Representation Of Totalitarian Governments In 1984 And The Movie V For Vendetta

Literature is a form of art and every form of art has the ability to provide insight into the human experience. Great literature provides us profound insight into the individual and collective human experience while keeping its integrity overtime. It reveals fundamental truths and aspects of life we take for granted, while complexly challenging the individual to be the best they can be by presenting paradoxes and anomalies upon which to reflect, always testing, what does it mean to be human? The human experience encompasses the realities of human existence including the mental, emotional, cultural, social, spiritual and physical characteristics of human life (Spacey, J.2019). The ability to think, the freedom of the individual and the collective to create morals, analyse history and unsheathe truth is the foundation of all humanity. The dark satirical novel nineteen eighty-four by Geogre Orwell (‘1984’) portrays a dystopian world ruled by totalitarian governments, set in 1984. Similarly the movie V for Vendetta (‘VFV’) a political thriller of 2006 directed by James McTeigue and written by Alan Moore set in 2032 shows an England ruled by the totalitarian Norsefire party led by their autocratic leader Chancellor Sutler. (En.wikipedia.org, 2019) A country in which the citizens rebel under the guidance of V the vigilante. This essay will explore how both pieces of literature aim to provide insight into the human experience by showing the destruction of its fundamentals.

By presenting anomalies great literature complexly challenges the reader, revealing to them new perspectives on their own human experience. Orwell's 1984 was written as dark political satire, It was set in England, known in the dystopian world of the novel as “airstrip one” and published in 1949, just after WWII. The book was directly influenced by the totalitarian regimes which existed during Orwell’s lifetime, making strong allusions to Hitler’s Nazi germany and Stalin’s great purge of the 1930’s. Along with personal experiences such as reporting on the spanish civil war and living with the poor of London. By illustrating the perversion of relationships in this dystopian world Orwell reveals their importance. The Ingsoc party in 1984 corrupted and perverted interpersonal and international relationships for their own agenda, ultimate power. This can be seen when O’Brien tortured winston physically and mentally manipulating him from the beginning, from their first interaction, yet winston “had never loved him so deeply”. This is not only ironic but allegorical, revealing that we as humans are ironically able to love the things that hurt us. Juxtaposingly in VFV, V tortures Evey in order to strengthen her as he loved her “Because I love you, Evey. BecauseI wanted to set you free.” yet she responds with “I hate you.” By presenting this anomaly in behaviour, loving what hates us and hating what loves us, both pieces of literature prompt the audience to think about situations like this in their lives, challenging their perception of what or who they hate and love. The Ingsoc party also perverts family relationships, this is best seen in the microcosm of the Parsons family. The daughter denounces her father to the thought police, “It was my little daughter… pride.”. The understated tone and normality of the language used by Parson suggests this is a regular occurence in oceanic life, a shocking burlesque to the reader. What was once based on love of one's family has shifted to love for the party. This subversion reveals how the human condition can be altered through nurture, making the reader question their beliefs, do they own them? or are they as the little child, forged into a servant of the social system? By illustrating the alarming destruction and perversions of relationships, VFV and 1984 challenge the reader, prompting them to appreciate or question their own relationships.

Freedom of thought and individuality is the foundation of the human experience, again by showing the consequences of restrictions the totalitarian and autocratic governments of 1984 and VFV respectively place on them, Orwell and Moore aim to reveal to emphasise on the importance of these two aspects. How they can never be lost. In Orwell's 1984 Ingsoc uses a variety of control methods to squash freedom of thought and individuality. The party employ heavily monitored surveillance through the telescreens where “The smallest thing could give you away. A nervous tic, an unconscious look of anxiety, a habit of muttering to yourself—anything that carried with it the suggestion of abnormality, of having something to hide.” this intense feeling of “big brother is watching” takes away the individuals freedom, by showing how miserable winston is after this basic freedom is taken away from him orwell aims to highlight its importance. Similarly in VFV the Norsefire party employ “Surveillance coercing your conformity”, “Yellow coded curfew is now in effect”, “Strength through unity unity through faith” all methods of control that seem

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