rebellion against the party. Winston's actions are based on his belief that there is a sphere which is protected from the invading power of Big Brother. Just after he had the dream above, the following conversation with Julia takes place in their secret room:

'It's the one thing they can't do. They can make you say anything – *anything* – but they can't make you believe it. They can't get inside you.'

'No,' he said a little more hopefully, 'no: that's quite true. They can't get inside you.' (179).

In a sense, Winston and Julia are fighting to guard the boundary of their small sphere against the invasion of the party, and the glass paperweight is the symbol of the successful protection of the sacred inside.

4. The paradox of conversion

Winston's belief in the inviolable inside, however, will be turned inside out when he is eventually arrested. The arrest and subsequent interrogation shatters his values completely: it is revealed to him that what appeared to be residual has been under the control of the party and that the party can get inside Winston's mind and change his ideas.

In the struggle against Big Brother, Winston assumed a dichotomy between the written and the oral, and between the dominant and the residual. As is argued above, Winston believed that he could access the "true" history by resorting to the oral narratives, and that the "true" history would defy the falsified official history of the party. In other words, these distinctions were the fortification for Winston to protect his own sphere.

Yet, when Winston faces his catastrophe, he is forced to acknowledge that the dichotomy was a mere illusion. Charrington, who appeared to be an "extinct animal" selling old junk, proves to be a member of Thought Police. O'Brien, who taught Winston the full lyrics of "Oranges and Lemons", is not a member of the Brotherhood, but a faithful member of the Inner Party whose mission is to discover dissenters. In short, what Winston thought as the residue of the past – the glass paperweight, the upstairs room of Charrington's shop, and the nursery rhyme – belongs not to Winston, but to the party. In this way, the sacred inner world is turned inside out, as the glass paperweight is shattered to pieces at the arrest:

There was another crash. Someone had picked up the glass paperweight from the table and smashed it

to pieces on the hearth-stone.

The fragment of coral, a tiny crinkle of pink like a sugar rosebud from a cake, rolled across the mat (232).

When the party intrudes into the inside, the illusion of being sheltered is shattered, and the inner object falls out and becomes vulnerable to the external world.

If Winston's desire was to find the residue of the past kept inside, the strategy of the party is to annihilate the distinction between the inside and the outside. At Winston's interrogation, O'Brien persistently argues that it is a fallacy that the outer reality is separated from the inner mind:

You believe that reality is something objective, external, existing in its own right. [. . .] [Y]ou assume that everyone else sees the same thing as you. But I tell you, Winston, that reality is not external. Reality exists in the human mind, and nowhere else (261).

Employing the solipsist logic that "[n]othing exists except through human consciousness" (278), O'Brien argues that reality resides not in the external objects or phenomena but in the mind that interprets them. That is why brainwashing mechanisms are operated methodically in the Ingsoc world. By controlling the minds of individuals, the party controls the reality that is a reflection of the human mind. This view is expressed most clearly in the following words by O'Brien: "Reality is inside the skull" (277). Although the image of the skull containing reality might resemble that of the glass paperweight, the logic of the party is completely different from that of Winston. While Winston believed the inner realm to be separate from the outer world, the party eradicates the distinction of inside and outside because, according to O'Brien, the inner mind *is* the outer reality.

In fact, the fundamental strategy of the party is to deprive individuals' inner egos. The omnipresence of telescreens, which is the most salient surveillance device in the novel, aims at the annihilation of the inside/outside distinction. The telescreen might remind the reader of Foucault's argument on the panopticon, a penitentiary system where prisoners in cells can be watched anytime by jailers who stay in a central tower. The crux of the panopticon system is that prisoners cannot know exactly when they are being watched, although they know jailers might watch them anytime they like. As a result, in fear of the jailers' eyes, even when they are not being watched, prisoners behave as if they are being observed; in other words, they internalize the eyes of the jailers and

monitor themselves with the eyes. In this regard, people in the world of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* are like prisoners in a panopticon; almost every behaviour or speech might be spied through numerous telescreens, but surveillance is intermittent and people are not sure if the Thought Police are actually watching them or not, as “there was of course no way of knowing whether you were being watched at any given moment” (4). As a result, one has to live “in the assumption that every sound you made was overheard, and except in darkness, every movement scrutinised” (5). The phrase “in the assumption” is significant, as it suggests that the eyes of Big Brother are internalized in the mind. The party plants its eyes inside the minds of the people, and along with other mind-control techniques such as *doublethink*, makes people see the world not with their own eyes but with the implanted eyes of the party, as O’Brien states: “[i]t is impossible to see reality except by looking through the eyes of the Party” (261). By this means the party invades the inner selves, annihilating the distinction between the inside and the outside. After the brainwashing, Winston has to admit his faith in the inviolability of the inside world has collapsed: “they *could* get inside you” (303).

