

## Power, Authority, and Psychological Control

Shameel K.

Doctoral Scholar, Department of English,  
Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Lucknow Campus.

Email: shamikallingal@gmail.com

### ABSTRACT

This paper explores the complex relationship between power, authority, and psychological control as it is portrayed in literary narratives. Using the theoretical frameworks of surveillance and disciplinary power developed by Michel Foucault, as well as interdisciplinary viewpoints from social ecology and neuropsychology, this analysis explores how literary works reveal the psychological processes by which people react to control and authority. Literature offers distinctive insights into the phenomenological experience of power dynamics, and how institutional authority permeates the deepest reaches of people's consciousness. Whether it takes the form of authoritarian regimes, colonial structures, or mental institutions, authoritarian regimes or colonial structures pierce the deepest reaches of people's consciousness. Literary narratives illustrate how psychological control functions through covert means of monitoring, normalisation, and internalisation of disciplinary gazes in addition to overt coercion. These processes result in what Foucault refers to as "docile bodies"—people who submit to authority by self-control as opposed to coercion. This study examines the psychological effects of power imbalances as they are portrayed in literature, including identity fragmentation, learned helplessness, chronic stress, and trauma transmission across generations. Literary depictions of characters whose mental landscapes are shaped by prolonged exposure to authority imbalances reveal the neuropsychological aspects of

subordination. At the same time, literary narratives shed light on overt and covert resistance tactics that people use to assert their agency against psychological dominance.

Keywords: Psychological Control, Foucault, Power, Dominance, Surveillance.

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