T.C.

İSTANBUL YENİ YÜZYIL UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE PROGRAMME

THEOCRATIC DYSTOPIAS: FAITH AS AN INSTRUMENT OF MANIPULATION IN *2084 THE END OF THE WORLD* BY BOUALEM SANSAL AND *SWASTIKA NIGHT* BY KATHARINE BURDEKIN

MA THESIS

Nooruldeen ALJUAFRI

19131306905

İSTANBUL, APRIL 2022

T.C.

İSTANBUL YENI YÜZYIL UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE PROGRAMME

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE PROGRAMME

THEOCRATIC DYSTOPIAS: FAITH AS AN INSTRUMENT OF MANIPULATION IN *2084 THE END OF THE WORLD* BY BOUALEM SANSAL AND *SWASTIKA NIGHT* BY KATHARINE BURDEKIN

MA THESIS

Nooruldeen ALJUAFRI

SUPERVISOR

ASST. PROF. JAVID ALİYEV

İSTANBUL, APRIL 2022

PREFACE

I would like to express my sincere gratitude and admiration to my supervisor Asst. Prof. Javid ALİYEV for his constant guidance, encouragement, and constructive academic suggestions in the organization and development of this thesis. Working with him is such a great honor. I also want to express my particular gratitude to Prof. Dr. Günseli İŞÇİ for her guidance during two semesters. Finally, and most importantly, I would like to thank my mother for her endless support in all times.

İSTANBUL, 2022 Nooruldeen ALJUAFRI

CONTENTS

Page number

THESIS APPROVAL PAGE i
ETHICAL STATEMENT ii
PREFACE iii
CONTENTS iv
ÖZET vi
ABSTRACT vii
INTRODUCTION 1

FIRST CHAPTER

1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK 6
1.1. The Marxist Mechanism 6
1.2. Religion as an Instrument of Manipulation in Marxism 15

SECOND CHAPTER

2. CLASS STRATIFICATION AND THE INSTRUMENTALIZATION OF RELIGION FOR MANIPULATION IN 2084 THE END OF THE WORLD BY BOUALEM SANSAL 29
2.1 An Overview of 2084 The End of the World by Boualem Sansal 29
2.2 Class Stratification and Class Struggle over Consciousness 32
2.3 The Gkabul Religion as an Ideology for Manipulation 37

THIRD CHAPTER

3. CLASS STRUGGLE AND THE MECHANISMS OF RELIGIOUS MANIPULATION IN SWASTIKA NIGHT BY KATHARINE BURDEKIN 52
3.1 An Overvıew of Swastıka Nıght by Katharıne Burdekın 52
3.2 Class Stratıfıcatıon and Class Struggle over Consciousness 55
3.3 The Nazı Relıgıon as an Instrument of Manıpulatıon 61
CONCLUSION AND RESULTS 72
BIBLIOGRAPHY 79
CV.....85

ÖZET

TEOKRATIK DISTOPYALAR: BOUALEM SANSAL'IN *2084: THE END OF THE WORLD* ROMANINDA VE KATHARINE BURDEKIN'IN *SWASTIKA NIGHT* ESERINDE BİR MANIPÜLASYON ARACI OLARAK INANÇ

Cezayirli yazar Boualem Sansal'ın *2084: The End of the World* eserinde ve İngiliz yazar Katharine Burdekin'in *Swastika Night* eserinde dinin bir manipülasyon aracı olarak kullanılması bu çalışmanın odağını oluşturmaktadır. Tek tanrılı dinlerin, pek çok zaman dünyayı daha barışçıl ve gelişmiş bir hâle getirmek adına insanlara prensipler ve düzenleyici kurallar sağladıkları görülmektedir. Buna karşın gücü elinde bulunduran sınıf bu inanç sistemlerini siyasallaştırdığı takdirde takdirde dinler, insanları manipüle ya da tahakküm etmede kullanılan ideolojik silahlara dönüşebilmektedir. Bu tez, yönetici sınıfın ideolojik kimliği olarak dini ve bu dinin– bir ütopyanın aksine– sistemik distopyalar kurmada kullanılması ihtimalini Marksist yazınsal metodolojisi doğrultusunda ele almaktadır. Çalışmanın varmak istediği hedefler arasında yönetici tabakanın inançsal manipülasyon yöntemlerini ve bu yöntemlerin sebep olabileceği kötücül sonuçları tespit etmek bulunmaktadır. Bir diğer amaç ise insan farkındalığını geliştirmede edebiyatın aydınlatıcı görevini ve yönetici sınıfın başvurduğu tahakküm edici ideolojileri incelemektir. Ayrıca bu tez, insanların güç arzusuyla ve baskınlık kurmak adına sahip oldukları birçok ilkeyi araçsallaştıran politik hayvanlar oldukları mefhumuna dikkat çekmektedir.

Nooruldeen ALJUAFRI, 2022

Anahtar sözcükler: Teokratik distopya, din, Marksizm, Katharine Burdekin, Boualem Sansal

ABSTRACT

THEOCRATIC DYSTOPIAS: FAITH AS AN INSTRUMENT OF MANIPULATION IN *2084 THE END OF THE WORLD* BY BOUALEM SANSAL AND *SWASTIKA NIGHT* BY KATHARINE BURDEKIN

This study focuses on religion as an instrument of manipulation in *2084 The End of the World* by Algerian novelist Boualem Sansal and *Swastika Night* by English novelist Katharine Burdekin. Monotheistic religions provide humankind with rules of conduct and principles that refine human conduct with aim to create a peaceful and improved world. Nevertheless, when the ruling class manipulates and politicizes these religions, they become ideological weapons with the capacity to manipulate and crush humankind. Through use of the Marxist literary methodology, this thesis addresses religion as the ruling class's ideology and the possibility of religion being used to create a dystopic realm instead of a utopic one. In this thesis, one aim is to identify the ruling class's mechanisms for religious manipulation and the pernicious consequences of such manipulation. A second aim of this thesis is to investigate literature as an enlightening instrument for raising people's consciousness and exposing the manipulative ideologies of the ruling class. Furthermore, this thesis highlights the concept of humans as political animals who, in their lust for power, instrumentalize abundant principles with the sole intention to dominate.

Nooruldeen ALJUAFRI, 2022

***Keywords*:** Theocratic dystopia, religion, Marxism, Katharine Burdekin, Boualem Sansal

INTRODUCTION

Can religion, which is reformist in nature, be instrumentalized as an ideology for manipulation? According to Boualem Sansal and Katharine Burdekin, the answer is yes. Sansal and Burdekin construct theocratic dystopias where religion is instrumentalized for manipulating – rather than reforming – the common masses. By presenting fictional realms of theocratic dystopias, which are reflections of the authors' own societies, these novelists present the possibility of instrumentalizing religion for purposes of manipulation and deception. Beyond this, these novelists reveal the evil capacity of humans to instrumentalize religions and invent new ones to legitimize their authority and achieve political and personal ends.

In this thesis, Boualem Sansal's *2084 The End of the World* and Katharine Burdekin's *Swastika Night* are examined. Both texts blend dystopian elements with religious criticism in a mesmerizing manner. Thus, Sansal and Burdekin recontextualize the dystopia genre and apply it to a modern context to reflect upon religion and theocratic regimes. In this sense, by studying these two theocratic dystopias, the possibility of religion being used to create a dystopic realm (instead of a utopic one) is investigated in this thesis.

Dystopia is a term of growing cultural popularity. More recently, the term has been employed mutually with Orwellian principles to indicate a miserable future or terrible living conditions, be it in fiction or reality. However, dystopia is not an antiutopian genre; it is not oriented towards utopian concepts and principles. Instead, dystopia is a speculative conception that considers the future of social and political principles as a dynamic and evolving element of the present. In this regard, literary critic Christopher S. Ferns states that the dystopia genre of fiction envisions a bizarre futuristic society projected from the existing one. Moreover, Ferns argues that the projected society is usually nightmarish and terrible and seems a probable destination to follow the present society. Thus, Ferns concludes that dystopia is a logical development drawn from the principles of the present system and society, and its portrayal signifies that it may happen unless something is done to avoid it (Ferns, 1999, p. 107).

However, according to French history professor Gregory Claeys (2017), the word dystopia is derived from the Greek words *dus*, which means bad, and *topos*, which means place. Thus, Claeys asserts that dystopia means a negative, unfavourable, or gruesome place (p. 4). The term dystopia is defined as "a society that is either completely unplanned or is planned to be deliberately terrifying and awful . . . it is a utopia that has gone wrong, or a utopia that functions only for a particular segment of society" (Gordin, Tilley, & Prakash, 2010, p. 1). Accordingly, a dystopia unfolds as a horrible and unjust society and location that is planned to be like this. However, in the dystopia's gruesome realm, a utopia exists only for a specific class.

In this regard, the presentation of a dystopia introduces a critique of the present social and political principles, which is rendered as an image of a fictional future. Furthermore, it raises and answers fundamental questions about human nature and the current conditions of society. In this sense, the dystopias of Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We*, George Orwell's *1984*, and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* are not just productions in the literary canon but also speculative visions into the future. They are also instruments used to question the future with the current social and political principles in place. Accordingly, in *1984*, Orwell presents a speculative future of totalitarian regimes' ideologies and the mass surveillance that swept the world during his time. Moreover, it investigates the instrumentalization of ideologies for mass manipulation and deception. Conversely, in *Brave New World*, Huxley criticizes his era's optimism regarding technology as a futuristic solution for war and disease by presenting a speculative future wherein technology reaches its extremes. In this regard, authors of the dystopian genre have emerged as post-Enlightenment intellectuals presenting a critique of the contemporary social and political principles that can provoke nightmarish fictional realms.

As the portrayal of a dystopia presents a criticism of contemporary social and political principles, it is thus essential to investigate ideology to gain a profound perception of dystopian fiction. Dystopia is often centred around ideologies; it investigates ideologies through portraying futuristic and nightmarish realms that current ideologies would create. Therefore, dystopian fiction lays ideologies bare and clear before the reader to enlighten them about the manipulation and deception that exists in the ideologies. In this sense, investigating the ideological content of dystopian fiction is fundamental not only for a

profound understanding of the text but also for knowledge about how the author views contemporary social and political concepts.

Concerning theocratic dystopia, it criticizes religion and presents the possibility of religion being instrumentalized to create a dystopian world. In Durkheimian sociology, religion unfolds as an integrated system of beliefs and acts that are linked to holy elements. However, religion also presents a transcendental reality and a consciousness through which the individual perceives and values the world. Thus, when considering religion's impact on an individual's consciousness, authors who portray theocratic dystopias present religion as the ruling class's ideological instrument for manipulating the common masses and, in turn, creating a dystopian realm. In this regard, in theocratic dystopian fiction, religions are viewed as ideologies of the ruling class or those in power to manipulate people to achieve their own political and personal ends. By criticizing religion, theocratic dystopian fiction is not a mockery of religion but a criticism of the human capacity of evil and of how, in pursuing power and personal benefits, humans manipulatively and deceptively instrumentalize religion.

However, recent research regarding theocratic dystopias is inadequate in covering this kind of fiction, which is regularly evolving. Numerous studies have addressed the dystopia genre and have generally focused on Orwellian principles. Nevertheless, these studies have not comprehensively focused on religion as a fundamental instrument in constructing the dystopian realm within theocratic dystopian fiction.

Given the lack of research regarding theocratic dystopias, this study focuses on the theocratic dystopia through consideration of Orwellian principles and Marxist studies regarding the instrumentalization of religion for manipulation. Thus, religion as an instrument of manipulation and the ruling class's mechanisms of religious manipulation are the cornerstone of this thesis. This study addresses the notions of theocratic dystopia and religion that are presented in both *2084 The End of the World* by Algerian novelist Boualem Sansal and *Swastika Night* by British novelist Katharine Burdekin. These novels written by Sansal and Burdekin portray theocratic dystopias; thus, they provide a fertile ground in investigating notions of the theocratic dystopia and the use of religion as a manipulative instrument. In this regard, in these novels, religion is not applied to achieve wellbeing and social justice. Rather, it is instrumentalized by the ruling class for mass manipulation to achieve political and personal gains.

As this study is concerned with literature, religion, and politics, the Marxist literary methodology is applied as the theoretical background. Marxist literary methodology is utilized to investigate the social and economic forces within a literary text and the author's real world. The analysis of socioeconomic aspects of a text using Marxist literary criticism prompts an analysis of the ideology presented in the text. Thus, Marxist literary criticism is used to analyse how class stratification is established and how the ruling class's ideology operates in the literary texts through cultural forms, be they theological, political, educational, or judicial. Therefore, the study and analysis of the political and ideological aspects of a text are believed to be fundamental in Marxist literary criticism. However, concerning the Marxist conception of religion, Marxism conceives religion as the ruling class's ideological product and a symptom of capitalism directed to legitimize the ruling class's authority in society. Moreover, religion is perceived in Marxism like opium that shuts down the people's senses to facilitate the ruling class's oppression and manipulation.

In addition to the Marxist literary methodology, some popular theories of religion from Thomas Hobbes, Niccolo Machiavelli, and Emilie Durkheim as well as Rene Girard's theory of scapegoating are applied in constructing the thesis argument. Emilie Durkheim's theory of religion is applied to provide insight into religion and its mechanism. In addition, Hobbes's theory and Machiavelli's theory, both of which concern the role of the leader in religion, are discussed to reveal how religion can be instrumentalized for the state's benefit. Furthermore, the possibility of instrumentalizing religion for scapegoating is discussed through Rene Gerard's theory of the scapegoat.

In this regard, the first objective of this study is to investigate religion as an instrument of manipulation. The second objective is to identify the ruling class's strategies in manipulatively instrumentalizing religion and the consequences of religious manipulation. The third objective is to investigate literature as an enlightening instrument for raising people's awareness and exposing the ruling class's manipulative ideologies. Therefore, in this study, the following questions are answered: How does religion unfold in Marxism as the ruling class's instrument of manipulation? What are the ruling class's strategies in instrumentalizing religion for manipulation? What are the consequences of religious manipulation? Finally, how does literature emerge as an enlightening instrument in raising people's consciousness and exposing the ruling class's ideologies?

This thesis is divided into three chapters in addition to the introduction and conclusion. Chapter 1 is titled Theoretical Framework and consists of two parts. The first part is titled The Marxist Mechanism and concerns Marxism as a literary theory and the Marxist concepts of base and superstructure. Additionally, this part addresses the consciousness and ideology concepts in Marxism and the idea of class struggle over consciousness. The second part is titled Religion as an Instrument of Manipulation in Marxism and concerns the Marxist view of religion and the ruling class's strategies in instrumentalizing religion for manipulation. In addition, this part addresses the devastating consequences of the ruling class's religious manipulation.

Chapters 2 and 3 apply the theoretical concepts presented in the first chapter to answer the research questions and achieve the research objectives. Chapter 2 is focused on Boualem Sansal's novel *2084 The End of the World,* and Chapter 3 is focused on Katharine Burdekin's *Swastika Night*. Each of these chapters is divided into three parts, where specific concepts in the given novel are discussed. In each chapter, the first part presents an overview of the novel, the second part addresses class stratification in the novel and the class struggle over consciousness, and the third part addresses religion as an instrument of manipulation in the given novel and presents the damaging consequences of religious manipulation.

FIRST CHAPTER

1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 The Marxist Mechanism

Whether Marxism is conceived as a socialist theory, philosophy, or movement is of little importance. According to Marxist literary critic Charles E. Bressler, what is essential in Marxist thought is revealing the reality of both society's mechanisms and human consciousness. Bressler argues that Marxist thought offers an opportunity to define and comprehend reality itself. To Bressler, Marxist thought reveals that it is the society that moulds the individual's consciousness, and it is the economic status and social conditions that directly affect how and what the individual believes. In this sense, Marxism presents an opportunity and schema to alter the society from a dogmatic and stratified one to a classless one, where wealth and opportunities are reachable for all individuals (Bressler, 1994, p. 115).

However, it is history and sociology that links Marxism to literary theory. According to Bressler (1994), Marxism connects with literary criticism through Karl Marx's interest in history and sociology. To Bressler, Marx believes that the history of a given society depends on its manufacturing of products and the social interactions that evolve from the production process. Moreover, an individual's experiences, social relations, labour, and status in society are primarily responsible for creating and developing their consciousness and who they really are. Consequently, Marx's interest in history and the historical approach to literature that prevailed in his time form the Marxist literary methodology. However, Karl Marx and Fredric Engels add another element to the Marxist literary methodology: "the economic means of production." Bressler argues that this element is linked with the social and economic forces active during the period when the text was written. This element also explores the social relations inside and outside the text, that is, within the author's world. In this regard, Marxism broadens the conventional historical

approach to literary criticism by addressing socioeconomic aspects that affect not just the fictional characters but also the readers and writers (pp. 116–117).

In Marxist literary criticism, the analysis of the socioeconomic aspects in a text provokes further analysis of the ideology presented in the text. According to Marxist researcher Lutfi Hamadi (2017), Marx states that ideology criticism examines how class interests run through cultural forms, be they theological, political, educational, judicial, or literary. Hamadi argues that, to Marx, the social and economic conditions of the author's realm formulate and reveal the dominant ideology of the author's society. However, since ideologies do not always manifest themselves explicitly and openly in a literary text, "a critic should less analyze what a text says than what it does not say" (p. 156). In this regard, to Marxist philosopher Fredric Jameson, Marxism proposes that "political interpretation of literary texts . . . [is] the absolute horizon of all reading and all interpretation" (Jameson, 1981, p. 17). Thus, the analysis of the political and ideological aspects of a text are believed to be fundamental in Marxist literary criticism.

As ideology tends to be a fundamental aspect in Marxist literary criticism, Marxist criticism unfolds as follows:

> A Marxist analysis seeks to expose the hidden machinations of ideology, a value system that quietly reinforces dominant social classes at the expense of the working classes, for whom this value system has been presented as natural, inevitable, and unchangeable. (Bardzell, Bardzell, & Blythe, 2018, p. 10)

This description reveals the fundamental aim of Marxist literary criticism as the unveiling of the ideology that operates in the text and the author's epoch. Accordingly, Marxist criticism seeks to dismantle and reveal the prevailing norms and moral system presented to the working class as inherent, logical, and inevitable. These norms and value systems, Marxism proposes, discreetly manipulate the working class and maintain the dominant class – at the cost of the subjected class. Consequently, it could be argued that the analysis of the seemingly righteous and natural value system (i.e., ideology) is fundamental in Marxist criticism to unveil its mechanism and how it manipulates the common masses.

However ideological analysis might be, Marxist scholars tend to perceive the literary text as one of the state's ideological instruments. According to Hamadi (2017), Marxism does not conceive literature as "innocent entertainment" and

autonomous from the state's forces because it plays a primary role in propagating the state's ideology (p. 157). In the same vein, English scholar John Anthony Cuddon states that some Marxist philosophers do not conceive literature as an expression of ideology nor an understanding of reality. However, they conceive literature as an ideological instrument and thus part of the state's ideological apparatuses (Cuddon, 2000, p. 495). On the contrary, Hamadi states the following: "So a novel may present the world in a way that seems to support dominant ideologies, but, as a work of fiction, it may also reveal those ideologies" (Hamadi, 2017, p. 159). Accordingly, a literary text seems to be a bipolar instrument that can propagate ideology and reveal it simultaneously.

As a definition, the term Marxism is conceived as a social theory and a revolutionary plan to change society and the world. Bressler defines Marxism as follows:

> a pragmatic view of history that offered the working classes of society an opportunity to change their world and therefore their lifestyles. By providing both a philosophical system and a plan of action to bring about change in society, Marxism offers to humanity a social, political, economic, and cultural understanding of the nature of reality, of society, and of the individual. (Bressler, 1994, p. 155)

Accordingly, it could be argued that Bressler's definition presents Marxism as a bipolar concept: a pragmatic philosophy and a revolutionary plan. As a pragmatic philosophy, Marxism is conceived as a practical and realistic study of history and reality. Consequently, Marxism offers humanity a realistic and scientific lens to discover the nature and reality of individuals, society, economics, and politics. As a revolutionary plan, via its realistic and practical study of social and political systems, Marxism offers a radical proposal for the oppressed classes to change their world. In this sense, Marxism unfolds as a pragmatic study of the world and a revolutionary plan for the salvation of the oppressed classes.

