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**DYSTOPIAN DISCRIMINATION IN KAZUO  
ISHIGURO'S "NEVER LET ME GO"**

**ANTIUTOPIJĀM RAKSTURĪGĀ DISKRIMINĀCIJA KAZUO  
IŠIGURO ROMĀNĀ "NEĻAUJ MAN AIZIET"**

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## Anotācija

Utopija nevar pastāvēt bez antiutopijas. Parasti tieši zemāko kārtu dēļ utopiska vide ir iespējama. 'Neļauj man aiziet' ir Kazuo Išiguro romāns, kurā cilvēki var dzīvot ilgāk ar klonu diskriminācijas palīdzību. Diskriminācija ir uzskatīta par svarīgu sastāvdaļu sociālajās attiecībās. Šis pētījums analizē antiutopijām raksturīgo diskrimināciju iepriekšminētajā romānā, pētot kā diskriminācija veicina gan utopiskas gan antiutopiskas vides pastāvēšanu vienā un tajā pašā antiutopiskajā literārajā darbā. Literatūras apskats, žanra pētīšana un sociālo normu analīze ir pētnieciskās metodes, kas tika izmantotas šajā pētījumā. Pētījuma rezultāti uzrādīja tiešu saistību starp diskrimināciju un utopiskām un antiutopiskām ainām.

**Key words:** antiutopija, antiutopijām raksturīgā diskriminācija, Kazuo Išiguro, Neļauj man aiziet, sociālo normu analīze.

## **Abstract**

There cannot be a utopia without a dystopia. It is usually at the expense of the lower classes that the utopic setting is possible. Kazuo Ishiguro's 'Never Let Me Go' is a novel in which humans can live longer because of discriminating clones. Discrimination is seen as important part in societal relations. This paper analyses dystopian discrimination in the novel by studying how discrimination contributes to both a utopian and a dystopian setting being present in a dystopic literary work. Literature review, genre studies and the analysis of societal norms were the research methods used in this study. The results showed a direct link between discrimination and utopic and dystopic scenarios.

**Key words:** Dystopia, dystopian discrimination, Kazuo Ishiguro, Never Let Me Go, analysis of societal norms.

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## Introduction

'If society fits you comfortably enough, you call it freedom' said by Robert Frost outlines the topic of this paper. First, if there is freedom, there is also lack of freedom, which indicate the existence of power relations in the society. Foucault is a theoretician that has contributed a lot to defining power and its expressions in the society and discourse. He states that power is never absent from human relations and it is functioning in a system of differences. Excessively analysed by Claeys (2010; 2016; 2017), dystopias typically provide criticism of the current society introducing a negative model of the society. Similar to post-modernism ideas analysed by Linda Hutcheon, there is a close relation to reality present in modern dystopias, even though the science fiction elements that are often present in them do not make it seem that way. The rise of dystopian fiction in the past decades is significant and almost overshadows the genre of 'utopias'. At the same time as stressed by several researchers there is not a utopia without a dystopia, such as that there cannot be freedom in a society without power. Dystopian genre is famous for its negativity and therefore does not retain from the depiction of cruel nature of discrimination. Discrimination is practice rooted into differences. Such researchers as Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (2002) and Tyson (2015) have located this practice in othering and post-colonial theory. In short, the group holding more power is oppressing a different group. This has manifested during colonization, in totalitarian regimes or other historical events which have also inspired many literary works. This paper as a novelty offers a brief overview of the main types of discrimination seen in dystopian novels. This is also expressed in the dystopia 'Never Let Me Go' (2005) written by Kazuo Ishiguro which narrates the memoir-like story of the main heroine Kathy H. about her life as one of the clones that is created with the purpose of donating their organs to the human health care system. The theme is analysed by various authors, but the research done by Kata (2012) and Vichiensing (2017) about othering is the most closely related to the theme of this paper, which is looking upon ways how discrimination targeted towards the clones contributes to the dystopian and utopian settings. Kazuo Ishiguro (1954) is a Japanese-born British novelist, a Nobel Prize winner who is known his unreliable characters and distorted narrative worlds. Recollections and memory tend to serve as basis for the stories, which only contributes to his experiments with genre and style.

The **goal** of this paper is to analyse dystopian discrimination in Kazuo Ishiguro's "Never Let Me Go" by studying how discrimination is used as a tool by the privileged group living in a utopian setting and creating a dystopia for the oppressed group.

In this paper the following **research questions** will be answered:

- 1) What is dystopian discrimination?

2) How does discrimination contribute to the utopian setting of the privileged group in 'Never Let Me Go'?

3) How does discrimination contribute to the dystopia of the oppressed group?

The enabling **objectives** are:

- 1) To analyse theoretical literature on utopias, dystopias and discrimination;
- 3) To analyse dystopian and utopian features in the book;
- 2) To analyse how discrimination is portrayed in the book;
- 4) To analyse how dystopian discrimination creates utopian and dystopian narratives in the book;
- 5) To draw conclusions.

The research methods that have been used are:

- Literature review
- Genre studies
- Analysis of societal norms

This research consists of four chapters. The first chapter presents the overview of the methodology used in this paper; the second describes dystopias and utopias and their connection to each other; the third chapter introduces discrimination and offers an interpretation of dystopian discrimination; and the fourth chapter contains the empirical part where instances of discrimination are analysed in connection to the utopic and dystopic narratives they produce. As a drawback of this research can be considered the not so extensive empirical part, which resulted due to broad discussion of theory in first part of the paper.

# 1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to present an overview of the methods which were used to deal with the subject of dystopian discrimination in Kazuo Ishiguro's 'Never Let Me Go'. It starts with literature review used for analysis of the existing sources and detecting different perspectives about the subject of concern. This paper also carried out the genre studies of dystopias, utopias and science fiction with the goal to apply the features to the novel. Claeys' (2010; 2016; 2017) and Gordin, Tilley and Prakash's (2010) works in particular were studied concerning these genres, as he has done impressive research concerning utopias and dystopias and has been referenced by many other researchers. Analysis and interpretation of societal norms was carried out to disclose the patterns of discrimination in the novel based on theories by Witcher (2013), Shaddox (2013), Vichiensing (2017) and Boreus (2017). Finally, the results of the analysis of social norms was applied to the genre analysis of the novel in order to find out the correlation between social classes and dystopias, by the use of discrimination.

## 1.1 Methods

### 1.1.2 1.1.1 Literature review

The review of already existing sources is performed so that the findings and perspectives could be used as a basis for a new research. Semi-systematic review approach (Snyder, 2019) was applied in order to overview the progress of the topic about utopias and dystopias taking into account different opinions and reveal reoccurring patterns for both these genres which serves as basis for the empirical part of the paper. Integrative review approach was used to combine and criticise different perspectives on discrimination and the novel itself. Integrative approach is considered the best for turning people's gaze towards an issue, as previous literature is not only reviewed but new perspective is created on a topic (Torraco, 2005). This review was used for defining dystopian discrimination, as theories about discrimination were combined with theories about dystopias and utopias. It was also applied in the empirical part in order to find out how discrimination creates both a utopian and dystopian setting in the novel 'Never Let Me Go' depending on which group one belongs to.

### **1.1.3 Genre studies**

Classifying a work under a specific genre puts the work under certain expectations regarding its structure, features and linguistic means. Genre studies as a method was used to find out the main characteristics to the genres of dystopias, utopias and science fiction and locate them in the novel 'Never Let Me Go'. Claeys' work on utopias and dystopias served as basis of the studies in the novel in order to trace dystopian and utopian features. Both genres looked upon in this research go under the genre of novel. The literary novel has gotten much attention only in the past few centuries, with the contribution to the theory of novel of such authors as Bakhtin who in the 'Dialogic Imagination' (1981) considers the novel as a unique genre that incorporates other genres and is overall interrelated to the contemporary society. It is the social and contextual aspect of novels which is very important for defining and analysing the genre and this was looked upon in the development of both dystopian and utopian genres and in the analysis of the novel 'Never Let Me Go' as well.

### **1.1.4 Analysis of societal norms**

Discrimination was located in the novel by interpreting and analysing the relationship between the two main classes in the novel. Discursive and non-discursive practices of discrimination put forward by Thompson (1998 in Witcher, 2017), Witcher (2017), and Boreus (2017) were analysed which will reveal the power relations between the classes and which allowed to compare the classes to dystopian and utopian features. An important literary theoretician Foucault is worth mentioning when it comes to the society and power relations. He compares society to a machine in which each part has a function and the conformity to social norms is accomplished by discipline. He emphasizes that power is never absent in human relations, therefore, it does not always have to be acknowledged by law, and that power can be measured by the degree of freedom (Paternek, 1987). One way of bringing power relations into being is by words. Bakhtin (1981) as well as Foucault has talked about the importance of discourse shaping and reflecting the society. In this research, Bakhtin's theory of social language is especially important, which is a 'concrete socio-linguistic belief system that defines a distinct identity for itself within the boundaries of a language that is unitary only in the abstract' (Bakhtin, 1981: 356).

## 1.2 Criticism on ‘Never Let Me Go’

This subchapter gives a description of the corpus of this study - the book ‘Never Let Me Go’ and an insight to research already done on it, particularly on the topics that will be discussed in more detail further on in the paper.

The novel ‘Never Let Me Go’ was written in 2005 by Kazuo Ishiguro and since then has been a part of wider discussion relating to such themes as humanity and genetic engineering. It is because the main characters in the novel are clones who have been created with the purpose of donating their organs to normal people, when the clones have reached a certain age. Contrary to some of the first cloning practices described in the novel, these clones are brought up in a safely controlled boarding school with the purpose of demonstrating the world that they can be considered human if they are treated like such. Although the discussion about the ethics of genetic engineering is a very obvious problem in the novel, some critics, such as Karl Shaddox (2013), argue that what the author is trying to emphasize in the novel is rather sentimentalism as a means for social change. The author has written the story from the perspective of a clone called Kathy H. in the form of a memoir, which makes readers relate to the clone through her human-like experiences and feelings and therefore makes one look at clones from a different perspective. The form of memoir is very typical to Victorian novels, emphasized by such researchers as Shaddox (2013) and Whitehead (2011), and does not often appear in traditional dystopias where the time usually is linear, as stated by Ketterer (1989). This has risen the question of the genre of this work. It has been called a cautionary tale about the dangers of science and technology, quasi science fiction, science fiction without the technology, a dystopia, a sentimental novel and lastly a science fiction dystopic narrative (Shaddox, 2013). The reason why it is often not regarded as fully belonging to science fiction is because there is absence of technologies in the novel (Hoyle, 2006). It is not explained how the clones are created or any detail, in fact, regarding the process of the genetic considerations, no doctors or scientists are mentioned. In addition, the scientific practices already exist, such as cloning, therefore, it may be considered that the novel lacks the element of fantasy, though so far cloning of humans is forbidden. Therefore, many authors tend to describe it as a dystopia. In common with other dystopias, it contains features of totalitarian repression, and deals with ‘in-vitro creation of human beings’ in a similar way as Huxley’s dystopia ‘Brave New World’ (Black, 2009; Toker and Chertoff, 2008). As stated by Marvin Mirsky, it does not contain the dystopian socio-political didactics and polemics or dystopian satire (Mirsky, 2006; Ketterer, 1989). Widely discussed is also the time in which the novel is set as the common tradition is to set

dystopias in future, yet 'Never Let Me Go' is set in the 1990s though described as speculative future (Carroll, 2010).

