TITLE: "I am not Winston Smith":
Orwell, The BBC, and NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR

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ABSTRACT

The subject of this thesis is the influence of George Orwell's experience as a war-time BBC radio broadcaster on the author as he created the world of NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR. In 1985 W.J. West published the transcripts of Orwell's wartime broadcasts. West suggested in his introductory preface that Orwell's NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR was based directly on his BBC experience and problems encountered with the Ministry of Information at that time. This thesis argues that, though Orwell probably drew on his BBC experience for the psychological content of NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR, Winston's treatment at the hands of Big Brother is not based on anything the author endured during his tenure at the BBC. To this end Orwell's personal and political reasons for both joining and leaving the BBC are discussed. The connection between reality and fiction in Orwell's works, both documentary and fictional, is examined, and the literary nature of all of Orwell's writing taken into consideration in an exploration of the creative dynamic shaping Orwell's expression.

L'ABSTRAIT

Le sujet de cette thèse, c'est l'influence de l'expérience de G.O. comme propagandiste du réseau BBC pendant la guerre des idées de NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR. Dans 1985 W.J. West a publié les transcriptions des émissions pendant la guerre de George Orwell. West a suggéré dans sa préface d'introduction que le domain NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR était basé directement sur les expériences au réseau BBC et les problèmes recontrés avec le Ministère des Renseignements à cette epoque-là. Cette thèse plaide que, bien que Orwell a tiré sure cette expérience du réseau BBC pour le contenu psychologique de NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR, le traitement de Winston aux mains de "Big Brother n'est pas basé sur une expérience dureé pendant sa tenure au BBC. À ce but, les raisons pesonnelles et politiques de George Orwell de joindre et de quitter le réseau sont discuteés. On examine la liaison entre la réalité et la fiction dans les oeuvres de George Orwell, et documentaires et fictionelles, et on considère la nature littéraire de toutes les oeuvres de George Orwell dans une exploration du dynamisme créateur qui forme l'expression de George Orwell.

Statement of Originality

This paper explores George Orwell's way of transmuting experience into polemical argument and fiction. George Woodcock's A CRYSTAL SPIRIT remains the most sensitive analysis of Orwell's way of integrating experience with a creative imagination in Orwell scholarship. The argument presented here has no doubt been influenced by Mr.Woodcock's work. This specific interpretation of the dynamics of creativity and experience in Orwell's work, however, and the discussion with reference to his BBC experience and NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR, is entirely my own.

The idea that Orwell's work should be treated as a literary, as distinct from a political, expression is affirmed in Michael Sheldon's recent biography, ORWELL. Sheldon presents Orwell as a literary figure, exploring his growth and development as a writer. This is in contrast to Bernard Crick's analysis of Orwell's political identity in GEORGE ORWELL, A LIFE, and the tendency of other writers such as Richard Rees, Steinhoff, Ian Slater, and Stansky and Abrahams to emphasize the evolution of Orwell's political identity. Woodcock's study certainly suggests a literary approach to Orwell's writing however by the very manner in which he analyzes Orwell's work. The study of Orwell's work which follows began from the recognition that, by virtue of the literary qualities of ANIMAL FARM, NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR, HOMAGE TO CATALONIA and certain of the essays such as "A

Hanging," all of Orwell's writing, though political in subject, is literary in nature. It is difficult then to define the source of this approach as Orwell's writing itself suggests it but the literary qualities of Orwell's work is not a subject which has been ignored by Orwell scholars.

"I AM NOT WINSTON SMITH"

ORWELL, THE BBC, AND NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR

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INTRODUCTION

"Two Wasted Years"?
Assessing Orwell's BBC Tenure

28 August 1941 George Orwell entered the following in his diary: "I am now definitely an employee of the BBC." For two years Orwell was responsible for producing and broadcasting pro-British propaganda to the Indian Intelligentsia. Afterwards he described his BBC employment in a letter to Philip Rahv as "two wasted years."[1]

Colleagues, friends, and critics took up the phrase. "For two precious years his talents were mainly wasted," biographer Crick writes, claiming that his colleagues were inclined to agree.[2] At the same time Crick, and the others, assert that this was a remarkably prolific period for Orwell, despite the demanding schedule of his BBC work.[3]

In 1984 W.J. West rediscovered the scripts of Orwell's BBC broadcasts. These texts were originally neglected by the editors of ORWELL'S THE COLLECTED ESSAYS,JOURNALISM AND LETTERS, as not representative of Orwell's more independently motivated journalism.[4] West, publishing the transcripts in 1985, claimed however that these documents provided invaluable insight into the development of Orwell as a writer, concluding that Orwell's BBC work was "the key to Orwell's evolution from the slightly pedantic and unpolished author of pre-war days to the able creator of ANIMAL FARM AND NINETEEN EIGHT FOUR."[5]

According to West, the contents of these documents "decisively overturned" the "accepted verdict that these years were largely wasted."[6]

West published these documents in two volumes. The WAR BROADCASTS collects the scripts of the literary, political, and general information talks Orwell wrote or compiled for overseas broadcast, from 1942 to 1943. This volume also contains some of Orwell's correspondence while at the BBC. THE WAR COMMENTARIES presents the texts of Orwell's weekly news summaries broadcast by the BBC to India from 1941 to 1943. The news summaries deal with the ephemera of the war's weekly progress. In and of themselves the news broadcasts are of little interest. Some of the other talks are of more intrinsic value, but show neither a change in tone, nor significant revelation in the author's political values. What the BBC scripts do show is good reason for Orwell's disparaging attitude towards his broadcasting work: if Orwell assessed the value of his BBC tenure in terms of the literary quality of these texts then it is obvious why he dismissed those months as "two wasted years."[8]

The content of the scripts does not bear out West's assertion that these texts document Orwell's BBC work as pivotal in his development as a writer.[9] West was duly taken to task by critics and reviewers for his extravagant claims. Critical response to the publication of West's edition of Orwell's WAR COMMENTARIES and WAR BROADCASTS, varied mostly in

the degree of enthusiasm with which the critic debunked West's extravagant claims. Julian Symons valued the WAR COMMENTARIES as documentation of this period in Orwell's development more than the "simplistic" literary material of THE WAR BROADCASTS but observed that "only those interested in (Orwell) will look at either volume." David Montrose introduced THE WAR BROADCASTS with the phrase, "scraping the barrel." Citing Orwell's acclaimed pre-war titles, HOMAGE TO CATALONIA, DOWN AND OUT IN PARIS AND LONDON," and the essay, "Shooting an Elephant," Walter Goodman of the NEW YORK TIMES trounced the notion that working for the BBC formed Orwell as a writer and applauded the wisdom of editors Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus for suppressing the texts in their publication of Orwell's essays and journalism of the manuscripts which West published. With reference to the WAR COMMENTARIES, Colin Welch observed, "Yesterday's news and mashed potatoes are notoriously stale," describing the material as "hackwork," though acknowledging the appeal of such a cache to "the Orwell buff."[10]

By 1989 the dust had settled from the initial critical reaction to West's introduction. John Rodden, researching the origins and development of Orwell's literary reputation was able to assess the discovery as nothing more, nor less, than a contribution to the Orwell archives of primary material. Rodden labelled West's claims regarding this material "inflated."[11]

Overall, while questioning the particular importance of West's find, most critics acknowledged that the BBC period was also something more than a hiatus for the sensitive political writer: Within weeks of quitting the BBC Orwell created ANIMAL FARM. Months later he projected the world of NINETEEN EIGHTY FOUR in all its frighteningly verisimilitude to explore the themes of bureaucratic totalitarian control.[12]

What then was the significance of Orwell's two years at the BBC to the writer? To what extent did this experience contribute to the making of NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR? West identified the BBC experience as a victim of the Ministry of Information as the source of Orwell's ideas for the world of Big Brother. Arguing from documents he discovered in the Ministry of Information archives, he concludes that Orwell modelled the story of Winston Smith in NINETEEN EIGHTY FOUR on that of his own experience at the BBC.[13] It is on the basis of this assumption that West overvalues the BBC manuscripts.

West builds his argument with reference to superficial similarities between, and associations with, things found in the BBC documents and NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR. This reading of NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR excited some of the most scathing comment from West's critics: David Montrose referred to West's suggestion that the wartime Minister of Information, Brendan Bracken, was the model for Big Brother as "a gem of pure dottiness."[14] Upon examination the archival evidence West cites does not support his assertion that the story of

NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR is derived from Orwell's BBC experience.[15]

However, much that makes Winston Smith's world real can be identified with that which Orwell experienced while working for the BBC. Orwell's writing, both his documentaries and his fiction, lends itself to this kind of facile association because all that Orwell wrote was based on his own experience. Much of his fiction looks like his life. Most of his polemical writing is supported by personal anecdote. As a result Orwell's fiction is often taken as Orwell's reality; Orwell's characters are thought to represent Orwell; their stories become his biography.

Experience was the foundation of Orwell's writing, his political opinions, his literary creations. But Orwell was a creative literary writer, first and last, not a reporter, not a political analyst. He was gifted with neither abstract psychological insight nor spontaneous creative invention. His talents lay in what, at its most shrill and uninspired moments, could be called exaggeration. Orwell did not report his experiences, he contemplated them, reached beyond them, and created worlds that illustrated his conclusions about them. He composed literary arguments, in both fictional and documentary modes, designed them to persuade the reader of the truth as he saw it.

Much of Bernard Crick's GEORGE ORWELL, A LIFE, is devoted to distinguishing a literary "I" from an autobiographical "I"

in Orwell's works.[16] Crick concerns himself with proving that much that Orwell said, particularly in the autobiographical essay, "Such Were the Joys," was not literally "true." However he does not explore the interface between experience and imagination which produced both Orwell's fiction and the powerful arguments in his "documentary" works.

Orwell was a imaginative literary writer. Michael Sheldon's recently published biography, ORWELL, presents the writer as a literary figure, rather than a political writer. Sheldon says that Orwell, "drove himself relentlessly to make his mark as a writer." The testimony of those aquainted with Orwell in the early days bears witness to the claim.[17] Shelden observes the role of Orwell's imagination in allowing him to identify with both sides of a situation and immerse himself in it. Though declaring toward the end of his life, "I am not a real novelist anyway," he struggled year after year to write novels. It is for his masterful prose that Orwell is appreciated in literary fields, and his passion was for words and style. But his ambition was to be a writer, to write novels, and he used his imagination to explore his own experience in order to have something to write about.[18]

George Woodcock observed, "Real writers turn all experience to use."[19] To understand the part Orwell's BBC experience played in the creation of Big Brother's world and the story of Winston Smith, is to ask the question what use

did Orwell make of his experience? What did Orwell make out of his experience at the BBC? To try to decipher his work as a kind of autobiographical roman-a-clef is to ignore the creative dynamic at work in all of Orwell's writing and to underestimate the unique interaction of deeply felt political convictions with a creative imagination which characterizes this writer's contribution to literature.

What was the nature of Orwell's BBC tenure and how did this experience influence the creation of NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR? To determine what Orwell did at the BBC, what he thought about it and what from that experience, distilled in the potent vapours of his imagination and political convictions, was rendered into the character of Winston Smith and the nightmare of Big Brother's world, is the object of this inquiry.

Why did Orwell join the BBC? Why did he leave? Chapter One which follows identifies the politics of Orwell's decision to support the government at war while remaining commited to Socialist revolution. Chapter Two reconstruct Orwell's BBC experience from his own diary entries and the observations of others, critically examining the grounds on which West's identification of Orwell's employment at the BBC with Winston Smith's job in the Ministry of Truth. The relationship of that experience to the theme and content of NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR is the subject of the final chapter which explores

Orwell's creative treatment of experience in both his literary and documentary works.

When Orwell joined the BBC in 1941 he knew the kind of work he would be doing. He had been writing and performing commissioned broadcasts for the BBC since 1940; his own work had been subjected four times to the editing and revision process required by which a solicited broadcast was rendered acceptable to the censorship.[20] When he resigned he complained of having "wasted" two years. What brought the writer to be able to give up the freedom of free-lance journalism and novel writing for the shackles of bureaucratic employment?

Orwell was not working on a book when he accepted the BBC job. By 1940 he had published eight books in eight years. "Too much," he told Geoffrey Gorer. But to everyone else he complained that it was the pressures of the war, and not fatigued inspiration, which interfered. In letters to friends Orwell did not elaborate on how the war interfered with his writing,[21] but the diary entry of June 1940 shows the frustrations eroding his concentration, the anxieties which swallowed his sense of literary purpose.

"Everything is disintegrating," he wrote, "It makes me writhe to be writing book reviews etc. at such a time and even angers me that such time-wasting should still be permitted."[22] The entry begins with an account of the Italian declaration of war and the Allied withdrawal from

Norway. He mentions an incident dating back to 1936 that he intended to write about, but concludes, lamely "now I feel so saddened that I can't write it."[23] Orwell's inability to write what he considered "real writing," as distinct from journalism at this time,[24] is rooted in his sensitivity to the political realities of his time, his vision of the implications of those events, and his belief that it was the responsibility of the intelligentsia to participate in and influence those realities.

