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by

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SCOPE AND CONTENTS: The aim of this thesis is first to establish the moral basis of Orwell's thought, and then to show how this influences his writing. The enquiry is focused on 1984 as the novel giving fullest expression to the moral outlook which determines the style and form of the work as well as Orwell's treatment of its sources.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

Introduction

George Orwell's writings present something of an enigma. In places his work appears to be based on an anarchical approach to life. Some of his writings are progressive in tendency; others have a conservative bias. On one hand he seems to be a vigorous apologist for Socialism, on the other, he is one of its most sturdy critics. He condemns British Imperialism, yet embraces the patriotism usually associated with it. He is a fervent opponent of class snobbery, yet speaks out in defence of the Old School Tie. His works show no evidence of a religious belief, but he has left behind him an aura of sainthood.

These contradictory elements in Orwell's work can be drawn into focus in this apt remark by George Woodcock:

> When people of widely differing viewpoints -- conservatives and Anarchists, Socialists and liberals, aging academics and young writers born old -- find encouragement for their attitudes in a single author's work, we can reasonably assume that each of them is missing something . . .[1]

In other words, what these people are missing is a factor which underlies and explains the apparent paradoxes in Orwell's work.

I believe that at the root of all Orwell's work, and especially 1984, on which I intend to focus this study, lies the moral factor. Few readers are unaware when reading 1984, or other works of Orwell, of a keen moral sense. Yet it is insufficient merely to leave it at

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[1] George Woodcock, The Crystal Spirit (Boston, Toronto, 1966), p. 55.

that. To arrive at any real appreciation of Orwell's morality, one must take the word "morality" to include mores in the broadest possible sense. Orwell was a complex, many-sided character; his morality is eclectic and does not lend itself to an explanation in terms of any orthodox body of thought, as is possible with the morality of a Plymouth Brother, a yogi, or a commissar. Yet, I believe it is possible to come to an understanding of his moral outlook if one views his life and works as a whole.

One of the most important factors in Orwell's morality is his love of nature. In "Why I Write" he tells us:

> So long as I remain alive and well I shall continue . . . to love the surface of the earth, . . .[1]

In "I Write as I Please" he calls this love of nature

> pleasure in the actual process of life . . .[2]

In the section of the above essay, entitled "A Good Word for the Vicar of Bray", Orwell gives this pleasure a moral turn, for he says that the Vicar has largely atoned for his "political quislingism" by planting a yew tree which still stands (1946) in the little Berkshire churchyard. He goes on to say:

> it might not be a bad idea, every time you commit an anti-social act, to make a note of it in your diary, and then, at the appropriate season, push an acorn into the ground.[3]

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[1] George Orwell, "Why I Write", The Orwell Reader. Introd. Richard H. Rovere. (New York, 1956), p. 394.

[2] "I Write as I Please", The Orwell Reader. Introd. Richard H. Rovere. (New York, 1956), p. 385.

[3] Ibid., p. 389.

This "pleasure in the actual process of life" is not productive of that mystic insight into morality described in Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey" but is rather a delight in the natural order of birth, growth, decay, and death, the return of the seasons and the appearance of the first toad in spring.

Orwell hates anything which interferes with the "process of life" and this accounts for his attitude to sex. He believes that the use of contraceptives is wrong, and he classes the advocates of birth-control with the "fanatics". Gordon's poem in Keep the Aspidistra Flying shows that one of the evil things about the "money-god" is that it

> lays the sleek, estranging shield
> Between the lover and his bride.[1]

Yet, lest it should be thought that Orwell has any moral affinity with the Roman Catholic Church on this topic, one should take into account the enthusiastic acceptance of pre-marital sex in the same book:

> Hats off to the factory lad who with fourpence in the world puts his girl in the family way. At least he's got blood and not money in his veins.[2]

As part of the "process of life" Orwell enjoys obscenity but he will not accept promiscuity because this destroys the natural order of marriage and the family. The obscenity of the comic postcard is acceptable because it implies a sound moral standard

> When one examines McGill's post cards more closely, one notices that his brand of humour only has meaning in relation to a fairly strict moral code. Whereas in papers like Esquire,

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[1] George Orwell, Keep the Aspidistra Flying (London, 1954), p. 186.

[2] Ibid., p. 57.

> for instance, or La Vie Parisienne, the imaginary background of the jokes is always promiscuity, the utter breakdown of all standards, the background of the McGill post card is marriage.[1]

Not only does Orwell reject promiscuity in sexual relations because it is against the natural order, but he also rejects puritanism on the same grounds. His essay, "Reflections on Gandhi" contains this interesting passage:

> The essence of being human is that one does not seek perfection, that one is sometimes willing to commit sins for the sake of loyalty, that one does not push asceticism to the point where it makes friendly intercourse impossible . . . No doubt alcohol, tobacco and so forth are things that a saint must avoid, but sainthood is a thing human beings must avoid.[2]

However, Orwell's morality has nothing epicurean about it, and the above passage is balanced by the stoicism of the declaration that if one is human,

> one is prepared in the end to be defeated and broken up by life, which is the inevitable price of fastening one's love upon other human individuals.[3]

Orwell's morality, then, implies a whole-hearted acceptance of the conditions of human existence in all its aspects, both joyous and sad. The above passage implies a condemnation of the morality of the saint, for the latter, wishing to escape from the human condition, becomes of little value to his fellow humans.

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[1] George Orwell, "The Art of Donald McGill", Critical Essays (London, 1946), p. 94.

[2] "Reflections on Gandhi", The Orwell Reader, Introd. Richard H. Rovere (New York, 1956), p. 332.

[3] Loc. cit.

However, Orwell saw that in his time the threat to the "process of life" no longer came from the moral attitude of the saint but from the immorality of totalitarianism based on the concept that the means is justified by the end and that might is right. Through most of his life he had been able to read about and hear of the results of this immorality in the Soviet Union. He saw with what cruelty the Communist Party had forced the Soviet society into new patterns to facilitate a rapid technological advance. He had noted with what ruthlessness collectivization had been forced upon the peasants, and how the populations of entire regions had been uprooted from the way of life which was natural to them, and redistributed in much the same way that a builder redistributes his materials for greater convenience on the building-site. He experienced personally in Spain how the totalitarians were reshaping men's minds in forms of their own choosing. He observed the New Order in Germany, reshaping populations through genocide, assisted by a highly developed technology. This technology enabled the totalitarian rulers to enslave people far more completely than the tyrannies of the past, and to direct all their energy to the aims of totalitarianism and away from the "process of life". It is no coincidence that this phrase is almost exactly duplicated in 1984 where O'Brien says:

> There will be no curiosity, no enjoyment of the process of life.[1]

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[1] George Orwell, Nineteen eighty-four (Harmondsworth, 1965), p. 215.

Orwell's opposition to the moral implications of the concepts that might is right, and that the end justifies the means, led him to reaffirm the morality inherent in the traditions in which he had been brought up, and this expresses itself to a great extent in his love for England. Whenever he writes directly of England, his style takes on an almost lyrical quality, as it does when he describes the South of England on his return from Spain, in Homage to Catalonia. Unlike many of his intellectual contemporaries, Orwell did not take up the fashion of cosmopolitanism but moved even closer to England.

Orwell's close association of himself with England is shown in the name he adopted. He had been christened Eric Blair. The surname is Scottish and reflects that pseudo-Scots cult which prevailed among the middle classes during Orwell's boyhood. His attitude towards the name was probably to a large degree that expressed by Gordon Comstock in Keep the Aspidistra Flying. Eric, too, has a non-English ring about it and carries echoes of the violent Viking.

On the other hand, George Orwell is wholly English; the surname he took from the River Orwell in East Anglia where he enjoyed holidaying and fishing in the rural atmosphere he loved so well; the Christian name is that of England's patron saint. Wyndham Lewis commenting on this point remarks:

> To understand why when Eric Blair began to write he selected as a nom de plume the name George Orwell is to have advanced a considerable distance in the understanding of this writer.[1]

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[1] Wyndham Lewis, The Writer and the Absolute (London, 1952), p. 155.

Having established Orwell's patriotism, it is possible to consider its moral implications, for Orwell's feeling for his country is not that sinking of the self in the larger unit in order to emphasize the self in a world context. This is mere nationalism. In his essay, "Notes on Nationalism", Orwell draws a distinction between nationalism and patriotism:

> By 'patriotism' I mean devotion to a particular place and a particular way of life, which one believes to be the best in the world but has no wish to force upon other people. Patriotism is of its nature defensive, both militarily and culturally. Nationalism, on the other hand, is inseparable from the desire for power. The abiding purpose of every nationalist is to secure more power and more prestige, not for himself but for the nation or other unit in which he has chosen to sink his own individuality.[1]

In this "particular way of life" of the English Orwell sees the antidote to totalitarian New Orders and systems which are inimical to "the process of life" and human decency in general. Speaking of the ordinary English people in the essay, "England Your England", he says:

> The power-worship which is the new religion of Europe, and which has infected the English intelligentsia, has never touched the common people. They have never caught up with power politics. The 'realism' [for Orwell this means naked force] which is preached in Japanese and Italian newspapers would horrify them.[2]

He goes on to speak of the comic postcards that one sees in cheap stationers' shops and calls them a "sort of diary" of the English people:

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[1]George Orwell, "Notes on Nationalism", Such, Such Were the Joys (New York, 1953), p. 74.

[2]"England Your England", Such, Such Were the Joys (New York, 1953), p. 205.

> Their old-fashioned outlook, their graded snobberies, their mixture of bawdiness and hypocrisy, their extreme gentleness, and their deeply moral attitude to life, are all mirrored there.[1]

He asserts that gentleness is perhaps the most marked trait of the English -- their policemen are unarmed, their bus-conductors good-tempered. They hate war, and in peace-time, even during periods of great unemployment, the government finds it difficult to get recruits for the tiny standing army. There is a military tradition in England, of course, but it is rooted in "the country gentry and a specialized stratum of the middle class"[2] and is completely alien to the man-in-the street.

Linked with this gentleness is what Orwell calls "an all-important English trait", the respect for legal customs and constitutionalism; the belief that the law is above both the individual and the state. The law may, on occasions, be inhumane but it is not to be corrupted:

> Everyone believes in his heart that the law can be, ought to be, and on the whole, will be impartially administered. The totalitarian idea that there is no such thing as law, there is only power, has never taken root.[3]

The English sense of fair play is especially apparent in the traditions of the Public School. Orwell won a scholarship to Eton and though he tended to depreciate the influence of this school on his

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[1] George Orwell, "England Your England", Such, Such Were the Joys (New York, 1953), p. 205.

[2] Ibid., p. 206

[3] Ibid., p. 209.

life, Lawrence Brander says, however, "to anyone who knew him it was obvious where he had been to school".[1] This sense of fair play gave Orwell a wide human sympathy, especially for those who were suffering injustice and a good example of this is his essay, "In Defence of P. G. Wodehouse", where he puts the case for a man whom many people were accusing of quislingism.

Together with the sense of fair play Orwell would have absorbed the ideal of the stiff upper lip which is characterized by physical and moral endurance. Physical endurance Orwell practised in his own life. He seemed to delight in plunging into the most unpleasant situations -- the filthy kitchens of Paris hotels, the evil-smelling doss-houses frequented by tramps in London's underworld, the rigours of the Spanish Civil War. This accounts for the élan with which he describes his experiences in Spain in his book Homage to Catalonia; he is proud of having been tried and not found wanting.

