GEORGE ORWELL AND THE TREASON OF THE "CLERKS"

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by

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ABSTRACT

In my "documentary approach" to Orwell scholarship, I investigate two "opposed" critical approaches, the historicist and formalist, to determine the extent to which unexamined presuppositions by the critic influence his or her interpretation. As an essayist, Orwell was given to polemicism; as an author, didacticism. This necessitates an examination of the historical context of Orwell's views. The "formalist" critic, for instance, in discussing Nineteen Eighty-Four, will emphasize other works in the anti-Utopian tradition, and tend to neglect the influence of James Burnham and Bertrand Russell. In opposition to this residual legacy of the New Criticism, I emphasize Russell's (largely neglected) influence in showing that the empiricist tradition, and its concomitant concern with the question of objective truth, is vital to an understanding of Orwell's "politics of the plain style." The influence of empiricism and the sceptical tradition (in general) and Bertrand Russell (in particular) on Orwell's politics is traced, as well as the relevance of empiricism to Orwell's rhetoric, and his philosophical interest in the problem of objectivity, a crucial yet little discussed motif of Nineteen Eighty-Four, and which further argues for the significance of the "Benda context" in the "construal" of a more "reasonable" interpretation of the novel.

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CONTENTS

The people will feel no better if the stick with which they are beaten is labelled 'the people's stick.'

--Michael Bakunin

There is nothing more absurd than for a Man to set up for a Critick, without a good Insight into all the Parts of Learning.

--Joseph Addison

Preface:

In his 1984 introduction to the study The Crystal Spirit, George Woodcock notes that the "thesis mills of the universities...[seem] more closely related to the academic need to produce works of original scholarship than to any close understanding of either Orwell's work or his intentions."[1] This failure of understanding, ironically enough, is often a consequence of "close reading," with the historical context ignored. In Fables of Identity, the great formalist critic Northrop Frye admits that an interpretation of Byron's poetry which ignored the biographical or social context would be inadequate.[2] My approach to Orwell will, however, not be narrowly or reductively historicist--it is based on the premise that different interpretive tools should be employed, depending on the subject of one's investigation. The distinction between "intrinsic" and "extrinsic" factors in literary criticism (as formulated by Wellek and Warren in their handbook, Theory of Literature) remains as a dividing line between critics today, who charge each other with "narrowly historicist" or "narrowly formalist" approaches to interpretation. At the outset, I disclaim any a priori preference for one methodology over the other. A "reasonable" critical methodology will proceed

from a rejection of the exclusionary distinction between the world and the text. In The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship, Bakhtin/Medvedev argues that formalism denies "the importance of [extrinsic] factors for literature, their ability to directly affect the intrinsic nature of literature... In a word, formalism is not able to admit that an external social factor acting on literature could become an intrinsic factor of literature itself..."[3] Nor did Bakhtin argue for a narrowly historicist approach; he attempts to bring each adversary to terms with the other. In The Dialogic Imagination, Bakhtin states his position lucidly: "the study of verbal art can and must overcome the divorce between an abstract 'formal' approach and an equally abstract 'ideological' approach. Form and content in discourse are one."[4] He concludes with the reminder that "verbal discourse is a social phenomenon."[5]

Beyond this tension between different methodologies, when we consider individual critics, we learn that the preoccupations, and, as some would have it, the "ideologies" of scholars, determine their approach to, and judgments upon, the work in question. This attitudinizing approach often neglects to consider the relevance of the critic's vantage-point to that of the author. Some scholars err in making exaggerated claims for the inclusiveness of their approach, or tacitly presume that the author they are "re-presenting" shares their preoccupations. A perusal of recent

Orwell scholarship confirms this: we are confronted with such titles as Primal Dream and Primal Crime: Orwell's Development As A Psychological Novelist,[6] and George Orwell and the Problem of Authentic Existence.[7]

While a variety of critical vantage-points is, of course, admissible, the presumption by many critics of the primacy of their approach should not be unquestioningly accepted. Since Orwell's preoccupation was primarily social or political, any discussion of Nineteen Eighty-Four is constrained to recognize the historical context. Raymond Williams has remarked that "nearly all theoretical discussions of art since the Industrial Revolution have been crippled by the assumed opposition between art and the actual organization of society..."[8] Or, as Orwell put it: "The opinion that art should have nothing to do with politics is itself a political attitude" (CEJL 1:26).

At the same time, the purely sociological or biographical approach taken by many scholars, who wish to profess their admiration for their "fundamentally decent" or "politically correct" culture-hero, is also open to the imputation of reductiveness; as Frye would maintain, such approaches err in discussing the meaning of literary language by reducing it to "intentional discourse." We are confronted, then, with two complementary approaches--to employ Orwell's distinction from "Writers and Leviathan"--the "aesthetic" and the "political," which are rarely

subsumed under the unifying vision of one critic. This thesis will be an implicit indictment of inadequate, limited, or narrow critical standpoints resulting from attempts to "procrusteanize" the vision of the author according to the preoccupations of the critic. Despite recent arguments concerning the impossibility of attaining objectivity, all viewpoints--even if we concede the premise--are not thereby rendered equally "subjective," nor are we prohibited from identifying unreasonable, biassed or ill-informed interpretations.

It needs no sagacity to discover that two and two make four; but to persist in maintaining this obvious position, if all the fashion, authority, hypocrisy, and venality of mankind were arrayed against it, would require a considerable effort of personal courage, and would soon leave a man in a very formidable minority. --William Hazlitt

Introduction

John Atkins's study, George Orwell, is a tribute to its subject in its gratifyingly plain language, but Atkins employs dubious dichotomies in asserting that Orwell's uniqueness lay "in his having the mind of an intellectual and the feelings of a common man."[9] I would alternatively affirm that Orwell's uniqueness lay in having the mind of an intellectual and feelings for the common man. The obverse side of Orwell's anti-authoritarianism is his egalitarianism. Orwell's message is two-sided: while we should fear Big Brother, we must place our hope in the proles.

Orwell's art is shaped by the political context of its creation:

> Of course, the invasion of literature by politics was bound to happen...even if the special problem of totalitarianism had never arisen, because we have developed a sort of compunction which our grandfathers did not have, an awareness of the enormous injustice and misery of the world, and a guilt-stricken feeling that one ought to be doing something about it, which makes a purely

> aesthetic attitude towards life impossible (CEJL 4:464).

Orwell made a moral decision to employ his art in the service of his political views, affirming that art entails the desire to influence the reader, to impose a system of values. Orwell's artistic credo anticipates Wayne Booth's The Rhetoric of Fiction by affirming that the author seeks to persuade the reader to accept the world-view or moral outlook of the "implied author." Orwell's aesthetics, his view of literary style, both reflect his self-appointed role as defender of objective truth, especially against the ideological abstractions propagated by officialdom.

Hayden White recently remarked that "all knowledge produced in the human and social sciences lends itself to use by some ideology better than it does to some others."[10] Orwell's writings provide a case-in-point. One easily recalls the numerous newspapers and magazines in 1984 commemorating his best-known work by disseminating views on its "message." The variety of disparate interpretations was predictably great. The viewpoints Orwell is held to endorse are often diametrically opposed. Isaac Deutscher, in his controversial essay on Orwell, relates a telling anecdote, a recommendation from a news vendor that he read Nineteen Eighty-Four, a few weeks before Orwell's death:

> 'Have you read this book? You must read it,

> sir. Then you will know why we must drop the atom bomb on the Bolshies!'
> ...poor Orwell, could he ever imagine that his own book would become so prominent an item in the programme of Hate Week? [11]

A novel with an avowed didactic aim is often instructive for the incompatible and contradictory lessons that its various readers derive from it. The "lessons" to be learned in the sphere of political didacticism can be even more disparate, and, in the case of Nineteen Eighty-Four, contradictory. Yet, with Orwell, there is a further complication. This author's oeuvre has ironically been appropriated by ideologues in the service of what Orwell, (as a self-confessed man "of the Left") would describe as the cause of "reaction." Orwell devoted much of his career as an essayist to opposing the efforts of literary intellectuals to assimilate a cultural artifact into their ideological "system." The appropriation of Nineteen Eighty-Four by the very groups Orwell satirized is testimony to the "truth-value" of his thesis that objective truth is in peril as a consequence of the efforts of those whom he called the "intelligentsia" or the "intellectuals."

According to Lewis Coser, the term "intellectual" came into general usage after the Dreyfus affair, a cause célèbre which entailed a new view of the intellectual's role in opposition to the state.[12] Coser's conception of the intellectual reveals this adversarial stance:

> When intellectuals set concern for abstract justice above respect for the desires of the national judiciary, they were subversive of the social order. [They became] special custodians of abstract ideas like reason and justice and truth, jealous guardians of moral standards that are too often ignored in the market places and the houses of power.[13]

This, of course, is the tradition within which Orwell resides. It is represented in the Orwellian plain style by a declaration from Albert Camus:

> Artists of the past could at least keep silent in the face of tyranny. The tyrannies of today are improved; they no longer admit of silence or neutrality. One has to take a stand, be either for or against. Well, in that case, I am against.[14]

Yet Coser also notes the aim of a class of intellectuals to "legitimize power," a relationship "in which intellectuals fashion a system of symbols, tissues of legitimating ideas, to clothe the exercise of power."[15] Thus, we are confronted with two antithetical roles filled by these groups: that of disseminating ideology, on the one hand, and unmasking it, on the other. In contemporary terms, we may refer to these groups as "policy-oriented" and "value-oriented": terminology that derives from a 1973 study undertaken by the U.S. Trilateral Commission. This study, bearing the Orwellian title "The Crisis of Democracy," was undertaken by the "liberal" contingent among U.S. élites,

and confirms Orwell's warning concerning totalitarian trends in democracies, as it decries the exercise of democratic rights by dissident groups and individuals, suggesting ways of returning them to a condition of political passivity. These "policy-oriented" functionaries are (in Antonio Gramsci's phrase) "experts in legitimation." In La Trahison Des Clercs, Julien Benda provides the historical context for the shift in the nineteenth century to an accommodation with power that characterized the journalists, academics, and opinion-makers whose specific function, Benda tells us, is to disseminate official ideology:

> The modern realists are the moralists of realism. For them, the act which makes the State strong is invested with a moral character by the fact that it is so, and this whatever the act may be. The evil which serves politics ceases to be evil and becomes good.[16]

Or, as Orwell put it: "there is almost no kind of outrage--torture, the use of hostages, forgery, assassination, the bombing of civilians--which does not change its moral color when it is committed by 'our' side" (CEJL 3:419). Linguist Noam Chomsky allies himself with Orwell's position as a "committed" writer by revealing the affiliations of these "clerks." He points out that the distinction between those who are "policy-" and those who are "value-oriented," was invented, ironically enough, by the ideologists themselves: "It is interesting that the term 'value-oriented' should be

used to refer to those who challenge the structure of authority, with the implication that it is improper, offensive and dangerous to be guided by such values as truth and honesty."[17] Benda concocts a dramatized declaration of their aims: "We are the servants of a political party, of a nation, only instead of serving it with a sword, we serve it with a pen. We are the spiritual militia of the material."[18] Orwell (and more recently Chomsky) documented what Benda originally decried: that the traditional "adversary relationship" between the intellectual and the state has been supplanted by an accomodation with power by the intellectuals themselves. A recent historical study articulates this phenomenon: "The intellectuals, abandoning the sacral exploitation of their monopolistic knowledge, now offer it for sale on the open market...[making] commodities of the ideologies they produce...."[19] This context is relevant to contemporary scholarship, even in what are commonly taken to be the aesthetic or "purely interpretive" discussions of literary criticism. To take an example, in a recent essay on Orwell, Norman Podhoretz remarks without qualification that

> Orwell in every stage of his development was almost always right about one thing: the character and quality of the left-wing intellectuals among whom he lived and to whom he addressed himself as a political writer...whatever ideas were fashionable on the Left at any given moment were precisely

> the ones he had the greatest compulsion to criticize.[20]

I cite Podhoretz to illustrate two signal points. First, the current epistemological angst that afflicts contemporary scholarship in the humanities is one that recognizes that "...contemplation presupposes action and theory presupposes practice, so too, interpretation presupposes politics as a condition of its possibility as a social activity."[21] Orwell himself noted that "our whole attitude towards literature is coloured by loyalties which we at least intermittently realize to be non-literary"(CEJL 4:463). Secondly, the various techniques of propaganda which these "clerks" employ are calculated to prevent rather than encourage discussion of substantive issues. The pervasive dissemination of "disinformation" achieves its intended effect of marginalizing the viewpoint of an ideologically "unacceptable" minority of non-aligned or "value-oriented" writers.