This is the gist of the essay, "Inside the Whale," inspired by Henry Miller's TROPIC OF CANCER, published in 1940. Here he decides that the attitude from which a "sensitive novelist" could operate was that of quietism:

> "Get inside the whale - or rather admit that you are inside the whale (for you are, of course). Give yourself over to the world-process, stop fighting against it or pretending that you control it; simply accept it, endure it, record.[25]

Orwell couldn't do this. And because he could not ignore the threat of universal fascist tyranny, and reconcile himself to a passive role of a mere chronicler, he sought participation in the only way left open to him - through writing about it, writing against totalitarianism, and for his idea of democratic socialism.

Orwell came to recognize his vocation as a political journalist in 1937, after fighting in the Spanish Civil War. His Spanish experience confirmed his belief in the spirit of Socialism, while teaching him the reality of revolutionary

politics.[26] Learning that party activism often meant sacrificing a genuine socialist agenda to the interests of this or that party doctrine, he devoted himself to becoming the voice of those socialist ideals, descrying hypocrisy and self-serving abuses where he found them, both without and within the Socialist movement.

Orwell dated his commitment to political journalism from the year of his return from Spain.[27] His ambition became to "turn political writing into an art." These were his words, in 1946, after the success of ANIMAL FARM, the work in which he achieved just that. The way he defined his ambition at that time reflects his decision, not to sacrifice his literary agenda, but to infuse it with political purpose, through writing "for democratic socialism," through writing "against totalitarianism."[28]

Meanwhile, before ANIMAL FARM, he struggled to write novels, like COMING UP FOR AIR,[29] redolent with political messages, essays of literary criticism with a decidedly political agenda, and politically responsible journalism. To Spender, on the propagandist aspects of HOMAGE TO CATALONIA he remarked, "I hate writing that kind of stuff and am much more interested in my own experiences." But, he told Spender, one could not escape the political intrigues and controversies HOMAGE TO CATALONIA was written to expose. Therefore one had to write about them.[30] Because he was Orwell, and deeply committed to the political realization of a society based on

principles he believed to be the platform of real socialism, he had to write polemically, he had to write propaganda.

By 1939 Orwell was convinced that war was imminent. The vision of concentration camps haunted him since his return from Spain; his fears of impending destruction are expressed in the bombing imagery in COMING UP FOR AIR, published in 1939, the note of warning on which HOMAGE TO CATALONIA ends, in the letters dating from the Spanish Civil War, where he complains of being unable to write because of the uncertain political future. In 1938, he wrote to Cyril Connolly, "This bloody mess-up in Europe has got me so that I really can't write anything... It seems to me we might as well all pack our bags for the concentration camps."[31]

When the war began, Orwell was consumed by his need to participate.[32] The beginning of his first "War-Time Diary" tells the story of his attempts to circumvent his poor health and the medical board to enter active service. His frustration becomes, by the summer of 1940, a shrill denunciation of the government's failure to conduct the war in a sincere and effective manner.[33]

Orwell was not writing when the BBC offered him a job, because the real possibility of defeat brought his nightmare that much closer to reality. Poor health and an unimaginative, uncommitted (he believed) government forced him into passivity -forced him, like Jonah, inside the whale, to merely accept and wait to see what would happen. This was not

Orwell's best manner. His words to John Lehmann, July of 1940 sum it up adequately, if not eloquently: "It is a terrible thing to feel oneself useless and at the same time on every side to see halfwits and pro fascists filling important jobs."[34]

August 1941, the BBC offered Orwell the opportunity to do something toward the war effort. He took it. If full time employment kept him busier than before, it meant trading being buried under books for reviewing, "to keep the wolf a few paces from the back door,"[35] for immersing himself in the duties of preparing broadcasts and lining up speakers. The writer did not turn his back on a burgeoning novel when he took up full time employment.

But the BBC was more than just a chance to make a living while too distracted to "really write." Orwell's politics made the BBC Indian service a forum in which he thought he might really contribute to the outcome of the war. BBC colleague William Empson said Orwell "always regarded his work in a high manner, not to say a self-important one, as many of us were prone to do."[36] Orwell's BBC service represented his active commitment to the British war effort.

Ultimately Orwell was disappointed in his expectations of influencing the political situation in India. His war-time diaries, a few pieces of correspondence and some journalism express Orwell's attitudes towards his work during this period. Orwell descried his activity at the BBC as "wasted"

for good reason, given the quality of work produced at that time as well as his failure to make much impact on the political situation. However what Orwell made of the whole experience can be found in his writing after 1943 and NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR. "Two wasted years?" A valid assessment perhaps in terms of literary output, but what follows is meant to show how Orwell made good use of what he learned in those two years; that Orwell's BBC experience contributed to the message, and the means by which the nightmare of NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR became a literary reality.

ENDNOTES: INTRODUCTION

1. George Orwell, in THE COLLECTED ESSAYS,JOURNALISM AND LETTERS OF GEORGE ORWELL, edited by Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus, (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England, 1970) Hereafter to be refered to as CE with volume number. Volume 3,p.71.

2. Bernard Crick, GEORGE ORWELL, A LIFE. [Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England, 1980], p. 416. See also Michael Shelden, ORWELL, THE AUTHORISED BIOGRAPHY (London, 1991), p.373. Shelden examines Orwell's BBC years paying attention to the drudgery involved in working in a large bureaucratic organisation. He concludes, referring to the vast bulk of routine correspondence required of Orwell in his position as Talks Director, that this was "an enormous waste of Orwell's energy, energy which should have been going into more meaningful work."

3. Bernard Crick and Ian Slater both remark Orwell's prodigious output at this time and discuss at length the ideas published in the journalism of those "wasted years." George Woodcock and Richard Rees, both colleagues and friends during Orwell's BBC days, describe this time as stimulating and influential, as does William Steinhof, writing in THE ROAD TO 1984 of the influences and experiences leading to the creation of Orwell's totalitarian nightmare. Bernard Crick, as above; George Woodcock, A CRYSTAL SPIRIT, A STUDY OF GEORGE ORWELL, (Toronto, 1966); Ian Slater, THE ROAD TO AIRSTRIP ONE (New York, 1985); Richard Rees, GEORGE ORWELL, FUGITIVE FROM THE CAMP OF VICTORY (Carbondale, Illinois, 1961), William Steinhoff, THE ROAD TO 1984 (London, 1975).

4. Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus, Editor's Introduction to Orwell, CE. Volume 1,p.15.

5. W.J.West, Editor's Introduction to GEORGE ORWELL, THE WAR BROADCASTS, ed. W.J.West. (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England, 1985) Hereafter to be referred to as WAR BROADCASTS, p.13.

6. W.J. West, Introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.7.

7. George Orwell, THE WAR BROADCASTS, (Harmondsworth, Eng.1987) Edited by W.J.West and George Orwell, THE WAR COMMENTARIES, Edited by W.J.West, (Harmondsworth, England, 1987). Both volumes are prefaced with introductory essays by editor W.J.West. Hereafter to be referred to as WAR BROADCASTS and WAR COMMENTARIES respectively.

8. Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus in Editor's Introduction, CE, Volume 1,p.15. Editors Orwell and Angus initially described these pieces as "oversimplified pieces, written for an

audience with a different background from his own and, though not of a different kind they are of a different level from his work for an English or American highbrow magazine, where he had no need to explain his references as he went along."

9. Sheldon, p.373. Sheldon assesses Orwell's writing for the BBC as "inferior to his best journalism," despite the opportunities offered for imaginative writing. He suggests that Orwell "set his sights too low in his broadcast writing," citing the difference between spoken and written mediums coupled with the pressure of deadlines as the cause.

10. Julian Symons, in TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT, 5/3/85, p.6 and 1/3/86, p.485; David Montrose in NEW STATESMAN, 4/12/85, p.26; Walter Goodman in NEW YORK TIMES, 09/20/85; Colin Welch in SPECTATOR, 10/26/85, pp.26-27.

11. John Rodden, THE POLITICS OF LITERARY REPUTATION, (New York, Oxford, 1989) p.50.

12. Walter Goodman, NEW YORK TIMES, Sept. 20, 1985. Goodman's conclusion to his otherwise scathing review of West's Introduction is typical: "Still Mr.West has a point - something must have been going on. Within a few years, Orwell would complete the two novels on which his fame largely rests today."

13. W.J.West, Introduction to ORWELL: THE WAR BROADCASTS, p.59. West's introductory essay argues the similarities between Orwell's BBC experience and the story of Winston Smith told in NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR to prove that Orwell based Winston's story directly on that experience. He makes a careful distinction however between Orwell's feelings towards the BBC and his attitude towards the MOI, disputing Crick's assertion, cited from an introductory essay to NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR, that Orwell's novel is a bitter parody of the BBC.

14. Montrose, THE NEW STATESMAN, 4/12/85, v.109,p.26.

15. West's evidence will be examined in Chapter II of this thesis.

16. Crick compiles an impressive amount of detail to support his suggestion that Orwell's imagination was perhaps more active an is usually discussed. He concerns himself with proving what Orwell's life was "really like," but does not offer an appreciation of the relationship between the writer's imagination and his real experience. Sheldon assesses Crick's contribution to Orwell scholarship as follows: "Crick's biography is a large collection of facts which relies heavily on the notion that facts speak for themselves if presented in

enough detail. He keeps a safe distance between himself and his subject, reporting Orwell's actions without commenting much on the motives and feelings behind them." (Sheldon, p.7)

17. Shelden, p.3. Orwell's sister, Avril recalls her brother "continually scribbling short stories in his notebooks." [Avril Dunn cited in Audrey Coppard and Bernard Crick, Editors, ORWELL REMEMBERED, (London, 1984). p.27] and his determination to write upon returning from Burma and resigning his commission. Ruth Pitter said Orwell was "like a cow with a musket" as he taught himself to write. [As above,p.70] According to his brother-in-law, and several other accounts, Orwell was determined to be a writer, [As above, p.127] a testimony born out by the years of personal deprivation and commitment to mastering the language with no sight of reward or recognition until the publication of DOWN AND OUT IN PARIS AND LONDON.

18. Sheldon, pp.3-4.

19. Woodcock, p.13.

20. W.J.West, Introduction and Appendix to Orwell, WAR BROADCASTS, p.21, and Appendix A, pp. 279-283. See West's introduction for a discussion of Desmond Hawkins' rewrite of the text Orwell composed titled "Proletarian Literature," and the Appendix for an extensive description of the censorship process.

21. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,pp.39 & 44. Orwell complained about being buried under books for reviewing and the journalism he took on to make a living during war times. He told Geoffrey Gorer he could probably make enough to get by on solely from writing, but that he would rather get into a trade. But the phrase repeated in the letters in conjunction with his failure to work on his novel refers the distraction of the war, and the futility of writing anything when the future was so uncertain.

22. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.391.

23. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,pp.393-394.

24. To Orwell, journalism was not "real writing." He wrote to John Lehmann in July of 1940, "I have written nothing except book reviews etc. for along time past...." [CE. Volume 2,p.45]. The "etc." must refer to the seven major essays he published that year, including the essay on Charles Dickens, "Inside the Whale," on Henry Miller and the artist's responsibility to society, and the essay on "Boy's Weekly." "I have practically given up writing except for journalism. I can't write with this sort of business going on," he wrote

to publisher James Laughlin, also in July of that year. Sometime in 1940 he began the important essay on English national temperament and socialism, "The Lion and the Unicorn." Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus introducing the COLLECTED ESSAYS, JOURNALISM AND LETTERS, wrote, "From 1939 to his death the only writings which he thought of as serious literary productions were two more novels and some essays." [CE. Volume 1,p.14]

25. Orwell in CE. Volume 2,p.576. The concerns generating these ideas are expressed in Orwell's letters and reviews since the Spanish War. In 1936 he wrote, "To turn away from everyday life to manipulate black paper silhouettes with the pretence that you are really interested in them, is a sort of game of make-believe, and therefore faintly futile, like telling ghost stories in the dark." [CE, Volume 1,p.281.]

26. Orwell's political naivete when he embarked upon his Spanish adventure has been well remarked by his friends and fellow Spanish combatants. Stansky and Abrahams in ORWELL, THE TRANSFORMATION, (London, 1981) cite fellow socialists Stafford Cottman, Bob Edwards and Harry Milton's reactions to Orwell's political naivete upon arriving in Spain. [Stansky and Abrahams, p.211] Upon preparing to return home he wrote to Cyril Connolly, "I have seen wonderful things and at last really believe in Socialism, which I never did before." [CE. Volume 1,p.201] This and other letters express his compulsion to "write the truth about what I have seen," [CE. Volume 1, p.299] to counteract the "appalling lies" being published in the papers. HOMAGE TO CATALONIA was the product of Orwell's commitment to the idea of Socialist revolution and to the need to tell what really happened in Spain for the purpose of enlightening the readership to the dangers inherent in revolutionary party politics.

27. Orwell, CE. Volume 1,p.28.

28. Orwell, CE. Volume 1,p.28.

29. Woodcock, pp. 47-349. Woodcock's A CRYSTAL SPIRIT describes the structural problems in Orwell's literary work. Woodcock shows that only ANIMAL FARM was structurally successful and attributes this achievement to the fact that it was a parody of the Russian Revolution, an actual historical incident.

30. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.345.

31. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.343. The stream of logic is typical of Orwell. For the writer who conceived of his vocation as that of a political reformer by rhetorical means it was inevitable that his own normal psychological anxieties manifested themselves in a fear of the concentration camp while the usual fluctuations of a writer's creative confidence were expressed as a loss of faith in the political course of the world. [See also, Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.38]

32. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.394. June 1 1940 Orwell writes, "If once in the army, I know by the analogy of the Spanish war that I shall cease to care about public events. At present I feel as I felt in 1936 when the Fascists were closing in on Madrid, only far worse."

33. Orwell, CE. Volume 2, pp.407,410,418. Orwell's failure to gain access to any kind of military service becomes a diatribe against the government's failure to take the socialist initiatives Orwell believed were necessary to defeat the Axis powers. By the end of August 1940 Orwell readily projects his frustration onto the "masses" seeing them as ready to revolt against the inept government which is losing their war. In his diary Orwell writes with certainty that it is only a matter of opportunity before, "one will only have to jump up on the platform and tell them how they are being wasted and how the war is being lost, and by whom, for them to rise up and shovel the Blimps into the dustbin." [CE. Volume 2,p.418]

34. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.44

35. Orwell, CE. Volume 2, pp.35,38.

36. Coppard and Crick, p.178.

CHAPTER 1

"Oxymoron"

Revolutionary Patriotism, Cynical Idealism: The Politics of Orwell's BBC Employment

In July of 1939 Orwell declared "What meaning would there be, even it if it were successful, in bringing down Hitler's system in order to stabilize something that is far bigger and in its different way just as bad?"[1] When war was declared, Orwell clamoured to be a part of it, and denounced the system roundly for refusing him active service in any capacity.[2] The "revolutionary patriotism" of THE LION AND THE UNICORN expressed Orwell's intellectual reconciliation of his socialist and patriotic impulses. Orwell accepted employment with the BBC in 1943 because broadcasting government propaganda allowed him to act on that resolution.

1939 was not the first time Orwell met the challenge of conflicting ideals with action determined according to immediate political priorities. July 1936, Franco's uprising in Spain forced a similar decision on Orwell's and his politically minded contemporaries. Stansky and Abraham's summarized the dilemma thus:

> "Until the summer of 1936, it was possible as a dedicated young man or woman of the Left to declare oneself a socialist, an anti-fascist, and a pacifist, and not be troubled by a sense of inconsistency in any of these particulars. But Spain changed things. Suddenly reality caught up with one's idealism: it became possible (perhaps necessary) to bear arms against Fascism. And by so doing, did not one bring that much closer the

> nightmare of war that had haunted the European imagination since 1918, and shaped the generation in England that only three years earlier had sworn never to bear arms for King and Country?[3]

Spain presented the opportunity to do battle against Fascism. Franco's challenge also represented a real threat, Orwell believed, to survival of European Socialism. While Middleton Murray and Max Plowman, both socialists with whom Orwell communicated, grappled with their anti-militarist consciences in the pages of Adelphi, Orwell was booking passage to Barcelona.

Orwell's WIGAN PIER ends with a clarion call to arms directed at all true Socialists because "Socialism" is the only enemy fascism has to face."[4] This is the argument of the second half of ROAD TO WIGAN PIER. Real socialists fought tyranny wherever they found it. If the need to unite against Fascism meant compromising on non-essentials, (including socialist anti-militarism, apparently) and an alliance between the socialist and his worst enemies, then the socialist need keep in mind only the essentials of Socialism: "A real Socialist is one who wishes - not merely conceives it as desirable, but actively wishes - to see tyranny overthrown."[5] On basis of this argument Orwell discredits pacifism in the Spanish context. Though war usually meant the sacrifice of the working classes of both sides on behalf of capitalist interests, the Socialists must fight the Spanish war in the name of Socialist survival and the defeat of Fascism.

Orwell set off for Spain, politically naive, highly idealistic, anxious to fight against fascism and for common decency. Upon arrival he was seduced and enthraled by the revolutionary socialist atmosphere of Barcelona. He enlisted with the POUM militia and trudged off to the Aragon Front. Stansky and Abrahams provide a third person account of what then ensued, explaining the political context of the story Orwell himself tells in HOMAGE TO CATALONIA. [6]

Orwell's work chronicles the dissolution of the Revolutionary euphoria he found so stimulating upon arriving in Barcelona in January into a "nightmare atmosphere... like being in a lunatic asylum." While Orwell was away at the front the revolutionary workers state had become increasingly dominated by Republican bourgeois elements interested in winning the support of the middle classes. Orwell returned to Barcelona, on leave from the front, on the 26th of April to discover revolutionary idealism giving way to sectarian infighting and the ascendancy of a capitalist republic.[7]

In May the calumny of POUM by the Communists began. Orwell in his usual way elected to remain associated with the underdogs in the struggle[8] and returned to his POUM unit. He was wounded and came back up the line to Barcelona. Once there, he discovered that POUM was being suppressed. The arrests had begun and Orwell, as a POUM militia man, had to disappear. Orwell escaped Spain, with his wife, and rushed home to write "the truth" about what he had seen.[9]

The "truth" he had seen was that the human spirit was capable of realizing the ideals of socialism, but that revolutionary politics was a sordid affair where the agenda was determined according to imperatives of gaining and keeping power, and at the expense of decency and liberty.[10] In Spain, Orwell learned of the distance between the idea of WIGAN PIER that socialist revolution was purely a matter of pitting socialists against fascists and bringing down the system, and the reality of what happened when those who talked about political equality, found themselves in a position of power.

Orwell's idealism survived Spain, indeed the experience enhanced his conviction that Socialism must be the political aspiration of all oppressed peoples. Having argued in WIGAN PIER that the Socialist must fight in Spain to preserve the interest of the working man against Fascist domination, he presented in HOMAGE TO CATALONIA a glorious image of what that Socialist revolution was, and the egalitarian atmosphere he experienced in his first days in Barcelona. The revolutionary spirit he saw at work in those first euphoric days remained with him, inspiring and shaping his political commitment. The most enduring image he brought back from Spain was that of the idealized Italian Militia Man - the one with which he introduces HOMAGE TO CATALONIA, the one which he resurrects in "Looking Back On the Spanish Civil War," written in 1943. The Italian Militia man represented Orwell's affection for, and

faith in the common man's ability to realize a political and social order rooted in common decency.

Orwell's humanitarian idealism remained intact, but his experience of revolutionary politics brought Orwell's earlier cynicism about society forward into his politics. The heroes, or anti-heroes of Orwell's early novels, effect no changes because they are caught by the very systems they despise. Flory's way out of the oppressive Imperialist hypocrisy in BURMESE DAYS, is suicide. Gordon Comstock in KEEP THE ASPIDISTRA FLYING returns to the maudlin world of lower middle class survival for which his upbringing prepared him. Dorothy in A CLERGYMAN'S DAUGHTER regains her memory and her pathetic bondage to father and parish. The central characters in these novels resign themselves to their place in the world reflecting the author's pessimistic evaluation of human society as something which the individual could have no hope of changing.

WIGAN PIER represented a first departure from Orwell's cynical sociology, themes conveyed by a hero's resignation to the inevitable pressures of conformity in the interest of his or her own survival. The first half of WIGAN PIER evokes the poverty and degradation of the not privileged under a capitalist economic order. But the second half offers a political solution: Socialism. The ills of unemployment, WIGAN PIER declares, can be alleviated with Orwell's idealistic political prescription. It was the vision of this

prescription which politicized Orwell's writing and sent him to Spain in 1936.[11]

After Spain, Orwell continued to believe in Socialism, writing to Cyril Connolley, that he believed it now as he never had before.[12] But his first hand experience of revolutionary politics turned him away from party politics: In Spain he conceived a "horror of politics,"[13] an attitude which determined the self proclaimed role as critic of left wing politics he maintained to the end of his life. Winston Smith, the hero of Orwell's last political novel, like his first, Flory of BURMESE DAYS, is defeated by the political system he can neither influence nor escape, despite his nobler impulses.

Orwell's cynicism was reserved for political phenomena. In 1938 he remarked, 'The mass of the people never get the chance to bring their innate decency into the control of affairs, so that one is almost driven to the cynical thought that men are only decent when are powerless."[14] Orwell's view of the masses as essentially decent, but rendered impotent by manipulative, exploitive political leadership, is most obviously demonstrated in ANIMAL FARM. Orwell discovered the distribution of power in Napoleon's barnyard society one day while watching a small boy whip a huge cart horse up a hill. Orwell marvelled at the control the child had over the massive strength of the animal, and the political structure of ANIMAL FARM was born.[15]

Orwell spent the rest of his life writing books and tracts which denounced corrupt political leadership and bureaucracy. But he retained his belief in the integrity of the powerless masses. In NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR the proletariate are reduced to healthy, vigorous, ineffectual animals, ignorant of the chains by which a corrupt and efficient bureaucracy restrict and control them. At the same time the healthy anti-Party character of Julia in NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR shows that Orwell still believed in the innate decency of mankind: despite being born into Big Brother's world, Julia instinctively comprehended the corruption of the Party. NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR has often been interpreted as a cynical denunciation of mankind's future, but the fact that Orwell wrote it, that he felt it necessary to present the vision suggests a more optimistic attitude than is conveyed by the story itself. A typical "dystopia", Orwell's NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR is a cautionary tale, a projection of the world as it might become if certain trends are allowed to progress to their logical conclusions, an avoidable future should humanity choose to heed the author's warning.

The writing which follows his Spanish education shows an attitude suspended between the twin poles of cynical critical examination of actual political solutions and their leaders and a genuine belief in humanity's love of liberty and capacity to realize a "decent, fully human life."[16]

Orwell returned from Spain, still an anti-fascist, and still a socialist. The same political priorities, and the same kind of activist thinking as informed his decision to go Spain, brought him to support the British war effort in 1939. Despite his pre-Spanish War Socialist anti-militarism Orwell was never a pacifist in so far as he did not denounce war on moral grounds referring to an anti-violence agenda. His politics was above all active. Orwell believed in winning the struggle against tyranny. If that meant war, then he would go to war.

Bernard Crick discusses Orwell's affiliation with the ILP distinguishing between pacifism and anti-militarism. Crick argues that despite alliances between the ILP and pacifist organizations such as the Peace Pledge Union, the ILP theoretically was prepared to fight a revolutionary war. Orwell's attitude towards pacifism in the face of the threat of Fascist domination was actively demonstrated in his rejection of pacifism in the Spanish situation.[17] Acquiescence to the threat of tyranny and Fascist domination was not on his agenda, not in 1936, nor in 1939.[18] In 1939, as in 1936, he determined that going to war would serve the revolutionary cause and he did not abjure it.

Orwell did however maintain, both before and after Spain, that modern war, was "a racket."[19] As late as 1939, he wrote against Imperialism, and denounced the idea of a war against Germany in the interest of a tyranny just as bad as

Hitler's.[20] But, just as in 1936 he declared war on Franco in the name of socialist revolution, so when Britain went to war against Hitler, he supported his government, to preserve democracy, and the potential it held for socialist revolution. Most of all he went to war to save England.[21]

Some of Orwell's later admirers obscure the nature of Orwell's war-time commitment by refusing to take his pre-war anti-militarism seriously.[22] In 1938 writing "Why I joined the Independent Labour Party, Orwell refers specifically to their anti-war platform:

> "...the I.L.P. is the only British party - at any rate the only one large enough to be worth considering - which aims at anything I should regard as Socialism....I believe that the ILP is the only party which, as a party is likely to take the right line either against imperialist war or against Fascism when this appears in its British form... Once I had grasped the essentials of the situation in Spain I realized that the ILP was the only British party I felt like joining - and also the only party I could join with at least the certainty that I would never be led up the garden path in the name of capitalist democracy."[23]

This was Orwell's view of what the ILP stood for, and the positions it represented which he advocated.

Orwell himself was rather more candid than some of his friends. Writing of his decision to support the war effort Orwell admitted, "For several years the coming war was a nightmare to me, and at times I even made speeches and wrote pamphlets against it."[24] Orwell then describes his conversion, complete with epiphanic revelation by way of a dream:

> .... the night before the Russo-German pact was announced I dreamed that the war had started. It was one of those dreams which, whatever Freudian inner meaning they may have, do sometimes reveal to you the real state of your feelings. It taught me two things, first that I should simply be relieved when the long-dreaded war started, secondly, that I was patriotic at heart, would not sabotage or act against my own side, would support the war, would fight in it if possible.[25]

Orwell's pre-war pacifism was part of his socialist agenda. As late as July of 1939 Orwell was still arguing that the upcoming war would serve the entrenched interests of wealth, bureaucracy and privilege.[26] It would not serve the aims of justice and liberty so boldly proclaimed by Orwell in WIGAN PIER.[27] Hitler's challenge however brought Orwell, and most other socialists, around to recognizing that the struggle against Fascism now meant defending Britain. The Spanish example had already broken the mould of socialist anti-militarism. In 1939 Harry Pollitt, representing the Communist Party in Britain, declared: "to stand aside from this conflict, to contribute only revolutionary-sounding phrases while the Fascist beasts ride roughshod over Europe, would be a betrayal of everything our forbearers have fought to achieve in the course of long years of struggle against capitalism."[28]

Under the aegis of Soviet influence, Pollitt recanted that position. As a result the party lost credibility with those who supported it for its anti-fascist position.[29] Orwell was saved the trouble of quitting the communist party for he had never joined it. He now came out in full support of

the war against Hitler. His membership in the pacifist ILP he resigned at the beginning of the war, on the grounds, "they were talking nonsense and proposing a line of policy that could only make things easier for Hitler."[30] He argued the pro-war position on socialist grounds. Only by keeping Hitler out of England would the revolution which he believed had already begun, continue.[31]

But Orwell, true to form, examined his change of position with a searching honesty that brought him to recognize and publicly admit the root of his motivation was emotional and patriotic. To argue as a socialist that there was no alternative to resisting Hitler was rational and perfectly viable; however Orwell candidly declared that the intellectual justification in terms of his socialism followed, rather than led, his patriotism, British born and bred.

