

Dystopia as Protest: Zamyatin's *We* and Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

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I. Introduction

Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We* (Russian title: *Мы*, meaning "My"), a dystopian novel written in the early 1920s, is said to have been influenced by H. G. Wells and to have influenced George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, although *We* is less familiar to Western readers than *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. In Soviet Russia, *We* was censored until the late 1980s when General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev's glasnost policy of openness lifted the ban on the book; the publication of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *Brave New World* soon followed (Tall 183). The publication of *We*, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, and *Brave New World* in Russia therefore coincided directly with the dissolution of the Soviet Union after seventy years of Communist rule. This suggests that some dystopias, by virtue of their content, are texts of social protest. I will explore this first through close examination of Zamyatin's *We* and then through a comparison of *We* with the protest elements of Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

A dystopia firmly rejects the ideal society envisioned by a utopia. The first appearance of the word "utopia" occurs in Thomas More's work *Utopia* in 1516:

The word *utopia*, first coined by More for his book [*Utopia*], also has a comfortable, modern feeling. It is now a very common term in English, most often carrying the meaning of a vain fantasy, a hopelessly unrealistic reform program, or an entirely impracticable set of social institutions (Sacks 4).

In the text of *Utopia*, More establishes the word by combining the Greek *u*, meaning "not," with *topos*, meaning "place," literally meaning

“no place” (More 86). As Sacks points out, in common contemporary parlance, “utopia” has come to mean a place that does not exist because such an unattainable ideal is impossible. The later development of the word “dystopia” unites the Greek *dys*, meaning “bad,” with the same root *topos*, giving it the literally meaning “bad place.” It is opposed to “utopia,” however, as a bad place that has resulted from the attempt to create utopia. Some scholars utilize the term “anti-utopia” in reference to Zamyatin and Orwell because the term “dystopia” does not fully convey an opposition to utopia in the same way that “anti-utopia” succeeds in this regard. Here I will use the term “dystopia” in both its literal and its opposing meanings as a place in which organizing principles of utopia have not exactly yielded utopian ideals or have successfully extinguished organic human desires (such as maternal instincts, love, the search for deeper meaning).

In the foreword to *American Protest Literature*, John Stauffer defines “protest literature” as “the uses of language to transform the self and change society,” also asserting:

The difference between literature and protest literature is that while the former empowers and transforms individuals, the latter strives to give voice to a collective consciousness, uniting isolated or inchoate discontent. Protest literature taps into an ideological vein of dissent and announces to its people that they are not alone in their frustrations. Protest literature is part of its milieu, inextricably linked to its time and place. But it also stands at a remove from prevailing social values, offering a critique of society from the outside. (xii)

Zamyatin’s novel is easily contextualized temporally to the establishment of lofty Marxist ideals under Lenin and the Communist Party in post-1917 Russia. He presents a world in which love and imagination are forbidden, urging his reader to reject a world in which individual voices are inaudible over the mass. Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four* offers a similar atmosphere in the context of post-World War II Europe,

coincidentally, although probably not intentionally, reminiscent of the Stalin era in Soviet Russia. For both authors, the events of their time—that is, the experiences of revolution and war—seem to have contributed to the writing of these novels, whether consciously or subconsciously. More broadly, within the texts of both *We* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, there is clear opposition between human nature and the laws of science. In a dystopia, the former is viewed as a weakness while the latter serves as the foundation of the laws of the land. Human instincts and desires drive both main characters to rebel against state reason and science. As a result, the injustice within the texts creates a sense of the necessity of fundamental human experiences in the reader that, as Stauffer believes, “taps into an ideological vein of dissent and announces to its people that they are not alone in their frustrations,” therefore establishing these two dystopias as works of protest literature.

II. Yevgeny Ivanovich Zamyatin (1884–1937)

Because Zamyatin is not a well-known author in the West, there is utility in presenting some basic biographical information about his life, in order to contextualize the discussion of *We* here. Yevgeny Ivanovich Zamyatin was born in the Russian countryside and moved to the city of St. Petersburg as a young adult to study naval engineering. His move to the city coincided with the growing discontent in Russia that led to the 1905 Revolution. In late nineteenth-century Russia, the Industrial Revolution and the end of serfdom in 1861 both contributed to increasing frustration among the working classes. Given the newness of industry in Russia, working conditions were often poor. Over time, the working class, without unions or any sort of provisions to protect them and their well-being (particularly if injured on the job, which, under these working conditions, was common), sought government help. The added industrial burden of the unpopular Russo-Japanese War (1904–5) did not help matters. Protests and strikes were common, though they did not typically yield results. In January 1905, on a day later designated as Bloody Sunday, peaceful protesters outside of the Winter Palace in St.

