

UNIVERSIDAD DE ALMERÍA

Facultad de Humanidades y Psicología
(División Humanidades)



GRADO EN ESTUDIOS INGLESES

Curso Académico: 4º

Convocatoria (Junio/Septiembre): Junio

Trabajo Fin de Grado: “*Brave New World*: un mundo de ideas”

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RESUMEN

Brave New World (Un Mundo Feliz) es una novela de ideas escrita por Aldous Huxley en 1932. Se le llama una novela de ideas, debido al hecho de que el autor se centra principalmente en satirizar los rápidos avances de la tecnología y sus consecuencias en el siglo XX. Una de las ideas principales en esta novela es la pérdida del individualismo de los ciudadanos, la gente en *Brave New World* está totalmente controlada y condicionada para comportarse como quiere el estado. La sociedad se basa en el consumismo y entretenimientos necios, mientras que el arte, la cultura, la historia, la religión y la literatura son considerados peligrosos y por lo tanto totalmente prohibidos. Sin embargo, la presencia de Shakespeare en esta novela es muy intensa, funcionando como un contraste ante este mundo vacío y materialista.

Esta novela distópica también se interpretó como una profecía. Hoy en día, muchos de los aspectos descritos por Huxley ya están presentes en nuestra sociedad: más libertad sexual, control avanzado sobre la reproducción, alto uso de drogas y medicamentos, etc. Sin embargo, estas tendencias han sido llevadas al extremo por Huxley, y su profecía aún no se ha hecho realidad. Por el momento, debemos de interpretarlo como una advertencia ante lo que pueda suceder si nos centramos demasiado en el placer y el consumo.

SUMMARY

Brave New World is a novel of ideas written by Aldous Huxley in 1932. It is called a novel of ideas due to the fact that the author focuses mainly in satirize the rapid advancements of technology and its consequences in the twentieth century. One of the prevailing ideas in this novel is the loss of individualism by the citizens, people in *Brave New World* are totally controlled and conditioned to behave as the state wants. The society is based on consumerism and foolish distractions, while art, culture, history, religion, and literature are considered dangerous and thus totally forbidden. However, the presence of Shakespeare in this novel is very powerful, functioning as a contrast to this empty and materialist world.

The dystopian novel was also interpreted as a prophetic one. Nowadays, many of the aspects described by Huxley are already present in our society: more sexual freedom, advanced control on reproduction, high use of drugs and medicines, etc. Nevertheless, those trends have been taken to the extreme by Huxley, and his prophecy has not yet come true. For the moment, we should interpret it as a warning about what may happen if we focus too much in pleasure and consumption.

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BRAVE NEW WORLD: A NOVEL OF IDEAS

Dajana Riduchowska

1. Introduction

The fictional “World State” described in Huxley's *Brave New World* is supposed to be the future of our today's civilization. Inspired by the rapid development of technology in the 1930s, Huxley constructs a whole world in which technology, science and social stability are more important than humans.

The novel opens in London in the year of 2540. There are no marriages, no families, no suffering, no literature, no religion and no social friction. Reproduction is managed by an complicated biogenetic mass production assembly line, so normal human sexual activity is not needed to propagate the species of Brave New World. Instead, the function of sex is only pleasure, a way to guarantee the happiness of the society and thus assure a stable, controllable population. Moreover, the state conditions people through hypnopedia, a technique which attempts to convey information to sleeping people by playing a sound recording to them while they sleep, through soma, a hallucinogenic drug which keeps people happy and through a total censorship of literature, history and culture. The society is also divided into five classes, beginning with the Alphas, the dominant class, then the Betas, Gammas, Deltas, and the lowest class of Epsilons.

There is also no sense of competitiveness among the society as everyone was created to do their job and that is it. Mustapha Mond, the the Resident World Controller for Western Europe, claims that constant economic stability and happiness are more important than the humanization of the individuals in the society.¹

In a brief summary, Huxley creates a dystopia in which the stability is the ultimate principle and its citizens can be characterized as “subhuman”. A dystopia can be defined as an imaginary place or state in which the quality of life is extraordinarily bad, as from deprivation, oppression, or terror, that is, the opposite of utopia. There were many attempts in history to create a utopia/dystopia, as for example by Hitler, Mussolini or Stalin, however all of them failed so therefore we can assume that utopias are not successful, against human nature and only imaginary worlds. Huxley, as Philip Tody² argues, has taken many of his ideas concerning science in the World State and its role from Bertrand Russell's *The Scientific Outlook* (1931): the main concept of

1 "Stability," said the Controller, "stability. No civilization without social stability. No social stability without individual stability." His voice was a trumpet. Listening they felt larger, warmer. (Huxley, 2004: 36).

2 Philip Thody was a French professor of literature, author of *Aldous Huxley: a Biographic Introduction* (1973).

Russell's dystopia, his “prophecy” of a scientific “World State”, was the concept of power, which he conceived as the ability to manipulate nature on an unprecedentedly massive scale.

Brave New World is rather a novel of ideas rather than characters. Huxley, interviewed for *The Paris Review*³, said: *I'm not very good at creating people; I don't have a very wide repertory of characters. These are difficult things for me. I suppose it's largely a question of temperament. I don't happen to have the right kind of temperament* (Fraser and Wickes, 1963: 7). Therefore the characters in this novel are flat, as they do not develop during the novel. The only character that can be considered round is John the Savage, an outsider both on the Reservation and on the civilized Brave New World with a superior morality.

A novel of ideas is a kind of philosophical fiction, works in which a significant proportion of is devoted to a discussion of ideas rather than telling the adventures of the characters. In *Brave New World* we are dealing with dystopian fiction, a genre of literature that explores social and political structures. Dystopian fiction (sometimes referred to as apocalyptic literature) is the creation of an entirely dreadful or degraded society that is generally pointed toward an irreversible obscurity, or dystopia. Huxley defines this genre (novel of ideas) in his novel *Point Counter Point : The character of each personage must be implied, as far as possible, in the ideas of which he is the mouthpiece* (Huxley, 1928: 409). So *Brave New World* is a novel of ideas due to the fact that Huxley takes as his focal point for the novel the contrast of different assumptions and theories rather than simply the conflict of personalities.

In this thesis, we will further see the different ideas with which Huxley deals in his novel, as the loss of individuality of the citizens of the World State and the materialism and consumerism that penetrates the whole society. It is also essential to discuss the diversity of interpretations of this novel that appeared since its publication, which are different but not incompatible, and the censorship that affects the novel both inside the described fictional world and the reception of the novel itself. Finally, it is impossible to study this novel fudging the influence of Shakespeare and his works in *Brave New World*, an influence that permeates almost every page of the book, even in the title which derives from Miranda's speech in William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Act V:

*O wonder!
How many goodly creatures are there here!
How beauteous mankind is! O brave new world,
That has such people in't* (Shakespeare, 1623: 47)

3 *The Paris Review* is a quarterly literary magazine established in 1953 by Harold L. Humes, Peter Matthiessen, and George Plimpton.

2. Novel of ideas

2.1. Loss of individualism

In the introduction we have mentioned that the novel *Brave New World* is a novel of ideas rather than characters. One of the most important ideas with which Huxley deals in the novel is the loss of individualism, privacy and freedom in the “World State”. The summary of all this ideology is contained in the three words of the main fordian motto “*Community, Identity, Stability*” (Huxley, 1932: 5).

To understand the intention of this words, we should begin explaining how people are “created” in this world. Reproduction in *Brave New World* consists in a high elaborated biological process, almost as an assembly line. Surgically extracted ovaries generate ova that are fertilized in artificial boxes and incubated in particularly designed bottles. There is also the Bokanovsky's Process, which is practiced on fecundated human eggs *in vitro*, provoking them to split into twin genetic duplicates of the original. This process can be made many times, but the maximum number possible of feasible embryos is 96, with 72 being a “*good average*” (Huxley, 1932: 5). The embryos are, in addition, conditioned to be more tolerant to their future work, e.g.: future mechanic engineers are conditioned to live in continuous movement, and chemical laborers are conditioned to tolerate poisonous chemicals. In the early childhood, citizens of the World State are submitted to hypnopedia, a technique of sleep-teaching that we have earlier explained in the introduction. The reproductive technology, sleep-learning, psychological manipulation, and classical conditioning have a mindless and nonambitious society as a result.

The conditioned birth, identical workers created to do their jobs leads to form a big mechanism, the state, in which the humans are nothing more than simple and meaningless cogs in the system. The people in the lowest caste are as much needed as those in the highest caste, as stated in the slogan “*every one belongs to every one else*” (Huxley, 1932: 34), but this is not the kind of community that we all know. A person has almost no value as an individual. This is more like an example of collectivism, a group of clones that know only their work and nothing else. Identity is stolen from the characters in this novel. They are all treated the same, and the way the community is organized is similar to a communist community, they only follow orders. With no freedom to think for one's self, the only thing that they can do is continue to work their meaningless jobs. Lacking natural physical uniqueness, the beings cannot act for themselves. All actions are calculated.

Without variety, people of the *Brave New World* have no incentive to better themselves and

this lack of motivation breeds docility. People of this dystopia are slow and identical. They lack intelligence and ability to act as an individual. All they have are indulgences that serve as the lubricant to the cog: a cog in a utopia's industrial stability. Constantly indulged, the people have lost the human desires that give individuality and therefore live mindless, boring lives, unable to question their existence. The conditioning everyone goes through in the developmental centers teaches the people in this society that being an individual is awful and undesirable. The thought of thinking for oneself is absurd. What is more, the fact that everyone is equal and created to do their job makes competitiveness to disappear.