On the contrary, Marxism is also conceived as an ideological weapon. According to American sociologist Ron Eyerman, Marxism is considered a counter ideology to the bourgeoisie's dominant and manipulative ideology because it unveils the mechanisms and tactics of the ruling class's manipulative ideology. Moreover, Marxism is regarded as a counter ideology because it offers the oppressed classes an

ultimate ideological and strategic weapon to counter the ruling class's manipulative ideology and achieve progress (Eyerman, 1981, p. 48).

However, Marxism presents the structure of society as being composed of a base and a superstructure. According to English literary critic Terry Eagleton (2006), people's social relations are inextricably linked to how they manage their economic lives. Eagleton states that, in the Medieval age, the organization of labour or productive forces concerned peasants' social relations to the lord, which is known today as feudalism. However, with the development of modes of production in the modern age, social relations have been between the capitalists and proletariats (i.e., between the capitalist class, which owns the means of production, and the proletarian class, whose labour force the capitalists purchase for profit). Eagleton argues that these forces and relations of production constitute what Marxism calls the base or society's economic structure (pp. 2–3).

On the contrary, the superstructure is conceived as "certain forms of law and politics, a certain kind of state, whose essential function is to legitimate the power of the social class which owns the means of economic production" (Eagleton, 2006, p. 3). Accordingly, the superstructure seems to be the state that embodies the laws and political rules. Nevertheless, the superstructure is not only a legal system of laws and political rules; it is also believed to have a role of legitimation. Consequently, the fundamental function of the superstructure is to legitimate the power of the capitalists or the ruling class, who own the means of production. In this regard, the superstructure's legitimation instrument is believed to be its ideology. Eagleton states that the superstructure also consists of principles of social consciousness: ethical, political, religious, and other social consciousness-based principles. Eagleton argues that these principles of social consciousness constitute what Marxism calls ideology, whose fundamental function is to legitimate the ruling class power in a society (Eagleton, 2006, p. 3).

In the earlier discussion, the superstructure appears to be a fundamental instrument for legitimation and maintaining the ruling class's power. In this regard, it is the capitalists who are believed to control the superstructure. In this regard, Bressler states that "the capitalists also decree what beliefs are acceptable, what values are to be held, and what laws are to be formed. In other words, the capitalists,

not the working classes, control their society's superstructure and its ideology" (Bressler, 2006, p. 119). Accordingly, it is the ruling class who controls a society's ideological and legal systems. In other words, the ruling class determines the ethics and beliefs to be accepted and held within the state. Moreover, the ruling class controls and formulates the state's legal body. Consequently, it is the ruling class and not the working class who formulates and controls the superstructure and its ideology. In a similar manner, Marxist theorist Bertell Ollman states that the task of determining the ideology in the society is assigned to the intellectuals who stand as "brothers" with the capitalists. Thus, Ollman states that the capitalists and the intellectuals constitute a class responsible for both the material and mental production in a society (Ollman, 1968, pp. 574–575).

In this regard, Marx states that the ruling class's ideas and concepts are typically the ruling ideas. Furthermore, the ruling class, who has the means of commodity production, also has the means of mental production (Marx, Engels, & Arthur, 2004, p. 64). On the contrary, sociologist Jane L. Thompson states that, as the ruling class controls the superstructure and the mental production, they fabricate beliefs and values to justify and legitimate their power and actions. Thompson argues that these fabricated beliefs and values are known in Marxism as a "false consciousness" that is fabricated by the ruling class and directed towards the working class to justify the status quo (Thompson, 1982, p. 42).

However, it is believed that the ruling class controls the society's ideological and intellectual production to mask the false consciousness that the ruling class promulgates in the society. Thus, the false consciousness concept is conceived as follows: "false consciousness . . . refer[s] to the distorted perception and beliefs an individual or a social class acquires through their life interactions in capitalist society" (Eyerman, 1981, p. 52). Therefore, the false consciousness seems to be a group of beliefs that a person or social class accesses via their daily performance in a capitalist society. However, these beliefs and this consciousness are believed to be born from a manipulative and misleading system. In the same vein, Eyerman states that the false consciousness generates tensions and suspicion in the subjected class; therefore, the state or ruling class employs ideology to brainwash the people and reduce false consciousness tensions. In this regard, the ideology works to provide

explanations and justifications to resolve these tensions and erase suspicions. Thus, Eyerman argues that the ruling class employs the ideology to mask the false consciousness and render it rightful and just in the minds of the common masses (Eyerman, 1981, p. 52).

On the contrary, Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci holds different views on the concept of false consciousness. According to Eyerman (1981), Gramsci conceives such a consciousness as false not because it manipulates the people and works for the ruling class's interests but because it blends the roots of its tyranny with folklore and myth. In this regard, the ruling class employs the church and religion to manipulate the people and teach them that poverty and honour are comparable. Moreover, the state employs religion to indoctrinate the people that political hegemony and poverty are part of the divine order (p. 47).

As discussed, ideology appears to be fundamental in controlling and manipulating the people. However, in Marxism, ideology is considered a component of state apparatuses. In his theory of ideology and the state, Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser presents two kinds of state apparatuses: repressive and ideological. Althusser conceives the repressive state apparatus (RSA) as follows:

> The state apparatus comprises, in 'Marxist theory', the government, administration, army, police, courts and prisons, which together constitute what we shall henceforth call the Repressive State Apparatus. 'Repressive' should be understood . . . in the strong, precise sense of 'using physical violence.' (Althusser, 2014, p. 75)

Accordingly, the RSA consists of prisons, the army, and the police. Moreover, the RSA is called by such a name because it uses physical violence to enforce the state's laws and ideology. On the contrary, Althusser states that the ideological state apparatuses (ISAs) consist of the school apparatus, religious apparatus, news apparatus, and cultural apparatus. Thus, Althusser argues that the ISAs do not use physical violence in enforcing the state's laws. Rather, they use ideology (Althusser, 2014, p. 75).

Although RSAs function via repression and ISAs through ideology, the behaviours of both, in certain circumstances, become a blend of the two. According to Nicholas Abercrombie, Stephen Hill, and Bryan Turner (2015), RSAs do not function mainly by repression but also by ideology. They argue that some circumstances require the police and army to use ideology to enforce the state's laws.

Similarly, the ISAs, in some circumstances, also use repression. In this regard, the school, which is ideological in nature, uses repressive punishments and penalties. Moreover, the press and the news utilize censorship as repression. Furthermore, they state that the ruling class employs ISAs to assert their dominant ideology (p. 24).

Thus, the state's ideological apparatuses are believed to be the ruling class's indoctrination instruments, yet they are also manipulative. Hamadi states the following:

> The education system, as well as other ideological 'apparatuses' . . . devised by the ruling class, teaches subjects how to be morally and professionally useful to this system through "rules of respect for sociotechnical division of labour and ultimately the rules of the order established by class domination." (Hamadi, 2017, p. 158).

Accordingly, the state's ideological apparatuses are conceived as the ruling class's ideological and indoctrination instruments. The ideological apparatuses are believed to be the ruling class's creation to indoctrinate the subjects to be useful for the state. Moreover, the ruling class seems to use these apparatuses to indoctrinate the subjects with the laws and orders that serve the ruling class's interests. Furthermore, Marxist scholar Julian Stewart Thomas states that the state's ideological apparatuses are manipulative and deceptive. Thomas argues that the ideological apparatuses indoctrinate the people with illusions that they are free and have total control over their lives. However, the people are not free; rather, they are prisoners of the illusions that the ruling class proclaims (Thomas, 2000, p. 12).

However ideological and repressive the state might be, ideology is not believed to be restricted to the state alone. According to Marxist sociologist Tom Bottomore (2001), ideology is not necessarily a means of manipulation restricted to the ruling class. It can also refer to the class's consciousness – be it the ruling or the working class. Consequently, Bottomore states that both the ruling and the working class have their own ideology that implies their consciousness. Thus, ideology constitutes both a system of ideas and a conception of the world. Furthermore, ideology implies concrete attitudes and orientations of human conduct. Bottomore states that ideology is fundamental because "men cannot act without rules of conduct, without orientations." Nevertheless, as the ruling class dominates both economic and mental production in society, the ruling class's ideology not only becomes the dominant one but also the one that controls the consciousness of the

working class. Thus, Bottomore concludes that it is by ideology and consciousness that a class raises a class conflict, dominates other classes, and manufactures their consent (pp. 250–251).

Although the ruling class ideology or consciousness is the dominant one, it does not mean that the working class will not develop their own consciousness against the ruling class. In this regard, Alvin Y. So (1991) states that "consciousness arises when class members are on the offensive, attacking the structural roots of class inequalities, exposing the dominant ideology as a coverup for irrationality and exploitation" (p. 48). Accordingly, the class develops consciousness when its members begin to be concerned over class issues and inequalities. In the earlier description, the consciousness seems to be associated with class struggle; that is, the class is conscious when it is aware of the ruling class's exploitations and fights against them. In this regard, the working class's consciousness pushes members to attack the dominant ideology and the inequalities and manipulation it masks. Consequently, Danish philosopher Lars-Henrik Schmidt argues that the ruling class fights for the state, but the working class fights against the state to let it die (Schmidt, 1977, p. 389).

Class conflict not only aims to demolish the state but also to establish a new social system. German American sociologist Lewis A. Coser states, "According to Marx, conflict leads not only to everchanging relations within the existing social structure, but the total social system undergoes transformation through conflict" (Coser, 1957, p. 200). Accordingly, Marxism conceives class conflict as a revolutionary instrument that creates an entirely new social system. In the earlier description, class conflict alters more than just the social relations within the social structure. Rather, the alteration is believed to be total; in other words, the class conflict formulates an entirely new social system. In the same vein, Coser argues that, in class conflict, societies do not die as biological organisms do because it is difficult to give precise points of birth and death for a particular society. In this sense, Coser states that the death of societies is viewed as a change, a "re-establishment of equilibrium," and the creation of a new system (Coser, 1957, p. 201).

As the conflict counteracts the ruling class ideology and presents the aim to formulate a new system, the ruling class does not stand idly by. According to So, when the subjected class develops a counter ideology to the ruling class's, the ruling class counterattacks through ideological repression. So states that the ruling class performs ideological repression through the education systems and mass media to repress any radical and revolutionary thoughts. Furthermore, the ruling class can launch another attack by accusing the subject class ideology of being false and hostile to society. In this regard, the ruling class may claim that the subjected class should not engage in the class struggle because it will reduce productivity and lead the nation to destruction. Moreover, So argues that the ruling class can also lunch another counterattack by praising its own ideology as divine and universal (So, 1991, p. 48). In a similar manner, Marxist scholar Alan Shandro states that, as a reconciliation of the antagonism of ideologies, the ruling class may announce an unreal foreign enemy that requires a union of the classes. Shandro states that the ruling class can fabricate a foreign enemy that threatens the nation's culture and religious faith to eliminate the class struggle and the antagonism among ideologies (Shandro, 2014, p. 137).

Concerning the class struggle, it is considered advantageous not only because it eliminates the ruling class's oppression. It is also believed that the masses become an actual class through the class struggle. In this regard, Marx conceives the common mass as follows:

> This mass is thus already a class as against capital, but not yet for itself. In the struggle . . . this mass becomes united, and constitutes itself as a class for itself. The interests it defends becomes class interests. (Marx, 2010, p. 117)

Accordingly, the proletariat or common masses are not a class when they are anesthetized by the ruling class's manipulation. However, what formulates the common masses as a class is the class struggle. Consequently, the class struggle unites the common masses, provides them with shared interests, and formulates their existence as a class. Furthermore, Ollman states that, by having ethical and cultural distinction, and a unique consciousness and interests, the common masses can become an actual class (Ollman, 1968, p. 580).

In a similar manner, it is believed that the class struggle provides individuals empowerment and supremacy. According to So, when individuals engage in class struggle, they share the same affections and experience a rise in emotions. Consequently, individuals enter a sacred domain; they feel a moral unison and make history through the class struggle. Therefore, So concludes that the class struggle offers class members empowerment: a feeling of courage, determination, and confidence (So, 1991, p. 54).

1.2 Religion as an Instrument of Manipulation in Marxism

Faith is defined in the Bible as "being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see" (Johnston, 2015, p. 36). In this definition, faith appears to have binary concepts. The first concept appearing in the first clause incorporates a notion of confidence in what one wishes for. Thus, faith constitutes being confident that what one hopes for will happen. The second concept of faith, which is incorporated in the second clause, is a certainty in transcendental entities (e.g., the existence of God) who cannot be seen. Therefore, it can be argued that faith means being confident that what one prays for will occur and being certain regarding the existence of transcendental and invisible entities.

English priest and theologian Charles Davis argues that religious faith captures and commandeers the mind and heart and broadens one's consciousness. Davis states that religious faith extends the perceptiveness through which a person acts, thinks, judges, and makes decisions. This principle or conduct is called the judgment of values, and it produces what is known as religious beliefs. The second kind of religious belief, states Davis, is the judgment of facts. This type arises as the mind – vitalized and inspired by faith – attempts to expound and understand the notions linked to the world's consciousness. Davis states that faith opens and reveals the horizon within which the human mind interprets these two types of religious beliefs. Moreover, the role of religious beliefs in the moulding of society is to form the values and facts discussed through politics (Davis, 1994, pp. 35–36).

In turn, French sociologist David Emile Durkheim defines religion as "a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things" (Durkheim, 1995, p. 44). In Durkheim's definition, religion is an integrated system of beliefs and acts that

is linked with holy elements. Via a contrasting perspective, religion involves two essential elements. English philosopher Richard Granville Swinburne argues that religion includes two essential elements: manner and creed. The way or manner is a lifestyle or a set of actions. Swinburne states that each religion often demonstrates one reason for following its religious way, and the most fundamental reason is to gain and secure salvation. The creed is the dogmatic system that explains why following a particular religious way will generate salvation and success in life (Swinburne, 2005, p. 161).

Similarly, Marcela Cristi (2001) states that religion appears to demonstrate the real meaning of the world and uncover its mysteries. Religion also presents a transcendental and absolute reality. Cristi asserts that the seemingly unjust and anarchic world seems, via religion, to have order and meaning (p. 99). Thus, it could be argued that religion makes the world meaningful, and it is via religion that the world has value and order.

In comparison, the conception of religion gained through Marxism seems unorthodox. Through Marxism, religion is not conceived as a real and fundamental consciousness of the world; instead, it is conceived as artificial. Marx conceives religion as follows: "Man makes religion; religion does not make man. Religion is, in fact, the self-consciousness and self-esteem of man who has either not yet gained himself or has lost himself again" (Marx, 1970, p. 131). Accordingly, Marx believes that religion is an artificial consciousness; that is, humans make religion. This notion implies that people manufacture religion. Therefore, it is not religion that moulds a person's consciousness. Rather, Marx's description reveals that religion constitutes a consciousness of those who have lost themselves and their essence. Therefore, through Marxism, religion is conceived as man's creation and a consciousness of the lost man.

Through Marxism, religion is not only conceived as artificial but also as an upside-down concept and a narcotic instrument. Thus, Marx argues the following:

> This state, this society, produce religion, which is an inverted world-consciousness, because they are an inverted world . . . Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people. (Marx, 1970, p. 131)

In Marx's earlier description, he indicates that the reversed world (i.e., state and society) creates religion, which, in turn, is a reversed consciousness. Consequently, the conception of religion as an ideology may appear distinctly on the horizon. Religion appears as an ideological product or a symptom of the stratified and capitalist (i.e., reversed) society, where social reality emerges in an upside-down fashion. Nevertheless, Marx conceives religion as a consolation of the oppressed and the essence of a heartless world. In this regard, Marx concludes that religion is the opium of the people. In other words, Marx conceives religion as a painkiller that provides temporary relief – but not a remedy.

Regarding the Marxist notion of religion as opium, American philosopher James G. Abernathy states that religion terminates the people's senses to facilitate the ruling class's oppression and manipulation. Abernathy argues that, like opium, religion subsides the people's senses and makes them passively submit and accept their miserable fate. Religion does so by faith in God and his final judgment, which convinces the people that oppressors will be penalized in the afterlife. Consequently, religion discourages people from revolting against the ruling class's oppression to improve their lives. In this sense, Abernathy states that, to Marx, those who do not hold any religious beliefs are more likely to make the world a better place (Abernathy, 2007, p. 211). However, Marxist scholars Uday Mehta and Akshayakumar Desai argue that Marx also believes religion plays a revolutionary and oppositional role. Consequently, they argue that Marxism further conceives religion as an instrument that enables the oppressed to protest against their persecution and injustice (Mehta & Akshayakumar, 1993, p. 18).

In a nutshell, according to Marxist scholar Doug Lorimer, Marxism addresses religion on two levels: the worldview and sentimental levels. Lorimer states that Marxism suggests the worldview aspect of religion is a collection of myths about deities and other supernatural entities and their interactions with the universe and humanity. Additionally, Marxism focuses on the sentimental aspect of religion as a distorted and illusory consciousness. Therefore, Lorimer argues that, through Marxism, religion is conceived as a way to distort the individual's worldview, their feelings, and their emotional reaction to reality (Lorimer, 1999, p. 61).

However, the fundamental principle in the Marxist critique of religion is that the ruling class employs religion for legitimation. In his book *Marx on Religion*, American Marxist John C. Raines states the following: "The central critique of Marx against religion is a critique of how elites have used and still use their religion—to give themselves . . . a sense of legitimacy for their privilege" (Marx & Raines, 2002, p. 169). Accordingly, legitimation is conceived to be a fundamental principle in the Marxist critique of religion. In this respect, religion in Marxism unfolds as the ruling class's instrument for legitimizing their authority and power. In the same manner, Raines argues that Marxism presents religion as an instrument for legitimating the class division and social hierarchy (Marx & Raines, 2002, p. 5).

In this respect, politics is believed to reside in the profane sphere; thus, it needs a powerful legitimation source to legitimate its authority. Finnish social scientist Jan Hanska states that politics incorporates the sacred within its body politics to gain legitimation. The legitimation by the sacred works by making politics and the ruling party represent the divine (Hanska, 2012, pp. 78–82). In a similar manner, Cristi states that politics can elevate to a sacred status by incorporating the sacred within the body politics. Cristi argues that "the sacred is employed as a conscious tool for political rule—'to develop a system of political legitimacy' and as an aid in mobilizing civil society to achieve political ends" (Cristi, 2001, p. 150). Cristi's description seems to indicate that the state often employs the sacred as an intellectual and ideological tool to achieve political goals. These political goals include political legitimacy and the mobilization of society to serve the state.

However, political scientist Maciej Potz states that the ruling class manages the act of authority legitimation. The essence of the legitimation act, Potz states, is to manufacture people's consent to feel morally obliged to obey the ruling class's orders and laws. For legitimation, the ruling class employs a system of ideas, political acts, and religious faith to legitimize their authority and justify their acts and laws. Potz asserts that, when the legitimation efforts work successfully, the subjects willingly support the political system and submit to its laws and orders (Potz, 2019, p. 64).

The legitimation strategies are divided into charismatic, ordinary, and religious legitimation. Regarding charismatic legitimation, Max Weber defines the term charisma as follows:

> [a] certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman or at least specifically exceptional powers and qualities . . . and on the basis of them the individual concerned is treated as a leader. (Weber & Eisenstadt, 1968, p. 48)

Weber's definition indicates that a charismatic individual is a person who enjoys a certain quality that sets them apart from others. Based on this particular quality, the individual is believed to have superhuman and unique capabilities and powers. In turn, these unique capabilities render the individual a charismatic leader. Accordingly, charisma appears to be an effective strategy of political legitimation. Political scientist Joseph Nyomarkay states that charismatic legitimation involves the notion that the ruler has the right to rule because of their divinity and unique personal qualities (Nyomarkay, 1967, p. 11).

On the contrary, charismatic authority is considered domination. American political scientist and historian Robert Charles Tucker asserts that charismatic authority renders people obedient to the ruling class; they blindly accept the ruling class's authority. Consequently, charismatic leadership is a kind of domination over the common masses (Tucker, 1968, p. 6).