Moral endurance in Orwell has already been touched on in my discussion of his attitude towards sainthood, but it also appears in his attitude towards schemes for earthly utopia. The idea of utopia itself is repugnant to Orwell because it means physical and moral softness. He does not want "the paradise of little fat men", his reason being that

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[1] Lawrence Brander, George Orwell (London, 1956), p. 4.

> . . . many of the qualities we admire in human beings can only function in opposition to some kind of disaster, pain or difficulty; but the tendency of mechanical progress is to eliminate disaster, pain and difficulty.[1]

At Eton the pupil was much less regimented than in the ordinary state-assisted schools; he had a private study, and was given plenty of scope to develop those abilities peculiar to him. Orwell wrote in an article entitled "For Ever Eton" which appeared in the Observer on August 1, 1948:

> It has one great virtue . . . that is a tolerant and civilized atmosphere which gives each boy a fair chance of developing his individuality.[2]

Together with this development of individuality goes individual moral responsibility and this Orwell had in abundance. He was against committing his conscience into the keeping of any orthodoxy, secular or religious. This ideal is completely contrary to the claims of totalitarianism which demand that the individual sacrifice his freedom of moral action to the dictates of the state.

These moral virtues, which Orwell found in the English people in general, and in his own background in particular, can be drawn together in the analogy of cricket which is a peculiarly English game. Although the game is not nearly so popular in the nation as a whole as it is on the grounds of the Public Schools, Orwell sees it as giving expression to much that is the best in the English moral

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[1]George Orwell, The Road to Wigan Pier (Harmondsworth, 1966), p. 170.

[2]Christopher Hallis, A Study of George Orwell (London, 1956), p. 19.

outlook:

> it gives expression to a well-marked trait in the English character, the tendency to value 'form' or 'style' more highly than success. In the eyes of any true cricket-lover it is possible for an innings of ten runs to be 'better' (i.e. more elegant) than an innings of a hundred runs: . . . It is a game full of forlorn hopes and sudden dramatic changes of fortune, and its rules are so ill-defined that their interpretation is partly an ethical business. . . . it is predominantly an upper-class game, but for the whole nation it is bound up with such concepts as 'good form', 'playing the game', etc., and it has declined in popularity, just as the tradition of 'don't hit a man when he's down' has declined.[1]

In this description of the game of cricket Orwell projects his own moral outlook to a great degree. The "ill-defined" rules of the game are similar to his own eclecticism, and the "ethical business" of their interpretation recalls Orwell's insistence on the individual's responsibility to act out his morality with sufficient flexibility to allow for humane consideration of one's fellows. The game's insistence on "form" and "style", rather than success, reflects Orwell's rejection of the totalitarian idea that the end justifies the means. Orwell's linking of the game with the tradition of not hitting a man when he's down shows his rejection, also, of that other cardinal belief of totalitarianism -- that might is right. As Orwell, in this description of cricket, ascribes to the game the most important elements in his eclectic moral outlook, this outlook may justly be called the "Cricket Morality".

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[1] George Orwell, "Raffles and Miss Blandish", Critical Essays (London, 1946), p. 143.

It is highly significant that totalitarianisms, both on the Right and on the Left, recognize the antagonism between the Cricket Morality and their own codes. Orwell notes:

> The Nazis, for instance, were at pains to discourage cricket, which had gained a certain footing in Germany before and after the last [1914-18] war.[1]

Arthur Koestler's Communist Party leader, Rubashov, in Darkness at Noon, admits the antagonism between the Cricket Morality and totalitarianism. He writes in his diary:

> As we have thrown overboard all conventions and rules of cricket-morality, our sole guiding principle is that of consequent logic. We are under the terrible compulsion to follow our thought down to its final consequence and to act in accordance with it.[2]

Orwell believed that the "final consequence" of abandoning the Cricket Morality was the horror of 1984 where he showed objective truth, personal freedom, and decency, all obliterated by the unbridled power of totalitarianism, and he sought, actively, to prevent the "final consequence" overtaking England. He saw that the only serious opponent of Fascism and Communism was Socialism, and so he allied himself with the latter cause.

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[1] George Orwell, "Raffles and Miss Blandish", Critical Essays (London, 1946), pp. 143-44.

[2] Arthur Koestler, Darkness at Noon (London, 1941), pp. 99-100.

CHAPTER II

Orwell and Socialism

Orwell's activities throughout his life-time would lead one to believe that he was an ardent socialist. In Spain he risked his life and received a severe throat wound while fighting in the militia of the Trotskyite P. O. U. M. against the fascists. In this he was carrying out, in a very practical manner, the socialist doctrine of internationalism. He became literary editor of the "Tribune" which was, at the time he joined it, the organ of the left-wing dissidents in the Labour Party led by Aneurin Bevan. He also contributed articles to left-wing journals such as the "Partisan Review" and "Horizon". Besides these associations with socialists, Orwell became an active member of the Freedom Defence Committee, eventually becoming its vice-chairman. This committee was created by left-wingers such as Herbert Read, H. J. Laski, and Aneurin Bevan; its object was to aid the victims of prosecutions under the war-time regulations which remained in force for some time after the end of World War II.

Writing about his political development in The Road to Wigan Pier, Orwell says that at the age of seventeen or eighteen he "loosely" described himself "as a Socialist,"[1] and in his essay "Why I Write" he

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[1]George Orwell, The Road to Wigan Pier (Harmondsworth, 1966), p. 122.

declares:

> Every line of serious work that I have written since 1936 has been written, directly or indirectly against totalitarianism and for democratic socialism, as I understand it.[1]

A brief survey of some of Orwell's most important works shows that, both before and after 1936, Orwell was expounding views which were in keeping with the socialist attitude to life. Down and out in Paris and London shows Orwell breaking away from the middle class to associate with the lowest section of society. The evil and futility of British imperialism is exposed in Burmese Days and Shooting an Elephant. In Keep the Aspidistra Flying and Coming up for Air, Orwell hits hard at capitalist commercialism. Orwell in Part One of The Road to Wigan Pier makes his contribution to alleviating the plight of the unemployed workers by revealing to the general public the conditions under which these people live.

Nevertheless, a closer examination of his works reveals that Orwell has very little to say about socialist economic or political programmes. He says nothing about taxation to eliminate hereditary privilege and secure equality of opportunity; he says nothing about co-operative control of the retail trade; he has no constructive suggestions regarding trade-unionism. In The Road to Wigan Pier he reports on the terrible housing conditions in the industrial North but he does not offer any socialist solution such as the state

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[1]George Orwell, "Why I Write", Such, Such were the Joys (New York, 1953), p. 9.

requisitioning of building-land and the expropriation of the property of speculating and rack-renting landlords. He mentions the workers' bad health but says nothing about a national health scheme. Orwell deplores unemployment but he does not propose state ownership of the means of production and state-planning of industry to solve the problem.

It is not only that Orwell does not put forward socialist policy in the places where he has a good chance, he actually differs from the socialists over a number of vital issues. He does not stop at merely indicating his disagreement on these issues but goes out of his way to attack these socialist standpoints in 1984.

Progress has always ranked high among socialist doctrines. Socialists look to progress for assistance in the social revolution by bringing in more efficient machinery to lighten the workers' load and to give them more leisure. Progress, to the socialist, also means the abandonment of the past with its social inequality, dirt, and unregulated capitalism for a future hygienic, well-ordered society amid glittering steel and gleaming concrete. In the 30's British socialists were always pointing to the great material progress in the Soviet Union. They were enthusiastic over the Dnieper dam, the Turk-Sib railway, the White Sea canal, the burgeoning steel industry and the rapid mechanization of agriculture.

All this was repugnant to Orwell. The glittering sterility of the machine-dominated world was against nature and "the process of life". Orwell loved animals and the country and he saw that progress in technology was hostile to these things:

> . . . a prominent I. L. P'er confessed to me with a sort of wistful shame -- as though it were something faintly improper -- that he was 'fond of horses'. Horses, you see, belong to the vanished agricultural past, and all sentiment for the past carries with it a vague smell of heresy.[1]

The progress Orwell had seen in the slum-clearance of the industrial North had not impressed him as being very humane. In The Road to Wigan Pier he describes how the new estates break up the old communal life and leave the tenants feeling lonely and insecure. Besides this, the tenants lose a considerable amount of freedom. They are told how they must keep their gardens, and, in some places, are even ordered to trim their hedges to a uniform height. They are not allowed to keep poultry, nor are they permitted to keep the homing pigeons of which the miners are so fond. Perhaps the worst indignity which the re-housed tenants suffer is the compulsory de-lousing of their persons and property before they enter the new house. Orwell agrees that the new houses are better than the old slums, but he would prefer that people be treated less like numbers and more like human beings.

Orwell saw clearly, too, that technological progress could bring harm as well as benefit:

> Our attitude towards such things as poison gases ought to be the attitude of the king of Brobdingnag towards gunpowder; but because we live in a mechanical and scientific age we are infected with the notion that, whatever else happens, 'progress' must continue and knowledge must never be suppressed.[2]

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[1] George Orwell, The Road to Wigan Pier (Harmondsworth, 1966), p. 177.

[2] Ibid., p. 182.

Orwell shows in 1984 how progress can be perverted. In Oceania there is evidence of great progress in the apparatus needed by the police state. The telescreens are wonderful pieces of equipment, but are used to crush liberty. Likewise, the speak-write is a marvellous machine but it is used for the spreading of lying propaganda and the crushing of creative writing, for to use it the writer must speak, and the telescreens register his every word. Shock therapy represents progress in psychiatry, but in 1984 electrical shocks are used to make people submit to totalitarianism. O'Brien defines the progress of 1984 as "progress towards more pain."[1]

A necessary prerequisite for progress, both in science and society, is a higher standard of education for the people as a whole and socialists have always been interested in education. Only recently Britain's Labour Government reorganized the secondary school system to help eradicate cultural differences between the strata of the community.

Orwell has a curious attitude towards education. On the one hand, he cherishes the ideals of the Public School to which he wants to send his adopted son, but on the other hand, he favours the working-class standpoint:

> Working people often have a vague reverence for learning in others but where 'education touches their own lives they see through it and reject it by a healthy instinct.[2]

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[1] George Orwell, Nineteen eighty-four (Harmondsworth, 1965), p. 214.

[2] The Road to Wigan Pier (Harmondsworth, 1966), p. 103.

I think that the apparent contradiction presented here by Orwell can be reconciled by one's referring back to the Cricket Morality. The Public School does not lay emphasis on intellectual achievement to the exclusion of everything else; it gives the pupil a chance to develop his own individuality within the framework of the Cricket Morality.

In the Grammar School, however, there is a tremendous competition (much greater in Orwell's day when state scholarships were rare) in which intellectual achievement is the passport to a better social position via the university. It is not surprising that, having succeeded in bettering themselves entirely through intellectual effort, intellectuals tend to place intellect above the Cricket Morality; their ready sneer at the Old School Tie is not simply a matter of social jealousy, it implies contempt for the "it's not cricket" attitude as well. Moreover, intellectuals from the working class are cut off from their old social surroundings by their education and yet do not feel at home in the class to which they have raised themselves. Socialism appeals to them because it demands an echelon of bureaucrats to administer its programmes and in this the intellectuals find security and power. Because they are after security and the satisfaction of power and do not follow the Cricket Morality, they are open to the blandishments of totalitarianism:

> The big public . . . are at once too sane and too stupid to acquire the totalitarian outlook. The direct, conscious attack on intellectual decency comes from the intellectuals themselves.[1]

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[1]George Orwell, "The Prevention of Literature", Inside the Whale and Other Essays (Harmondsworth, 1966), pp. 172-73.