John the Savage comes from the Reservation and he has not undergone all this process of conditioning, so after being brought to the "civilized" World State he is a stranger capable to think by himself. He is not able to become part of this cog and he finally commits suicide. However, Mond claims that constant economic stability and happiness are more important than the humanization of the individuals in the society.⁴

No individualism leads also to no privacy. The reason of this is the fact that solitude, understood not as complete isolation but as place private enough to enable a person to think for himself, fosters individualistic attitudes. On the contrary, the constant presence of other people or the sense of being under constant surveillance enforces conformity. *Secrecy enables subversive thinking and planning to be hidden from the authorities* (Posner, 2005: 8). That is, when people are alone they are more apt to have more unpredictable thoughts about their community rather than when they are immersed in it. So loneliness is almost a crime in *Brave New World*, as it leads to think by oneself. The primary example of it is Bernard Marx. He is not a perfect Alpha due to some accident in his bottling. He feels lonely and even thinks independently. This makes him to end exiled to an island, as he is no more allowed to enter the "civilized" world in London.

The slogan "*every one belongs to every one else*" (Huxley, 1932: 34) can be compared to socialism's dependency. The socialism is defined by the *Encyclopedia Britannica* as *a social and economic doctrine that calls for public rather than private ownership or control of property and natural resources. According to the socialist view, individuals do not live or work in isolation but live in cooperation with one another* (Dagger, 2013: 1). *Brave New World* limits people's individual growth and freedom, they leave no place for individual thinking or responsibility. The crowd is basically converted to animals in a "sociological zoo" with the elite as the zoo keepers. The total control over the "animals" is similar to the one that appear in George Orwell's *Animal Farm*

⁴ "Stability," insisted the Controller; "stability. The primal and the ultimate need. Stability. Hence all this." (Huxley, 2004: 36)

(1945)⁵, also a dystopian novel.

Problems of attempts to gain complete control of people's lives were visioned long before this novel was written. We should take a look into some quotes of Plato and Socrates.

Those who are already wise no longer love wisdom whether they are gods or men. Similarly, those whose own ignorance has made them bad, rotten, evil, do not strive for wisdom either. For no evil or ignorant person ever strives for wisdom.

What remains are those who suffer from ignorance, but still retain some sense and understanding. They are conscious of knowing what they don't know. (Socrates, 4th Century BC: 218b).

I am a stinging fly, sent to goad the city (Athens) as though it were a huge, thoroughbred horse, which because of its size is rather sluggish and needs to be stirred. (Socrates, 4th Century BC: 30e)

It can be interpreted as a description of the fordian society. As they are conditioned to act like all the other citizens, they do not seek for any additional knowledge, apart from the information taught in their early children. The society is also as this “huge sluggish horse”, stable and without any intentions to develop, unless they receive some stir, like the introduction of literature by the Savage (unsuccessful in this case). As the opposite to this mindless society without individualism, we can take the Age of Enlightenment, also called the Age of Reason. This cultural movement from the 17th and 18th Century emphasized on reason and individualism. Francis Fukuyama, in his work *Our Posthuman Future* (2002)⁶, states that the principles of the Enlightenment that lead to liberal democracy by way of maintaining intrinsic and fundamental natural rights for all human beings seemed to have won over the totalitarian attempts of the 20th Century. He considers that liberal democracy is the ideal of human organization and the failure of totalitarian regimes.

The paradox is that in Huxley's caste system, just the lowest caste is indistinguishable, while the higher castes are individualized. Huxley saw that a society of equals would never function properly, however genetic modification of human traits does not obligatory have to lead to identical individuals. However, all are subject to regulative reproduction and products of the same.

5 According to Orwell, the book reflects events leading up to the Russian Revolution of 1917 and then on into the Stalin era in the Soviet Union. Orwell, as a democratic socialist, was an outspoken critic of Joseph Stalin and the corruption of the sovietic socialism.

6 *Our Posthuman Future: Consequences of the Biotechnology Revolution* is a book by Francis Fukuyama. In it, he discusses the potential threat to liberal democracy that use of new and emerging biotechnologies for transhumanist ends poses.

2.2. Fordism vs. Christianity

In the interview for *The Paris Review* Huxley confessed that he started writing *Brave New World* as a parody of H.G. Wells' *Men Like Gods*⁷, a novel about a society whose Christ, for example, died on the wheel, not on the cross and have no government, they are an anarchic society. Fanatic religion, like politics, has disappeared, and elaborate scientific investigation prospers. Life in Utopia is lead by “the Five Principles of Liberty”: privacy, free movement, unlimited knowledge, truthfulness, and free discussion and criticism. However, Huxley's novel turned into something different from what he had originally intended. *Brave New World* is characterized by its engineered perfection, in which science and technology are applied to control human activity. It is contrary to the belief system that we know, it is set against personal relationships, including intimate and family, rejects democracy and abjures religion. The matter is that they have their own “religion”, called Fordism. It seems to have some similarities with Christianity, but with totally opposite values, or as many critics admit, with no values.

The first big difference between Fordism and Christianity is the lack of moral values. Christian faith state that Jesus suffered, died, was buried, and was resurrected from the dead to give eternal life to people who believe in him and trust him for the forgiveness of their sins. On the contrary, Fordism is based on all those human sins. Christian values like unconditional love, fidelity in marriage, renunciation of worldly goods, and its use in modern politics and ethic - censorship of sexual content, especially in movies and on television, the desirability of laws against induced abortion and contraception and sexual abstinence outside of marriage – are everything that characterizes the fordian society. If religion is that aspect of man's culture which speaks to the spirit, then fordians have an absence of spirit of which they are unaware.

Huxley based this society on promiscuous behavior, the major factor of stability in *Brave New World*. Here, sexuality is a commodity which has been separated from reproduction and shed from emotions. Moreover, Mustapha Mond even ridicules the concept of family: *The world was full of fathers -was therefore full of misery; full of mothers - therefore of every kind of perversion from sadism to chastity; full of brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts-full of madness and suicide* (Huxley, 1932: 33). “Mother” and “father” have become shameful and unpronounceable words. Huxley's world has overcome family bounds and passionate emotion by institutionalizing compulsory promiscuity and made sexual satisfaction available as a diversion. We can see it also in how Huxley illustrates a

⁷ *Men Like Gods* is a novel published in 1923 by H. G. Wells. It features a utopia located in a parallel universe.

degradation of human worth by using of the word “pneumatic” to describe women, what shows lessening of women's worth. They are nothing more than sex objects.

Tolstoy also criticized the view of sexuality as a diversion and predicted the loss of importance of family relations. He accused carnal love as a state of bestiality which should not be glorified as poetic and elevated by contemporary art. He saw these trends in the upper classes of the Russian society and thus had to confront the paradox that the adherence to Christ and his teaching would lead to the extinction of humanity:

Chastity is neither rule nor injunction, but an ideal, or rather – one of the conditions of this ideal. But the ideal is a true one only when its realization is possible only in an idea, in thought, when it is presented as attainable only in the infinite... Such was the ideal of Christ – the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth, an ideal, foretold by the prophets, about how the time will come when all people will be taught by God, will turn their swords into ploughshares... the whole meaning of human life consists in movement towards this ideal... the absence of this Christian ideal would have annihilated the forward progress of humanity and therefore the possibility of life. (Tolstoy, 1889: 115)⁸

So as we can see, the pleasure principle is another central feature of the *Brave New World*. Procreation is essentially illegal and even repugnant, and the only purpose of sexuality is pleasure. The conditioned happiness of the World State separates men from deep experience, keeping them from being fully human. Technology and pleasure enable the creation of the utilitarian paradise. Utilitarianism is a theory which holds that the adequate course of action is the one that maximizes utility, usually defined as maximizing happiness and reducing suffering, so above everything else, Huxley's novel is a send-up of utilitarianism. On the other hand, Christianity's view suggests that suffering is going to happen and that people need to be prepared with their manner of dealing with it, thus suffering and sorrow are a part of life. Pleasure is often synonymous with joy, gratification, and contentment while Christianity on the other hand is related with words such as laborious and cumbersome, and therefore non-enjoyable. The Christian right fears pleasure, especially sexual pleasure, which is seen as degrading, corrupting and tainted. Many Christians relate their own experiences with sex, specially those who descended into addictions and often sexual and domestic abuse before they found Christ, to building a movement that brings an external rigidity to cope with the chaos of human existence, which burdens them. They are not capable to trust their own impulses, their ability for self-restraint or judgment.

This difference between Fordism and Christianity can be also compared in its “rituals”. The second ones meet every Sunday in churches, to celebrate the Eucharist, praying and asking God for

⁸ Fragment from *The Kreutzer Sonata*, a novella by Leo Tolstoy, named after Beethoven's Kreutzer Sonata. The novella was published in 1889 and promptly censored by the Russian authorities. The work is an argument for the ideal of sexual abstinence and an in-depth first-person description of jealous rage.

forgiveness for their committed sins. Fordian rituals are something totally different to the Christian mass. In *Brave New World*, the state organizes “Solidarity Services” that end in ritualistic orgies, to fulfill the need for intimacy. In circles, the “Solidarity Groups” dance, singing *Orgy-porgy, Ford and fun, kiss the girls and make them one. Boys at one with girls at peace; Orgy-porgy gives release* (Huxley, 1932: 73). The men feel good and satisfied with this frequent empty sex so therefore they do not spend time questioning their existence.

The abolition of religion is also symbolized in *Brave New World* with the icon that substitutes the cross as the main religious image with a T. The adoration of a supernatural rescuer is replaced by the adoration of a lord of the assembly line, Henry Ford⁹, and the sign of Our Ford is taken from the model name of his early cars. The cross' four arms have been modified to the three arms of the T. Moreover, Huxley uses “A.F.” to measure time, like in our contemporaneous society we use “A.D”, the acronym for *anno domini*, which in Latin means “in the year of the lord”. The society in *Brave New World* looks up to the main founder of the technology era, Ford, as much as Christians look up to God.