However, ordinary legitimation and religious legitimation involve aspects that differ from charismatic legitimation. American religious studies professor Craig Martin states that ordinary legitimation does not involve any supernatural elements. On the contrary, religious legitimation includes some sort of "superhuman or supernatural element." That is, the legitimation is religious when, for example, a subject receives an allegation that says, "God says so or God will punish you if you do not" (Martin, 2017, p. 105). In a similar way, historian of religion Bruce Lincoln argues that "religious claims are the means by which certain objects, places, speakers, and speech-acts are invested with an authority, the source of which lies *outside the human*" (Lincoln, 1994, p. 31). In Lincoln's description, it appears that men, places, and even objects can be infused with authority by linking them to religion. When ordinary men, places, and things are supernaturalized and cloaked in religion, they obtain authority and power. Accordingly, it could be argued that

appealing to religion, the supernatural, and the sacred is more powerful than appealing to mundane elements in legitimating authority.

However, another fundamental principle in the Marxist critique of religion is in how the ruling class employs religion as a mechanism of manipulation. According to American theologian John M. Duffey (2013), Marxism presents religion as an instrument of manipulation. However, religion is not perceived as the "actor" of manipulation, but it is believed to be the tool and mechanism of manipulation. Consequently, Duffey argues that the manipulator is the ruling class, the manipulation victims are the common masses, and the manipulation instrument is religion. In this sense, Duffey concludes that, through a Marxist lens, if people are free of religion, they are also free of manipulation (p. 99).

In Marxism, the instrumentalization of religion for manipulation is evident in its employment to justify and mask evils. In his theory about Marxism and religion, Marxist writer James Arthur Thrower states that Marxism presents religion as follows:

> Religion served the exploiting classes as an instrument of exploitation, both by seeking to justify the existing order of things and by seeking to divert attention away from present ills to the joys which awaited men hereafter . . . Religion is the ideology of the exploiting class. (Thrower, 1983, p. 351)

Accordingly, religion unfolds in Marxism as the ruling class's exploitation ideology. In this regard, the ruling class tends to employ religion to justify their manipulative actions and the status quo. Moreover, religion appears to be employed as an instrument of conscious deviation. In other words, religion attempts to shift focus away from present evils and manipulation towards the delights that await humanity in the afterlife. In this sense, religion is presented in Marxism as an ideological instrument to exploit and influence the masses. In the same vein, sociologist Christopher Marsh states that Marxism conceives religion as a "lie" fabricated by the ruling class to facilitate their manipulation of the common masses (Marsh, 2011, p. 32).

According to Martin, the ruling class employs religion as an instrument to manufacture people's consent regarding society's stratification. Consequently, the ruling class proclaims that their authority and wealth are part of God's divine plan and ordained by God; therefore, it is unquestionable. However, poverty is also

divinely ordained, and poor people have to work hard to earn God's favour and achieve wellbeing. Martin concludes that the ruling class's religious notion that their authority and wealth are divinely ordained is a "fairy tale" that masks their malice and manipulation (Martin, 2013, pp. 405–407).

Religion appears to be the ruling class's instrument not only for indoctrination concerning the concept of society's stratification but also for social control and power. According to British scholar John Fulton (1987), Marxist Gramsci conceives religion as societal hegemony. Fulton states that, to Gramsci, religion is the ruling class's instrument to mould society according to their interests and to maintain their power. Thus, Fulton concludes that religion unfolds as an instrument or a force of social control and hegemony that aims to maintain the ruling class's power and interests (p. 207).

In this respect, the ruling class employs religion and religious claims to render people obedient and to maintain their control. Craig Martin states the following:

> People don't always want to do what they are told, but one can manufacture their consent by convincing them that they must, that it's inevitable that they comply, or that there will be supernatural consequences if they do not . . . Responses such as "you'll go to hell if you don't" might persuade people it is in their best interests to comply with social expectations. (Martin, 2017, p. 104)

In Martin's description, the people are believed to not typically be inclined to do what they are commanded to do. Thus, through use of religion and supernatural consequences people's consent is manufactured. Consent manufacturing means to make the people happy to obey the ruling class and their laws; thus, this is not achieved through obvious coercion. For this reason, the ruling class utilizes religion and supernatural consequences to make people willingly perform duties. The supernatural consequences used include ideas of damnation and going to hell to manufacture people's consent and make them easier to control. Accordingly, religion and religious claims become means for controlling and manipulating the people.

Appealing to supernatural powers and divine punishment is believed to be a common strategy used by the ruling class to manipulate and control people. According to theologian Bernard J. Cooke, the ruling class often uses God and people's fear of supernatural powers to enforce its authority. Cooke asserts that the

ruling class usually presents God as a police officer to instil fear in the subjects and enforce the ruling class's authority (Cooke, 2004, p. 37). Furthermore, Aloysius P. Martinich (1992) asserts that the fear of supernatural and invisible powers is perceived as the most powerful strategy to enslave people. Martinich further states that the heaven and hell concept often renders people obedient to their ruling class to avoid damnation and gain bliss in the afterlife (p. 81).

However fundamental religion and fear of the divine is to the state, Italian philosopher and politician Niccolo Machiavelli states that a fear of the leader can substitute a fear of the divine when a country's people lack a fear of God (Machiavelli & Gilbert, 1989, p. 225). Moreover, Machiavelli asserts that it is more essential for the leader to be "feared than to be loved . . . fear is sustained by a dread of punishment that will never abandon [the leader]" (Machiavelli, 2005, p. 58). Accordingly, fear is an essential feature of the leader, which they can sustain via punishment and penalties.

Nevertheless, Machiavelli suggests that the people's love of their country can be used by the ruling class to offset their fear of the leader. According to Benedetto Fontana, Machiavelli believes that the people's fear of and terror concerning their leader may cause opposition between the leader and their subjects. In this scenario, the love of the country is employed to route the leader's depravity outwardly onto a foreign enemy of the country. Accordingly, the opposition and resistance between the people and the leader is consequently replaced with a condition of warfare between the country and its enemies. Thus, Fontana concludes that, to Machiavelli, the leader's barbarousness, the love of the state, and the fear of the state's foes often keep the citizens obedient and the leader in control (Fontana, 1999, pp. 657–658).

Additionally, religion as a means of social control is evident in Machiavelli's theory of religion, in which he describes the instrumentalization of religion for social and political purposes. In Machiavelli's theory, religion is considered a fundamental "pillar of the state because it . . . ensur[es] obedience to laws, customs, and traditions" (Vilches & Seaman, 2007, p. 87). Machiavelli perceives religion as fundamental to the government because it teaches submissiveness to the state and its laws. He also perceives religion as an effective means of "controlling the armies, in giving courage to the plebeians, in keeping men good" (Machiavelli & Gilbert, 1989,

p. 224). Through this description, religion is considered a powerful tool for producing virtuous citizens and rendering proletarians hardworking and courageous. It also reveals that the state may need religion to produce powerful armies, effective institutions, and loyal subjects. Presenting a different perspective, political writers Vilches and Seaman (2007) state that Machiavelli perceives religion as fundamental for the state because of the people's fear of God. The subjects' fear of God and divine punishment often render them obedient, hardworking, and determined (p. 86). Accordingly, if the state lacks religion and the people lack a fear of God, the state is destined to ruin and destruction. For this reason, Machiavelli asserts that religion and its teachings are often the reason behind a state's success or ruin (Machiavelli & Gilbert, 1989, p. 225).

To Machiavelli, religion is also perceived as an instrument that indoctrinates people with love and loyalty to the state. Political theorist Fontana states that Machiavelli wants religion to teach people to love and honour their country. Consequently, Machiavelli often links religion to the country in an inextricable manner. In this sense, Fontana states that, in Machiavelli's theory, God, the country, and the people derive significance and value from each other (Fontana, 1999, pp. 656–657). Furthermore, American political scientist Anthony James Gregor states that the veracity of the aforementioned religious doctrine depends on the individuals and their religious faith. It is not the logical or practical truth but the religious faith that evokes submission, loyalty, and dedication to the country (Gregor, 2012, p. 10).

The abovementioned conceptions about the instrumentalization of religion are discussed and further developed in Thomas Hobbes's theopolitical theory. Marxist scholar Jorge Larrain states that Hobbes conceives religion as an essential instrument for political control. For Hobbes, Larrain argues, religion is fundamental in avoiding anarchy and rebellion and in making people obedient to the political authorities. For these reasons, Larrain argues that Hobbes often conceives religion as fundamental in maintaining order and evading civil struggles (Larrain, 1979, p. 23).

Hobbes conceives religion as the "fear of power invisible, feigned by the mind, or imagined from tales publicly allowed" (e.g., the tales of the Scriptures) and superstition, likewise, as only arising from tales that are "not allowed" (Milner, 1988, p. 415). Accordingly, religion, to Hobbes, is a fear of invisible and obscured powers.

The fear appears to be an illusion and merely an invention of the human mind. This fear and illusion may stem from the imagination of authorized tales, like tales from the Scriptures, or superstitions of unauthorized tales. In a similar way, Hobbes (1994) asserts that fear and ignorance are the fundamental pillars or seeds of any religion. Ignorance, says Hobbes, evolves from a lack of knowledge of the natural causes of the elements of life. Consequently, ignorance will render people credulous and lead them to believe in lies and even invent them. Additionally, Hobbes states that fear evolves from ignorance itself. Because people do not investigate natural causes, they feign invisible powers behind these causes. The fear of these invisible powers is the natural seed of what is called religion. To these people, fear and worship apart from their religion are superstitions (pp. 62–63).

For Hobbes, the state often needs to employ religion to make obedient citizens. According to Cristi, Hobbes believes that "people can be kept in obedience by instilling in them a religious reverence for the law" (Cristi, 2001, p. 96). Accordingly, obedient citizens can be made by indoctrinating spiritual or religious respect for the laws. Cristi argues that, for Hobbes, the task of citizens' indoctrination should be accomplished by education. First, the citizens must be taught and indoctrinated about their duties and political commitments to the state. Second, the state needs to make the citizens conscious and afraid of the terrible costs of opposition, rebellion, and disobedience (Cristi, 2001, p. 96). However, Hobbes not only cloaks the laws with religion but also the ruler. According to Maureen Henry (1979), Hobbes considers it essential to persuade citizens to regard their ruler as a mortal god to establish a powerful social order. Furthermore, Hobbes wants the citizens to be indoctrinated with the idea that, to gain eternal salvation, they must obey and consider their ruler a mortal god (p. 129).

As the laws are invested with sacredness, Cristi concludes that "those who break the law would learn that they do not only offend their rulers but also anger their gods" (Cristi, 2001, pp. 96–97). Accordingly, when the laws are cloaked with divinity and sacredness, those who disobey the laws know that they are angering both their rulers and their gods. In a similar manner, Ukrainian historian Dmitry Shlapentokh states that those who disobey and break the state's laws are also considered traitors and enemies of the state. Thus, the violators of the state's laws

become the enemies of society, the ruling class, and the entire state (Shlapentokh, 2017, p. 125).

As Hobbes conceives religion as fundamental for the state, he argues that it is essential for the ruling class to control what the citizens perceive as religious and holy. According to political philosopher Stephen J. Finn, Hobbes's theopolitical theory indicates that sometimes religion and politics clash when the people use "God's words to question the sovereign's actions" (Finn, 2007, p. 92). Consequently, Hobbes's theory suggests that the state "requires a civil authority with the right to determine religious doctrines so that religion and politics do not clash" (Finn, 2007, p. 92). In the earlier description, Hobbes seems to provide absolute authority to the ruling class to decide which religious doctrines and beliefs are established in the state. Thus, the ruling class must control the religious beliefs and doctrines to maintain peace and avoid a clash between religion and politics. In other words, if the ruling class perfectly controls the state's religious faith and beliefs, the people will not have the opportunity to use their religious faith to rebel or question the ruling class's authority.

In the same vein, concerning the rise of the state, the state often resorts to fabricating and eliminating old texts and religious teachings. Machiavelli states that, when the state is established, it resorts to "extinguish[ing] the old . . . to get[ting] rid of all ancient records, burning the works of poets and historians, throwing down images, and destroying everything else that might give any suggestion of antiquity" (Machiavelli & Gilbert, 1989, p. 340). Thus, when established, Machiavelli's description indicates that the state discards the past vestiges and old religious teachings. Likewise, the religious authorities often eliminate old texts and burn the old regime's literary and historical works. Thus, everything that refers to the past and the old teachings is destroyed and burned. However, Machiavelli states that the past elimination process proceeds quickly if the authorities create and adopt a new language (Machiavelli & Gilbert, 1989, p. 340).

However, the earlier political strategies of instrumentalizing religion are believed to be deceptive and significantly damaging to the people. According to British philosopher Susan James, the state that instrumentalizes religion is often superstitious, and it misleads the people by manipulating them via their fear of God.

By claiming divinity and instrumentalizing religion, people fear the ruling class with the same intensity that they fear God. Therefore, such authority is superstitious and misleading because it is "propagating false ideas about the nature of political rule" to manipulate the people. Consequently, James concludes that the people are unable to think critically, and their thoughts are inflexible under such authority (James, 2012, p. 263).

Additionally, Cristi (2001) argues that the political strategies behind the instrumentalization of religion are based on lies and deception, which provokes "intolerance and national fanaticism." Cristi also argues that such a religious conception "places people in a constant state of alert, or war . . . [and] incites people to be 'bloodthirsty,' and 'regard as a sacred act' the slaughter of those who do not accept its gods" (Cristi, 2001, p. 18). Thus, the manipulative theopolitical strategies are thought to put people in a perpetual state of vigilance and war with those who threaten their religion and security. In Cristi's description, religion appears dangerous because, when it is manipulated, it prompts humans to be murderous savages against those who oppose their religious faith. Under the influence of religious fundamentalism, these people believe that killing others who do not follow their god is a holy act.

Under the superstitions and deception of political authorities, people are also believed to be rightless. In his comment on the state's instrumentalization of religion, American political philosopher Michael P. Zuckert states the following:

> What were primordially given were not the rights of the people but the rights of rulers and the duties of the people. Those who understood politics in terms of such theories therefore knew nothing of government as a thing made for the sake of securing rights and thus did not place rights at the center of their political thinking. (Zuckert, 1994, p. 3)

In Zuckert's description, it appears that the political authorities who instrumentalize religion neglect the people and their rights. What such authorities seek to secure is the rights of the ruling class instead of the people's rights. That is, they marginalize people's rights and stress people's duties in return. Consequently, it could be argued that such authorities do not conceive the government as a device for securing the people's rights and do not place them at the core of their political debate. Nevertheless, American political writer Jason Caro argues that such manipulative

politics do not address what is perceived as logically appropriate for the people and society. Instead, their function is based on what the ruling class decides and perceives as appropriate for the people (Caro, 2011, p. 32).

In this respect, the ruling class's religious ideology unfolds as beneficial and serves only the ruling class's interests. Marxist politician Mikhail Sergeevich Gorbachev states that the ruling class's ideology is an instrument used to serve the capitalists and their interests. Gorbachev also states that it is an instrument used to serve monopolies and wreak social vengeance. Gorbachev concludes that the ruling class's ideology is a vision of society that lacks a future for the common masses (Gorbachev, 1986 as cited in Pork, 1989, p. 284). Consequently, American philosopher Delos B. Mckown argues that the ruling class's political and religious conceptions render people dependent on and slaves of the ruling class and the capital (Mckown, 1975, p. 48).

Because the ruling class instrumentalizes religion for manipulation to serve their interests, emancipation from religion becomes key to Marx. Marxist John Raines argues the following:

> For Marx emancipatory practices require emancipation not from a particular religion but from religion in general. He came to this conclusion because the state religion . . . had not simply abandoned the poor and working classes but had become an ideological weapon of the ruling class. (Marx & Raines, 2002, p. 16)

Accordingly, religion is perceived in Marxism as the ruling class's ideological instrument or weapon used to manipulate the common masses. However, Marxism indicates that manipulation is not restricted to a particular religion; instead, every religion can become a manipulative ideology. Consequently, Marxism suggests that emancipation from religion is necessary to liberate the common masses from oppression and manipulation.

Through consideration of the Marxist theories about religion discussed in this chapter, it becomes clear that, in Marxism, religion exists as an instrument used to anaesthetize and manipulate the common masses. In this respect, the Marxist critique of the instrumentalization of religion is bisected into two fundamental parts: legitimation and manipulation. First, the Marxist critique of religion for legitimation reveals how the ruling class instrumentalizes religion to legitimate their authority and power. Second, the Marxist critique of religion for manipulation demonstrates how

the ruling class instrumentalizes religion to manufacture people's consent and render them obedient and submissive. These Marxist theories are employed as analytical instruments in the following chapters to construct an examination of religion as an instrument of manipulation.

SECOND CHAPTER

2. CLASS STRATIFICATION AND THE INSTRUMENTALIZATION OF RELIGION FOR MANIPULATION IN *2084 THE END OF THE WORLD* BY BOUALEM SANSAL

2.1 An Overview of 2084 The End of the World by Boualem Sansal

Boualem Sansal was born in Algeria in 1949. Sansal has a PhD in economics, and, at the age of 50, he began his career as a novelist after resigning from his work as a high-level official. The rise of religious fundamentalism in some countries has inspired him to document and incarnate the people's lives in the dystopian realms of theocracies. However, Sansal's notable works, *2084 The End of the World* and *The German Mujahid,* have aroused many controversies and are censored in his home country because of their criticism of religious fundamentalism.

Boualem Sansal's *2084 The End of the World* novel won the Grand Prix prize of French Academy because of its elaborate depiction of the dystopian realms of theocracies. This novel was inspired by Big Brother's totalitarian government in Orwell's *1984* – but on a theocratic scale. However, a theocratic dystopia, class stratification, and manipulation by religion appear to be the main themes and motifs of the novel.

The novel is set in an unspecified future after the year 2084 in a country named Abistan: a totalitarian and fundamentalist theocracy. Abistan is the winning country in the Great Holy War that defeats Orwell's Big Brother regime. Time stops in Abistan, and the year 2084 becomes everlasting. Similarly, the space of Abistan becomes boundless; thus, Abistan is thought to be the only country on Earth with no borders or limits. Abistan is not a multireligious country; it has one religion, the Gkabul, which is its divine constitution. In Abistan's theocratic regime, Yolah is the God, and Abi is his faithful messenger who records Yolah's divine teachings in a

book named the Gkabul. Furthermore, Abi invents Abilang: Abistan's official and sacred language. However, Abistan is a one-party regime where the Just Brotherhood party takes the monopoly of power and controls the state because they emerge as divinely appointed. Thus, by seizing power and being legitimized by the Gkabul religion, the Just Brotherhood party instrumentalizes religion to achieve their own political and personal ends.

The novel's plot is secondary because much of the novel describes religion's effect and power over the people – with limited depictions of characters and events. However, the novel opens with protagonist Ati in his final days in the sanatorium after recovering from tuberculosis due to a pandemic that has spread across Abistan. In the sanatorium, Ati struggles with the disease and with his growing scepticism about the dubious religious teachings and principles imposed by Abistan's theocracy. Ati's scepticism is further reinforced when he meets an archaeologist named Nas, upon recovering and returning from the sanatorium to his home. Sharing the same caravan in their one-year journey towards home, Nas tells Ati about the recently discovered village that does not follow the Gkabul religion. The people in this village have evidence capable of refuting the Gkabul's questionable principles that the Just Brotherhood party worked hard to establish via religious manipulation. Reinforced by Nas's facts about the village, Ati realizes that his religion, the Gkabul, is built on lies and deception. Thus, Ati embarks on a journey of truth to uncover the lies and deception within the Abistan theocracy. In this regard, Ati does not want to attack or stir a rebellion against the regime. Rather, he strives to penetrate the system to uncover the facts about his religion and free himself from the chains of the theocratic regime.