Orwell said he dreamed of war the night before Ribbentrop flew to Moscow and Soviet neutrality became a reality. Although the Soviet position could be represented as a refusal to become involved with an Imperialist war, it is most likely that Orwell, given his Spanish experience, perceived the Soviet-Nazi pact as a combination of totalitarian powers. Crick suggests that the cynicism of the pact turned Orwell to support the war, that by the light of the threat of Soviet-Nazi totalitarianism, England's democracy, however minimal became worth defending.[32]

This is quite reasonable and probably true. However Orwell goes to great lengths to specify that his patriotism was virtually an instinctive response to the threat to England. "The long drilling in patriotism which the middle classes go through had done its work ... once England was in a serious jam it would be impossible for me to sabotage [sic]," he declares without equivocation. He then unites his patriotic loyalty to England to his revolutionary agenda declaring, "Only revolution can save England," and that the revolution had started, "and may proceed quite quickly if only we can keep Hitler out."[33]

Orwell's socialist agenda and patriotic urges met in the imperative of saving England. When he declares his loyalty to England in the 1940 essay, "My Country Right or Left," he makes a mystical distinction between patriotism and conservatism. "Patriotism is has nothing to do with conservatism," he writes. "It is devotion to something that is changing but is felt to be mystically the same, like the devotion of the ex-White Bolshevik to Russia.[sic]"[34] Orwell's politics in this little essay become somewhat muddled at this point. "To be loyal to both Chamberlain's England and to the England of tomorrow might seem an impossibility, if one did not know it to be an everyday phenomenon," he declares obscurely.[35] In 1939 Orwell defined the essence of his socialism in terms of a deep and abiding attachment to the England of his childhood, the England of pre-1914 English

prosperity. The nostalgic basis of his patriotism is overtly expressed here. That this nostalgia fuelled his version of socialism is more subtly conveyed in his earlier works.

The most evocative passage in WIGAN PIER describes the pre-1914 working class interiors Orwell recalls from the days of English prosperity.[36] Against a cosy vignette complete with Father, "a rough man with enlarged hands who like to sit in shirt-sleeves and says 'Ah wu commin' oop street,'"Orwell presents the inevitable, but not very lovable utopian future furnished with rubber, glass and steel. Orwell recognizes that the old world must fall away, but his conclusion expresses his belief that homes such as the one he describes are the cradle of the human decency on which Orwell's idea of socialism turned.[37]

The happiness of the working class home depended on one thing: "Whether Father is in work."[38] WIGAN PIER betrayed Orwell's wish that socialism could simply be a matter of making sure Father was always in work. But Orwell was incapable of burying his head in the sand of an unrealistic yearning for the comfort of the past. In HOMAGE TO CATALONIA he describes his return from Spain and a Europe rapidly succumbing to Fascist and totalitarian domination evoking the somnolent countryside of southern England, "the sleekest landscape in the world... the England I had known in my childhood." But he turns quickly from nostalgia to warning as he pronounces his fear that this complacent England, his

England, will not wake up to the dangers of European fascism, till the bombs start dropping.[39]

England, Orwell argued in WIGAN PIER was threatened by Fascism from within and from without. From within, the breakdown of capitalism from the forces of unemployment and deprivation was inevitable. To save themselves, the privileged classes would clutch at Fascism, even sell themselves to the European Fascist dictators.[40] Socialist revolution, in WIGAN PIER is posited as the only way to save England.[41] Orwell consistently advocates socialism in the name of "saving England."

Orwell's difficulty detaching himself from his affection for the England of his childhood, is reflected in the way he declares his loyalty to the idea of England in 1940: "When the red militias are billeted in the Ritz," he wrote, "I shall still feel that the England I was taught to love so long ago and for such different reasons is somehow persisting."[42] Orwell wanted to preserve the comfortable England of his childhood and the values he vaguely referred to as decency and located in the working classes without the economic inequality against which most of his polemic was directed.

Orwell could identify what he would go to war to save, only in terms of the past, even while rejecting the social and political order represented by the very government a victory would preserve. It was this attachment to the past, to the culture and traditions of England, to a nostalgic vision whose

economic basis was the very Imperialism against which he railed in his earlier writing, that motivated the "Revolutionary Patriotism" of Orwell's commitment to the war. The politics of this commitment are expressed in his 1940 essay, "The Lion and The Unicorn." It was written during the months when, following the fall of France and Mussolini's declaration of war, England stood alone and was most threatened. Orwell's "Lion and the Unicorn" is an expression of faith in the British people, faith in British democracy, and, above all faith in the capacity of the British to resist fascism on all fronts.

This essay describes the English national temperament as a most effective bulwark against Fascism. But it is also a call for revolution, not so dramatic a revolution as perhaps was suggested in WIGAN PIER, but by no means can Orwell's exuberant call to arms of the British People against fascism in 1940 be interpreted as a statement in support of the British government:

> Revolution does not mean red flags and street fighting, it means a fundamental shift of power. ... Nor does it mean the dictatorship of a single class. What is wanted is a conscious open revolt by ordinary people against inefficiency, class privilege and the rule of the old. It is not primarily a question of change of government. British governments do, broadly speaking, represent the will of the people, and if we alter our structure from below we shall get the government we need. ... Although there are gifted and honest individuals among them, we have got to break the grip of the moneyed class as a whole.[43]

British parliamentary institutions, the tradition of democracy, and respect for private life were worth saving. In the temperament both engendered by and essential to the development of those traditions could be found the qualities which would allow Britain to resist Fascism. However the current government would have to go. If Orwell's 1940 revolution sounds more like a change of civil service personnel than a real revolt of the masses it is a reflection of the patriotic sense of unity Hitler's threat engendered. But the soul of Orwell's Lion is still to be consumed by the red dragon of socialist change.

At the same time, this essay reflects a moderated view of the governing classes on Orwell's part. In WIGAN PIER, Orwell denounced his capitalist-Imperialist government as incapable of waging sincere war against Fascism and likely to surrender the entire Empire to Fascist powers rather than allow Socialism to triumph.[44] By 1940 the ruling classes had not surrendered the Empire, and Orwell wrote of the governing classes as decadent, but not essentially corrupt: "The British ruling class were not altogether wrong in thinking that Fascism was on their side," he wrote, and he explained. Then he continued:

> ... But - and here the peculiar feature of English life that I have spoken of, the deep sense of national solidarity, comes in - they could only do so by breaking up the Empire and selling their own people into semi-slavery. A truly corrupt class would have done this without hesitation, as in France.[45]

Orwell expresses a similar view in the privacy of his diary, contemplating the unconsciousness of the treachery attributable to the British ruling class. Orwell consistently rejects the notion of rampant conscious sabotage, while relentlessly excoriating the stupid mistakes made in the conduct of the war by a ruling class incapable of a whole hearted attack on the fascists.[46]

Orwell's new found appreciation of the ruling classes derived from his own subjective appreciation of patriotism, a patriotism based on a "peculiar feature of English life," what he called the sense of "national solidarity." Orwell's appreciation of English tradition and cultural continuity, and of the temperament bred by those traditions brought him to support a war waged by a government he did not support, in the name of a revolution to unseat it, and to preserve the very institutions and culture which had bred it. Orwell's patriotism, rooted in a desire to preserve England, without the economic inequality, manifested itself during the war in a patriotic call to arms to defeat the fascist threat from without, coupled with a socialist agenda of revolution within.

Orwell did not abandon his revolutionary agenda during the war. He continued to believe, as he posited in WIGAN PIER, that the privileged classes were incapable of a sincere battle against their Fascist enemies. He believed that the mistakes the government was making would bring the population around to realizing that only by ousting the current government could

the war against Fascism be waged and won. He maintained the opinion during the Battle of Britain that England was in a revolutionary phase, and sustained his hopes by reading revolutionary significance into the attitudes of the public he recorded in his diaries.[47] When it became evident to him the Hitler would not attempt an invasion in the summer of 1940, he records his disappointment, for Orwell believed that a failed invasion would be just the thing to oust the "dead minds and pro-Fascists" in the current government, and bring about a conscious movement against the governing class.[48]

Only revolution could save England: "Hitler is the leader of a tremendous counter-attack of the capitalist class," he declared. "When it comes to resisting such an attack as thi anyone who is of the capitalist call must be treacherous or half-treacherous, and will swallow the most fearful indignities rather than put up a real fight."[49]

In Spain Orwell witnessed the folly of trying to win a revolution while fighting the war. Indeed, in HOMAGE TO CATALONIA he wrote of accepting the practical good sense of the Communist Party in placing the war ahead of the revolution.[50] But it was not the strategic reasoning which captured Orwell's imagination in Spain. From his early days in Barcelona, Orwell retained the experience of the popular revolution, and an idealistic belief in the ability of the common man to unite in the struggle against Fascism. That ephemeral socialist paradise which he believed was the reality

of revolutionary Barcelona, the spirit of democratic equality and liberty which impressed him so strongly in his early militia days, was what he believed he was fighting for in Spain;[51] it was what he wanted to believe he was fighting for in 1939; it was to fight for this that he exhorted his fellow countrymen to go to war 1940.

The message of "The Lion and the Unicorn" is unequivocally revolutionary. Orwell could at once both claim that he would not do anything to sabotage his government's war effort, indeed would fight on its behalf, it they'd let him, and still insist that revolution could, and was, happening. The "Lion and the Unicorn," is a celebration of the British national temperament in terms of its potential for socialist revolution. Revolution in the name of defeating the Fascists, revolution to save England.

In April of 1941, Orwell decided that the revolutionary phase of the war was over. Reviewing his predictions of revolutionary change, he concluded: "the revolutionary changes that I expected are happening, but in slow motion."[52] Orwell now anticipated a different kind of "disaster," one not likely to bring any corresponding political improvement. The idea of domestic revolution disappears from the diaries in April. August 1941 Orwell was offered, and accepted employment with the BBC.

For Orwell this job meant the realization of his commitment to active war-time service on behalf of the

struggle against Fascism.[53] The revolution within had stalled. The war without was going to be long and bitter. The German offensive in Russia was at its height, Kiev had fallen August 17. Orwell wrote in his diary that he believed the Russian campaign settled in so far as the Hitler would not break through to the Caucasus and the Middle East that winter, but neither was he going to collapse: "There is no victory in sight at present. We are in for a long, dreary, exhausting war, with everyone growing poorer all the time," he concluded.[54] Orwell embarked upon his employment, August 1941, as a kind of military service, without comment,[55] but not without conviction. The 28th of August, 1941 he closed his diary, and set about learning his job as a broadcaster of government propaganda to India.

Orwell took the job for personal reasons - not the least of which was the financial security it offered. But by all accounts Orwell took his work seriously[56] and his interest in influencing the attitudes of the Indian intelligentsia was sincere. William Empson accounts for the choice of placing Orwell in the Indian service thus:

> George was intensely devoted to the liberation of India - so much so that he felt Hitler's war would be worth while if it spelt the end of the British Raj... but the 'advanced' Indians who imagined they would secure this result by helping Hitler to win were (he was convinced) disastrously deluded. Actually, most of the Englishmen you could have found for the job would have held these opinions (though Churchill insisted that he himself did not), but to political thinkers from the subject countries the English attitude was incredible; and

it could only be made credible by someone who was plainly not mealy-mouthed.[57]

Britain's concern in India in 1941 was essentially the maintenance of Indian loyalty, and internal political stability. For Orwell to broadcast anti-fascist propaganda to India at this time did not interfere with his own anti-imperialist agenda, for he had already committed himself to the war in the name of defeating fascism. The English had no third alternative between surrendering or fighting Hitler: similarly Orwell could, indeed must, apply himself to the task of encouraging Indian loyalty to Britain by discouraging pro-Fascist sentiments among the intelligentsia and anyone else who might listen to his programs.[58] It was not until the fall of Singapore in February of 1942, and Burma in April, that a Japanese invasion of India became a real threat, and Indian loyalty became a serious concern to the British government. Orwell's job then became that of persuading his listeners that they had something to fight for, and that they would not find the political liberty they sought under the Fascist yoke, should they choose surrender.[59] Orwell's propaganda generally contrasted the "true nature" of Fascist domination as could be determined from their treatment of conquered peoples, with observations of the essentially democratic nature of the British Government.[60]

At this point Orwell opened his second War-Time diary, declaring his plans regarding his employment at the BBC:

"Shall remain in it," he states, "if the political changes I foresee come off, otherwise probably not."[61]

Orwell had been working for the BBC for six months when he wrote this. He described the atmosphere as "something halfway between a girl's school and a lunatic asylum," and assessed the work as "useless, or slightly worse than useless."[62] Orwell was clearly frustrated from the start by the poor organization of the propaganda campaign and the bureaucratic policies of the organization with which he had to work.[63]

"Moral squalor and the ultimate futility.. frustration, the impossibility of getting anything done... policy ill-defined... disorganization," this language characterizes his entry on 21 June, but he goes on to identify the same frustrations in his other "public" wartime activity, his participation in the Home Guard.[64] Orwell's criticisms are consistently directed at a general ineptness on the part of those responsible for war strategy in all capacities. After six months of active service under the direct supervision of one of those agencies, Orwell had enough.