One of the reasons why the novel is considered a sentimental novel is because of its connection to sentimental and abolitionist literatures. As 19<sup>th</sup> century writers used sentiment and empathy to fight pro-slavery adversaries, in *Never Let Me Go* the author uses it for people to connect with the clones. The lives of the clones, of course, cannot be fully compared to slave narratives, though both parties were discriminated. The clones in Ishiguro's novel do not rebel against the power figures, nor they try to escape. Moreover, according to Lisa Fluet (2007), they do not express strong negative feelings at all. It is never explained what is the source of their passivity, whether it is nature or nurture. Though there still is a sense of oppression all throughout the novel, as stated by Vichiensing (2017). He and Kata (2012) have looked more upon the 'othering' aspect between the *normals* and clones, indicating various linguistic means that show how the clones have been indirectly made different only by using different terms for clones such as using *complete* as a euphemism for *die* or using positive words such as *my dears* for the clones to feel appreciated and to conceal the fact that they are objectified.

Overall, the novel has been analysed from various aspects by several authors. Those aspects include its genre, ethics of cloning and means of *othering*. These analyses serve as an insight to the problems in the novel for this paper, especially the genre discussion and the relationship between the clones and the humans.

## 2 DYSTOPIAS AND UTOPIAS

This chapter gives an insight to the development and the main characteristics of utopias and dystopias, though it concentrates more on dystopias, as it is the primary concern of this paper. Both genres are constantly compared to each other because of their similarities and finally a definition of the genre of science fiction is given as well.

### 2.1 Dystopia – historical background of the development of the genre in 20<sup>th</sup> century

Dystopia is often equated with negative emotions, such as fear, anxiety and frustration, which is a valid claim considering all the terror that comes with the historical and real life meaning of this term. Claeys (2016) in his book 'Dystopia: A Natural History' describes these emotions, especially as collective emotions for the whole society, and mentions that they can be traced very far back. Claeys claims that 'as a psychological state, dystopia may also be conceived to be humanity's starting point' (ibid.: 9). He emphasizes on the aspect of fear, claiming that fear has also developed together with the society, starting from fear from the phenomena of the natural world such as gods, spirits, presence of evil to the fear of science and technology which could possibly dominate us (ibid.). All these have been important components of the evolvement of science fiction, particularly dystopias, though some historical aspects have contributed more to the development of this common fear than others. As this paper is discussing the dystopia 'Never Let Me Go' by Kazuo Ishiguro, published in 2005 depicting the late 1990s, the 20<sup>th</sup> century will be analysed in more detail opposed to others.

One important historical aspect that has invited technology in people's lives and therefore shaped their thinking was the Industrial Revolution. Claeys mentions that in the 20<sup>th</sup> century 'a condition of universalized fear was certainly intensified by the immense destructiveness of overly rapid modernization' though this process had already started earlier (2016: 9). In England, 'the break with a pre-industrial past begun sometime in the middle or later decades of the eighteenth century' (Wrigley, 1990: 11) This is called the period of the Industrial Revolution when 'the pernicious effects of unprecedented technological change were fast becoming apparent' in England (Clerk, 2000: 3). The Industrial Revolution was slowly transforming the lives of the people living in the industrialized societies. It was not only that the industries that changed, but what came with it – such as changes in 'population, agriculture, transport and trade' (Musson, 1982: 253). There were prominent changes in people's lives, especially turning from an agricultural and rural lifestyle to an urban one (ibid.). All this life-style change could have been very stressful and caused emotions starting from mild anxiety to fear of what is yet to come, especially because many farmers were left with less income. These included factory

production, as well as other developments such as the postal system, rotary printing press and broadcasting (ibid.). Samuel Butler reflects this anxiety in his utopian satire 'Erewhon' (1872) foreseeing a future where the boundaries are blurred between human and machine, people becoming servants of technology. The Land of the Changing Sun (1894) by Will N. Harben also proposes the idea of people becoming slaves, yet for the purpose of science, and H.G. Wells in 'The Island of Doctor Moreau' (1896) elaborates more on the negative and terrifying outcomes of generic development controlled by scientists. Therefore, although people were controlling the technologies during the Industrial Revolution, or at least, learning to control, the technologies seemed to be more powerful. This could have caused a feeling of powerlessness. Though as many historians mention, 'the Industrial Revolution was not confined to the particular period chosen and that there are longer-term aspects to be considered, both before and after', therefore, the changes had been gradual starting even before the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century and ending long after mid-19<sup>th</sup> century (Musson, 1982: 253). Therefore, the Industrial Revolution was a major starting point for anxiety and fear due to technology as people had to learn how to adapt to a new lifestyle and develop a new way of thinking.

Twentieth century can be characterised by the continuous growth of technology and industrialization and the appearance of several totalitarian regimes, which might have added to the already existing anxiety due to the life style change. Claeys states that this was the ' "turn" towards dystopia' and time-wise could have happened between the late nineteenth and the mid-twentieth century (2010: 108). The nightmare came from the First World War, as 'the progress of reason and science was now displaced by a sense of incapacity of humanity to restrain its newly created destructive powers' (ibid.). Marwick (1988) proposes that total war is an 'emotional and psychological experience [...] comparable with the great revolutions of history', further explaining that the changes in the society that the war can bring is so great that they can brought a 'social and economic revolution' after the Second World War (Marwick, 1988 quoted in Smith, 1990: 9). Most rapid changes were seen in the development of technology, though not fully in a positive sense. According to Simmonds, The British, including people in general, were forced to get acquainted with industrialized warfare after World War I (2013: 3). Therefore, they saw a darker side of the newly found industry. As Miller states, together with the creation of the atomic bomb in 1945, it was mainly World War II 'that transformed our understanding of technology and the role it plays in our culture' (Miller, 1998: 290). Before that technology was more related to industry and mechanics, yet after World War II it impacted everyone. This impact can be seen in Huxley's dystopia 'Ape and Essence' (1949) where he connects both the terrible impacts of nuclear weapons with powerful leaders and creates a very depressing future for the mankind. Daniel Bell calls the period immediately after World War II

the 'post-industrial society' and names several radical changes during those years, such as the 'bomb, the first digital computer [...], the creation of new relationships between science and government [...], new techniques of macroeconomic analysis' (1973: 346-48 quoted in Miller, 1998: 294). Another post-war development especially in America, characterized by David Harvey, was mature Fordism which includes mass production because of the rapid development of industrial technologies during the war times – transportation, steel, petrochemicals, electrical and electronic goods, and construction (Miller, 1998: 132). Dwight Eisenhower calls this the 'military-industrial complex' which influence was growing in the post-war period (ibid.: 293). According to Bell, the society witnessed a 'pervasive change in moral temper – a new 'future orientation'' characterized by 'rationality, planning, and foresight' (Bell: 346-48 quoted in Miller, 1998: 294). It means that the companies and life in general had to be changed or was already inevitably getting adjusted to a different system – a technical system. After that, starting from 1973, Fordism was replaced by the information society, where 'the majority of Western labor force engages in information processing and service activities' (ibid.: 292). Thus it can be concluded that world wars showed another, much darker side of technology and how much it can actually impact everyone's lives. Though the post-war period also brought more and more advanced technology, making people more and more adjusted to this new system.

Another important aspect of the increased fear in 20<sup>th</sup> century is the emergence of totalitarian regimes. Fatima Vieira mentions that the progress of science and technology and totalitarianism are closely connected and together have 'fed dystopian discourse' (2010: 18). For example, this connection can be seen in Huxley's dystopia 'Brave New World' (1932) where science has formed an efficient totalitarian state where the people like their servitude because the people are being biologically produced. According to Claeys, the term 'totalitarianism' first appeared in 1928 and was 'central to thinking during the Cold War period (1947-91)' (2010: 119). It's ideal 'was held to be the desire for complete control over the hearts and bodies, minds and souls, of the citizens of the nation' (ibid.). Therefore, it excluded such ideas as individualism and individual rights (ibid.). Some features of totalitarian regimes, proposed by Claeys, are 'technological basis to centralized power', 'absolute loyalty and sacrifice, and the absolute submission of the citizen to the party/state, leaving no part of private life unpoliticized' and 'the use of total terror [...] to intimidate the population and ensure complete loyalty' (2010: 119). The technological basis to power can be explained by the use of technology and science 'as an instrument of control' (Piffer and Zubok, 2017: 232). The government was controlling the media, there were many surveillance techniques (Claeys, 2010: 18). This is reflected in Orwell's 'Nineteen Eighty-Four' (1949) where constant surveillance is the central mechanism of power. It keeps the people 'on their toes' and, therefore, controlled,

there is ‘no way of knowing whether you were being watched at any given moment’ (Orwell, 1983: 6).

As the ideology of totalitarianism was that all problems can be solved, totalitarianism was very much based on science (Holloway, 2017: 232). This prospered the development of science during those times, though in a terrifying way, for example, the development of the bomb or the Nazis’ focus on medical science, particularly, ‘inhuman experiments with concentration camp inmates’ (ibid.: 234-244). Experimenting with people is quite a common theme in dystopias since, especially in Margaret Atwood’s novels where she explores the outcomes of genetic engineering or other biological experiments. The other feature of totalitarian regimes – terror, was achieved by making the population conscious of the fact that nobody was ‘protected from arbitrary imprisonment, torture or death, and it is the ultimate superfluity of everyone which distinguishes totalitarianism from earlier forms of genocidal aggression’ (Bowring, 2011: 200). If at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century people were dreaming of a better future, then after the ‘two World Wars, Hitler’s utopian aspiration to ‘purify the human race’ and the collapse of the communist regimes all over the world’ made people think more realistically (Claeys, 2010: 22). According to Bowring, ‘the survival of totalitarianism depended on the expansion of power’, therefore, they everything that stood in front of dominating everyone was a threat (2011: 196). The solution was to create a ‘situation of permanent instability’ or a ‘permanent revolution’ as Trotsky calls it (ibid.). The two main totalitarian regimes’ leaders of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Stalin and Hitler, used this rule by continually revolutionizing the Russian society ‘by means of deadly purges’ or exterminating whole races in Germany such as Jews and Poles or the allegedly unfit people (ibid.). Permanent instability can be seen also in Orwell’s ‘Nineteen Eighty-Four’ by Oceania always being at war with other world powers and having continuous rocket bombs falling from the sky (Orwell, 1983). Government-wise, it was structured in order to conceal information – in layers (Bowring, 2011: 197). Therefore, the only certainty for the inhabitants about their leadership was ‘the more visible the government agencies are, the less power they carry, and the less in known of the existence of an institution, the more powerfully it will ultimately turn out to be’ (Arendt, 1951:403 quoted in Bowring, 2011). All of this shows how terrifying this time has been and that the creation of a perfect society comes with its sacrifices and, in addition, terror.

Another event that has caused a lot of tension world-wide in the 20<sup>th</sup> century was the Cold War. It did not result in a physical war, but was rather considered an ‘ideological conflict’ (Blair and Curtis, 2009: 102). Having started after the World War Two, between 1945-49, it lasted for decades, only ending in 1986-91 (ibid.: 98). Though it can be traced as far back as 1917 Russian revolution (ibid.). One of the main characteristics of the Cold War were nuclear weapons. They

are ‘explosive devices based on fissions or combined fission and fusion nuclear reactions that release a tremendous amount of energy’ (Mazanec, 2015: 111). Manufacturing these weapons led the ideological war to almost result into a physical war between the Soviets and the UN during the Cuban missile crisis (Blair and Curtis, 2009: 70). Though a treaty called the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty was issued in 1968 in order to limit the spreading of nuclear weapons, many countries, such as Israel and Pakistan, are thought to possess these deadly weapons (Blair and Curtis, 2009: 71). This shows that people are more worried about the consequences scientific inventions, such as the atomic bomb, than winning a war or ruling the world. This proves how powerless regular people are against the power of technology.