Christianity is also characterized by its prayers, defined as invocations that seek to activate a rapport with a deity, an object of worship, or a spiritual entity through deliberate communication, and its ten commandments, a set of biblical principles relating to ethics and devotion, which play an essential role in Christianity. In *Brave New World*, the government has slogans encouraging sociability and sexual promiscuity. Examples of this slogans are “*Never put off till tomorrow the fun you can have today*”(Huxley, 1932: 81), “*One cubic centimeter cures ten gloomy sentiments*” (Huxley, 1932: 46) or “*A gramme is better than a damn*” (Huxley, 1932: 100).

John the Savage was educated with the Bible, so he has a set of moral values which fordians cannot understand. He shows symptoms of disease, due to the fact that there is a powerful moral and emotional conflict between the civilized world and himself. He found himself there repulsive and alienated. He finally decides to live in completely solitude to purify his body and soul from the sins that have blemished him in the civilized world. For the citizens from the World State it was something curious and interesting, so they wanted to see it. They wanted him to whip himself for purification, it was a spectacle for them. He finally commits suicide, he dies for the sins of others, like Jesus Christ died on the cross for the sins of humankind.

We can see how novel's references to orgies, self-flogging, suicide, and the characters' contempt for religion, marriage and family. The fordian population is not capable of grasping the significance of religion. Religion has been reduced to orgiastic rituals of physical expression.

9 Henry Ford was an American industrialist, the founder of the Ford Motor Company, and sponsor of the development of the assembly line technique of mass production. His introduction of the Model T automobile revolutionized transportation and American industry.

2.3. Class system

People in *Brave New World* belong to one of the five castes: Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta or Epsilon. Moreover, each caste is also divided into three stratum, that is in Plus, Neutral and Minus (e.g. Alpha Plus, Alpha and Alpha Minus). Alpha is the highest one and therefore the more respected, on the opposite, Epsilons are the lower caste and the least respected. These castes are determined before fertilization; Alpha and Beta ova remain in their incubators until they are “definitely bottled” but Gamma, Delta, and Epsilon ova are removed from their incubators so that they may undergo Bokanovsky's Process. In addition, when they are still fetus, alcohol is introduced in their blood, they are deprived of oxygen, and then, subsequently, they have to undergo extreme brainwashing and conditioning. The top members of society are unique while the lower classes, specifically the Epsilons, are all very similar having limited physical and mental abilities which make them easier to control.

The higher Alpha caste wear the color grey, they do not contain any alcohol in their surrogates and maintain the highest jobs in the world state: they mostly work in the labs. The second highest caste, the Betas, can interact with the Alphas and they are not looked down upon as much as the lower castes. They wear the color mulberry. Then we have the Gammas, who wear the color green. Gammas are considered the average caste. Gammas go through the Bokanovsky's process and they also have alcohol in the blood surrogates, but not as much as the lower castes. Gammas also get more oxygen than the Deltas and the Epsilons. Deltas wear the color khaki, they undergo the Bokanovsky's process, have alcohol in the blood surrogate and they get a little bit of oxygen, but more oxygen than the Epsilons. This last caste wears the color black. Epsilons are the lowest caste and can not read or write. They are deprived 80% of their oxygen and have the bigger amount of alcohol in their blood surrogates. Epsilons have to do the worst jobs that no one else wants to do.

This color division allows to easily distinguish castes. The society described in Huxley's novel is very shallow, so the use of a superficial designation with colors is obvious. However, it also is very effective psychologically. In such a world, it is essential to know at all the time who is in which caste. This aspect is so important that the worldians even have a hypnopedic slogan for it:

Alpha children wear grey They work much harder than we do, because they're so frightfully clever. I'm really awfully glad I'm a Beta, because I don't work so hard. And then we are much better than the Gammas and Deltas. Gammas are stupid. They all wear green, and Delta children wear khaki. Oh no, I don't want to play with Delta children. And Epsilons are still worse. They're too stupid to be able to read or write. Besides they wear black, which is such a beastly color. I'm so glad I'm a Beta” (Huxley, 2004: 22)

The caste system in this novel is, from some points of view, a satiric commentary on the English class system. British society, like other European countries and nearly all societies in world history, was divided into a social structure called the estates, with all the main noticeable characteristics of a caste system: inbreeding and the transmission of occupation between families, social status and political influence. However, endogamy is not a feature that characterizes the World State, in fact, here marriage does not even exist, and it is also impossible that something can be hereditary if there are no families.

Britain, in the beginning of the 20th Century, was a greatly powerful nation, it controlled the seas and had an empire including one quarter of the population of the whole world. Moreover, it even had carbon which was exported all over the world. Upper and middle class people were educated to believe that the lower classes are inferior and disgraceful, despite the fact they were willing to employ them as servants. Those classes can be associated to the Alphas and Betas, as we can see from the previous quotation, they also do not want to have nothing to do with the lower classes (despite the fact that they work for them, “everyone for everyone”). There were over two million servants in Britain at this time. Actually, 80% of the population at that time were working class, what we understand in this novel as Gammas, Deltas and Epsilons.

However, class systems is not something new. In the past they were even more pronounced. Let us take as an example the social structure in the Middle Ages. The highest of those social classes was royalty, which had full power over political and economic decisions and over the land. This class was something more than Huxley's Alphas and Betas, it is more appropriate to compare them with the World Controllers as Mustapha Mond. Alphas and Betas are more like the nobility, the second class with power after the royalty. Thus, at the bottom of this social pyramid were the commons (guilds, merchants, city leaders and peasants). This last class can be compared with the Gammas, Deltas and Epsilons. One of the main common features was the impossibility to move between the different classes, if someone was born as a common or decanted as a Epsilon in the case of *Brave New World*, he stayed in this class for his whole life with no options to “advance”.

Nowadays we still have some kind of social classes, more or less pronounced depending on the culture, but this problem has not been removed yet. On April 2, 2013 analysis of the “Great British Class Survey”¹⁰, (GBCS), revealed seven classes in Britain: a wealthy elite; an amply salaried “middle class” consisting of professionals and managers; a class of technical experts; a class of new wealthy workers, and at the lower levels of the class system, in addition to an oldish traditional working class, a “precarariat” who had very low levels of capital and persistent precarious

¹⁰ A survey of social class in the United Kingdom which researched the social structure. The survey was developed in collaboration with academic experts and the results released were based on a survey of 160,000 residents of Britain most of whom lived in England and described themselves as "white."

economic security, and a group of emergent service workers. Although these classes are not so evident, there is always some resemblance with the social structures of the Middle Ages, the English 20th Century and even the *Brave New World*. However, if we want to find a clearer example in the present times, we should think about less liberal countries as North Korea, Cuba, Libya or Belarus.

Since the 1950s in North Korea, the Kim¹¹ regime put its people through a series of political examinations in order to separate the people who are supposed to be loyal from those who are disloyal to the regime. After three years of examination, it was reported that the people could be classified into three political groups: a loyal “core class,” a suspect “wavering class,” and a politically unreliable “hostile class.” Individuals are further classified into 51 subcategories, depending on factor like being landowners before the communists came to power, having resided in the southern half of Korea before 1945 or the political history of one's parents, grandparents, and relatives.

Before 1959, Cuba had a rigorous class system; beginning with the peasants who were not able to maintain his families and ending with millionaires, who enjoyed all the advantages of great wealth. But Cuba had also a substantial middle class of lawyers, doctors, social workers, and other professionals. There was also a large group of fairly prosperous colonos, leaseholders and tenant farmers, who grew sugarcane for the large wagers under government protection. Although Cuba's social hierarchy allowed for some racial fluidity, the majority of poor and uneducated were people of color. Under Castro's government, class divisions and social differentiations, such as elite education and membership in country clubs, disappeared but the revolution did not eradicate all forms of privilege.¹²

In conclusion, for some people we may be moving toward a greater differentiation of classes, although not by the mechanism depicted in *Brave New World*. However, as a result of conditioning, class conflict has been eliminated in Huxley's future world. All people are genetically “fabricated” and conditioned from their childhood to be best adapted to the lives they will experience and to totally agree with the class system. IQ is also a significant component nowadays, so we can expect an IQ distribution in future generations. The paradox is that although *Brave New World* is supposed to present a future vision of the world, in part it is a retrocession due to the numerous aspects in common with societies from the past (working class, impossibility to move between the classes, etc.). Another paradoxical fact is the origin of the terminology in the caste system; “Alpha, Beta,

11 The current ruler of North Korea, Kim Jong-il, and his late father, Kim Il-sung who have had over 50 years to perfect their political system.

12 Under the Castro government, people involved in the government, military, and the Communist Party formed a new privileged group.

Gamma, Delta and Epsilon” are, in fact, the first letters of the Greek alphabet, a classical language, something censored and forbidden in the *Brave New World*.

2.4. Consumerism and materialism

Consumerism is defined as a social and economic ideology that promotes the purchase of goods and services in increasing amounts. Primal criticisms of this ideology are present in the works of Thorstein Veblen,¹³ but in *Brave New World* Huxley also attacks the consumerist society rather than the politic system. A society based on consumerism, such as the World State needs inhabitants who want new things. Newness is then more important than internal value; art, culture and philosophy only compensate the lack of material goods, something that never happens in Huxley's world. In *Brave New World* consumerism is considered almost a second nature in society due to the fact that economic stability is the key to the efficiency of the World State. It encompasses planned obsolescence and a “throwaway” mentality, as manifested in the motto “*ending is better than mending*” (Huxley, 1932: 42). People are brainwashed to want more, ever newer consumer goods.