In 1984 Orwell gives the intellectuals their wish. As members of Ingsoc they have, collectively, absolute power and are uninhibited by any moral considerations. At the same time Orwell shows that, by abandoning the Cricket Morality, they have trapped themselves in a world of futile sophistry in which the only reality is absolute power which corrupts absolutely.

Orwell differed from most socialist intellectuals on the question of patriotism. The orthodox socialist substitutes internationalism for patriotism as is shown by the slogan, now practically dead, "Workers of the world, unite!" Orwell had personally experienced the failure of internationalism in the Spanish Civil War. Moreover, looking at world events -- the increasing nationalism of the Soviet Union, the perverted patriotism of the right-wing reaction in Spain, Italy, and Germany -- and considering his own deeply moral feelings on the matter, Orwell decided that, by ignoring the force of national feeling, the socialist intellectuals were not in touch with reality.

Orwell believed that, for the English, patriotism could be a regenerative force, and it formed a good part of Orwell's Cricket Morality. On the other hand, the type of patriotism which Orwell called nationalism could become a demonic power and he warned the socialist intellectuals of the danger of ignoring it in 1984.

The British Empire was another subject on which Orwell took an unorthodox line. He agreed with the socialists that it was wrong for one race to impose its power upon another. He, too, saw the Empire as, basically, a commercial racket. However, he saw also that the Empire

was not entirely evil and that many conscientious administrators took the idea of bearing the White Man's Burden very seriously. Orwell says of the nineteenth-century Anglo-Indians:

> It may be that all they did was evil, but they changed the face of the earth (it is instructive to look at a map of Asia and compare the railway system with that of the surrounding countries), . . ."[1]

In "England Your England" Orwell writes:

> It was fair to say that life within the British Empire was in many ways better than life outside it.[2]

Orwell felt, therefore, that the sniggers of the "pansy-left circles" at everything to do with the Empire were deplorable. The sneering left-wing intellectuals were not responsible, active men, whereas many of the colonial administrators were. Besides, Orwell held the view which, Woodcock tells us:

> was current until quite late in the 1940's that the abandonment of the Empire would diminish automatically the national income of Britain and in consequence the standard of living of the workers.[3]

This view led Orwell to believe that the socialist intellectuals were not honest because, while they advocated the dismemberment of the Empire, they had not the courage to admit the consequences:

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[1]George Orwell, "Rudyard Kipling", Critical Esays (London, 1946), pp. 103-4.

[2]"England Your England", Inside the Whale and Other Essays (Harmondsworth, 1966), p. 29.

[3]George Woodcock, The Crystal Spirit (Boston, Toronto, 1966), p. 267.

> They have internationalist aims, and at the same time they struggle to keep up a standard of life with which those aims are incompatible. We all live by robbing Asiatic coolies, and those of us who are 'enlightened' all maintain that those coolies ought to be set free; but our standard of living, and hence our 'enlightenment', demands that the robbery shall continue.[1]

This attitude of Orwell came about because of his Cricket Morality, which impelled him to be just to men who were doing their best, even in a situation which was morally impossible to justify.

Two more important points on which Orwell differed from the socialists were family-planning and the power of the state. The socialists felt that the only way in which the Malthusian warning could be acted upon was by the provision of family-planning clinics and cheap contraceptives. Orwell opposed this, on moral grounds, because it interfered with the "process of life".

Socialists believed that to facilitate the planning of the economy, and the provision of social services, the state would have to gain more power and become more centralized. Orwell feared this idea because he saw how, once the apparatus of centralization was set up, it would become the ready tool for totalitarianism, and it is no coincidence that the government of Big Brother in 1984 is highly centralized.

As Orwell differs so widely from the socialist viewpoint on these basic matters, it is necessary to find out just what Orwell understood by socialism. Fortunately, Orwell makes a clear statement

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[1]George Orwell, "Rudyard Kipling", Critical Essays (London, 1946), p. 103.

on this in a number of places. In The Road to Wigan Pier he writes about the possibility of setting up "an effective Socialist Party":

> We can only get it if we offer an objective which fairly ordinary people will recognize as desirable. Beyond all else, therefore, we need intelligent propaganda. Less about 'class consciousness', 'expropriation of the expropriators', 'bourgeois ideology', and 'proletarian solidarity', not to mention the sacred sisters, thesis, antithesis and synthesis; and more about justice, liberty, and the plight of the unemployed. And less about mechanical progress, . . . that kind of thing is not an integral part of Socialist doctrine, . . . All that is needed is to hammer two facts home . . . One, that the interests of all exploited people are the same; the other that Socialism is compatible with common decency.[1]

In another place, in the same book, Orwell writes:

> We have to fight for justice and liberty, and Socialism does mean justice and liberty when the nonsense is stripped off it.[2]

What Orwell understands by socialism, therefore, is "justice and liberty" and "common decency". Thus, it is evident that Orwell's fundamental interest in socialism is moral, not political. This conclusion will be strengthened if a closer examination is made of Orwell's political activities.

Orwell confesses that the first time he really became aware of the working class, he saw them as

> the symbolic victims of injustice, playing the same part in England as the Burmese played in Burma.[3]

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[1] George Orwell, The Road to Wigan Pier (Harmondsworth, 1966), pp. 202-3.

[2] Ibid., p. 193.

[3] Ibid., p. 130.

Orwell felt that morally he was partly responsible for the oppression of the Burmese because he had been a policeman in the service of the oppressors, and when he came to England he again felt this sense of moral responsibility because he was a member of the class which benefitted from the exploitation of the workers. So when he went among the "lowest of the low" it was with the idea of making some sort of personal expiation:

> Once I had been among them and accepted by them, I should have touched bottom, and -- this is what I felt: I was aware even then that it was irrational -- part of my guilt would drop from me.[1]

This is not the attitude of the politician but that of the moralist.

If Orwell's part in the Spanish Civil War is examined carefully, his moral attitude will be seen there as well. In Homage to Catalonia Orwell says that he initially went to Spain "with some notion of writing newspaper articles" but joined the militia "because at that time and in that atmosphere it seemed the only conceivable thing to do."[2] The "atmosphere" was that of revolutionary Barcelona where Orwell, for a short time, found himself in the classless society of his dreams. Orwell nowhere states any of the ideological reasons a socialist would have for joining the militia, he merely says, "I recognized it immediately as a state of affairs worth fighting for."[3] His significant comment at the end of the book is:

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[1]George Orwell, The Road to Wigan Pier (Harmondsworth, 1966), p. 131.

[2]"Homage to Catalonia", The Orwell Reader. Introd. Richard H. Rovere (New York, 1956), p. 166.

[3]Ibid., p. 167.

> Curiously enough the whole experience has left me with not less but more belief in the decency of human beings.[1]

Once again, we are back to "decency", to the Cricket Morality.

Again, Orwell's morality is seen in his activities on behalf of the Freedom Defence Committee. He felt people were being treated unjustly. It was not a political consideration, for he opposed the emergency measures even when they were exerted against the fascists in Britain.

One question still remains -- why did Orwell choose to support the socialists? The answer is that he saw only two political forces to be reckoned with in the world -- the power-worship of fascism and the democratic ideals of socialism. The Soviet system had degenerated into power-worship. The British Liberal Party had died with the advent of new economic and technological phenomena that had done away with free trade and laissez faire. Orwell felt that many of the reactionaries of the Tory Party were quite willing to accept fascism. Thus, Orwell saw that, in England, socialism was the only serious opponent of fascism, "which at its very best is socialism with the virtues left out."[2]

Orwell set himself to keep the virtues in socialism and his main task was to "humanize" it, in other words, to make it consistent with the Cricket Morality. Orwell knew the dangers of increased state

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[1] George Orwell, "Homage to Catalonia", The Orwell Reader. Introd. Richard H. Rovere (New York, 1956), p. 211.

[2] The Road to Wigan Pier (Harmondsworth, 1966), p. 193.

control, and the creation of a large bureaucracy disturbed him. In Animal Farm he showed how the intellectuals could seize power and deceive the workers into accepting their oligarchical dictatorship, and he feared that English socialists might be tempted to do the same thing. This is why, in 1984, he called the party of Big Brother by the name Ingsoc. In this parody of English Socialism Orwell addressed a direct warning to the socialists not to forsake the Cricket Morality for the worship of power.

CHAPTER III

The Vision of Power in 1984

It has been seen in the opening chapter of this study that a considerable part of the Cricket Morality has its basis in the love of justice, detestation of militarism and abhorrence of power politics. In accordance with these principles, Orwell involved himself in the fight against those things he felt were incompatible with their survival. For him the evils of injustice, falsehood, brute force, and the adulation of power focussed themselves in political activity. It was this which gave direction to his innately rebellious personality and led him to engage on a very personal level throughout his lifetime in the political and social struggle.

Orwell at first saw the evil of monopolist capitalism and colonialism and allied himself with what he took to be the socialist cause. But as socialism increased in strength during his lifetime, finally culminating in victory in the 1945 elections, so Orwell became increasingly disturbed at certain elements in socialism and in the thinking of the common people. In a passage from Orwell's essay, "Inside the Whale", one can see his growing fears:

> Until recently . . . it was generally imagined that socialism could preserve and even enlarge the atmosphere of liberalism. It is now beginning to be realized how false this idea was. Almost certainly we are moving into an age of totalitarian dictatorships -- an age in which freedom of thought will be at first a deadly sin and later

> on a meaningless abstraction. The antonomous individual is going to be stamped out of existence.[1]

Socialism, he saw, was no guarantee of liberty and justice, but, indeed, was helping to prepare the way for totalitarianism. He found that what many socialists would like to see was, not so much liberty, but order imposed from above -- of course, for the good of the people:

> The truth is that, to many people calling themselves socialists, revolution does not mean a movement of the masses with which they hope to associate themselves: it means a set of reforms which 'we', the clever ones, are going to impose upon 'them', the Lower Orders.[2]

These people were well-meaning but convinced that they knew what was best for society. But this wish to impose reforms from above instead of working through the slower methods of education, adaptation and compromise, though well-intentioned, was bound to lead to totalitarianism. What if the "Lower Orders" and those who recoil from socialism for ideological or aesthetic reasons rejected the "dictatorship of the prigs"? The probable course of the reformers would be to struggle for power to push through their plans in the sincere belief that they were combating ignorant reaction and vested interests. If the opposition became more pronounced, the reformers would be obliged to channel their main effort in the direction of gaining and maintaining their power so that they could introduce the beneficial measures they believed in. But in such a situation the struggle for

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[1] George Orwell, "Inside the Whale", Inside the Whale and Other Essays (Harmondsworth, 1966), p. 48.

[2] The Road to Wigan Pier (Harmondsworth, 1966), p. 157.

power would become an end in itself and the original purpose would be forgotten. This would bring about the state of affairs projected in 1984, where power has become unequivocally an end in itself.

However, besides these people with original good intentions, there were some who would be quite happy to see socialism gaining more power. They felt that, in socialism, there was an orthodoxy in which they could quell their doubts and fears and they would have liked socialism to back up its orthodoxy with a power in which they could bury their weakness. These people, like those first mentioned, were also likely to become tools for totalitarianism.

But apart from the anti-libertarian tendency among socialists there was a disturbing bias towards totalitarianism and its accompanying phenomena in the literature of the ordinary man -- and the ordinary child, too. In boys' magazines and detective stories Orwell found the elements which would go towards creating the sadism and power-worship which he depicts so ruthlessly in 1984.