Although the Cold War was surpassed, it was not the end of fear. There was a political shift from ‘fear of Communism and the Red Scare to a fear of terrorism, biological diseases’ (Matus, 2009: 27). The world was still changing and becoming more interconnected. This caused more difficulties maintaining the order in society (ibid.). This is portrayed in such dystopias as Margaret Atwood’s ‘Oryx and Crake’ (2003) and Amitav Gosh’s ‘The Calcutta Chromosome’ (1995) where people are afraid that the state will not be able to protect the citizens from bigger problems which could doom all of humanity, such as terrorism, global warming and others. Matus states that it was a ‘world of interconnectedness, [...] not only do we have to worry about our own failures and mistakes, but those of the rest of the world as well’ (2009: 28). Therefore, such as one atomic bomb could destroy a big amount of lives, so can, for example, various biological diseases released into society destroy more lives than ever imagined all around the world because of travelling.

From this summary of the past events it can be concluded that there has been a great amount of fear and anxiety present during the past few centuries most prominently because of the development of technology, wars and totalitarian regimes. These events have also shaped the literary world, producing dystopias which depict these fears of the events.

## **2.2 The origin of the term ‘dystopia’**

Although the idea of a dystopia has existed for a long time and has ‘stemmed’ from Thomas More’s ‘Utopia’ (1516), the word appeared in print English in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and was more commonly used only starting from the beginning of the twentieth century (Matus, 2009: 4; Claeys, 2016: 4; Cziganyik, 2017: 8). The 19<sup>th</sup> century was very significant in the evolvement of this terms, as the British politicians in the 19<sup>th</sup> century were ‘obsessed with the idea of a state that could be controlled for the happiness of its population’ and therefore wanted to impose more rules on its citizens eventually creating a perfect society that did not need laws (Matus,

2009: 4). Matus states that it was due to this idea the term was invented (ibid.). The term 'dystopia' was first coined in a parliamentary debate in England in 1868 when talking about the Conservative government not wanting to allow the Irish 'the right to own land or choose their own religion' (Trahair, 1999: 110). John Stuart Mill in his speech said: 'It is, perhaps, too complimentary to call them Utopians, they ought rather to be called dys-topians, or cacotopians. What is commonly called Utopian is something too good to be practicable; but what they appear to favour is too bad to be practicable.' (ibid.) Vieira indicates that Mill had 'used the word dystopia as synonymous with cacotopia, a neologism that had been invented by Jeremy Bentham' (Claeys, 2010: 16). Bentham coined the term in 1818 and it was a product of 'anti-communist imaginary that was excitedly reanimated in the 1880s and 1890s (Beaumont, 2006: 465). Though there have been many more variations referring to 'the idea of utopia gone wrong' such as 'negative utopia, regressive utopia, inverse utopia or nasty utopia', Mill's variant seems more preferable to people (Claeys, 2010: 16). Both 'cacotopia' and 'dystopia' come from Greek, where 'tapos', the common part, means place. 'Kako' in cacotopia is 'is used to refer to something which is unpleasant or incorrect' and 'dus' from dystopia means 'bad, abnormal, diseased' (ibid.). There is also a difference in the meaning, respectively, a cacotopia is not only the opposite of utopia 'but something pernicious in its own right' and particularly depicting a dystopian working class (Beaumont, 2006: 465). Yet, Mill's derivation was covering more than just the working class. Further on, dystopian literature has had a big influence on the meaning of the term, the historical events always contributing to the development (Jameson, 1996: 53 quoted in Matus, 2009: 5). Since Mill's critique of Edmund Burke, Jameson claims that the term has 'been transformed by the modern and postmodern novelists into a "critique of high modernism itself as repressive, totalizing, phallogentric, authoritarian, and redolent of an even more sublime and inhuman hubris than anything Burke could have attributed to his Jacobin contemporaries"' (ibid.).

The term dystopia is often used meaning dystopian literature, though a dystopia is not 'necessarily fictional in form' (Levitas, 1990: 195). Claeys points out that such natural catastrophes as the greenhouse effect or melting of ice caps are very much dystopian as they imply 'fearful features where chaos and ruin prevail' (2016: 5). Claeys mentions that the common viewpoint for both literary and historical dystopias is the 'failed utopia' of twentieth-century totalitarianism (ibid.). In fact, totalitarianism, especially its characteristics such as slavery, imprisonment and inequality, is often equated with dystopia. For example, Steven Rosefielde (2010) considers Stalinism as an 'infernal dystopia' and dystopia as 'the antithesis of Utopia' (Rosefielde, 2010 quoted in Claeys, 2016: 5). It means a consequence after trying to create 'unrealizable ideal systems' (ibid.). Especially after the collapse of Soviet communism,

the end of the Cold War and actions by ‘Hitler, Mao, Pol Pot, Nixon, Pinochet’ people really started questioning utopias (Gordin, Tilley and Prakash, 2010: 3). Nowadays, people tend to imagine utopic scenarios less and dystopic more, which can be seen in such organizations as ‘World Trade Organization or Al Queda’ (ibid.; Claeys, 2010: 193-194). This shows that there are many dystopian features all around us, and people are less likely to create their own ideal systems after the ones that failed in the 20<sup>th</sup> century though some still exist.

Overall, the term dystopia was coined in a parliamentary debate by Mill using a reference to More’s Utopia and an already existing term cacotopia. From then on, people kept referring to failed utopias as dystopias. Dystopias can be spotted not only referencing political utopias gone wrong, such as totalitarianism, but also natural catastrophes or nowadays such organizations as Al Queda.

### **2.3 Utopia as the primary source of dystopias**

Utopia is an essential part when talking about dystopias. As Krishan Kumar states, a dystopia has been present since utopias appeared and that ‘so close are the genres that it is not always clear what is a utopia and what a dystopia’ (Vieira, 2013: 19). He calls dystopia as a shadow to a utopia, which is a better term, as stated by Gordin, Tilley and Prakash: ‘a dystopia does not have to be exactly a utopia inverted’, as assumed by many (2010: 2). Both terms have the same etymology of the word – as mentioned in the previous chapter, a dystopia is derived from ‘dus’ and ‘topos’ meaning the bad place and used mainly as the opposite to a utopia - the good place. Though actually utopia consists of ‘two Greek words – ouk (that means not and was reduced to u) and topos (place), to which he [meant Thomas More] added the suffix ia, indicating a place’ (Claeys, 2010: 4) so ‘etymologically, utopia is thus a place which is a non-place, simultaneously constituted by a movement of affirmation and denial’ (ibid.). The meaning ‘the good place’ was added when the creator of this term, Thomas More, at the very end of his first of his influential book called ‘Utopia’, used another neologism – Eutopia. It was mentioned in a poem, where Utopia’s three main characteristics were stated: isolation, being superior to Plato’s city and that ‘its inhabitants and its laws are so wonderful that it should be called Eutopia instead of Utopia’ (ibid.: 5). Since then, there is a duality of the term utopia – it is a non-place and a good place at the same time (ibid.). Thus, it is clear that a dystopia is not just an inverted utopia and utopia does not carry only one meaning, which is the good place, but also implies that it is a non-existent place.

Thomas More wrote ‘Utopia’ in 1516 and it became the basis for utopian literature worldwide. Controversial to the common though connected to a utopian society, More did not

write it with the intention for others try to recreate this 'perfect society'. It was rather a 'satire on the chaos of sixteenth-century life in England' (Frye, 1965: 325). This can also be seen in the previously discussed etymology of the term – he meant it as a world that does not exist. Instead, he did what fictional utopias are meant to do - 'projecting a better world in the future' and rendering present day problems hence making them more clear (Moylan, 2000: 74). More in his work was criticizing Europe, what he did not like in the society, the structure of the government. For example, More solved the problems of contemporary political culture by eliminating private property: "I must freely own," he reasons, "that as long as there is any property, and while money is the standard of all other things, I cannot think that a nation can be governed either justly or happily." (Duncombe and More, 2012: xxiv) 'it is the fear of want that makes any of the whole race of animals either greedy or ravenous; but, besides fear, there is in man a pride that makes him fancy it' (ibid.: 103). Most things were made more or less the same in Utopia, which was the complete opposite to the real world. In 'Utopia' 'every city is divided into four equal parts' (ibid.), 'throughout the island they wear the same sort of clothes, without any other distinction except what is necessary to distinguish the two sexes and the married and unmarried' (94). In Europe the lower classes were repressed, especially in terms of a job. In More's 'Utopia' everyone had the same access to health-care and education, all had to work equally: 'All among them, women as well as men, learn one or other of the trades formerly mentioned' and 'they, dividing the day and night into twenty-four hours, appoint six of these for work, three of which are before dinner and three after; they then sup, and at eight o'clock, counting from noon, go to bed and sleep eight hours' (94). 'Not even the magistrates hold back from work' (98). Yet, to ensure that, everything was controlled – everyone received great education about the existing laws and were making sure others follow the laws, no doors could be locked, there was no private space: 'Their doors have all two leaves, which, as they are easily opened, so they shut of their own accord; and, there being no property among them, every man may freely enter into any house whatsoever' (90). Here, from the perspective of a nowadays' reader, connections can be made with the totalitarian regimes which appeared in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and associated with oppression. Claeys mentions that the 'sacrifice of individuality' is the part that for modern readers seems the most dystopian and that the 'issue of group identity is thus at the core of the relationship between utopia and dystopia' (2017: 44). Though to More, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century society it meant a better life. It has to be taken account that "Better never means better for everyone... It always means worse, for some", said by Margaret Atwood in 'The Handmaid's Tale' (Atwood, 2006). Even in More's 'Utopia' there were slaves. Though a Utopian could become a slave only by committing a crime, it shows that everyone could not possibly be content in Utopia. The fact that slavery was even a part of Utopia shows

how closely connected utopias are to the society of those times and how easily one concept which is considered completely normal by the society can turn a utopia in what nowadays would be considered a dystopia. Gordin, Tilley and Prakash claim that ‘every utopia always comes with its implied dystopia’ (2010:2) Thus Kumar emphasizes that it is unclear whether the genre is a utopia or a dystopia - because it depends on the readers’ interpretations (Vieira, 2013). Therefore, in any utopia there is a dystopia as well. For example, Claeys mentions that in the works of Karl Popper, Jacob Talmon and others ‘the utopian impulse was itself inherently dystopian’, meaning that when creating a society where humans behave more superior than the norm there needs to be control and punishments for those that ‘falls below this standard’, forming a police state (Claeys, 2010: 108). Though Claeys mentions also a counterpoint that most utopias ‘accept considerably improved behaviour as attainable norm’, therefore everyone does not have to act perfectly (ibid.). Gordin, Tilley and Prakash here say that the dystopia can also emerge if a utopia ‘corrupts itself in practice’ (2010: 2). Claeys in this part argues that ‘utopia has been most prone to produce dystopia when it assumes the shape of a “political religion “” (Claeys, 2017: 42). Kumar says that ‘many distinct utopias [...] have been considered dystopias, but at the same time, “American college students of the 1950s and 1960s found Aldous Huxley’s dystopia Brave New World, with its easy availability of sex and drugs, a distinct utopia”’ (Vieira, 2013: 8, 19) Therefore, not only utopias can create dystopias, but also the other way around.

Overall, dystopias are very closely connected to utopias, though they do not necessarily oppose each other. Even the same work can be viewed both as a utopia and dystopia, depending on the reader’s attitude on the things discussed or depending on what is a person’s place in the society, because nothing can be perfect for everyone.