The underlying theory to this society is the need for constant consumption which leads to nearly universal employment, so the constant consumption demands can be met. So as we can see, world controllers adapt future demand to future industrial supply:

I do love flying. I do love flying, I do love having new clothes. But old clothes are beastly. We always throw away old clothes. Ending is better than mending, ending is better than mending, ending is better than mending. The more stitches, the less riches; the more stitches, the less riches. (Huxley, 1932: 42)

So the three options for these constant scarcity are continuation, annihilation or widespread happiness. This can be seen in the Infant Nurseries in *Brave New World*. The nurses place the babies in rooms with books and roses in the floor. When the babies are engaged in playing with it, the nurse presses a lever, signaling a shrieking siren and alarm bells, and later they receive electric shocks. By this technique, the babies will always link books and flowers with pain. The Director explains that while flowers themselves pose no threat to the individual or the society, they *have one grave defect: they are gratuitous. A love of nature keeps no factories busy* (Huxley, 1932: 18). Originally, the lower castes had been conditioned to love flowers and nature so that they would be compelled to consume transport to the country in their free time. However, it was not long before

¹³ Veblen's subject of examination in 1899, the newly emergent middle class arising at the turn of the twentieth century, comes to fruition by the end of the twentieth century through the process of globalization. In this sense, consumerism is usually considered a part of media culture.

another, more economically sound method was developed to lure the people into consuming mass transport into the country. *“We condition the masses to hate the country, but simultaneously we condition them to love all country sports. At the same time, we see to it that all country sports entail the use of elaborate apparatus. So that they consume manufactured articles as well as transport”* (Huxley, 1932: 18).

In addition, in the playground, hundred of children play games such as “Centrifugal Bumblepuppy”, which of course requires a massive amount of apparatus to play, therefore increasing consumption as well as providing entertainment. The society in *Brave New World* is encouraged to use public transport, usually to entertain themselves, to visit one of the reservations, or to play a game, such as Obstacle Golf, another example of consumerism in the novel, because it costs money to play. So everything is related to mass-consumption and mass-production.

The world controller Mustapha has his own views on this matter. He considers consumerism as a good element contributing toward today's world. He describes it as form of controlling life, which makes easier keeping society fastened. Mustapha Mond says that the population is *so conditioned that they practically can't help behaving as they ought to behave* (Huxley, 1932: 84). In today's society it seems as though the need and greed to have everything is inevitable. In the brave new world society, the people seem to have everything they want, but their need rises rapidly. Mond sees this control as essential for the societies success and survival. Mary Jo Leddy¹⁴ wrote an article titled *And the angel said, “Be happy”*, in which she presents a different view on consumerism. While Mond believes that consumerism is something good for society and that it allows keeping the people under control and senseless, Leddy thinks that society will control the world for many years. She says that *you must have more to be more. And more. You must have more to be happy.* (Leddy, 2012: 10). She strongly states this quote as meaning “it is never enough”. People's avarice is a constant battle within themselves, and their need for perfection and gratification. She starts her article with an occurrence that helped her to understand what a strange incident it was to see such a “genuinely happy person”. She maintains that people today “crave” materialistic things, and always are wanting more than what they have.

Huxley in his novel deals with the world from a European perspective, but he considers America to be the precursor of the negative trends he condemns. He said that he had received inspiration from a trip to California and for him, modernity in the United States was marked by mass-production and the private pursuits of pleasure. Ford functions as a god-like character,

¹⁴ Mary Jo Leddy, (born 1 February 1946) is a Canadian writer, speaker, theologian and social activist. Leddy is widely recognized for her work with refugees at Toronto's Romero House. She began working for the centre as a night manager in 1991, and has been its director since then.

represents materialism and mass-consumption in the *Brave New World*. Ford Motor Company injected consumerism in the American society with the mass-production of products that everyone, no matter what was their financial situation, would be able to acquire one of his cars. The application of mass-production ideas to biology has its main symbol in the assembly line of the London Central Hatchery; the penetration of capitalism and pragmatism into the private area, thus, the suppression of privacy, dignity and humanness.

To conclude, we should keep in mind that technological “progress” and mass-production, may be, at the same time and perhaps more fundamentally, retrogressive from the standpoint of civilization. Seeing that consumers will buy a product only if they think that it will make them better off, the capacity of technology to succeed in the market in the way described is apparently an evidence that the technology is a “something good.”

3. Interpretations of the novel

When *Brave New World* was published in 1932, the novel sold properly in England but less amply in the United States, however, it made Huxley internationally famous, both in America and Europe. It was obvious to critics that Huxley's work was a novel of ideas, where the book's themes were much more developed than the plot and characters were. These themes bring up many important ideas, from freedom to class structure. Huxley employed satire and humor to point out the excesses and triviality of contemporary society. However, Watt's¹⁵ examination of the revisions in *Brave New World* proves that Huxley was unable to decide what direction he wanted for the story and the frontal male characters to take until very late in the composition of the novel. We will further see the different interpretations of the novel.

3.1. *Brave New World* as a satire

Initially, Huxley did not intend this novel to be a satire of the future. The only meaningful future is actually, as he observed in an essay published a year earlier, the future which already exists in the present. In addition, modernism and satire are in many ways incompatible. While a novel such as *Jacob's Room*¹⁶ involves impudently the concept of narrational omniscience, for instance, Huxley is apparently untroubled by the convention. Huxley shows little interest in the representation of consciousness, being almost exclusively focused on the exposure of folly. Nevertheless, this fictional world (distorted, oblique, abundantly rich in indifference, mechanism, generational struggle, and insecure identity, and so leading to a state of affairs in which all quests are suspect, all virtues unestablishable) is sufficiently like the prevailing world outside to be more than amusing.

However, the novel is mainly interpreted as an ironic commentary on contemporary values. It seems that the primary idea of the novel is to portrait a sarcastic critic of the advances of civilization. An image of a future full of technical and scientific discoveries which attempt to provide satisfaction and pleasure to society, but affecting social and sociological aspects: *We live*

15 Donald Watt (15 August 1926–18 April 2004) was a Scottish historian and Professor Emeritus at St Andrews University. Watt studied at Aberdeen Grammar School, before reading history at Aberdeen University.

16 *Jacob's Room* is the third novel by Virginia Woolf, first published on 26 October 1922. The work is seen as an important modernist text; its experimental form is viewed as a progression of the innovative writing style Woolf presented in her earlier collection of short fiction titled *Monday or Tuesday* (1919).

today in a world that is socially and morally wrecked (Huxley, 1922: 55)¹⁷. But some can be wondering what a satire really is. It can be defined as a genre of fiction that attracts the reader's attention to the defects in his society, or in humanity more generally. Often it is set in a fantastic world, apparently remote in time, place, or culture from the satirist's world.

In order to show the absurdity of the contemporary society's values, and also the future society's, Huxley use techniques as this satire, parody (a humorous turn of a distinguishable style of a work or author), and irony (words that mean something totally different from what they literal meaning, or what the characters think they mean). Simple scenes that can be recognized by the reader include conversations, behavior, and internal thoughts which show the distorted and absurd values of the society of the future. Portraying an inhumane pleasure society, his satire is lofty, playful and sardonic. *Brave New World* is the "logical" outcome of reform measures advocated by advanced thinkers in England and other countries during the depression. Developing the logic of an existing social system to an absurd is a typical technique of satire: using irony to present an imaginary world where many of the contemporary tendencies in British and American society have been taken to extremes. The difference between the satirist and the writer of utopias is somewhat minimal to begin with, since the second, like the first, intends to expose the difference between what he beholds and what he would prefer to see.

It is also characteristic of satire that there is a satirist character in the work, a denouncer of the defects to which the author wishes to invite the reader's attention but not necessarily identical to the author. Normally he is a darker and sharper figure than the author, and sometimes he represents many of those defects that he denounces. This novel has two main satirist characters: the Savage, who is an outsider to the "world" which is being satirized, and Bernard Marx, the insider, a classic satiric misfit.

We can see how intensely Huxley attacked the present from his repeated attempts to measure the progress of the malady of dehumanization. He affirmed that there were two myths under the psyche and behavior of Western man. The first one was the myth of progress promulgated through the medium of advertising, and the second was the myth of nationalism promulgated through political propaganda and brainwashing. The absurdity of both of these myths is that they stress the external aspects of life, not the internal. Their disciples, therefore, must inevitably "progress" to one or another kind of perdition: the perdition of heaven or the perdition of hell. Nonetheless, this kind of progress is really no progress at all. Real progress, according to Huxley, can only be defined as "personal progress," or "internal progress."

In *Brave New World* Huxley also satirizes the Henry Ford theory about efficient

¹⁷ Quote from the essay titled *The modern spirit and a family party*.

manufacturing and factory management using the Controller's philosophy of creating humans in "factories." As a child, Henry Ford was very inventive and enjoyed working with tools. The problem was that he hated doing his duty and always wished to make things easier to do in life. This became Henry's leading idea in life, he always tried to make things easier to do in life, at work or home. Ford invented the most effective form to keep his workers pleased, still keeping his business prosperous. He instructed many companies to run their enterprise in an innovative style without wasting any profits and the possibility of augmenting production also. Ford was able to efficiently mass produce cars. It was the first time that car elements were exchangeable and easy to obtain, and Ford intentionally maintained a low price of his Model T, enough for his workers to be able to afford them. Buying on credit became acceptable due to the fact that many people did not have enough cash needed to stretch out payments over time for the new automobiles. Consequently, people started to buy other goods on credit, inciting the economy by overspending money and taking on debt.