Ati is not alone in his journey for the truth. Upon returning home, Ati befriends Koa, a sceptic and a professor in the sacred language of Abilang. Koa's grandfather was a great propagandist of the Gkabul religion, and Koa is a man with social skills that make him capable of leading Abistan's heretics and nonbelievers without appearing suspicious. Ati and Koa begin to question their religion and the theocratic regime. Ati loathes Abistan's theocratic regime, while Koa despises the individuals who serve within it. Armed with their scepticism, Ati and Koa set goals: to sneak to Abistan's forbidden ghetto (the neighbourhood of Abistan's heretics) and

locate Nas to uncover more about the suspicious village. Thus, the two friends start their journey to discover the truth by sneaking into the ghetto, where they find free people whose lifestyle differs thoroughly from that of the Abistanis. Even more shocking to Ati and Koa is that these renegades live in freedom and safety near Abistan – despite Yolah's promise to slaughter them all. What Ati and Koa see in the ghetto reinforces their scepticism about the Gkabul religion and inspires them to search for Nas to learn more from him.

As transportation between neighbourhoods is forbidden in Abistan, Ati and Koa forge the necessary documents to move between neighbourhoods and go to the Abigov, the heart of Abistan's theocracy, to find Nas. Upon their arrival to the Abigov, Ati and Koa meet Toz, a brother of one of the leaders of the theocratic oligarchy. Toz reveals many aspects of the reality and corruption of the Gkabul religion and Abistan to Ati and Koa. First, the two friends learn that Nas has "committed suicide." However, the possibility is presented that he may have been killed by the authorities, upon discovering the village that reveals the falsehood of Abistan and the Gkabul religion. Toz also shares that the seemingly solid and united regime is in fact divided into ruling clans, which are in a constant struggle over the strategic and administrative offices of Abistan. More shocking is when Toz tells them that Abi and Yolah do not exist and that the Gkabul religion is merely the invention of the Just Brotherhood party. Thus, after the Great Holy War (i.e., the war with Big Brother's regime), an apocalyptic expectation motivates a group of adventurers to invent a new religion based on the strong fabrics of Big Brother's dead religion to operate a new political system. With these shocking facts about Abistan and the Gkabul religion, Toz leaves Ati and Koa in a warehouse hidden from Abistan's streets, where spies swarm.

However, Abistan's authorities aim to eliminate those who learn about Nas and the suspicious village; thus, by investigating Nas and the village, Ati and Koa find themselves at the top of the most wanted list. Spending some days in the warehouse, the two friends sneak from there to the streets crowded with spies to explore people's living conditions there. However, due to their risky exploration, they are captured by spies. After escaping from the spies and police, Koa gets lost, and Ati returns alone to the warehouse. After the incident, Toz takes Ati to the

leaders' residential quarters to be involved in the scheme of the Bri clan to seize power in Abistan. Ati becomes fascinated by the luxurious residential quarters of the leaders. Comparing these with the common masses' primitive and ruined residential quarters is like comparing heaven and hell. However, having no choice, Ati involves himself in Bri's plan to seize power. Through this, leaders Dia and Hoc are overthrown after being accused of blasphemy and a plot against Abistan. After the success of Bri's scheme, he becomes the Great Commander of Abistan. Still, Ati wants to free himself from Abistan's hellish theocracy. The novel ends with Ati being left in the mountains (near where Abistan's borders are rumoured to be located) to cross the borders and leave the hellish world of Abistan.

2.2 Class Stratification and Class Struggle over Consciousness

Abistan's social structure is stratified into two classes: the ruling class of Abi and the Honorables and the proletariat class or the common masses (i.e., the believers). Together, they constitute the base. The ruling class is composed of Yolah's delegate, Abi, and his party, the Just Brotherhood. Abi is depicted as follows: "he was Yolah's delegate, the father of the believers, the supreme leader of the world" (Sansal, 2017, p. 19). Accordingly, Abi appears as the world's supreme ruler and Yolah's representative on Earth. Abi assists Yolah in governing the believers. With this sacred and supreme status, Abi emerges as the luminary of the hierophany of the Gkabul religion. Hierophany is a recurring term in Mircea Eliade's theory of religion, where it is defined as a "manifestation of the sacred" (Eliade, 1987, p. 11). Therefore, Abi is the dignitary of the hierophany; he is the incarnation and manifestation of God and his rule on earth.

The other fundamental component of Abistan's ruling class is the Just Brotherhood party or the Honorables. The Honorables are portrayed as "the Just Brotherhood—the congregation of forty dignitaries chosen among the most faithful believers by Abi himself" (Sansal, 2017, p. 13). Moreover, the Honorables hold administrative offices in the various ministries of Abistan and are conceived as follows: "The Honorables were men, but they were like Abi—to a lesser degree, obviously, but they were also immortal, omnipotent, and omniscient. Demigods, basically" (Sansal, 2017, p. 117). Therefore, the Honorables are similar to Abi but of

a lesser status. Nevertheless, they are divine and immortal and have supernatural powers like Abi.

Abistan's proletariat class consists of believers. The novel sometimes refers to the believers as the flock, sheep, zombies, and dead people. With these allusions, the believers unfold as dependent, submissive, and dead. In this sense, they appear to be like the walking dead. Expressly, the believers are not physically dead but rather spiritually dead. Their religion anaesthetizes them to such an extent that it extinguishes their human spirit and dulls their senses. What remains is a flock of anaesthetized and eccentric people, where "Abi is the flock's infallible shepherd" (Sansal, 2017, p. 57). The earlier allusions also indicate that the proletariat, the flock, is not a class in and of itself because they are anaesthetized by religion. They do not develop their own identity, consciousness, and interests.

Abistan's superstructure primarily consists of the Gkabul religion and its ideology and laws. The Gkabul is the name of Abistan's religion, and it is also the title of the holy book where Abi's religious and divine teachings are recorded. Consequently, it is the constitution of Abistan and the believers. The Gkabul is depicted as "The Path to Ultimate Realization" (Sansal, 2017, p. 61). This portrayal demonstrates that the Gkabul is not merely a constitution but a system of beliefs, through which the believers conceive and realize the world. In this regard, every law and everything in Abistan emerges from the Gkabul teachings to keep the believers on Yolah's path. Moreover, Yolah's menaces are fearfully depicted in the Gkabul to warn the believers about the penalties of deviating from the Gkabul path.

However, as the Honorables are the ruling class, their ideas are the ruling ideas; thus, they are the ones who control Abistan's superstructure: the Gkabul. The supremacy notion of the Honorables' ideas is evident in the following description: "they . . . invented Abi and Yolah, wrote the Gkabul, built the Kïïba and the City of God, founded the Just Brotherhood" (Sansal, 2017, p. 186). Accordingly, the Gkabul religion, Abistan's superstructure, is an illusion; it is the Honorables' invention. Since the fabricated Gkabul is the prevailing ideology and the fundamental constitution of Abistan, the Honorables' ideas become the ruling ideas. Therefore, the Honorables endure as the intellectuals who control Abistan's Gkabul superstructure to manipulate and control the people through use of religion.

In this regard, the Gkabul religion emerges as the ruling class's invention and, in turn, a false doctrine. The falsehood of the Gkabul is portrayed as follows:

> Abistan's great misfortune was the Gkabul: . . . it offered humanity submission to sanctified ignorance, and by pushing servitude to self-negation, to pure and simple self-destruction, it denied the possibility of rebellion as a means of inventing a world on a human scale . . . Religion truly is the remedy that kills. (Sansal, 2017, p. 183)

Accordingly, the Gkabul religion materializes as a fatal misfortune to the Abistanis. However, the "death" enacted by the calamity of the Gkabul is not physical but mental. Thus, Gkabul leads the believers to obey and submit to ignorance that is masked with a religious halo. Furthermore, the Gkabul authorize slavery to the extent that an individual negates and destroys their inner self. Consequently, the Gkabul strips the human of their inner self and anaesthetizes what remains in them to deny their consciousness and rebellion. In this sense, the Gkabul emerges as a false and inverted consciousness that offers no remedy but death.

However false and pernicious the Gkabul traditions might be, they are perfectly enforced and maintained by the state's ideological and repressive apparatuses. The terrible apparatus of the Vs is among Abistan's repressive devices. Their members are portrayed as "mysterious beings, formerly known as djinns, who mastered telepathy, invisibility, and ubiquity" (Sansal, 2017, p. 47). Accordingly, the Vs are telepathic and what makes them more terrible is that they are invisible and exist everywhere simultaneously. In addition to the apparatus of the Vs, the apparatuses of the Volunteer Law-enforcing Believers and the Civics roam Abistan's streets day and night looking for blasphemy and suspicious behaviours.

Another RSA of Abistan is the Council of Reformation, known as the Core. The Core is the destination of people suspected of blasphemy and ignorance concerning the Gkabul religious principles. The Core is so mysterious and enigmatic that no one knows about it. The following example demonstrates how it is enigmatic: "after a summons in due form the inadequate individual simply vanished . . . it was like death" (Sansal, 2017, p. 60). In this sense, the ones who are summoned by the Core vanish. Thus, they are unable to tell the people in the society what the Core is, and they are counted as dead. However fearful and unjustified the disappearance of people, this machinery of death appears just to the believers because it is operated by the fair ruling class: the Honorables.

Furthermore, the ISAs of Abistan are highly represented in their public education system (i.e., the schools). Abistan's public education is portrayed as follows:

> Public education was a calamity, the source of all Calamities . . . education turned him into a compulsive, vicious little confessor, prepared to swallow dark fairy tales . . . and recite fantastical stanzas, obtuse slogans and offensive curses; and where physical exercise was concerned, he became the perfect perpetrator of all manner of pogroms and lynching. (Sansal, 2017, p. 183)

Accordingly, public education in Abistan appears to embody two roles: brainwashing and physical training. Regarding brainwashing, Abistan's public education brainwashes the people by instilling in them a false consciousness that turns them into fanatical and mentally congealed believers, willing to swallow terrible myths and superstitions. Regarding physical training, public education trains people to become ideal criminals who are physically capable of committing all kinds of crimes. Thus, Abistan's public education exists to brainwash people with a false consciousness and mould them into ideal criminals.

Another ISA is the Committee for Moral Health, which conducts a monthly inspection to check believers' religious consciousness at the city hall. The committee's duty is to probe the believers' religious consciousness to provide the authorities with necessary information about the believers' religious status. However, the act of religious inspection is portrayed as a "film of a consensual rape to which he would be subjected every month of every year for the rest of his life" (Sansal, 2017, p. 65). In this regard, the inspection act of the moral committee is conceived as rape by consent, to which Ati and other believers submit to monthly for life.

However, the outcomes of the false consciousness that the ruling class promulgates are evident in the stadium. The stadium is a place of slaughter, where a massacre of nonbelievers or scapegoats occurs every Thursday after the Great Imploration. The execution of these scapegoats is portrayed as follows: "The crowd at the stadium would go wild, would try to trample their bodies and drag them through the streets until all that remained were a few scraps of flesh on their bones" (Sansal, 2017, p. 94). Accordingly, the people are portrayed as savages because they crush the nonbelievers' bodies in public. Thus, the ruling class's false consciousness fashions bloodthirsty and wild animals out of the Abistanis. However, after the mass

executions of these scapegoats, “justice would triumph as never before, and faith would be strengthened a millionfold” (Sansal, 2017, p. 101) in Abistan.

The earlier massacre of the nonbelievers involves Girard’s notion of the scapegoat mechanism. The scapegoat is conceived as the “victim of crowd violence” (Frear, 1992, p. 118). According to French literary critic and philosopher Rene Girard (1986), the crowd conceives the victim as embodying all the suspiciousness and wickedness that poison the people’s religious faith and relationships. What comes after eliminating the scapegoats is a social peace and the “birth of a completely new order in the religious union of a community” (Sansal, 2017, p. 42). Therefore, Abistan’s nonbelievers emerge as scapegoats. The Abistani people conceive these scapegoats as the incarnation of wickedness and blasphemy that poisons Abistan’s religious society. After killing these scapegoats, the religious order is maintained, and faith is strengthened a millionfold in Abistan.

However false and pernicious the Gkabul’s doctrine is, protagonist Ati develops an authentic understanding about the reality of Abistan and the Gkabul. In this respect, Ati and his consciousness are portrayed as follows:

> Ati was not free and never would be . . . he felt truer than Abi, greater than the Just Brotherhood and its tentacular Apparatus, and more alive than the inert, swelling mass of believers; he had acquired the consciousness of his condition, and therein lay his freedom . . . It seemed clear to him that true victory lies in the losing battle that, despite everything, is fought to the end. (Sansal, 2017, p. 33)

Accordingly, Ati appears enslaved and not free. However, despite the slavery and gruesomeness of his situation, Ati authentically develops his consciousness to break the slavery chains and be free. As Ati acquires a real awareness of his condition, he begins to feel truer than the illusions of the Gkabul religion and its false consciousness would allow. In other words, Ati’s consciousness cultivates life and confidence inside him so that he feels more genuine than Abi and more powerful than the Honorables and their apparatuses. Moreover, his consciousness makes him feel animate and more alive than the anaesthetized believers. Consequently, Ati’s real consciousness motivates him to penetrate Abistan’s impenetrable theocracy to find the truth. Thus, Ati emerges as the incarnation of a counter-consciousness against the ruling class.

However, the essence of Ati's revolutionary consciousness and philosophy is not averse to religion. In this respect, Ati's consciousness is conceived as follows: "What his spirit was rejecting was not so much religion itself as the crushing of mankind by religion" (Sansal, 2017, p. 57). Accordingly, Ati's counter-consciousness and philosophy are not antireligious; rather, they are against the oppression and manipulation of people through use of religion. Therefore, armed with his consciousness, Ati rises to discover and expose the ruling class's manipulation and oppression, which are enacted through religion.

2.3 The Gkabul Religion as an Ideology for Manipulation

Abistan is not a multireligious country. It has one religion, the Gkabul, which comes "from an inner malfunction in an ancient religion" (Sansal, 2017, p. 186). The birth of the Gkabul religion dates back to the Great Holy War, in which Abistan defeated Big Brother's regime from Orwell's *1984*. Thus, the defeat of Big Brother's regime bred the Gkabul religion. It is an offspring and a foul product of Big Brother's ancient religion. The process of the invention of the Gkabul religion is conceived as follows:

> A group of adventurers who sensed all around them that the end was near decided to found a new religion on the ruins of the old one . . . They took what was still strong from the old one to add it to the new one . . . [They] invented Abi and Yolah, wrote the Gkabul, built the Kïïba and the City of God, founded the Just Brotherhood, and gave themselves the title of chik, which means Honorable. (Sansal, 2017, p. 186)

Accordingly, the apocalyptic foreboding after the Great Holy War motivated some adventurers to invent a new religion or ideology to operate a new political system. Thus, they invented the god Yolah and the charismatic prophet Abi, created the Just Brotherhood party, and wrote the holy book: the Gkabul. The Just Brotherhood party is the prime element that maintains the vitality of the Gkabul religion and Abistan. They named themselves the Honorables to separate themselves from the common masses. In this sense, the Gkabul religion reveals itself as false and as an inverted consciousness of an inverted world (i.e., the ruined world after the Great Holy War). Moreover, it is the ruling class's ideological invention to control and restore order.

Similarly, it is believed that, when an existing political system deteriorates, religion often saves the situation and restores order. Marxist philosopher Agon

Hamza states that “when a big political event marks a rupture in the already established political, ideological and social edifice, and thereby creates a gap, it is usually religion which takes over and fills the gap” (Hamza, 2016, pp. 58–59). Accordingly, religion appears as a reformative instrument for deteriorated and collapsed political and ideological systems. In the same vein, sociologist Rhys H. Williams states that ideologies arise when the cultural norms and principles (along with politics) fail to keep a society in order. Thus, ideologies arise as a cultural response to a cultural crisis when the current cultural principles seem incapable of achieving social change (Williams, 1996, p. 371).

Accordingly, the Honorables’ invention of the Gkabul religion is a cultural and reformative response to Big Brother’s cultural and political collapse after the Great Holy War. When Big Brother’s empire was defeated in the Great Holy War, Big Brother’s cultural principles seemed unable to handle the cultural crises and changes that followed. Therefore, these societal crises and the sense of an oncoming apocalypse following the collapse of the Big Brother government motivated Abistan’s ruling class to invent the Gkabul ideology to restore social and political order.

However fake and false the Gkabul religion is, it is perfectly accepted by Abistan’s common masses. The Abistanis believe in the Gkabul religion because “they are convinced that their place in paradise has been booked and is waiting for them like a suite in a luxury hotel” (Sansal, 2017, p. 185). In this regard, the ruling class convinces the people that the Gkabul is the path to paradise. Thus, by following the Gkabul religion and the ruling class, they will be guaranteed a place in heaven. By conceiving the Gkabul as the path to heaven, the Gkabul religion crystalizes for believers that “our faith is the soul of the world” (Sansal, 2017, p. 27) and also the “Path to Ultimate Realization” (Sansal, 2017, p. 61). Therefore, it is via the Gkabul faith that the world acquires meaning and order. Through Gkabul, the dystopian world of Abistan seems to have absolute order and justice.

As mentioned, the Gkabul religion is an ideology invented by the ruling class to establish a political system and control people via religion. In this regard, the fundamental purpose that lies at the core of Gkabul’s religious ideology is political legitimation. Thus, Abistan’s political system is conceived as follows: “However

totalitarian it might be . . . the System was perfectly accepted, because it had been inspired by Yolah, conceived by Abi, implemented by the Just Brotherhood and monitored by the infallible Apparatus" (Sansal, 2017, p. 60). Accordingly, despite being totalitarian, the ruling class's authority is perfectly accepted by the believers because it is "divinely ordained." The invention of the Gkabul religion provides the ruling class with a fertile ground upon which they can legitimize their power and authority.

In this respect, to fashion a fertile ground for religious manipulation, the whole of Abistan's ruling class is made legitimate through religion and conceived as sacred. Primarily, the religious legitimation works for the deification of Abi and the Just Brotherhood party. Abi is conceived as follows: "Yolah is great, and Abi is his faithful Delegate" (Sansal, 2017, p. 10) and "Yolah and Abi are One" (Sansal, 2017, p. 27). In this regard, Abi and God are conceived as one entity. Thus, Abi is the incarnation of God's authority on earth. On the other hand, the ruling class members or the Honorables are also legitimized by religion and conceived as sacred. The Honorables are portrayed as follows: "The Honorables were . . . immortal, omnipotent, and omniscient. Demigods, basically" (Sansal, 2017, p. 117). Legitimized by religion and cloaked with sacredness, the ruling class is not accountable to any earthly authority except for Yolah alone.

The earlier notions of religious legitimation seem to involve and imply the Weberian concept of charismatic legitimation. Lewis and Petersen state that, in the Weberian concept of charismatic legitimation, the leader claims leadership because of his supernatural and unique qualities (Lewis & Petersen, 2005, p. 229). In a similar manner, Lewis and Hammer state that charismatic legitimation also involves the notion of the "leader's ability to provide both mundane and supernatural benefits to followers" (Lewis & Hammer, 2010, p. 24). Accordingly, the conception of Abi as God's lieutenant and an immortal "leader with supernatural powers" (Sansal, 2017, p. 96) indicates a charismatic legitimation. In this sense, Abi's supernatural and mediative qualities render him a charismatic leader.

Similarly, the Honorables also appear charismatic and legitimized by charisma. Like Abi, the Honorables are conceived as having supernatural qualities; they are immortal, omniscient, omnipotent, and demigods. Accordingly, they are

raised to the status of Abi so that they become divine semi gods. Therefore, in addition to religious legitimation, these charismatic features legitimize and prioritize the Honorables in constituting the leadership in Abistan.

However, the invention of the Gkabul religion and its employment for religious legitimation provides the ruling class with an arable ground for manipulation. At first, incorporating the Gkabul religion within Abistan's political system benefits the state and prevents clashes between politics and religion. In this regard, Stephen J. Finn states that, for Hobbes, it is fundamental for the state to incorporate religion within its body politics to prevent civil war and clashes between religion and politics. The religiopolitical clash happens when people use God's holy words to question the authorities' acts. Thus, Finn concludes that, when the state incorporates religion within its body politics and presents itself as representing divine will, there will be no chance for a religiopolitical clash (Finn, 2007, p. 92). In this regard, by incorporating the Gkabul religion within Abistan's political system, the ruling class avoids a religiopolitical clash. Moreover, the ruling class thus guarantees that the common masses will not use the Gkabul religion to question their authority because their authority and the religious authority are one entity.