For instance, a scholar who expends energy responding to the interpretations of Podhoretz and his ilk is unlikely to influence, much less convince, those who have prompted his rebuttal. The absence of fundamental, "agreed-upon" premises encourages honest critics to become embroiled in critical controversies which are wholly factitious: hence the level of sophistication of critical discussion, like that of the political realm, is degraded. The "ideological"

critic subsumes his aesthetic interpretations under his political world-view, and often advances viewpoints which, loyal to the principles of doublethink, he does not sincerely believe. Podhoretz, for instance, claims that if Orwell were alive today he would be a staunch "neo-conservative," a position that can only be maintained by misleadingly selective quotation. On one occasion, he deigns to cite only the beginning of a passage, not acknowledging that Orwell concluded an anti-socialist diatribe by declaring in a manifestly non-neo-conservative manner that "I do not see how one can oppose Fascism except by working for the overthrow of capitalism, starting, of course, in one's own country" (CEJL 1:284). In her recent study, The Orwell Mystique, Daphne Patai calls attention to the ethical implications of Podhoretz's technique: "When Orwell's views do not match his own, Podhoretz seems content to treat them as inexplicable, or as curious lapses; when they do coincide, he holds them up as semisacred writ."[22] A method so clearly disingenuous can plausibly be linked with Podhoretz's defenses of the indefensible in the contemporary political arena. Orwell has already explained this phenomenon:

> When one praises a book for political reasons, one may be emotionally sincere, in the sense that one does feel strong approval of it, but also it often happens that party solidarity demands a plain lie. Anyone used

> to reviewing books for political periodicals is well aware of this (CEJL 4:464).

Podhoretz's evaluation, however suspect to those who observe his devotion to half-truths in other areas of thought, bears the distinction of being the first essay included in the collection from Zack Bowen's "Modern British Literature" series, while rebuttals to the article, such as that by Christopher Hitchens (who has called attention to the "clumsy elisions" in Podhoretz's citations) languish in the back issues of the periodicals in which they originally appeared.

Speaking as a "value-oriented" writer, Orwell points out that the integrity of the modern writer or journalist is

> thwarted by the general drift of society rather than by active persecution... Everything in our age conspires to turn the writer, and every other kind of artist as well, into a minor official, working on themes handed to him from above, and never telling what seems to him the whole of the truth (CEJL 4:82).

Orwell's revelations were of more than merely topical import. Today, according to Chomsky, journalists and columnists

> develop a feel for what is acceptable, and self-censorship thus occurs on the basis of learned and understood limits of subject matter, tone, balance, and the like [which] combine to provide an intellectual milieu in which few serious questions will be raised about sensitive issues."[23]

It is appropriate that the sole epigraph to Volume One of Chomsky's foreign affairs study entitled The Political Economy of Human Rights is a quote from Orwell's essay, "Notes on Nationalism": "The nationalist not only does not disapprove of atrocities committed by his own side, but he has a remarkable capacity for not even hearing about them." By contrast, the iconoclastic role of the non-partisan writer is exemplified by his refusal to countenance half-truths. When asked to address a conservative group protesting Soviet intervention in Yugoslavia, Orwell declined, remarking that

> I cannot associate myself with an essentially conservative body which claims to defend democracy in Europe but has nothing to say about British imperialism. It seems to me that one can only denounce the crimes now being committed in Poland, Jugoslavia, etc. if one is equally insistent on ending Britain's unwanted rule in India" (CEJL 4:49).

The controversial subtext of such novels as Burmese Days is often dismissed by critics whose interpretations are marred by the "distancing effect" that the march of history affords. In the present, to speak of "British imperialism" in India, or the heroism of such figures as Gandhi, is largely accepted as a matter of course. Thus, in the present, it is instructive to heed Orwell's contemporary counterpart, Noam Chomsky, who also criticizes the foreign

policy of his own country, including the role of the intellectuals in reproducing state doctrine:

> My attitude toward the war in Vietnam was based on the principle that aggression is wrong, including the aggression of the United States. There's only a small number of people in American academic circles who could even hear those words. They wouldn't know what I'm referring to when I talk about American aggression in South Vietnam. There's no such event in official history, though there clearly was in the real world. It seems difficult for elite intellectuals to believe that my opposition... was based on the same principle that led me to oppose the Russian invasions of Czechoslovakia or Afghanistan.[24]

This admirably exemplifies the position of the adversarial writer, in the tradition of Voltaire, Jonathan Swift, and William Hazlitt.

It is a most encouraging thing to hear a human voice when fifty thousand gramophones are playing the same tune.
--Orwell

Nineteen Eighty-Four and Benda's Clercs

As we have seen, Orwell's oppositional role was marked by considerable hostility towards British literary intellectuals whose aim was to reproduce and disseminate official ideology. This concern provides a major motif for Nineteen Eighty-Four. The obvious conflict between "freedom and totalitarianism" assumes another guise in Orwell's writing: "the intellectuals versus the people," as Orwell depicts the former's mandate to justify hierarchical social forms and unjustified privilege.

Orwell's hostility to the "policy-oriented" intellectuals is inextricably linked with his view of the masses as the "essentially decent" victims of the ministrations of the ideologues. George Woodcock justly notes some ambivalence in Orwell's attitude toward the masses, but I believe he overstates the case when he contends that

> he satirized (my italics) the masses in the proles of Oceania, content with their beer and the synthetic sentimental songs disseminated by the Party, but entirely unresponsive to the problems that disturb Winston and Julia... by the end, he may have

> also lost faith in the workers as a significant social force.[25]

These two claims are not identical: Orwell may indeed have "lost faith" in the workers as a social force while refraining from any satirical intention. Orwell's identification with the masses, as I will show, is fundamental to a valid interpretation of Nineteen Eighty-Four. Orwell's solidarity with the "proles" prompted him to delineate their degraded condition, but as a means of assailing a polity which was specifically engineered to "ghettoize" the proles. They are depicted in a condition of apathy in order to illustrate their victimization by the Party, which has rendered them quite effectively "de-politicized." Emmanuel Goldstein's "subversive" tract speaks of the treason of the intellectuals, who, by dint of specialized knowledge, formulate an ideology subservient to power:

> The new aristocracy was made up for the most part of bureaucrats, scientists, technicians, trade-union organizers, publicity experts, sociologists, teachers, journalists, and professional politicians. These people, whose origins lay in the salaried middle class, and the upper grades of the working class, had been shaped and brought together by the barren world of monopoly industry and centralized government.[26]

By re-working the motif best represented by Huxley's Brave New World, Orwell's "prolecult" reaffirms Huxley's warning that "a really efficient totalitarian state would... control a population of slaves who do not have to be coerced because they love their servitude."[27] Nineteen years after Benda's cri de coeur, Orwell recognized that it was the clercs, not the masses, who were the source of the problem:

> the British intelligentsia have... been infected by habits of thought that derive ultimately from Machiavelli. All the cults that have been fashionable in the last dozen years, Communism, Fascism, and pacifism, are in the last analysis, forms of power worship (CEJL 3:22).

Orwell declared, in opposition to this "political realism," that "...might is not right. It is here that the gulf between the intelligentsia and the common people is widest" (CEJL 3:22). He elaborates this elsewhere:

> The power-worship which is the new religion of Europe, and which has infected the intelligentsia, has never touched the common people. They have never caught up with power politics. The 'realism' which is preached in Japanese and Italian newspapers would horrify them (CEJL 2:78).

A few years later, however, Orwell becomes alarmed by his recognition of a growing trend, a direct consequence of the politicisation of the intelligentsia:

> ...what is new is the growing acquiescence of ordinary people in the doctrines of expediency, the callousness of public opinion in the face of the most atrocious crimes and sufferings, and the black-out memory which allows blood-stained murderers to turn into public benefactors overnight if 'military necessity' demands it (CEJL 3:122).

But this trend, Orwell believes, is a function of the ideological messages being transmitted to the English people, who, possessing no inherent immunity to indoctrination, come to share the callous assumptions of empire that the writer in the antihegemonic tradition finds abhorrent.

This context makes clear, once again, that Orwell's proles are victimized by the Huxleyan "distractions" implemented by the Party:

> And the Ministry had not only to supply the multifarious needs of the Party, but also to repeat the whole operation at a lower level for the benefit of the proletariat... Here were produced rubbishy newspapers containing almost nothing except sport, crime, and astrology, sensational five-cent novellettes, films oozing with sex, and sentimental songs which were composed entirely by mechanical means...[28]

As a consequence, the proles are not to be blamed for their "contentment" with the distractions being fed to them--according to the novel, "orthodoxy is unconsciousness," that is, engineered unconsciousness, or what Walter Lippmann termed "the manufacture of consent." Pace Woodcock, Orwell's

purpose concerning the proles was not satirical. Winston comes to realize that the proles do not deserve the contempt with which the Party regards them:

> the proles, it suddenly occurred to him... were not loyal to a party or a country or an idea, they were loyal to one another. For the first time in his life he did not despise the proles or think of them merely as an inert force which would one day spring to life and regenerate the world. The proles had stayed human. They had not become hardened inside.[29]

To Orwell, because power corrupts, it is precisely the disenfranchisement of the masses that accords them their moral worth:

> The mass of the people never get the chance to bring their innate decency into the control of affairs, so that one is almost driven to the cynical thought that men are only decent when they are powerless (CEJL 1:372).

Orwell's sophisticated grasp of how propaganda functions is also under-emphasized by many critics, usually because the "Benda context" is not kept in mind. Orwell knew that it is not necessary that the ideological material be factually inaccurate: a half-truth or a whole truth in a particular context (which renders it a half-truth) is all that is required: "All propaganda's lying, yours or mine/ It's lying even when the facts are true...."[30] Those, such as D.A.N. Jones, who fail to appreciate the multifarious

forms of propaganda, find this verse hard to credit. In the course of delivering his "arguments against Orwell," Jones dismissively remarks of this couplet that "This doesn't make much sense. Some BBC propaganda was truthful and some was lying."[31] Yet, in the essay "Through a Glass, Rosily," Orwell reveals his profound understanding of the nature of different forms of propaganda. Orwell observes that the Axis propagandists effectively used Forster's A Passage to India in their radio broadcasts.

> And as far as I know, they didn't even have to resort to dishonest quotation. Just because the book was essentially truthful, it could be made to serve the purposes of Fascist propaganda. According to Blake, "A truth that's told with bad intent/Beats all the lies you can invent" (CEJL 4:54).

Nineteen Eighty-Four admirably displays various forms of propaganda adumbrated by Jacques Ellul. One form is

> always translated into reality by physical involvement in a tense and over-excited activity. By making the individual participate in this activity, the propagandist releases the internal brakes, the psychological barriers of habit, belief, and judgment.[32]

Thus, what Ellul calls "agitation propaganda" is satirically presented in Hate Week.

Orwell also grasped what Ellul calls "integration propaganda," to which the "value-oriented" intellectual,

Winston Smith, succumbs. In the novel, Julia (as Orwell's feminist critics justly complain) is not Winston's equal--she falls asleep while he is reading The Book to her. However, in some ways Julia was

> far more acute than Winston, and far less susceptible to Party propaganda. Once when he happened in some connexion to mention the war against Eurasia, she startled him by saying casually that in her opinion the war was not happening. The rocket bombs which fell daily on London were probably fired by the Government of Oceania itself, 'just to keep people frightened.'<u>This was an idea that had literally never occurred to him</u>.[33]

This illustrates the counter-intuitive insight of Ellul that many "intellectuals [like Winston Smith] are more sensitive than peasants to integration propaganda. In fact, they share the stereotype of a society even when they are political opponents of the society."[34] The instructiveness of sociological scholarship to Orwell studies is often lost on Orwell's critics, whether defenders or detractors, who often miss the didactic significance of such examples as the above. They typically believe that Winston--the "last man in Europe"--is to be identified with the author. But he is another Orwellian anti-hero, and makes a number of serious errors, including Orwell's injunction that "no one should be branded on the tongue"(CEJL 3:51). Mr. Charington, the shop-owner from whom Winston rents the room in which he and Julia are eventually captured, is eventually revealed to be a

member of the Thought Police, whose faked proletarian accent has disappeared.

Hence we see that a number of sociological studies are of considerable benefit in explicating the novel. Validity in interpretation is predicated upon the construction of a hierarchical arrangement of motifs. The most "reasonable" interpretation requires a recognition of the dominant motif(s). This is preferable to a dissection of the text according to the critics's vantage-point, one which is usually chosen in an a priori manner. A recognition of the admissibility of the biographical and sociological context allows an interpretation based upon a hierarchy of motifs, from the dominant to the less significant. The treason of the intellectuals, as I have argued, is the dominant motif of Nineteen Eighty-Four, which is associated with two subordinate motifs: the ideology of power and the problem of objective truth. This scaffold, of course, should ideally be built as the author would have constructed it, rather than by formulating interpretations which derive from the critic's "favored" approach. A grasp of the relative importance of these motifs (the relation of the parts to the whole) is essential to a more "reasonable" interpretation of the novel.

