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## Transmedia dystopias and fantasies: exploring totalitarianism across media



Istock. Pandagolik

**Por:** Eva Gómez<sup>1</sup>, investigadora independiente,  
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9530-4650>

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1 Graduada en Historia por la Universidad de Cantabria y cuenta con un Máster Interuniversitario en Historia Contemporánea por la misma institución. Actualmente es doctoranda en Historia Contemporánea y ha realizado una estancia de investigación en el Cañada Blanch Centre for Contemporary Spanish Studies de la London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). Sus líneas de investigación abarcan la historia local, el análisis fílmico, la ultraderecha nacional e internacional y la documentación archivística. Ha publicado numerosos artículos en castellano e inglés, así como capítulos de libro y ha participado como ponente en congresos nacionales e internacionales. Contacto: [evagomezfer22@gmail.com](mailto:evagomezfer22@gmail.com)

## Abstract

This article examines how contemporary transmedia narratives represent and critically interrogate totalitarianism, drawing on the intellectual lineage of twentieth-century dystopian literature by Aldous Huxley, George Orwell, and Ray Bradbury. By analyzing six case studies across television, film, video games, and musical, including *Snowpiercer*, *The Handmaid's Tale*, *BioShock Infinite*, *Papers, Please*, *Wish*, and *Wicked*. The study identifies four distinct forms of authoritarian governance: technocratic, theocratic, bureaucratic, and personalist. A qualitative, interpretive methodology grounded in Cultural Studies and transmedia narratology allows for a comparative analysis of mechanisms such as scarcity, surveillance, propaganda, and charismatic leadership. The findings highlight how these narratives translate classical dystopian critiques into contemporary media ecologies, fostering critical reflection on authority, social control, and resistance. By linking theory and empirical cases, the article demonstrates the pedagogical and analytical potential of transmedia storytelling for understanding the persistence and mutation of totalitarian logics in digital modernity.

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## Distopías y fantasías transmedia: explorando el totalitarismo en distintos medios

### Resumen

Este artículo analiza cómo las narrativas transmedia contemporáneas representan e interrogan críticamente el totalitarismo, tomando como referencia la tradición de la literatura distópica del siglo XX de Aldous Huxley, George Orwell y Ray Bradbury. A partir del análisis de seis casos en televisión, cine, videojuegos y teatro —*Snowpiercer*, *The Handmaid's Tale*, *BioShock Infinite*, *Papers, Please*, *Wish* y *Wicked*— se identifican cuatro formas de gobernanza autoritaria: tecnocrática, teocrática, burocrática y personalista. La metodología es cualitativa e interpretativa, basada en los Estudios Culturales y la narratología transmedia, lo que permite un análisis comparativo de mecanismos como escasez, vigilancia, propaganda y liderazgo carismático. Los hallazgos muestran cómo estas narrativas traducen las críticas clásicas de las distopías al ecosistema mediático contemporáneo, fomentando la reflexión crítica sobre la autoridad, el control social y la resistencia. Al vincular teoría y casos empíricos, el estudio evidencia el potencial pedagógico y analítico de la transmedia para comprender la persistencia y transformación de las lógicas totalitarias en la modernidad digital.

### Palabras clave:

Totalitarianism, Dystopia, Fantasy, Transmedia Storytelling, *Snowpiercer*, *Papers Please*, *Bioshock Infinite*, *Wish*, *Wicked*, and *The Handmaid's Tale*.

### Key words:

Totalitarismo, Distopía, Fantasía, Narrativas transmedia, *Snowpiercer*, *Papers Please*, *Bioshock Infinite*, *Wish*, *Wicked*, El Cuento de la Criada.

## INTRODUCTION

Aldous Huxley, George Orwell, and Ray Bradbury stand as foundational figures in twentieth-century dystopian literature. Their seminal works — *Brave New World* (1932), *1984* (1949), and *Fahrenheit 451* (1953) — articulated powerful critiques of totalitarianism in response to the rise of fascism, Nazism, Stalinism, democratic erosion, and the ideological polarization that shaped the mid-twentieth century. Far from confining totalitarianism to a closed historical episode, these authors constructed fictional worlds that exposed the structural mechanisms of domination embedded within modernity itself.