In his essay "Boys' Weeklies" he compares the Gem and Magnet which have been on the market for more than thirty years with the more modern boys' magazines such as Skipper and Hotspur and he finds that these, unlike the earlier magazines, encourage the reader to identify himself not with people of his own age, but with "some single all-powerful character who dominates everyone about him and whose usual method of solving any problem is a sock on the jaw."[1] He goes on to say:

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[1] George Orwell, "Boys' Weeklies", Inside the Whale and Other Essays (London, 1966), p. 193.

> This character is intended as a superman, and as physical strength is the form of power that boys can best understand, he is usually a sort of human gorilla; in the Tarzan type of story he is sometimes actually a giant, eight or ten feet high.[1]

Then he goes on to the American magazines in which there is "the frankest appeal to sadism" and he notes that the "huge sale of the Yank Mags in England shows that there is a demand for that kind of thing, but very few English writers seem able to produce it."[2] One English serial writer can do it, however, in a most ominous way from Orwell's point of view, for he portrays a "hero" of the "tough guy" type as always swinging a rubber truncheon.

Another essay, "Raffles and Miss Blandish" is a demonstration that in popular adult fiction there has also been a pronounced turn in the direction of power-worship and sadism. Commenting on the books of James Hadley Chase who has captured the moral spirit of the American underworld, he says:

> Their whole theme is the struggle for power and the triumph of the strong over the weak. The big gangsters wipe out the little ones as mercilessly as a pike gobbling up the little fish in a pond; the police kill off the criminals as cruelly as the angler kills the pike. If ultimately one sides with the police against the gangsters, it is merely because they are better organised and more powerful, because, in fact, the law is a bigger racket than crime. Might is right: vae victis.[2]

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[1] George Orwell, "Boys' Weeklies", Inside the Whale and Other Essays (London, 1966), p. 193.

[2] George Orwell, "Raffles and Miss Blandish", Critical Essays (London, 1946), p. 148.

The whole sentiment of this kind of literature is completely opposed to the Cricket Morality. Particularly dangerous, from the point of view of this morality, is the idea that the guardians of the law do not succeed because they are pursuing justice but merely because they are more powerful than the gangster's mob. Once the position of the police is allowed to be amoral, then the activities of the police in 1984 are no surprise.

The demand for this kind of literature, Orwell notes, is obviously very great because the book sold "according to its publishers, no less than half a million copies."[1] Moreover, Chase could count on "hundreds of thousands of readers who know what is meant by a 'clipshop' or the 'hotsquat', do not have to do mental arithmetic when confronted by 'fifty grand', and understand at sight a sentence like 'Johnnie was a rummy and only two jumps ahead of the nutfactory."[2]

So Orwell sees a situation in which the seeds of the totalitarianism of 1984 might well take root. There are adherents of the socialist party who would rejoice in a power-structured state, there are other socialists who would unintentionally be moulded into such a structure and meanwhile the masses are developing the right psychological mood to accept a leadership based on brute force.

All these tendencies, therefore, caused Orwell to see the dangers of political power and coupled with this was his feeling that

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[1] George Orwell, "Raffles and Miss Blandish", Critical Essays (London, 1946), p. 147.

[2] Ibid., p. 149.

all power corrupts. This influenced his criticism of some of Arthur Koestler's work which is most important for a full understanding of 1984. In his criticism of Koestler's The Gladiators Orwell says:

> If Spartacus is the prototype of the modern revolutionary -- and obviously he is intended to be that -- he should have gone astray because of the impossibility of combining power with righteousness.[1]

In Orwell's view, however good the purpose may be, nothing justifies unregulated power in one individual or group because corruption always accompanies power. Orwell sets forth the dilemma of revolutionaries:

> You can achieve nothing unless you are willing to use force and cunning, but in using them you pervert your aims.[2]

In 1984 Orwell pursues this problem which Koestler had posed in Darkness at Noon. Orwell's Winston uses, word for word, part of a sentence which Koestler's Rubashov had written in his diary. Winston's sentence is "I understand HOW: I do not understand WHY".[3] The emphasis of the capitals points to the fact that Orwell is exploring the question of means and end. Rubashov writes "Woe to the fool and the aesthete who only ask how and not why."[4]

The context of Rubashov's sentence is a short dissertation on the immaturity of the masses in comparison with technical progress.

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[1] George Orwell, "Arthur Koestler", Critical Essays (London, 1946), p. 134.

[2] Ibid., p. 134.

[3] Nineteen eighty-four (Harmondsworth, 1965), p. 67.

[4] Arthur Koestler, Darkness at Noon (London, 1941), p. 165.

Each advance in the system of technology and economics leaves the people behind politically, for to be politically mature means to have a full understanding of the contemporary world. When the masses have caught up politically with the new technological advance, a further step forward leaves them behind again. Rubashov sees the Russian leaders as being politically abreast of progress while the proletariat lags behind. It is therefore necessary to spur them along in the right direction. This may entail degradation and suffering for the masses and oppression, lies and hypocrisy on the part of the leaders. Thus in Rubashov's opinion only the aesthete and the fool will question the ugliness and hardship of the transitional period. The wise man will look ahead to find the reasons.

Orwell in 1984 does not accept this point. According to the Cricket Morality, the means are important. The reader will remember the emphasis on "form" and "style" pointed out in the first chapter. Following Rubashov's thesis Orwell provides in 1984 all the physical and moral accompaniments of a transitional period; most mature English readers recognize at once the London of Airstrip One as the London of the emergency or transitional period of World War Two. Then the end was the winning of the war against Fascism to make the world safe for democracy. In Darkness at Noon the aim of the Party is to catch up with technological progress. Orwell has combined reality with theory in 1984 where he creates a state of continuous warfare. Although the end of this warfare is, ostensibly, the defeat of the enemy of the moment, this end is by deliberate policy, never reached. The end

postulated in Darkness at Noon is deferred by the historical process. The Party recognizes this process and at the same time encourages technological advance. Thus although they do not admit it they are really deferring the end to cling to power.

The Party in 1984 does not have any illusions about itself. O'Brien is brutally frank:

> The German Nazis and the Russian Communists came very close to us in their methods, but they never had the courage to recognize their own motives. They pretended . . . that they had seized power unwillingly and for a limited time, and that just round the corner there lay a paradise where human beings would be free and equal . . . We know that no one ever seizes power with the intention of relinquishing it. Power is not a means, it is an end.[1]

Even Winston who has opposed the Party and has been tortured by its representative, O'Brien feels that somehow the Party thinks that it will achieve some beneficial end although he bears the marks of the means on his own body. Thus when O'Brien asks him for his explanation as to why the Party clings to power Winston answers: "You are ruling over us for our own good . . .".[2] But O'Brien stops him with a corrective shock from the torture machine and then tells him the real reason:

> 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 . . .[3]

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[1]George Orwell, Nineteen eighty-four (Harmondsworth, 1965), p. 211.

[2]Ibid., p. 211.

[3]Ibid., p. 211.

O'Brien then goes on to explain how power desecrates the principles of the Cricket Morality. He emphasizes that power is power over the mind in all its aspects. In "The Prevention of Literature" Orwell had warned that totalitarianism would not only destroy the function of those whose creations were in the liberal arts but the scientist with his modern pragmatic outlook as well:

> So long as physical reality cannot be altogether ignored, so long as two and two have to make four when you are for example, drawing the blueprint of an aeroplane, the scientist has his function, and can even be allowed a measure of liberty. His awakening will come later, when the totalitarian state is firmly established.[1]

And O'Brien goes on to show how external reality can come under the control of the Party by means of "doublethink". The stars can be near or far as the Party determines. The Party would find no difficulty in teaching that the sun and stars go round the earth while still acknowledging their true courses for the purpose of navigation. Prior to this Winston has his mind so brought under the Party's control in the person of O'Brien that he actually sees that two and two make five when the Party says so.

O'Brien explains that it is not enough that power should exist. It must assert itself over human beings by making them suffer, thus proving that they are obeying the will of those in power and not their own. In the end all "enjoyment of the process of life" (Orwell's love of the countryside, planting trees, fishing, and discovering the first toad of the year) will be done away with and in its place, O'Brien says:

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[1]George Orwell, "The Prevention of Literature", Inside the Whale and Other Essays (London, 1966), p. 174.

> . . . always there will be the intoxication of power constantly increasing and constantly growing subtler. Always at every moment, there will be the thrill of victory, the sensation of trampling on an enemy who is helpless. If you want a picture of the future imagine a boot stamping on a human face -- for ever.[1]

The heightened rhetoric in these speeches of O'Brien and their explicitness make this the real centre of the book. All Orwell's misgivings about the growth of the power-complex voiced throughout his career come to a climax here. The stamping boot image comes directly from passages in previous works in which he dealt with power: in "England Your England" the wording of the image is almost identical with that above:

> The goose-step, for instance, . . . is simply an affirmation of naked power . . . the vision of a boot crashing down on a face.[2]

In "Raffles and Miss Blandish", Orwell is horrified by the hero of Hadley Chase's He Won't Need it Now who

> . . . is described as stamping on somebody's face, and then having crushed the man's mouth in, grinding his heel round and round it.[3]

Nowhere in 1984 does Orwell suggest where power should lie. The proles are treated with sentiment, and their essential decency, beneath their ignorance and squalor, is brought out but there is never

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[1] George Orwell, Nineteen eighty-four (Harmondsworth, 1965), p. 215.

[2] "England Your England", Inside the Whale and Other Esays (London, 1966), p. 70.

[3] "Raffles and Miss Blandish", Critical Essays (London, 1946), p.148.

any suggestion that they can take over power. Winston wrote in his diary: "Until they become conscious they will never rebel, and until after they have rebelled they cannot become conscious."[1] Orwell hopes that the proles may destroy the power of the Party "like a horse shaking off flies".

Winston the puny opponent of the Party is not fit to have power either. The means he proposes to employ in destroying the Party are no better in the light of the Cricket Morality than those of Big Brother. Moreover, setting aside the question of means for a moment, his selfish, self-indulgent character makes him unfit to pursue a good end with any fixity of purpose. Furthermore, he has, apart from mere destruction, no coherent end in view.

Thus the implication of 1984 is that power cannot be entrusted wholly to any one person or party. Richard Rees has called Orwell "Fugitive from the Camp of Victory",[2] and this describes Orwell's life and literary career very perceptively. While power lay with capitalism, colonialism and the upper class, Orwell threw in his lot with socialism, but when the latter gained power he left it. He was, in effect, redressing the balance of power, the scales of which, as is implied in Orwell's works, ought to be approximately level to allow that compromise and respect for the opponent which is essential to the Cricket Morality.

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[1] George Orwell, Nineteen eighty-four (Harmondsworth, 1965), p. 51.

[2] Richard Rees, George Orwell Fugitive from the Camp of Victory (London, 1961).

CHAPTER IV

The Polemical Essay and 1984

Orwell's attack on power is furious and concentrated. Throughout 1984 the reader is conscious of Orwell's anger, and all the various aspects of the evil in power politics that he dealt with in his previous works are brought together. The characterization, the handling of situation, the structure and style of the book -- all bear marks of a compulsion to preach -- in other words, there is an intrusive didactic purpose. This writing with a purpose is admitted by Orwell in "Why I Write", where he maintains that the closer he follows this purpose the better his writing:

> And looking back through my work, I see that it is invariably where I lacked political purpose that I wrote lifeless books and was betrayed into purple passages, sentences without meaning, decorative adjectives and humbug generally.[1]

With Orwell "political" means the same thing as "moral."