As an illustration, in debates on Nineteen Eighty-Four, the masochistic elements of the portrayal of Smith's plight, often lead not, as they ought, to an examination of

the relationship between the holders of power and their victims, but to the examination of what the critic regards as a psychic morality play. The well-known view of Anthony West has, I believe, spawned much more heated controversy than such a reductive viewpoint merits. He contends that

> Only the existence of a hidden wound can account for such a remorseless passion... it is possible to see how Orwell's unusual mind was working. Whether he knew it or not (my italics), what he did in 1984 was to send everybody in England to an enormous Crossgates to be as miserable as he had been.[35]

The great convenience of Freudian doctrine is that it can be advanced to buttress interpretations which do not require substantiation by an examination of the "conscious" thought of the author in question. Of course, Orwell's childhood may provide insights into the novel, and his ordeals at St. Cyprian's may be a useful point of departure for explicating the novel. Yet Zwerdling seems to be missing the point in conceding that "Mechanical as is West's application of this thesis, there must be something about it that is right. Otherwise it would have sunk into oblivion rather than producing so many impassioned rebuttals over the years" (my italics).[36] Despite this non-sequitur, Zwerdling is an acute explicator of Orwell, owing to his sophisticated grasp of the political context of Orwell's writing, which renders his judgments less suspect than those

of many of West's supporters, who tend, not surprisingly, to be "conservative by default," that is, uninterested in the political context. As an essayist, Orwell was more of a polemicist and pamphleteer than an aestheticist; he was primarily motivated by a desire to "get a hearing." His art is similarly oriented towards a didactic mode. Thus, any attempt to discuss his thought from some other point of departure, however valid in itself, will inevitably suffer from the critic's limited insight into the social and political context.

The essay "Such, Such Were The Joys" may be adduced as relevant to a discussion of Nineteen Eighty-Four on the reasonable premise that childhood experiences, however trivial from an objective viewpoint, may make deep and lasting impressions upon a sensitive subject. The biographical context can shed light on the anti-authoritarian strain in Orwell's temperament that led him to "left" politics. It seems reasonable to infer that Orwell's experiences at St. Cyprian's contributed to the value-system of one who identified with the individual rather than the state. Yet irrelevancies abound in the dialogue arising from such biographical concerns, while more compelling questions are relegated to the margins. The West camp, discussing the novel from the standpoint of childhood psychology, can hardly be said to provide the final word on the subject. Arrayed against them, the anti-West camp categorically

denies that Orwell had an unhappy childhood, or categorically affirms that he was a modest man not given to aggrandizement of his own experience. The consequence of this "either/or" debate is that many vital insights into Nineteen Eighty-Four, its theme of epistemology and the "will to power," as well as its anatomy of the Cold War, are largely ignored, as has recently been noted in a rare essay on the last-mentioned topic.[37]

The essential question which Anthony West ignores is the query that the novel itself was written to a large extent to answer. Winston Smith poses it to O'Brien: "I understand HOW, I do not understand WHY?" Unlike Huxley, Orwell was interested in the motive of the holders of power, the ideology that transforms the Party into a cohesive unit. A formalist approach is not likely to provide the answer or even to concede the importance of the question in explicating the novel, as it entails the (for them) discomfiting question of "ideology." The second part of the novel depicts the colloquy between O'Brien and Winston Smith as a means of exploring the power motif. The least realistic section of the novel, depicting Smith's enlightenment by a sententious torturer, it is correspondingly the most overtly didactic section of the novel (a fact which the naturalistic descriptions of sadism fail to mask). O'Brien's accomodatingly edifying lecture on the ideology of power,

if not the novel's raison d'être, at least articulates one of its most important and original themes.

The question of literary precursors, of course, cannot be ignored in the examination of Orwell's treatment of the power motif. For this motif, a seldom discussed influence is the Jack London novel, The Iron Heel, which Orwell favorably reviewed in 1945, and which emphasizes the ideological over the economic in its anatomy of power. Orwell's excerpt from London is instructive:

> Many of [the revolutionaries] have ascribed the strength of The Iron Heel to its system of reward and punishment (my italics). This is a mistake... The great driving force of the Oligarchs is the belief that they are doing right (CEJL 4:43).

Orwell remarks approvingly of this passage, that

> London's understanding of the nature of the ruling class--that is, the characteristics which a ruling class must have if it is to survive--went very deep. According to the conventional left-wing view, the 'capitalist' is simply a cynical scoundrel, without honor or courage, and intent only on filling his own pockets. London knew that that view is false (CEJL:4:43).

The employment of manipulative power by London's Oligarch class is closer to the vision of Huxley, where the World Benefactor seeks to promote happiness at the expense of freedom. Orwell's Inner Party, on the other hand, displays no such benevolent designs. Despite the different

depictions of ideology, it is clear that both London and Orwell rejected the Marxist reduction of the power motive of the ruling class to mere economic exploitation. When O'Brien asks Winston to surmise the motive of the Party, he is confronted with the "popular" but wrong answer: "You are ruling over us for our own good...You believe that human beings are not fit to govern themselves...."[38] Orwell wishes to be emphatic in his rejection of this common view, and O'Brien thus rejects this answer as "stupid," explaining that

> "The Party seeks power entirely for its own sake. We are not interested in the good of others; we are interested solely in power. Not wealth or luxury or long life or happiness: only power, pure power... Power is not a means, it is an end. One does not establish a dictatorship in order to safeguard a revolution; one makes the revolution in order to establish the dictatorship. The object of persecution is persecution. The object of torture is torture. The object of power is power."[39]

Orwell sought to determine the psychological basis of this ideology.

If the apolitical approach of Anthony West pointedly ignores this crucial motif, the political vantage-point of Sir Isaac Deutscher prompts the wrong answer to the question of "why?" In both instances, a misreading occurs because the vantage-points of the critics in question are too far removed from that of the author. Deutscher, failing to see

the point Orwell is making, advances his well-known, but deservedly controversial, "mysticism of cruelty" view, as the answer to Winston's question "why":

> [Orwell's] distrust of historical generalizations led him in the end to adopt and cling to the oldest, the most metaphysical, and the most barren of all generalizations: all their conspiracies and plots and purges and diplomatic deals had one source and one source only--'sadistic power-hunger.'[40]

Deutscher refers to the power insight as "metaphysical," and thereby reveals the materialist, Marxist-inspired view of political organization that he holds and which Orwell attempted to improve upon. Deutscher could not see that the notion of power--divorced from an economic motive--might be more than a literary convention or mythopoeic idea. The assumption of a "mysticism of cruelty" approach by Orwell to literary creation is, in actuality, a projection, stemming from Deutscher's facile dismissal of Orwell's post-Marxist political ideas. In Deutscher's reading, Orwell's supposed "mysticism of cruelty" motif is analogous to (say) D.H. Lawrence's theory of the blood. Deutscher facilely assumes that Orwell resorted to "barren generalizations" to take him where his understanding faltered. Lawrence, of course, took his notions seriously, but the critic is under no similar obligation to pass beyond the bounds of the reasonable. Some of Lawrence's acolytes err in ascribing greater "truth-

value" to his notions than can be defended without lapsing into the sort of mysticism that Deutscher falsely ascribes to Orwell, or without lapsing into the blind faith of idolatry--the Lawrence cult seems much more parochial and fanatical than any inspired by Orwell. In contradistinction to Lawrence's supporters, who project referential value into a theory of the blood which cannot be supported by the microscope, Deutscher's attack is premised upon a reverse error: failing to recognize the "referential value" of Orwell's power motif. This is nowhere more evident than in Deutscher's invidious comparison of Nineteen Eighty-Four with Darkness At Noon, where he suggests that Koestler's novel presents an accurate depiction of reality while Orwell was forced to "rely upon invention." Yet, if the power motif possessed little relevance to the "extra-textual world," then the novel would be a failure by Orwell's own aesthetic standards. For Orwell, the novel must "reflect" reality, not embody some mythopoeic projection of the author's. Orwell's doctrine had little tolerance for the "art for art's sake" school: "literature is an attempt to influence the viewpoint of one's contemporaries by recording experience" (CEJL 4:870). His observation about power seems to be one that only those who reject such abstract totalizing doctrines as Marxism could recognize. In his celebrated essay, "Shooting An Elephant," Orwell's remark that the sahib wears a mask and his face grows to fit it, is

an early insight that is clearly non- or post-Marxist, because here, the expropriators have already, in a sense, been expropriated. The post-Marxist power motif embodies an insight which is lost on Deutscher, who contends that Nineteen Eighty-Four is little more than a "thoroughgoing English variation on Zamyatin's theme; and it is perhaps only the thoroughness of Orwell's English approach that gives to his work the originality that it possesses."[41] Thus Deutscher, in dismissing the applicability of Orwell's power motif to the "real" world, falls back on intertextuality, the hermeticism (given this subject and author) of "close reading," and a marginally relevant discussion of literary precursors. But, as Woodcock notes, "with an author of Orwell's kind, where a direct relationship between his writing and his experience is always evident...the formative elements of his work are likely to be found outside literature and in life."[42] Orwell's understanding of the "special problem of totalitarianism" (CEJL 4:64) was far more acute than Deutscher is willing to credit. The uniqueness of this "problem" was recognized by Orwell, who began writing the novel in 1946. His letter to Julian Symons in the autumn of 1948 records his completion of the first draft (CEJL 4:448); by this time, the enormity of the "Final Solution" as implemented by the "National Socialists" was common knowledge.

Speaking of Orwell, Bertrand Russell averred that, in the twentieth century, men who resembled Goethe, Shelley, or Wells in their capacity for sympathetic identification have endured "experiences more or less resembling imprisonment in Buchenwald. Orwell was one of these men."[43] Emil Fackenheim's 1970 description of the unique phenomenon owes less to Orwell than to his own historical study of totalitarianism itself:

> Eichmannn would not stop the murder trains even when the war was as good as lost, and when less "sincere" Nazis thought of stopping them in an effort to appease the victorious Allies. The Nazi murder of Jews was an "ideological" project; it was annihilation for the sake of annihilation, murder for the sake of murder, evil for the sake of evil.[44]

The value of the historical context to a proper explication of the novel cannot be over-emphasized. In The Lion and the Unicorn, Orwell remarks that the goose-step

> is one of the most horrible sights in the world, far more terrifying than a dive-bomber. It is simply an affirmation of naked power; contained in it, quite consciously and intentionally, is the vision of a boot crashing down on a face (CEJL 2:81).

Yet, despite all this, Deutscher would attribute a simplistic "conspiracy theory" mentality to Orwell: "His political reasoning struck me as a Freudian sublimation of persecution mania. He was, for instance, unshakably

convinced that Stalin, Churchill, and Roosevelt consciously plotted to divide the world in common."[45] In answer to Orwell, Deutscher prefers to speak of the "apparent differences" beneath the seeming solidarity of the Big Three. Despite the likelihood of his disavowal of the consequences of his stand, Deutscher's stance provides de facto support for the ideologues of the West, who are invariably at pains to emphasize the "differences" between East and West, righteously advancing claims of moral superiority. While Orwell recognized the evils of the Soviet model, he also rejected the simplisms of the "freedom versus totalitarianism" polarity. (What student of Orwell can fail to recall "Hate Week" when talk of the "Evil Empire" is sanctimoniously trumpeted to the U.S. electorate?) Orwell's reading of thinkers such as James Burnham and Bertrand Russell assisted in bringing him to a position beyond the simplisms of bi-polarism. A recent definition of detente by Chomsky provides an implicit endorsement of Orwell's prediction of the rise of "Superstates," a direct consequence of the atomic bomb:

> By the late 1960's the United States accepted what had essentially been Russian policy all along -- detente as a world system of joint management, with the Russians as the junior partner.[46]

In "You and the Atom Bomb," (1946) Orwell asks us to suppose that "the surviving great nations make a tacit agreement

never to use the bomb against one another? Suppose they only use it, or the threat of it, against people who are unable to retaliate? (CEJL 4:25)" As noted, the international structure that gives rise to the world of Nineteen Eighty-Four has been largely overlooked by Orwell scholars, a world James Burnham predicted, as Orwell understood it, with nation-states "at once unconquerable and in a permanent state of 'cold war' with [their] neighbors" (CEJL 4:26). While Deutscher regards Emmanuel Goldstein's book as hermetically intertextual in its satire, parodying the style of Trotsky's The Revolution Betrayed, the extended excerpts from the book read by Winston were, I submit, intended by Orwell to be read without irony, as the James Burnham context makes clear. Goldstein's text informs Winston that the primary aim of modern warfare is to

> use up the products of the machine without raising the general standard of living... The essential act of war is destruction, not necessarily of human lives, but of the products of human labor... materials which might otherwise be used to make the masses too comfortable, and hence, in the long run, too intelligent. Even when weapons of war are not actually destroyed, their manufacture is still a convenient way of expending labor power without producing anything that can be consumed.[47]

While Orwell's novel was less a prophecy than a warning, it is clear that a penetrating analysis of international trends in Orwell's day formed the groundwork

of his book. Indications of the relevance of this analysis can be found in current literature on foreign affairs:

> The cold war is a highly functional system by which the superpowers control their own domains...[in which] it is necessary to have the population whipped into the appropriate state of chauvinist frenzy or at least beaten into apathy and obedience. How does one sell this program, which means a cut-back on wages and consumption, the products of waste and higher profits for big industry, with a market paid for by taxation? The only way is to have a war, or the preparation for a war (my italics).[48]

"War is Peace" still means that the preparation for war is necessary for the maintenance of the status quo, that is, the preservation of a hierarchical society.

