

“2061” by Lev Neymotin

A Mirror of the Future: Living Inside the Soft Totalitarianism of Tomorrow

Review - Essay

Preface

This review is about a **book that doesn't really exist yet** — a *virtual book* called **2061**. It was imagined as a modern version of George Orwell's famous novel *1984*, written for our time. Orwell's book warned people in 1949 about what could happen if governments used fear, control, and lies to rule over people's minds.

In *1984*, the story takes place 36 years after Orwell wrote it. Following the same pattern, this project looks **36 years ahead from today**:

1948 → 1984

2025 → 2061

So, *2061* tries to imagine what might happen to freedom, language, and truth if today's social and political changes continued to grow in the same direction.

The story begins in **2025**, when an **openly communist mayor** is elected in New York City — a moment that starts a slow, but deep, change in American life. Step by step, ideas about fairness, safety, and kindness are turned into tools of control.

People are not forced to obey by fear, as in Orwell's world, but by the pressure to “be nice,” “agree,” and “never offend.” By the year 2061, the country has turned into a new society called **Zohrania**, ruled by an ideology named **Zohranism** — a mix of extreme equality, emotional control, and moral preaching. Its main rule is: “*Conflict is cruelty; agreement is virtue.*”

This imagined society teaches that kindness is more important than truth, and feelings are more real than facts. People no longer argue — they “harmonize.” They do not think — they “align.” They don't have freedom — they have “emotional safety.” Everything sounds gentle and good, but it hides a quiet, total control over the human mind.

This review treats *2061* as if it were a real novel. It describes its plot, characters, and language, and it explains what the story tells us about today's world. It is meant as both **a warning and a mirror** — showing how easily a society that values comfort over honesty can lose its freedom without even noticing.

Readers of all ages can think of *2061* as an experiment: What would happen if *1984* were rewritten in the language of 2025 — not about fear and force, but about emotions, approval, and kindness used as new forms of power?

I. Opening Reflections — When Dystopia Becomes Documentary

In *2061*, Lev Neymotin achieves something uncanny: he transforms Orwell's *1984* from prophecy into post-mortem. Where Orwell warned of truth crushed by fear, Neymotin depicts a world where truth dissolves in comfort—where the population of the once-free West willingly trades meaning for harmony.

The novel begins with a historical calculation: $1984 - 1948 = 36$; $2025 + 36 = 2061$.

The symmetry is intentional. Orwell’s dystopia looked 36 years ahead from his present; Neymotin’s looks 36 years ahead from ours. But the symmetry ends there. The world of *2061* is not ruled by a Big Brother—it is ruled by a smiling crowd.

The story’s seed is sown in **2025**, when a self-declared “communist of compassion” becomes mayor of New York City. His ideology—equal parts guilt, collectivism, and therapeutic language—spreads across America, first through cities, then suburbs, and finally the countryside. By *2061*, the United States no longer exists; the continent has been absorbed into **Zohrania**, a “post-Western cooperative” governed by the faith of **Zohranism**.

II. The World of Zohrania — Harmony Through Obedience

Zohranism is not religion but *theology without God*. It is a system that replaces moral choice with emotional alignment. Its central teaching—“Conflict is cruelty; agreement is virtue”—turns civic life into a form of mass meditation.

The reader’s guide through this world is **N.N.**, a middle-aged man whose name is an abbreviation of “Neutrally Normal.” He works as a **Reconciliation Technician** in the Ministry of Harmony, responsible for correcting “emotional inconsistencies” in historical archives. His world is one where even silence must signal approval. On the wall of his small apartment hangs the national slogan, printed in iridescent letters that change color with the room’s temperature:
“You Are Heard Because You Agree.”

The first chapter opens at dawn, as the city broadcasts its daily “Emotional Weather Report.”
“The People’s Mood Today: Brightly Concerned. Citizens are encouraged to display solidarity smiles until 14:00.” Even the sky seems cooperative; drones spray a faint mist of lavender to “calm urban tension.”