1984, because of this purpose has deficiencies in form and characterization which I intend to discuss in this chapter. In another place in the essay from which I have quoted above Orwell says that for the decade before 1947, what he has wanted to do most is "to make political writing into an art." However, it was not "political writing" that he made into an art but moral writing. To write politically one must have a political programme firmly before one and as I have pointed out, this is

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[1]George Orwell, The Orwell Reader. Introd. Richard H. Rovere (New York, 1956), p. 396.

what Orwell did not have. His impulse to write was "always a feeling of partisanship, a sense of injustice."[1] This is a moral intention, not a political one. Orwell is always preaching the Cricket Morality and this preaching is what he made into an art.

This art of Orwell's is best seen in his essays, which far outnumber his novels. There he is able to attack those things which are opposed to the Cricket Morality, without having to pay attention to the business of characterization, plot, dialogue and structure. Orwell was frequently angry when writing and so he was at his best in the polemical essay such as, for example, "Inside the Whale," "Politics vs Literature" and "The Prevention of Literature."

The question then arises as to why Orwell ever undertook the writing of novels. Woodcock points out that a number of Orwell's critics "Tom Hopkinson and Edward M. Thomas among them, have argued that Orwell only took to novels because that happened to be the genre in which everyone was writing in the 1930's."[2] There may be something in this, but there is another explanation which may be nearer the truth.

Much of Orwell's adherence to the Cricket Morality was the result of his reflections upon personal experiences such as those he underwent in Burma and in the Spanish Civil War. As he owed so much to personal experience it was natural that he should turn to the novel because it

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[1]George Orwell, The Orwell Reader. Introd. Richard H. Rovere (New York, 1956), p. 394.

[2]George Woodcock, The Crystal Spirit (Boston, Toronto, 1966), p. 343.

offered him the opportunity to show fictional characters undergoing experiences in a social context from which the political and moral conclusion could be drawn. But what happened was that the main characters in his novels took on close resemblances to himself and were often mere mouthpieces for him. Besides, Orwell's anxiety, that the reader should not miss the point, betrayed him into introducing elements of a style suited, not to the novel, but to the polemical essay. This is what happened in 1984 and I shall try to show that the polemical essay has made a deep impression upon the form and style of this novel.

The most obvious and significant features of 1984 showing the imprint of the essay are Winston's diary, Goldstein's "The Theory And Practice Of Oligarchical Collectivism," and the Appendix. The latter is a tacit admission on Orwell's part that he found the novel form did not give him the opportunity for a full exposition or the horrors of Newspeak. He felt he had to add a ten-page essay on to the end of the novel. The essay repeats and expands what the reader has learned about Newspeak from Winston's work at Minitruth and from Symes' exposition of its function but the polemicist in Orwell insists on hammering home his point by repetition.

The Appendix constitutes not only a repetition of what has been said in the novel but also an intrusion in the novel's continuity. If the reader looks up the Appendix when he first comes across the word "Newspeak" he will have to interrupt his reading of the story while he works through its ten pages. If, on the other hand, he leaves the Appendix until after he has read the novel he will find the task of reading it will take away the effect of the irony and pathos of Winston's final submission

to the Party at the end of the novel. Here Orwell's aesthetic achievement is spoiled by his polemical intentions and the Appendix is a disruption of the novel by the essay form.

The diary begins as an essay illustrating the sadism of the Party in providing films showing the bombing of refugees "somewhere in the Mediterranean" and the equal sadism in the glee of the majority in the audience. It also illustrates that the only vestiges of decency lie with the proles as a woman "down in the prole part of the house suddenly started kicking up a fuss" about such vicious scenes being shown to children. In spite of Orwell's attempts to give some actuality to the writing of the diary by making Winston progressively neglect his punctuation as he goes on with the account, one feels that Orwell is really setting out to write an essay in which he deliberately selects his material to stir up hostility in the reader towards the Party's regime. In terms of the novel the thing would have been done better had Winston been actually present in the cinema. The same criticism applies to Winston's record of his sexual encounter with the aging prole woman.

Of course the writing of the diary is in itself supposed to represent an act of rebellion against the Party, but this would have far more weight if Winston, after his pretentious salutation,

> To the future or to the past, to a time when thought is free, when men are different from one another and do not live alone . . .[1]

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[1]George Orwell, Nineteen eighty-four (Harmondsworth, 1965), p. 26.

had written down something which would have given his act of rebellion a definite significance. His action would have had far more point if he had written down the details of his finding "The Times" photograph of Jones Aaronson and Rutherford in New York which decisively disproved the Party's accusation that they had been on Eurasian soil at that date. This evidence of a historical fact that had been altered could provide a focal point for those who only vaguely felt that the Party's claim to being always in the right was invalid. It could provide something concrete for the beginnings of a revolution.

Apart from the passage Winston copies from the children's history text-book which is a kind of short essay showing how children get a distorted account of the past through the Party-approved text-books, the diary dwindles down to a number of key sentences which initiate Winston's internal monologue and steer the reader in the direction Orwell's polemical dialectic demands:

> If there is hope, wrote Winston, it lies in the proles.[1]
>
> Until they become conscious they will never rebel, and until they have rebelled they cannot become conscious.[2]
>
> I understand HOW: I do not understand WHY.[3]

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[1]George Orwell, Nineteen eighty-four (Harmondsworth, 1965), p. 59.

[2]Ibid., p. 60.

[3]Ibid., p. 67.

> Freedom is the freedom to say that two plus two make four. If that is granted, all else follows.[1]

Orwell is, in effect, intimating that these are some of the main headings for discussion and they appear again in the novel at the points appropriate for their elucidation.

Goldstein's book is really Orwell's essay on the effects of totalitarianism, within the political framework suggested by Burnham. In so far as revelation of character, providing a situation or furthering in any way the progress of the novel are concerned, the inclusion of Goldstein's book is unjustified. What is the point of O'Brien giving Winston this book? Winston has already identified himself as an enemy of the Party and shown that Julia is an accomplice in their interview with O'Brien in the latter's apartment. There is no point in O'Brien's engineering the little charade of conveying the book secretly to Winston. Logically, the arrest of Winston and Julia should have followed the moment they professed themselves ready to go to any lengths to sabotage the Party. The answer would seem to be that Orwell felt he could not say all he wished to about the political and moral monstrosities he was attacking and felt he needed to write an essay, a little over twenty-two pages long, in the middle of the book.

In much of the writing of the actual story the reader is conscious of Orwell's own voice addressing him directly.

> How could you make appeal to the future when not a trace of you, not even an anonymous word scribbled on a piece of paper could physically survive?[2]

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[1] George Orwell, Nineteen eighty-four (Harmondsworth, 1965), p. 68.

[2] Ibid., p. 25.

Here Orwell is obviously forcing the reader to consider the point under discussion. The second person singular is aimed at the reader personally. The rhetorical question in which the whole thing is couched is also a device for addressing an audience. This direct address is another technique of the polemical essay.

In speaking of Orwell's polemical talent Edward M. Thomas notes that a favourite device of Orwell's "was a sort of grand slam at a whole collection of enemies, insulting them directly, and then again indirectly by the act of association."[1] This device is used in 1984 against inanimate objects as Orwell strikes at the unlovely physical accompaniments of the Party's regime:

> In any time that he could accurately remember, there had never been quite enough to eat, one had never had socks or underclothes that were not full of holes, furniture had always been battered and rickety, rooms underheated, tube trains crowded, houses falling to pieces, bread dark-coloured, tea a rarity, coffee fifthy-tasting, cigarettes insufficient -- nothing cheap and plentiful except synthetic gin.[2]

This is very rhetorical writing. The sentence starts slowly with clauses of medium length, the reiterated "never . . . never"giving them weight; then the sentence speeds up to elliptical phrases having in them an alliteration which gives the effect of vituperation -- the explosive "f's" of "coffee" and "filthy," the hissed sibilants of "cigarettes" and insufficient; then comes a rhetorical pause broken by "nothing cheap and plentiful" followed by the quiet mockery of the

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[1]Edward M. Thomas, Orwell (London, 1965), p. 107.

[2]George Orwell, Nineteen eighty-four (Harmondsworth, 1965), p. 51.

qualifying phrase. The word "synthetic" tends to be rather less opprobrious these days, but, apart from this, the quality of the gin is indicated by its unpleasant associates in the sentence.

Here is quite plainly the language of a man working himself up into an attack. It is not the rueful reflections of a man sitting over his lunch in a canteen. Once again it is Orwell the polemical essayist who is making himself heard, not Winston the character in the novel.

Another polemical device used by Orwell is inversion. He sets up the very opposite of what he stands for in order to attack it. Thus he makes O'Brien hold forth in adulation of unbridled power. The rhetoric of the passage does have some use in regard to characterization in that it shows the sadistic exaltation of the fanatical power-worshipper, but, over and above this, Orwell intends to build up an atmosphere that will turn against what O'Brien is saying:

> Power is in inflicting pain and humiliation. Power is in tearing human minds to pieces and putting them together again in new shapes of your own choosing. Do you begin to see, then, what kind of world we are creating? It is the exact opposite of the stupid hedonistic utopias that the old reformers imagined. A world of fear and treachery and torment, a world of trampling and being trampled upon, a world which will grow not less but more merciless as it refines itself. Progress in our world will be progress towards more pain.[1]

Once again the rhetoric of the polemical writer is seen. It is repetitive in order to drive the point home. Syntactically, the first four words of the second sentence are an exact replica of the first.

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[1]George Orwell, Nineteen eighty-four (Harmondsworth, 1965), p. 214.

Then there is the threefold repetition of "a world" within one sentence and lastly, there is the repeated "progress" which is linked alliteratively with "pain." Two more elements in this rhetoric are the rhetorical question answered by the speaker and the vocal emphasis on the word "more" in the penultimate sentence. And all this is addressed, not to a packed hall but to Winston who is lying a couple of feet away.

Frequently in 1984 Orwell uses the essayist's method of choosing a concrete object or a phrase as a starting point for more generalized observation. The headings from Winston's diary mentioned above provide some of these starting points.

For example, the heading "If there is hope it lies in the proles." leads to an exploration of the grounds for this hope. Orwell points out, through Winston, that they comprise 85% of the population of Oceania and he goes on to relate the incident of the prole women fighting over the saucepans in the market and the momentary power that they showed. He regrets however that their massive weight is not brought to bear against the Party. This leads on to the heading "Until they become conscious they will never rebel, and until after they have rebelled they cannot become conscious." This starts him off through Winston's internal monologue on an amplification of this statement.

An example of Orwell's use of a concrete object to start him off on more generalized observation occurs when Winston is gazing out of the window of the room over Charrington's shop at the prole woman hanging out washing in the yard. The prole woman becomes the starting point for a general description of the lives of prole women. In the course of this

description Orwell, through Winston, works round by intuitive association with the proles' undaunted animal vitality and cheerfulness, rather than by logical progression, to a belief that the future is theirs.