Orwell's agenda at the BBC is clarified at this point. He opens the second diary because he believes the war is in "a new phase." He then discusses Cripp's departure for India and speculates on what Cripp's might be empowered to offer the Indian Congress.[65] This second diary covers the period between Crippp's flight to India and the suppression of the

Indian Congress leadership.[66] "Quite truly the way the British Government is now behaving in India upsets me more than a military defeat," he wrote in August.[67] In October he despaired of the Indian situation entirely, and the relevance of broadcasting to India at all.[68] There are four more desultory, curt entries, and the diary ends November 15, 1942.

Orwell's second "War-Time Diary" is an account of political expectations raised, and defeated. Prior to this, when Churchill first took office, Orwell expressed his belief that Churchill would not balk at any step which seemed necessary to winning the war, including granting independence to India.[69] Those hopes are quickly abandoned as he logs his disappointment with Churchill's failure of vision in June of 1940.

Cripps' renewed attempts at conciliating the Indian Congress in 1942 however piqued Orwell's interest. For a brief time, the diaries show that he really believed in the possibility of an Independent India fighting fascism on the side of the Allied powers.[70] Orwell's failure to realize that this was both unlikely and impractical is partly attributable to his idealistic way of perceiving political movements. His disappointment is similar to the disillusionment he experienced in Spain as his belief in the human quest for liberty was confronted by typical pragmatic political behaviour. His expectation that Churchill would automatically grant Indian independance, despite Churchill's

pre-war history of public adamant opposition to such a change is another indicator of Orwell's idealistic perception of political leadership. Orwell's writing is replete with realisitic descriptions of living conditions and the plight of the underprivileged but when it comes to understanding political developments and the motivation of the leadership behind them his judgement is impaired by the very strength of his own moral conviction.

The politics of Indian liberation turned on the conflict between Hindu and Muslim nationalism. Cripps went to India with a proposal designed to accommodate the Congress demands, but containing provision for a separate Moslem state. The Indian Congress predictably rejected the plan but did so on the grounds that the British plan did not allow for Indian involvement in the administration of the war. Ghandi then promulgated the slogan "Quit India," arguing that if the British left, Japan would leave India alone.[71] The British were not prepared to do this during war time, as this would leave India susceptible to Axis interference in the civil war that would likely result if the British pulled out.[72]

Orwell's diaries at this time however discuss neither the political implications of Cripps' offer nor the grounds for its rejection.[73] Orwell's interpretation of the problem was subjective and based on the premise that political action was determined solely by the attitude of the individuals involved:

> ... the basic fact about nearly all Indian intellectuals is that they don't expect independence, can't imagine it

> and at heart don't want it. They want to be permanently in opposition, suffering a painless martyrdom, and are foolish enough to imagine that they could play the same schoolboy games with Japan or Germany as they can with Britain.[74]

Whether the lack of objective political analysis in Orwell's discussions represents an ignorance of the issues or indifference towards political detail is a matter of speculation. However to criticize Indian politics in terms of an insincere commitment to liberty is consistent with Orwell's attitude towards and assessment of the Spanish situation.

Orwell was no systematic political analyst, and never postured as one. His political writing is that of a visionary, and a moralist, not a scientist. He offers no detailed theories, only a consistent belief in the capacity of human decency to effect political change and create a better life for everyone. Orwell recognized that the terms Cripps offered were bad, but as late as April 11 he refused to regard Cripps' failure as final.[75] If the Indians truly cherished liberty, they would find a way to work with the British government during the war-crisis. Only when, by the mid-April nothing has changed, is he ready to lay optimism to rest. Orwell concludes his comments on the Cripps mission by declaring its value in establishing for the world's eyes "(a) the British ruling class doesn't intend to abdicate and (b) India doesn't want independence and therefore won't get it, whatever the outcome of the war."[76] Nowhere does Orwell

address the terms of Cripps' offer, nor the political reasons for which Hindu and Moslem nationalists rejected it.

Orwell's propaganda to India is at its best when he is exhorting the inspiration of Liberty.[17] It is in terms of the Indians' apparent willingness to put local differences ahead of that ideal that Orwell discusses the political events in India that summer. During the summer of 1942 Orwell's political idealism collided with the political reality of a divided India, just as in 1936 his socialist idealism confronted the sordid realities of party politics.

This time however, Orwell was not actively involved in the struggle. His experiences were not caught up in the controversies and intrigues of Ghandi's manipulation of the Congress and nationalist sentiment, of the less than straightforward negotiations between Cripps and the Congress leadership.[18] Orwell experienced this political reality through listening to and participating in discussions with Indian intellectuals at the BBC. There were no acts of heroism for him to witness, no atmosphere of revolutionary egalitarianism to inspire him, no images of intense devotion to the cause to sustain his idealism and spawn a companion to that eulogy to the revolutionary spirit, HOMAGE TO CATALONIA.[19]

It was inevitable that Orwell, being Orwell, would be drawn to the Indian struggle for liberty at a time when the world was convulsed by a bid for brute power and military

control.[80] It is equally predictable that when the Indian thrust for liberty seemed to degenerate into partisan bickering Orwell would lose interest, and heart. In 1942 Orwell's political idealism was again educated, this time by the realities of a struggle halfway across the world, a struggle in which he, ironically, recognized himself as one of those who did the screaming and not the fighting.[81] This time there was no "Italian Militia-Man" to mitigate the painful lesson in the impotence of idealism when challenged by political realism. Orwell's enthusiasm for broadcasting atrophied.

Orwell's second diary ends after Cripp's failure in India. His record of disappo ntment culminates in a poignant confession. September 15:

> Ghastly feeling of impotence over the India business, Churchill's speeches, the evident intention of the Blimps to have one more try at being what they consider tough....our own apathy about India is not worse than the non-interest of India intellectuals in the struggle against Fascism in Europe.[82]

On the fifth of October Orwell recorded a completely depressing report on the Indian situation from an observer, Lawrence Brander, recently returned from India:

> ... affairs are much worse in India than anyone here is allowed to realize, the situation is in fact retrievable but won't be retrieved because the Government is determined to make no real concessions, hell will break loose when and if there is a Japanese invasion, and our broadcasts are utterly useless because nobody listens to them.[83]

In his diary Orwell agrees with Brander's conclusion that the BBC should broadcast only news and music.

In December Orwell wrote to George Woodcock of his doubts about staying in the job.[84] The political changes Orwell wrote of in his first diary entry obviously had not "come off." The sense of doing something politically meaningful by encouraging a burgeoning Indian drive for Liberty had proven false. The possibility of political change which had sustained his commitment to BBC service despite his frustrations with bureaucratic incompetence and interference had been defeated by a failure, in his eyes, of vision on the part of both his government and the India Congress. Orwell's sense of the futility of broadcasting is complete by October 1942.

Orwell joined the BBC in 1941 to satisfy his patriotic sense of military duty. The notion that he might effect political change by broadcasting to India appears in his writing only with the advent of the Cripp's mission. With the failure of that mission Orwell had no more political reason to stay at the BBC after 1942, than he'd had when he joined. None the less he continued his self-imposed sentence of service for nearly a year.

Eventually Orwell left the BBC having discovered that working as a government broadcaster was not an effective way to defeat Fascism. In his letter of resignation he accounts for his decision with reference to the consciousness, "for some time past," of the futility of his broadcasting work.[85]

Orwell's reasons for staying on at the BBC a full year after 1942, had to do with the reasons for which he joined. But the summer of 1942 saw the deflation of his enthusiasm for his work, and the erosion of his commitment to BBC service.

Orwell's politics before accepting BBC employment were not altered by his commitment to service there. If Orwell compromised himself in joining the BBC in 1941, it was only in the nonessentials: the exigencies of defeating a common enemy required such sacrifices.[86] But he retained his allegiance to his fundamental principals throughout, the idealism that put defeating the greater tyrant ahead of all other political agendas. It was perhaps this very single mindedness that set him up for the disillusionment of 1942, as he discovered again that real politics did not conform to the idealism which shaped his political commitment.

In the summer of '42 Orwell decided that his sacrifice of journalistic freedom was in vain. Eventually he came to the conclusion that he could not, under the aegis of the BBC serve the cause of defeating fascism, of preserving England's minimal democracy in the name of domestic socialist revolution, nor could he influence the Indian struggle for Independence. So he quit.

When Orwell left the BBC he was what he had been when he joined it, what he remained while working in it: a champion of Indian Liberation, a Revolutionary patriot, actively anti-Fascist and more anxious than ever for the revolution within

which would bring the English genius for socialism into play. He took on the literary editorship of TRIBUNE, a socialist journal, and began writing ANIMAL FARM. He continued to strive against tyranny in what he believed to be the most effective way open to him, through his journalism, and through the power of his writing, to translate political idealism into a frighteningly persuasive reality, a pursuit much more meaningful to him than that of directing and producing government propaganda at the BBC.

END NOTES, CHAPTER ONE

1. Orwell, CE. Volume 1,p.437.

2. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.407.

3. Stansky and Abrahams, pp.185-186.

4. George Orwell, THE ROAD TO WIGAN PIER in THE COMPLETE WORKS OF GEORGE ORWELL, Edited by Peter Davison, Volume 5, (London, 1986) p.200.

5. Orwell, WIGAN PIER, p.206. This is the socialism Orwell proselytizes in THE ROAD TO WIGAN PIER: it was essentially moral and idealistic. Orwell's idea of socialism turned on the belief that if men were not oppressed by economic necessity, they would be able to behave decently toward one another. Following what he was eventually to put forward as Dickens' philosophy, Orwell believed that if all men would behave decently, the world would be a decent place.

His socialism was shaped by Orwell's personal commitment to values he ascribed to fundamental human decency, and consisted largely in a reaction again tyranny and oppression, economical and political. Although his attitudes places Orwell's commitment well in the tradition of English socialism, [See Robert Klitzke in "Orwell and His Critics," cited in Crick, p.621] that commitment evolved through personal encounters with individuals suffering under unjust economic and political conditions, and not through academic dialogue with historical socialist thought. Richard Rees recalls that Orwell remained unmoved by years of discussion as to the merits of socialism. [Richard Rees, quoted in Stansky and Abrahams, p.129] Stansky and Abrahams, in ORWELL THE TRANSFORMATION, show how it was his journey north to the depressed mining communities and his encounters with the casualties of capitalist economics which brought Orwell to comprehend that a political solution was both possible, and imperative. [Stansky & Abrahams, pp.133-148.]

6. Stansky and Abrahams, pp.205 to 237.

7. Orwell, HOMAGE TO CATALONIA & LOOKING BACK ON THE SPANISH WAR, (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England, New York, New York, 1983) p.217-220. Hereafter to be referred to as HOMAGE. See Stansky and Abrahams, p. 219-222 for discussion of changes in Barcelona's political atmosphere in the early months of 1937, leading up to the "May Days" - uprising, troubles, riots - which left 400 people dead and more than 1,000 wounded.

8. The last chapter of Richard Rees' book, GEORGE ORWELL, FUGITIVE FROM THE CAMP OF VICTORY, celebrates Orwell's association of justice with the weaker side in a conflict. Rees tell a story of

describing a Communist poet to Orwell whom he recognized was a respected writer of Symbolist poetry: "When I told Orwell about this many years later he said: "Ah, but in those days, you see, it didn't pay to be a Communist; and it's a pretty safe rule to say about anything that as long as it doesn't pay it's all right." Justice, in other words, is always with the weaker side, and you know which is the weaker side because it does not pay to join it." [Rees, p.142]

9. Orwell, CE. Volume 1,p.299. See Stansky and Abrahams and Ian Slater for accounts of Orwell's fall from political innocence. Slater identifies the moment of Orwell's recognition as June 29, 1937, the night he returned from the front for a second time to find that the POUM, in which militia he had been soldiering, had been suppressed and he was now an enemy of the revolution. [Slater, p.149] Stansky and Abrahams identify Orwell's first leave, that of late April which allowed him to be present in Barcelona during the May uprising and riots, as the beginning of Orwell's disillusionment. They suggest however that at this stage Orwell saw the situation rather simplistically as "the struggle between those who wanted the 'revolution' to go forward (CNT and POUM) and those who did not (PSUC)." [Stansky and Abrahams, pp.220-222] It is with reference to the May fighting that Orwell begins his description of the change in atmosphere in Barcelona, identifying "a peculiar evil feeling in the air," observing the difficulty of regarding the war "in quite the same naively idealistic manner as before. [HOMAGE, p. 172.] He remained involved in the struggle however returning to the front 3 days after the fighting in Barcelona ended. Orwell's disillusionment probably began brewing in response to this experience in early May, coming to a head upon his return, after being wounded and discharged, again to Barcelona in June where he discovered the jails were full and Anarchists and POUM adherents were disappearing. With his injury and discharge from active service Orwell found himself in "a more observing mood" than he'd known for months. [HOMAGE, p.193] No longer actively involved in the struggle perhaps it was at this time that Orwell was able to take a more detached, critical look at what was behind the "evil" atmosphere which had replaced the days when the people of Barcelona believed in the revolution.