## **2.4 Typical features of utopias**

Although More invented the term, he did not invent utopianism, which is an ideology that ‘has at its core the desire for a better life’ (Claeys, 2010: 6). The utopian tradition goes as far back as to ancient Greece, later on being influenced by various myths of the Golden Age (dating as far back as 6<sup>th</sup> century BC) and from the Middle Ages (5<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century). Historically, a utopia has been defined as having at least one of four characteristics):

- 1) the content of the imagined society ((i.e., the identification of that society with the idea of ‘good place’, a notion that should be discarded since it is based on a subjective conception of what is or is not desirable, and envisages utopia as being essentially in opposition to the prevailing ideology);
- 2) the literary form into which the utopian imagination has been crystallized (which is a very limiting way of defining utopia, since it excludes a considerable number of texts

- that are clearly utopian in perspective but that do not rigorously comply with the narrative model established by More);
- 3) the function of utopia (i.e., the impact that it causes on its reader, urging him to take action (a definition that should be rejected as it takes into account political utopia only);
  - 4) the desire for a better life, caused by a feeling of discontentment towards the society one lives in (utopia is then seen as a matter of attitude). (Claeys, 2010: 6)

Though More was a great contributor to the definition of the utopianism we know now. He changed the way the desire for a better life was to be expressed in utopian works and in 'Utopia' mixed the 'classic and the Christian traditions', adding a 'new conception of the role individuals are to play during their lifetime' (Claeys, 2010: 6). Claeys claims that 'More established the basis for the steady development of a literary tradition [...] which relies on a more or less rigid narrative structure': there is a journey to an unknown place, then the utopian traveller is given a tour with explanations of the society and its organization; the traveller returns back to his own country (ibid.: 7). Claeys says that More had used 'the conventions of travel literature and adapted them to his aims' (ibid.). A structure of a story is proposed as one of the features of utopian literary traditions. Frye adds that usually the story is told using a first person narrator (Frye, 1965: 324). He also mentions that at first the things the guide is telling about the society seem irrational, becoming rational 'when their significance is explained' (ibid.). Other features of a utopia which Claeys (2010) mentions throughout his book are:

- speculative discourse on a non-existent social organization which is better than the current one;
- human-centred, not relying on chance or on the intervention of external, divine forces in order to impose order on society;
- relationship with reality (quite often, the imagined society is the opposite of the real one, a kind of inverted image of it; utopias put forward projective ideas that are to be adopted by future audiences, which may cause real changes.);
- communism (meaning that people voluntarily sacrifice their individuality for the common good);
- female involvement in warfare;
- contempt for gold.

Claeys in 'Utopian Horizons' (2017) adds equality and enhanced sociability to the list of utopian features.

Although the works in the utopian genre can have different themes, the common thing is that they 'do not usually portray a 'perfect' society' (Claeys, 2017: 43). J.C. Davis states that 'utopian mode is one which accepts deficiencies in men and nature and strives to contain them

through organizational controls and sanctions' (Davis, 1981: 370 quoted in Claeys, 2017: 43). Claeys states that in utopias 'crime and vice still exist', though there can be seen improvement of human behaviour (2017: 43).

Although the concept of Utopias has existed for a long time, the ideas discussed in them are usually relevant to the societies to which the authors belong. Frye mentions that a utopia is always changing with the times, and so are its features, such as the use of technology in the stories (Frye, 1965: 326). This is also why former utopias tend to 'overlap with science fiction' (ibid.: 325). Very important event was the Industrial Revolution after which technologies made an inevitable appearance in utopias. In a similar way when a contagious disease was identified in a germ, utopias started issuing laws of quarantine. Likewise, when from around 1850 when technology finally unified the world and the 'isolated' utopia started to disappear. It produced two forms of utopia – the straight utopia, visualizing the ideal world such as H.G. Wells' a modern utopia, and the utopian satire or parody, 'which presents the same kind of social goal in terms of slavery, tyranny, or anarchy' such as George Orwell's '1984' (ibid.: 325-327). The latter one also called anti-utopia, negative utopia or a dystopia which demonstrates 'ways of life we must be sure to avoid' (Claeys, 2010: 107).

Overall, utopias are not characterised by having a perfect society, but rather wanting a better life and ensuring that by various organizational controls. One of the main features of utopias is also close connection to reality, usually being a product of criticism of an existing social order. Therefore, utopias are changing over time, containing some features from the original utopia, and adding some more relevant to the point in time such as technology.

## **2.5 Typical features of dystopias**

It has already been mentioned before that utopias and dystopias are not that different, as utopias may be dystopias for some people, and the other way around. Therefore, they must be similar in their form and structure as well. Vieira supports this claim saying that 'literary dystopia utilizes the narrative devices of literary utopia incorporating into its logic the principles of euechronia' (2010: 17). Euechronia, as Vieira explains, is 'the good place in the future' (ibid.: 9). Here, one of the main features of a dystopia is shown – prediction in a sense that 'things will turn out badly' (ibid.:17). It means that the same place where the utopist lives is imagined in another time, usually the future (ibid.). Moylan even states that the story just has to be in such a time and space for the reader to view the whole society as worse (Moylan, 2000: 74). Moylan believes that the events in a dystopia are usually not real possibilities because the goal of dystopias is to 'frighten the reader and to make him realize that things may go either right or

wrong, depending on the moral, social and civic responsibility of the citizens' (ibid.). This leads to another feature of dystopias – they, claimed by Moylan (2000) and Phillips (2008) 'internalize present problems and provide a critique of political, social, and economic structures' (discussed in Matus, 2009: 2). It means that, the same as utopias, dystopias have a close relationship with reality. Though quite negative means are used to make the readers realise the current problems, the authors expect 'a very positive reaction on the part of their readers' (Vieira, 2010). Dystopias are designed to give hope to people about those current problems, as 'dystopias that leave no room for hope do in fact fail in their mission' (ibid.). For example, Orwell's '1984' 'leaves us with almost unrelieved pessimism' yet at the same time gives us some 'shadowy hopes of democracy and decency' (Lyon, 1994: 204).

Matus (2009) in her work emphasizes the feature of political terror. The scholar states that there is a 'hyper-awareness of the type of power that is exercised over the member of the dystopia' (ibid.: 2). For example, in '1984' people are aware that they live in a totalitarian state, they know how much power the government has over them. An example of this appears when O'Brien in the novel says that he will be shot no matter what, which comes true. Especially 20<sup>th</sup> century dystopian novels 'envision a government whose very existence revolves around some form of political terror' (ibid.). They can be 'external threats to individual autonomy or the safety of the population' (ibid.: 3). The 'regimented and enslaved population' are living in an 'architecturally overwhelming, closed environment' with an 'intense pressure on the individuals to conform or be liquidated' (Claeys, 2010: 169). Though the ideas of political terror change over time, as during the world wars and the Cold War they were the fears appearing because of totalitarianism, the use of nuclear weapons or genetic engineering and later more global problems like economic disasters, terrorism, biological diseases or the uncontrollable power of nature (Matus, 2009: 52-53).

Another characteristic common for both *-topias* is suggesting revolutionary solutions to the problems - a radical change (Gordin, Tilley and Prakash, 2010: 2). Thus the whole system of society has to be changed, and the social order to be altered. For example, by changing the social structure in 'The Handmaid's Tale' (2006) where fertile women are being enslaved by people in power in order to save human race from disappearing because of low fertility rates, Margaret Atwood is directing our gaze to the problem of infertility, pollution, and patriarchy.

Parrinder (2010) emphasizes the drama and excess of emotions in dystopias. He claims that 'the typical dystopian narrative dramatizes the difficulties and dangers faced by an individual who is either a visitor or a dissident citizen' (Parrinder, 2010: 156). Dystopias bring to the emphasis 'individuality, the self-absorption, and the capacity for emotion that novel-readers crave but the architects of utopian societies look down upon' (ibid.).

Overall, dystopias internalise present problems and portray them so that they would look much worse and the result might frighten the reader without making him lose hope in a better future. Some of the main features are the close relationship to reality, political terror, awareness of the power exercised and a radical change in the system of society.

## **2.6 Types of dystopias**

The features of dystopias can be grouped based on the type of terror they express. Claeys classifies dystopias in three main forms:

- 1) the political dystopia;
- 2) the environmental dystopia;
- 3) the technological dystopia (Claeys, 2016: 5).

Claeys states that amongst these there is also the totalitarian political dystopia, which ‘has received the greatest historical attention’ (ibid.). The totalitarian dystopia is associated with the ‘failure of utopian aspirations’ and defined by ‘extreme coercion, inequality, imprisonment, and slavery’ (ibid.). People in totalitarian dystopias live in a ‘closed society offering neither exit nor entry’ (Claeys, 2010: 169). Steven Rosefelde narrows this to a type called ‘the communist dystopia’ which is ‘the antithesis of Utopia. A hellish state brought about by attempts to construct unrealizable ideal systems’ (Rosefelde, 2010: 14-257 quoted in Claeys, 2016: 5).

Environmental dystopia, or as Siplely calls it ‘eco-dystopia’, would ‘envisage capitalism as the ultimate cause for the degradation of the environment’ (2003: 1). As an example of such dystopia is Margaret Atwood’s novel ‘Oryx and Crake’ (2003). ‘Atwood in fact depicts a society replete with the environmental and economic ills of our own era’ such as pollution and genetic engineering (Siplely, 2003: 1.). In technological dystopia ‘science and technology ultimately threaten to dominate or destroy humanity’ (Claeys, 2016: 5).

These forms are often interrelated, yet they can be perceived as independent by correlation to ideas of utopia. For example, Claeys (2016) states that a modern form of political dystopia appeared in the same year as Thomas More’s Utopia (1516) when ‘the first ‘ghetto’ for Jews was created in Venice’. This event, as well as ‘conquest of the New World’ in More’s work promised a better life for one part of the society at the expense of enslaving the other. The same goes for creating a consumption society by causing environmental degradation (Claeys, 2016: 6). This better life for one part of the society at the expense of others is the basis of another type of dystopia - collectivist dystopia. People are sacrificing ‘their individual interest to the common good’, yet it appears more as ‘compulsory solidarity’ rather than a voluntary

endeavour and promotes self-sacrifice (Leszek Kolakowski, 1983: 237; Claeys, 2016: 8). As a result, it generates fear which dominates an individual's everyday life, 'sometimes for decades or longer' (Claeys: 2016: 9). Claeys identifies two forms: the internal and external collectivist dystopia. In the first one, the 'coercion pervades the privileged main group' as in Stalinism. External, however, is where the coercion 'defines the relationship to outsiders as a means of upholding the main group' as in More's Utopia (ibid.)

Matus (2009) analyses 20<sup>th</sup> century dystopic fiction by dividing them in First Wave and Second Wave dystopian novels. The common features for First Wave novels ('published after both World Wars and through the Cold War') are:

- high levels of government control over its citizens (in terms of constant surveillance, harsh punishments, and rehabilitation of social deviants);
- a governmental monopoly on knowledge and definitions of reality;
- a history that establishes the total power of the state (Matus, 2009 :7).

Some of the novels that have all these characteristics are Aldous Huxley's 'Brave New World' (1932) and George Orwell's 'Nineteen Eighty-Four' (1949). What these features represent is a 'fear of the monolithic, all powerful state' which refers to the totalitarianism regimes ruling the 20<sup>th</sup> century (ibid.). Second Wave dystopian fiction (starting from the end of Cold War and the failure of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe) 'began imagining the kinds of threats that the human race might face in an increasingly globalized world' (ibid.: 27). It was not only the overall control that people were afraid of in these dystopias, but also 'the impossibility of the state to protect against the extinction of the human race' because of such causes as 'global warming, biological warfare, economic crises, terrorism' (ibid.). From this, Matus distinguishes such characteristics of Second Wave dystopias:

- emphasis on a world of interconnectedness;
- mechanisms of biopower;
- uncontrollable terrors (such as biological disease);
- states that lack the ability to control the outcomes (ibid.: 27-28).

What these features represent is the fear of weakness and vulnerability of the 'inept state' (ibid.: 28). Matus also states that the outcomes of this inept state are described a lot in dystopias, though they do not offer a solution. In that case they create an 'alternate purpose of the state' so that a totalitarianism does not seem more desirable (ibid.: 45).

To summarize, dystopias can be classified depending on the terror they express, such as political, environmental or technological threats. They can also be classified chronologically,

where dystopias published throughout the Cold War contain features of totalitarian regimes, yet after that – deal with fears which are more global than the borders of one nation.

## **2.7 Utopias, dystopias and science fiction**

This subchapter presents the issue which many researchers have with ‘Never Let Me Go’ – whether or not a dystopia is science fiction.