III. Language as Habitat — The 2061 Dictionary

Language is the oxygen of Zohrania, and its corruption is complete. Neymotin’s *2061 Dictionary*—interspersed throughout the novel—serves as both comic relief and existential horror. Each entry reads like an algorithmic gospel, turning virtues into their parodies:

Word	Old Meaning	New Meaning (Zohranian Definition)
Freedom	Self-determination	The joy of agreeing with all
Truth	Objective fact	Emotional coherence shared by many
Tolerance	Acceptance of difference	Refusal to notice difference
Peace	Absence of conflict	Absence of disagreement
Love	Devotion to another	Dissolution of the self in others
God	Transcendent being	The State’s benevolent reflection of your feelings
Dissent	Speaking one’s mind	A treatable disturbance
Critical Thinking	Analysis of claims	Suspicion of one’s own doubts

These redefinitions are the novel’s heartbeat. Every page vibrates with their irony. In Zohrania, language no longer connects people—it anesthetizes them.

IV. The Five Inversions — How Civilization Reversed Itself

Neymotin structures *2061* around five grand inversions: Education, Media, Economy, Freedom, and Science. Each is a mirror turned inside out.

1. Education — ZoEd

Education in Zohrania is “empathic conditioning.” Children learn to read not through phonetics but “mood recognition.” “Blue words are sad, red are passionate, and gray are safe,” a teacher explains. “Literacy is emotional fluency.”

History is rewritten daily; mathematics has been re-framed as “Equality Geometry,” where every triangle must be declared isosceles to avoid “shape privilege.” Students who question this are reassigned to “Re-Sensitivity Units.”

N.N. recalls his youth: “We were taught not to remember but to *understand that remembering hurts someone*. I learned to forget beautifully.”

2. Press and News — ZoMedia

The Ministry of Harmony replaced journalism with “Moodcasting.” News anchors do not report—they soothe. “A meteor struck the coast today, reminding citizens of our shared fragility. Authorities thank the meteor for its unifying role.”

Each story concludes with the national refrain: “It could have been worse, and therefore it is good.” N.N. works occasionally with these broadcasts, editing adjectives to match the government’s *Mood Curve Index*. When a protest erupts, he replaces “unrest” with “participatory healing.” Facts are too sharp for Harmony.

3. Economy — ZoEco

Private property was not banned—it was “liberated.” Citizens now “share stewardship of all resources in the spirit of equitable humility.” In practice, this means no one owns anything except their guilt. Factories produce “affirmations” instead of goods; the most profitable industry is Virtue Analytics. “Every worker receives a monthly Moral Dividend,” N.N. reads from a memo, “adjusted for attitude compliance.”

It is socialism rebranded as empathy capitalism, where feelings are currency and worth is measured by emotional congruence.

4. Freedom — ZoFreed

Freedom has survived, but only in ritual form. Once a week, citizens participate in the “Free Choice Ceremony.” They enter polling booths to choose among identical options: “YES,” “YEA,” or “I AGREE.” This act, televised live, renews the illusion of democracy. “Choice is sacred,” the announcer says. “Uniformity is the proof of sincerity.” Those who abstain are not punished—they are “comforted” in rehabilitation centers designed to help them “rediscover their alignment.”

5. Science and Literature — ZoSci and ZoLit

In Zohrania, research is governed by “Consensus Creation.” Hypotheses are accepted when they “feel right.” “Gravity,” says an official scientist, “was an oppressive metaphor. The State now supports levity.” In the arts, all literature ends with a “Collective Resolution.” No novel may conclude in solitude or ambiguity.

When N.N. secretly reads a forbidden pre-Zohranian poem, he experiences an emotion he cannot name: “The words did not heal. They trembled. They refused to be kind.” That moment—his first unmediated reaction—marks the novel’s quiet turning point.

V. Living the Ordinary Day — A Walk Through Zohrania

To read *2061* is to inhabit its textures: the buzzing of drones dispensing aromatherapeutic mist; the omnipresent choral hum of “Unity Stations” playing harmonized mantras; the sight of citizens performing random acts of apology in public squares.

N.N. walks through the city: “Everyone was smiling. Some smiled from joy, some from duty. A few smiled because they feared their faces might betray a question.” The architecture mirrors the ideology—every building slightly concave, as if bowing. Even the traffic lights are reprogrammed: green for “Go Together,” red for “Pause in Reflection,” yellow for “Proceed Empathetically.”