10. Orwell, HOMAGE, p.143, pp.8-10. Orwell introduces his chapter on the politics of the Barcelona fighting thus: "It is a horrible thing to have to enter into the details of inter-party polemics; it is like diving into a cesspool." He deemed it important enough however to devote more than one chapter to a political analysis of what had gone on: ".. it is necessary to try and establish the truth, so far as it is possible. This squalid brawl in a distant city is more important than might appear at first sight." At the same time he introduces his book with a careful description of the socialist atmosphere of revolutionary Barcelona and a vision of individual commitment to the ideals of socialism which he does not

give up, despite his disappointment in the politics of the affair.

11. Stanksy and Abrahams, pp.133 - 148. See note 5 above.

12. Orwell, CE. Volume 1,p.301.

13. Orwell, CE, Volume 1.p.39.

14. Orwell, CE. Volume 1,p.372.

15. Orwell, CE. Volume 3, pp.458-459. Orwell offers this explanation of the origins of ANIMAL FARM in his introduction to the Ukrainian translation of ANIMAL FARM. Orwell's 1940 essay, "The Lion and The Unicorn," calls for a revolution that amounts to a change in personnel rather than an overhaul of the existing political structure: oust the wealthy classes from political power and economic democracy would follow as working men took over. This expectation belies Orwell's flirtation with the idea that men are decent only when powerless in 1938, however it does show Orwell's consistent belief in the humanity of individuals, especially those whose values were untainted by wealth and privilege.

16. Orwell, HOMAGE, p.245.

17. Crick, p.365.

18. Orwell, "Inside the Whale" in CE. Volume 1, pp.540-578.

19. Orwell, CE. Volume 1,p.368.

20. Orwell, CE. Volume 1,p.434.

21. Orwell, CE. Volume 1, p.591. Orwell expresses his revolutionary agenda in terms of "saving England" repeatedly. "Only revolution can save England," he wrote in 1940. An effective Socialist party is the only way of "saving England from Fascism," he declared in WIGAN PIER, [WIGAN PIER, p. 214]. THE LION AND THE UNICORN, also written in 1940 exhorts the English to turn the war into a revolutionary war, because "The final ruin of England could only be accomplished by an English government acting under orders from Berlin." [CE, Volume 2, p132] "I believe in England," Orwell concludes this work, "and I believe that we shall go forward." [CE2, p.134] However unrealistic Orwell's faith in the English ability to simultaneously effect both domestic Revolution and victory over Hitler may have been, that he linked his Socialist agenda with the idea of preserving England as a nation is clear. Orwell's diary account of the war years shows that he viewed the government's austerity measures and the compliance of the people towards sacrifice in the name of victory represented the first stages of an England moving towards economic equality while fighting to retain her democratic government.The message of THE

LION AND THE UNICORN is that England is democratic at heart, and it would only take an adjustment from the bottom up, a revolution which ousted the privileged from the seats of political power, to allow for the evolution of economic democracy.

22. Crick, p.366.

23. Orwell, CE. Volume 1, pp.374-365.

24. Orwell, CE. Volume 1, p.590.

25. Orwell, CE. Volume 1,pp.590-591.

26. Orwell, CE. Volume 1,p.438.

27. Orwell, WIGAN PIER, p.201.

28. Harry Pollitt quoted in Angus Calder, THE PEOPLE'S WAR, BRITAIN 1939-45, (London, 1969) p.59.

29. Calder, p.59.

30. Orwell, CE. Volume 2, p.39.

31. Orwell, CE. Volume 1,p.591.

32. Crick, p.380.

33. Orwell, CE. Volume 1,p.591.

34. Orwell, CE. Volume 1,34.p.591.

35. Orwell, CE. Volume 1,p.591.

36. Orwell, WIGAN PIER, p.109.

37. Orwell, WIGAN PIER, p.109: "Curiously enough it is not the triumphs of modern engineering,... but the memory of working-class interiors - especially as I sometimes saw them in my childhood before the war, when England was still prosperous -that reminds me that our age has not been altogether a bad one to live in."

38. Orwell, WIGAN PIER, p.108.

39. Orwell, HOMAGE, p.221. Similarly George Bowling in COMING UP FOR AIR goes in search of his childhood and discovers instead the inevitability of war. [Orwell, COMING UP FOR AIR, (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England, 1981) pp.223-224] But the England Orwell cherished is resilient: It re-appears in NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR as the "Golden Country" of Winston's dreams. According to Sheldon's biography, Orwell's golden memory is based on his days in Henley-on-Thames in Oxfordshire. Sheldon remarks, "Whatever the realities

of Edwardian life may have been, (Orwell) preferred to judge it according to his experience of the stable, prosperous environment in Henley." [Sheldon, p.18]

40. Orwell, WIGAN PIER, p.200.

41. Orwell, WIGAN PIER, p.158.

42. Orwell, CE. Volume 1,pp.591 & 592.

43. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.108.

44. Orwell, WIGAN PIER, p.200: "Our rulers," he wrote, "would probably prefer to hand over every square inch of the British Empire to Italy, Germany and Japan than to see Socialism triumphant."

45. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.92.

46. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,pp.410 & 406.

47. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,pp.410, 424, 418. Orwell is at his most shrill in August of 1940. Amidst air raid sirens and the threat of invasion, he writes "The time has almost arrived when one will only have to jump up on the platform and tell them how they are being wasted and how the war is being lost, and by whom for them to rise up and shovel the Blimps into the dustbin." [CE. Volume 2, p.418]

48. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,pp.140, 399, 402, 406, 410, 418.

49. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.402.

50. Orwell, HOMAGE, p.66.

51. Stansky and Abrahams, p. 202.

52. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.446.

53. Orwell, CE. Volume 1,p.591. Orwell, complaining in 1940 of his forced idleness despite his real commitment to fighting the war, and his government's refusal to employ him, or anyone he knew, "in any capacity whatever," added somewhat prophetically, "Besides, they will be forced to make use of us sooner or later."

54. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.463.

55. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.463.

56. Coppard and Crick, p.178.

57. William Empson in Coppard and Crick, p.180.

58. Orwell, WAR COMMENTARIES, p. 27. The first of Orwell's news broadcasts, dated 20 December 1941 shows how Orwell approached his task. He reports that a manifesto signed by Japanese Admirals and Generals, stating that it was Japan's mission to set Burma and India free had appeared earlier that year: "What it would be like to be free under the heel of Japan, the Chinese can tell us, and the Koreans," he comments.

59. Orwell, WAR COMMENTARIES, pp.72, 93-96. April of 1942 finds Orwell pointing out that "A very great deal... depends on the will of the Indian people to defend themselves and upon their feeling that they have something which is really worth fighting for." [WAR COMMENTARIES, p.72.] In May he addressed India's situation directly, describing the war as an ideological war: "The Fascists states have a common interest in suppressing liberty everywhere... In this vast struggle, India finds itself inescapably on the democratic side... a victory of the Germans or the Japanese would postpone Indian independence far longer than the most reactionary British Government would either wish or be able to do...India's independence may be determined to a very great extent by the efforts that Indians themselves now make." [WAR COMMENTARIES, p.93.] Orwell also spoke of the success of other popular resistance movements, referring to the Chinese resistance against the Japanese, which was passed by the censorship. [WAR COMMENTARIES, p.78.] His references to the early days of the Spanish Civil War when "the Republic had practically no army at all,for it was precisely the regular army, under Fascist officers, which had staged the revolt" are censored. Allowed to stand however are his more general observations which implicate the German army in the suppression of the Spanish: "The Spanish people fought for two and a half years against their own quislings and against the German and Italian invaders, actually fought against odds which, relatively speaking, were greater than those facing China. Their resistance was the resistance of almost unarmed peasants and working men against hordes of trained soldiers with the resources of the German war machine behind them." [WAR COMMENTARIES, pp.94-95.] The censorship policy would have reflected British concern that the Fascist Franco remain neutral in the interest of protecting Gibraltar and British interests in the Mediterranean.

60. Orwell, WAR COMMENTARIES, pp. 59,173. Orwell observed the deprivations the British people were prepared to endure in the name of preserving democracy. He particularly enjoyed stressing austerity initiatives which pointed towards a more democratic enjoyment of wealth in Britain. The censorship was not always prepared to let some of his more socialist interpretations pass. [See, WAR COMMENTARIES, p.64, 79.]

61. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.465.

62. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.465; also pp.347-348,470. Orwell complains throughout the diary, and in his private correspondence of "official inertia and obstruction," of "wasted labour," of going on "guess work" and the lack of any "clear or useful policy directive".

63. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.405. Orwell criticized the government's approach to propaganda even before becoming himself employed at the BBC. After working for the BBC he complained, "Our radio strategy is even more hopeless than our military strategy." [CE. Volume 2,p.465] In March he wrote that Empson was forbidden to broadcast suggestions of a Japanese attack on Russia, while the Indian section continued to push the idea: "The same chaos everywhere on the propaganda front," he observed. [CE. Volume 2,p.466] In June he complained of being forced to put "sheer rubbish on the air because of having talks which sound too intelligent cancelled at the last minute." [CE. Volume 2, p.489] William Empson recalls that Orwell was invariably frustrated by having to let "important speakers" go on the air saying things that could only harm the cause. Orwell's solution: the engineers should switch off the power and the speaker told later there had been a technical problem. "He seemed genuinely indignant when complaining that the BBC had refused," Empson adds. [William Empson in Coppard and Crick, p.180].

64. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,pp.489-490.

65. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.465.

66. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.500.

67. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.500.

68. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.507.

69. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.398.

70. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,pp.500,505,597. The extent of Orwell's disappointment, as expressed in his diary indicates the height of his expectations.

71. Peter Calvocoressi and Guy Wint, TOTAL WAR (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England, New York, New York, 1979), p.748.

72. Calvocoressi and Wint, p.750.

73. William Empson in Coppard and Crick, p. 180. An example of Orwell's detachment from the political realities of India can be found in his written reaction, or the lack thereof, to finding out, in Empson's words, that "his Number Two was working for an independent Pakistan." According to Empson Orwell was "shocked" by this discovery. In his diary however there is no mention of the

political significance of Bokhari's position. The only reference Orwell makes to this fact is to point out, when news of the August arrests and riots came out, that "Even Bokhari, a Muslim league man, [was] almost in tears and talking about resigning from the BBC." [CE. Volume 2,p.500] Whether Orwell was ignorant of the details of Indian politics, or simply chose not trouble himself with "inessentials" is difficult to determine conclusively from his writing.

74. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.471.

75. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.473.

76. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.474.

77. Woodcock, p.14. According to George Woodcock, Orwell, extemporaneously of the censored script, suggested they end a literary broadcast with a reading of Byron's "Isle of Greece." Following the published transcript in THE WAR BROADCASTS, Empson comments on the attitude of World War I poet Rupert Brook thus, "You see he's willing to cripple his own personality for the sake of a cause he believes in." Orwell responded, "But there can be an actual enthusiasm for war when it's for some cause such as national liberation. I mean one can feel the war is not merely a disagreeable necessity, but that it is spiritually better than peace - the kind of peace you have in Vichy France, for instance." [WAR BROADCASTS, p.87] Byron's inflammatory "Isle's of Greece," is then read.

78. Calvocoressi and Wint, p.748.

79. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p. 472. Orwell did manage to render an intellectual hero out of one of his colleagues: Of Mulk Raj Anand he writes: "He is genuinely anti-Fascist, and has done violence to his feelings, and probably to his reputation, by backing Britain up because he recognizes that Britain is objectively on the anti-Fascist side." No doubt this is how Orwell also perceived his own position.

80. Calvocoressi and Wint, p.754.

81. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.470. Orwell quotes as passage from his own HOMAGE TO CATALONIA. "One of the most horrible features of war is that all the propaganda, all the screaming and lies and hatred, comes invariably from people who are not fighting.... It is the same in all wars; the soldiers do the fighting, the journalists do the shouting, and no true patriot ever gets near a front-line trench, except on the briefest of propaganda tours....." He then observes wryly, "Here I am in the BBC less than 5 years after writing that. I suppose sooner or later we all write our own epitaphs."

82. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.505.

83. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.507. The British in general had no accurate way of measuring Indian public opinion. Orwell's conclusions regarding the effectiveness of his broadcasts is based on knowledge gained from friends and confirmed by Brander's report. However unfounded his conclusions may have been, the fact remains that Orwell came to believe that his broadcasting work was futile and it is this perception which governed his attitude and actions. Michael Sheldon's research for Orwell's biography confirms Orwell's perception. Sheldon describes the BBC's endeavour as "unrealistic". He concludes: "The whole undertaking was marred by an assumption that the subjects which interested a small group of English intellectuals would also interest large numbers of people living thousands of miles away." Sheldeon speculates that by the time Orwell's perception of the futility of the exercise was confirmed by Brander's reports, Orwell no longer had the energy to fight to change the programmming. [Sheldon, pp.378-379.]

84. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.307.

85. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.362.

86. Orwell, WIGAN PIER, p.205. In 1936 Orwell wrote that of putting the defeat of Fascism ahead of non-essentials and the discomfort of alliances with enemies: "... the need to unite against Fascism might draw the Socialist into alliance with his very worst enemies. But the principle to go upon is this: that you are never in danger of allying yourself with the wrong people provided that you keep the essentials of your movement in the foreground."

CHAPTER 2

"A Squashed Orange"

The Nature of Orwell's BBC Tenure

1943 was, on the home front, and in the words of one historian, "the quietest year of all."[1] In that year also Bose, the Indian Refugee leader, ran the anti-British pro-Nazi propaganda radio service for "Azad Hind" from Berlin. Bose then returned to Asia to set up an Indian government in exile in Singapore, and began building up the Indian National Army to assist the Japanese in their invasion of India. Bose's government however was not inaugurated until October 23 of that year, and it was not until the following year that the threatened invasion became a reality. Meanwhile, by August of 1943, Orwell had made up his mind to quit the BBC.[2]

The state of Indian affairs at that time seemed to have little to do with his decision. As William Empson remarked, Orwell could hardly have considered that the Indian situation was resolved, though things were quieter in the summer of '43.[3] Orwell resigned in September, and left in November, taking up the editorship of TRIBUNE. He also began writing ANIMAL FARM.

Orwell entered the BBC complaining that journalism and book reviewing was a waste of time when every effort should be directed against the Nazis and "real writing" impossible with his vision consumed by the threat concentration camps.

Somewhere in the middle of 1943 the balance turned and working for the ministries became a greater waste than pursuing his own writing, in Orwell's assessment. Orwell expressed his intentions to return to his own work in his letter of resignation:[4] within three months of leaving the BBC ANIMAL FARM was ready for the publisher.

It was in December of 1942, after he could no longer believe that a liberated India was going to join the anti-fascist struggle, that Orwell first voiced his doubts about remaining at the BBC. Clearly after this point, Orwell lost interest in the Indian situation, though he continued to perform his work adequately and with some enthusiasm for the literary experiments broadcasting offered.[5] Colleague I.J. Bahadur Singh recalls Orwell's attitude thus:

> "My memories of Eric Blair were of a rather withdrawn and preoccupied person giving an impression of being generally bored with what he was doing. It appeared that he was doing a job of work without having his heart in it and with not much enthusiasm....In his conversation with me and other Indian friends, one got the impression that he expected the UK Government to do more to reassure the Indian National Congress that independence would be achieved after the war. He was disappointed that this was not being done."[6]

Writing to George Woodcock in December of 1942, Orwell both defended his broadcasting work, and suggested that he may not remain for much longer.[7] But Orwell did not tender his resignation for another year. His letters in 1943 rehearse his frustrations with bureaucratic problems, "official inertia and obstruction," as he writes to Alex Comfort. At the same

time he affirms the importance of promoting "decent cultural relations" with Asia, defends the quality of work being done, and publishes a collection of Broadcasts which he recommends to his correspondents. His ambivalence peaks in a July letter to Alex Comfort, where he both defends the work of fellow employee William Empson, while describing the BBC, not for the first time, as "whoreshop and lunatic asylum."[8] A month later he wrote to Rayner Heppenstall of his own cynicism, and announces the decision to quit.[9]

It is most likely that Orwell stayed at the BBC for the same reasons he joined - the sense of duty which compelled him to active service in the name of his commitment to anti-fascism and the survival of Britain, the frustration of his creative ambitions by his preoccupation with political realities and their implications, and the financial security which government employment guaranteed.[10] What prompted him to tender his resignation in September of 1943 is a more difficult question to address because there is very little in Orwell's own writing to account for the decision.

The diaries end in November of '42. His letters describe no specific problems or incidents. His only essay directly reflecting on his BBC experience, "The Poetry and The Microphone" argues that at the moment broadcasting was the enemy of the creative writer. However he points out that the larger a bureaucracy, the more corners there are in which an independently minded intellectual can hide, and possibly

subvert the system. The government cannot get along without the intelligentsia, he affirms,[11] echoing his 1940 prophesy that "they will be forced to make use of us sooner or later,"[12] but his experience at the BBC seems to have suggested to him that one could, with a concerted effort get a great deal past the authorities.[13]

But for Orwell, broadcasting was an experience in frustration, the frustration of attempting to influence a bad system from within the system. Like Flory, in BURMESE DAYS, Orwell admitted defeat after that first summer of political idealism and settled into a job that, when his own creative impulses reasserted themselves, grew more and more tedious, oppressive and unsatisfying.

W.J. West, drawing on material he discovered in the BBC archives argues in his introduction to GEORGE ORWELL, THE WAR BROADCASTS that Orwell was the victim of a Ministry of Information scheme to displace him from his position. West concludes that NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR therefore retells the story of Orwell's own experience of bureaucratic tyranny and manipulation at the hands of the Ministry of Information, through the agency of the BBC.

West begins by attributing Orwell's December doubts to the cancellation, under the aegis of the MOI, of a talk on the Spanish war by his friend Mulk Raj Anand.[14] Orwell wrote a memo stating that the talk would be dropped, but asked that Anand be paid. From this memo West concludes that Orwell's

comment to Woodcock represented "a change of mind which may reflect either disgust at the censor or worry about the significance of his own position as the person who sponsored the talk."[15] Orwell then proceeded to draw up a plan for the next three months of talks. From this West concludes Orwell was making arrangements in case he was in fact forced to leave.[16]

West writes that "this was the first time Orwell had direct confrontation of this kind over one of his programs,"[17] but Orwell complained in his diary of such interference and the nuisance value of having to replace censored talks at the last minute months earlier.[18] Orwell's own news broadcasts had also already suffered substantial deletions by the censor.[19] It is conceivable that this latest irritation spurred Orwell to voice thoughts of leaving the next day in his letter to George Woodcock, but the tone of the letter is ambivalent: it is as much, if not more, a defense of his work at the BBC as it is an expression of doubt.[20]

If Orwell feared his defense of Anand would lead to unemployment, it strikes this reader as unlikely that he would assume responsibility for setting up talks on behalf of a replacement. The letter to Woodcock shows Orwell beginning to question the impact of his broadcasting work on the war effort, but there is no suggestion that he doubted the security of his position.

West describes further pressure, referring to a memo of which, he admits, Orwell probably had no knowledge.[21] The memo criticizes Orwell's independence as he failed to communicate his choice of speakers or subjects, resulting in repetitions over the sections, in the weekly broadcasting schedule. West concludes that "those who were used to reading between the lines could see that the well-known bureaucratic method of dislodging someone who no longer fitted had perhaps begun."[22]

Orwell's observation a month later in PARTISAN REVIEW of a "conscious elbowing -out of the 'reds' who were useful when moral needed pepping up but can now be dispensed with," becomes for West, "a fairly close reading of the situation Orwell now found himself drifting into."[23] It is difficult to understand how Orwell could give a close reading of something West discovered between the lines of a document which Orwell never saw. In his article Orwell talks about Cripp's removal from the war cabinet as an example of the government's tendency, as he saw it, to move to the left in disastrous times, and to the right in moments of success.[24]

Early in December of that year, Orwell attended a committee meting in which a new series was proposed. West concludes from this that, "all of Orwell's freedom of movement was about to be circumscribed," but adds that Orwell's position within the BBC was "still relatively sound," on the

grounds of his reputation as an intellectual, "pure and simple."[25]

Orwell continued to work, despite this "pressure," alleges West. Meanwhile, "suspicions grew," as shown by a memo from the assistant controller of overseas talks. The substance of this memo again concerns Orwell's independence. Orwell's response was to follow protocol as requested.[26] Laurence Brander, a BBC colleague of Orwell's, recalls that Orwell "laughed very readily at the nonsense that went on, and made it tolerable."[27]

West suggests that in the spring of 1943, the threat of Japanese invasion of India had passed, and the original purpose of the Indian section, to boost morale in the event of an invasion, no longer existed. The aim was now to thwart the Indian Independence movement. West produces a memo from John Morris, dated March 13, which shows that the MOI planned to reconstruct the Far Eastern Bureau in such a way as would eliminate the Far Astern Section of the BBC and "All India Radio" on the grounds of redundancy. West argues that the MOI was scrambling to reconstruct the BBC employment roster with persons less anti-imperialist than Orwell in response to the increasing threat of civil disturbance in India,[28] and uses this incident to build the case that Orwell was harassed out of the BBC by the MOI.

John Morris apparently attended MOI meetings and knew a great deal more about the influence of the ministry that

Orwell. West concludes that John Morris and Orwell would have agreed that the MOI was trying to get complete control of the BBC Eastern Service.[29] Perhaps he would have, but Orwell did not have John Morris' knowledge of Ministry meetings and initiatives. Morris did not like Orwell and there is nothing to indicate that he took him into his confidence.'" West concedes, parenthetically, that, for Orwell, the MOI was an "unknown force, encountered directly only when someone ran afoul of the censor,"[31] but leaves the reader with the impression that, somehow, John Morris' conclusions and Orwell's are interchangeable.

In March of 1943, Orwell wrote Reg Reynolds asking him to produce a script for broadcasting. In it he refers to changes in the hour of the summer broadcasting schedule, and finishes, "but I shall be going back to our old programmes in September."[32] From this letter in which Orwell commissions a talk to be broadcast in the not immediate future, West concludes "It is obvious that some running down of the Indian section was being considered."[33] Perhaps John Morris and W.J.West were privy to MOI decisions which would suggest this interpretation, but nothing Orwell wrote in this letter indicates that he believed the Indian section was soon to be shut down.[34]

May 1943 Stalin dissolved the Comintern in the name of "anti-fascist solidarity."[35] According to West the BBC censorship tightened up in response to fears of the scattered

influence of Communist infiltrators in other political groups.'[36] This is the context in which Orwell, alleged West, "talked himself into the Ministry of Information's net."[37]

Orwell was allowed, through a mistake on the part of an inexperienced censor, to broadcast a highly volatile news report. Asked to fill in for the absentee broadcaster of the Malaysia News Service, Orwell prepared a newsletter that, according to West, "no doubt reflected his feelings on the situation in Burma and elsewhere."[38] Complaints were made to the War Office and the MOI which led to an investigation. Orwell's next news broadcast went out over his legal name, Eric Blair, and, apparently for the first time, his reading was monitored by a switch censor.[39]

Orwell had, in West's words, "provoked the direct wrath of the hidden forces of the MOI." His response? "To carry on as normal."[40]

West then makes much of Orwell's recruitment of Kingsley Martin, virtually blacklisted by the censorship, as a speaker. Martin gave a very left-wing talk which Orwell, according to West, made an ineffectual, formal effort to have blocked. "The inevitable storm followed," West tells us. "An exchange of letters ensued culminating in a last desperate manuscript note."[41] The note cited requests that a "fatherly eye," be kept on such matters, and the co-operation of Blair ensured.[42]

The Kingsley Martin episode represented, in West's

telling, Orwell's confrontation of MOI over freedom of speech. Orwell's response to the storm? Only that he continued to use Martin.[43]

West then introduces the example of another broadcaster, Harmen Grisewood. A memo from the Assistant Controller accuses Grisewood of becoming "more and more attached to his own personal opinions."[44] West characterizes Grisewood's crime as "the ultimate sin in a bureaucracy," tags it "thought crime," and arbitrarily pronounces Orwell also guilty of it.[45]

There is no record of Orwell being so accused, by the MOI, or the BBC administration. Nor is there any evidence that Orwell considered himself the victim of this kind of oppression. The BBC memoranda pertaining to Orwell cited by West consistently chastise his recalcitrance in following procedure. They do not make any reference to his opinions, nor attempt to censor them. In July Orwell wrote to Alex Comfort complaining of "official inertia and obstruction," and the difficulty of achieving anything worth while under the bureaucracy. There is nothing in this letter, nor in the one written a month later to Rayner Heppenstall that suggests Orwell believed himself to be a victim of MOI censorship or plotting.[46]

The 12th of August, Martin broadcast again. According to West, Orwell "drove the matter on until there was no option but resignation."[47] Martin finished his series of talks and

Orwell continued his organization of others. No attempt was made to block Martin's talks, despite the furore West claims Orwell's use of this speaker aroused.

12 days later Orwell wrote to Heppenstall of his decision to leave the BBC. "At present I'm just an orange that's been trodden on by a very dirty boot,"[48] he wrote. This letter shows that Orwell's cynicism about the value of his work had peaked. West asserts that Orwell's decision was made, "no doubt at the time of the Kingsley Martin row," but there is nothing in Orwell's correspondence, that suggests it was in response to the "wrath" of the Ministry of Information. Nor does West offer any documentation from the Ministry's archives that suggests Orwell was being singled out or pressured to resign.