The intrusion of the essay and Orwell's polemical approach affects characterization in 1984. Winston does not have the marks of individuality possessed by Koestler's Rubashov in Darkness at Noon or Huxley's Savage in Brave New World. Laurence Brander, comparing Winston with these characters, writes:

> In the other books the fine flowers of human personality are destroyed; in 1984 the huge paraphernalia of obliteration are put in motion to destroy a weed.[1]

It is true that Winston's intellect is feeble beside that of Rubashov and his spirit is a paltry thing compared with that of the Savage. However, both these characters have their results outside the totalitarian systems postulated by Koestler and Huxley -- Rubashov in pre-revolutionary Russia, the Savage in the Indian Reservation. Winston, however, has never been outside the system. He is a product of a system which produces weeds. He is no hero -- he does not stand out physically, his position in life is mediocre, he is not a great lover, he is selfish and he is a coward. This lack of any nobility in Winston is a result of his political and moral environment which Orwell is attacking. In such an environment there are no heroes.

There is a significance in the name Winston Smith. The surname is

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[1]Laurence Brander, George Orwell (London, 1956), p. 187.

the commonest in England. The Christian name is that of Churchill, the great hero of the liberal tradition who led a victorious fight against one manifestation of totalitarianism. The linking of these two names shows that in the "age of uniformity," dominated by the Party, the hero is reduced to anonymity and can only function in the ineffective way that Winston Smith does. Also connected with this idea is the fact that Winston Smith's lot is that of every individual in Oceania. So Winston becomes something of the Everyman of the old morality play.

Julia has little to recommend her as an interesting character in herself. She is against the Party, not for the sake of freedom as a noble concept, but because the Party interferes with her enjoyment of sex. Her cynicism towards the Party's doctrines is refreshing and her subterfuge in arranging meetings with Winston gives the reader some slight hope that the Party may be deceived after all. She is selfish as she proves by her comment when Winston points out the significance of the evidence he had once held of the Party's lies:

> I'm not interested in the next generation, dear.
> I'm interested in us.

And when the pressure is put on her at the Ministry of Love she betrays Winston almost at once. Nevertheless, she has a normal woman's reaction to the dry politics of Goldstein's book and while Winston is reading it aloud falls asleep with the words

> Yes, my love, I'm listening to you. Go on.
> It's marvellous.[1]

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[1]George Orwell, Nineteen eighty-four (Harmondsworth, 1965), p. 162.

In this typical femininity she represents normality in a politically abnormal world.

The character of O'Brien gives promise of being interesting in its own right when he is first introduced. He shows individuality in his powerful physique and in his curiously civilized manner of resettling his spectacles on his nose. However, he is spoiled as a character because of Orwell's polemical purpose. As Woodcock points out, Winston thinks he has made a human contact in O'Brien and it is not until he is confronted by O'Brien in the Ministry of Love that he discovers that O'Brien is the agent of the inhumane power of the Party. But instead of allowing this relationship to work itself out in human terms between these characters in their situation, Orwell, as Woodcock says,

> entirely spoils the effect by allowing O'Brien to argue and discourse at length, like an inverted image of himself, on the dialectics of power.[1]

The other characters are all types rather than individuals and serve to show some aspect of the life in Airstrip One. Ampleforth is a type of the ineffectual poet and his only claim to distinction is the excessive hairiness of his ears. Syme is the type of the depraved intellectual. He has a ghoulish delight in the spectacle of public hanging. Apart from displaying in his callousness the brutalizing effect of totalitarianism on even a keen mind, he serves the purpose of elucidating the main aspects of Newspeak. Parsons is the type of the inanely enthusiastic party-worker at the community level. One suspects that

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[1]George Woodcock, The Crystal Spirit (Boston, Toronto, 1966), p. 349.

with his growing obesity and his predilection for shorts he is closely related to the two men, probably socialists, whom Orwell mentions in The Road to Wigan Pier. Mrs. Parsons is a reproduction of the vision Orwell has seen, from a passing train, of a woman trying to free a blocked drain-pipe on the outside of a house in a Midland slum. The last two characters have just been lifted together with their associations, from events in Orwell's own actual experience, to demonstrate aspects in his total vision of the totalitarian state.

Dialogue in 1984 is often a mere vehicle for Orwell's exposition of the political and social basis of Ingsoc. When Syme jovially comments on the progress of Newspeak, he says "Every year fewer and fewer words, and the range of consciousness always a little smaller."[1] He waxes enthusiastic as he develops his theme:

> The whole literature of the past will have been destroyed. Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Byron -- they'll exist only in Newspeak versions, not merely changed into something different, but actually changed into something contradictory of what they used to be.[2]

It is just not credible that any man who takes an interest in language and literature, even within the framework permitted by the Party, could voice sentiments like these. Syme is a mere puppet articulating Orwell's fears for the English language and the morals of its users that he had already voiced in his essays "Inside The Whale"(1940), "The Prevention Of Literature" (1945-6), "Politics And The English Language" (1946),

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[1]George Orwell, Nineteen eighty-four (Harmondsworth, 1956), p. 45.

[2]Loc. cit.

and "Politics vs. Literature (1946)."

Orwell's polemical purpose, sometimes causes him to ignore probability in the novel. The elderly prole whom Winston contacts in the pub has a perfect cockney turn of phrase as he complains to the barman about the lack of pint pots. Yet,it is highly improbable that the old man would be unaware of the fact that only litre and half-litre glasses were available unless he had played Rip Van Winkle for the past thirty years or so. All Orwell wants of this character is for him to demonstrate in his conversation with Winston that the proles cannot synthesize their grievances into any coherent thought which might provide the basis for revolt.

So intent is Orwell on attacking the concepts opposed to his Cricket Morality that he ignores the chance he has within the novel of letting the proles show that this morality is not quite dead. He does give us glimpses of their decency as in Winston's reference to the prole woman's protests at the bombing films and in Winston's recollection of the aged prole pouring out genuine grief in the tube-station during the air raid, but he never brings the proles alive as people. Even the huge prole woman whom Winston sees hanging out washing in the yard behind Charrington's shop is not a real person but a symbol of durability and vague hope. The author of The Road To Wigan Pier and Down And Out In Paris And London might at least have shown the proles coping with the bombings, shortages and overcrowding; and a few appearances of the proles at a football match, the races,or some such other proletarian activity would have enabled him through the normality of such scenes the vigour of working-class

speech and the decency of working-class feelings to make more convincing Winston's suggestion "If there is hope, it lies in the proles."

So far it has been shown that Orwell, in attacking the immorality of totalitarianism in 1984, has put a strain on the novel by introducing elements of the polemical essay. Orwell best expressed the Cricket Morality in polemical essays not in sermons. However, an aspect of homiletics does occur in 1984. This is the use of a symbol as a focal point around which to build moral counsel, a technique which goes back to Aelfric and Wulfstan. The outstanding function of symbolism in 1984 is the evocation of the theme of old rural England which is one of the most important strands running through Orwell's Cricket Morality and it comes out strongly in this, his last novel.

The old nursery-rhyme "Oranges and Lemons" is used as a symbol of the England in whose capital the church-bells could be heard before they were drowned by the roar of traffic; the England where children could sing and play without thoughts of the Spies, the Junior Anti-Sex League, Hate Week and Big Brother. But more important than these associations is the symbol's link with the England where personal relationships could flourish unstunted by the poisonous soil of Ingsoc. The symbol appears at each stage in Winston's advance towards making relationships between himself and those whom he feels he can trust.

The rhyme is first mentioned by Charrington whose apparent love for antiques leads Winston to trust him. Charrington is able to supply only the first two lines of the rhyme and the last two which are: "Here comes a candle to light you to bed, here comes a chopper to chop off your

head."[1] Julia, when Winston starts her off by reciting the first line, is able to go one line further than Charrington and O'Brien gives the fourth line. Thus each step in the reconstruction of the rhyme corresponds to an apparent step forward in Winston's development of human relationships. The utter betrayal of these relationships is symbolized by the repetition of the final part of the rhyme by the voice from the telescreen on the wall of Charrington's upstairs room when Winston is arrested. The irony is heightened by the fact that Charrington's knowledge of the rhyme's ending foreshadows, symbolically, the inevitable result of Winston's attempt at establishing human relationships uncontaminated by the Party's sanction.

Another important symbol in this theme of England is The Golden Country. It is a dream which keeps recurring to Winston throughout the book. The dream is of a place in the country where there is an old rabbit-eaten pasture with elm trees in the hedge on the side opposite the dreamer; nearby there is a pool in which the dace swim under overhanging willows. This dream scene has more than one symbolic significance. First, it symbolizes old England with its rural beauty, secondly it represents Orwell's "pleasure in the actual process of life," and thirdly, and most important, it stands for escape.

In the first instance, the beauty of the scene contrasts with the ugliness of London in 1984. In the second, it points to the kind of enjoyment which the Party aims to stamp out: O'Brien explains to Winston

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[1]George Orwell, Nineteen eighty-four (Harmondsworth, 1965), p. 82.

in the Ministry of Love that "There will be . . . no enjoyment of the process of life." In the third instance the aspect of escape includes the first and second connotations of the symbol.

The setting of The Golden Country is very similar to that of George Bowling's secret pool at Lower Binfield, in Coming up for Air. George revisits Lower Binfield in order to escape temporarily from his humdrum, middle-aged, lower middle class existence and his fears of approaching totalitarianism. For years he has cherished the memory of this pool as a thing still capable of giving happiness in the midst of the changes for the worse which he sees in his day to day life. His illusion is shattered when, on rediscovering his pool, he finds it has been turned into a refuse dump for a new housing estate and he departs thinking "I'm through with this notion of getting back into the past."[1]

In the case of Winston it almost appears that his dream has been realized when he keeps his tryst with Julia. He sees the beauty of old England, enjoys "the process of life" in the song of the thrush and has, for a moment, escaped from Big Brother. However, this escape turns out to be an illusion. Just as all-pervading "progress" has swept away George's pool, so the ubiquitous Party prevents Winston and Julia from ever going back to the place where they first made love. They have to keep changing their meeting-place, as a precaution against spies, until they are finally run to earth in the room above Charrington's shop. The dream recurs to Winston in the cells of the Ministry of Love where it

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[1]George Orwell, Coming up for Air (Harmondsworth, 1965), p. 215.

emphasizes the fact that he is trapped.

Another symbol distantly related to the England theme by reason of its being a product of the past is that of the glass paper-weight. Winston buys it from Charrington, just before Julia reveals herself to him, and from then on it becomes a symbol of their escape from reality, a little world in which they hide themselves. Orwell is quite explicit in the manner of the homilist:

> The paper-weight was the room he was in, and the coral was Julia's life and his own, fixed in a sort of eternity at the heart of the crystal.[1]

However, the paper-weight is transparent as are Winston's and Julia's actions to the Thought Police. When the latter arrest the couple, symbolically the paper-weight is smashed and there is a moment of deep pathos:

> The fragment of coral, a tiny crinkle of pink like a sugar rosebud from a cake, rolled across the mat. How small, thought Winston, how small it always was![2]

The emotion is transferred to the relationship between Winston and Julia. The utter insignificance of their attempts to free their lives from the Party's grip is pathetic.

The use of these symbols does not distort the novel as do the other devices of the polemical moralist, in fact they blend in with the action, characterization, and plot in a way that is aesthetically satisfying. Nevertheless, on the whole, Orwell's moral purpose is too obtrusive throughout the book. Orwell cannot resist the moralist's impulse to preach: instead

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[1]George Orwell, Nineteen eighty-four (Harmondsworth, 1965), p. 120.