Though utopias and dystopias by some researchers, such as Suvin (1979), are considered a sub-genre of science fiction, it does not always mean that utopic and dystopic works always belong to the genre of science fiction. For example, Roberts under the categories of science fiction puts only ‘futuristic utopias and dystopias’ (2000: 15). Modern science fiction at its core reflects or expresses ‘our hopes and fears to science and technology’ (Claeys, 2010: 138). Roberts claims that science fiction appeared when science started taking the place of theology, though it has preserved some supernatural views and therefore science fiction is a mix of science and mysticism (2000: 3). This is also true for utopias and dystopias, though not all of them. In utopian fiction, science fiction particularly brings ‘the role of technology as a tool for social transformation’ (Claeys, 2010: 139). For example, B.F. Skinner’s ‘Walden Two’ (1948) and E. Callenbach’s ‘Ecotopia’ (1975) are utopias, though they cannot be considered science fiction. They describe the made-up communities and the psychology behind them without prominent technological enhancement or the story being placed in the future (ibid.).

Also, utopias present alternatives to the present, though science fiction works ‘rarely imply or assert a critique of the present’ (ibid.: 150). Utopias and dystopias portray more ‘feasible negative visions of social and political development’, yet science fiction allows ‘extraordinary or utterly unrealistic features’ in the works as well (ibid.: 109). Some works have been considered too unrealistic and do not exploit ‘some existing trend’ to be utopias or dystopias such as Well’s ‘The War of the Worlds’ (1898) due to the ‘Martians’. In fact, the boundaries of science fiction and utopias are considered fluid, depending on where in time the reader is located. For example, totalitarian dystopias ‘are clearly dystopias, that is, mirrored if refracted realities’, though ‘conquest by alien beings, or robots, or the final calling of the time by God at Judgement Day, may portray dystopic elements’ and not be dystopias (ibid.). The opposite goes for science fiction: ‘A voyage in a balloon in 1863 thus is not science fiction; a journey to the moon is’ (ibid.).

Another difference between a utopia and science fiction is that there is a whole community devoted to science fiction writings, but not utopian (Claeys, 2010: 144). There are awards, fan conventions, magazines. Claeys mentions that one reason could be that utopian

writers usually write one utopia, while science fiction write works on a regular basis. Also other forms have incorporated more science fiction elements than utopian, such as advertising or music (ibid.).

To summarize this chapter, utopias and dystopias are interconnected, historically and by sharing similar features. What is important, is the definition on the genre depends also on the perspective, as the story can be a utopia for one group of people, and a dystopia for another. On the basis of a dystopia is fear, which has been resulted from real events, mostly the industrial development influencing many terrors in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, dystopias do not always have to contain technology which is characteristic to science fiction. Only the aspect of a new society mirroring the current one is necessary as the addition to the terror.

### 3 DISCRIMINATION

This chapter gives a brief understanding of discrimination and its practices in real life and literature. The chapter discusses in more detail discursive discrimination and humanity as an important aspect for discrimination.

#### 3.1 Definition and main features

The most neutral definition for discrimination is given by Thompson (1998) which is ‘simply a matter of identifying differences’ (Thompson, 1998: 9 quoted in Witcher, 2013: 98). A definition by Schiller indicates the problem of unequal opportunities. He states that discrimination is ‘the absence of equal opportunity to attain socio-economical status’ and that ‘the existence of discrimination does not require the existence of deliberate maltreatment. Unequal opportunities may be institutionalized, as well as consciously imposed’ (Schiller, 1971: 263). Vichiensing expands the definition and adds the goal of discrimination. He states that ‘Discrimination can manifest in many forms, it is essentially a physical, emotional, or social abuse of another to reinforce or create a vertical power, hierarchical relationships, and marginalization’ (Vichiensing, 2017: 127). He also emphasizes an important reason for discriminating others – differentness. Vichiensing states that ‘discrimination makes people who are not similar or important enough belong to the same group of the mainstream’ (ibid.). This means that there is a ‘normal’ group and others that differ to the norm. Though this distinction is quite natural. Wharton states that:

people are drawn to those whose attitudes, values, and beliefs are similar to their own. People who share our views affirm us [...] We may also feel that people who are like us in these ways are easier to communicate with [...] We may trust them more and feel a greater sense of kinship with them. Conversely, when people are different to us, we may feel threatened and find communication difficult (2005: 59 quoted in Witcher, 2013: 101).

Yet, Witcher argues that this theory has some flaws, as consequently ‘social divisions are entrenched when engagement might instead erode them’ (2013: 101). Witcher mentions that what results is misunderstanding and misrecognition of the identity of the other, and consequently – unjust and discriminatory treatment. This means that people are not recognising others as individuals and allocating them similar characteristics as for the rest of their group. This can be seen in Allport’s definition of discrimination, which is the same as the one of the United Nations’, where discrimination is described as ‘any conduct based on distinction made on grounds of natural or social categories, which have no relation either to individual capacities or merits, or to the concrete behaviour of the individual person’ (1979: 52 quoted in Lucas, 2008: 176). A person’s identity is not a fixed concept – ‘it is constructed through actions and interactions’ therefore, what a person does should be looked more on than a person’s physical

traits or what things they own (Butler, 1990; Walzer, 1983 discussed in Witcher, 2013: 122). The mental distance created between ‘us’ and ‘them’ can also be called ‘othering’. It means that people define their own group, whether it is a social class, nation or race, by those they exclude from it (Vichiensing, 2017: 127). The others typically just have something different such as a language or beliefs. The other group is not considered problematic unless it is not purposeful, therefore, viewed as inferior. Exclusion, as one of the consequences of othering, requires ‘the power within relationships for domination and subordination’ and it is influenced often by the persons’ visible features such as a different ‘skin color, accent, language, physical abilities, gender, or age’ (ibid.).

Negative attitudes that ‘diminish the person, their power and their voice’ expressed towards ‘the different’ people can be in such forms: stereotyping, marginalisation, invisibilisation, infantilisation, welfarism, dehumanisation and trivialisation (Thompson, 1998 discussed in Witcher, 2013: 103). The outcomes of such actions are people being ‘ignored, over-protected, patronised and not taken seriously’ or even treated ‘less than a human’ (ibid.) Misrecognition can also result in ‘demonisation, the exaggeration of power or threat’ in order to ‘stoke fears and promote empathic rejection, justify aggressive acts or legitimise the enforced assimilation of those deemed dangerously different’ (Witcher, 2013: 103). Aggression can also be aimed at those who are powerless and being discriminated. When people who are regarded as inferior because of their differentness, discrimination can take such forms as excessive amount of unwelcome attention, or taking the form of ‘bullying, harassment or worse’ (ibid.).

Overall, most often discrimination results from people feeling threatened by a group that differs from theirs. This can result in various negative expressions towards the discriminated group starting from exclusion to harassment and not being treated as fully human.

### **3.2 Types of discursive discrimination**

When discriminatory treatments take linguistic expressions it is called discursive discrimination. It is necessary to find out the ways of how discrimination is expressed in a discourse, as the aim of the research is to analyse a book which is known for its special vocabulary and discriminatory treatment especially through linguistic means. In a discourse, as proposed by Boreus (2017), discrimination takes four forms:

1) exclusion – it occurs when ‘human beings are deliberately excluded from a group, locked out, being deprived of goods of various types’. In a discourse, a person can be made invisible by under representing certain groups (the groups are seen as unimportant), by certain words (a group is included into a generic form which is only names another group), by

excluding voices (people of a certain group are excluded from conversations about important issues about them);

2) negative other-presentation – referring to the ways an in-group expresses that an out-group is inferior by derogative labelling, negatively evaluative descriptions or derogative metaphors;

3) discriminatory objectification – occurs when a ‘group of people tend to be discursively treated only as the objects of some purposes of other agents’;

4) arguing for unfavourable treatment of group members – occurs when ‘some negative treatment other than purely linguistic, particular to the group in question, is argued for’ such as singling out a specific group for worse treatment (Boreus, 2017: 33).

These types show that discrimination can be expressed without physically harassing a group or a person. Thus it is important to study other ways in which people can be discriminated, as sometimes society is unaware of discrimination as no physical harm has been done.

### **3.3 Humanity and discrimination**

Differences between individual, even nations can be significantly magnified by dehumanization. This practice has been used in wars in order to promote violent behaviour. In order for both sides to reconcile, the opposite process has to take place – ‘each victim must be seen as an individual with unique feelings that could be felt as one’s own’, also called rehumanization (Halpern and Weinstein, 2004 discussed in Shaddox, 2013: 461). This means that recognising someone as an individual means recognising someone as human and therefore, belonging to the same group as one-self. Based on the definitions provided for discrimination before, this means that there should not be discrimination, when everyone is seen as belonging to the same group. However, recognising someone as human is not that easy nowadays. The concept of how to define humanity has been challenged since the evolvement of technology and science, political revolutions and especially the completion of the human genome in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Shaddox, 2013: 452). As the genome contains also ‘mental and psychological makeup’, human individuality is no longer considered a self-evident concept. Therefore, the only way for individuals to understand the similarities among each other is through empathy. Science fiction is a genre which greatly contributes to trying to define humanity, starting from M. Shelley’s novel ‘Frankenstein’ (1818), in which the monster was rejected by his creator because his creation was just too ugly and who itself was aware that he lacked some human aspects. Shaddox emphasizes, that empathy, opposed to sympathy, can occur only for one person at a time, as one has to perceive the other person as an individual and understand their

perspective (ibid.: 462). Therefore, a person could feel sympathy towards a group, yet not empathy which is necessary for humanization. Another aspect for humanization is interaction, between individuals and also in the context of the society. Weinstein states that ‘the process [of reconciliation] can only occur within the context of a society that not only gives permission for people of opposing groups to interact but indeed promotes their collaboration in pursuit of a common goal – building a humane society based on principles of justice and equity’ (Halpern and Weinstein, 2004: 582 quoted in Shaddox, 2013: 465).

To summarise, discrimination often manifests when people feel threatened by those who appear different to them, therefore they tend to form groups based on similarities. This leads to excluding the different group, often a minority, and reduction of communication, which enhances misunderstanding. This misunderstanding often leads to treating a group as inferior or even worse – as not fully human. The proposed cure for this is recognising a certain person’s individuality by sharing similar experiences.

### **3.4 Dystopian discrimination**

Discrimination is a common occurrence in literary works, especially in literary utopias and dystopias. These genres are famous for reflecting and criticizing the current society. Therefore, literary works show the current fears, hopes and dreams of a particular time period. For example, the start of colonizing activities led to the emergence of literature devoted to *othering* – the concept of ‘us versus them’. According to Tyson (2015), the post-colonial theory, which involves *othering*, offers tools for examining different kinds of oppression (Tyson, 2015 discussed in Vichiensing, 2017: 129). Edward Said (1977) emphasized racial discrimination, as Europeans were the colonizers and the others were often people of different skin tone (discussed in Vichiensing, 2017). The natives were forced to give up their identities and cultural background. This period is portrayed in novels with dystopian elements such as ‘Heart of Darkness’ (1899) by Joseph Conrad and ‘Things Fall Apart’ (1958) by Chinua Achebe. Also worth mentioning is a dystopia ‘Noughts and Crosses’ (2001) by M. Blackman, in which the roles of colonizers and natives are subverted, and Africans are the superior race, while Europeans are their slaves. Although the novel of concern does not involve colonialization, it still reveals the relationship between a group that thinks itself superior and the other group that is deprived of identity and is enslaved. Totalitarian regimes in the 20<sup>th</sup> century have also inspired many racial discrimination scenarios in dystopias, especially Nazism and Fascism, which exercised some of Social Darwinism ideology. It is ‘the elimination of those poorly fitted, and the survival of those better fitted’, and the best fitted were usually the race of the ruling state

(Wells, 1907: 695). A dystopia 'The Man in the High Castle' (1962) written by P.K. Dick can serve as an example of this, in which Japan and Nazi Germany won the war, and this resulted in the existence of a world where other races are still discriminated against and black people are enslaved.