Petersburg were shot by the czar's guards, who would go on to kill and wound thousands.¹ As an active participant in revolutionary activities that led to the failed revolution, Zamyatin was arrested and exiled. One biographer describes Zamyatin's interest in revolution as "a craving for excitement, allied with a natural rebelliousness" and describes the outcome of his participation in revolutionary activity:

1905, the year of the first attempt at revolution in Russia, was full of incident for Zamyatin . . . his revolutionary activity continued unabated and in December a police raid on the revolutionary headquarters of the Vyborgsk Quarter led Zamyatin, along with thirty others, to be arrested, searched, and beaten up. For several months he was kept in solitary confinement in the Shpalerny Prison, during which time he studied shorthand and English and 'inevitably,' as he says, wrote poems. . . . In the Spring of 1906 he was freed and sent home . . . and soon slipped back illegally into the capital, from where he several times went to Helsinki to revolutionary gatherings. (Richards 8–9)

A natural rebel, Zamyatin's defiance of his exile only caused the authorities to re-sentence him to two more years of exile once he was discovered to have, in fact, illicitly returned to St. Petersburg. When his exile sentencing ended and Zamyatin was permitted to return to St. Petersburg in 1913, he undertook more activity in the literary community and published stories and Russian translations of English authors, including H. G. Wells, who is thought to be an important influence in the writing of *We*. Zamyatin was viewed as a leader in literary circles, often mentoring young authors as a member of the Serapion Brotherhood, a group devoted to communion among authors and dedication to craft rather than to ideological content. Edward Brown describes Zamyatin as decidedly apolitical in his philosophy, claiming that he "insisted that literature be free of social or political tendency" and "genuinely indifferent to actual political events and the philosophies that motivated them" (26). Brown simultaneously recognizes this alleged perspective

was possibly requisite in the highly politicized and revolutionary climate of early twentieth-century Russia in order to avoid clashes with the government. Regarding *We*, there is a general consensus that it contains a philosophical component that is decidedly absent in Zamyatin's earlier works, possibly because of the heavy impact of the 1917 Revolution, which successfully overthrew the monarchy. David Richards states, "The Russian Revolution of 1917 had a decisive influence on Zamyatin's literary career. Most of his best work, produced in the twenties, reflects more or less directly the Revolution, its effects, its shortcomings and its significance for the future" (11). Since Zamyatin was a rebel and protester himself, it is not surprising that *We* might be considered a work of protest literature.

In the postrevolutionary period, Zamyatin was known as a *poputchik*, or "fellow traveler," the term used to refer to artists and intellectuals who believed in the objectives of the revolution but who did not always agree that Marxist or communist principles were the most effective way to foster new and better conditions. Under Lenin and Trotsky's leadership, the fellow travelers were considered friends of the state, but under Stalin's first Five-Year Plan (1928–33), which dictated that artistic production must align with the goals of the party, Zamyatin's reputation was destroyed. In this repressive climate for artists and intellectuals, many authors were denounced as enemies of the state if or when their texts did not promote the ideals of socialism, did not emphasize the goals of industrialization, or did not joyfully sing the praises of the Communist Party. "Zamyatin's forthright opinions had long made him unpopular with the proletarian critics who now gained wide authority and in 1929 he found himself branded as a traitor and subjected to a prolonged campaign of vilification in the Soviet press," Richards notes (12). As a result, Zamyatin appealed directly to Stalin in 1931 for permission to leave the Soviet Union, which was granted to him and his wife. They moved to France, where he died in 1937. Before his death, Zamyatin is reported to have said, "I am an excommunicant, you know. I had to leave Soviet Russia as a dangerous counterrevolutionary" (qtd.

in Richards 14). Zamyatin's personality—namely, his rebellious nature and questioning of the intentions of communism—significantly contribute as evidence for categorizing *We* as a text of protest.