Deutscher's misreading, then, stems from his own ideological commitment, valorizing the "authentic Marxist" outlook against what he (correctly) terms Orwell's rationalism, an outlook of "empirical common-sense." However, Deutscher concludes that this led Orwell to a position of "quasi-mystical pessimism" as a result of the irrationality of Stalin's purges.

While the claim of pessimism has merit, the assumption of "mysticism," which is fundamental to Deutscher's view, is wide of the mark, and can be traced to his solidarity with Marxism, as witnessed by his haughty suggestion that the "authentic Marxist outlook is better mentally prepared than the rationalist is for the

manifestation of irrationality in human affairs."[49] Ironically, Deutscher's unguarded revelation here shows his susceptibility to the historicist bent that Orwell and others (such as Koestler with Darkness At Noon) so convincingly assailed. There is more than a grain of truth to the charge by Melvyn New that Deutscher

> simply refuses to acknowledge the reality of the concentration camps, both because of their existence in Russia, and, more important, because they demonstrate so clearly the fallacy of the "Marxist generalizations."[50]

While Deutscher's Marxist blinders limit his interpretation, a univocally formalist reading of the novel will also ignore the significance of the power motif. In both instances, the critic expresses a view which fails to come to terms with the author's intentions. A critic who aspires to explicate the novel on the basis of the Utopian tradition or of Orwell's previous books--without emphasizing the socio-historical context from which Orwell's motifs are derived--is similarly limiting his interpretation. The thoughtful essay by Carl Freedman on the mix of genres in Nineteen Eighty-Four is instructive in this regard. Freedman's vantage-point is what Orwell would term "purely aesthetic." As a consequence, his discussion is premised on an acceptance of Deutscher's "mysticism of cruelty" thesis. He contends that, while there is nothing more vivid than the

agonies Winston Smith endures in the Ministry of Love, there is "nothing more satiric than the explanation given for those agonies (my italics)."[51] While he is correct in positing a satiric intention, he fails, I submit, to locate its proper object. O'Brien's explanation that "the object of power is power" is facilely dismissed: "As satire, this is as telling as most of the other concepts in the book. As a rational social explanation, it is meaningless, an abstractly posited bogey."[52]

While Freedman justly draws attention to the various elements of Orwell's satire, including the under-emphasized anti-Catholic satire, he ignores the political dimension of a novel whose author recognizes the significance of such observations as "the true ends of democracy are not achieved by state socialism or by any system which places great power in the hands of men subject to no popular control..."[53] For Bertrand Russell, as for Orwell, the power motive was a vital question, and required great emphasis as a counterweight to the delimiting Marxist emphasis on economic exploitation: "The mere possession of power tends to produce a love of power, which is a very dangerous motive, because the only sure proof of power consists in preventing others from what they wish to do."[54] Or, as Orwell put it: "It is important to notice that the cult of power tends to be mixed up with a love of cruelty and wickedness for their own

sakes" (CEJL 3:258). Thus it is by no means an "abstractly posited bogey."

It may be inferred from the foregoing that Orwell's major literary influences included writers not usually regarded as literary artists. Any adequate interpretation of such an overt piece of didacticism as Nineteen Eighty-Four must entail references to his reading of Marxist and socialist literature generally, and specifically such works as James Burnham's The Managerial Revolution, and Bertrand Russell's Power, and Principles of Social Reconstruction. The exhaustive work by William Steinhoff on the origins of Nineteen Eighty-Four is an admirable study of the novel's literary precursors. Yet, as Woodcock rightly says, nqn-fiction works such as Burnham's, "which seemed so controversially urgent in the 1940's, in fact contributed much more to Nineteen Eighty-Four than did Zamyatin and We."[55] However, the influence of Russell on Orwell, who expresses considerable admiration for the writings of the century's leading exponent of Empiricism, has yet to be fully appreciated.

II

Empiricism and Scepticism

A number of writers could be cited as influences upon or precursors to Orwell, such as William Hazlitt, who once wrote:

> I am no politician, and still less can I be said to be a party-man, but I have a hatred of tyranny, and a contempt for its tools... I can't sit quietly under the claims of barefaced power, and I have tried to expose the little acts by which they are defended.[1]

Hazlitt also wrote in the plain style, appealing to the "common-sense" of the reader, which, for him, is "a judge of things that fall under common observation, or inevitably come home to the business and bosoms of men."[2] However, Hazlitt diverges from Orwell in giving priority to feeling, rather than devotion to the empiricist claim to truth:

> Passion speaks truer than reason. If Buonaparte was a conqueror, he conquered the grand conspiracy of kings against the abstract right of the human race to be free, and I, as a man, could not be indifferent which side to take.[3]

Had Orwell written such a passage, he would have reversed the terms I have emphasized.

Another influence was Jonathan Swift, for whom Orwell expressed qualified admiration, and who once advised

that the best way to write was "to put proper words in their proper places." However, Orwell took issue with Swift's conception of human reason, which does not

> mean the power of drawing logical inferences from observed facts... it appears in most contexts to mean either common sense--acceptance of the obvious and contempt for quibbles and abstractions---or absence of passion and superstition. In general he assumes that we know all that we need to know already, and merely use our knowledge incorrectly (CEJL 4:247).

Here Orwell places himself squarely in the empiricist tradition by this critique of deductive reasoning; like Bertrand Russell, he adopted the prevailing twentieth century empiricist or "scientific" approach' to knowledge-acquisition.

According to Bernard Crick, Orwell was much admired by Russell; Crick notes an occasion when Orwell had been "asked to lunch with the old Earl."[4] While it is evident that each read the other with considerable approval and admiration, the evidence, although meager, indicates that Orwell was more influenced by Russell than Russell was by Orwell. Despite Crick's suggestion, evidence provided by Russell's correspondence indicates that it was Orwell, not Russell, who initiated the lunch date on February 12, 1946.

Russell's influence on Orwell, while not seminal, has, however, been considerably underestimated by most commentators. Orwell uses his favorite demotic term of

approval (which is also used by partisans of the "Orwell myth" to describe Orwell himself) in remarking that Russell "has an essentially decent [Orwell's italics] intellect, a kind of intellectual chivalry which is far rarer than mere cleverness" (CEJL 2:414).

Their criticism of each other's work displays a marked complementarity. As an empiricist, Russell advocated that we "stand upon our own feet and look fair and square at the world--its good facts, its bad facts, its beauties, its ugliness; see the world as it is...."[5] In the memorial tribute printed in The Critical Heritage, Russell averred that Orwell should be admired for following this precept: "He preserved an impeccable love of truth, and allowed himself to learn even the most painful lessons...."[6] Orwell's own testimony previously confirmed this opinion: "I knew I had a facility with words and a power of facing unpleasant facts...."[7]

Scholars have remarked of both that they bore a temperamental resemblance to Voltaire, and their common critical temper is indicated by their consistently-maintained distinction between knowledge and opinion, their mutual willingness to admit their inability to extricate themselves from a condition of half-knowledge. In Russell, it is revealed by his contempt for the system-building philosophers who inspired one of his various definitions of philosophy: "an unusually ingenious attempt to think

fallaciously."[8] For Russell, this approach to philosophizing usually entailed a covert wish by the philosopher in question to justify a cherished belief, a belief which "pure reason" could not establish. In contrast with this sort of special pleading, Russell defines rationality in empirical terms, as "the habit of taking account of all relevant evidence in arriving at a belief. Where certainty is unattainable, a rational man will give most weight to the most probable opinion (my emphasis)."[9] Characteristically, Orwell echoes this dictum in a political context:

> a truly objective approach is about impossible, because in one form or another everyone is a nationalist... in looking at any situation they do not say, 'What are the facts?' 'What are the probabilities?'but 'How can I make it appear to myself and others that my faction is getting the better of some rival faction?'(CEJL 3:340).

This freedom from doctrinaire thought is, for both, the outcome of an empiricist appeal to "fact." That Orwell had little interest in abstract philosophical debate is well-known. As Zwerdling puts it: "Orwell was not a theorist, but a tester of theories, a skeptical observer attempting to assess the validity of certain accepted or controversial socialist ideas."[10] Orwell's debt to the prevailing empiricist tradition is made manifest by his approach to philosophy, which is based on a consideration of the observed effects of a polity on the individual man. The

next section will investigate the influence of Russell and the empiricist tradition on Orwell's politics.

What was said by Marx, boys, what did he perpend?
No good being sparks, boys, waiting for the end.
Treason of the clerks, boys, curtains that descend.
Lights becoming darks, boys, waiting for the end.
--William Empson, "Just A Smack At Auden"

Rationalism Versus Nationalism

The most appropriate example of Orwell's sceptical political thought is provided by his view of Marxism. It is Marx's description of capitalist excesses, rather than his historicist predictions, that can be linked with Orwell's message. Orwell's writings often present examples drawn from life which illustrate Marx's term "alienated labor," which, according to Marx, is constituted by the fact that

> Labor is external to the worker, that is, that it does not belong to his essential being; that in his work, therefore, he does not affirm himself but denies himself, does not feel well but unhappy, does not freely develop his physical and mental energy but mortifies his body and ruins his mind... His work therefore is not voluntary, but coerced; it is forced labor.[66]

Typically, Orwell reifies this phenomenon in Down and Out in Paris and London, where his social critique emphasizes less the unequal distribution of wealth than the transformation of labor into meaningless and dehumanizing activity. In a brief expository section, Orwell concludes that a plongeur is

> not freer than if he were bought and sold. His work is servile and without art; he is paid just enough to keep him alive; his only holiday is the sack... One cannot say that it is mere idleness on their part, for an idle man cannot be a plongeur, they have simply been trapped by a routine which has made thought impossible.[67]

This prefigures one of the messages of Nineteen Eighty-Four, that "orthodoxy is unconsciousness," which indicates that the alleged "estrangement" from socialism that many scholars choose to discern in Nineteen Eighty-Four is merely a recognition of "the pitfalls of socialism," as elaborated in Russell's essay of the same name in the collection entitled Political Ideals. Russell responds to the assumption that socialism is inherently less oppressive than capitalism because the former will possess

> no economic interests opposed to the wage earners. But this argument involves too simple a theory of political human nature--a theory which orthodox socialism adopted from classical political economy, and has tended to retain in spite of its falsity. Economic self-interest, and even economic class interest, is by no means the only political motive...[68]

This is the controversial message which Orwell expressed in much of his writing, fictional and documentary. Both Orwell and Russell held that the "will to power" divorced from considerations of economic motives, could explain much that Marxist theory ignored or insufficiently emphasized. Orwell and Russell both agreed with Bakunin's

critique of Marx in stressing psychological over economic factors. In Russell's words:

> The most important error in [Marx's] theory is that it ignores intelligence as a cause... men practice agriculture, not because of some extra-human dialectic compelling them to do so, but because intelligence shows them its advantages.[69]

Similarly, Orwell states that the "main weakness of Marxism is [that] a 'Marxist analysis' of any historical event tends to be a hurried snap judgment; [thus] it is impossible to have an intuitive understanding of men's motives, and therefore impossible to predict their actions."[70] Anthony Zwerdling's assessment, however, is that Orwell's "quarrel was not so much with Marx as with Marxism."[71] Zwerdling is himself more sympathetic to Marx than was Orwell, who misled Zwerdling by expending more energy attacking the creed than its founder. Mistrusting abstractions and totalizing systems, Orwell came to reject Marxism because he recognized the similarities between Marxism as an "-ism," and a religious creed. Yet he also writes: "It is not surprising that in our age the followers of Marx have not been much more successful as prophets than the followers of Nostradamus" (CEJL 3:340). This remark is directed as much against Marx, and his claim to have discovered a science of history, as it is against his disciples.