Legitimized and reinforced by the Gkabul religion, the ruling class manipulates the people to achieve political ends. The ruling class's manipulation begins with the rise of Abistan and the Gkabul religion. With the rise of Abistan's theocracy, the ruling class eliminates past vestiges to strengthen its religious ideology. The elimination process is portrayed as follows: "Ever since Abistan was founded, all . . . things that dated from an earlier era had been banished, along with the languages, traditions, and all the rest" (Sansal, 2017, p. 90). Therefore, when Abistan was founded, the ruling class removed past vestiges and eliminated materials that refer to the previous regime. The result of such elimination of past-related elements is the belief that "on earth there is only Abistan" (Sansal, 2017, p. 190). In this sense, with the elimination of history, reality is distorted, and people are manipulated to believe that Abistan is the only country on Earth.

The ruling class not only resorts to the elimination of past vestiges but also uses religion for the fabrication and manipulation of facts. The use of religion in the manipulation of facts is evident in the state's discovery of the village. The village is

located in Abistan's deserted desert and is discovered by a pilgrimage group that deviates from their pilgrimage's authorized route because of profuse rain, which makes a vast pond. What is peculiar about the village is that it is "capable of abolishing the founding truths of Abistan" (Sansal, 2017, p. 52). The village is capable of refuting the history and reality of Abistan because it "was not an Abistani village, but . . . it belonged to an earlier civilization that was far superior to our own, governed by principles that were totally the opposite of those that are the foundation of the Gkabul" (Sansal, 2017, p. 151). In this sense, the village can demolish the identity of Abistan because it refutes the belief, which the ruling class built via religious manipulation, that, on Earth, there are only the Gkabul and Abistan.

In this regard, the village becomes a thorn in the ruling class's side. To confront the emergence of the threatening village, the ruling class masks the village with a religious wrap and raises it as a sacred shrine. As a first procedure, the authorities eliminate the pilgrims who discovered the village and everyone who has learned the story to eliminate evidence. Then, the authorities "raise the village to the rank of a holy shrine . . . [to] be safely hidden from any hypocritical gazes or sacrilegious questioning" (Sansal, 2017, p. 90). In this regard, the ruling class declares the village as the sacred shrine where Abi "received the revelation of the Gkabul" (Sansal, 2017, p. 152). Thus, the ruling class manipulates the facts by masking the village with a religious wrap to eliminate threat and avoid public questioning concerning Abistan and the Gkabul's authority.

The ruling class progresses in its religious manipulation to declare the village not only as sacred but also as a place of pilgrimage. Upon the discovery of the village, the Honorable Dia "wanted it in order to serve his personal legend, to lay claim, as his own property, to a pilgrimage of prime importance" (Sansal, 2017, p. 52). Accordingly, the village is conceived as an investment for the ruling class to achieve personal purposes and benefits because, "in Abistan, the only economy was religious" (Sansal, 2017, p. 15). In this regard, the village discovery marks the beginning of a massive investment in the state. Upon the village discovery, "reservations had been filled for the next ten years to come . . . prices going through the roof—burnis, satchels, sandals and pilgrims' staffs now cost a fortune" (Sansal,

2017, pp. 84–85). Therefore, the village is elevated to a sacred place of pilgrimage to serve the ruling class's interests and to gain economic benefits.

In the earlier descriptions, the ruling class has manipulated the facts in the sense that the village was transformed from an "embarrassing fact" (p. 90) to a sacred pilgrimage shrine. Accordingly, the ruling class removed the threat of the village's existence through religious manipulation to make the "fact its own" (Sansal, 2017, p. 90). Additionally, when the village was transformed into a pilgrimage shrine, the ruling class edited Abistan's history and the Gkabul. Expressly, the theologians "have to rewrite the history of Abistan and the Gkabul . . . [and] touch up chapters in the Holy Book" (Sansal, 2017, p. 85). Therefore, the ruling class can continuously amend the Gkabul to keep its ideology updated and manipulative in addressing any recent threats and events.

As illustrated, the economic utilities are the real intention behind the pilgrimage, since Abistan's economy depends entirely on religion. However, the pilgrimage provides the ruling class with another significant utility; it limits Abistan's overpopulation. Initially, the pilgrimage occurs annually and is managed by the authorities, through which candidates are chosen to visit designated holy places. In this regard, the pilgrimage campaigns are conceived as follows: "these perilous pilgrimages might be an effective way to rid the cities of their teeming masses and offer them a beautiful death along the road to fulfillment" (Sansal, 2017, p. 16). Accordingly, the ruling class seems to instrumentalize pilgrimage as a death machine to kill people and address Abistan's overpopulation. In the same vein, the ruling class manipulates people's religious instincts and makes "the true dream of all the candidates—to die along the path to holiness" (Sansal, 2017, p. 18). Thus, the ruling class instrumentalizes religion to manipulate the people, kill them, and solve the problem of overpopulation.

However, the religious manipulation that follows the discovery of the village reflects Hobbes's notion of the state controlling religious matters. Political philosopher Jonathan Havercroft states that Hobbes wants the state to "determine religious doctrine for all of society and then to ban any public religious practices that contradicted the sovereign's religion" (Havercroft, 2011, p. 117). Havercroft indicates that Hobbes wants the state to determine the religious doctrines held by the

state. In other words, the state determines what citizens perceive as holy and sacred and prohibits religious practices and notions that contradict the state religion. In this regard, Abistan's ruling class achieves this process through its approach concerning the village and its culture. Upon discovering the revolutionary village (and the threatening nature of its existence), the ruling class rapidly abolishes its history and claims the village as a religious shrine. The village's history is abolished because the spiritual practice of its people contradicts Abistan's Gkabul religion. In this sense, the ruling class's acts regarding the village align with Hobbes's notion of sovereignty.

The ruling class employs the Gkabul ideology not only to fabricate facts and gain economic utilities but also to manufacture consent. In this regard, the ruling class instrumentalizes the Gkabul religion to manufacture people's consent and make them submissive. In the holy Gkabul, a verse says, "God is great, he needs his believers to be perfectly submissive, he hates pretention and calculation" (Sansal, 2017, p. 30). Accordingly, what the Gkabul faith prompts is blind submission and obedience. Consequently, the Gkabul religion dulls the believers' senses and anaesthetizes them to such an extent that they blindly obey and submit to the ruling class. In this regard, the Gkabul faith and submission become two sides of the same coin as presented in the following expression: "Submission is faith" (Sansal, 2017, p. 27). Thus, through reinforcement of the Gkabul doctrine that calls for blind submission, the ruling class manufactures people's consent and wins their blind obedience.

Abistan's ideological apparatus of the schools plays a significant role in indoctrinating the Gkabul ideology in manufacturing consent and producing obedient citizens. Throughout Abistan, there exist religious schools known as the School of the Divine Word. These schools teach the Gkabul and its obedience principles. The education in these schools is described as follows: "While everything in their environment seemed to doom them to aphasia, degeneration, and a drifting life of dissension, after only one short trimester of learning . . . they were transformed into ardent believers" (Sansal, 2017, p. 69). Accordingly, despite Abistan's dystopian and degenerate realm that encourages antagonism and arrogance, the learning in these schools transforms people into enthusiastic and obedient believers. Therefore,

Abistan's schools play a significant role in moulding people into ardent and obedient believers.

People's submissiveness and obedience are also achieved because they are persuaded to fear supernatural consequences. In this regard, the Gkabul swarms with verses that promise the nonbelievers and heretics a terrifying end. Among these terrifying verses is the following:

> He who is arrogant will suffer the thunder of my wrath, he will be mutilated, dismembered, burned, and his ashes will be scattered to the winds, and his kin, ascendants, and offspring, will know a bitter end, and death itself will not protect them from my prosecution. (Sansal, 2017, pp. 32–33)

Accordingly, the heretics and nonbelievers will be disfigured, cut into pieces, and burned. Moreover, Yolah's wrath and penalty extend to the nonbeliever's family members and offspring. Thus, Abistan's ruling class instrumentalizes the fear of Yolah and supernatural consequences to render people obedient and easier to manipulate.

The earlier presented strategy of manufacturing consent through use of fear and coercion seems Machiavellian at heart. Machiavelli states the following:

> Men have less hesitation in injuring one who makes himself loved than one who makes himself feared . . . since men are bad, they break at every chance for their own profit; but fear is held by a dread of punishment that never fails you. (Machiavelli, 1989, p. 62)

In their quest for their own interests, Machiavelli argues that people seem more prone to harm and oppress the one who is tolerant than the one who is fierce. Consequently, Machiavelli suggests that the ruler has to be fierce, and fear, in turn, is maintained by punishment. In this sense, to avoid any harm or disobedience, Abistan's ruling class emerges as fierce and violent to the people. Moreover, as Machiavelli suggests, Abistan's ruling class, the Honorables, maintains that fear with severe punishment that falls on the nonbelievers and their entire family.

Where fear of the Honorables is essential, it may also create hatred between them and the people. In this regard, the Honorables employ the Machiavellian concept in which love of the country channels hatred towards the country's enemy. The earlier Machiavelli's strategy appears in Abistan as follows: "As for the Regs . . . they belong to Abistan. The people and the System need them, they need

phantasmagoria like them to channel hatred and anger" (Sansal, 2017, p. 190). The Regs are renegades who do not believe in the Gkabul. As a result, the common masses consider them enemies. However, Abistan's ruling class considers the renegades part of the Abistani people. Therefore, the ruling class fabricates and instils the notion of renegades to instrumentalize the believers' love of Abistan as a deviation instrument that channels hatred towards Abistan's enemy: the renegades.

Abistan's ruling class also employs the heaven and hell concept to manipulate the people and render them obedient and submissive. As illustrated above, those who do not follow the path of Yolah and Gkabul will gain a terrible and bitter end. In this regard, concerning Abi, "every day, enthusiastic crowds flocked in procession around his sixty palaces to offer him their ardent devotion and costly gifts, and all they asked from him in return was paradise upon their death" (Sansal, 2017, p. 19). Accordingly, the believers come daily to Abi's palaces to demonstrate their loyalty and devotion. In return, they seek salvation and a place in paradise after death. This description aligns with Hobbes's notion that citizens are rendered obedient by viewing the ruler as the incarnation of salvation. In this sense, concepts like heaven and hell and the ruler as the incarnation of salvation are employed by Abistan's ruling class to render the people obedient.

The ruling class also instrumentalizes the Gkabul religion to make people vigorous and active. Abistan's common masses are conceived as follows: "they quickly got bored with anything that distracted them from their religious and para-religious duties, and that might in the end make them lose points and expose them to the public condemnation of Yolah" (Sansal, 2017, p. 55). Accordingly, the common masses seem quickly bored with mundane affairs and any duties that lack religious relevance. They do not want to be involved in mundane affairs because these affairs make them lose points and, in turn, be found guilty under Yolah. The concept of points collection is the state's creation, according to which the people are rewarded on the Day of Reward for their participation in religious and public duties. In this sense, the common masses are consistently aiming to be energetic and busy achieving their religious and public duties. This way, they can gain points to increase their rank and avoid Yolah's condemnation. The Abistanis display of significant vitality in conducting public duties is described as follows:

> They were busy doing volunteer work to rack up points for the next R-Day, the Day of Reward, giving a helping hand wherever it was needed—here to raise the tower of a mockba, there to dig graves or a well, paint a midra, check a list of pilgrims, provide backup to rescuers, take part in searches for missing persons, and so on. (Sansal, 2017, p. 46)

Accordingly, the people are regularly occupied conducting volunteer work and public duties to collect points for the next reward day. For this reason, they are conscientious to quickly detect situations that require assistance. Thus, they scatter here and there to provide aid concerning various issues and affairs. Thus, the condemnation of Yolah and points collection via religious duties create vital citizens to serve Abistan's ruling class.

While the instrumentalization of the Gkabul religion is beneficial for the ruling class, it significantly damages people's lives and liberty. Thus, Abistan's political system is conceived as "the System having no aim other than to prevent freedom from appearing, to enchain men and kill them" (Sansal, 2017, p. 33). Accordingly, the fundamental aim of the state is to crush freedom, restrain the people, and kill them. In this regard, freedom in the world of Abistan is conceived as follows: "in their world freedom is a path to death, it goes against the grain, it's disturbing, a sacrilege" (Sansal, 2017, p. 142). Thus, freedom in the world of Abistan unfolds as blasphemy, and seeking freedom is a death path. In this sense, the Gkabul significantly damages people by stripping them of their freedom and turning them into slaves.

The ruling class's religious ideology also turns people into bloodthirsty fanatics. The religious fanaticism and bloodthirstiness are evident in the people's "virile cheers: 'Yolah is great!' 'The Gkabul is the way!' 'Abi will win!' 'A curse upon Balis!' 'Death to the Enemy!' 'Death to Regs!' 'Death to traitors!'" (Sansal, 2017, p. 99). The cheering reflects people's sectarian mentality that there is no religion or way but the Gkabul. Moreover, the cheering portrays people's bloodthirstiness incarnated through their menacing desire for death to renegades and heretics. Therefore, the ideology of the Gkabul religion turns people into barbaric maniacs who believe that there is no religion but Gkabul and that death is the appropriate outcome for the renegades.

People's bloodthirstiness towards the nonbelievers is well portrayed in the stadium. The stadium is a place where a "holy carnage" (Sansal, 2017, p. 88) of

nonbelievers occurs every Thursday after the great imploration prayer. The people in the stadium are portrayed as follows: "The crowd at the stadium would go wild, would try to trample their bodies and drag them through the streets until all that remained were a few scraps of flesh on their bones for the dogs to fight over" (Sansal, 2017, p. 24). Accordingly, in punishing nonbelievers, the people go wild and crush nonbelievers' bodies. They pull them through the streets until their bodies strip from the flesh, and all that remains are bare bones. However, the stadium's wild and bloody massacres are conceived as holy. Thus, the Gkabul religion renders the Abistani people intolerant and homicidal. It indoctrinates them to regard killing those who do not follow the Gkabul as a holy act.

Under the ruling class's religious ideology, people also become rightless. The people's deprivation of rights can be noticed first in their ruined and polluted cities. The city environments are portrayed as "blocks of gutted buildings, walls riddled with bullet holes, entire neighbourhoods buried in rubble, eviscerated corpses, gigantic craters transformed into steaming dumping grounds or putrid swamps, hallucinatory masses of twisted, torn, melted metal" (Sansal, 2017, p. 11). This description reveals that the Abistani people do not live in cities but on battlefields because their environments are ruined. A terrible aspect is that the destroyed cities swarm with decadent and eviscerated bodies that stink the neighbourhoods. Thus, these destroyed and polluted cities make Abistan a hell on earth that crushes the people and makes their living conditions unbearable. In this regard, these demolished cities and their hellish living conditions deprive the Abistani people of the right to wellbeing. In turn, they are rendered rightless.

The people's rightlessness is also evident through the Hir: the national gruel and the only food that the ruling class provides. The Hir gruel is the Abistani populace's main meal that they feed on five times a day. The Hir gruel is described as follows:

> a grayish flour made from who knows what, and a reddish, oily concoction drawn from who knows where . . . The gruel wasn't as innocent as it looked, for it contained secret ingredients: bromides, emollients sedatives, hallucinogens, and other additives that enhanced an appetite for humility and obedience. (Sansal, 2017, pp. 114–115)

Accordingly, the gruel is not even food but a chemical blend of secret poisonous ingredients: bromides, sedatives, and other chemicals that stimulate hallucinations and make one anaesthetized. Thus, the fundamental purpose of the narcotic gruel seems to anaesthetize people and arouse their appetite for submissiveness and humility. Consequently, what Abistan's ruling class provides is not food but a blend of poisonous and narcotic chemicals. Thus, the ruling class deprives the people of the right to healthy food.

While the common masses feed on poisonous chemical gruel, the ruling class and their escorts feed on luxurious and nutritious foods. This matter is evident in the protagonist Ati's visit to the office of Toz, who is one of the Honorable Bri clan members. Toz's hospitality is portrayed as follows:

> Toz offered them an unusual sort of meal, food they had never seen, white bread, pâté, cheese, chocolate, and a bitter, burning drink he called coffee. At the end he took a basket of fruit from the buffet—bananas, oranges, figs, and dates. Ati and Koa nearly jumped out of their skin, they thought these things had disappeared off the face of the earth long before they were born. (Sansal, 2017, p. 123)

The description reveals how rightless the Abistani people are because they conceive ordinary food like bread and coffee as luxurious and unusual. Thus, Ati and Koa are stunned because they have never seen such food in their entire life, and they had formerly believed that these kinds of food had disappeared from the Earth long ago. In this sense, Ati's visit reveals that the Honorables preserve the healthy food for themselves, while providing the common masses with a poisonous chemical gruel.

The luxurious living conditions of the ruling class are not only evident via their quality foods but also through their luxurious residential quarters. Upon Ati's visit to the Honorable Bri clan's residential quarters, he describes the luxurious residence as follows: "The car went through a gigantic gate, guarded by an entire army, and into a vast park with majestic trees, romantic copses, charming flower beds, dreamy arbors, lawns, and ponds as far as the eye could see" (Sansal, 2017, p. 147). Accordingly, the Honorables' residential quarters are like a broad charming park that is predominately romantic and calm. While the common masses live in destroyed and polluted cities, the Honorables live in charming and heavenly quarters. Therefore, the Honorables' heavenly quarters stand as proof that Abistan's ruling

class seeks to secure its rights instead of the citizens' rights and that the citizens are thus rendered rightless and marginalized.

However, the common masses are not the only victims of the Gkabul's manipulative and deceptive ideology; the ruling class members are also victims of the Gkabul. This matter becomes evident through the Honorable Bri's scheme to become the Great Commander of the Just Brotherhood party by scapegoating the two Honorables: Dia and Hoc. Thus, the Honorable Bri proclaims terrifying news in Abistan that carries the following accusation: "Dia and Hoc, those snakes, were the leaders of an incredible plot against the Just Brotherhood and, what was an immense, terrible blasphemy, against Abi and Yolah themselves" (Sansal, 2017, p. 170). Accordingly, Bri's accusation portrays Dia and Hoc as heretics plotting against the Just Brotherhood party and trying to profane Yolah and Abi. In this regard, to seize the office of the Great Commander, Bri instrumentalizes the Gkabul religion to scapegoat his rivals by portraying them as the Gkabul's enemies.

Bri's plan to overthrow Dia and Hoc seems to work according to the scapegoat mechanism. According to Rene Girard, the scapegoat is the incarnation of suspicions, ill feelings, and antagonism that poisons the order and union of a community. Being the reason behind the community's deterioration, the community feels an urgent need to eliminate the scapegoat to be emptied of its bane and poisons. Moreover, Girard states that, after the community is emptied of its poisons, order is restored, or even a new religious order is born in the community (Girard, 1986, p. 42). Accordingly, Bri's portrayal of Dia and Hoc as enemies of the Gkabul religion and schemers against the Just Brotherhood party is an act of scapegoating. Thus, overthrowing these poisonous men becomes an urgent need to restore Abistan's religious order and unity.

The notion of a recovery of religious unity and order via the scapegoat concept is evident in Toz's speech about Abistan's bright future. Toz tells Ati that they will achieve the following:

> [They will] prepare the radiant future that Abistan will know—the sooner the better—when His Lordship becomes Great Commander of the Just Brotherhood . . . Under His Lordship, the holy Gkabul will truly be the only real light in the world. (Sansal, 2017, p. 154)

Toz's speech shows that when Bri eliminates these scapegoats and becomes the Great Commander, Abistan will witness a bright future, and the Gkabul will epitomize the world's ultimate path. In this sense, the Gkabul religion unfolds as a bipolar weapon or ideology that manipulates the common masses and its fabricators: the Honorables.

Whether it manipulates the ruling class or the common masses, Gkabul's manipulative ideology seems to turn the Abistani populace into congealed and dead people. The Gkabul impact on the Abistanis is depicted as follows:

> It had made him, and everyone around him, into a stubborn machine who was proud of the fact, a believer who was happy to be blind, a zombie congealed in submission and obsequiousness, living for nothing, out of simple obligation, useless duty, a petty creature capable of killing all of mankind with a snap of his fingers. (Sansal, 2017, p. 34)

Accordingly, under the reign of the Gkabul religion, the Abistanis are stripped of their human traits. They become merely creatures trapped in submission and slavery. Furthermore, the Abistani people become narrowminded individuals living for nothing, who can easily kill all humans. Thus, the Gkabul manipulation turns the Abistani populace into ruined and mentally congealed people.