Gender discrimination, as well as racial discrimination, is more or less based on physical features. Feminist writers are famous for creating dystopian scenarios where women are oppressed by patriarchy. Tyson (2015) and Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (2002) have talked about feminist literature being in close connection to the post-colonial theory and *othering*. Basically, what they propose is that the women are the *other* because of the differences from men and are therefore objectified and marginalized (ibid.). Feminist dystopias have been excessively published starting from the 1970 with the start of Second Wave feminism. One of the most influential authors is Margaret Atwood and her still widely discussed dystopia 'The Handmaid's Tale' (1985). With the development of technologies, a common issue is the patriarchy and medical science having complete control of the female body, as it is one of the worst outcomes of using reproductive technologies (Carroll, 2010). Childbearing is a reoccurring cause for discriminating women in dystopias, as it is an important aspect for the existence of the human race. This can be seen in the overabundance of men in 'The Book of the Unnamed Midwife' (2016) by M. Alison or the one child policy in 'An Excess Male' (2017) by M.S. King.

Age is another discrimination type commonly found in dystopias. The discrimination of the elderly can be found in such scenarios as troubles of resource distribution in 'The Children of Men' where the elderly are offered to commit suicide, although more often it is the young that are discriminated against as they are easier to control. In A.A. Bartol's 'Secondborn' (2017) the fate of the children is decided by the government based on the sequence of birth, for example, secondborns are sent away to the military. In K. Takami's 'Battle Royale' (1999) and 'The Hunger Games' (2008) children are sent to a place from which only one can come out alive. In both books such treatment of children is rather to scare the rest of the society so that they would not question the power of their rulers.

As discrimination is based on dividing people into groups having similar features yet being different from the main one, the most obvious way of categorising people is by their social class. Fluet (2007) discusses class formation and states that it is the aspect looked at first when categorising people, which is only then followed by race, gender etc. Usually the case is that this categorisation benefits 'upper class at the expense of the lower class' (Arifania, 2017: 2). This creates discrimination based on the social class a person belongs to. Class discrimination can be looked upon from three aspects: political, economic and social where

these systems have failed (ibid.). A real life example for the economic aspect is inequality where the lower class is unable to gain prosperity, as the prices are rising (ibid.: 3). This can be seen in the example given in the subchapter discussing the historical background for dystopias where, during the industrialisation, many farmers lost their jobs and had to face severe poverty. In forms of art, economic inequality is portrayed in a dystopic movie 'In Time' (2011) where time is used as currency, creating a system in which poor people can live for a shorter time than the rich (Arifania, 2017: 3). In dystopian literature class discrimination is seen as the most typical. Even in the original Utopia there was slavery, which at those times was the social norm, – therefore, a social class that was being oppressed. Till now, such groups of people have been actively discriminated against in dystopias as prisoners and immigrants seen in 'The Children of Men' (1992) by P.D. James or the lower classes by the political leader and the superior classes in totalitarian dystopias such as 'V for Vendetta' (1982) by A. Moore and 'Nineteen Eighty-Four' (1949) by G. Orwell. Huxley's 'Brave New World' criticizes the British class system by dividing and creating a society with artificially controlled levels of IQ (discussed in Matus, 2009). Another class more and more looked upon in dystopias nowadays is genetically modified beings. Though they are mostly the ones that are placed as superior, therefore showing the fear of such outcome in real life. In some dystopias, such as 'Spares' (1997) by M.M. Smith or Kazuo Ishiguro's 'Never Let Me Go', they are the ones being discriminated against by humans, therefore, criticizing some social norms of the society.

What is common for discrimination, as seen in all these dystopias, is that the ones in power gain a lot more from the radical change in the structure of the society, living in a utopic setting, yet the victims suffer tremendously. This portrays the dystopian feature that the fears are exaggerated and the society is portrayed as a lot worse. Due to dystopian discrimination some part of the society is made powerless and treated badly: Europeans are enslaved by Africans, fertile women are forced to have children for the common good, people die because they are too poor to buy more time, children are sent to fight for their lives, people are deprived of identity due to predetermined classification. While at the same time another part of the society is benefiting from this treatment: problems of overpopulation or infertility are resolved, people can live longer, all work, such as manual labour, is done for them.

What can be concluded is that dystopian discrimination can be seen in exaggerated power relations, which result in a utopic setting for the superior group and a dystopia for the inferior. The group considered inferior can be based on race, gender, age, yet most often – class, as it is the most obvious aspect for differentiating others.

To summarize the theoretical part, utopias and dystopias share many similar features, such as radical change of the society. While in utopias the society is viewed as better, in

dystopias the structure overall is considered worse, however, it also depends on the perspective of the person viewing it. An important aspect for this division is discrimination, which manifests from fear of different groups and leads to unequal and unjust treatment of the different group. After reviewing features of utopias, dystopias, the practice of discrimination and locating discrimination in several dystopias, dystopian discrimination can be interpreted/considered as discriminatory practices exercised in an overall dystopic world that result in a utopian setting for the group holding the power and a dystopia for the victims. This interpretation will be used as a basis for analyzing dystopian discrimination in Kazuo Ishiguro's 'Never Let Me Go'.

## **4. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS OF DYSTOPIAN DISCRIMINATION IN ‘NEVER LET ME GO’**

This chapter concerns the findings of the analysis of dystopian discrimination in the novel by studying how discrimination is used as a tool by the privileged group living in a utopian setting and creating a dystopia for the oppressed group. To clarify, for the purpose of this research the humans or, as they are called in the novel ‘normals’ are considered as the privileged group and the clones – the oppressed group. They are the two main groups in the dual class society which can be located in the novel. Discrimination was analysed in these two settings – utopian and dystopian because of the two sides of dystopian discrimination – there is a group that significantly gains from it, and the one that suffers. As the superior group in the novel is humans, the readers would be more likely to consider the novel utopic, though as the reader empathize and views the events from the perspective of a clone, it was interesting to analyse how the society turns out to be more dystopian. The analysis was based on the features of utopias and dystopias, compiled mostly from Frye (1965) Claeyes (2010; 2016; 2017), Gordin, Tilley and Prakash (2010), Vieira (2013) and the research done on this topic by Matus (2009); theories about the roots of discrimination reviewed in the works of Witcher (2013), Shaddox (2013) and Vichiensing (2017) and the classification of discursive discrimination proposed by Boreus (2017). Lastly, the author’s own interpretation of dystopian discrimination, which was based on the reviewed literature, was used to analyse the class relations and its correlation in novel ‘Never Let Me Go’.

### **4.1 Causes for discrimination**

#### **4.1.1 Differentness**

The main cause for discrimination – differentness, analysed by Witcher (2013), is mentioned in the book in many ways. First of all, none of the clones have parents, which is a significant difference from the humans. Ruth (one of the clones) says ‘we’re modelled from trash’ and Kathy looks through porn magazines with the hope of finding someone related to her: ‘We all wonder about our model,’ she tells Tommy (86). *Models* are the people that are their ‘originals’, that is - people whose genes have been cloned to create the clones. The clones keep looking for these ‘originals’ throughout the story. That means that they wish to be included, to be a part of something. In a way they see these ‘originals’ as missing parent figures, finding of which would diminish the distance between the ‘normals’ and clones. Another physical difference is that the

clones cannot have children. The difference can be significantly seen when they are taught about sex and the guardians say that they have to be careful when having sex with other people, as for the ‘normals’, sex is followed by emotions, yet for the clones it is not.

Another aspect contributing to differentness is their lives’ purpose. As the normal timeline for people is studying, getting a job, having hobbies and also having children, for clones their lives have already been predetermined before they came into existence. The clones which are in the main heroes of the story, study in Hailsham, then they go to Cottages and, when fully grown up, they either start donating their organs or become carers for the ones that give donations before they and then themselves become donors. Either way, they end up donating their organs until they die in the process. As one of the clones describes it in the book: ‘there’s nothing to do except watch your remaining donations until they switch you’ (133).

One more way of how the clones differ is the whole class they belong to – they are human creations, not considered being fully human, being just made for health care purposes. Therefore, they stand very low on the importance scale in the society, yet at the same time they are necessary. To diminish negative feelings humans might experience by subjecting human-like beings to a dreadful fate, they are excluded from the society serving their purpose very quietly. All these aspects contribute to class discrimination in dystopias, as the clones are grouped based on their unique contribution to the society, from which they gain nothing. Fluet (2007) elaborates on class thinking in ‘Never Let Me Go’, particularly the class of service professionals, as the clones in some way can be considered health care workers who have their particular professional objectives. Overall, the clones differ from ‘normals’ by not having any relatives, being deprived of the possibility of having children and feeling emotions while having sex, as well as not being able to choose their future – they are a class of health professionals, therefore, indicating class discrimination.

#### **4.1.2 Misunderstanding**

What comes from differentness, first of all, there is misunderstanding and misrecognition of the identity of the other, which is said by Witcher (2013) to cause discriminatory behaviour. In the book this is clearly seen at the end when Kathy H. (a clone) and Madame (human) are talking about their interaction when they were both in Hailsham and Kathy was singing and dancing by song ‘Never Let Me Go’. While singing, Kathy remembers having imagined ‘this woman who’d been told she couldn’t have babies. But then she’d had one, and she was so pleased, and she was holding it ever so tightly to her breast, really afraid something might separate them, and she’s going baby, baby, never let me go’ (129). While it happened, Kathy had been aware

that Madame was watching her and she had seen Madame was crying. Kathy interpreted Madame's tears as Madame being able to read her mind and understand her, as the song was not about having children at all. In reality what Madame was really thinking at the time was about 'a little girl, her eyes tightly closed, holding to her breast the old kind world, one that she knew in her heart could not remain, and she was holding it and pleading, never to let her go' (ibid.) So, though Madame felt pity for the clone, her interpretation was strikingly different from the actual one, rather based on her own knowledge and experience than the one of the clones. This shows how subjective and impersonal was her knowledge about the clones' lives. At the same time this moment also created a bond between them both – as Madame was relating to Kathy's melancholy. Though the bond turned out to be false when they finally started to communicate as sort of equals. Identities are constructed through actions and interactions, therefore, Madame only got a sense of Kathy's identity seeing that action, though it lacked an important aspect such as interaction, which they experienced only later. This is an example of how people who knew about the clones, but did not know them personally, misperceived them. And that is why they perceived them as a group with no separate identities which could be treated impersonally. Probably, if they learned about their identities, they would have thought and acted differently. An aspect worth mentioning concerning identities is the guardians' perspective. They were the ones that encouraged the clones to create art, therefore, concentrating on them as separate individuals.

#### **4.1.3 Fear**

An emotion seen in the interaction and overall behaviour of humans towards the clones, is fear. As was stated in the chapter about discrimination by Wharton (2005 in Witcher, 2013), people feel threatened by those who are different, therefore, reducing communication. This can also be seen from the behaviour of Madame. After surprising the woman, the impression that Kathy got was the following: 'And I can still see it now, the shudder she seemed to be suppressing, the real dread that one of us would accidentally brush against her. [...] Ruth had been right: Madame was afraid of us. But she was afraid of us in the same way someone might be afraid of spiders' (18) It is even proven by Miss Emily saying that 'We're all afraid of you' (128). Therefore, both sides were aware of the fear that the clones caused. Because of that the clones felt more excluded and objectified.