Russell remarks that "to understand Marx psychologically, one should use the following dictionary:

Yahweh	= Dialectical Materialism
The Messiah	= Marx
The Elect	= The Proletariat
The Church	= The Communist Party
The Second Coming	= The Revolution
Hell	= Punishment of the Capitalists"[72]

Similarly, for Orwell, since 1935, the Auden-Spender generation of British writers turned to the Communist party because it was the new religion:

> All the loyalties and superstitions that the intellect had seemingly banished could come rushing back under the thinnest of disguises. Patriotism, religion, empire, military glory --all in one word, Russia. Father, king, leader, hero, saviour--all in one word, Stalin. God--Stalin. The devil--Hitler. Heaven--Moscow. Hell--Berlin. All the gaps were filled up (CEJL 4:565).

Such forced parallels illustrate two aspects of the opposition to Marxist ideology which both Orwell and Russell shared. First, they are instances of their mutual propensity to employ plain language for the purpose of translating abstract language into an accessible discourse. Second, they reveal their common rejection of the deterministic element in the Marxist view of history. Both recognized that such historicist creeds encourage the view that "the end justifies the means," that the individual must be prepared

to sacrifice himself, in the manner of Winston Smith swearing allegiance to the Brotherhood, to help bring about the "inevitable" kingdom of justice. This is the consequence of what Karl Popper calls "historicism," or the belief "in large-scale laws of historical development of the kind to be found in speculative systems of history."[73] Those who hold historicist views believe that a blueprint for a future Utopia can be discovered, or what is often called "vulgar Marxism" (Marx himself would have denigrated such opinions as "Utopian socialism").

Like Orwell, Popper holds that historicist views are the foundation of totalitarian ideologies. Orwell sought to discourage what he analogously called Utopianism:

> The real answer is to dissociate socialism from Utopianism. Nearly all apologetics consist in setting up a man of straw... called Human Perfectibility. Socialists are accused of believing that society can be...completely perfect; also that progress is inevitable. The answer is that Socialism is not perfectionist: socialists don't claim to be able to make the world perfect: they claim to be able to make it better (CEJL 3:83).

This is a striking anticipation of Popper's corrective of "piecemeal social engineering," which explicitly rejects any attempts to work out blueprints for a future ideal society, and aims at rectifying society's ills through problem-solving. For Popper, as for Orwell and Russell, change is not only inevitable, but essential. Orwell's conclusion was

that Utopianism is a false doctrine: "there must be very many minds in which the hackneyed phrase 'dictatorship of the proletariat' has been sincerely a nightmare, a hope and a chimera...a pious hope, but the facts do not seem to give much warrant for it" (CEJL 1:372). Orwell's anti-Marxist stance relies upon a "commonsense" appraisal of its predictive claims in the light of pragmatic experience.

For Orwell, the problem of power politics enjoins one to consider the individual life, how to maximize freedom and creativity rather than trying to envision a perfect society. This is essentially an Anarchist vision, and both Russell and Orwell were Anarchists by temperament. Russell's view is that "pure Anarchism, though it should be the ultimate ideal to which society should approximate, is for the present impossible, and would not survive more than a year or two at most. The nearest practical system, to my mind, is Guild Socialism."[74] George Woodcock feels that Orwell's "real inclinations" were revealed by his vision of a "decentralized society and worker's control of industry--something rather like a Guild Socialist vision (my italics) with a great deal of room for individual initiative."[75] Like Russell, Orwell conceded that Anarchism was impractical and naïve in its optimistic view of human nature. Whereas Anarchist thinkers such as Kropotkin felt that all evil springs from the State, Orwell's early embrace of the view

was later modified by personal experience. While in Burma he had

> worked out an Anarchistic theory that all government is evil, that the punishment always does more harm than the crime, and that people can be trusted to behave decently if you will let them alone. This of course was sentimental nonsense. I see now that it is always necessary to protect people from violence.[76]

Orwell's sympathy, then, lies predominantly with the egalitarianism and individualism of the Anarchist ideal: he would have repudiated the label "Anarchist."

The empiricist tradition is intimately connected with the politics of both men. As the empiricist model proceeds from "facts" to hypotheses or generalizations, so the general approach to politics they hold in common begins with a consideration of the needs of the individual man. Orwell and Russell both maintained that political ideals must be based on "ideals for the individual life. The aim of politics should be to make the lives of individuals as good as possible."[77] Orwell contrasts two attitudes toward social improvement:

> the one, how can you improve human nature until you have improved the system? The other, what is the use of changing the system before you have improved human nature? The central problem--how to prevent power from being abused--remains unsolved (CEJL 1:469).

In his essay, "Philosophy and Politics," Russell provides the only attempt in his published writings to link philosophy and politics, to provide a philosophical justification for his "radical" politics, saying that "the only philosophy that affords a theoretical justification of democracy, and that accords with democracy in its temper of mind, is empiricism."[78] He proceeds to explain it:

> The essence of the Liberal outlook lies not in what opinions are held, but in how they are held: instead of being held dogmatically, they are held tentatively. Science is empirical, tentative, and undogmatic... the intellectual counterpart of what is, in the practical sphere, the outlook of Liberalism.[79]

The principle of "systematic doubt" consequently entails methods to achieve closer approximations to the truth, such as

> hearing all sides, trying to ascertain all the relevant facts, controlling our own bias by discussion with people who have the opposite bias, and cultivating a readiness to discard any hypothesis which has proved inadequate. These methods are practiced in science, and have built up the body of scientific knowledge.[80]

Orwell's theory of knowledge is also empirically-based, defining the scientific method as "a method of thought which obtains verifiable results by reasoning logically from observed fact" (CEJL 4:27). Speaking in the

context of education, he echoes Russell's position on this topic: "a scientific education ought to mean the implanting of a rational, skeptical, experimental habit of mind" (CEJL 4:27). The evidence for Orwell's adherence to the principle of doubt is provided by Crick, who notes that Orwell was dubbed by a fellow Etonian as "a strong arguer, he put different sides of a case; there was his habit of worrying whether he had seen all sides of a case that distinguished him from many others then."[81] The philosophy of systematic doubt often requires, as we saw earlier, "facing unpleasant facts," or, more generally, maintaining a distinction between "fact" and "value." To disregard this distinction is to commit an epistemological "sin" that neither Orwell nor Russell can be charged with: the "naturalistic fallacy." The next section seeks to know them by their enemies, and examines the striking similarity of negative critical reaction which their respective world-views have evoked.

Truth is not abstract, and it is not arbitrarily produced by an individual; it is the most absolutely logical expression of those principles which live and move in the masses.
---Michael Bakunin

The "Critique of Doubt" Critiqued

It is in keeping with Deutscher's misreading of Orwell that he should conclude that Orwell was "anything but a skeptic. His mental make up was rather that of a fanatic, determined to get an answer, a quick and a plain answer to his question."[82] Ironically, it is Orwell's allegiance to the principle of doubt that prevented his accommodation with Deutscher's dogmatic Marxist orientation.

As we have seen, the principle of doubt enjoins the suspension of judgment in the absence of sufficient evidence. For Russell and Orwell, the facts cannot be wished away. The "fact-value split," the urge to separate emotion from analysis, is common to both Orwell and Russell. Orwell speaks of the "saner self that stands aside, records the things that are done and admits their necessity, but refuses to be deceived as to their true nature" (CEJL 4:470). As a consequence of this stand, both thinkers inspired similar critics, who may be described either as pluralists or moralists--in the critical practice of Wayne Booth (on Russell) and D.S. Savage (on Orwell) the terms prove to be interchangeable. The similarity in both the matter of critical dissension and in the manner in which they argue against these exponents of empiricism indicates the

proximity, not only of the positions of these critics, but of their subjects.

Both men emphasized that the distinction between knowledge and opinion often suffered by the encroachment of emotion upon reason. Russell suggests that political discourse could be improved by an attempt to achieve objectivity:

> When, in a sentence expressing a political opinion, there are words which arouse powerful but different emotions in different readers, try replacing them with symbols, A, B, C, and so on, forgetting the particular significance of the symbols. Suppose A is England, B is Germany, C is Russia. So long as you remember what the letters mean, most of the things you believe will depend upon whether you are English, German, or Russian, which is logically irrelevant.[83]

This echoes Orwell's point in the essay "Notes on Nationalism," but Russell's intention was to emphasize the undesirable consequences of subordinating logic to emotion; whereas Orwell uses analogous arguments to demonstrate the evil of subordinating truth to Party loyalty:

> Now, if one divides the world into A and B and assumes that A represents progress and B reaction, it is just arguable that no fact detrimental to A ought ever to be revealed. But before making this claim, one ought to realize where it leads...(CEJL 4:54).

Yet "systematic doubt" is assumed (by such rhetors as Wayne Booth) to represent an assault upon one's moral

convictions. Booth cannot endure the split between fact and value that Russell's epistemology represents. Both Russell as philosopher and Orwell as "implied author" face the same indictment, which may be reduced to the "enormity" of holding an "anti-humanistic pessimism," stemming from their sceptical approach to knowledge-acquisition. The split between fact and value leads, according to Booth, to the view of man as a "puny, meaningless insect."[84] The debate which Booth presents is quite revealing. Booth's chosen adversary, Russell, takes the position that the fearful consequences which may follow from a belief are irrelevant to whether it is true or not. Booth's emotion-laden rejoinder places his own philosophical competence in question:

> Who says? What is the authority for this decision that rules for emotional purification, developed fruitfully in chemistry and physics, ought to be applied in deciding what to believe about human life?... I want to know why your dictum has superior claim over the dictum that I ought to avoid intellectual convictions that have intolerable (sic!) consequences.[85]

Booth can "tolerate" nothing less than the position that our moral convictions rest upon a firm foundation in "fact." For Booth, there is no sharp distinction between the moral and the epistemological, or even between moral and aesthetic judgments. Because Booth wants his literary judgments to be

considered "factual," he regards Russell's skepticism as a threat to his critical authority. This is revealed in the section where he proffers a couplet of his own creation ("The Beatles are greater than Bach/And Einstein is greater than Mach")[86] and submits that it is a "fact" that this is inferior to Blake's "London." While I am willing to endorse Booth's self-assessment as a poet, I am constrained to point out that the question of interpretive validity is hardly relevant to Russell's ontological speculations. A plethora of category mistakes seems to lie at the heart of Booth's opposition to the "principle of doubt." As an alternative to Russell's advocacy of systematic doubt, Booth submits an alternative which can provoke only mirth in more disciplined minds: "systematic assent." He recommends that

> By changing one's picture of the natural world from the mechanical, value-indifferent thing that Russell clung to... one can import values (my italics) back into the domain of knowledge.[87]

It is not surprising that Booth has a hidden agenda. In practice, such wishful thinking is an answer to Russell's agnosticism, as Booth attempts to construct a preliminary sketch of a philosophic "system": "One obvious possibility is to develop a religious or metaphysical counterpart to behavior--to see man's values as inseparable from God's or Nature's values...."[88] This remark exemplifies the preference for the subjective over the objective realm, an

orientation which distinguishes both these "dogmatic" critics from the "sceptical" bent of their respective subjects, Orwell and Russell. Booth evidently chooses to ignore Russell's warning that "the desire to have knowledge which cannot be challenged, the certainty of final truth, is not likely to lead so much to objectivity as to rigidity and arrogant dogma."[89]

It is probably a matter of loyalty to his doctrinal commitments which convinces Booth to engage in misrepresentation in arguing against Russell. The devices he employs are easily catalogued: quotations wrenched out of context, sometimes signifying the opposite of what was contextually indicated, dishonest use of italics to create a misleading emphasis, and spurious dichotomies, such as the presumed pitting of reason versus intuition. For instance, Russell is depicted as a "divided man,"[90] and "torn between his mysticism and his logic,"[91] when Russell merely advocated reason as a means of distinguishing reliable intuitions from misleading ones:

> Instinct, like all human faculties, is liable to error... it is such considerations that necessitate the harmonizing mediation of reason, which tests our beliefs by their mutual compatibility.[92]

Perhaps Booth's most flagrant device is the citation of the opening paragraph of a popular essay (which presented some

of Russell's philosophic conclusions in summary form). Booth represents it as a formal philosophic treatise, an example which Booth presents to allege that Russell's "philosophy" contains many "gaping holes"![93] Booth is not often taken to task for such occasions of rhetorical legerdemain, although a rare instance appears in a recent study by William E. Cain. In a review of Critical Understanding, Cain notes that Booth admits that he engages in wilful misrepresentation in order to argue a case. Cain responds that this admission "leads me not to commend Booth's honesty, but to wonder why he breaks a law of which he is well aware."[94] The most that can be said for this enterprise is that it renders the plain style, by contrast, a monument of impartiality and forthrightness.