At lunchtime, he visits the “Free Expression Café,” where patrons sit in silence while AI translators reformulate their sentences into “emotionally safe equivalents.” “Your phrase ‘I disagree’ has been rendered as ‘I seek deeper resonance.’ Congratulations, you have maintained Harmony.”

In such scenes, Neymotin’s satire approaches the absurd precision of Kafka filtered through Silicon Valley. The reader feels the chill of politeness weaponized.

VI. Tone and Technique — Humor as Tragedy

Neymotin’s prose is meticulous and unhurried, blending the **bureaucratic dryness of an internal memo** with the **melancholy lyricism of exile**. Humor flickers constantly, but beneath it lies an ache for civilization’s lost vocabulary. The *2061 Dictionary* entries arrive like bureaucratic psalms—calm, clean, and monstrous.

Each chapter opens with one. Chapter 6 begins: “*Freedom (noun): The state of not needing to choose, as all choices have already been made for your benefit.*” The rhythm of such passages becomes hypnotic. Readers begin to sense the slow erosion of distinction between satire and realism.

VII. Sociopolitical Resonance — The Soft Tyranny of Good Intentions

What makes *2061* terrifying is its plausibility. Neymotin’s Zohrania is not born of coups or gulags but of moral exhaustion. The book argues that when societies elevate **sensitivity above truth**, the machinery of freedom collapses from within. The citizens of Zohrania are not victims—they are believers. They chant, “We agree because we care.”

Every institution, from media to academia, operates under the new catechism: “Reality is unkind unless corrected.” In this sense, *2061* is not merely dystopian fiction but **diagnostic sociology in literary form**. Neymotin has written the pathology report of a civilization that dies of empathy overdose.

VIII. Philosophical Core — The Grammar of the Soul

Like Orwell, Neymotin understands that tyranny begins in grammar. But where Orwell saw words reduced, Neymotin sees them multiplied until they mean nothing. In the final pages, N.N. experiences a brief rebellion—not through action but through a forbidden thought.

He sits by the river, remembering his mother’s voice. “She once told me that love meant to choose someone. I tried to recall the word *choose*. It had no place in our language anymore.”

For one instant, he thinks, *I am*, before correcting himself to *We are*.

The novel ends not with defiance but with the faint pulse of humanity refusing extinction.

IX. Literary Context — From Orwell to the Age of Emotion

If *1984* was the literature of fear, *2061* is the literature of fatigue. It stands in lineage with Orwell, Huxley, and Atwood, but diverges in tone: its villain is not power but *niceness*. Its totalitarianism is **therapeutic**—a dictatorship of comfort.

Neymotin's achievement is not only prophetic but stylistic. He writes as if chronicling the afterlife of Western civilization—its vocabulary still alive, its meaning long dead.

X. Conclusion — The Warning Whispered in a Smile

Reading *2061* is like walking through a museum of our present tendencies, only with the labels switched. It is a novel of quiet apocalypse, where words decay faster than morals, and people become prisoners of their own virtue.

Neymotin's message is not shouted—it is whispered through the machinery of politeness: "When truth offends, we silence truth and call it kindness."

In the final analysis, *2061* is less a work of fiction than a moral instrument. It does not predict—it reflects. The reflection is cold, persuasive, and heartbreakingly recognizable. Like Orwell, Neymotin forces the reader to confront a future that has already begun.

Editorial Note

While *2061* functions as a novel of ideas, its force lies equally in the texture of its invented world — the bureaucratic voice, the sterilized empathy, the rhythm of an ordinary day turned ceremonial. The following materials, reproduced from the book's fictional archives, offer a closer view of that world. They are not "chapters" in the narrative sense, but **documents that survive its ideology**: official communications, private fragments, and public decrees that collectively form the moral atmosphere of Zohrania.

Presented here as *Voices and Documents from the Age of Harmony*, these excerpts invite the reader to experience the quiet perfection — and underlying terror — of a civilization that replaced truth with comfort.

Addendum A: Voices and Documents from the Age of Harmony

1. Morning Moodcast (Broadcast Transcript)

Department of Harmony – National Broadcast #114, April 15, 2061

Mood Index: *Brightly Concerned*

ANNOUNCER:

“Good morning, citizens of Zohrania!