III. Summary Analysis of *We* as Protest Literature

Zamyatin's novel *We* describes life in a postapocalyptic, collective society in which humans have numbers instead of names, love and imagination are criminalized, and daily life in the nation of One State is meticulously scheduled and highly restrictive. Citizens, known as ciphers, live unquestioningly devoted to the leader, the nation, and the history and philosophy provided by the state. The main character of the novel, D-503, is the author and narrator of the text who also provides the reader with a first-person view of his nation, One State; his leader, the Benefactor; and his creation of the *Integral*, a ship designed to travel to distant galaxies in order to disseminate the One State ideology to the interplanetary masses. D-503 is an engineer with an affinity for mathematics, which personally unites him with the One State mantra of reason and science as the only philosophies under which any society is to survive. Zamyatin's own background as a naval engineer played a role in the development of D-503's character and occupation. D-503 frequently uses math, numbers, and even algebraic equations to rationalize the laws and doctrines of One State. D-503's consistent reference to numbers, logic, and equations always serves its purpose in legitimizing the principles of One State but not in rationalizing an unexpected human emotion: love.

D-503 describes the history of One State and life there early in the novel:

It may be that you don't know terms like the Table of Hours, the Personal Hour, the Maternal Norm, the Green Wall, the Benefactor. . . . The Table of Hours—it transforms each of us into the real-life, six wheeled, steel heroes of a great epic. Each morning with six-wheeled precision, at the exact same hour, at the exact same minute, we, the millions, rise as one. At the

exact same hour, we uni-millionly start work and uni-millionly stop work. And, merged into a single, million-handed body, at the exact same Table-appointed second, we bring spoons to our lips, we go out for our walk and go to the auditorium, to the Taylor Exercise Hall, go off to sleep . . . Twice a day—from 16:00 to 17:00 and from 21:00 to 22:00—the united powerful organism scatters to its separate cages. These are written into the Table of Hours: the Personal Hours. (Zamyatin, *We* 11–13)

In this passage we see a world in which every activity is rigidly scheduled and idle time is limited. The Green Wall represents an impermeable boundary to the outside world that no cipher is to cross. The walls of One State are made of glass so that every action is visible, and the citizens are dressed and coiffed identically as D-503 describes: “The auditorium. An enormous, sun-saturated hemisphere of glass expanses. Circular rows of noble, spherical, smoothly sheared heads” (16). In another scene later in the novel, D-503 describes a similar gathering: “Cube Plaza. Sixty-six powerful concentric circles: the stands. And sixty-six rows: quiet, bright faces and eyes reflecting the radiance of the skies—or, maybe, the radiance of the One State . . . Profound, strict, gothic silence” (41). The leader of One State, the Benefactor, is described as having “superhuman might” (44), and the execution (by a sort of electric guillotine operated by the Benefactor himself) of disobedient ciphers is common. The failure to maintain expected norms is punishable by death.

Even sexual relationships are governed by One State in order to stifle love and the irrational behavior that accompanies it:

So it's natural that having subjugated Hunger (algebraically = to the sum of material goods), the One State began an offensive against the other master of the world—against Love. Finally, even this natural force was also conquered, i.e., organized and mathematicized . . . and the rest are technicalities. You are thoroughly examined in the laboratories of the Bureau of Sex, the exact sexual hormone content of your blood is determined,

and then they generate a corresponding Table of Sex Days for you. Then you make a statement that on your given day you would like to make use of this (or that) cipher, and you receive the appropriate ticket book (pink). And that's it (Zamyatin, 21).

Procreation is also mandated by the state, in order to prevent ciphers from “obliviously giving birth to children” (14). Children belong to and are raised by the state, further enmeshing the ciphers with the only parental figure the state wants them to know, the Benefactor. One character, D-503's regular sexual partner, O-90, is unable to part entirely with her own maternal instincts, despite not being a Maternal Norm. O-90's disappointment about this issue offers a brief but honest point of view that suggests that life in One State is, in fact, not perfect for everyone, and some people still feel twinges of human nature (or later, as we will discover, a soul), no matter how much science and reason may seem to prevail in One State.