The control of the human mind results not only in the rule of reality but also that of history. Since the past is in itself intangible, people have to rely on written documents and human memories but, as O’Brien argues, the party controls both (260). Winston knew well that written documents were monopolized by the party, but he had a hope that human memories were not entirely under the party’s control. As argued above, it is in human minds that Winston looked for a “true” account of the past; Winston resorted to the oral history of the elderly prole and the nursery rhyme, where the residual might be hidden, but his attempts turn out to be fruitless. Thus, Winston has failed to find his own version of history against the party’s official history.

However, the memory of Winston was not totally controlled by the party. At the root of this reliance on human memory lies the fact that Winston does remember what he should not remember. As he still remembers his family who are supposed not to have existed, his memory contains the residual. Moreover, the residual memory comes involuntarily. At the interrogation by O’Brien, forgetting that he is under torture, Winston denies that memories are involuntary rather than consciously controlled:

‘But how can you stop people remembering things?’
cried Winston, again momentarily forgetting the

dial. ‘It is involuntary. It is outside oneself. How can you control memory? You have not controlled mine!’ (261)

This involuntary, and therefore uncontrollable, nature of memory is what brought Winston a hope of finding the residual history unaltered by the party. As his dreams reveal the memory buried in the unconscious, Winston thought the uncontrollability of memories had a subversive power against the regime of Big Brother. That is why memories inside human minds were valuable for Winston.

After the interrogation, however, even this involuntary memory comes to be controlled by the party. The party teaches Winston “self-discipline”, saying “only the disciplined mind can see reality” (261). As reality is a reflection of a human mind, the party’s eyes implanted inside the mind of Winston come to monitor the involuntary memory and control the interpretation of it. In consequence, the residual memories revealed by the dream are deprived of subversive power.

As is shown above, Winston’s former belief is shattered after his arrest. The party enters and invades Winston’s microcosm symbolized by the glass paperweight. It is cruel of the party that they did not arrest Winston immediately, which they could have done, as they were monitoring Winston through the telescreen hidden in the upstairs room of Charrington’s shop. Instead, the party first gives Winston hopes in the form of the glass paperweight, the nursery rhyme, and the book by Goldstein, and lets him pursue those hopes. Then, after all Winston’s struggles, the party utterly shatters those hopes. In this way, his faith in the inviolability of the inner self and the existence of the residual is crushed.

What is ironic in the novel is the fact that the more Winston struggles against the regime, the closer he comes to catastrophe. This is especially true of the function of the nursery rhyme in the novel. As Kawabata points out, “Oranges and Lemons” is prophetic with the ending of “Here comes a chopper to chop off your head”, suggesting the eventual arrest of Winston (40). While Winston himself believes he is finding out the whole lyrics in order to uncover the hidden past, he is, in fact, realizing the prophecy. In other words, his search for the past is paving a way for the prophesized future embodied by the nursery rhyme.

It might be better to interpret this issue as a paradox. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* contains various paradoxes, and the most obvious are the party slogans such as “WAR IS PEACE / FREEDOM IS SLAVERY / IGNORANCE

IS STRENGTH” (6). More importantly, the novel itself is highly paradoxical. Although set in the future, the world Orwell describes in the novel reflects the political situation of his time, whether totalitarian Stalinism in Russia or socialism in Britainⁱⁱⁱ What is curious in this futuristic novel reflecting the present is that it features the struggle for the retrieval of the past. In short, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is paradoxical in terms of temporality. Therefore, the function of the nursery rhyme, which works as both a key to the past and a prophecy of the future, can be regarded as another example of the contradiction of temporal vectors in the novel.

This paradox brings a slightly bright aspect in the novel. The novel appears to be thoroughly pessimistic, ending with the crushing of Winston’s hopes, as he realizes that there is neither anything inviolable inside nor is the residual memory immune from the influence of the party. Paradoxically, however, we can still find rays of hope in the pessimistic conversion. For example, although Winston’s reliance on the folkloric is subverted, we can also see a product by the party escape from the party’s control. Whereas the nursery rhyme “Oranges and Lemons” turns out to be a trap set by the party, the song mechanically composed by the party comes to acquire folkloric power. Focusing on a washerwoman who sings the song in the neighbourhood of Charrington’s shop, Kawabata suggests that a washerwoman is a typical figure in nursery rhymes. Therefore, although the song is mechanically produced by the party, the way she sings it is very folkloric. Thus, according to Kawabata, the woman is usurping the party’s song into the realm of folklore. In short, the function of the folkloric in the novel is twofold: on the one hand, it is exploited by the party; on the other hand, the mechanical product is transformed into the folkloric. In this way, the conversion is not totally pessimistic, even if it appears to be.