All these economic revolutions influenced Huxley's vision of the future. Firstly, he saw Ford's techniques of production and management as radical, and decided to create Ford not just as a hero for the characters in the *Brave New World* but actually as a god. Moreover, Huxley saw that technology could also provide workers with big amounts of free time. The result of this could be more time spent on creating art and discussing social problems, however, Huxley's Controllers noting that those activities were threatening for the order already created, decided to offer foolish distractions to entertain their workers. These workers will do their tasks and buy more and more material things, keeping the economy running, to the point of even throwing away things rather than repairing them. Mustapha Mond also kept his society "happy", and every task was so mechanized that it did not require a big effort, and moreover every inhabitant of the World State was conditioned for the work he would have to do all his life, thus it was easier for them. The quintessence of Henry Ford's theory was the assembly line, which permitted to produce many "copies" quickly and easily. It can be compared to the "Central London Hatchery and Conditioning Centre" in which many "copies" on humans were decanted quickly and easily through the Bokanovsky Process.

Huxley also points out the shallowness of the society of his times in the color wearing system of *Brave New World*. Members of the different social castes wear differently in order to be related with their own caste. John the Savage is the only one who can see people as they really are since he has not been conditioned to blindly tolerate the stark class system. Huxley even satirizes sentimentality by making the citizens of the future to sing sentimental songs about "dear old mom," with the little twist that they sing a version in which they naively bethink their "dear old bottle," the one in which the fetuses grow. Remembering sentimentally one's origin in a test tube will result for

many readers really funny, as well as ironic.

Another great irony in this novel is Lenina's falling in love. She does not understand what has happened to her. As Helmholtz she does not know how to call the new feeling and thereby, there is no possibility of conceiving what it is. She is only able to think about love in the physiological way, like she has been conditioned to think, but she feels something different. Satire even appears in the names of the characters: the frustrated potentials of specific character names reflect the coopting of individuality. For example, Bernard "Marx,"¹⁸ and "Lenina"¹⁹ Crowne possess names alluding to rebellion or intellect. All such allusions are ironic, however, their possibilities firmly frustrated by an intellectually stifling society. The name of Mustapha Mond, the "Resident Controller for Western Europe," reveals unfulfilled potential just as do the others. The reference to Alfred Mond²⁰ is straightforward but ironic allusions exist as well. The ironies of the unfulfilled potentials of specific characters' names reiterate the difficulty of freeing the individual from the tyranny of the collective and from the seductions of hedonism. Though many names allude to rebellion and intellect, all characters fail to make any positive change in society, thus reinforcing the more overt themes of *Brave New World*.

Wyndham Lewis²¹, a writer from the times of Huxley, also is an author of a satire, but of London's contemporary literary and artistic scene. However, Mark Perrino²² states that:

The heavy element of satire in Lewi's fiction is fundamentally at odds with the romantic, subjectivist aspect of Modernism. Besides being offensive to many humanist sensibilities, radical satire, with its mixture of topicality, didacticism and fantasy, does not often satisfy the ideal of an autonomous, organically unified work of art propounded by the school of American New Criticism which shaped the modern canon. (Perrino, 1995: 2)

18 Karl Heinrich Marx (5 May 1818 – 14 March 1883) was a German philosopher, economist, sociologist, historian, journalist, and revolutionary socialist. Marx's work in economics laid the basis for the current understanding of labour and its relation to capital, and has influenced much of subsequent economic thought.

19 Vladimir Ilyich Lenin (22 April 1870 – 21 January 1924) was a Russian communist revolutionary, politician and political theorist. He served as the leader of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic from 1917, and then concurrently as Premier of the Soviet Union from 1922, until his death.

20 Alfred Moritz Mond, 1st Baron Melchett (23 October 1868–27 December 1930), known as Sir Alfred Mond, between 1910 and 1928, was a British industrialist, financier and politician. In his later life he became an active Zionist. His major business achievement was in 1926 working to create the merger of four separate companies to form Imperial Chemical Industries (ICI) one of the world's largest industrial corporations at the time.

21 Percy Wyndham Lewis (18 November 1882 – 7 March 1957) was an English painter and author (he dropped the name 'Percy', which he disliked). He was a co-founder of the Vorticist movement in art, and edited the literary magazine of the Vorticists.

22 Author of *Poetics of Mockery* (1995), a study that reconsiders Wyndham Lewis's adversarial role in the modernist movement through a close reading of his prodigious satire of 1920s cultural politics. It presents a new interpretation of *The Apes of God* as a Menippean satire, with attention to its style, characterization, allegory, and historiography, and to Lewis's polemics of the period.

While Huxley's satire is nothing like as radical as Lewis', this observation also holds true for Huxley's social satires.

3.2. Prophecy

Brave New World is also seen as a prophetic book; when it was written, Huxley imagined the utopian world as a future reality, but we appreciate that this future is very similar to the reality in which we live now. Many aspects described in this novel as “future” are now valid in our time. However, many things became current even in Huxley's time. Much of what he is presumed to have feared, such as the state of eugenics, planning and propaganda, he actually included as desirable at the time he wrote the novel. In fact, Huxley was a passionate anti-democrat until the mid-1930s, when he committed himself to absolute pacifism.

The first prediction that came true was Huxley's warning of an all-powerful government. A decade after writing the novel, the strength of fascist states such as Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, coupled with the terror of World War II, radically changed the world's vision of future possibilities. Moreover, in the second half of the 20th century, advances in biology were so immense that a eugenic society became more than a fantasy.

Nowadays, a great number of Huxley's prophecies are real, for example contraception. In *Brave New World* women use contraception to avoid pregnancy, and if they do get pregnancy accidentally, they hurry to the abortion center. In our present times, contraception is something common and even promoted by doctors and family planning associations, not only to avoid pregnancy but also some sexually transmitted diseases. Abortion is also totally legal in some countries, and in special cases (like rapes or life threatening pregnancies) in other countries. However, pregnant women can also illegally have an abortion, in private medical clinics or by an abortion pill. So as we can see, sex has been made largely safe for pleasure by the invention of methods of contraception that at once are reliable and do not interfere with the pleasure of sex, while a variety of other technological advances, ranging from better care of pregnant women and of infants to household labor-saving devices and advances in the medical treatment of infertility and the automation of the workplace, have freed women from the traditional restrictions on their sexual freedom. The result is a climate of sexual freedom, and of public obsession with sex and sexual pleasure, much like that depicted in Huxley's novel, though “mother” is not yet a dirty word as it literally is in the novel and marriage has not yet been abolished, though the marriage rate has fallen considerably.

Regarding the use of soma in *Brave New World*, we should think about drugs and medicines that we have and use in our times. Even Huxley had his own experience with drugs and was taking mescaline²³, describing it in *The Doors of Perception* (1954), a book which takes the form of Huxley's remembrance of a mescaline trip that took place during an afternoon. However Huxley affirmed that there were not any resemblance between soma and mescaline:

Soma is an imaginary drug, with three different effects – euphoric, hallucinant, or sedative – an impossible combination. Mescaline and lysergic acid transfigure the external world and in some cases produce visions. Most people have the sort of positive and enlightening experience I've described; but the visions may be infernal as well as celestial. These drugs are physiologically innocuous, except to people with liver damage. They leave most people with no hangover, and they are not habit-forming. Psychiatrists have found that, skillfully used, they can be very helpful in the treatment of certain kinds of neuroses. (Fraser and Wickes, 1963: 7)

In *Brave New World* people take soma to feel happy, nowadays people also take drugs to get away from their problems. Not only drugs, but also the medicines can be compared to soma. We fear of some diseases being an epidemic among children and adults alike. For example, ADHD²⁴ is portrayed as epidemic among American children. There is also an idea that depression is a serious pandemic amongst both adults and children. In reality, depression and ADHD should not be considered epidemics or anything of that sort. The “victims” of depression and ADHD are being medicated with much stronger drugs than necessary, with accurately resembles how soma is used in the novel. When someone is not happy in the novel, they simply take soma and they are suddenly all better. Those with ADHD and depression, along with those suffering of many other mental problems, are also suddenly “all better” after they take their medication.

The mass media (television, internet) seem to resemble Huxley's hypnopedia. We watch always the same, repeatedly in television, and we start to think what they want us to think. But we have also another kind of hypnopedia, following up the training of children to use their manners with repetition of it. Parents usually instruct a child to say “please” when they want something and “thank you” when a person has done something for them. This is similar to hypnopedia for the reason that the parent keeps repeating the words which the child should say. The only difference is that the parents in our world use this as a positive mechanism instead of a negative one, and they are not repeating it when the child is asleep. Another example of a method used by both our society and

23 Mescaline is a naturally occurring psychedelic alkaloid of the phenethylamine class, known for its hallucinogenic effects similar to those of LSD and psilocybin. It occurs naturally in the peyote cactus, the San Pedro cactus and in the Peruvian torch.

24 Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a psychiatric disorder of the neurodevelopmental type in which there are significant problems of attention, hyperactivity, or acting impulsively that are not appropriate for a person's age.

the society in *Brave New World* which helps children fit in is schooling early. In our community, we call early schooling “preschool.” In *Brave New World* it is called “playtime.” The playtime in Huxley's novel is used for sexual training and preparing, but in our society we use preschool as a way to prepare children for elementary school.

In addition, with the development of successful experiments in cloning, Huxley's tale about Bokanovsky's process has somehow morphed into one of prophecy. Bokanovsky's Process is a fictional process of cloning humans that is a fundamental aspect of the world envisioned in Huxley's *Brave New World*. Nowadays, science has developed a process of cloning, creating similar populations of genetically identical individuals that happens in nature when organisms such as plants, bacteria or insects reproduce asexually. But while cloning in Huxley's novel is applied to fertilized human eggs *in vitro*, causing them to split into identical genetic copies of the original, nowadays cloning in biotechnology is defined as a process used to create copies of DNA fragments (molecular cloning), cells (cell cloning), or organisms, and what is most important, we do not clone humans.