[2]Ibid., p. 177.

of letting character and situation speak for themselves, he must keep intruding to emphasize the point. Woodcock sees the main flaw in 1984 in the fact that "it has two centres, a political and a theoretical one and a human one."[1] These two centres, Woodcock points out, come together, when Winston is face to face with O'Brien in the Ministry of Love. As has been shown in the comments made on O'Brien as a character, Orwell at this crucial point lets the theoretical centre predominate. This is indicative of what happens throughout the novel, and it happens because Orwell can never allow aesthetic consideration to distract him from his moral purpose.

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[1] George Woodcock, The Crystal Spirit (Boston, Toronto 1966), p. 349.

CHAPTER V

The Moralist and his Sources

Orwell's preoccupation with the menace of totalitarianism to the Cricket Morality is seen not only in the style and form of 1984 but also in Orwell's use of the sources for his novel. It has already been observed in Chapter three how Orwell develops his concept of the motive underlying political power from the questions raised by Rubashov in Arthur Koestler's Darkness at Noon. In this chapter I propose to consider the more obvious sources of 1984, the most important of which is Zamyatin's novel We.

Woodcock notes that Orwell's novel "bears the ineradicable marks of Zamyatin's influence,"[1] and he relates how in 1946 Orwell showed him a French translation of We. On January 4 of the same year, according to Hollis, Orwell had an essay in the Tribune in which he

> praised Zamyatin's book, claiming that Mr. Aldous Huxley's Brave New World 'must be partly derived' from We, and criticized Mr. Huxley because the masters of the Brave New World had not the motive for their tyranny of a conscious, brutal love of power.[2]

This criticism of Orwell's invites a comparison between his and Huxley's use of the source material from We, a comparison demonstrating that, while Orwell's main interest was the Cricket Morality and political power, Huxley's chief concern was with spirituality and religion.

In We, Zamyatin creates a United State which has as its aim the greatest happiness of the greatest number. To secure this happiness

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[1]George Woodcock, The Crystal Spirit (Boston, Toronto, 1966), p. 26.

[2]Christopher Hollis, A Study of George Orwell (London, 1956), p. 199.

all the activities of the state are carried out according to the rational principles of mathematics and logic. All things within the state present a perfect geometric and rhythmical symmetry. Much of Zamyatin's language uses mathematical imagery, for example

> The denominator of the fraction of happiness is reduced to zero and the whole fraction is thus converted into a magnificient infiniteness.[1]

The citizens have numbers instead of names and, being all dressed in the same uniform, are called male or female "unifs." They are almost like the highly sophisticated machines they work with: all the irrational and emotional faculties of the individual are subordinated to reason and for one unif to suggest to another that he has imagination is to insult him. The state is cut off from the "primitive" (i.e., unregimented) people round about by glass walls.

The action centres around D503 who begins to show irrationality and spiritual unrest brought about by his relationship with a female unif, I330. He is worried by his symptoms and goes to see a doctor who diagnoses his condition; "Yes, it is too bad, apparently a soul has formed in you." I330 introduces D503 to the ideals of the past through contact with the outside people with whom they form an organization, MEPHI, which revolts against the state. The United State is saved by lobotomy of the whole population. D503 in his lobotomized state watches complacently as I330 is first tortured and then executed, and the situation at the end of the novel is summed up by the slogan "Reason must prevail."

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[1]Eugene Zamyatin, We (New York, 1952), p. 22.

1984 and Brave New World, like We, envisage a society which has had its connection with the past severed by a total war. In We it is the Two Hundred Years War, in Brave New World the Nine Years' War and in 1984 it is an atomic war which has taken place in the 1950's. In We the past is considered bad because it was irrational. In Brave New World the past is also bad for a different reason. To the past belong such pursuits as reading, which is not allowed in Huxley's utopia because it is carried out alone and does not use expensive equipment. The economy of Brave New World demands that the citizens should spend their time in communal activities which increase the consumer demand. All old things must be discarded so that new ones may be bought. This is drummed into the people from birth by hypnopaedic slogans such as "The more stitches the less riches" and "Ending is better than mending." In 1984 the past is treated very differently. The individual must not have any contact with the past independently of the Party. This is because the Party claims to control the past. As O'Brien says:

> We, the Party, control all records, and we control all memories. Then we control the past, do we not?[1]

One of the fundamental doctrines of the Party is that it is always right. Anything the Party does is contradicted by the past, therefore, it is the past that is wrong, not the Party, and all records are altered so that the past agrees, at all points, with the Party's policy of the moment. In the control of the past the Party uses the Records Department of its huge propaganda agency, the Ministry of Truth, to make

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[1]George Orwell, Nineteen eighty-four (Harmondsworth, 1965), p. 199.

continual changes in past records as they become necessary.

While Huxley, therefore, has developed a simple economic idea from Zamyatin, Orwell has evolved a whole paraphernalia of political propaganda aimed at shoring up political power. At the basis of this political idea is Orwell's concern with morality, for the Party shows it has abandoned objective truth with all that this implies for freedom of thought and moral responsibility.

In We, society has abolished marriage in favour of a "maternal norm" on eugenic principles. By the provisions of the "Lex Sexualis" any inhabitant of the United State " . . . may obtain a licence to use any other Number as a sexual product."[1] Each male is examined to find out the degree of concentration in his sex hormones and a time-table is drawn up allowing him the frequency of sexual intercourse demanded by his particular constitution. The object of this is to produce healthy children and to eliminate the sexual jealousy in a man's sole possession of a woman.

Brave New World has followed We in abandoning marriage. However, in the later novel sex has nothing to do with procreation, which is a process initiated and controlled artificially in vast state-hatcheries. Therefore sexual activity is not regulated by any eugenic principle but has become merely hedonistic. It plays a part together with sport in keeping the individual from getting too energetic and perhaps questioning the principles of his society. Promiscuity is the social norm and any prolonged sexual attachment is frowned upon. As the hypnopaedic proverb has it, " . . . every one belongs to every one else."

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[1]Eugene Zamyatin, We (New York, 1952), p. 22.

In 1984 Orwell's treatment of sex again shows his concern with political power. In his novel marriage and the family are, on the surface, the same institution we know today but it has been perverted to serve the political ends of the Party. Winston reflects:

> The family could not actually be abolished, and, indeed, people were encouraged to be fond of their children in almost the old-fashioned way. The children on the other hand were systematically turned against their parents and taught to spy on them and report their deviations. The family had become in effect an extension of the Thought Police.[1]

The system is seen in practice when Parson's small daughter denounces him to the Thought Police.

As far as sex is concerned the ordinary social taboos we know today have been increased and perverted to serve the Party's aims. Every projected marriage has to be submitted to the Party for approval which is withheld if there appears to be a sexual attraction between the partners. The grounds for the Party's sexual puritanism are

> . . . not merely that the sex instinct created a world of its own which was outside the Party's control and which therefore had to be destroyed if possible. What was more important was that sexual privation induced hysteria, which was desirable because it could be transformed into war-fever and leader-worship.[2]

Once again Orwell differs from Huxley in that sex and the family become politically orientated in 1984. In this kind of political interference with sex Orwell is near to real fact. All totalitarian states have this tendency towards sexual puritanism in order to channel the sex drive into political activity and military aggressiveness. One of the most striking

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[1]George Orwell, Nineteen eighty-four (Harmondsworth, 1965), pp. 109-10.

[2]Ibid., p. 109.

accompaniments of Hitler's rise to power was the disappearance of the sexual freedom that characterized Germany in the '20's and early '30's.

One thing which Huxley ignored in We was the Well-Doer at the head of the United State. His Mustapha Mond is nothing more than a sort of company director and he finds maintaining the hedonism of the state an exacting task. To Orwell, the idea of this rather kindly, fair-minded man in control of Western Europe is just not credible, for power must corrupt. Orwell, too, knew the political effectiveness of a powerful leader's charisma. In an article in the New English Weekly he says about Hitler:

> The fact is that there is something deeply appealing about him. One feels it again when one sees his photographs. . . . It is a pathetic, doglike face, the face of a man suffering under intolerable wrongs. In a rather more manly way it reproduces the expression of innumerable pictures of Christ crucified, and there is no doubt that this is how Hitler sees himself. . . . He is the martyr, the victim chained to the rock, the self-sacrificing hero who fights single-handed against impossible odds.[1]

The average German was able to identify himself with Hitler because after the Treaty of Versailles Germany was burdened with huge reparations, underprivileged economically, scorned and hated by the rest of the world.

Similarly the propaganda of Ingsoc portrays Big Brother as the great fighter protecting Oceania against the enemy. Thus in the Two Minutes Hate, which takes place in the Ministry of Truth, the telescreen's composite picture of Goldstein and the huge threatening Eurasian soldier melts

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[1]George Woodcock, The Crystal Spirit (Boston, Toronto, 1966), p. 57.

> . . . into the face of Big Brother, black-haired, black-moustachio'd, full of power and mysterious calm, and so vast that it almost filled up the screen. Nobody heard what Big Brother was saying. It was merely a few words of encouragement, the sort of words that are uttered in the din of battle, not distinguishable but restoring confidence by the fact of being spoken.[1]

A "little sandy-haired woman" begins praying, uttering "a tremulous murmur that sounded like 'My Saviour'." Then the slow chanting of "B-B! . . . B-B! . . . B-B!" breaks out, giving the reader the impression of a small-scale Nürnberg Rally.

Of course Ingsoc is not a dictatorship but an oligarchy, yet the Party knows what it is about in creating Big Brother. Goldstein's book explains the Party's motives:

> Big Brother is the guise in which the Party chooses to exhibit itself to the world. His function is to act as a focal point for love, fear and reverence, emotions which are more easily felt towards an individual than towards an organization.[2]

The natural sexual and family instincts are diverted from their natural objects and channelled into love of Big Brother and hatred towards whichever enemy he points out.

We has a police system which is a powerful and obtrusive force in the state. The police are called "the guardians"; they hover above the city in "aeros" and observe all that goes on in the glass buildings; they have "electric whips" with which they can herd masses of people

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[1]George Orwell, Nineteen eighty-four (Harmondsworth, 1965), p. 16.

[2]Ibid., p. 167.

together. They have a torture machine which is an enormous vacuum bell in which the victim is placed and the air pumped out. They also have a novel method of execution; this is a machine called the Machine of the Well-Doer because it is operated by him in public. It projects a ray onto the victim who is literally liquified. If a unif discovers some aberration in any of his fellows he must report it to the Bureau of Guardians within 48 hours. There is a system of spies -- "S" follows D503 through his deviations and keeps crossing his path from time to time. D503 recognizes that "S" has been spying on him when he sees him in the Bureau of Guardians near the end of the book.

Huxley largely ignores Zamyatin's Guardians. The police in Huxley's novel are almost like nurses in a mental home. They deal with the people on benevolent psychological principles. They are equipped with "knock-out gas" to deal with violent individuals at close quarters, and they use tranquillising gas and soothing speeches on tape to put angry rioters into a state of euphoria.

Orwell develops the germinal ideas of the police state in We to nightmare proportions. Ordinary police snoop into people's houses from helicopters and patrol the streets checking the papers of any person who arouses the slightest suspicion. Then there are the dreaded Thought Police who have the advantage over Zamyatin's Guardians in the telescreens which are placed in a commanding position in every room and place likely to be frequented by a Party member. The telescreens function all hours of the day and relay, not only pictures, but also all but the slightest sounds, to the listening Thought Police. As their name suggests, these

police exercise a rigorous surveillance not only over the actions of every Party member but over his very thoughts as well. They, too, have methods of torture. In the Ministry of Love there is an electrical machine which convulses the victim until his back nearly breaks; the machine has a dial which registers the severity of the shock so that the operator knows just how far he can torture his victim. The police also use mental torture; there is Room 101 in the Ministry of Love where the victim is confronted with the very thing his psychological make-up causes him to fear most, the object of his fear having been ascertained by previous observation.