The main character who leads D-503 to protest behavior is I-330. D-503 becomes acquainted with I-330 while admiring his surroundings, overcome by the majesty of One State at the beginning of the novel:

I saw it all as though for the very first time: the immutably straight streets, the ray-spraying glass of the sidewalks, the divine parallelepipeds of the transparent buildings, and the quadratic harmony of the gray-blue ranks. And then: it was as if I—not whole generations past—had personally, myself, conquered the old God and the old life. As if I personally had created all this. And I was like a tower, not daring to move even an elbow, for fear of scattering walls, cupolas, machines. . . .

And then there was an echo—a laugh—coming from the right. I spun around: the white—unusually white—and sharp teeth of an unfamiliar face were before my eyes.

“Forgive me,” she said, “but you were observing your surroundings with such an inspired look—like some mythical god on the seventh day of

creation. It looked as though you actually believed that you, yourself, had created everything—even me! I’m very flattered. . . .” (Zamyatin, *We* 7–8)

D-503 is unsettled by I-330’s presence, associating her with the variable x , saying, “There was a kind of strange and irritating X to her, and I couldn’t pin it down, couldn’t give it any numerical expression” (8). As Andrew Barratt observes, D-503’s “predicament, as all critics have noted, stems directly from the unexpected intrusion into his previously well-ordered life of the mysterious and alluring I-330. Under her influence, his position as loyal and trusted servant of One State becomes increasingly irksome and untenable, a circumstance which profoundly affects every facet of his life” (660). I-330 is a member of an underground organization within One State, the ME-PHI, whose primary objective is to liberate the people of One State by destroying the Green Wall and freeing the ciphers. Early in the novel, the organization’s existence is reported in the daily newspaper, although D-503 is unaware that I-330 is involved: “According to reliable witnesses, new evidence has been found of an organization, which continues to elude us to this day, whose aim is the liberation of the State from its beneficial yoke” (Zamyatin, *We* 33). D-503 is shocked and confused by this news, never thinking that he or any of his acquaintances are connected to the organization, even though he is already infatuated with I-330, one of the MEPHI’s most enthusiastic members.

I-330 repeatedly influences D-503 to break the laws of One State. The first occurrence is when they visit the Ancient House, a museum displaying artifacts of twentieth-century life. I-330 is unconcerned with obeying the Table of Hours, claiming that she can get a friend to forge a doctor’s note attesting to her absence at a required, scheduled event. D-503, stunned by her apathy, states that, like any loyal cipher, he must report her to the Bureau of Guardians for attempting to falsify her whereabouts. Our first indication that D-503 is beginning to question the authority of One State is his subsequent failure to report I-330

to the bureau after all. The next time they meet, we see how powerless D-503 is in I-330's presence:

"So you didn't go to the Bureau of Guardians?"

"I was . . . I couldn't. I was sick."

"Yes. Well, I thought so. Something was always going to prevent you—it didn't matter what." Sharp teeth, a smile.

"And so, now you are in my hands. You do remember: 'Any cipher who does not declare themselves to the Bureau in the course of forty-eight hours is considered . . .'"

My heart struck so hard that the twigs bent. Like a little boy—foolish, like a foolish little boy, I had been caught, and foolishly, I stayed silent. (Zamyatin, *We* 47)

D-503 is simultaneously intrigued and revolted by I-330, and her power over him somehow makes him repeatedly neglect his obedience to One State, making him complicit in her own protest against One State. This particular meeting continues in this same way, with I-330 continuing to break more rules, including drinking alcohol and smoking cigarettes, about which D-503 cites verbatim the text of One State's law against these substances. I-330 counters this by saying simply, "You are so sweet—oh, I am sure of that—and you wouldn't think of going to the Bureau and telling them that I drink liqueur and smoke. You will be sick—or you will be busy—or whatever. Furthermore: I am sure that you are going to drink this charming poison with me now" (49–50). Predictably, D-503 takes a drink, once again defying the rules of One State in exchange for I-330's attention and approval.

The first incident of organized protest of One State involving I-330 and the MEPHI occurs on an election holiday when to the surprise of D-503, thousands of ciphers vote against the Benefactor, I-330 included, when normally all votes are in favor of the Benefactor:

“Who says ‘No’?”