Nancy Wigston²⁵ compares Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* to our own society in her article “*Brave New World: Aldous Huxley's predictions seem to be upon us.*” She claims that he created a novel concerning an *infantilized, drug-dependent, science-controlled, consumer society* (Wigston, 2012: 3), which is extremely similar to the civilization we live in now. For example, in current civilization, the general public has discovered a way to slow the aging process. The method is known as botox, which is commonly used cosmetically to remove wrinkles and to treat certain muscular conditions. In *Brave New World*, they prevent aging with soma, so people die suddenly, without any physical signs of age.

Nevertheless, people today are better informed, more individualistic and more self-assertive than they were in Huxley's time. Leon R. Kass²⁶ also compares Huxley's world to the one we live in today, highlighting that it is still not the same:

Of course, Brave New World is science fiction. Our Prozac is not yet Huxley's “soma”; cloning by nuclear transfer is not exactly “Bokanovskification”; MTV and virtual-reality parlors are not quite the “feelies”; and our current safe and consequenceless sexual practices are not universally as loveless or as empty as in the novel, but the likenesses between Huxley's fictional world and ours are increasingly disquieting, especially since our technologies of bio-

25 Nancy Wigston is an experienced writer with expertise in travel writing, profiles, book reviewing, medical, historical and social issues. In 2006, she read the works of nearly 50 first-time writers and selected the long and short lists for the Books in Canada/Amazon.ca First Novel Award.

26 Leon Richard Kass (born February 12, 1939) is an American physician, scientist, educator, and public intellectual, best known as proponent of liberal education via the "Great Books," as an opponent of human cloning, life extension and euthanasia, as a critic of certain areas of technological progress and embryo research, and for his controversial tenure as chairman of the President's Council on Bioethics from 2001 to 2005.

psycho-engineering are still in their infancy, yet vividly reveal what they might look like in their full maturity. (Kass, 2001: 2)

Suffering, growth and regeneration are still part of the human status which show that Huxley's prophecy has not yet come true. And certainly if we try to prevent people from being exposed to the tragic, we would have to eliminate much world literature which has been universally proclaimed great.

3.3. Warning

Huxley insisted that *Brave New World* was not a prophetic novel, but a cautionary one. He realized the rapid modifications that scientific development was allowing in society and, supported by a strong scientific background, imagined how much further it can go. Huxley defends his purpose in an interview:

Technology could iron humans into a kind of uniformity, if you were able to manipulate their genetic background... if you had a government unscrupulous enough you could do these things without any doubt... We are getting more and more into a position where these things can be achieved. And it's extremely important to realize this, and to take every possible precaution to see they shall not be achieved. (Huxley, 1962)²⁷

The novel is considered a testimony of the things that can happen to humanity if it is focused too much in pleasure and consumption rather than the inner values. In Huxley's time, the values and ideas of society were changing notably. The young generation of 1920s rejected the more puritanical Victorian values of their parents. People played with modern ideas, such as communism, and questioned the rigid attitudes about social class. Some even accepted the idea of free love (sex outside marriage or commitment). Others discussed in public about sex, or using contraceptives²⁸. Women started to smoke in public, shorten their hair and wear much shorter skirts. This attitudes are taken to extreme in the novel.

Scientists were starting to explore the possibilities of human conditioning. Ivan Pavlov²⁹ proved that one can create a conditioned response in animals. For example, he rang a bell whenever

²⁷ Quotation from a speech at UC Berkley in 1962 titled: The Ultimate Revolution. In his presentation, Aldous Huxley gave historical evidence, and future predictions on how the "New World Order" would be achieved by the ruling Oligarchy via their use of State Sponsored Terrorism to implement their desired Lock Step Police State to control the proletariat by the fear of ever increasing terrorism as a pretext to the citizens of Western Society willingly sacrificing their essential freedoms and liberties for the promise of temporary security.

²⁸ Contraceptives were being popularized by Margaret Sanger (1883-1966), the American leader of the birth-control movement.

²⁹ Ivan Pavlov (1849-1936) was a Russian was a physiologist known primarily for his work in classical conditioning.

he fed a group of dogs, and later they began to dribble simply at the sound of a bell, even without food. John Watson³⁰ believed that humans can be lessened to a network of inducements and reactions, which could be therefore controlled by everyone who experimented on them. Hans Spemann³¹ improved the controversial science of experimental embryology, handling the experience of a human fetus in the uterus in order to influence it. The eugenics movement, which was an attempt to limit the childbearing of lower class, ethnic citizens, was also popular in the 1920s.

The technique of hypnopedia was popular in the 1920s and 1930s. People wanted to learn passively by listening to instructional recordings while they were asleep. Although the electroencephalograph, a device invented in 1929 that measures brain waves, demonstrated that humans' ability to learn information while sleeping is limited, however it also proved that hypnopedia can influence beliefs and feelings. At the same time, the ideas of the father of modern psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud³², also started to be popular among society. He thought that most of the psychological problems were originated by early childhood experiences. Huxley introduced all these psychological and technological discoveries into *Brave New World*, where the Controllers abused this knowledge about controlling human behavior to hold down their citizens. Huxley's aim was to make his contemporary society wonder about the morality of using technology for social goals and to notice the dangers of abuse of technology by totalitarian governments. *Brave New World* demonstrates the result of transplanting the growing ideals of technology mass production onto humanity itself, rather than simply humanity's machines.

Huxley had been analyzing the course of this sort of scientific progress for the last decade, particularly in its guises of psychology, political propaganda, and their popular corollary, advertising. The advancements in technology, like contraceptives, are responsible, among others, for women's emancipation from their formerly constrained role in society, that has brought in its train a high divorce rate, a low marriage rate and high age of first marriage, a high rate of abortions and of births out of wedlock, a low birth rate, an increase in fertility problems that has contributed in turn to an increased rate of innovation in reproductive technology, and a profound change in sexual morality, including increased tolerance of homosexuality. Other unintended consequences of technological progress include the effect of life-extending medical technology on the costs of Medicare and social security, and the effect of automation and computerization on income equality:

30 John Broadus Watson (1878 – 1958) was an American psychologist who established the psychological school of behaviorism.

31 Hans Spemann (1869 – 1941) was a German embryologist who was awarded a Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1935 for his discovery of the effect now known as embryonic induction.

32 Sigmund Freud (1856 – 1939) was an Austrian neurologist who became known as the founder of psychoanalysis.

the effect has been to increase inequality by increasing the demand for highly educated workers relative to manual workers. However, nor has technological progress imperiled democracy, rather the opposite. *Technological progress has increased average incomes in most nations, and income not only is strongly positively correlated with political freedom but also appears to play a causal role in that freedom* (Posner, 1997: 344). We should consider the possibility that technology may threaten that freedom through its effect on privacy.

As stated by Robert Combs³³ in his essay, *The Eternal Now of Brave New World*, “Huxley does not look to the future for some solution, but to the experience of the self in an ongoing present” (Combs, 2001). Since the stems of most of the practices presented in this futuristic society can be found in contemporary ideas, the reader is induced to question the values of contemporary society, as efficiency and progress. When taken to the absurd extreme of babies being hatched in bottles for maximum efficiency the reader realizes that not all progress and efficiency are good.

To sum up, Huxley, in writing this novel, wanted people to think carefully what would happen in this world if they consider luxury and pleasure as number one instead of freedom and integrity. He wanted to make the readers reflect and rethink what is their role or position as individuals, and what can one do to change the world. Not only to be part of it, but critically be conscious about everyone's role in this world.

3.4. Recipe for a perfect and happy world

Apart from the three interpretations of *Brave New World* that we have explained till now, there is one more left. Although this is the less common, some consider this novel as a set of instructions which explain how to create a perfect world, that is, an utopia. As Huxley explains in his prologue to the novel, *government by clubs and firing squads, by artificial famine, mass imprisonment and mass deportation, is not merely inhumane (nobody cares much about that nowadays); it is demonstrably inefficient* (Huxley, 1932: XXXV). According to Huxley, a really efficient totalitarian state would be the one in which the almighty political leaders and their army of helpers were able to rule a society of slaves who do not have to be forced, because they love their servitude. To make them love it is the task assigned, in the current totalitarian states, to the ministries of propaganda, the directors of newspapers and school-teachers. However, their methods are still coarse and non scientific.

³³ Robert Combs was a professor of English in the Columbian College of Art & Science, now in George Washington University, graduated in the University of South Carolina in 1971.

In *Brave New World*, Huxley gives four main principles to create a “happy world.” First of all there is an improved technique of suggestion. In the novel it is represented by the conditioning of children. The embryo conditioning, hypnopedia and censure of history and literature make people think what the state wants them to think. The second one is a high advanced technology, which allows to maintain a social and economic hierarchy. Moreover, this also allows more sexual freedom, and where there is no sexual restrictions, there are no wills for rebellion. The third principle is the substitution of alcohol and drugs. Nowadays, alcohol and drugs are one of the biggest problems of society. Starting with simple hangover, and ending with violence, family ruptures, accidents and deaths. The citizens of the World State have replaced it with their soma, a hallucinogenic drug which makes people feel happy and have long “trips”, and in addition there is no hangover after taking it. The last principle is eugenics, as Huxley defines it, that standardizes the human product and so to facilitate the task of the managers.

Regarding the controllers of this perfect world, they have to know and understand what is “dangerous” in the society and can motivate rebellion, but the most important thing is to not allow society to discover it. Mustapha Mond is more individualistic than his subordinates and he possesses in his library the Bible and works of Shakespeare, however he knows that this kind of literature must be forbidden and he hides these books from the others. Moreover, charismatic political leadership depends on the leader's ability to control public information about him. If he loses that ability (he loses his “privacy”) his mystique, and with it his power, erodes. So those are the instructions to follow in order to create a “happy world”, according to some interpretations.