In this regard, the manipulation by the Gkabul religion spawns disdainful and mentally congealed people, rightless people and slaves, and bloodthirsty people who are hardly humans. Moreover, it is the Abistan ruling class who benefits from the religious manipulation; they instrumentalize religion to achieve their own political and personal goals.

Such manipulative instrumentalization of the Gkabul religion and its disastrous consequences are reflected in the novel's prologue: "Religion might make us love God but there is nothing stronger than religion to make us despise man and hate humankind" (p. 5). Accordingly, religion unfolds as a unique bipolar instrument for loving God and crushing humankind. In terms of approaching God, religion provides humankind with rules of conduct and principles that refine human behaviours to win God's favour. However, the goal of all religions, whether monotheistic or nontheistic, is to make the world a better place and not to crush humankind. Nevertheless, when a particular religion is politicized and manipulated, it becomes a lethal weapon with the capacity to crush humankind. In this sense, it

could be argued that true evil is not religion itself but rather the humans who instrumentalize religion to achieve their desired personal benefits and political ends.

The analysis of Sansal's dystopian novel within this chapter has demonstrated that religion, when politicized, can be an effective instrument for manipulation and deception. Thus, in the novel, the discussed theoretical concepts of Marxist criticism of religion and other theoretical notions of Machiavelli and Hobbes are developed and applied to the extreme. As these theoretical concepts indicate, the ruling class instrumentalizes religion in the novel for political legitimation, fabrication of facts and history, manufacture of consent, and the development of vigorous citizens for the benefit of the state. However, the novel also highlights the discussed theoretical notions of the pernicious consequences of religious manipulation. Thus, the ruling class's religious manipulation results in rightlessness and slavery, fundamentalism and bloodthirstiness, and mentally congealed people. In this sense, *2084 The End of the World* provides a fertile ground for investigating religion as an instrument of manipulation because it tackles religion from various angles regarding the notion of manipulation. Finally, this novel provides information regarding both the mechanisms of the ruling class's religious manipulation and the devastating consequences of such manipulation.

THIRD CHAPTER

3. CLASS STRUGGLE AND THE MECHANISMS OF RELIGIOUS MANIPULATION IN *SWASTIKA NIGHT* BY KATHARINE BURDEKIN

3.1 An Overview of Swastika Night by Katharine Burdekin

One aspect of 20th-century dystopian literature is the representation of a cautionary critique against potentially subversive sociopolitical systems and ideologies that damage the individual and society. Such cautionary literary critiques appeared with the emergence of the totalitarian regimes in Germany, Italy, and Russia that stood as a clear testimony of how dangerous these ideologies and sociopolitical systems are to society and the individual's liberty. In this regard, 20th-century antitotalitarian authors like Katharine Burdekin, George Orwell, and Aldous Huxley have instrumentalized literature to depict and expose the mechanisms of these destructive ideologies and sociopolitical systems.

British novelist Katharine Burdekin (1896 to 1963) was born as Katharine Penelope Cade in Spondon, Derbyshire. Katharine Burdekin is the youngest of four children of the upper-middle-class family of Charles Cade. She received her education at home, but she later became a student at Cheltenham Ladies' College. Katharine Burdekin wrote speculative and feminist fiction that addresses social and feminist matters. Moreover, she wrote under the pseudonym Murray Constantine. Some of her novels include *The Rebel Passion* (1929), *Proud Man* (1934), and *Swastika Night* (1937), which is considered her notable work.

Burdekin's novel *Swastika Night* was published in 1937 under the Murray Constantine pseudonym and is described by British writer Andy Croft as "the most original of all the many anti-fascist dystopias of the late 1930s" (Croft, 1990, p. 238). Thus, *Swastika Night* presents a critique of totalitarian regimes and their manipulative ideologies that destroy society and limit individuals' awareness. The novel is set seven centuries into the future, and it portrays the world in the seventh

millennia of the Hitlerian era. The novel's world is divided into two empires: the German empire comprises Europe and Africa, and the Japanese empire comprises Asia, the Americas, and Australia. The German empire is theocratic in the sense that the Nazi ideology becomes a religion that draws its vitality from the "Teutonic mythology" (Burdekin, 1985, p. iv). In the Nazi theocracy, Hitler is worshiped as a god who was not born of a woman but rather exploded from the head of his father: God the Thunderer. In this regard, the Nazi religion and the Hitler Bible become the constitution of the Nazi theocracy, which is run by a ruling class of priests: the Teutonic Knights.

The novel begins in the Nazi church with Hermann, a Nazi worker, doing his weekly prayers and listening to the fundamentalist and brutal laws of the Knights and the Nazi religion. After the prayer, Hermann meets his English friend Alfred Alfredson, the novel's protagonist, who has travelled to Germany on a pilgrimage to visit the Nazi holy places. Alfred is 36 years old and a ground mechanic at the Salisbury Aerodrome in England. Like other Englishmen, Alfred is a sceptic and develops a logical consciousness that gives him a realistic and nonmythological conception of the corrupted Nazi regime and the world. After an enthusiastic welcome, Alfred and Hermann go for a walk, during which Alfred tells Hermann about his heretic thoughts and how he will liberate England and the whole world from the corrupted Nazi theocracy. In this regard, Alfred portrays his heretical and revolutionary personality as an acorn that will grow into a massive oak tree. However, Alfred clarifies to Hermann that his revolution will not be violent. Rather, it will be a revolution of consciousness and disbelief in the Nazi regime.

On the walk home to the ranch where Hermann works and lives, the two friends meet an attractive Nazi boy who tries to rape a Christian girl. Thus, Hermann beats the boy savagely until the boy becomes unconscious. However, Hermann is not angry about the rape but about the fact that this attractive boy reveals interest in girls and not boys. Such bloody acts are common in the Nazi regime because homosexuality is legislated and encouraged. Moreover, women are considered disgusting and inhuman. Therefore, there is no marriage but rape to procreate sons. The boy incident leads Alfred and Hermann to meet Nazi Knight Friedrich von Hess to provide a testimony about the incident. Friedrich von Hess is an old Knight who

develops factual and revolutionary understandings from a book written by one of his ancestors and passed down to him. However, the meeting between Knight von Hess and Alfred is a turning point in the novel because the Knight recognizes Alfred's rebellious spirit, and he reveals to him all the shocking facts about the lies of Nazi religion and theocracy.

Alfred spends most of his pilgrimage period at the Knight's farm, during which he pays daily visits to the Knight to nourish his consciousness with facts about the manipulated history and the lies of the Nazi religion. The Knight shows Alfred his two revolutionary possessions: a historical book and a photograph depicting the pre-Hitlerian era. The Knight shares a glimpse of the book content, which communicates that Hitler is not a god but an ordinary leader, who died centuries ago. Furthermore, the Nazi religion was fabricated by a coward Knight named von Wied to achieve political ends. The Knight reinforces his speech with shocking evidence: an actual photograph of Hitler proving him an unheroic man with a feminine physique – when compared to the woman standing beside him, whose physique is perfect and heroic. Alfred and Hermann are stunned by these shocking facts because they contradict what the Nazi theocracy promulgates. The theocracy asserts that Hitler is a seven-foot-tall god with unique and superhuman qualities. Moreover, the woman's heroic appearance and perfect physique are jaw dropping to the two friends because such women disappeared during the rise of the Nazi religion; they are considered inhuman and were thus rendered head-shaven, ugly, and imprisoned in mile-square cages in the suburbs. With these facts, Alfred develops an authentic understanding and realizes that the Nazi religion is merely a lie and an ideology used to manipulate the people.

While the Knight's scandalous knowledge about the Nazi religion enlightens Alfred, it defeats Hermann. The novel presents Hermann as a paradigm of the effect of Nazi religious ideology on people. Thus, Hermann, who has been brainwashed by the Nazis' religious ideology and false consciousness, is unable to believe or even perceive the Knight's crystal-clear facts. However, after a few sessions with the Knight, during which he learns about the manipulated history and the truth about the Nazi religion, Alfred's pilgrimage period ends. Thus, he must return to England. Before Alfred's departure, the Knight gives Alfred the book and the photograph

because they are the proof and knowledge Alfred needs to start his rebellion of ideas and disbelief. In this regard, the Knight sends Hermann with Alfred to protect the book and tells Alfred to read the book and start preaching by beginning with his sons and then with the people he trusts.

Upon arriving in England, Alfred keeps the book hidden at Stonehenge, where he pays daily visits in the evening to study the book with his son Fred and Hermann. Alfred also visits his rebellious Christian friend Joseph Black to discuss religious matters. However, one evening as they are studying the book at Stonehenge, a group of Nazi soldiers breaks into Stonehenge to shelter from heavy rain, and they are attacked by Hermann. The Nazi soldiers shoot Hermann and violently beat Alfred to unconsciousness, but Alfred's son Fred manages to escape with the book. Later, Alfred dies of his injuries at the hospital, and Fred takes the book into Joseph Black's house because Christianity is considered a filthy race in the Nazi theocracy; thus, Christians are free of authority's search and investigation. The novel ends with Alfred's death, suggesting that Fred will continue the task of preaching the rebellion of disbelief against the corrupted Nazi theocracy.

3.2 Class Stratification and Class Struggle over Consciousness

The German empire's superstructure is comprised of the Nazi religion. Teutonic Knight von Hess portrays the Nazi religion as follows: "ours is a warlike religion, you are ruled in a soldierly way, not in a priestly way" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 136). Accordingly, the principles of the Nazi religion are not like ordinary religions but martial and heroic ones; thus, the ruling style of the Nazi theocracy is soldierly. In this regard, the Nazi religion indoctrinates the following principles: "And I believe in pride, in courage, in violence, in brutality, in bloodshed, in ruthlessness, and all other soldierly and heroic virtues" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 6). Thus, the German empire's religion is based on militarized morale and savage beliefs. Expressly, the Nazi religion does not cultivate intellectuality and pacifism but brutality, bloodthirstiness, and violence. Accordingly, the superstructure of the Nazi theocracy is comprised of martial and savage principles.

The superstructure of the Nazi theocracy is also comprised of religious laws and principles that indoctrinate misogyny. The misogyny aspect of the Nazi religion is conceived as follows:

> As a woman is above a worm, so is a man above a woman. As a woman is above a worm, so is a worm above a Christian . . . The meanest, filthiest thing that crawls on the face of the earth is a Christian woman. (Burdekin, 1985, p. 7)

Accordingly, in the Nazi religion, women are not considered human beings but as things whose status is above the worm. However, the Christian woman is lesser than the worm and thus the most defiled thing on earth. The Christian women are conceived so because, in the Nazi religion, Christianity is not a religion but a filthy and defiled race. Men unfold as the only human beings, and thus their status is higher than women's. In this sense, the German empire's superstructure is comprised of religious laws and a false consciousness that indoctrinate misogyny and brutality.

However, the German empire's base or social structure is stratified into the ruling class and the common masses. The common masses are comprised of the Nazis and the foreign races. The Nazis are conceived as "a Nazi above any foreign Hitlerian" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 7), and thus people of non-Aryan blood (i.e., foreign Hitlerians) are marginalized and considered defiled races. The ruling class includes the god, Hitler, and the Knights. The Knight status stands above the Nazis, and they are conceived as follows: "the Knights in their vanity and blindness think themselves of different clay from the common Nazis" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 181). In this regard, the Knights think of themselves as supreme beings, who are higher than the Nazis in nature and social status. Additionally, in the Hitlerdom feudal society, the Knights possess the production forces (e.g., lands, factories, and machines). However, God the Thunderer and his son Hitler stand at the height of this social hierarchy, and they are portrayed as follows: "They are equal in this holy mystery. They are God" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 8).

As the Knights are the ruling class and own the means of production, they are responsible for the overall mental production. This aspect is evident in the book of von Wied, a Nazi scholar Knight who is conceived as "the voice of God" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 83). Von Wied's book was published during the rise of the Nazi empire, and

its concepts were adopted in writing the Hitler Bible, which is the Hitlerdom's constitution. Von Wied's book is conceived as follows:

> This book of von Wied proved that Hitler was God, not born but exploded, that women were not part of the human race at all but a kind of ape, and that everything that had been said and done and thought before Hitler descended was the blackest error of subhuman savagery. (Burdekin, 1985, p. 79)

Accordingly, von Wied's book eliminates world history and fabricates a new history and consciousness – a false consciousness in which Hitler is raised to the status of a god and women are dehumanized to become like apes. Therefore, the Knights emerge as the intellectuals responsible for material and mental production in Hitlerdom. Furthermore, their ideas are the ruling ideas, and they control the Hitlerdom superstructure (i.e., the Nazi religion) to keep their ideology updated and appropriately manipulative.

Accordingly, the superstructure (i.e., Hitlerdom's religious laws and principles) is the ruling class's fabrication; it is a false consciousness. The falsehood of Hitlerdom's religion is portrayed in Knight von Hess's comment about the religion: "The religion has become very debased and impure, but that would be inevitable. Women had a very high place in the old Christian theology. Theoretically, their soul-value was equal to the men's" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 73). Accordingly, the Nazi religion is presented as degrading and false because it asserts a false consciousness about gender identity and nature. Thus, one of the corrupted aspects of the Nazi religion stems from the dehumanization of women, which renders them wretched and soulless creatures and, in turn, inferior to men. In this regard, the Nazi religion is conceived as a rotten body that decays the German empire as in the following: "it is a stinking corpse, and its smell is coming through. It is a religion which must die" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 130).

However false and pernicious the Nazi consciousness might be, it is perfectly indoctrinated and maintained by the state's ideological apparatus: the church. In this regard, the Nazi church has established monthly worship sessions for men, which consist of readings of the fundamental laws of Hitlerdom and several rituals based around glorification of Hitler and Aryan race, and gender degradation. The rituals regarding Hitler are conceived as follows: "I believe . . . in God the Thunderer, who made this physical earth . . . and in His Heaven where all heroes are, and in His Son

our Holy Adolf Hitler" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 5). Accordingly, the churches submit Nazis to monthly brainwashing through presentation of a false ideology, in which Hitler is venerated as a god who created the Earth and heaven for the Nazis. In addition, the rituals about race and gender degradation dehumanize women, assigning them animal status, and the non-Aryan races, who are designated "savage tribes" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 26). Thus, the state's ideological apparatus, the Nazi churches, are brainwashing instruments to indoctrinate the people and maintain the false consciousness of Hitlerdom.

However dehumanized the women are, they are herded from their prisons to the churches to worship Hitler once every three months. Women's worship is conceived as "agony" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 9). It is done while standing because their ill-balanced bodies are considered profane to the church's holiness. Moreover, women would weep and wail when the Knight "exhorted them on humility, blind obedience and submission to men, reminding them of the Lord Hitler's supreme condescension in allowing them still to bear men's sons" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 8). Accordingly, while religion indoctrinates men with misogyny and racism, it indoctrinates women with submission and blind obedience to men. Therefore, the ISA, the church, plays a fundamental role in brainwashing the two sexes with false understandings commensurate with the state's religious ideology.

Although the Nazi religion brainwashes the common masses with false consciousness, Englishmen develop a counter-consciousness. Scepticism and a counter-consciousness are incarnated in the protagonist, Alfred. Alfred is an Englishman of 36 years, who works as an aerodrome ground mechanic in England. Unlike the Nazis, Alfred holds a real and nonmythological consciousness about life and human nature. Alfred's consciousness is conceived as follows:

> Hermann, what *is* a man? A being of pride, courage, violence, brutality, ruthlessness, *you* say. But all those are characteristics of a male animal in heat . . . A man is a mentally independent creature who thinks for himself and believes in himself, and who knows that no other creature that walks on the earth is superior to himself. (Burdekin, 1985, p. 28)

In Alfred's earlier criticism, the Nazi false consciousness is laid bare and ugly alongside Alfred's realistic and logical consciousness. In this regard, Alfred's consciousness refutes Nazi consciousness by declaring that the Nazi's conception of

man as proud and violent is false and that it renders the Nazi man merely a wild animal. Besides, Alfred rejects the divine kingship notion of the Nazi theocracy by stating that men should be mentally independent by rejecting the conception of Knights as superior holy beings. In this regard, Alfred's consciousness presents itself as logical and realistic and, in turn, a counter-consciousness to that of the Nazi's.

Alfred's consciousness is also composed of logical conceptions about the inferiority of women and subject races, who are dehumanized and despised in the Nazi religion. Alfred's understanding of women is presented as follows: "Women are something—female, they must want to be that, they must think it the most superior, the highest possible form of human life" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 107). Thus, despite the Nazi religion's misogyny and conceptions of women's inferiority, Alfred develops a consciousness that elevates women to a supreme status. In this regard, Alfred does not want women to submit to the Nazi false consciousness but to develop a consciousness with which they see themselves as supreme and unique creatures. In addition, Alfred conceives the subject races inferiority as follows: "An *acceptance* on my part of fundamental inferiority is a sin not only against my manhood but against life itself" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 106). Thus, Alfred's consciousness unfolds as unique and revolutionary in that it renders men rational and pacifist and women human and unique.

Knight von Hess's revolutionary book nourishes and refines Alfred's consciousness. The family of von Hess has "a family curse of knowledge" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 65), which arose via a book written by their revolutionary family ancestor, known as Friedrich von Hess. Friedrich von Hess was one of the few Knights who had been closest to Hitler; von Hess's consciousness pushed him to write a book that counters von Wied's illogical one. In this regard, Friedrich wrote his book about the rise of the German empire when the Nazis destroyed the history books to construct their own Teutonic mythology as a religion and historical truth. Thus, the book is conceived as the "truth about the history of Germany and the history of the rest of the World" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 80). Accordingly, von Hess's book emerges as a history book about the world, which the Nazi empire had worked hard to abolish by use of a false consciousness. Therefore, Knight von Hess's book nourishes Alfred's consciousness with facts about the world's history, which were

abolished with the rise of the Nazi empire. Furthermore, the two different consciousnesses presented in these two books (i.e., von Wied's and von Hess's books) generate the struggle of consciousness presented in Alfred's character.

Armed with his awareness, Alfred aims to stir a spiritual and intellectual rebellion against the German empire. In this regard, it is worth mentioning that "those who live in the world of myths are 'secure from all refutation' and cannot be discouraged" (Jennings, as cited in de Guevara, 2016, p. 26). Thus, the Nazis, whose mindset and religion are based on Teutonic myths, appear to be secured from refutation and, therefore, irrefutable. In this regard, Alfred does not want to stir an armed rebellion against Germany because he thinks that "armed rebellion against Germany will always fail" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 24). Furthermore, Alfred states that armed rebellions fail because they aim to overthrow the regime by force and bloodshed and not by ideas and consciousness. Consequently, Alfred conceives his rebellion as follows: "The rebellion must be unarmed, and the power behind the rebellion must be spiritual, out of the soul" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 100). Accordingly, Alfred aims to attack Hitlerdom's core, the Nazi consciousness, by stirring an intellectual revolution that will smash Germany harder than an armed one. In this regard, Alfred states, "I'm not only going to deliver *England* from the Germans. I'm going to deliver the world" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 30).

Alfred's very name recalls the Medieval character of King Alfred. According to American literary critic Adam Stock (2019), Alfred's name in the novel is metaphorical, referring to the Medieval King Alfred, who defended England against foreign invasions. Thus, Stock states that Alfred's name signifies the possibility that Alfred will deliver England from the Nazi invasion just as the Medieval King Alfred protected England from foreign invasions (p. 167).

After having been marginalized and conceived as savage tribes, Alfred and the English people emerge as an actual class upon acquiring their own consciousness. In this sense, their consciousness enables them to be an actual class by having their own interests and mindset that emerge as a counter-consciousness to the corrupted Hitlerdom. The notion of the English people as an actual class of counter-consciousness is evident in the British community named Brotherhood of British Heathens. The Brotherhood of British Heathens is conceived as an "anti-Hitler secret

society" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 172) with branches scattered throughout England. Thus, England is conceived as a starting point to the intellectual revolution and the struggle against the false consciousness of Hitlerdom. In this regard, the English people emerge as a revolutionary class because "they are sturdy heretics. The best of them are incapable of spiritual panic, even the ordinary men among them are hard to move to dubiously moral courses by spiritual pressure" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 114). Accordingly, the rebellion is incarnated in the English people because they have spiritual independence and consistency that render them consciously solid in the face of the Nazi false consciousness. In this sense, with consciousness and spiritual consistency, the English people emerge as an actual class with a unique mindset and interests that counter the Nazi false consciousness.