Huxley imagined a technocratic order sustained not through overt repression but through biotechnological engineering, psychological conditioning, and mass entertainment, where pleasure anesthetizes dissent. Orwell, deeply influenced by his experience in the Spanish Civil War and his observation of totalitarian regimes, depicted a world governed by omnipresent surveillance, historical erasure, and linguistic manipulation, revealing how truth and subjectivity can be systematically dismantled. Bradbury, writing during McCarthyism and the Cold War, warned against censorship, media commodification, and the erosion of critical thought through distraction and conformism. Together, these dystopias mapped distinct yet convergent pathways through which totalitarian power might operate technocratic, ideological, bureaucratic, and cultural.

Their legacy extends far beyond literature. Contemporary audiovisual culture continues to reinterpret and expand dystopian critique across multiple platforms. Works such as *Snowpiercer*, *The Handmaid's Tale*, *BioShock Infinite*, *Papers, Please*, *Wish*, and *Wicked* demonstrate how narratives of domination, resistance, and ideological control circulate across television, film, video games, and fantasy adaptations. These productions do not merely reproduce classical dystopian tropes. In fact, they translate them into contemporary media ecologies characterized by interactivity, seriality, and global digital circulation.

Scholars have recently turned their attention to the intersection between dystopia, transmedia expansion, and political critique. The global circulation of *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood — from novel to television adaptation and symbolic appropriation in feminist protest movements — illustrates how dystopian narratives transcend fiction to intervene in public discourse. Likewise, interactive media such as *BioShock Infinite* demonstrate how video games can stage immersive engagements with theocratic and

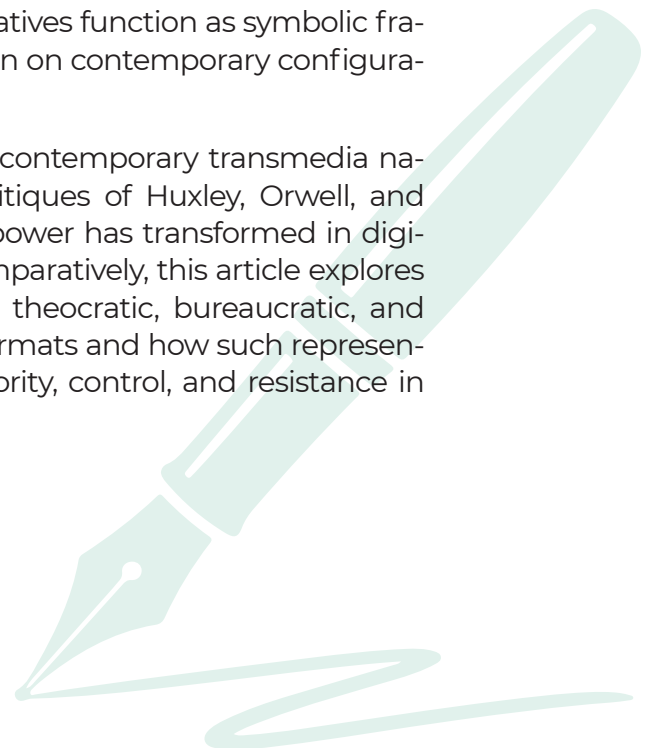
racialized authoritarianism, allowing players to experience moral complicity within oppressive systems.

This article addresses that gap by situating contemporary transmedia narratives within the intellectual lineage of twentieth-century dystopian thought. Rather than treating these works as isolated cultural artifacts, it approaches them as part of an evolving critical tradition that interrogates the transformations of authoritarian power in digital modernity. By examining how narratives of domination circulate across film, television, video games, and fantasy adaptations, this study seeks to contribute to ongoing debates on the persistence, mutation, and symbolic mediation of totalitarian logics in contemporary societies.

The general objective of this study is to analyze the pedagogical potential of contemporary transmedia narratives in representing and critically interrogating multifaceted forms of totalitarianism.