However, the World State is not exactly what a “perfect world” should be. It invokes the names of leftists such as Marx, Engels, Trotsky, and Bakunin along with the names of prominent historical supporters of capitalism such as the deified Ford, Benito Mussolini, Diesel, Rothschild, Hoover, and Alfred Mond. Rather than taking the best aspects of both capitalist Right and socialist Left, the World State has taken the worst: from the former the subordination of the individual to the supremacy of the collective State, and from the latter the reduction of the individual to compulsive consumer.

4. Literature and Shakespeare in *Brave New World*

Brave New World has the more brilliant surface, and a sparkling wit that links it to the great British comic tradition, but it is not a happy book; it has no characters who engage the reader's sympathy and no emotional depth. The conquest by science of the tragic realities of human life as we know it in our day is shown as destroying the possibility of romance. Critics accused this novel of being dry, boring, and overly simplistic. His vision of the future was seen as interesting but irrelevant and unoriginal.

In the World State, the literature as we know it is completely removed and forbidden. They can read, but the only books that they know are technical manuals. They only watch “feelies”, movies that stimulate more than just the eyes, those watching can actually feel all of the action. The controller Mustapha Mond is an intellectual who secretly indulges his own passion for knowledge, literature, and history and he possesses lots of books, from Shakespeare's works to the Bible. Helmholtz Watson is brilliant and also shows interest for literature, but when the Savage introduces him to Shakespeare's works, he can't completely understand the plays because he is so limited by his conditioning. When he feels an amused incomprehension of Juliet's emotional dependence upon her parents, Huxley is only presenting in him an exaggeration of this same twentieth century attitude toward family relationships.

Beauty's attractive, and we don't want people to be attracted by old things. We want them to like new ones (Huxley, 2004: 193). Mond admits that *Othello* is more beautiful than *Three Weeks in a Helicopter*, but points out that not only would *Othello* be subversive to this consumer-based passionless society, but that society would be unable to appreciate the beauty of the play anyway. Helmholtz interrupts, saying that he desires to write something as beautiful as Shakespeare but with a story to which modern, conditioned humans could relate.

Mond sympathizes John and Helmholtz, but contends that stability and happiness (modern happiness, not Shakespeare's “overcompensations for misery”) are worth the price of high art and science.

4.1. Presence of Shakespeare in *Brave New World*

One of the most outstanding elements in this novel is the extent and variety of the Shakespearian references and quotations. As we have mentioned in the introduction, even the title of the novel is a quotation from *The Tempest*, but moreover, the ironic appositeness of Miranda's

words to John's discovery of outside civilization is brought out many times in this novel.

Some quotations are read out of the Savage's old volume, other reproduced from memory with an occasional alternation or error. Some, printed as verse or provided with a source citation. Other quotations merge insensibly with the surrounding text, and many of these would seem to have become the unconscious vehicles of the Savage's own thought.

The reason of this presence is the fact that Shakespeare's predominant claim to greatness is in his style, his word magic. In this sense, we can see the universality of Shakespeare, that is wideness of appeal. Characters like the Savage, Helmholtz Watson and Mustapha Mond are supposed to have easily recognized Shakespeare's greatness. Huxley quotes Shakespeare so often due to the variety of human situations and institutions with which Shakespeare deals.

Shakespeare constitutes a useful encyclopedia and manual of quotations of every occasion, as well as covering a range of ideas and activities beyond that of almost any novelist. However, Shakespeare is universal only in terms of a traditional social and intellectual pattern in which he has closer contacts with primitive man than with the Fordian world. So the purpose of those numerous references to Shakespeare is Huxley's artistic aim of making a grotesque contrast between the old and the new. But explicit, conscious criticism is easily observable, and its presence justifies a search for implicit valuations as well.

Brave New World in some way resembles Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Huxley treats of the reaction of John, a type of Miranda, to the world of "civilized" men and women. Bernard Marx represents Caliban, the deformed monster and unwilling slave of Prospero, described by his master as *a devil, a born devil, on whose nature / Nurture can never stick; on whom my pains, / Humanely taken, are all lost, quite lost* (Shakespeare, 1623: 155). But the resemblance is unmistakable. Like Caliban's, Marx's questionable birth, or decanting, is against him, his physical deformity breeds discontent and rebellion, and his education or conditioning has failed to produce its desired results. Again, like Caliban, Marx takes part in an unsuccessful insurrection, and, terrified of his master's wrath, he abjectly begs for mercy when the plot is covered.

John, like Miranda, is the innocent suddenly brought into an evil world. But as Lenina's virtuous lover he identifies himself with Ferdinand as well. Like Ferdinand's, John's sadness for the death of a parent is gradually replaced by a love which is not filial. Like Ferdinand, John believes in get a bride, not for the asking, but by winning her through the achievement of some difficult task. He quotes Ferdinand to the effect that *some kinds of baseness / Are nobly undergone* (Shakespeare, 1623: 110).

Taking into account that John represents Ferdinand, then Lenina must be Miranda. The degree of difference between Shakespeare's innocent, fresh, intelligent virgin and Huxley's experienced,

jaded, automated Alpha can be compared to the degree of difference between Huxley's vision of an ideal world and Shakespeare's.

Following the previous scheme, Prospero, the father of Miranda, is represented by Mond, the father-surrogate to Lenina. Through his planning and coordination their generation has been brought about, and through his direction and supervision their conditioning has been effected. Moreover, like Prospero in the play, the Controller is the guiding figure in Huxley's novel: he knows what is happening at all times and he decides about the fate of all the people under his dominion. His wrath is fearful: just as Caliban cringes before Prospero, so does Marx before Mustapha Mond. But here again there is a gross distortion of character. Mond is a Prospero who has elected to stay in Milan, a Prospero who for the reason of security and worldly power has abandoned his scientific studies. Having to choose (as in a sense Shakespeare's Prospero was) between getting on in the world or of continuing his search for truth, Mond's choice was not as Prospero's. And as in Shakespeare so in Huxley an island, far from all trade with the rest of the world, is the only getaway possible for the nonconforming thinker.

4.2. John the Savage and Shakespeare

John the Savage is the most linked character with literature, apart of resembling Miranda from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, he is the one who brings Shakespeare's works to *Brave New World*. The character of the Savage is the resemblance of the Noble Savage – the notion used to call that primitive people who are more pure of heart and innocent than civilized people. However, Huxley is cautious to not portray him as heroic or as ideal in this primitive culture. The reader sympathizes with him regarding that he is the one who most represents current values.

Soon after his twelfth birthday, his mother gives him an old book that her lover found in an ancient chest. The book is called *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*. John opens the book at random, and the first passage he reads is from the third act of *Hamlet*, with Hamlet berating his mother for her infidelity: *Nay, but to live / In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed, / Stew'd in corruption, honeying and making love / Over thy nasty sty...* (Shakespeare, 1603: 43). The passage affects John *like the drums at the summer dances, if the drums could have spoken* (Shakespeare, 1603: 45). He feels that it speaks directly to him and his situation, *about Linda lying there snoring, with the empty cup on the floor beside the bed; about Linda and Popé...* (Huxley, 1932: 114). As John reads Shakespeare, he begins to hate Popé more and more, associating him with such Shakespearean villains as Iago and, above all, Claudius. He sees Shakespeare's words as magic, *and somehow it was as though he had never really hated Popé before; never really hated him because*

he had never been able to say how much he hated him (Huxley, 1932: 114). Literature is here endowed with the power to create emotion: John's reaction to Shakespeare is the perfect example of why literature is banned in London. When he reads of Hamlet's desire to murder Claudius *when he is drunk asleep, or in his rage / Or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed* (Huxley, 1932: 115), John is convinced that the words are telling him to kill Popé. He stabs Popé, who is lying drunk asleep in Linda's bed, but misses his mark and merely wounds him. Rather than beating John, however, Popé laughs at his tears, and sends him out of the room.

Still in the reservation, John goes to the hotel and enters Lenina's bedroom. He finds Lenina, lying semiconscious on soma-holiday in her bed, wearing pink zippypijamas. John nearly cries with her beauty, and is inspired to recited a passage from Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*, in which Troilus obsesses over the seemingly supernatural whiteness of Cressida's hand; the passage reminds him of another Shakespearean passage, and he continues, whispering Romeo's adulation of Juliet's hand. Both passages concern the extreme purity of the heroine.

When John arrives to London he falls romantically in love with Lenina, he thinks about her, and compares their love with *Romeo and Juliet*:

*“On the white wonder of dear Juliet's hand, may seize
And steal immortal blessing from her lips,
Who, even in pure and vestal modesty,
Still blush, as thinking their own kisses sin.”* (Shakespeare, 1597: 36)

Another example is a dark-skinned person of a lower caste. When John sees him, he associates him with Othello, a character from Shakespeare's play who was both dark-skinned and admirable. John does not judge a person by his clothes color or appearance, like the other citizens of the world state.

John could only talk about Shakespeare with Watson and Mond. Watson immediately befriended John and was enthralled by the forbidden writings of Shakespeare, but he was not able to understand it. Mond, on the other hand, understands it very well, but for him what is important is “stability” and nothing more, which excluded literature, while John insists that he craves the inconveniences: *I don't want comfort. I want God, I want poetry, I want real danger, I want freedom, I want goodness. I want sin* (Huxley, 1932: 211).

John's language has the archaic tone which one might expect from his saturation with Elizabethan English. Moreover, the John is a perfect example of someone who experiences what Freud called the Oedipus complex, a strong desire to join with one's mother. At a certain point he identifies with Hamlet, when he finds his mother with her lover. Hamlet also had an Oedipal complex, an obsessive affection to his mother that impeded him accepting her as sexually

independent of him. Freud thought that experiences from childhood form adult emotions, perceptions, and behaviors, and all the characters in *Brave New World* are clearly forced to think and act according to the ideas they learned as children, even when confronted with proves that their behavior causes personal suffering.