But what especially distinguishes the police in 1984 is their sadism. A considerable portion of the third part of the book, from Winston's arrest onward, is almost one continuous nightmare of police brutality. The beating up of a prisoner is a matter of course and it is obvious that the police relish this part of their duty. When O'Brien first comes in to Winston at the Ministry of Love he has a guard with him. Quite without reason the guard hits Winston a violent blow on the elbow:

> Everything had exploded into yellow light. Inconceivable, unconceivable that one blow could cause such pain! The light cleared and he could see the other two looking down at him. The guard was laughing at his contortions.[1]

Orwell develops this idea of the Thought Police because he wants to show the extent to which totalitarianism wishes to assert its power -- even over people's minds. He emphasizes the sadism of the police because those who have total power are corrupt and need corrupt instruments. In all totalitarian systems the police forces attract moral degenerates

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[1]George Orwell, Nineteen eighty-four (Harmondsworth, 1965), p. 192.

who delight in torture for its own sake, and, where normal sex is repressed, there is an added incentive to sadism because it is the only form of sexual expression which meets with official encouragement.

In We there are elements of religion. The Well-Doer descends among the waiting unifs. "He -- the new Jehovah -- in an aero, He, as wise and as lovingly cruel as the Jehovah of the ancients."[1] There is also a religious aspect to the ritual of the execution of the offenders on the Machine of the Well-Doer. There is something of the sacrifice of the scapegoat or pascal lamb in it. Huxley ignores this aspect, but takes up the Day of Unanimity and makes of it the Solidarity Service which is a parody of the Mass.

But Huxley goes far beyond the Solidarity Service. He constructs a religion which is a parody of Christianity. It is supposed to date from the time of Henry Ford who replaces Christ in the calendar. The citizens usually refer to him as "Our Ford" but they know that he sometimes liked to be called "Our Freud" when he was on earth. As "Ford", he represents material comfort; as "Freud", he shows forth perfect happiness through the defeat of neurasthenia and psychic conflicts by the immediate satisfaction of desire. These two manifestations of the same divinity approach an ironical parallel to the Persons of the Trinity.

The externals of Christianity are humorously duplicated; instead of the sign of the cross there is the "T" honouring Ford's flivver. St. Paul's Cathedral has become the "Fordson Community Singery", and the highest religious dignitary is the "Arch-Community Singer of Canterbury."

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[1]Eugene Zamyatin, We, p. 131.

Certain slogans such as "Our Ford loved infants," are reminiscent of Christian teaching: Bernard Marx gets into trouble for not behaving out of office hours "like a babe in a bottle," a play on St. Matthew 19 v. 3.

Huxley develops the religious paraphernalia extensively, because the main point he makes is religious. He sees that in an age of material abundance and pleasure-seeking the churches could well lose their spiritual function and become mere extensions of hedonism. This is what has happened in Brave New World -- the churches do not provide spiritual satisfaction for the normal man who, like the Savage, feels a sense of sin and looks for atonement.

Orwell significantly, ignores the religious possibilities in We. He does take up the idea of the scapegoat, but he gives it a political and moral significance. The Party uses Goldstein as the symbolic scapegoat against whom the people of Oceania are made to vent the hatred which is caused by their fear and insecurity. Unhappily, it is not merely the symbol alone against which this hatred is directed. If that were the case then the Party would, in this instance, be relatively humane. What happens is that each deviationist is branded as a follower of Goldstein and suffers the fate of the scapegoat. O'Brien describes it in these words:

> Goldstein and his heresies will live for ever. Every day, at every moment, they will be defeated, discredited, ridiculed, spat upon -- and yet they will always survive. . . . Always we shall have the heretic here at our mercy, screaming with pain, broken up, contemptible -- and in the end utterly penitent, saved from himself, crawling to our feet of his own accord.[1]

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[1]George Orwell, Nineteen eighty-four (Harmondsworth, 1965), p. 215.

Thus the scapegoat, Goldstein, is constantly tangible in the tortured persons of those who stray from the strict orthodoxy of the Party. The terrible immorality and injustice of this is seen when one considers that the Party creates the conditions in which people's fears express themselves in hysterical hatred and then turns this hatred against those who try to escape from these conditions. In this way the frustration of the people is used by the Party to keep them in bondage.

The most obvious feature of Huxley's Brave New World is the structure of its society. It is not a democratic society any more than Zamyatin's society is. Zamyatin imagines great technological advance which has reached the stage where it is on the threshhold of space travel. However, he does not say anything about the structure of society or the division of labour -- this, presumably, is regulated by "reason". Huxley, on the other hand, builds a complete society based on biology and psychology. All the citizens are produced artificially in state hatcheries. During the gestation period the embryos are stimulated or retarded, so that when they are "decanted" they will have the necessary physical characteristics suitable for their future work and place in society. During infancy they are subjected to hypnopaedia which conditions them psychologically to be satisfied with their allotted role in life, whether it be turning a nut on an assembly line or lecturing on "emotional engineering," and the whole population is graded from the highly intelligent Alpha Pluses to the semi-moronic Epsilons. Everybody is happy because everybody is perfectly adjusted to society.

The most obvious feature of 1984 is its politically structured society. As I have pointed out above, Orwell uses some of the political

elements in We such as the Well-Doer and the State Police. But Orwell goes far beyond Zamyatin in this respect and draws on another source, James Burnham's The Managerial Revolution.

Michael Maddison says "Orwell, it appears, has drawn on two main sources for 1984 -- Zamyatin and Burnham."[1] Although Maddison has overlooked the influence of Koestler, it is obvious that 1984 bears deep imprints of Burnham's thought.

In an essay, "Second Thoughts on James Burnham," published three years before 1984, Orwell sets forth and examines some of the suggestions made by Burnham in his books The Managerial Revolution and The Machiavellians. First, Orwell outlines the thought in the two books. The main thesis of the first book is that, although capitalism is vanishing, socialism is not replacing it. Instead, a new kind of planned, undemocratic but non-capitalist society is coming into being and at its head are the managers i.e., those who regulate industry and society -- technicians, executives, bureaucrats and soldiers -- who will destroy the capitalist class, crush the workers and take to themselves all power and economic privilege. Although private property rights will be abolished they will not be replaced by common ownership. The new managerial societies will form super-states around the main industrial centres in Europe, Asia, and America. These super-states will fight for control over the few unintegrated regions but none of them will be decisively defeated. The internal structure of each state will be hierarchical, with political

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[1]Michael Maddison, "1984: A Burnhamite Fantasy?", Political Quarterly, XXXI-XXXII (1960-61), p. 75.

and economic power in the hands of a talented few who will rule over a mass of slaves on the lowest rung of the ladder.

The Machiavellians is a reassertion, with a number of additions, of what Burnham said in his earlier book. One of these is that, a democratic society has never existed in the past, and, to all appearances, never will exist in the future because society is, by nature, oligarchical and the power of oligarchy rests on fraud and force. Another development of Burnham's thought is that history can be seen as the successive struggles of new classes for political power and that all programmes for utopia are merely pretexts to hide the real intentions of the currently rising class. In each revolution, the masses, when they have served the purpose of bringing the new rulers to power, are relegated to subservience.

It is not necessary here to go point by point into the influence on 1984 of the theories Orwell outlines in his essay. The whole social and political structure of the society in the novel is indebted to them, and Goldstein's book, except for the explanations of Newspeak and Doublethink, is a recapitulation of them. Orwell's essay on Burnham, however, is especially interesting because it shows the nature of his political and moral thinking in his approach to 1984.

Orwell shows his preoccupation with political power in the following passage, where having made note of the great labour-saving, technological advances of modern times he writes:

> . . . class distinctions are probably re-establishing themselves in a new form, and individual liberty is on the down-grade: but as these developments are now technically avoidable they must have some psychological cause which Burnham makes no attempt to discover. The

> question that he ought to ask, and never does ask, is: why does the lust for naked power become a major human motive exactly now, when the dominion of man over man is ceasing to be necessary?[1]

So once again, in this source as well as the others which have been discussed, Orwell isolates the problem of power. It is on this problem that Orwell's sources from Koestler, Zamyatin and Burnham meet in 1984. Orwell's answer to the question, as has been shown in Chapter three, is that power is its own end; and Orwell criticized Huxley because he had failed to see this.

The essay on Burnham also throws great light upon Orwell's moral outlook and reasoning in a way that makes the situation at the end of 1984 bear the seeds of hope. Orwell finds at the basis of Burnham's thinking two axioms:

> a) Politics is the same in all ages.
> b) Political behaviour is different from other kinds of behaviour.

Orwell goes on to quote Burnham's account of political behaviour from The Managerial Revolution:

> A rising social class and a new order of society have got to break through the old moral codes just as they must break through the old economic and political institutions. Naturally, from the point of view of the old, they are monsters. If they win, they take care in due time of manners and morals.[2]

Orwell repudiates this type of behaviour saying:

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[1]George Orwell, "Second Thoughts on James Burnham," The Orwell Reader. Introd. Richard H. Rovere (New York, 1956), p. 352.

[2]Ibid., p. 354.

> It ignores the fact that certain rules of conduct have to be observed if human society is to hold together at all.[1]

By "certain rules of conduct" Orwell means the Cricket Morality.

Burnham's first axiom causes Orwell to look for an example in Nazi Germany and he notes that Burnham when he wrote The Managerial Revolution in 1940 believed that the new managerial society of the Nazis was invincible. This was because Burnham had been unable "to see that the crimes and follies of the Nazi regime must [sic!] lead by one route or another to disaster."[2] The reason the Nazi regime "led to disaster" is implicit in Burnham's second axiom: they came up against "other types of behaviour" in the people of the countries they overran:

> . . . the smaller European states . . . might conceivably have accepted the New Order if the Germans had kept some of their promises. But the actual experience of German rule aroused almost at once such a fury of hatred and vindictiveness as the world has seldom seen.[3]

Partisan movements grew up in all the conquered countries which harrassed the Germans and made more effective the efforts of those who were still free.

This line of thought can be seen in 1984. The Party and all its members are governed by the first axiom -- that politics is the same in all ages and that it is based on fraud and force which expresses itself in the behaviour seen throughout the novel. However, the proles are

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[1]George Orwell, "Second Thoughts on James Burnham," The Orwell Reader. Introd. Richard H. Rovere (New York, 1956), p. 354.

[2]Ibid., p. 354.

[3]Ibid., p. 345.

outside this control -- their behaviour is "the other type," the Cricket Morality.

The situation appears hopeless in 1984, but so did the European situation in 1940. There was very little logical reason for doubting Nazi invincibility and any hope of its overthrow seemed a mere pious wish. I believe that Orwell in 1984 would have us see that the proles will eventually overthrow Big Brother, just as the other nations overthrew Hitler, even though every piece of evidence is against it. This gives point to Winston's pathetic but firm belief. When O'Brien asks him if he sees any reason why the proles will turn and defeat the Party, Winston says:

> No. I believe it. I know [sic!] that you will fail. There is something in the universe -- I don't know, some spirit, some principle -- that you will never overcome.[1]

I claim that the "principle" is the Cricket Morality and the "spirit" is that "form" or "style" with which it is carried out.

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[1] George Orwell, Nineteen eighty-four (Harmondsworth, 1965), p. 217.

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