To achieve this aim, the study pursues several specific objectives, including examining how selected audiovisual productions reinterpret and update the dystopian frameworks articulated by Huxley, Orwell, and Bradbury; identifying and classifying the distinct forms of totalitarian governance represented across the case studies; comparing the mechanisms of domination—including scarcity, surveillance, violence, propaganda, and leadership structures—as mediated through different narrative formats; exploring how medium-specific affordances such as seriality, interactivity, visual immersion, and musical performance shape the representation of authoritarian control; and assessing the extent to which these narratives function as symbolic frameworks capable of fostering critical reflection on contemporary configurations of power (Didi-Huberman, 2009).

This study is guided by the proposition that contemporary transmedia narratives not only continue the dystopian critiques of Huxley, Orwell, and Bradbury but also reveal how authoritarian power has transformed in digital modernity. By examining these works comparatively, this article explores how totalitarian mechanisms—technocratic, theocratic, bureaucratic, and personalist—are represented across media formats and how such representations may foster critical reflection on authority, control, and resistance in contemporary society.



## METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN AND ANALYTICAL APPROACH

This article adopts a qualitative and interpretive methodological approach grounded in Cultural Studies, conceived as an interdisciplinary field that examines cultural production as a site of symbolic negotiation among ideology, power, and social conflict. Audiovisual narratives are not treated as secondary or merely illustrative artifacts, but rather as culturally situated texts that both reflect and shape collective imaginaries concerning authority, legitimacy, and resistance.

The methodological proposal is primarily based on the notion of *contre-analyse de la société* developed by Marc Ferro (1995, pp. 26-30), who conceptualizes audiovisual media—initially cinema, though extendable to television series and video games—as alternative historiographical documents that reveal the tensions, anxieties, and ideological constructions of a given era. Their value lies not in factual precision, but in how societies represent themselves, their fears, and their structures of domination. This perspective is applied here to contemporary digital culture.

The framework is further enriched by contributions from transmedia narratology and convergence theory. Henry Jenkins (2008) defines transmedia storytelling as the dispersion of integral narrative elements across multiple platforms to create a coordinated experience. Carlos Alberto Scolari (2013) emphasizes the construction of complex narrative worlds that circulate across media, while Marie-Laure Ryan, Jan-Noël Thon and C.B Harvey (2014) underline how meaning is shaped by the specific affordances of each format (visual immersion in cinema, extended development in serialized television, interactivity and procedural logic in video games). These differences are crucial, as mechanisms of totalitarian control are represented and mediated differently depending on the medium.

The research design is comparative and interpretive, centered on six case studies selected according to three criteria. First, thematic centrality of authoritarian or totalitarian regimes. Second, diversity of formats and heterogeneity of audiences. The corpus includes:

The television series included in the corpus offers two distinct yet complementary representations of authoritarian control. *Snowpiercer* functions as a metaphor for rigid class stratification, the monopolization of resources, and the systematic suppression of dissent within a closed society confined

to a perpetually moving train. Its spatial structure reinforces social hierarchy, rendering inequality both visible and inescapable. Similarly, *The Handmaid's Tale* portrays a theocratic regime in which patriarchal authority regulates bodies, reproduction, and civil liberties. Through its depiction of institutionalized gender oppression, the series foregrounds the intersection of religious fundamentalism and state power as mechanisms of total social control.

The selected video games explore authoritarianism through interactive and procedural dimensions. In *Papers, Please*, the player assumes the role of a low-level bureaucrat operating within a repressive regime, confronting moral dilemmas that emerge from routine administrative tasks. Gameplay mechanics simulate complicity, surveillance, and the ethical tensions embedded in authoritarian systems. *BioShock Infinite* immerses players in a fictional society structured around religious-nationalist extremism and racialized hierarchy. Through exploration and combat, the game intensifies ideological confrontation, exposing the violence and myth-making that sustain oppressive political orders.

Within the animated film category, *Wish* presents a seemingly benevolent ruler whose authority is sustained through paternalistic imagery and concealed manipulation. The narrative gradually reveals how charismatic leadership can mask coercive control, thus illustrating the subtle mechanisms through which domination may be normalized and legitimized.