John's problem was that his Shakespearianism, of thought as well as language, often made him ridiculous. Huxley may be taken to imply that we can best profit from the plays if we view them esthetically and not, in John's fashion, as textbooks of thought and conduct.

Huxley confessed in *Texts and Pretexts* that: *I wanted this person to be a platonic lover; but, reading through the plays, I realized to my dismay that platonic love is not a subject with which Shakespeare ever deals* (Huxley, 1933: 45).

4.3. Shakespeare's world vs. Fordian World

If we assume that Fordian world is satirized, therefore Shakespearian tragedy is held up as an ideal point of reference. However, Huxley strives in his novel to show the contrast between the Shakespearan world and the World State described by the author.

The *Brave New World*, made so comfortable and safe by the technology foreseen by Huxley, has no place in it for Romanticism. In the Fordian Era, there was no romantic love, no ideals of nobility and heroism which involves internal conflict or suffering, so, consequently, there was no possibility of any similarities between this world and Shakespeare's plays. *Romeo and Juliet*, with its non-Fordian attitudes toward sex, parents, and disposal of the dead, are totally forbidden in this society.

Mustapha Mond, the world's controller, in a conversation with John the Savage compares how own world the world described in Shakespearan works:

Because our world is not the same as Othello's world. You can't make flivvers without steel – and you can't make tragedies without social instability. The world's stable now. People are happy; they get what they want, and they never want what they can't get. They're well off; they're safe; they're never ill; they're not afraid of death; they're blissfully ignorant of passion and old age; they're plagued with no mothers or fathers; they've got no wives, or children, or lovers to feel strongly about; they're so conditioned that they practically can't help behaving as they ought to behave. And if anything should go wrong, there's soma. Which you go and chuck out of the window in the name of liberty, Mr. Savage. Liberty! (Huxley, 1932: 193)

According to the novel, Romanticism and Shakespeare are brought by John from the “savage society.” Lenina serves as the liaison between civilized and savage society, as she feels a strong connection with John but is confused by the growing predilection for monogamy and love.

Nevertheless, Huxley stated in an interview for the *Paris Review*: *I still believe that tragedy is not necessarily the highest form. The highest form does not yet exist, perhaps. I can conceive of something much more inclusive and yet equally sublime, something which is adumbrated in the plays of Shakespeare. I think that in some way the tragic and comic elements can be more totally fused* (Fraser and Wickes, 1963: 7).

Nowadays, we can affirm that the Fordian world is already with us in many of the more modernistic aspects of modern life. This means that the disappearance of meaningfulness in Shakespeare has begun.

5. Censorship

5.1. Censorship within *Brave New World*

In the World State, to control the citizens, the Controllers ensured that the citizens were taught only what they needed to know in order to function within society and nothing more. Knowledge is risky. Books are strictly forbidden. Culture and art stimulate the intellect, spirit, and emotions thus they must be reduced to faint imitations of the real thing. Knowledge, literature, and history are all denied to ordinary citizens in order to keep people from questioning the structure and values of the society that has been created for them.

In the world state was a place without libraries or schools because it was believed that learning and thinking can lead to the destruction of stability and happiness and society and break society's greatest goods: production and consumption. People are unaware that technology has been used to control their lives because books are taboo and knowledge is allowed only for the powerful ruling class.

Foolish gadgets and hi-tech diversions function as distractions, not allowing the childlike citizens to engage in rich intellectual and emotional lives or to experience challenges that can lead to intellectual and emotional growth.

Therefore religion and art are restrained by the controllers and subordinated to the support of the state. Only Mustapha Mond can access the great culture and literature of the past. He likes to discuss about Shakespeare with John the Savage. Huxley, by giving to his primitive character only Shakespeare's works from which to obtain his ideals, shows the power of that great literature: it can encompass vast range of human experience, to which the citizens of the world state are completely unmindful.

5.2. Censorship of *Brave New World*

People with rigorous norms regarding sexual behavior, who support the ideas of chaste courtships and monogamous, lifetime marriages, are confronted in this novel with a world where sexual promiscuity is an advantage and where the unique function of sexuality is not reproduction but simply pleasure. Therefore, this novel was not acceptable by many readers and needed to be censored.

Richard H. Beckham³⁴, in his essay “*Huxley's Brave New World as Social Irritant: Ban It or Buy It?*”, argues against censoring this novel, claiming that the satire provides an insightful reflection of our human behavior and societal values. However, he comments on its pessimism and tragedy as reasons why it should not be taught. Such an objection overlooks the tone of the book. The purpose of this novel is to analyze the defects in human behavior in order to foster reform. Such analysis are unpleasant when we recognize our failures through them. But pain and growth and regeneration are part of the human condition and prove that Huxley's prophesy has not yet come true. And certainly if we try to prevent people from being exposed to the tragic, we would have to eliminate much world literature which has been universally proclaimed great.

Brave New World is a satiric novel, and the pleasant perfection of society in A.F. 689 is created against the norms of society in the twentieth century generally and also against the norms of a particularly primitive society which still currently exists. If Huxley had perfidiously managed to reduce and oversimplify the most significant scientific and philosophical ideas of modern times to a simple society portraying a serious projection of what the world will almost for sure become, then we might at least understand the objections of those who want to censor the book.

34 Richard Beckham is a polymath: screenwriter, novelist, short story writer, memoirist, entrepreneur, inventor, philosopher, poet, painter, publisher, literary theorist, singer/songwriter, film director and producer. He is the author of two novels, two unpublished collections of poetry, and numerous screenplays in different stages of development. He holds a B.A. from the University of Washington and a Master of Fine Arts from Antioch University Los Angeles. Currently, he lives in Seattle with his wife. Richard's novels are mixed with surrealism, poetry, social satire, and a dash of comedy.

6. Conclusion

Huxley in this novel presents two different societies taken to the extremes. On the one hand, there is the “civilized” world, with no emotions, no families, no history and lead by technology, and on the other hand, the savage and uncivilized people from the Reservation. John the Savage is unhappy but vital; the civilized people are fatuous, empty. The role of technology is to create the conditions in which a tiny elite can combine complete control over social, political, and economic life with the achievement of material abundance.

There are three options for the Savage: first, the madness of acceptance, madness of rejection, or, a third option, later commented by Huxley, a normal life. John is caught out of time. He is not able to return to his old culture, nor can he accept the new one. The only option for him, in a society in which he has become a freak to be observed at his suicide. Since his body hangs on a cord rotating toward all directions, Huxley suggests that we also may be becoming a society in which ironically there is no place for human emotion and for human life.

He presents a unique problem, as he is the son of a conditioned woman who tried to condition him as best she can outside of the technology of London, but is raised in an unconditioned society. The result is John's inability to completely identify or fit into either world. The Savage shows symptoms of a disease, there is a powerful emotional and moral conflict between him and the civilized world. He believed in wisdom, nobility and heroism, but all what that society presented was lack of ethics, pleasure and consumerism.

Huxley sadly remarked in a prologue for *Brave New World* written in 1946, that he had given his protagonist, the Savage, only two alternatives: to continue living in the civilized society whose God is Ford, or to return to a primitive Indian village, in some ways more human, but also insane in others.

Huxley, with his own passion for Shakespeare, would not have conceded that Shakespeare could have provided the Savage with an alternative to a choice between an insane utopia and a barbaric lunacy. However, he wrote in the prologue that if he would have to write again this novel, he would offer the Savage this third option. Between the insane utopia and the primitive world of his dilemma, there would exist a third possibility of a normal life, a possibility which was in part created in the community of people exiled from the happy world, who would live in a kind of Reservation. In this community, the economy would be decentralist to the style of Henry George³⁵,

³⁵ Henry George (1839–1897) was an American writer, politician and political economist, who was the most influential proponent of the land value tax. He inspired the economic philosophy known as Georgism, whose main tenet is that people should own what they create, but that everything found in nature belongs equally to all humanity.

and the politics would be Kropotkinian³⁶ and cooperativist.

Between the two extremely described worlds, we can conclude with one last idea, the incompatibility of happiness and truth. The characters of this novel do everything possible to avert the truth about their own lives. The drug soma, almost universal, is apparently the most clear example of this self-delusion. However, even Shakespeare can be considered a way of avoiding the truth, as John shows by his perseverance on viewing Lenina from the point of view of Shakespeare's world, firstly as a Juliet and later as an "impudent strumpet." Mustapha Mond gives priority to happiness at the expense of truth: the controller believes that people feel better with happiness than with truth.

It is clear that happiness refers to the immediate satisfaction of the citizens' desire for food, sex, drugs, and other consumer items. Nevertheless, it is not clear at all what the controller means by truth. We can identify two principal kinds of truth which are suppressed in the world state from Mond's discussion with John. On the one hand the World State controls and deadens all efforts of the citizens to obtain any kind of scientific, or empirical truth. On the other hand, the government seeks to eliminate all kinds of "human" truths, such as love, friendship, and personal connection.

The search for truth then, seems to include individual effort, striving and fighting against odds. The desire to search for truth is something that the society of *Brave New World*, based on anonymity and lack of thought, cannot allow to exist. Truth and individuality then become spliced in the novel's thematic structure.

36 Prince Pyotr Alexeyevich Kropotkin (December 9, 1842 – February 8, 1921) was a Russian geographer, economist, activist, philologist, zoologist, evolutionary theorist, philosopher, writer and prominent anarchist. Kropotkin advocated a communist society free from central government and based on voluntary associations between workers.

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