3.3 The Nazi Religion as an Instrument of Manipulation

The German empire is not mono-religious; it has the Nazi religion and Christianity. However, Christianity is despised and conceived as a defiled race. Therefore, the Christians are treated as savages and outcasts. Thus, the Nazi religion emerges as the German empire's supreme religion and divine constitution. The Nazi religion is the ruling class's fabrication from the fabrics of Teutonic mythology. In this regard, the intellectual Knight von Wied wrote a book, where he asserted that "Hitler was divine, and that the world, the real human world, was born in His Explosion" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 83). Accordingly, in the Nazi fabricated and mythical religion, Hitler is conceived as a deity who was not begotten but who exploded from the head of his father: "God the Thunderer" (Burdekin, 1985, p. iv). Moreover, the Nazi religion portrays Hitler as a seven-foot god with the "holy German physique" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 67).

According to American author Daphne Patai (1984), Hitler's miraculous birth resembles the birth of Athena in ancient Greek mythology, where Athena exploded from her father Zeus's head. In this regard, Patai states that Hitler's miraculous birth indicates male supremacy and degradation of woman's procreative power (p. 88). Moreover, Hitler's conception as the son of God the Thunderer may draw a parallel between him and Christianity's conception of Jesus Christ as the son of God. Thus,

Hitler is venerated as Jesus Christ, for he is worshiped as the son of God, who leads the German people to salvation.

The conceptions of Hitler's deification and myth sacralization categorize the Nazi religion as a political religion. According to Adam Stock (2019), Burdekin sacralizes the Nazi ideology and thus renders the German empire a theocracy. Stock states that the German empire's conception as theocratic aligns with conceptions of fascism as a political religion rooted in mythical concepts (p.141). In this regard, the Italian historian Emilio Gentile defines political religion as follows:

> a type of religion which sacralises an ideology, a movement or a political regime through the deification of a secular entity transfigured into myth, considering it the primary and indisputable source of the meaning and the ultimate aim of human existence on earth. (Gentile, 2004, as cited in Griffin, 2005, p. 34)

Accordingly, the Nazi religion is conceived as a political religion because it sacralizes the Nazi ideology through the deification of Hitler in myths. Moreover, the Nazi myths are conceived as the ultimate consciousness and realization of the world. Furthermore, these myths are presented as the fundamental aim of Nazis on Earth. In this sense, the Nazi religion unfolds as a political religion and the ultimate consciousness through which the Nazis realize and perceive the world.

However false and mythical the Nazi religion might be, it is perfectly held by the Nazis. The Nazis' commitment to their religion is portrayed in their prayers as follows:

> I believe in God the Thunderer, who made this physical earth on which men march in their mortal bodies, and in His Heaven where all heroes are, and in His Son our Holy Adolf Hitler . . . He the perfect, the untainted Man-Child, whom we, mortals . . . must ever worship and praise. (Burdekin, 1985, pp. 5–6)

This prayer reveals how committed the Nazis are to their religion; they believe their mythical deity is the creator of the universe and thus must sincerely worship him and pay him obedience. Therefore, the Nazis are committed to their religion because it exists to them as the world's ultimate religion and reality.

Being fabricated by the ruling class, the Nazi religion's fundamental purpose seems to legitimize the ruling class and social hierarchy. The legitimation notion appears in the Hitler Bible as follows:

> As a man is above a woman, so is a Nazi above any foreign Hitlerian. As a Nazi is above a foreign Hitlerian, so is a Knight above a Nazi. As a Knight is above a Nazi, so is Der Fuehrer (whom may Hitler bless) above all Knights . . . But of God the Thunderer and our Lord Hitler . . . They are equal in this holy mystery. They are God. (Burdekin, 1985, pp. 7–8)

Accordingly, the Hitler Bible legitimizes the ruling class by presenting the principles of social hierarchy and class stratification as divinely ordained. Thus, the Hitler Bible separates the Knights and sets them at the top of the social pyramid under God the Thunderer and Lord Hitler. However, the pyramid's bottom is occupied by the Aryan Nazis, who are conceived as above the foreign Nazis. In this sense, the Nazi religion plays a fundamental role in legitimizing the ruling class and social hierarchy.

However, the ruling class's mechanism of religious legitimation also works by incorporating the sacred into its body politics. This notion is evident in Knight von Hess's comment on the German empire as follows: "Church and State really *are* one in the German Empire, and der Fuehrer is the Pope" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 135). Accordingly, the ruling class incorporates the religious authority, the church, and the political authority in one entity, the state, that now represents the divine. By doing so, the German empire's politics and the ruling class's authority are raised from the profane to the sacred sphere. In this regard, the Knights emerge as priests who are believed to be capable of cursing the people to "exclude them from the benefit and blessing of God" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 135). Thus, the ruling class instrumentalizes religion to achieve political ends (i.e., to legitimize and strengthen their authority and power).

The German empire's ruling class is not only legitimized by religion but also by charisma. The notion of charismatic legitimation is evident in Hitler's unique and superhuman qualities. The ruling class portrays Hitler as a God with a unique physique: his slender body is "seven feet tall" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 60). Moreover, he has thick golden hair and beard, a noble rugged brow, and blue eyes. Accordingly, these unique and superhuman qualities render Hitler a charismatic leader and prioritize his leadership and power in the German empire. The Knights are also legitimized by charisma. The Knights are conceived as being "of different clay from the common Nazis" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 181). Thus, this quality renders them charismatic and, in turn, legitimizes their monopolism of authority and power. Furthermore, the charismatic legitimation of Knights also stems from their

superhuman and priestly quality of cursing certain people and excluding them from salvation and God's mercy.

The earlier notions of charismatic and religious legitimation provide the ruling class with arable soil for manipulation. Thus, during the rise of the Nazi empire, the ruling class instrumentalized religion to eliminate history and culture, and replace them with fabricated Nazi versions. The notion of elimination is conceived as follows:

> All history, all psychology, all philosophy, all art except music . . . every book and picture and statue that could remind Germans of old time must be destroyed . . . all the enormous mass of Christian theology must be destroyed throughout the Empire. (Burdekin, 1985, p. 79)

Accordingly, history, culture, Christian religion, and everything that relates to the pre-Hitlerian era were eliminated at the rise of the German empire. Then, this void of history was filled with fabricated Nazi religious history and culture to render the Nazi religion genuine. Thus, the ruling class instrumentalized religion to manipulate the truth and eliminate history.

The ruling class instrumentalized religion not only to eliminate history but also to fabricate facts. The ruling class's fabrication of facts is evident in their transformation of Hitler from an ordinary leader to a god with a unique physique. As stated earlier, Hitler is conceived as a god of slender body and colossal height with thick golden hair and blue eyes. However, when Knight von Hess shows Alfred the real picture of Hitler, Hitler appears as a man with a feminine physique. Thus, Hitler appears in the real picture as follows:

> smallish . . . he was dark, his eyes were brown or a deep hazel, his face was hairless as a woman's . . . His hair was cropped short . . . He was dressed in uncomely tight trousers like a woman's instead of the full masculine breeches of all the statues and pictures, and his form was unheroic, even almost unmale. (Burdekin, 1985, p. 67)

Accordingly, instead of the mythic masculine physique, the real Hitler is short and has a hairless face and brown eyes. Hitler's appearance emerges as unheroic and even feminine. Consequently, the picture reveals how manipulative and deceptive the Nazi religion is because it transformed Hitler from a man with a feminine physique to a perfectly masculine one. In this sense, the ruling class

instrumentalized religion to fabricate the facts, through which Hitler was transformed from an ordinary leader to a unique and heroic one.

Moreover, in their quest to nurture obedient citizens, the ruling class employs religion to manufacture people's consent and render them obedient. The notion of consent manufacturing is evident in the Hitler Bible as follows:

> Who in our need, in Germany's need, in the world's need . . . came down from the Mountain, the Holy Mountain . . . to march before us as Man who is God, to lead us, to deliver us, in darkness then, in sin and chaos and impurity, ringed round by devils. (Burdekin, 1985, p. 6)

Accordingly, Hitler emerges as a god and saviour who came to deliver Germany and the world from sin and chaos. Thus, Hitler and the Nazi religion are presented as the incarnation of salvation. By submitting to them, people will guarantee salvation in the afterlife. In this sense, by portraying Hitler and the Nazi religion as saviours, the ruling class manufactures people's consent to be obedient and submissive citizens so they can guarantee salvation.

However, women are exposed to a different concept of consent manufacturing. In Hitlerdom's misogynistic society, marriage is abolished, and the sole role of women is that of procreation. Thus, conception is accomplished only by rape, and the religious manipulation of women is directed towards rendering them submissive and willing to be raped. In this regard, the concept of manufacturing consent in women is evident in the Knights' indoctrinating religious teachings: "It is not for you to say, 'I shall have this man or that man['] . . . for a woman to oppose any man (except a Christian) on any point is blasphemous and most supremely wicked" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 13). Accordingly, women's disobedience and opposition to man's will are considered blasphemous and wicked. Additionally, earlier Nazi religious teachings had stripped women of their right to choose their male partners and rendered them submissive to men. Thus, by considering women's free will as blasphemous, the ruling class has rendered women submissive and obedient to men.

The ruling class also employs factors of fear and supernatural consequences to render the citizens obedient. Supernatural consequences are evident in the heaven concept that the Nazi religion promises for heroes. This factor is conceived as follows: "I believe . . . in God the Thunderer . . . and in His Heaven where all heroes

are*"* (Burdekin, 1985, p. 5). Accordingly, heaven is guaranteed for those who believe in the Nazi religion and its fundamental principles of violence, bloodshed, and ruthlessness. In addition, the fear factor is incarnated in the Knights' supernatural abilities to curse the people. Thus, the Knights are conceived as being able to curse the people to "exclude them from the benefit and blessing of God" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 135). Therefore, it is fundamental for the people to obey and submit to the Knights to avoid being cursed and to guarantee their salvation in the afterlife.

However, fear of the Knights may generate opposition and hatred between the Knights and the Nazis. In this regard, the Knights instrumentalize the Nazis' love of Germany as follows: "what love of country can do . . . is to channel fear of the prince outward, onto an external enemy of the partia" (Fontana, 1999, p. 657). This matter is evident in Knight von Hess's speech to Alfred, where he says, "The peace between Japan and Germany is permanent. The Knights know this, the Nazis do not" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 76). Accordingly, unlike the Nazis who are indoctrinated that war with their sworn enemy, the Japanese empire, is around the corner, the Knights do not consider the Japanese empire their enemy because they have made permanent peace with the Japanese. In this sense, the ruling class instrumentalizes the concept of the enemy and the Nazis' love of Germany to channel the Nazis' fear and hatred towards an external enemy: the Japanese empire. However, the enemy concept also allows the ruling class to prevent class struggle. Thus, the sense of being threatened by a foreign enemy prevents rebellious movements through mobilizing the Nazis' energies towards despising and attacking their foreign enemy.

However beneficial the Nazi religion is to the ruling class, it significantly damages people's liberty and rights. The rights damaging aspect is evident in the religious conception of women regarding their nature and status in society. Through the rise of the Nazi theocracy, the Nazi religion embraces a concept known as the Reduction of Women. The Reduction of Women is fabricated by Nazi scholar Knight von Wied, whose teachings were adopted in constructing the Hitlerdom constitution, and is conceived as follows:

> He advocated shaven heads for women and a kind of dress that . . . have nothing mysterious or graceful about it. They must dress all in one colour, a dirtybrown (as they do now), and must be, after the age of sixteen, completely submissive . . . to any

> and every man, for such was the will of the Lord Hitler . . . He said there must be no love, only lust or a desire to beget sons. (Burdekin, 1985, p. 81)

Accordingly, the earlier religious concept of the Reduction of Women renders women as hideous and filthy creatures. Furthermore, it portrays women as submissive creatures who are not worthy of love but only lust and desire to procreate sons. In this sense, the Nazi religion strips women of their rights, making them merely instruments for procreation.

However, the religious concept of the Reduction of Women is not restricted to notions of procreation but incorporates far more nonhuman elements. In this regard, the Nazi religion conceives women as follows: "A woman has no soul and therefore can have no sorrow" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 11). Accordingly, the woman in the Nazi religion exists as a heartless subhuman being. Moreover, it is considered as "natural and right that they should always have less food than men, and . . . [give them] just what would keep them alive" (Burdekin, 1985, pp. 59–60). Thus, women do not even have the same rights and equality regarding food, as their rations are less than those of men, and they receive only enough to keep them alive. However, the authorities imprison women in a mile-square cage, and, once every three months, they are herded like cattle to the church to worship Hitler. Moreover, when giving birth to a male child, the authorities take the male child at 18 months to be raised and tutored by men. Thus, the Nazi religion deprives women of their rights, freedom, and human nature, rendering them merely instruments for procreation.

The religious concept of the Reduction of Women and scapegoating seem to be two sides of the same coin. In addition to the earlier inhuman religious conceptions regarding women, women are considered profane to the Nazi religion and the holy places because "women's rumps [are] even more defiling to holy places" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 8). Accordingly, women are scapegoats in the Nazi religion; they are profane to the Nazi male religion and society's religious order. Thus, women are prisoned in a mile-square cage and "excluded them from the human race and its divisions, allowing them neither nationality nor class" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 68). In this sense, women are eliminated from society and the human race to maintain the sacredness of the holy places and keep the Aryan society purified, religious, and orderly.

In the Nazi regime, women are not the only rightless group; Christians also exist as rightless and marginalized. The Nazis conceive Christians as follows: "We look on them rather as we look on wild animals. If they got savage they would be shot" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 149). Thus, the Nazis consider Christians as savages who are kept alive as long as they are calm. Additionally, Christians' living conditions are portrayed as follows: "The Christians were allowed no rations by the government, and they could do no work. They lived on . . . the small proceeds of their illicit sales" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 174). Accordingly, Nazi theocracy considers Christians as outcasts who have no right to rations and work. Therefore, the Nazi religion renders Christians rightless and savages, and the Christians emerge as scapegoats. The Christians are scapegoats because they are conceived as a filthy and profane race when compared to the sacred Aryan race and Nazi religion. In this manner, they are eliminated from Nazi society to maintain its religious order and sacredness.

Moreover, even the Nazis of Aryan blood do not survive the ruling class manipulation, as they strip the Nazis' rights and secure the ruling class's rights only. This matter is evident in the proscription of the Nazis' surnames and family feelings. Thus, this matter is conceived in Knight von Hess's speech as follows:

> The German Government wished the common men, the Nazis and the subject races, to have as little family feeling as possible. The Knights are allowed to have family feeling . . . The Nazis are only allowed to have pride in Germany; the Blood itself is to be their family, and so all their surnames were proscribed. (Burdekin, 1985, p. 133)

Accordingly, the ruling class deprives the Nazis of a sense of family by restricting the use of surnames and replacing them with a sense of pride in Germany and Aryan blood, which function as the Nazi family. Additionally, the ruling class members, the Knights, are the only ones who are allowed to have surnames and family feelings, as is evident in von Hess's surname. Thus, the surname proscription aspect reveals that the ruling class seeks to secure their rights instead of the ruled, and this renders the Nazis also rightless and marginalized.

Under the corrupted Nazi theocracy, the common masses also become mentally restricted and unproductive. This aspect is evident in the ruling class's prohibition of books. Thus, in the German empire, "there is nothing to read but the Hitler Bible and absurd legends about the heroes and technical books" (Burdekin,

1985, p. 148). Accordingly, the common people can read technical books to render them as beneficial technicians for the empire and Nazi myths to brainwash them with the nonsense of Aryan blood and Hitler's divinity. In this regard, the Nazi theocracy restricts people's knowledge and culture by prohibiting scientific and philosophical books and presenting only mythical ones. However, by restricting people's intellectuality, society becomes unproductive and culturally futile. This matter is evident in Knight von Hess's comment about society: "No one can write anything now, not even a new march. No one has written anything for hundreds of years, except the most flagrant hash-ups and plagiarisms" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 120). Thus, the act of restricting people's learnedness places society in an intellectual coma for hundreds of years. Therefore, people write nothing but plagiarism. Therefore, the Nazi theocracy renders people unproductive and mentally restricted.

Rather, the religious ideology of the Nazi theocracy fashions anti-Semite, bloodthirsty, and fundamentalist people. As stated earlier, the fundamental principles of the Nazi religion are bloodthirstiness, brutality, and violence. In this sense, these religious teachings and principles provoke brutal acts of anti-Semitism and religious fundamentalism. The anti-Semitism aspect unfolds in the following remark from Knight von Hess regarding the Jews: "Jews were killed, massacred to the last man and the last child" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 148). Thus, the brutality and anti-Semitic principles of the Nazi religion led the Nazis to slaughter all the Jews and, in turn, led the Jewish people to extinction.

Religious fundamentalism and bloodthirstiness are also evident in the mutilation of a girl who "couldn't see why women should be ugly" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 84). The crime occurred when the Nazi theocracy began working on von Wied's concept of the Reduction of Women; it was recorded in Knight Frederick von Hess's book to present the Nazis' religious fundamentalism and ruthlessness. Knight von Hess portrays the atrocity against the girl as follows:

> It was the naked body of a woman . . . The eyes were torn out and the nostrils slit up. The hair had all been pulled out . . . The body was covered with innumerable stabs and cuts that looked as if they had been made with a pen-knife. The nipples had been cut off. (Burdekin, 1985, p. 84)

Accordingly, having questioned the religious concept of the Reduction of Women, the girl ends up mutilated and killed. Thus, the Nazi religion renders people as

bloodthirsty fanatics, who are capable of killing and mutilating those who question their religion.

The manipulation employed by the Nazi religion results in people who are mentally dead. This matter emerges in Knight von Hess's comment about the Nazis: "We can create nothing, we can invent nothing—we have no use for creation, we do not need to invent. We are Germans. We are holy. We are perfect, and we are dead" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 121). Accordingly, Nazis emerge as people who cannot create or invent anything because they are anaesthetized and chained by religion. Thus, the Knight concludes that they are dead people and "stagnant" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 121). However, the Nazi religion affects not only people but also culture, as "there is no civilised culture in the world now, only remnants of the old" (Burdekin, 1985, p. 121). In this regard, the instrumentalization of the Nazi religion for manipulation results in a non-civilized culture and society and mentally congealed people who cannot create or invent anything.

Through the analysis presented in this chapter, it becomes clear that, in Burdekin's dystopian novel, religion is the ruling class's instrument for manipulating the common masses to achieve their political ends. In this regard, the novel provides a rich ground for discussing and applying the discussed theoretical concepts of Marxist religious criticism and theoretical notions from Machiavelli and Hobbes. As these discussed theoretical concepts indicate, in this novel, the ruling class instrumentalizes religion for political legitimation, fabrication of facts and history, and the manufacture of consent. However, the novel also highlights and tackles discussed theoretical notions of the dangerous consequences of religious manipulation. Thus, the ruling class's religious manipulation renders people as rightless savages, society as uncivilized and unproductive, and culture as dull and corrupted. In this way, the novel presents itself as an ideal area for investigating religion as an instrument of manipulation because it tackles religion from various perspectives that allow for broad exploration of the manipulation notion. Moreover, it presents both the mechanisms of the ruling class's religious manipulation and the damaging consequences of such manipulation. However, it is worth mentioning that no monotheistic religion aims to crush or manipulate humankind; instead, monotheistic religions are reformists. In this sense, the true evil exists via the humans

who sacralize ideologies and instrumentalize religions for manipulative purposes to achieve their own personal and political ends.