Finally, the stage and film adaptation *Wicked* offers a reinterpretation of a familiar narrative from the perspective of alterity. By centering a character traditionally constructed as villainous, the work exposes how structures of power fabricate enemies through historical distortion, propaganda, and the manipulation of collective memory. In doing so, it foregrounds the processes by which dissenting figures are marginalized and demonized in order to preserve hegemonic authority.

These six works were chosen not only for their relevance to the study of totalitarianism, but also for the variety of their formats, narrative forms, and intended audiences. This diversity enables a richer understanding of totalitarianism as a polyvalent phenomenon—one that may present itself explicitly, as in Orwell's *1984*, or more subtly, through mass-entertainment narratives that nonetheless encode sophisticated critiques of power.

The following table summarizes the defining features of totalitarian leadership as depicted in these case studies. It includes an analogy with the "Tailies" from *Snowpiercer*—a marginalized underclass deprived of basic rights—and with Elphaba, the so-called "Wicked Witch" in *Wicked*, who is demonized for

uncovering hidden truths and challenging official narratives. Both figures illustrate the mechanisms by how totalitarian regimes fabricate enemies and neutralize dissent through manipulation and exclusion.

**Table 1.** Key characteristics of totalitarian leaders in selected audiovisual works

Case studies	Leader	Form of totalitarian governance	Instruments of control	Manufactured enemy
<i>Snowpiercer</i>	Mr. Wilford	Technocratic elitism	Resource monopolization, and strict hierarchical order	The "Tail Section"
<i>The Handmaid's Tale</i>	The Gilead Commanders	Theocracy	Sexual coercion, religious indoctrination and state surveillance	Women, racial minorities, and liberal democratic values
<i>Papers, Please</i>	Arstotzkan State	Bureaucratic	Border control and punitive regulation	Foreign nationals depicted as internal threats
<i>BioShock Infinite</i>	Father Comstock	Theocratic white supremacy	Ideological brainwashing and systemic racism	Atheists, socialists and dissidents
<i>Wish</i>	King Magnifico	Paternalistic autocracy	Censorship and panoptic surveillance	Critical thinkers and subversive voices
<i>Wicked</i>	The Wizard of Oz	Populist demagoguery	Scapegoating and suppression of dissent	Elphaba, framed as dangerous through political mythmaking

Own elaboration.

## CONCEPTUAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF TOTALITARIANISM

Before analyzing the distinct features of the totalitarian regimes presented in these transmedia narratives, it is essential to define totalitarianism and identify its core characteristics. Totalitarianism can be described as a form of political domination that, unlike traditional dictatorships, does not only aim to control political power, but seeks to govern every aspect of social, economic, cultural, and even personal life (Arendt, 1962, p. 325). It emerged as a modern phenomenon in the aftermath of World War I, during a time when liberal democratic systems showed signs of instability and vulnerability to radical ideologies. Notable historical examples of totalitarian regimes include Italian fascism and German Nazism from the far-right, and Soviet communism and North Korea's Juche ideology from the far-left, particularly from the mid-20th century onward.

A key feature of totalitarianism is the aspiration to establish a single, unquestionable truth, usually anchored in an ideology that becomes a dogma beyond any critique. For instance, both Nazism and Stalinism constructed totalizing worldviews that explained all aspects of reality and justified repression, violence, and social control as necessary means to achieve a greater objective—whether racial purity in the case of Nazism or the dictatorship of the proletariat in the case of Stalinism (Traverso, 2018, p. 94). This is why these regimes are often referred to as *secular religions*. For this reason, the state is governed by a single, unified party (Sartori, 2002).

Despite their ideological differences, totalitarian regimes share several common traits. The first of these is the centralization of power in the figure of a charismatic leader, who is portrayed as infallible and endowed with exceptional qualities. Leaders such as Adolf Hitler in Germany, Benito Mussolini in Italy, and Joseph Stalin in the Soviet Union were depicted as living embodiments of the spirit of their respective nations or the working class (Paxton, 2004, p. 115). This figure of absolute leadership replaces existing institutions and eradicates any possibility of political opposition or pluralism.