This paradox can also be found in terms of the residual memory. Interestingly enough, Winston can retrieve his lost memory after he submits to the party. After being released from the Ministry of Love, the brainwashed Winston can now deal with the involuntary memory with the party’s reality-control technique. One day a memory comes involuntarily to his mind:

Unrecalled, a memory floated into his mind. He saw a candlelit room with a vast white-counterpaned bed, and himself, a boy of nine or ten, sitting on the floor, shaking a dice-box and laughing excitedly. His mother was sitting opposite him and also

laughing.

It must have been a month before she disappeared. It was a moment of reconciliation, [. . .] For a whole afternoon they had all been happy together, *as in his earlier childhood.*

He pushed the picture out of his mind. It was a false memory. He was troubled by false memories occasionally. They did not matter so long as one knew them for what they were (my italics, 308-309).

As a party member, who is supposed to see and interpret the world through the eyes of the party, he controls the interpretation of the memory; he regards the revelation as a false memory and dismisses it. The paradox here, however, is that the detailed memory comes back after he is brainwashed. Before the brainwashing Winston was desperate to recall the memory of his childhood but could not do so for all his struggle; in contrast, after he is brainwashed the memory comes back with clarity.

What is more, the unrecalled memory recalls the glass paperweight. The scene Winston remembers clearly is of his family staying indoors on a rainy day: “He remembered the day well, a pelting, drenching day when the water streamed down the window-pane and the light indoors was too dull to read by” (309). As the paperweight consists of “soft, rain-water glass” (99), Winston and his family in the memory are sheltered by the rain-drenched window-pane. Even after the paperweight is shattered and Winston comes to dismiss the involuntary memory as false, the image of the glass paperweight reverberates and brings back the clear memory of his childhood which he has been longing for. In this way, Winston’s mind-control paradoxically revives the memory of happy days which the glass paperweight embodies.

These are slightly bright aspects in the pessimism of the novel. It is true that the values Winston held onto throughout his struggle against the party are totally reversed by the party, but the reversal is not entirely in favour of the party. As the song mechanically produced by the party transforms into the folkloric, Winston’s aspiration to regain the memory of his childhood is fulfilled in his brainwashing. Paradoxically, his submission to the party allows him to reclaim his memory. Therefore, in this novel, the reversal of values is not unidirectional; as rebellion is reversed to obedience, the obedience has the potential to revolve into a subversive power.

It is important to emphasize that the novel is not

only about paradoxes, rather the novel is itself a paradox. In Brin's words, the novel is a "self-preventing prophecy" anticipating the frightening future, which in turn warns people not to realize the future. In other words, as Reilly points out, "Orwell wishes his readers to act *outside* and *before* the text" (123) against the forthcoming totalitarian future. Therefore, although inside the text Orwell describes the failure of resistance to the totalitarian power, outside the text he is wishing for success. In this respect, it can be said that Orwell himself is assuming a distinction between the inside and the outside, which is shattered inside the text. These paradoxes bring a ray of hope, although very thin, in the darkness of the satire.

5. Conclusion

Nineteen Eighty-Four describes the struggle of Winston Smith for the retrieval of a past which is monopolized by the party. Deprived of the memory of his childhood, Winston suffers from the lack of his own life history, which leads to an uncertainty of his identity. In order to fill the void of his life history, he tries to reclaim the past by looking for residues of the past that the party failed to erase. The ideal of Winston

is symbolically embodied in the glass paperweight, which shelters the residue of the past in its transparent hemisphere. In fact, Winston's rebellion is founded on his belief in the survival of the residual and the inviolability of the inside. However, as the party's slogans are formulated by the reversal of the opposites such as "FREEDOM IS SLAVERY", Winston's belief is reversed as the story develops. What appeared to be residual memory turns out to be a trap the party has set, and the party invades the apparently sheltered inner microcosm. Eventually, his struggle for freedom ends with conversion to slavery.

In this sense, the novel appears to be pessimistic, but there is still hope. Hope emerges from the fact that the reversal of values is not one-way in the novel: while a nursery rhyme is exploited by the party, a song mechanically produced by the party acquires folkloric power; and the memory of his family, which he could not retrieve despite his struggle, comes back to him after the brainwashing. As *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is a paradox of a "self-preventing prophecy", the pessimism in the novel is not straightforward but has to be understood in terms of paradox.

ⁱ For this function of narrative, see Bruner and Brooks.

ⁱⁱ As for the features of the torture itself in the novel, Rejali analyses them referring to historical contexts.

ⁱⁱⁱ For example, Conquest states that many points in the novel correspond to Stalin's regime. On the other hand, Crick argues that the novel is a parody of the thesis of James Burnham, an American political theorist. According to Gleason, besides the political situation, Orwell's biological elements are embodied in the pessimism of the novel.

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