Orwell has also been accused of being less than a whole man. In "Writers and Leviathan," Orwell advocated that writers should draw a sharper distinction between their political and literary loyalities: "group loyalties are necessary, and yet they are poisonous to literature, so long as literature is the product of individuals... When a writer engages in politics he should do so as a citizen, as a human being, but not as a writer" (CEJL 4:468). Orwell is maintaining the incompatibility of "universal" values and narrow party loyalties. Elsewhere, he asserts that to "write in plain, vigorous language one has to think fearlessly, and if one thinks fearlessly one cannot be politically orthodox"

(CEJL 4:89). Like Booth, D.S. Savage is also a traditional moralist, who, in the course of a tendentious and vituperative assessment of Orwell's place in English literature summarizes Orwell's essay with an undercurrent that bears a striking resemblance to Booth's misrepresentations of Russell:

> [Orwell] split his life into two compartments, in the political part acting as violently and insanely (sic!) as necessity may dictate, while in the literary part standing aside and writing without factional bias, in disabused aesthetic detachment.[95]

It seems unlikely that Savage's avowed antagonism towards Orwell rests upon such a rarefied issue. As in Booth's case, Savage's commitments are primarily doctrinal. A passage from the memoir Such, Such, Were the Joys is cited, where Orwell discloses his secular humanist stance. His New Testament friends (Orwell reveals) were Ananias, Caiaphas, Judas, and Pontius Pilate. Savage's response is that "These friends of a thirteen year old boy might give a contemporary theologian cause for a mighty headache: especially the last."[96] Having thus glimpsed Savage's vantage-point, we can discern the voice of the traditional moralist in Savage's citation of the following quotation from Keep The Aspidistra Flying: "Always [Gordon Comstock's relationships with women] had started in a sort of cold-blooded wilfulness and ended in some mean, callous

desertion." Savage responds, by sarcastically noting that, for Orwell, "It is not [Comstock's] fault if the encounters end in mean, callous desertion, for neither he nor anyone can be held accountable for the wretchedness of a world in which things 'just happen' in a dull and pointless way beyond choice and evasion."[97] The passivity of Orwell's major characters which Savage laments is undeniable. But is this indicative of a moral fault on the part of the author? Savage replies in the affirmative. Speaking of Nineteen Eighty-Four, he asserts that

> Sexual love is a normative value. But Winston's apparently normal love for Julia, once asserted, instantly turns into its contrary, and Winston demands...that she be promiscuous, disloyal, and corrupt... No novelist can expect to establish connection with his readers without some recognition of those normative values (my italics) which, as participators in the same cultural milieu, both parties must be supposed to acknowledge.[98]

Savage proceeds in a barely-muted tone of indignation: "Thus it turns out that the oppressive Party is the guardian of Purity, Goodness, and Virtue...Winston has deprived himself of any claim to moral superiority to the system he detests...."[99] Savage dogmatically asserts that Orwell is "obliged" to posit normative values in the same tone with which Booth asserts that Russell is obliged to "import values" into his philosophy. Yet Orwell's refusal to do so is in accordance with the realism of the novel. In Brave

New World, the character called "the Savage" provides a reference norm for the reader, but Nineteen Eighty-Four is a far more complex work. Savage (the critic) naïvely presumes that the novel is a concrete embodiment of the author's mind, and does not recognize that Winston Smith's values do not correspond to Orwell's.

Yet the reader of Nineteen Eighty-Four is not confronted with embodied moral maxims, but finds himself in a claustrophobic world where it is impossible to know (initially) whether the people Winston encounters are friends or enemies. Because the range of thought among the citizens of Oceania has been diminished by Party dogma, strict limits have been imposed upon how he (and Julia) are capable of comprehending and responding to their plight. They are not in a position to be aware of any "positive" values--they can only know that they are against the Party. It was Orwell's conviction that encroachments by the totalitarian state upon the mind debilitate both creativity and personal values. Early in the novel we witness Winston Smith faltering before his diary, surprised to realize that he has forgotten what to say. Just as the masses do not know that they are oppressed, having no standards by which to compare their lot with others, Winston and Julia have no means of constituting a humane value-system as an alternative to the pervasive atmosphere of sadism engineered by the Party. Because Winston knows only that he hates the

Party, he becomes an anarchist. In a scene of mordant satire, Winston is subjected to a revolutionary catechism, in which he and Julia affirm their willingness to lie, cheat, commit murder and acts of sabotage, throw acid in a child's face, and so forth, without needing to be told why, but in blind obedience to the Brotherhood. This is a satire on the destructiveness of extremist ideology (and which undermines all arguments which presume an identification between Winston and Orwell). A recognition of this renders "un-realistic" an interpretation that would indict the author for not forcing his characters to formulate a quasi-Christian counter-ideology as an answer to the Party's pervasive monologic discourse of "Purity" and "Goodness."

Savage does not recognize that Orwell wrote a novel which embodied a negation of the normative values that he wished to uphold. In the novel, tragedy itself is an anachronism, belonging

> to an ancient time when there was still privacy, love, and friendship, and when the members of a family stood by one another without needing to know the reason. [Winston's mother] had sacrificed herself to a conception of loyalty that was private and unalterable. Such things, he saw, could not happen today. Today there were fear, hatred, and pain....[100]

The passivity of Orwell's characters which Savage assails is the key to Orwell's anxiety concerning the societal forces conspiring to render the individual little more than a cipher. Smith, Flory, Comstock, Bowling--all are

different manifestations of an individual who has been subordinated to the collective. In The Road To Wigan Pier, Orwell explains that

> A thousand influences constantly press a working man down into a passive role. He does not act, he is acted upon. He feels himself the slave of mysterious authority and has a firm conviction that 'they' will never let him do this, that, and the other.[101]

Orwell's rationalism invariably prompts the charge of pessimism from those whose optimism derives from a creed other than Marxism. For instance, like Savage, the Catholic writer Anthony Burgess sees Nineteen Eighty-Four as a testimony of despair, but "not despair of the future of humanity; a personal despair of being unable to love. If Orwell had loved men and women, O'Brien would not have been able to torture Winston Smith. This is a monstrous travesty of human probability."[102]

The tepid critical reception of Nineteen Eighty-Four by such eschatological optimists again indicates the need for critical objectivity. In the practice of both Booth and Savage, the pose of pluralism, which claims the necessity of "importing values" into one's philosophy in order to render it palatable, on the one hand, and the injunction to posit "normative" values, on the other, is undertaken in the service of a deductive premise, that is, a cherished belief which is dictatorially asserted to be "necessary." Yet

critical pluralism, as William Cain aptly remarks, is less open-minded than it appears:

> its form of liberation can quickly become an enclosure: no interpretation is to be preferred, and no value (except for pluralist inquiry) unites us in a common cause. Political action... seems futile, ruled out in advance, because any analysis of the reasons for change is just another view.[103]

Predictably, Orwell's message is not congenial to those who are conservative by default, as he well knew, referring to them as "religious reactionaries--that is, people who defend an unjust order of society by claiming that this world cannot be substantially improved and only 'the next world,' matters" (CEJL 4:249). It is not surprising that those who hold such views will find little to admire either in the philosophy of cognitive doubt, or in the liberal politics upheld, in the tradition of Lockean empiricism, by both Russell and Orwell.

Because of their ideological "commitments," the opponents of "doubt" assert that its advocates are constrained to dilute their rhetoric, to concede the tentativeness of their convictions at every turn. However, as we shall see, in neither Russell nor Orwell did the principle of doubt lead to a self-disarming rhetoric. The implications of this seeming contradiction will be examined in the next section.

III

A Rhetoric of Force

"The opinion that art should have nothing to do with politics is itself a political attitude."
Orwell: "Why I Write"

"The claim that knowledge should be 'value-free' is itself a value judgment."
Terry Eagleton

The claim to authority in Orwell's rhetoric derives from an empiricist model, the appeal to personal observation of concrete data, which is communicated in the plain style to de-mystify the abstractions of officialese. In this, he and Bertrand Russell are at one. As essayists, both relied in large part upon the claim to authority through direct experience and "common-sense" argumentation. Russell employs this rhetoric to mock abstract philosophic "creeds," while Orwell uses the same to ridicule the misleadingly diffuse statements and "polysyllables" of (typically) bourgeois socialists and Marxists. Orwell's view was that the English intellectuals displayed a "marked characteristic... the emotional shallowness of people who live in a world of ideas and have little contact with physical reality" (CEJL 2:95). Jeffrey Meyers has dubbed Orwell's technique "documentary, empirical, and pragmatic, filled with statistics, essential information, useful suggestions, and his view is, as far as

possible, an insider's view."[104] This tendency is revealed in The Road To Wigan Pier, which is structured into two parts. The first section provides a first-hand account of the daily life of the "lower classes," an account marked by naturalistic description conveying Orwell's intimate knowledge which, in his view, the theorists of Socialism lack.

The second part presents Orwell's conclusions. He begins by alluding disparagingly to the shortcomings of abstract theory, telling us that "The first thing that must strike any outside observer is that Socialism in its developed form is a theory confined entirely to the middle class,"[105] confined, that is, to those whose knowledge of working class life, is merely theoretical and divorced from practical experience. By contrast, in Part Two, Orwell's claim to authority derives from the "personal experience" he has established in Part One, a structural analogue to an empirical generalization. He purports to be presenting "pure" unmediated description, relying on the testimony of his own eyes, a procedure which illustrates his dictum that "one can write nothing readable unless one continually struggles to efface one's personality" (CEJL 1:29). This is a claim for the expression of objective knowledge, a claim, as I am about to show, that many critics reasonably choose to dispute.

In Thinking To Some Purpose, Susan Stebbing justly calls attention to pseudo-empirical argumention by Russell, in which he attempts to demonstrate his intimate knowledge of human nature by the pretense of first-hand observation. Russell's subject is envy, and he disingenuously claims to have observed the eyes of women on the subway, as they are directing "malevolent glances" towards women who are better dressed. Stebbing reveals that she subjected Russell's claim (which was obviously made for rhetorical purposes) to a field test, and having failed to confirm the truth of his generalization, concludes that "possibly he is generalizing from his own experience uncorroborated by other evidence. It is more probable, however, that he is deliberately making a sweeping generalization for the sake of attracting attention."[106] She fails to note, however, that this "sweeping generalization" is an inductive (or, in this instance, pseudo-empirical) generalization, attempting to win the assent of the reader through the pretense of an "eye-witness" observation.

Both Russell and Orwell have had occasion to resort to misleading rhetorical devices. Daphne Patai's feminist critique challenges the much-vaunted "objectivity" of Orwell's narrator in such books as The Road To Wigan Pier, and echoes Stebbing by charging Orwell with "sweeping assertions, a rhetorical technique that brushes aside reservations and challenges by the sheer force and

confidence with which they are made."[107] Patai anticipates objections to her stringent critique by claiming that she is merely holding Orwell to his own standards of honesty, decency, egalitarianism, justice, and so forth, and has found him wanting. For Patai, the virtue of Orwell's anti-imperialism pales into insignificance in comparison with his anti-feminism.

On the subject of rhetoric, her critique seems to presuppose that Orwell was obliged to establish self-evident truths concerning questions of value--an objective which, according to the practitioners of the "New Rhetoric," is an impossibility. Patai and other critics of Orwell's rhetoric have failed to concede that if we grant that Orwell's appeal to credibility through "observation of fact" is "merely another" rhetorical approach, this does not invalidate it, precisely because discussions of value must be relegated to the status of doxa, not episteme. Recent scholarship contained under the rubric of "The New Rhetoric" asserts that the "truth claims" of value arguments cannot be conclusively demonstrated. The empiricist approach to argument corresponds to what rhetors Chaim Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca refer to as the "structure of reality" argument, which enjoys no privileged status as a rhetoric. For Perelman, all discursive techniques permit no more than the inducement of the mind's "adherence to the theses presented for its assent."[108] That is, final or

demonstrative proof in such argumentation is too much to ask. Further, he endorses the Bakhtinian enterprise by emphasizing that all discourse must be judged in terms of its audience. While neither Orwell nor Russell provide an argument which demonstrates (with mathematical certitude) the validity of their claims, this does not concede the victory to their opponents, not does it open up a rhetorical "free-for-all": some arguments are "better than," or more probative than others (just as some interpretations are "better than," or more reasonable than others).