Another characteristic of totalitarian regimes is the rejection of individualism. In totalitarian thought, individuals have no intrinsic value apart from their role within the collective, which must be entirely subordinated to the state. Propaganda and mass mobilization play a crucial role in unifying thought, creating a collective identity based on obedience and sacrifice (Linz, 2000, p. 45).

A further defining trait is the systemic use of violence as a tool for social control. Repression in totalitarian regimes extends beyond political opposition to permeate all aspects of life. Nazi concentration camps and Soviet gulags serve as extreme examples of this logic of extermination of the “enemy”, often fabricated through propaganda. Joseph Goebbels, the Reich Minister of Propaganda, was one of the architects of this strategy, encapsulated in his *77 Principles of Propaganda*, which were adopted by other totalitarian regimes to create and demonize the enemy. Totalitarian regimes also strive to impose social, cultural, and racial homogeneity. In Nazi Germany, this homogeneity took the form of an ideology of racial purity, which led to the violent exclusion of anyone who did not conform to the Aryan ideal. In the Soviet Union, uniformity was achieved through the extreme bureaucratization of the state and the systematic elimination of ideological dissent.

Economically, totalitarian regimes are marked by extensive state control. In some cases, such as fascism in Italy, this control manifested through corporatism, where the state sought to reconcile the interests of workers and employers under its direct control, eliminating class struggle but also any form of free negotiation (De Felice, 1977, p. 167).

Transmedia narratives—both dystopian and fantastical—explore various forms of totalitarianism, presenting oppressive regimes that restrict individual and collective freedoms. In the dystopian genre, *Snowpiercer* portrays a technocratic totalitarianism centered around Wilford, in which humanity survives a climate disaster aboard a perpetually moving train. Society is divided by class, with a capitalist and technocratic elite justifying their absolute dominance. The “tailenders” at the back of the train are deprived of rights, and the elite attempts to erase their class consciousness until a rebellion ignites, with support from the third class, revealing fractures within the system (Manson, 2020-2024).

In *The Handmaid's Tale*, the narrative immerses us in a theocratic totalitarian regime in the fictional state of Gilead, where a patriarchal system reduces women of reproductive age to mere reproductive roles. The regime is maintained through constant surveillance, psychological terror, severe punishment, and manipulation of language to suppress critical thinking (Miller, 2017-2025).

In the realm of video games, *BioShock Infinite* depicts a theocratic and racist totalitarianism in the floating city of Columbia. The charismatic leader, Zachary Comstock, uses religious fervor to establish a regime based on white supremacy and an exclusionary national identity, justifying violence as both necessary and sacred (Levine, 2013). In contrast, *Papers, please* presents a bu-

reaucratic totalitarianism akin to Soviet-style regimes. Through the role of an immigration inspector, the player is forced to navigate an impersonal web of regulations, making difficult moral choices. As the rules shift and personal circumstances are disregarded, empathy is eroded, and duty replaces humanity (Pope, 2013).

In the fantasy genre, *Wish* portrays a personalistic form of totalitarianism. The Kingdom of Roses is ruled by an absolutist monarch, the Magnificent King, who exercises control over his subjects' desires. Although this regime does not employ overt violence, it creates emotional dependence, subtly neutralizing the will of individuals (Buck & Veerasunthorn, 2023). *Wicked*, on the other hand, showcases a totalitarian system sustained by cult-like worship leader. The Wizard of Oz uses propaganda and the creation of external enemies to maintain his power, demonizing certain groups and concealing uncomfortable truths. What appears to be a just and peaceful regime is one built on fear, deceit, and exclusion (Chu, 2024).

## COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TRANSMEDIA CASES

This comparative analysis outlines the core similarities and differences in the characteristics of totalitarian models portrayed across the case studies discussed. In *Snowpiercer*, scarcity is physical and material. Essential resources like food, space, and heat are severely limited. The train's hierarchical structure divides these resources unequally, with the elite classes in the front enjoying abundance, while the lower classes at the rear face extreme deprivation. In *The Handmaid's Tale*, scarcity is biological. Due to widespread infertility caused by environmental and social factors, fertile women become valuable reproductive assets, forced to serve as "handmaids" for the ruling class. In *Papers, please*, scarcity is economic. Basic needs such as money, healthcare, and well-being are scarce. The protagonist, an immigration officer, faces moral dilemmas shaped by this scarcity, where his success depends on processing people correctly, and any mistake jeopardizes his survival. In *BioShock Infinite*, scarcity is socially constructed. The city of Columbia is divided into a wealthy white elite and a marginalized underclass, predominantly persons of color and foreigners. This scarcity isn't just material. It's a social construct that justifies segregation and exclusion, ensuring the elite's privilege while condemning the lower classes to poverty. In *Wish*, scarcity is symbolic. King Magnificent controls the wishes of the kingdom's citizens, creating an abstract scarcity of dreams, aspirations, and personal freedom. By restricting au-

tonomy, he prevents individuals from fulfilling their own desires. In *Wicked*, scarcity manifests as the absence of truth, freedom, and pluralism. The Wizard of Oz controls the official narrative, suppressing alternative versions of reality and marginalizing those, like Elphaba, who question the established order.

In *Snowpiercer*, social control is physical and direct, maintained through constant surveillance and violent repression by brakemen and harvesters who prevent the lower classes from rebelling. In *The Handmaid's Tale*, control is omnipresent, exerted both by institutions and social pressure. The fear of betrayal is amplified by the threat of violent punishment and psychological manipulation. In *Papers, please*, control is bureaucratic. Citizens are monitored and evaluated according to the rules of the immigration system, and the protagonist, part of this system, perpetuates control without the constant presence of security forces. In *BioShock Infinite*, control is exercised through a combination of physical repression (police and automatons) and a powerful religious ideology. Columbia's inhabitants live under the constant threat of being watched by armed forces and robots. In *Wish*, control is more subtle, operating through the manipulation of citizens' desires and hopes. The people believe King Magnificent acts in their best interest, but he deprives them of autonomy to decide their own wishes. In *Wicked*, control is ideological, achieved through propaganda that divides the world into "good" and "evil," with dissent viewed as a threat. Those who challenge the official narrative, like Elphaba, are persecuted.

In *Snowpiercer*, violence is direct and systematic, with severe, immediate punishments for any act of rebellion. In *The Handmaid's Tale*, violence is institutionalized and justified by religious ideology. Executions, mutilations, and public punishments are integral to Gilead's social order. In *Papers, please*, violence is more latent and bureaucratic. While there are no mass executions, arrests and disappearances, coupled with the constant threat of punishment for administrative errors, the regime creates an atmosphere of repression. In *BioShock Infinite*, violence is ritualized and public, justified by racial supremacy and religious fanaticism. In *Wish*, violence arises when anyone questions the system, manifesting as intimidation, magical punishment, and threats. King Magnificent's power is maintained through fear and emotional suppression. In *Wicked*, violence is psychological and symbolic, accomplished through propaganda and marginalization that crushes dissent, as seen in the persecution of Elphaba.

In *Snowpiercer*, propaganda strengthens Wilford's image as the charismatic leader essential to the survival of the train. In *The Handmaid's Tale*, ideologi-

cal manipulation is religious, using an extremist interpretation of the Bible to justify oppression and violence. In *Papers, please*, propaganda is centered on nationalism and obedience to the state, without a central charismatic figure. In *BioShock Infinite*, ideological manipulation is racial and religious, with pervasive propaganda glorifying Comstock and his messianic and supremacist perspective. In *Wish*, ideological manipulation is emotional, with King Magnificent justifying his control over desires by claiming it benefits the people, even as he retains power through manipulation. In *Wicked*, the Wizard of Oz uses propaganda to control the narrative, erasing dissent and rewriting the truth, as seen in the persecution of Elphaba.