CONCLUSION AND RESULTS

Alongside its introduction of sacred practices and rituals, religion is a system of beliefs and a lens through which people conceive and value the world. In this regard, in a ruling class's endeavour to control the masses and establish a powerful authority, the ruling class may instrumentalize religion to achieve political and personal ends. However, literature emerges as an enlightening instrument in raising people's consciousness and exposing the ruling class's manipulative ideologies. Thus, the power of literature is conceived as follows: "literature presents an actual world less than it represents a possible one, and that its primary function is thus not simply to please or even to inform but somehow to instruct and by instructing to transform" (Gunn, 1970, p. 278). Accordingly, the power of literature emerges from the creation of worlds that enlighten readers with an advantageous understanding of the real world. Therefore, literary works present worlds that function to expose various mechanisms of life, to raise the reader's consciousness, and, in turn, to beneficially transform the world.

This study has focused on religion as an instrument of manipulation with aim to identify ruling classes' strategies of instrumentalizing religion for manipulation. This scientific study has presented Katharine Burdekin's novel, *Swastika Night*, and Boualem Sansal's *2084 The End of the World*. Marxist theoretical concepts of consciousness, class struggle, and religion as a ruling class's ideological weapon have played fundamental roles in constructing the thesis argument. Additionally, some popular theories of religion from Thomas Hobbes, Niccolo Machiavelli, and Emilie Durkheim and Rene Girard's theory of scapegoating were significant theoretical components in constructing the thesis argument.

The basic concept of discussion in this thesis is religion: specifically, the instrumentalization of religion for manipulation. Basically, the thesis has presented two concepts of religion: the orthodox and the unorthodox Marxist concepts. The orthodox concept portrays religion as a consciousness and a lens through which the individual perceives and interprets the world. In this regard, religion provides a

system of beliefs and a transcendental reality with which the world gains value and order. The unorthodox Marxist concept conceives religion as humanity's creation and an opium of the people. In this regard, religion exists as the ruling class's instrument for anaesthetizing and manipulating people to achieve the ruling class's personal and political ends. The findings of this thesis have emerged on two levels: the mechanisms of religious manipulation and the pernicious consequences of religious manipulation.

Boualem Sansal's *2084 The End of the World* and Katharine Burdekin's *Swastika Night* have various concepts and motifs that can be investigated using contemporary methodologies. However, the fact that they both present dystopias and various religious concepts means that a vast analytical horizon to consider the theocratic dystopia appears. Thus, based on the Marxist literary methodology and religiopolitical theories of Machiavelli and Hobbes, Sansal's and Burdekin's novels have been examined in this thesis through the lens of the ruling class's instrumentalization of religion for manipulation. Furthermore, the study of Sansal's and Burdekin's works has revealed that they both fashion ultimately theocratic dystopias out of the original dystopia genre. In this manner, Sansal's and Burdekin's works provide a fertile ground for investigating a ruling class's manipulation by religion. Furthermore, they present reflections of the religious fundamentalism and manipulation that has roamed the world in the 20th and 21st centuries.

One of the findings of this thesis is that religion is distinctively used for political legitimation. Religion is utilized as the ruling class's instrument for legitimizing class stratification and their authority and power in society. Thus, the ruling classes of the German and Abistani empires instrumentalize religion for legitimation by portraying themselves as representing God's authority on Earth. Therefore, they emerge as sacred and hold priority in leadership. In this regard, the leaders (i.e., Hitler in the German empire and Abi in Abistan), are deified and presented as God's vicars. The ruling class members (i.e., the Knights and the Honorables) emerge as unique and sacred. Moreover, the German empire's Nazi religion and Abistan's Gkabul religion both endow the ruling classes with charismatic qualities. This matter is discussed through Max Weber's concept of charisma, in which the leader claims leadership because of his supernatural qualities.

Thus, the Knights and the Honorables claim leadership because they apparently have supernatural qualities and provide worldly and supernatural utilities.

Another important finding of this thesis is that religion has a critical role in establishing and restoring political and social order. In this thesis, religion emerged as the ruling class's instrument for restoring order after a political and cultural collapse. This notion is well incarnated in Abistan's theocracy. Thus, after Big Brother's empire collapsed in the Great Holy War, the Honorables instrumentalized the Gkabul religion as a reformative instrument for establishing and restoring political and social order. In this regard, the Honorables instrumentalized religion to create sacred ideologies that rendered the ruling class worthy of obedience, laws as sacred, and social principles as divine. This, in turn, restored political and social order. However, this aspect is further discussed through Hobbes's theory of religion and politics, in which he devised the use of religion for the state's benefit. As Hobbes proposes, the theocratic regimes of the Nazi empire and Abistan incorporate religion within their politics to prevent anarchy and class struggle and also to maintain social order. Moreover, the leaders of Hitler and Abi emerged as Hobbesian, as they were both conceived as the incarnation of salvation.

One of the fundamental concepts highlighted in this thesis is Hobbes's theory of religion. Hobbes's notions of instrumentalizing religion for state benefit have been provided special attention. Thus, as Hobbes proposes, the theocratic regimes of Abistan and the Nazi empire instrumentalized religion to fashion obedient citizens by sacralizing laws and social principles. They also controlled people's religious doctrine to prevent people from using religion to question the state's authority and to stir a rebellion.

This thesis has also focused on religion as a powerful instrument for the manufacture of consent to render people submissive and the class stratification acceptable. This notion is highlighted by two Marxist writers: James Thrower and Craig Martin. In their theories, notions of heaven and hell and fear of supernatural consequences are instrumentalized to achieve political ends. Thus, in the earlier theocratic regimes, the Nazis and Abistani people consider class stratification fair and unquestionable because it is ordained by God. Additionally, the Nazis and Abistanis ignored their society's injustices and ills because they were promised

heaven in the afterlife. However, religion rendered these people submissive to the ruling class based on their fear of hell and supernatural consequences. Thus, they were indoctrinated that those who are arrogant and go against the ruling class's sacred laws will be damned, as they anger not only the sacred ruling class members but also their God.

Moreover, this thesis has presented the possibility of religion being instrumentalized to fabricate facts. Thus, religion emerged as the ruling class's instrument to fabricate facts through religious claims and the manipulation of religious texts. The notion of fact fabrication is highlighted in Sansal's novel through the state's discovery of the village, whose existence could refute Abistan's conception of their identity and religion. To confront the emergence of the village, the ruling class fabricates the facts of the village by masking it with a religious wrap and elevating it as the sacred shrine where Abi received the revelation of the Gkabul. In this regard, religion is instrumentalized to cloak facts that expose the ruling class's corruption and manipulation through use of a religious cloak to hide these facts from suspicious calculations. In Burdekin's novel, the notion of fact fabrication is highlighted in the transformation of Hitler from an ordinary leader to a god with a unique physique. Thus, instead of being an ordinary leader with human qualities, Hitler is rendered by the Nazi religion as a god with a mythical masculine physique. Additionally, the Honorables and Knights keep their fabricated religious texts updated in the face of recent threatening events and facts to maintain them as their own.

One of the important highlighted concepts in this thesis is Rene Girard's scapegoat concept. In this regard, this thesis has addressed the possibility of instrumentalizing religion through scapegoating rivals in both the political and public spheres. The scapegoat emerges in Girard's theory as the crowd's victim who carries suspiciousness and wickedness, which poison people's religious faith and relationships. The scapegoat concept crystallizes in Sansal's novel through the Honorable Bri's plan to seize the office of the Great Commander by overthrowing his political rivals: Dia and Hoc. Thus, Bri instrumentalizes the Gkabul religion by scapegoating them and portraying them as the Gkabul's enemies while plotting against Abistan and Abi. However, the scapegoat concept crystallizes in Burdekin's

novel through the Nazi religious concept of the Reduction of Women, in which women are rendered filthy animals and profane to the Nazi religion. Accordingly, women are eliminated from society and the human race to maintain the sacredness of the holy places and keep the Aryan society purified, religious, and orderly. Thus, in the earlier theocratic regimes, the ruling classes instrumentalized religion through scapegoating their rivals and presenting them as carrying all ills and wickedness that poison people's religious faith and the broad social order.

Furthermore, Machiavelli's theory of the state and religion has also been highlighted in this thesis. This thesis has focused on Machiavelli's theory on two levels: his notions of the leader's fear in his book *The Prince* and the instrumentalization of religion for the state's benefit. Machiavelli proposes that the leader should be feared rather than loved to make people obedient to the state. Moreover, Machiavelli sees religion as one of the state's fundamental pillars because it teaches love and submissiveness to the state and its laws. As Machiavelli proposes, the Nazi and Gkabul religious teachings rendered Nazis and Abistanis as obedient and hardworking and their armies as loyal and robust. In addition, the ruling classes, the Knights and Honorables, kept people submissiveness through fear of severe punishments and repercussions. In this sense, this thesis has indicated the possibility that religion is instrumentalized to glorify the state and make active people and powerful armies.

Through the profound investigation of manipulation by religion, this thesis has not only revealed the mechanisms of religious manipulation but also the consequences and outcomes of this kind of manipulation. Thus, this thesis has indicated that manipulation by religion leads to slavery and deprivation of people's rights. In both theocratic regimes, the Honorables and Knights enslaved people by brainwashing them with damaging religious teachings and promises of salvation in the afterlife, both of which restrict people's thoughts and make them blindly submissive. Furthermore, religious manipulation of the ruling classes rendered people rightless. In these theocratic regimes, the Honorables and Knights sought to secure their rights while marginalizing the people. Thus, while the Honorables and Knights enjoy healthy living conditions and luxurious lives, the common masses live

in poor and unhealthy living conditions; however, the people accept their living conditions because they are divinely ordained.

This thesis has also indicated that religious manipulation renders people as both barbaric and narrowminded. In Abistan and the Nazi empire, people's bloodthirstiness stems from their intolerant religious principles, which persuade them to reject other religions and calls for the death of those who do not follow their God. In Sansal's novel, people's ruthlessness crystallizes in the stadium: a place for holy carnages where nonbelievers are cut into pieces and savagely killed. However, the bloodthirstiness aspect is crystallized in Burdekin's novel through the atrocity against the girl, who the Nazis killed and mutilated because she questioned the Nazi religious concept of the Reduction of Women. Moreover, the ruling class's religious manipulation narrows people's mentality and leaves them empty. Thus, the Honorables and Knights render people as narrowminded by eliminating their history and prohibiting books that could illuminate their mentality. In this regard, the Abistanis and Nazis emerge as narrowminded and unproductive; they do not write or read anything but authorized religious texts.

These literary works of Sansal and Burdekin present actual and vibrant worlds through their depiction of the facts and events of worlds that lie parallel to the real world. However aesthetic these texts are in presenting theocratic dystopias, their fundamental purpose is not to please or entertain the reader but to raise their consciousness. By providing readers insights into ruling class mechanisms of religious manipulation and the possible dystopian worlds that this manipulation can create, these works unfold as instructive instruments to raise the reader's consciousness and support a beneficial understanding of the world. Thus, by instructing readers regarding religious manipulation, these literary works (among others) are focused on transforming people into conscious readers and thus advantageously transforming the world.

By studying two theocratic dystopias, this thesis has not only addressed the political aspect of religion but also the political aspect of literature to reveal literature as a medium of investigation and reflection concerning the political sphere. In this regard, the presented literary works of Sansal and Burdekin are political fiction that presents a commentary about politics and religion. Thus, by investigating politics,

these literary works make the mechanisms of religious manipulation and its consequences crystal clear before the reader's eyes to raise their consciousness. Therefore, this thesis has contributed to the cultivation of our understanding regarding the function of literature as a medium to investigate and reflect on political spheres and social norms for instruction and reformation purposes.

Overall, this thesis has highlighted the concept of humans as political animals who, driven by their hegemonic desires, instrumentalize an abundance of principles so they can dominate. Thus, one of the findings of this thesis is that true evil is not located in religion but in humans. Monotheistic religions provide humankind with rules of conduct and principles that refine human conduct to create a peaceful and improved world. Nevertheless, when the ruling class manipulates and politicizes these religions, they become ideological weapons that have the capability to manipulate and crush humankind. Therefore, evil exists not in religion but in the actions of humans who instrumentalize religion to achieve their own personal benefits and political ends.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abernathy, J. G. (2007). *By any other name: Exposing the deception, mythology, and tragedy of secularism*. Wipf & Stock.

Althusser, L. (2014). *On the reproduction of capitalism: Ideology and ideological state apparatuses*. Verso.

Bardzell, J., Bardzell, S., & Blythe, M. A. (2018). *Critical theory and interaction design*. The MIT Press.

Bottomore, T. (2001). *A dictionary of Marxist thought*. Blackwell.

Bressler, C. E. (1994). *Literary criticism: an introduction to theory and practice*. Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Burdekin, K. (1985). *Swastika Night*. Gollancz.

Caro, J. (2011). *The Origins of Free Peoples*. Continuum International Publishing Group.

Claeys, Gregory. (2017). *Dystopia: a natural history*. Oxford University Press.

Cooke, B. (2004). *Power and the Spirit of God: Toward an Experience-Based Pneumatology*. Oxford University Press, USA.

Coser, L. (1957). Social Conflict and the Theory of Social Change. *The British Journal of Sociology, 8*(3), 197-207.

Cristi, M. (2001). *From Civil to Political Religion: The Intersection of Culture, Religion and Politics*. Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

Croft, A. (1990). *Red letter Days: British fiction in the 1930s*. Lawrence & Wishart.

Cuddon, J. A. (2000). *The Penguin dictionary of literary terms and literary theory*. Penguin Books.

Davis, C. (1994). *Religion and the Making of Society: Essays in Social Theology*. Cambridge University Press.

De Guevara, B. B. (2016). *Myth and Narrative in International Politics: Interpretive Approaches to the Study of IR* (1st ed. 2016 ed.). Palgrave Macmillan.

Duffey, J. M. (2013). *Science and religion: A contemporary perspective*. Resource Publications.

Durkheim, E. (1995). *The elementary forms of religious life*. The Free Press.

Eagleton, T. (2006). *Marxism and literary criticism*. Routledge/Taylor & Francis e-Library.

Eliade, M. (1987). *The Sacred and The Profane: The Nature of Religion*. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Eyerman, R. (1981). False Consciousness and Ideology in Marxist Theory. *Acta Sociologica, 24*(1/2), 43-56.

Finn, S. J. (2007). *Hobbes: a guide for the perplexed*. Continuum.

Fontana, B. (1999). Love of Country and Love of God: The Political Uses of Religion in Machiavelli. *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 60(4), 639-658.

Frear, G. (1992). René Girard on Mimesis, Scapegoats, and Ethics. The Annual of the Society of Christian Ethics, 12, 115-133.

Fulton, J. (1987). Religion and Politics in Gramsci: An Introduction. *Sociological Analysis*, 48(3), 197-216.

Girard, René. (1986). *The scapegoat*. Johns Hopkins University Press.

Gordin, M. D., Tilley, H. L., & Prakash, G. (2010). *Utopia/dystopia: Conditions of historical possibility*. Princeton University Press.

Gregor, J. A. (2012). *Totalitarianism and Political Religion: An Intellectual History*. Stanford University Press.

Griffin, R. (2005). *Fascism, totalitarianism and political religion*. Routledge.

Gunn, G. B. (1970). Literature and Its Relation to Religion. *The Journal of Religion*, 50(3), 268–291.

Hamadi, L. (2017). The Concept of Ideology in Marxist Literary Criticism. *European Scientific Journal*, ESJ, 13(20), 154.

Hamza, A. (2016). *Althusser and Theology: Religion, politics, and philosophy*. Brill.

Hanska, J. (2012). *Reagan's Mythical America: Storytelling as political leadership*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Havercroft, J. (2011). *Captives of Sovereignty*. Cambridge University Press.

Henry, M. (1979). *The Intoxication of Power: An Analysis of Civil Religion in Relation to Ideology* (Vol. 43). D. Reidel Publishing Company.

Hobbes, T., & Curley, E. (1994). *Leviathan*. Hackett Publishing Company.

James, S. (2012). *Spinoza on philosophy, religion, and politics: The Theologico-Political Treatise*. Oxford University Press.

Jameson, F. (1981). *The political unconscious: narrative as a socially symbolic act*. Cornell University Press.

Johnston, R. (2015). *Get Real: What It Means to Have Real Faith in the Real World*. Lulu Publishing Services.

Larrain, J. (1979). *The Concept Ideology*. Hutchinson.

Lars-Henrik Schmidt. (1977). A Marxist Theory of Class Struggle. *Acta Sociologica, 20*(4), 385-392.

Lewis, J. R., & Hammer, O. (2010). *Handbook of religion and the authority of science*. Brill.

Lewis, J. R., & Petersen, J. A. (2005). *Controversial new religions*. Oxford University Press.

Lincoln, Bruce. (1994). *Authority: Construction and Corrosion.* University of Chicago Press.

Lorimer, D. (1999). *Fundamentals of historical Materialism : The Marxist view of history and politics*. Resistance Books.

Machiavelli, Niccolò, & Gilbert, A. (1989). *Machiavelli: the chief works and others*. Duke University Press.

Machiavelli, Niccolo. (2005). *The Prince*. Oxford University Press Inc.

Marsh, C. (2011). *Religion and the state in Russia and China: Suppression, survival, and revival*. Continuum.

Martin, C. (2013). Ideology and the study of Religion: Marx, Althusser, and Foucault. *Religion Compass*, 7(9), 402–411.

Martin, C. (2017). *A Critical Introduction to the Study of Religion* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Martinich, A. P. (1992). *The two gods of Leviathan: Thomas Hobbes on religion and politics*. Cambridge University Press.

Marx, K. (1970). *Critique of Hegel's philosophy of right*. Cambridge University Press.

Marx, K. (2010). *The poverty of philosophy*. Nabu Press.

Marx, K., & Raines, J. C. (2002). *Marx on religion*. Temple University Press.

Marx, K., Engels, F., & Arthur, C. J. (2004). *The German ideology*. International Publishers.

McKown, D. B. (1975). *The classical Marxist critiques of Religion Marx, Engels, Lenin, Kautsky*. Nijhoff.

Mehta, U., & Desai, A. R. (1993). *Modern godmen In India.: A sociological appraisal*. Popular Prakashan.

Milner, B. (1988). Hobbes: On Religion. *Political Theory*, *16*(3), 400–425.

Nyomarkay, J. (1967). *Charisma and Factionalism in the Nazi Party* (Minnesota Archive Editions ed.). University Of Minnesota Press.

Ollman, B. (1968). Marx's Use of "Class". *American Journal of Sociology, 73*(5), 573-580.

Patai, D. (1984). Orwell's despair, Burdekin's hope: Gender and power in Dystopia. *Women's Studies International Forum*, *7*(2), 85–95.

Pork, A. (1989). The Concept of 'Ideological Struggle': Some Soviet Interpretations. *Government and Opposition* 24(3), 283-293.

Potz, M. (2019). *Political Science of Religion: Theorising the Political Role of Religion* (1st ed.). Palgrave Macmillan.

Sansal, Boualem. (2017). *2084 The End of the World*. Europa Editions.

Shandro, A. (2014). *Lenin and the logic Of hegemony: Political practice and theory in the class struggle*. Brill.

Shlapentokh, D. (2017). *The Proto-totalitarian State: Punishment and Control in Absolutist Regimes*. Routledge.

So, A. Y. (1991*).* Class Struggle Analysis: A Critique of Class Structure Analysis. *Sociological Perspectives*, 34(1), 39–59.

Stock, A. (2019). *Modern dystopian fiction and political thought: Narratives of world politics*. Routledge, Taylor et Francis Group.

Swinburne, R. (2005). *Faith and Reason*. Oxford University Press Inc.

Thomas, J. (2000). *Interpretive archaeology: A reader*. Leicester University Press.

Thompson, J. L. (1982). *Sociology made simple*. Made Simple Books.

Thrower, J. (1983). *Marxist-Leninist "scientific atheism" and the study of religion and atheism in the Ussr*. Mouton.

Tucker, R. (1968). *The Theory of Charismatic Leadership (Vol. 97)*. Daedalus.

Turner, B. S., Abercrombie, N., & Hill, S. (2015). *The dominant ideology thesis*. Routledge.

Vilches, P., & Seaman, G. (2007). *Seeking Real Truths: Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Machiavelli*. BRILL.

Weber, M., & Eisenstadt, S. N. (1968). *On charisma and institution building*. Univ. of Chicago Press.

Williams, R. (1996). Religion as Political Resource: Culture or Ideology? *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 35(4), 368-378.

Zuckert, M. P. (1994). *Natural Rights and the New Republicanism*. Princeton University Press.