A more balanced critique by Raymond Williams holds that Orwell was a "fine observer of detail, and appealed as an empiricist, while at the same time, committing himself to an unusual amount of plausible yet specious generalization."[109] It is evident that the empirical mode of argument can often foster merely the illusion of demonstrated truth. In The Road to Wigan Pier, Orwell writes that "I have inspected great numbers of houses... and made notes of their essential points (my italics)."[110] The validity of this claim is (obviously) questionable. As with scientific theories, all naturalistic description reflects a point-of-view--the vantage-point of the scientist or artist--and Orwell's pose of presenting "pure" unmediated description, insofar as it claims to represent literal or unqualified truth, cannot be accepted.

When Orwell declares that "I have never seen a genuine working man who accepted Marxism" (CEJL 1:532), Patai dismisses this as a "blanket generalization," yet it is hardly irrelevant to point out that this remark also expresses an opinion Orwell sincerely held--that the workers, while being the class that would rationally most benefit from Socialism, display a distinct aversion to it. The question of "truth-value" is indispensable to a discussion of Orwell's rhetoric. Orwell's overriding concern was to persuade his (contemporary) audience, and Orwell's rhetorical strategies must be judged accordingly. In The Road to Wigan Pier, Orwell provides one of his most notorious catalogues of bêtes noires:

> there is the horrible - the really disquieting prevalence of cranks whenever socialists are gathered together. One sometimes gets the impression that the mere words 'Socialism' and 'Communism' draw towards them with magnetic force every fruit-juice drinker, nudist, sandal-wearer, sex-maniac, Quaker, Nature-Cure quack, pacifist, and feminist in England.[111]

Raymond Williams cites this flurry of ad hominems, among others, to exemplify Orwell's descent to what he terms "emotive abuse."[112] The charge is valid, yet I must risk incurring the more damaging charge of contributing to the Orwell "cult" by pointing out that his introductory remarks reflect his concern to counter the prevailing antipathy of

the "working man" towards Socialism: "The average thinking person nowadays is not merely not a Socialist, he is actually hostile to Socialism. This must be due chiefly to mistaken methods of propaganda."[113] Orwell would have the workers recognize that they should not exclude themselves on the basis of their opinion that the movement attracts "cranks": "The ordinary decent person, who is in sympathy with the essential aim of Socialism, is given the impression that there is no room for his kind (my italics) in any Socialist party that means business."[114] In the contentious passage cited above, when Orwell writes "One sometimes gets the impression..." he is not speaking simply for himself--he recognizes the rhetorical necessity of identifying with his intended audience. Orwell's "auditors" are kept in the forefront of his considerations, as he follows the Aristotelean prescription to tailor his remarks to them, to establish an ethos. This is not to suggest that Orwell secretly approved of what he denigrates here--his antipathy to the majority of groups represented is well-known. However, the same chapter provides another example of this rhetorical "fault":

> By 1918...England was full of half-baked antinomian opinions. Pacifism, internationalism, humanitarianism of all kinds, feminism, free love, divorce-reform, atheism...[115]

Orwell's "half-baked antinomian opinions" would seem to entail at least some to which he also would have subscribed, certainly the last. As Bakhtin teaches:

> from whatever aspect we consider it, expression-utterance is determined by the actual conditions of a given utterance--above all by its immediate social situation... In the absence of a real addressee, an addressee is presupposed in the person of a normal representative of the social group to which the speaker belongs."[116]

The historical context of Orwell's writing shows that Orwell's intent was to change attitudes--he wrote as a pamphleteer, not as a litterateur anticipating his eventual enshrinement as a cultural totem.

While Orwell's purpose was evidently more hortatory than aesthetic, it is evident that Orwell's most strident critics, such as Daphne Patai, choose to evaluate his writing according to the severest standards of ahistorical "verbal iconism," that is, as if Orwell wrote primarily literary essays for posterity. Her unspoken standard is synchronic and ignores the historical context. But Orwell's purpose was much the same as Gramsci's. For the "value-oriented" writer

> the closer his opinions are to the truth, they can be accepted by everyone..the truth, because it can be spread, must be adapted to the historical and cultural conditions of

> the social group in which we want it to be spread.[117]

Orwell explained that "when I sit down to write a book, I do not say to myself, 'I am going to produce a work of art,' I write because there is some lie I want to expose, some fact to which I want to draw attention" (CEJL 1:28). To this end, the empirical mode of argumentation, while occasionally more rhetorical than demonstrative, is admissible, because it is no less legitimate than any other. Argumentation--especially where ethics and politics are concerned-- must be relegated to the realm of the non-demonstrable. Despite his differences with Marx, Orwell seemed to agree that the artist's purpose is not merely to understand the world, but to change it. His was an art of praxis. This point seems to be missed by Hugh Kenner, whose essay, "The Politics of the Plain Style," seeks to undercut Orwell's authority by arguing that the plain style is as much an affectation as the euphuistic. He remarks (rightly) that Orwell's style was "deliberately contrived in response to Newspeak."[118] Yet, for some undisclosed reason, Kenner seems to find Newspeak less objectionable than the plain style, which he devotes the remainder of his essay to summarizing in sardonic terms: "Homely diction is its hallmark, also 1-2-3 syntax, the show of candor, and the artifice of seeming to be grounded outside language, in what is called 'fact....'"[119] Kenner is correct in assuming that

Orwell's dichotomy was "plain talk versus dishonest," but finds the plain style itself untrustworthy:

> A man who doesn't make his language ornate can't be feigning; so runs the hidden premise... You can get yourself trusted by appropriate artifice. The plain style feigns a candid observer. Such was its advantage for Orwell. He wanted its mask of calm candor, from behind which he could appeal, in seeming disinterest, to people whose pride was their no-nonsense connoisseurship of fact.[120]

Of course, Kenner is partially correct. While possessing no necessary connection to honesty and truth, what Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca call the "neutral style" achieves its effectiveness by suggesting "the transition from general approbation given to the language to approbation of the standards enunciated."[121]

Consequently, we may concede Kenner's point that the plain style may be used, like any other, to present tendentious arguments. However, it does possess the virtue of being easier to analyze: unspoken presuppositions are much easier to detect and rebut when the style is plain; and misrepresentation, or the communication of half-truths, is easier to identify. Further, the plain style, as Kenner concedes (without pondering the positive implications) is a populist style, presenting the critic-as-spokesman for the disenfranchised masses. Kenner remarks glibly that Orwell, through its use, "got himself trusted," without troubling to

consider precisely the group which is according Orwell that trust.

The critic who neglects to burden his or her interpretation by pondering the historical conditions of production (adapting Roman Jacobson's definition of literature) "commits linguistic violence on ordinary speech." Terry Eagleton rightly remarks that

> it would probably come as a surprise to George Orwell to hear that his essays were to be read as though the topics he discussed were less important than the way he discussed them. In much that is classified as literature, the truth-value and practical relevance of what is said is considered important to the overall effect.[122]

Contra Kenner, the persona of Eric Blair, as constituted by the plain style, was marked by a self-deprecatory candor, and, as with Russell, an unfeigned willingness to admit erroneous judgments made in previous writings. Orwell's "London Letter" of December 1941 is entirely devoted to his mistakes in his early analyses for the Partisan Review. How is this to be reconciled with Kenner's imputation of a mere "show" of candor? For Orwell, the responsibility of the writer was to try to approach objectivity:

> I believe that it is possible to be more objective than most of us are, but that it involves a moral effort. One cannot get away from one's own subjective feelings, but at

> least one can know what they are and make allowances for them. I have made attempts to do this... (CEJL 3:341)

As noted, Orwell attempted this feat in the cognitive realm: in the disinterested search for truth. Since perfect objectivity is impossible to attain, Orwell advocated an approach to style in persuasive writing that included much that is "downright propaganda" (CEJL 1:28), yet intermixed with stylistic effects that render its production "an aesthetic experience" (CEJL 1:28). Orwell's "propaganda" was, in practice, the writing of "counter-propaganda," the exposing of lies in the realm of the non-demonstrable, such as ethics or politics.

The charge by Booth that the "apostles of doubt" are compelled for the sake of consistency to refrain from advocacy in writing is a spurious one. The proper distinction, I believe, is between skepticism, that is, a willingness to hold tentative opinions, on the one hand, and a rhetoric of force, on the other. Again, both Russell and Orwell advocate systematic doubt, that is, doubting the validity of one's own opinions, as a means of avoiding or reducing error <u>on the level of cognition</u>. The principle of doubt, on the one hand, accounts for the frequent admissions by both men that they had changed their views on various questions. This is invariably invoked by dogmatists as a sign of "inconsistency" or "unreliability," rather than a sign of the virtue of intellectual honesty, as well as their

commitment to the quest for an impersonal or objective truth.

At the same time, they employed a commanding style in order to win adherents to their (tentatively-held) views. The conscious adoption of a "rhetoric of force" accounts for what one may concede to be the occasional pseudo-empirical arguments employed by Russell and the similarly misleading arguments often made by Orwell. Orwell seemed to recognize that conclusive proof of the validity of his opinions cannot be established, and that complete freedom from bias is impossible, but that this condition does not demand silence or quietism: "there is no reason why the writer should not write in the most crudely political way, if he wishes to" (CEJL 4:469). Both Orwell and Russell seemed to hold that an opinion-maker is obliged to pursue "the facts" in an objective manner, then to convince others to share one's rational convictions. A dispassionate appraisal of the "facts" leads, in a two-step process, to advocacy of certain "values." Both recognized that certainty was not easily ascertained, but that it was morally necessary to act without complete certainty. For Russell, "one ought always to hold all one's beliefs with a certain element of doubt and one ought to be able to act vigorously in spite of the doubt."[123]

The split between content and form, for Orwell, is a reflection of the split between fact and value. Orwell tried

to learn the facts, then express them: to be right, then write.

Empiricism and Pessimism

The split between fact and value in Orwell's thought is indicated by Russell (as we have seen) in his remark that Orwell allowed himself to learn painful lessons through what Russell called his "love of truth." However, Russell added an instructive cavil: "But he lost hope."[124] This remark refers to Nineteen Eighty-Four, and repeats something said earlier by Orwell, who quibbles in analogous fashion that Russell, in his book Power, failed to provide any prescriptions for improvement, relying merely upon a "pious hope that the present state of things will not endure" (CEJL 1:413). Both "faced facts," but Russell often chose to end his sober analyses with a rhetorical flourish which reflected a sanguine outlook belied by the sobriety of his preceding remarks. The split between emotion and analysis is revealed by Russell's frequent concessions that such optimistic codas may, however, be more temperamental than rational. Orwell's conception of human nature, while less sanguine than Russell's, was, ironically, a more consistent outcome of empiricism. Russell's hope was neither derived from nor a logical outcome of empiricist thought. While maintaining his allegiance to the philosophy of doubt,

Russell defended his political engagement to anti-rationalists like Booth by responding that he acted according to his feelings: "the isms by which people attempt to justify their impulses are, in fact, the products of the impulses that they pretend to justify."[125]

While Orwell and Russell relied upon feeling to determine their commitments, both these engagé writers adopted the empiricist slogan "Reject authority: Look at the facts" as their response to State-sanctioned injustice. But, as we saw in the last section, in questions of value there are no self-evident truths to be demonstrated, merely arguments to be pleaded. This distinction is pervasive throughout Russell's philosophy: despite Russell's brief essay positing a connection between empiricism and "liberal" politics, Russell was chary of asserting any proven connection between the two. A contrast between philosophic rationalism and empiricism is relevant here. In the course of arguing for his rationalist theory of an "innate" human nature, Chomsky's critique of empiricism discusses the ominous uses to which the empiricist's view of man may be put:

> If in fact man is infinitely malleable, completely plastic being, with no innate structures of mind and no intrinsic needs of a cultural and social character, then he is a fit subject for the 'shaping of behavior' by the state authority, the corporate manager, the technocrat, or the central committee. Those with some confidence in the

> human species will hope this is not so....[126]

Orwell seriously entertained this Lockean view of man:

> In the past, every tyranny was sooner or later overthrown, or at least resisted, because of 'human nature,' which as a matter of course desired liberty. But we cannot be at all certain that 'human nature' is constant. It may be just as possible to produce a breed of men who do not wish for liberty as to produce a breed of hornless cows (CEJL 1:419).