#### 4.1.4 Othering

Kata (2012) and Vichiensing (2017) are scholars that have studied othering in 'Never Let Me Go' starting from constructing otherness through language and also adding other levels, such as social, cultural and psychic to the language devices. The 'us vs them' aspect in the novel is important in order to establish the groups for power relations. For example, at the Hailsham's period there were mainly two groups – the students and the guardians. The guardians were the ones with the power and the students were the ones that had to follow many rules. With occasional appearance of Madame, the students spotted a person from the outside, therefore, at this point the 'us' was the whole school (Hailsham) versus Madame, which they thought had the power from the outside – that she was making her private gallery. When the students got to the cottages, they tend to stay within the same environment – other students from Hailsham, and the others were the other clones – who did not grow up in Hailsham. The person in power here was the owner of the cottages, being 'the other' for all the clones. He gave them tasks that needed to be done and ensured that they do not read any porn magazines and he overall acted very distant manner towards them. At this period, the clones started to explore the outside world and thus now it was the clones versus the 'normals' with their possible originals. Then, when the donations process started, other clones were in charge of the donors, though they were more like carers than authority figures. An important aspect was when Madame and Miss Emily informs the clones about the harsh reality and at that moment the guardians are no longer the others, as they have been fighting the system, and the government, influenced by the wants from the society of a world without illnesses becomes the main opposing group, which has the ultimate power in the novel. The role of the public opinion on the decisions about clones is also an aspect worth mentioning, as it proves that the power is in the hands not only of the superior group, but also in common agreement of the society. The Morningdale scandal is an event that influences the mainstream so much that Hailsham and the other boarding schools get shut down, despite of them exercising different experiments than the ones conducted by James Morningdale and that were considered as a threat to the human race. Therefore, allowing other experiments with clones also seemed too risky from the humans' side, which shows that the clones are stereotyped by the ruling class.

To sum up, these four elements – differentness, misunderstanding, fear and othering, taken from theories about roots of discrimination, were applied to the fictional society created by Kazuo Ishiguro and with that demonstrate the dystopian feature, which is close relation to

the reality. Clones are a class deprived of physical and social traits, misunderstood and always treated as the others and fear was a strong contributor to that.

#### **4.2. Discrimination as a tool for the humans living in a utopian setting**

Overall, the whole novel is dystopian, as the overall structure of the society is considered as worse than the reality, because there are more humane ways how to grow organs. Though, as society has many levels, the situation is clearly worse for some social classes while better for other ones. This section demonstrates how instances of dystopian discrimination contribute to the utopian setting for the privileged group in the novel – the humans.

The humans can be considered to live in a utopia because they live in a society that is better than the one in the real world in the 1990s. It is better, as their life span is extended and they can now be cured of incurable diseases. There is more equality in their world, as there are less sick people and they do not have to make any sacrifices. The solution is human-made – because of the huge advancements in technology they have managed to create a better world for themselves. However, all of this is possible at the expense of other living beings – a new social class that they have created. In Kazuo's fictional England the breakthrough of science in the middle of the 20th century created many possibilities to 'cure so many previously incurable conditions' (125), and cloning was one of them. When the society finally got concerned about the process, it was already too late to stop it. As Miss Emily (the headmaster of the boarding school Hailsham created for proving that clones have souls) explains to the clones Kathy H. and Tommy: 'How can you ask a world that has come to regard cancer as curable, how can you ask such a world to put away that cure, to go back to the dark days?' (ibid.). Consequently, rearing clones became a social norm in the society. Humans saw them as 'shadowy objects in test tubes' and as Miss Emily tells the clones: 'So for a long time you were kept in the shadows, and people did their best not to think about you', and the only place where they were not treated as such were boarding schools, such as Hailsham, created by people that wanted to prove that clones have souls too. By using discrimination as a tool, humans are ensuring that the clones serve their intended purpose and do not rise against them or surpass them in the future, thus ensuring that the humans stay in their created utopia.

One way to do that is by the previously mentioned aspect of 'keeping them in the shadows' or as better put – **exclusion**. Physical and discursive exclusion is used in order to maintain the idea of this being the perfect solution for the problem. Because of their location the privileged class are not reminded about the clones' existence and can pretend that inequality does not exist in their world. The three places the 'privileged' clones (meaning, the clones that

went to boarding school in contrary to other clones) inhabit throughout their lifetime are created specifically for keeping the clones 'out of sight', for example, the recovery centre in Kingsfield had been used by humans before becoming this kind of facility: 'that must have been where the families had their holiday apartments, and though I'd guess the interiors have changed a lot, the outsides look much the same' (102). The only humans involved are the guardians, which are voluntarily educating clones in Hailsham, Madame – a person 'from the outside' who comes to collect their art, sponsors, that would review their art in closed events: 'There'd be cabinet ministers, bishops, all sorts of famous people coming to attend. There were speeches, large funds pledged.' (124); the owner of the cottage and the doctors in the recovery centres. The humans have constructed the system in such way that the clones can take care of each other as much as possible. This can be seen in their lives' purpose, where they first have to become carers for other clones who have already started their donations and then become donors themselves. Therefore, the clones also imitate the profession of caretakers, which makes the clones less of a scientific experiment, therefore, the actions of the humans less bad, and more as class of professionals. This caring of others that are similar to oneself, in some way puts also the 'social norms of good professionals' stated by Black (793) upon the carers, which keeps them from trying to escape the system. Whitehead (2011) in her essay approaches the topic of the fictional health system in 'Never Let Me Go' and says that carework depicted in the novel serves a distraction for the clones from the ugly things that are happening in the operation halls. This makes them feel good about their work, also as a part of the society, though they are far from being official citizens.

Making the clones stay in the shadows is maximised by **discursive exclusion** and various linguistic means. Vichiensing (2017) and Kata (2012) have analysed the linguistic means for othering in 'Never Let Me Go', more particularly, the usage of euphemisms and assimilation. Their conclusions about the importance of linguistic devices for othering another group coincides with Boreus' (2017) classification of discursive discrimination and also Bakhtin's theory about social languages, which is a potential dialect and mark a certain group in a society. First of all, the clones are made less important than they really are or even ordinary by the use of ordinary every-day language for specific clone-related phenomena. For example, the word 'donor' normally refers to a person that donates something to other, yet to a clone it refers to the final stage of the lifecycle when they donate their organs to the normals and spend their time in a Recovery Center. Particularly significant is the usage of 'students' when referring to clones. This word normally used for children in an educational institution in the novel is a euphemism used to soften the difference for the clones. Proposed by some scholars, this can also be an occurrence of **infantilisation**, which is a discriminatory treatment often used in

patriarchal society towards women to make them feel younger and less intelligent than they really are. In this novel, the clones by this case of infantilisation are deprived of growing up and living independently, which would be the stage after being ‘students’ for *normals*. At the same time, the euphemism creates ambiguity and emotional gap between the humans and the clones. The emotional gap might have been set up on purpose, so in case the clones interacted with the humans, the things they would talk about, firstly, would sound quite normal and secondly, if the normals would be aware of the meaning, they would not understand how the clones could talk about serious topics such as death (*completion* for clones) without the expected negative emotions that usually come with the someone dying. The clones would sound ‘almost’ normal, as for a reader, who is a human, the language does not feel completely natural and at the beginning of the story when the true meaning are not revealed yet, the usage of *donations*, *carers*, *collection* and other euphemisms is what gives the impression of the boarding school students being different. Even though the reader is referred as a carer from Kathy’s side, the linguistic ambiguity excludes the reader from feeling as one of the clones and more like the *normals*.

The exclusion is done also by the means of **positively coloured words** and positive actions, such as praising the clones and acknowledging their contributions. For example, the clones have proper names, which make them seem more valued, though even they themselves know that they are not the same as humans. At the end of the book the clones are praised for being educated and cultured – ‘You’ve had good lives, you’re educated and cultured’, applying them the same qualities that are characteristic to humans, though it does not change the fact that their lives will still end differently. Overall, because of non-existent neologisms for the practice of the donation process or clone-related phenomena, or euphemisms when referring to clones, the privileged can pretend that they are just health care workers or students when talking about the clones.

Other discriminatory treatments exercised by humans towards the clones in order for them to keep living in their utopic society are **objectifying** and **dehumanizing** the clones.

Dehumanization is the reason why cloning is even possible in the fictional society. By dehumanizing and objectifying the clones, the privileged class can use them as objects – as ‘shadowy objects in test tubes’ and not wonder about the ethical implications. This makes it okay to take the clones’ organs, as they are objects created for that purpose. Humans are looking after the clones’ health, what they do with their physical bodies, restricting them from smoking, so that they could get organs that are healthy as possible. ‘The guardians ‘made sure to give us some sort of lecture each time any reference to cigarettes came along’ and ‘then there were the actual lessons where they showed us horrible pictures of what smoking did to

the insides of your body' (33), Kathy says. On the basis of ensuring that was routine and overall control, such as no closed doors. Foucault (1989) refers to these aspects as a necessity for a society to conform to social norms. This proves that humans in this novel are the superior group which through surveillance and creating routine are making the clones to confirm to their social norms, which for them means a better society, yet for the clones sacrificing their individuality. Stereotyping contributes to dehumanization, as all clones are falsely accused of not being human, though the perspective of the clone Kathy proves that the clones possess many qualities that humans do. As the purpose for the clones' creation is not hidden from the clones themselves and gradually implemented into their minds, it is easier to treat them as objects when they themselves think that way. This is done mainly through language – negative other-representation and discriminatory objectification. The previously mentioned example of 'shadowy objects' show derogative labelling, as first of all, they are very straight-forward called objects, which is discriminating, and also 'shadowy' which has only negative connotations. Just as a dystopia is a shadow of a utopia, while sharing many similarities, the clones are the shadows of humans. As the clones do not actually converse with regular humans throughout the story, the discursive discrimination comes from the guardians who tell them about the general opinions of them. The shadows, in fact, are mentioned several times such as 'you were kept in the shadows' and that the world 'wanted you back in the shadows'. Humans do not consider them human – they 'supply medical science', they were 'less than human', not properly human. Therefore, they were treating them as such. The guardians themselves also use derogative language and refer to clones as not human. Madame and Miss Emily refer to them as 'poor creatures' that are being 'reared'. Though at the same time they use the previously mentioned euphemisms to soften the objectification, such as students instead of clones. Miss Emily says that 'all clones – or students, as we preferred to call you' and with the word students came the additional meaning – the differentness, as Miss Lucy says: 'you're students. You're... special' (34). The differentness contributed with the 'shadowy objects' show that they are the lowest social class of them all and the fact that they are oppressed only contributes to the utopian setting, as one of the utopian features is the oppression of lower classes.

#### **4.3. Discrimination as a tool for a dystopia for the clones**

Contrary to the humans, the clones live in a complete dystopia as they are the victims of the revolutionary solution of fighting diseases. Just like many other dystopian novels, 'Never Let

Me Go' also portrays unreal possibilities by showing what would happen if humans would have made this choice. Many scholars, such as Toker and Chertoff (2008), Black (2009), and Whitehead (2011) connect the treatment of the clones to such real life discriminatory practices as Nazi-era incarceration and Fascism, in which there was radical exclusion and humans were deprived of political identity. This kind of political repression can be seen in other totalitarian dystopias such as 'Ninety Eighty-Four', or collectivist dystopias such as 'Anthem' (1938) by A. Rand, or 'The Giver' (1993) by L. Lowry, where people are deprived of identity. However, the closest relation can be seen to Holocaust, because of organ harvesting and the profit-driven culture of care (Whitehead, 2011). Another dystopian feature is that the reader is asked to contemplate on the problem addressed in the dystopia, with the goal of eliciting a positive response from the reader, in this case – to reconsider the concept of humanity and the treatment of other social groups. This is mainly done by empathizing with the discriminated class with the use of 1<sup>st</sup> person narrator Kathy, who belongs to it.