Finally, in *Snowpiercer*, Wilford's leadership is charismatic and technical, rooted in his ability to ensure the train's survival. In *The Handmaid's Tale*, power is patriarchal, with a religious male elite interpreting the Bible to justify oppression. In *Papers, please*, the regime's legitimacy comes from the bureaucratic system, with no central leader. In *BioShock Infinite*, Comstock is a messianic leader whose legitimacy is based on his divine connection and vision of a utopian future for white Christians. In *Wish*, King Magnificent is a paternalistic leader, presenting himself as a protector, but his power depends on emotional manipulation. In *Wicked*, the Wizard is a false leader, whose legitimacy is constantly questioned, maintaining power through propaganda that conceals his incompetence and malice.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This study aimed to analyze how contemporary transmedia narratives represent and critically interrogate different forms of totalitarianism, building on the intellectual lineage of twentieth-century dystopian literature and grounding the analysis in Cultural Studies and transmedia narratology (Jenkins, 2008). By examining six case studies across television, video games, film, and stage adaptations, the analysis identifies four distinct models of totalitarian governance—technocratic, theocratic, bureaucratic, and personalist—and explores how each is mediated through the affordances of its respective medium.

First, *Snowpiercer* stands as a clear example of technocratic totalitarianism, where the regime derives its legitimacy from its scientific and technological prowess. Wilford's leadership is distinctly technical: his authority hinges on his ability to manage resources and ensure the train's survival, which is the central factor in humanity's continued existence in this universe. Social control is enforced through strict hierarchy and constant surveillance, with the lower

classes physically oppressed to maintain the system's stability. Propaganda surrounding Wilford reinforces this technical legitimacy, positioning him as indispensable to the survival of the train. His figure is omnipresent, and in the second season, a near-religious following is built around him.

In contrast, *The Handmaid's Tale* and *BioShock Infinite* depict theocratic totalitarianism, where power is centralized in religious figures or a group of spiritual leaders who not only govern but also dictate moral and social norms based on specific interpretations of sacred texts. Both dystopias are rooted in British Israelism, a fundamentalist belief that frames the United States as God's chosen nation. This ideology rejects other religions, including Catholicism, and imposes a strict patriarchal order. In these regimes, power is justified through biblical discourse and perpetuated by authoritarian religious structures, where women are reduced to reproductive tools due to widespread infertility. The manipulation of ideology is profound: religion serves to legitimize violence, framing atrocities as divine acts aligned with God's will (Gómez Fernández, 2022).

In *Papers, please*, there is bureaucratic totalitarianism, which deviates from the far-right models previously discussed, offering a depiction closer to the Soviet system. Here, control is maintained through an all-encompassing bureaucratic apparatus, emphasizing surveillance and the regulation of citizens' movement. The protagonist, an immigration officer, is not a revolutionary leader but a cog in a system that justifies itself through its supposed efficiency. There is no central charismatic figure or religious doctrine. Authority emanates from the routine execution of bureaucratic procedures, where obedience to rules is paramount.

Finally, *Wish* and *Wicked* explore personalist totalitarianism—though elements of this form also appear in *BioShock Infinite*—where the power structure revolves around a charismatic leader. In *BioShock Infinite*, Comstock, in *Wish*, King Magnificent, and in *Wicked*, the Wizard, all represent regimes that center on the cult of personality. Their authority is upheld through the emotional and symbolic elevation of the leader, whose perceived benevolence conceals the reality of absolute control. In *Wish*, for example, King Magnificent is portrayed as the sole entity capable of granting wishes, yet his true role is the suppression of individual autonomy and the imposition of his will upon his subjects. Though this form of leadership may appear protective or benevolent, it is ultimately oppressive.

To conclude, these transmedia narratives not only reveal various types of totalitarianism but also demonstrate how such regimes, while differing in struc-

ture and ideology, share similar mechanisms of control. These works provide more than just entertainment because they serve as powerful tools for political reflection and education. Through interconnected fictional worlds, they invite the audience to critically examine the systems of power, control, and ideology that shape society. Thus, these narratives function as mirrors to the real world, encouraging a deeper understanding of how authoritarian regimes can emerge and how individuals can challenge them. Beyond their aesthetic or commercial appeal, these stories foster critical thinking about freedom, authority, and the delicate balance between the two.

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