Thus, it is not to be wondered that Orwell "lost hope," or what Chomsky calls "confidence in the human species." While both Chomsky and Russell are easily classified as radical "left" thinkers in the antihegemonic tradition, the philosophic arguments they advance to justify their radicalism place them in diametrically opposed camps. Chomsky attacks empiricism because it leads to the notion that man <u>can</u> be and therefore <u>should</u> be "controlled"; while Russell, by contrast, upholds the empiricist appeal to fact as the sole defense against the ideological manipulations of the state. Orwell's world-view places him in Russell's (philosophical) camp, while all three are men of the left.

Orwell's concept of man, then, entails a pessimism which can be traced to an empiricist bent. What this suggests is that whether or not a philosophy or world-view

is progressive or reactionary depends upon manner in which it is appropriated.

This relativity can clearly be seen in the topical problem of objectivity. All the political writers cited here discuss (as essayists) or posit (as fiction writers) the abuse of objective truth by political élites. Yet, excepting Orwell himself, they always characterize this abuse by the holders of power in terms of their acceptance and appropriation of objective truth. Julien Benda held that an empirical outlook is actually promoted by governments in the service of oppression:

> Today all political ideologies claim to be founded on science, to be the result of a precise observation of facts. We all know what self-assurance, what rigidity, what inhumanity... are given to these passions today by this claim.[127]

Similarly, Chomsky tells us to "expect that political elites will use the terminology of the social and behavioral sciences to protect their actions from critical analyses...."[128] In 1931, in a striking anticipation of Nineteen Eighty-Four, Russell imagined an Orwellian society in which a power élite will

> possess the sole up-to-date armaments, and will be the repository of all new secrets in the art of war. There will, therefore, be no more war... [This society] will control propaganda and education. The government,

> being an oligarchy, will instill submissiveness into the great bulk of the population, confining initiation and the habit of command to its own members....[129]

However, this society "will embrace all eminent men of science except a few wrong-headed [i.e., "value-oriented"] and anarchical cranks. Whatever the outward forms may be, all real power will come to be concentrated in the hands of those who understand the art of scientific manipulation."[130] In what Orwell would have unproblematically called "the real world," power-holders traditionally annex the concept of objective truth (appropriating it as a special fiefdom), but in Orwell's novel, objective truth is itself subordinated to "power-politics." This extreme view (as satire) forms the basis of Orwell's distinctive contribution to Dystopian literature, a consequence of his obsession with his ideological adversaries.

As we saw in Chapter One, the dominant motif of Nineteen Eighty-Four was the attack upon the "treason of the intellectuals." The ultimate form of control extends beyond the power of propaganda--to the "collective solipsism" of the Party. Orwell recognized the quasi-religious role of the policy-oriented functionaries: "A totalitarian state is in effect a theocracy, and its ruling caste, in order to keep its position has to be thought of as infallible" (CEJL 4:86). This was Orwell's view; the power-worshipping priesthood is personified by the "policy-oriented"

intellectual, O'Brien. After his incarceration, Winston, upon first seeing O'Brien, exclaims, "They've got you, too." O'Brien's response betrays his theocratic ties: "'They got me a long time ago,' said O'Brien, with a mild, almost regretful irony."[131] Bakunin also speaks of this doctrinal function:

> In their existing organization, monopolizing science and remaining thus outside of social life, the savants form a separate cast in many respects analogous to the priesthood. Scientific abstraction is their god, living and real individuals are their victims....[132]

But, again, the priesthood Orwell depicts worships not scientific abstraction, but power, a motif that Orwell employed to emphasize Bakunin's primary insight. The dogma of the Deified Party, Winston tells us, is Collective Solipsism:

> The heresy of heresies was common sense ...For, after all, how do we know that two plus two equals four? If both the past and the external world exists only in the mind, and if the mind itself is controllable--what then?[133]

O'Brien's doctrine is that "reality exists in the mind, and nowhere else... Whatever the party holds to be truth, is truth."[134] Winston Smith holds a countervailing doctrine--naïve realism. His rebellion stems from his heretical notion that "the solid world exists, its laws do not change. Stones

are hard, water is wet, objects unsupported fall towards the center [yet] the Party told you to reject the evidence of your eyes and ears."[135]

For Winston, two and two makes four. Orwell's favorite example of objective truth antedates Orwell's reading of Zamyatin. Orwell first mentions it in his review of Russell's book Power, observing that

> we are descending into an age in which two and two will make five when the Leader says so. Mr. Russell points out that the huge system of organized lying upon which the dictators depend...put them at a disadvantage as against those who know the facts. But... it is quite easy to imagine a state in which the ruling caste deceive their followers without deceiving themselves (CEJL 1:414).

Pace Deutscher, this pessimistic remark explains the profound difference between Orwell and Zamyatin: their attitude towards objectivity. The ideological basis for the tyranny of "The Benefactor" in Zamyatin's novel is that: "the only things unshakable and eternal are the four rules of arithmetic. And only that morality which is built upon these four rules will prove great, unshakable, eternal."[136] In We, the holders of power uphold the notion of objective truth and appropriate this truth for the purpose of oppression. Winston Smith's "subversive" truth becomes, in the world of We, official doctrine:

> there is but one truth, and but one true path: and that truth is: two times two; and that true path is : four. And would it not be an absurdity if these happily, ideally multiplied twos were to get notions of some sort of freedom---i.e., about what is, clearly, an error?[137]

The consequence of this worship of objective truth is that, if the people should "fail to understand that we are bringing them a mathematically infallible happiness, it will be our duty to compel them to be happy."[138] This is precisely the opposite of what Orwell depicts in Nineteen Eighty-Four: not a polity arrogating authority to itself by dint of specialized knowledge, but, beyond this, a government presuming to subordinate the realm of "fact" to its own interests. What accounts for this difference is a satiric thrust, directed at the clercs. In attempting to stem the tide of revisionism that proceeded soon after the publication of the novel, Orwell articulated the dominant motif: "totalitarian ideas have taken root in the minds of intellectuals everywhere, and I have tried to draw these ideas to their logical consequences" (CEJL 4:564). This is Orwell's de-mystification of the "mysticism of cruelty" thesis.

Orwell observed that, for the Nazis, truth was subordinated to ideology: instead of "Science," they recognized "Jewish Science" and "German Science." He concluded that

> the implied object of this line of thought is a nightmare world in which the Leader, or some ruling clique, controls not only the future but the past. If [the Leader] says that two and two are five--well, two and two are five. This prospect frightens me more than the bombs.[139]

Orwell's post-Catalonia credo established his oppositional stance: in order to defend the masses, one defends objectivity. Orwell recognized the contempt with which the managerial class regarded the masses, since the willingness to impose a doctrine of "collective solipsism" necessarily entails an élitist ideology. As Syme explains (before he is purged for "knowing too much"): "The proles are not human beings."[140] Again, the relevance of the historical context obtrudes. Hitler's opinion of the masses was no higher than that of O'Brien:

> Since the masses have only a poor acquaintance with abstract ideas, their reactions lie more in the domain of the feelings...[Hitler advocates] not objectivity, which is a feckless attitude, but a determined will, backed up by power where necessary.[141]

Bernard Crick, writing on Hannah Arendt's Origins of Totalitarianism, remarks that "the Nazis had a full-blown ideology, irrational in its power to comprehend the real world but rational in terms of a broad internal consistency."[142] Arendt herself defines ideology as "isms which to the satisfaction of their adherents can explain

everything and every occurrence by deducing it from a single premise."[143] The shortcoming of ideology, for the empiricist, is precisely this deductive basis. Karl Mannheim, in Ideology and Utopia, says that this anti-Orwellian type of thought is

> academic and lifeless. [It] does not arise from the struggle with concrete problems of life nor from trial and error, nor from experience in mastering nature and society, but rather much more from its own need for systematization....[144]

Such "deductive" thought is attacked by Russell in characteristic arguments:

> it is dangerous to start from general principles and proceed deductively, both because the principles may be untrue and because the reasoning based upon them may be fallacious. Science starts, not from large assumptions, but from particular facts discovered by observation or experiment.[145]

This is the "old" view, which has since been supplanted by what Frederick Ferré calls "postmodern science."[146] But it is a classic statement of the then-predominant empiricist outlook. From this standpoint, both deduction and ideology, as thought-systems, are vitiated by being "closed," depending upon internal consistency rather than external confirmation.

Lionel Trilling recognizes the source of Orwell's philosophic (as opposed to political) realism:

> Orwell...came to respect the old bourgeois values because they were stupid--that is, because they resisted the power of abstract ideas. And he came to love things, material possessions, for the same reason... He came to fear that the commitment to abstract ideas could be far more maleficent than the commitment to the gross materiality of property had ever been.[147]

In Orwell's empirically-based view, the signified precedes the signifier; that is, the world precedes the text. Orwell, like Russell, subscribed to the correspondence theory of truth, and saw language as a tool man uses to refer to a world which is, in itself, non-linguistic. Orwell's dichotomy of "world" and "text" would not accommodate such avant-garde notions as the textualisation of history or the infinite play of signifiers. Eschewing obscurantism, Orwell praises the "liberal habit of mind, which thinks of truth as something outside of yourself, something to be discovered, and not something you can make up as you go along..."(CEJL 4:111). And while he affirms that this view will survive, he adds that "I still don't envy the future historian's job" (CEJL 4:111).

The dilemma Orwell anticipated arrives with historian Hayden White's contention that "any historical object can sustain any number of equally plausible interpretations."[148] For White, the assumption that the "stories" historians tell are found in the evidence rather

than invented, is a "fiction."[149] The following passage by Orwell demonstrates that White's relativism is not without historical precedent:

> It is pointed out that all historical trends are biassed or inaccurate, or, on the other hand, that modern physics has proved that what seems to us the real world is an illusion, so that to believe in the evidence of the senses (my emphasis) is simply vulgar philistinism...(CEJL 4:86).

Such a view, Orwell holds, is not only false, but exceedingly dangerous:

> Totalitarianism demands... a disbelief in the very existence of objective truth. The friends of totalitarianism in this country usually tend to argue that since absolute truth is not attainable, a big lie is no worse than a little lie...(CEJL 4:86).

A profound historical shift has occurred. Objectivity, which was traditionally regarded as "progressive," is now seen as a sign of a "repressive" mentality. According to topical arguments, to disregard the subject in the subject/object dichotomy is "dehumanizing." Yet such disparate appropriations of objectivity as we have seen demonstrate that progressive or reactionary aims can be upheld by either viewpoint. Gerald Graff notes the relevance of Orwell's defense of objective truth to current problems of interpretation:

> It's not that it hadn't occurred to Orwell that the notion of objective truth could easily be used to justify the actions of tyrants and oppressors. But Orwell's experience of Fascist and Communist falsification of history showed how the denial of the possibility of objectivity could also justify oppressive actions....[150]

Despite fashionable attitudes, there is no necessary connection between the quest for objectivity and repression. In the real world, as opposed to the "real world," a phrase which suffers from the pose of ontological sophistication that the presence of quotation marks are intended to confer, there is no "tyranny of fact."

CONCLUSION

Nineteen Eighty-Four is likely to retain its relevance and "truth-value" no matter what philosophic outlook or dominant ideology prevails. This work, whatever its "aesthetic" demerits, is more than a bleak anti-utopian novel embodying an "outdated" defense of objectivity. The novel conveys a powerful counter-ideological message; in current jargon, its purpose is the "de-ideologisation" of ideology. As such, its message will always be "subversive." How Nineteen Eighty-Four achieves this feat is hinted at by Irving Howe:

> The novel deals with moral sentiments, with passions and emotions; it tries, above all to capture the quality of concrete experience. Ideology, however, is abstract... Yet it is precisely from the conflict that the political novel gains its interest.[151]

This, the novel's enduring virtue, is best revealed by citing the the theory of art of the Althusserians, in which literature is not to be understood merely as the expression of ideology, but as offering us a distancing from ideology. The subversive element of the literary text, according to Eagleton, "is revealed by endowing the ideological with a

precise, specific configuration to foreground its limits and lacunae, that of which it cannot at any cost speak...."[152] This "distancing" of ideology is the distinctly Orwellian contribution to the kakatopian tradition, and forms the basis of claims of precedence for Nineteen Eighty-Four over such works as We and Brave New World.

Orwell's gift was not prophecy, but dispassionate analysis. His projection was prophetic because his political acumen enriched his fictional treatment of existing trends. This political sophistication was greater than was assumed by the nay-saying critics discussed herein, and is the source of their dismissive (mis)interpretations. Despite a variety of critical biases, Orwell's "foregrounding" of the ideology of power retains its relevance as an overtly didactic warning that will continue to be "appreciated" by its intended audience, despite misappropriations by contemporary clerks, and regardless of the historical circumstances of its reception.

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