**Exclusion** as one of the discriminatory treatments creates several dystopian aspects for the oppressed class. **Physical exclusion** of the clones creates the dystopian closed environment, enhanced control through surveillance and the fact that the government or in this case – the guardians, shape their reality by managing their knowledge about the world. In Hailsham, there are physical borders – fences and 'the woods' that mark the territory of the premises. The students were not allowed to cross them and they were mostly kept inside the borders not because of how strong the fences were, but how strong the fear was. The students stayed inside due to the fear created by the terrible stories told by the other students about the ones who had tried running away in the woods outside the boundaries and got horribly injured or were not let back in. The stories were very effective and stayed in the young students' minds, as Kathy says herself 'the woods played on our imagination' and developed the idea that Hailsham was the safe place: 'safest was the front of the main house' where the woods could not be seen (25). They were not only kept away from the real world by borders but also by the lack of knowledge about it. The information was completely controlled by the guardians and therefore, they were the ones that created a sense of reality for the clones. They were the authority figures and the only person 'from the outside' was Madame. The students were also deprived of having things from outside of Hailsham and the only way to get something was the Sale, though it was also very controlled, as all the objects were registered. This kept them from the knowledge about the things that humans know, for example, about the existence and usage of different objects. A real connection to the real world can be seen from the tape that Kathy got in the Sale, as she got a sense of the culture of the normals. In cottages, with the appearance of a TV in their lives, they got a glimpse of the outside world, though this can also be considered as a type of

exclusion, as the biggest insight to the relationships and everyday lives of the 'normals' were through staged performances. The clones were sort of 'looking in' the outside world, yet not getting to contribute to it. In cottages the clones were also deprived of some commodities, such as heat. Kathy remembers 'freezing rooms', 'the blankets often weren't even blankets, but really old assortment – old curtains, even bits of carpet' and that 'sometimes you just had to pile anything you could over you'. The clones were no longer treated as well as in Hailsham. Because of the closed environment, the clones were also hyper-aware of the power that was being exercised over them, which they did not even try to escape. This shows that this cannot be considered a slavery novel, where there is also a discriminated group, because the slaves usually try to break out of the system, however the clones do not question their fate and the supremacy of the humans. Giving up at the end and serving their original purpose shows the dystopian nature of the novel.

**Discursive exclusion** and **trivialisation** creates the feeling of 'us vs them' and contributes to the awareness of the power exercised. The linguistic ambiguity, marginalisation and invisibilisation discussed before shows that just like the lowest social classes in totalitarian dystopias, the clones are treated like they are not important. It could be said that they are hidden together with their specific meanings of the words and the absence of special vocabulary. This exclusion decreases the possibility of identity for the clones, making them 'quite human' by the similar vocabulary, yet still different, as the words are used for different things that are hidden and therefore, not understood. Though there is a small spectrum of emotions expressed in the novel by the clones, which opposes the characteristic of dystopias, it serves as a tool for exclusion from the side of humans, as the reason for that is excluding the clones from the ordinary usage of English.

An important aspect of discursive discrimination is also **excluding voices** – all the decisions regarding the clones are made without their contribution. This is revealed at the end of the novel where Madame and Miss Emily reveals the truth about Hailsham to the students. They basically say that the clones were just an outcome of the breakthrough of science and one of the possibilities 'to cure so many previously incurable conditions' (125). They talk about events in which they review the students' art, they talk about other little movements and colleagues at Glenmorgan and the Sounders Trust, the Morningdale event, which scared away their sponsors and the 'government homes' in which clones are kept after the closing of Hailsham. All this information signifies how little was said to the clones about the system in which they were in, not even mentioning that they did not have any say in the processes.

By **dehumanizing** the clones, as mentioned before, it is possible to create a better life for the humans. This brings forward another collectivist dystopian feature which is involuntary

sacrificing individuality for the common good. Here, the common good is mostly meant the privileged group – humans, yet the clones are helping their own group as well by being carers. Although the process might seem quite voluntary from the clones' side, it is only the outcome of the dehumanization and objectification which makes the clones think that there is no other way for them to live and that they are not fully human. Experimenting with living beings is unethical and this contributes to the dystopian feature of scientific experiments. Due to this, the novel can be considered partly a totalitarian and technological dystopia as technology is used in creating the clones. Though it rather coincides with both – first wave dystopias, which are inspired by totalitarian regimes and the genetic experiments present in those times, and also second wave dystopias, in which the fear and criticism revolves around uncontrollable terrors due to globalization and the weakness of the state. Objectification also shows not only control of the environment and information, but overall control that is seen in dystopias, especially totalitarian dystopias, such as 'Nineteen Eighty-Four' and 'Brave New World'. It is made clear that entire bodies belong to science and their thought process has been adjusted to this goal. The previously mentioned example of smoking and also the restriction of another bodily function – having sex with normals, contribute to their differentness and physical objectification and dehumanization. The most extreme example of inhumane treatment towards all clones is the stage after the fourth donation, if a clone has survived that far. Kathy describes this stage in one of her contemplations about her life: 'then you find there are more donations, plenty of them, on the other side of that line; how there are no more recovery centres, no carers, no friends; how there's nothing to do except watch your remaining donations until they switch you off' (133). The thought process has been shaped by discursive elements, such as euphemisms, assimilation and objectification discussed before, used by the guardians as the main authority figures, which consequently makes the clones think that they deserve to be the lowest class and follow the social norms – serve as organ donors as they are supposed to.

It is also important to mention here that there are dystopian features in the utopian setting for the humans as well. The discriminatory practices bring in such dystopian features as fear from uncontrollable terrors and interconnectedness. As stated before, humans are scared that the clones might become more superior than their kind, and without proper examinations the clones are looked upon as uncontrollable. Interconnectedness as a feature of Second Wave dystopias is seen through the contribution of clones to the society – their involvement can eventually impact the whole human race and be potentially dangerous (as states before – they are a terror) to more than just England. However, the clones are kept quite 'out of sight', therefore, only the people who are aware of their existence and all the processes that come with it experience these dystopic features in the otherwise quite utopian setting. Those people are

the guardians, scientists and the sponsors, and also the reader, which is why the novel is more dystopic than utopic, even when the humans in the novel live in a utopia. The dystopic setting is magnified by empathising with the main character Kathy. Just as the guardians believed that the clones have souls because of their close communication, the reader gets even more insight to how similar the clones actually are to humans by following the thought process and recollections of Kathy.

## CONCLUSIONS

The goal of this paper was to analyse dystopian discrimination in Kazuo Ishiguro's "Never Let Me Go" by studying how discrimination is used as a tool by the privileged group living in a utopian setting and creating a dystopia for the oppressed group.

Dystopia as a concept relating to fear and anxiety has always existed in society, however, due to the Industrial Revolution and totalitarian regimes of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the concept has evolved into an independent literary genre set apart from the genre it shadows – utopias, the perfect place that does not exist. The term 'utopia' was invented by Thomas More as the name of his alternate society which was criticizing the society of those times rather than proposing the template of the perfect society. Criticism of the current society, radical change, narrative devices and close relationship with reality are some of the features in common for utopias and dystopias. The same work can be perceived both as a utopia and a dystopia, it only depends on the character's place in the society or the reader's attitude towards the problems and solutions discussed. The main difference is that utopias present the idea of a better life, yet dystopias depict a much worse solution for present problems. Dystopias are classified based on the terror they express, such as political, environmental or technological threats, or chronologically, resulting in First Wave and Second Wave dystopias, which each contain features characteristic to the events happening in the real world. The emphasis on social transformation in utopias and dystopias often result in them not to belong to the genre of science fiction, which calls for the contribution of technology to the ongoing processes.

Discrimination is the act of depriving people of equal opportunities, which can often be seen in dystopias. It manifests when people feel threatened by those who appear different to them, therefore, they tend to form groups based on similarities. Negative attitudes starting from diminishing the person by the acts of stereotyping, marginalisation, invisibilisation, infantilisation, welfarism, dehumanisation and trivialisation to more aggressive acts such as harassment lead to people being excluded, ignored, over-protected, patronised and not taken seriously or excluded. Discursive discrimination is an important aspect of discrimination, as in the forms of discursive exclusion, negative other-presentation, discriminatory objectification and arguing for unfavourable treatment of group members it shows that discrimination can exist even when no physical harm has been done. Recognising someone as an individual is one of the ways how discriminatory treatment can be abolished, however, the concept of human individuality starting from the 20<sup>th</sup> century is no longer fixed and the only cure left against discrimination is empathy.

The review of the literature allowed to make a distinct connection between dystopias and discrimination, and, after studying instances of discrimination in other dystopian works, it was concluded that dystopian discrimination occurs with exaggerated power relations between two groups that live in an overall dystopic world. It results in two opposite realities – a utopian setting for the group in hold of the power and a dystopia for the victims. It was also concluded that the group victimized the most was because of their class, and only then by other commonly seen types of discrimination such as race, gender and age. Class discrimination refers to formations, therefore, the inferior group can also be non-human beings.

The interpretation of dystopian discrimination was applied while analysing Kazuo Ishiguro's 'Never Let Me Go' and the findings show that dystopian discrimination is present in the novel. First, there is a dual division of a society always present in the novel, which was located by studying the causes for discrimination - differentness, misunderstanding, fear and othering. This showed that the humans are holding the power and the clones are the victims. After carrying out genre studies, the novel revealed more dystopian elements than utopian and because of the radical and unethical solution for prolonging people's lives, the societal structure was considered dystopic.

Main practices of discrimination located in the novel were exclusion and dehumanization. Also, such negative attitudes as stereotyping, marginalisation, invisibilisation, infantilisation and trivialisation were seen. Discrimination more often was expressed discursively and using linguistic devices such as assimilation and euphemisms, which created misunderstanding not only between the two classes, but also between the clones and the readers. The discriminatory practices, especially discursive discrimination, created a utopian setting for the humans and a dystopia for the clones. The utopian features found resulting from discrimination were: an idea for a better life, human-made solutions to the problems, more equality on their side of the society, and oppression of the lower classes in order to live in a utopia. A dystopia for the clones contained many features both from totalitarian and collectivist dystopias, such as overall control, the lack of privacy, hyper-awareness of the power exercised and scientific experiments. Second Wave dystopian features, such as fear from uncontrollable terrors, can be seen in the utopic setting for the humans, only proving that there is always an implied dystopia in every utopia.

This work contributes to the analysis of societal norms in literary works. The literature review on dystopias and utopias and the interpretation of dystopian discrimination could serve as basis for further and more in depth research on dystopian discrimination, as no such study exists yet. Due to extensive research done in the theoretical part on dystopias and discrimination

and the limitations of pages, the empirical part is not as extensive, which is the main drawback of this paper.

## Theses

- 1) Utopias and dystopias share common features, such as criticism of the current society, radical change, narrative devices and close relationship with reality.
- 2) Utopias present the idea of a better life, yet dystopias depict a much worse solution for present problems.
- 3) Dystopias are classified based on the terror they express, such as political, environmental or technological threats, or chronologically, resulting in First Wave and Second Wave dystopias.
- 4) Dystopias contain discrimination which is the act of depriving people of equal opportunities and manifests from differentness.
- 5) Discrimination can be expressed by various negative attitudes, such as stereotyping, marginalisation, invisibilisation, infantilisation, welfarism, dehumanisation and trivialisation and can lead to exclusion or considered non-human.
- 6) Dystopian discrimination the exercise of discriminatory practices in an overall dystopic world that result in a utopian setting for the group holding the power and a dystopia for the victims.
- 7) The group victimised the most in dystopian discrimination is social class.
- 8) Dystopian discrimination is present in Kazuo Ishiguro's 'Never Let Me Go' by humans living in a utopic setting and the clones in a dystopia.
- 9) Class discrimination is the discrimination type present in 'Never Let Me Go'.
- 10) The main discriminatory treatments used by the privileged group in 'Never Let Me Go' are exclusion and dehumanization.
- 11) Discursive discrimination is an important aspect in 'Never Let Me Go', as it creates linguistic ambiguity both for the two present classes in the novel, and also for the reader.

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## Dokumentārā lapa

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