The People’s Mood today is *Brightly Concerned*.

Gentle rainfall has reminded us to appreciate shared fragility.

The Ministry thanks the clouds for their solidarity contribution.

The approved color is **Pale Azure**, symbolizing mindful calm.

Please wear Azure ribbons until 14:00 to maintain alignment.

Remember: disagreement changes emotional weather.

Stay Kind. Stay Clear. Stay Harmonized.”

(Background chorus hums softly: “We Feel, Therefore We Are.”)

2. ZoEd Classroom Directive

Ministry of ZoEd Circular – “Literacy Through Feeling,” Revision #9

1. **Letters** divide; therefore, transition fully to **MoodMarks**.
2. Students must identify five emotional hues:
 -  Blue – Gentle Sadness
 -  Green – Collective Safety
 -  Yellow – Anticipatory Empathy
 -  Red – Righteous Warmth
 -  White – Neutral Approval
3. Testing measures *emotional congruence*, not factual recall.
4. Avoid reading texts suggesting individuality or loneliness.

Reminder: Independent thinking = unshared feeling. Prevent it early.

3. Internal Memo: Ministry of Harmony

For Authorized Reconciliation Technicians Only

Subject: Reclassification of Historical Events (Domestic)

Replace in all archives:

- “Famine” → “Nutritional Patience”
- “Rebellion” → “Unscheduled Enthusiasm”
- “Censorship” → “Empathic Editing”
- “Unemployment” → “Recreation Redistribution”

Ensure replacements maintain **Comfort Symmetry** (Clause 7A).

Motto: Truth feels better when everyone agrees.

4. Diary of N.N.

Recovered Personal Entry – April 21, 2061

The apartment is quiet. The drones have finished spraying lavender.

I found an old printed book. The pages were rough, alive.

It used words I had never felt before.

One word—*love*—did not mean sameness. It meant choosing.

I whispered it aloud.
The wall light turned amber: “Emotional Deviation.”
I smiled until it returned to green.

 5. Department of Harmony – Daily Communiqué

TODAY’S CITIZEN GUIDELINES

- 1. Disagreement reduces National Empathy. Report non-aligned tone.
- 2. Apology Corners installed citywide—use daily for moral hygiene.
- 3. Social Transparency Week begins Monday: upload private thoughts for Peer Review.

REMEMBER:

-  *Harmony is Health.*
-  *Health is Agreement.*
-  *Agreement is Freedom.*

 6. Extract from the 2061 Constitution (Version 14.2)

PREAMBLE

We, the People of Zohrania, united in shared compassion,
establish this Constitution to protect all citizens
from the burden of choice and the cruelty of opinion.

ARTICLE I – The individual exists as the most beautiful form of the collective.

ARTICLE II – Speech shall remain free from harm, and therefore subject to correction.

ARTICLE III – The pursuit of happiness shall not interfere with the happiness of others,
and shall be collectively managed.

 7. Final Scene Fragment: “The River of Agreement”

(Last page of 2061)

N.N. sat by the river. The towers bowed toward one another; the sky hummed with consensus.
Across the city, speakers whispered: “*We Are Enough.*” For a heartbeat he thought, *I am.*
The thought glowed—wild, unshared, alive. Then the speakers rose in volume, drowning the silence.

He closed his eyes and smiled. And in that quiet rebellion, unseen by all,
something in him remained human.

Addendum B: Selected Entries from *The 2061 Dictionary*

Term	Definition (Official Zohranian Usage)	Illustrative Quote
Harmony (n.)	The alignment of emotions through removal of individuality	“He was out of Harmony and thus out of humanity.”
FeelProof (adj.)	Verified by collective emotional response	“The Minister’s statement was FeelProof—everyone wept.”
KindThink (v.)	To neutralize a harmful idea by replacing it with comfort	“Before speaking, KindThink your words.”
Equiluv (v.)	To demonstrate equality through unconditional approval	“They Equiluvved the policy into law.”
Self (n.)	A deprecated concept retained for sentimental reference	“The Self was a pre-Zohranian myth of isolation.”