This was always the most magnificent moment of the holiday: everyone continues to sit, immobile, joyfully bowing their heads to the beneficial yoke of the Cipher of ciphers. But now, to my horror, I heard another rustling: a very light sound . . . I raised my eyes and . . . In the hundredth part of a second, the hairspring of a clock, I saw: thousands of hands wave up—‘No’—and fall again. I saw I-330’s pale face, marked with a cross and her raised hand. (Zamyatin, *We* 125–26)

Immediately after this incident, D-503’s foundation is shaken as he considers those who voted against the Benefactor, saying, “I am ashamed, pained, and scared for them. But who are ‘they’? And who am I: ‘they’ or ‘we’? How will I know?” (128). This important moment leads to a climax when D-503 is introduced to the MEPHI as the builder of the *Integral* and realizes that I-330 plans to hijack the *Integral* in order to escape One State:

“Brothers! You all know that there, in the city behind the Wall, they are building the Integral. And you know that the day has arrived when we will destroy this Wall—every wall—so that the green wind can blow from pole to pole—the whole Earth over. But the Integral is taking these walls up there, to the thousands of new Earths, to those that will whisper to you tonight with their fires through the black night leaves. . . . The Integral should be ours. . . . On the day when it first casts off into the sky—we will be on it. Because the Builder of the Integral is here with us. He forsook the Wall and he came here with me, to be among us. All hail the Builder!” (137)

At this moment of introduction, D-503 is fully transformed into a participant in protest when he says, ever mathematically, “I stopped being a component, as I had been, and I became the number one” (138). Moments later he fully complies in the MEPHI protest of One State, explaining that “everyone must go crazy—as soon as possible” (142).

When I-330 questions D-503's newfound protest of One State, reminding him of his lifelong devotion, D-503 becomes defensive. By this time in the novel, D-503 has become as resolute in his protest of One State as he was in his prior loyalty to it, even though he cannot quite define what this means.

I-330's plan to take over the *Integral* requires D-503's consent. I-330 explains D-503's role to him and the order of events that must take place in order for her plan to be realized. Despite his love for I-330 and his newfound support for the cause of the MEPHI, D-503 is concerned about the plan, exclaiming, "This is pointless! This is ridiculous! Isn't it clear to you yet: you are starting what is called—a revolution!" (Zamyatin, *We* 153). The word "revolution" in One State is *verboden* and taught to the ciphers as an impossibility. I-330 appeals again to D-503 with mathematic persuasion: "My sweet, you are a mathematician . . . So then, tell me: what is the final number . . . the last, the highest, the biggest" (153). To this D-503 responds that numbers are infinite, and I-330 responds by saying, "Revolutions are infinite" (153), appeasing D-503's rational side and soliciting his consent to take over the *Integral* upon its first test flight.

The next day, the One State newspaper announces that a procedure has been developed that destroys imagination and that all ciphers are to report to the auditoriums to have the Great Operation. The test flight of the *Integral* is coincidentally postponed. I-330 encourages D-503 to have the operation instead, saying to him that he should cure himself of her (Zamyatin, *We* 162). D-503 puts off the operation, saying, "It was clear to me: everyone was saved, but there was to be no saving me, I don't want saving" (163). Every move that D-503 makes enables the departure of the *Integral*. He and I-330 strategically avoid the Great Operation (another act of protest) and set the stage to launch the *Integral* for its departure from One State, but are unsuccessful. D-503's subversion is driven by love, while I-330's is driven by her cause: "I-330's rebellion against utopia's repression is overtly political: she belongs to the secret underground movement . . . dedicated to

overthrowing the Well-Doer, to tearing down the Wall. . . . D-503's rebellion, however, is purely instinctual, that of a man blindly following his heart . . . willing now to do anything to keep her love" (Beauchamp 292). Despite D-503's conditioned and intellectual submission to One State, his proscribed rationality cannot be maintained as a result of his fundamentally human feelings for I-330.

D-503 then receives a call from the Benefactor requesting a meeting in which the Benefactor tells D-503 that I-330 is only interested in him because of his status as builder of the *Integral*. Betrayed by the object of his affection, D-503 returns to the only other love he has known—love for One State. The next day, he confesses everything to the Bureau of Guardians. All of D-503's progress toward protest unravels. He is "cured" of his love and imagination by undergoing the Great Operation and returns to his earlier rational state of mind:

The facts are these. On that evening, my neighbor, having discovered the finiteness of the universe, and I, and everyone who was with us, were taken, since we did not have Operation certificates, and carried off to the nearest auditorium. . . . There, we were bound to tables and subjected to the Great Operation. The next day, I, D-503 appeared to the Benefactor and told him everything that I knew about the enemies of happiness. How could this have seemed so hard to do before? Incomprehensible. The only explanation: my former sickness (a soul). (Zamyatin, *We* 202–23)

Within the text, there are additional subversive elements not mentioned here but conveyed well by another source:

Within this plot, there are numerous subplots and subtleties. For example, one can follow the spread of the soul 'epidemic' to other characters in contact with the love-smitten D-503: O-90 falls in love with him, becomes jealous of I-330 and illegally conceives a child by him; U secretly reads his diary, falls in love with him and informs on the other revolutionaries, thus affecting the outcome of the story. One can explore the contrast

between illusion and reality—D-503’s initial understanding of the state and the revolutionary movement, and his ultimate realization that he has been used by both. (Kern 13)

The underlying subplots mentioned above are additional elements of protest that contribute to the overall message of social protest conveyed in the novel. As the resistance of the MEPHI in the novel escalates with the destruction of parts of the Green Wall and I-330’s coercion of D-503 as the Builder, these other elements similarly communicate the message of protest.

The final words of the novel, however, leave this message unclear. Although it appears that D-503 is no longer protesting One State, his final words act as an invitation to the reader to appeal to his or her reason having now read D-503’s diary:

There is still chaos, howling, corpses, wild beasts, and—unfortunately—a significant number of ciphers betraying reason in the western quarters. But, across the city, on the fortieth avenue, they have managed to construct a temporary wall of high-voltage waves. And I hope we will win. More than that: I know we will win. Because reason should win. (Zamyatin, *We* 203)

This brings up the important issue of the title—*We*. Zamyatin’s use of the first-person plural pronoun functions not only in its purpose of talking about the ciphers as a collective, but it also snares the reader as a participant. “And I hope *we* will win. More than that: I know *we* will win.” Even though we are meant to believe that D-503 has no recollection of his resistance to One State, writing it off as a sickness, the reader only recalls this opposition. In that context, these two sentences can be interpreted as the reader wishes. Which “we” does the reader select: the “we” of One State’s so-called reason or the “we” of the MEPHI protesters? As Gary Kern states, “*We* . . . would hardly cause a mass revolution, but it might start a little revolution in the mind of each

reader” (20). It is difficult to say which “we” D-503 means for us to join, but in the context of postrevolutionary Russia, Zamyatin’s intent appears to be clear: *We* must not let One State–like principles thrive.

IV. Comparing Dystopic Protest in *We* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

There are many comparisons to be made between *We* and Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Here I will focus on the parallel elements in each that serve as evidence that dystopia is a form of protest literature. The myriad linkages between the two texts has been widely acknowledged in scholarship, often also incorporating Aldous Huxley’s 1932 novel, *Brave New World*. Speaking of the similarities between the three, Brown states,

Some of these are surface and obvious: for instance, Zamyatin’s benevolent dictator appears in Huxley’s work as the World Controller and in Orwell’s as Big Brother; the ‘mephi’ outside the wall in *We* have their counterpart in Huxley’s ‘savage reservation’ and in Orwell’s ‘proles.’ What is more important and perhaps not so obvious is that all three books share an implicit assumption: that the more complex and highly organized a society becomes, the less free are its individual members. All three works assume the direction of modern European society is toward larger and more complex organization, and that the regimented world of Ford, Taylor, or the proletarian extremists will result at last in the disappearance of the individual human being in favor of the mass. (39)

It is precisely against this “favor of the mass” over the individual that Winston Smith, Julia, D-503, and I-330 protest in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *We*. Because of love (an individual affliction), Winston and D-503 become more opposed to blind compliance.

In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Winston, unlike D-503, questions the world around him even before becoming driven to subversion by his love for Julia. This is in part owing to his occupation in the Records