Orwell received a memo from Laurence Brander dated September 23 which confirmed the assessment Orwell wrote about in his diary the year before. Audiences in India were low, Orwell's ratings even lower than those of other broadcasters such as J.B. Priestly.[49] The next day Orwell wrote his letter of resignation citing the futility of broadcasting British propaganda to India as the reason, an attitude entirely consistent with the complaints found in his diary and private correspondence.

Despite this, West detects, a "slightly strange tone," based on his idea that Orwell's action was a response to pressure from the MOI. Orwell's benevolent description of the

BBC is comprehensible, according to West, because Orwell's troubles were not caused by the BBC, but "by the censors of the quasi-totalitarian Ministry of Information."[50] West concludes then that Orwell's NINETEEN EIGHTY FOUR is not a parody of the BBC, as was suggested by Crick, but a satire of the MOI.[51]

West then offers an elaborate discussion of Empson's 1944 assignment as translator of news into "Basic English" to demonstrate the plausibility of his statement: "Orwell would have followed this stage of Basic/Newspeak's progress with laughter," he writes: "To Orwell the idea that the same bureaucrats who had censored his broadcasts and prevented ANIMAL FARM from being published should be entrusted with the job of translating, say Wordsworth into Basic English would have been material for a Swiftian Satire, indeed."[52] This tidy association would go a long way towards proving that the totalitarian atmosphere of NINETEEN EIGHTY FOUR did indeed represent Orwell's reaction to an encounter with the forces of MOI, but for one problem: Empson, not Orwell was engaged in this work. Orwell had left the BBC a year before Empson embarked on this project.

There is nothing explicit in Orwell's journalism and correspondence that suggest he felt himself to be the victim of the MOI while at the BBC. West posits astutely enough that the message of NINETEEN EIGHTY FOUR is directed at the middle class fellow travellers and covert communists enjoying the

taste of power given them by their war-time employment in the ministries. It is a perspicacious reading of Orwell's theme, but West supports his insight by re-creating Orwell's BBC experience in the guise of Winston Smith's story on basis of documents and information of which Orwell had no knowledge.

Orwell did turn on the ministries, after terminating his BBC employment. He criticized the control of the MOI appeared to maintain over public expression. But the cause of his anger was the censorious rejection of ANIMAL FARM by Jonathan Cape and other prestigious publishing houses for manifestly political reasons. Orwell was balked by the "hidden power of Moi" after he left the BBC, not during his tenure as an employee.[53] The experience of malicious Ministry oppression while at the BBC remains entirely West's creation. The suggestion that Orwell based Winston's situation on his own role as a victim at the BBC is not born out by anything Orwell had to write about his experience as a BBC employee.

Whether there was a deliberate effort on the part of the MOI to dislodge Orwell from the BBC remains uncertain. But since Orwell knew nothing of such machinations from above, it is difficult to give credence to West's suggestion that the ideas of NINETEEN EIGHTY FOUR represent Orwell's reaction to that interference.[54] West's argument is based on guilt by association. A memo exists accusing Harmen Grisewood of a certain fondness for his own opinions; West writes off Orwell as condemned for "thought crime." William Empson is assigned

to translate news into "Basic English;" Orwell's satire is born of the irony of another man's employment. Because documents exist pointing to concern among his superiors over Orwell's independence as Talks Director, West infers that the world of Big Brother was born of Orwell's reaction to this dialogue to which he was not a party. It is unlikely that Orwell could have written a story about things he didn't know were happening; that the concepts which make the psychology of Big Brother's world so plausible were a satire of activities in which the writer was not involved; or that the bitterness of Winston's plight was provoked by the content of private memos concerning other employees and to which Orwell had no access.

Orwell's attitude towards the BBC after his resignation offers no support for West's dramatic claim that the writer was "hounded out" by the MOI, left to gain revenge in the creation of Winston Smith's trauma at the hands of a malevolent bureaucracy. George Orwell at the BBC is not Winston Smith.

Orwell left the BBC discouraged with the part he had been allowed to play in the war against fascism, but he did not defame the organization. What he had to say about the BBC after his employment differed little from what he had written before. When challenged by a reader of TRIBUNE in 1944 he re-affirmed his belief in the BBC's responsible treatment of their broadcasting mandate.[55]

West's reconstruction of Orwell's BBC days is based on his revision of the common view of the BBC as a relatively independent public broadcasting service. West's TRUTH BETRAYED challenges the benevolent image presented by Gerald Mansell in his work on the wartime BBC, LET THE TRUTH BE TOLD. Mansell, with reference to his own experience as well as that of others working for the corporation, presents a BBC of serious integrity, operating according to high principles, at arms length from the government.[56]

Mansell observed that the rank and file were generally untouched by controversy over high level issues and upper level bureaucratic in-fighting.[57] His conclusion, that the Riethian ethos of devotion to public service had percolated down and permeated the ranks of those responsible for what actually went on the air is corroborated by the testimony of many of those people, George Orwell among them.[58]

W.J. West, however, collating documents form the BBC and the MOI archives argues that the MOI interfered extensively in the operation of the wartime BBC.[59] West's research offers grounds for reassessing the extent to which MOI influenced BBC activities, but it cannot logically provide grounds for revising the view of the people who worked at the BBC about their own attitudes at the time.

When Orwell decided to quit the BBC in August of 1943, he wrote to Rayner Heppenstall of his own cynicism, of feeling like, "an orange that's been trodden on by a very dirty

boot."[60] In another letter, responding to a request from Philip Rahv for contributors to a publication, he wrote of everyone being "drained dry by writing muck for one of the ministries."[61] By the time of writing NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR, the metaphor of the oppressive, destructive boot has taken over. But both of the references here, are more concerned with the draining away of creative juices.

Orwell's frustration with his BBC work at this time probably has more to do with a return of his creative drive at a time when he had already determined the futility of his broadcasting work, than with pressure from the Ministry of Information. That immediately upon his release from his BBC duties he began, and completed ANIMAL FARM, makes this conclusion plausible, if not inevitable.

By 1943 Orwell had grown accustomed to the deprivations and insecurities of war. By the summer of 1943, the threat of a Nazi invasion and foreign domination of Britain had passed. The immanence of destruction which in 1940 stimulated Orwell's latent patriotism and fuelled his compulsion to active service was no longer so vigourous. His months of BBC work demonstrated his active commitment to the war effort, and exorcised his compulsion to self sacrifice and service. Like his friend, Mulk Raj Anand, he had "done violence to his (anti-Fascist) feelings, and probably to his reputation,"[62] in the name of the greater struggle against the Nazis. Finding his efforts to be futile, and with ANIMAL FARM

burning in his imagination, why should he continue to pour his abilities into filling the air with noises to which no one was listening?[63]

On September 23 Indian observer Laurence Brander informed Orwell that the audience in India was very low, and Orwell's ratings even lower than those of other broadcasters.[64] This memo could only have reminded Orwell of a similar report from Brander the year before which he recorded in his diary. Brander had discovered that few of the university students towards which Orwell's more intelligent cultural programs were directed even owned radio sets, and on basis of this discovery Orwell had made moves to get some of the talks published.[65] However Brander's confirmation in September of 1943 that no one was listening, must have reminded Orwell of his feelings of complete futility and meaningless expressed the summer the British and Indian Congress failed to achieve a workable agreement.

Orwell's letter of resignation, dated September 24 cites this futility, and his belief that by returning to his own work of writing and journalism he would better serve the cause. Orwell did not have a job to go to when he wrote this letter: the editorship at TRIBUNE came up later.[66] Meanwhile he thought the OBSERVER might send him to North Africa as a correspondent.[67] Though there are no grounds for concluding that Orwell consciously left the BBC to write ANIMAL FARM, it

is clear that his sense of literary creativity and journalistic purpose had returned.

Orwell dismissed his BBC days as "two wasted years." Newly released from the restrictions of conforming to bureaucratic protocol and the daily agenda of full time employment, editing the left-wing paper TRIBUNE, his attitude to that service is understandable. He was also working on ANIMAL FARM, a manifesto against the totalitarian way of thinking Orwell was devoted to defeating, a struggle in whose name he had originally sought active war-time service. Orwell may have readily regarded his service as wasted, but he did not dismiss the BBC, nor did he seek to malign it in NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR.

Orwell used his BBC experience to create NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR, but Orwell at the BBC is not Winston Smith at the Ministry of Truth. Orwell was quite capable of fantastically drawing on his own experiences to create the psychological realism of Winston's experiences. However there is nothing in his direct discussions of his BBC work that reflects anything other than the usual chafing to be expected of a creative writer and independent journalist when bound by the strictures of governmental policy and bureaucratic protocol, constraints rendered even more restrictive under the conditions of war.

Orwell's experience at the BBC is best paraphrased by his own metaphor, that of a "squashed orange." When he was ready to get on with his own work, that of defeating totalitarianism

by raising political writing to an art, Orwell could only resent the draining of his creative energies into the bureaucratic cacophony his BBC service had come to represent. The balance turned, now journalism and his own writing was more meaningful than serving the government. Orwell quit the BBC in order to engage in the journalism and creative work that had again become meaningful to him.

ENDNOTES, CHAPTER TWO

1. Calder, p.338.

2. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.349.

3. William Empson, in Coppard and Crick, p.183.

4. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.360.

5. Crick, p.416. Orwell took some pride in some of the work he was responsible for and believed it important enough to seek its publication. He can alsp be found recommending it to his friends. [Orwell, CE. Volume 2,pp.307,347, Volume 3,p.72] He was responsible for radio adaptations of stories by Ignazio Silone, Anatole France, and Hans Christian Anderson. [Published in WAR BROADCASTS] West's association of the literary style of ANIMAL FARM with these exercises is not without merit, though he exaggerates the debt of plot and idea to Silone's story. In 1946 Orwell himself broadcast an adapted ANIMAL FARM as a radio play. [West, Introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.61] Orwell also wrote with some interest of his experiment in joint authorship, the Story by Five Authors, [published in WAR BROADCASTS], in which can be seen emerging the idea of the Fiction Factory in NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR.

6. Crick, p.417.

7. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.307.

8. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.348.

9. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.349.

10. See Introduction for discussion of Orwell's personal reasons for accepting BBC employment.

11. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.381.

12. Orwell, CE. Volume 1,p.591.

13. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,pp.375-382. George Woodcock tells a story of his broadcasting experience with Orwell that illustrates Orwell attempting this kind of manoeuvre. In an edition of "Voice", a poetry series, Orwell responded to a reference to Rupert Brooke's attitude towards war with the comment, "there can be an actual enthusiasm for war when it's for some cause such as national liberation." [Orwell, WAR BROADCASTS, p.87] Orwell, then, according to Woodcock, extemporaneously suggested a reading of Byron's "Isles of Greece" at the end of the broadcast: "At that time the British government was opposed to the Indian independence

movement .. but all of the participants in the broadcast supported it in sentiment at least, and as Herbert Read spoke the ringing verses of revolt, the program assumed a mild flavour of defiance which we all enjoyed." [Woodcock, p.7] Other examples include the Kingsley Amis talks he produced and which aroused the concern of the censorship, but were not blocked, and his own broadcast to the Malayan service, which was not caught by the censorship until it was too late.

14. The censorship in this instance was probably concerned with maintaining good relations with Franco to preserve Spanish neutrality. If Hitler won Spain to his side the Germans stood a good chance of being able to take Gibraltar and thus threaten the British position in the Mediterranean. Franco agreed to remain neutral provided the British refrained from blockading Spain. The British pursued this course despite contrary public opinion. This was not the first time Orwell attempts to air references to the Spanish Civil War were censored. [See also Chapter 1, note 57]

15. W.J. West, Introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.45.

16. W.J. West, Introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.46.

17. W.J. West, Introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.44.

18. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.489. Entry 21 June, 1942.

19. Orwell, WAR COMMENTARIES, pp. 94-95.

20. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.307.

21. W.J. West, Introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.46.

22. W.J. West, Introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.46.

23. W.J. West, Introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.42.

24. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.318.

25. W.J. West, Introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.47.

26. W.J. West, Iintroduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.49.

27. Laurence Brander, quoted in Crick, p.416. See also Crick, p.418.

28. W.J. West, Introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.49-50.

29. W.J. West, Introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.50.

30. John Morris, in Coppard and Crick, p.176. Morris asserts his dislike of Orwell througout this talk, and concludes that after a particularly painful social incident, his relationship with Orwell was entirely formal.

31. W.J. West, Introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.50.

32. Orwell, in WAR COMMENTARIES, p.248.

33. W.J. West, Introduction to WAR COMMENTARIES, p.49.

34. Orwell, letter reproduced in WAR COMMENTARIES, p.247.

35. Calvocoressi and Wint, p.332.

36. W.J. West, Introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.52.

37. W.J. West, Introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.52.

38. W.J. West, Introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.52. West does not reproduce this broadcast, nor is it available in the COLLECTED ESSAYS. According to I.J. Bahadur Singh Orwell was very distressed by the fate of Burma, Crick,417. and attitude which no doubt would influence the content of his news analysis.

39. W.J. West, Introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.53.

40. W.J. West, Introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.54.

41. W.J. West, Introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.55.

42. W.J. West, Introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.55.

43. W.J. West, Introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.55. The furore West refers to seems to consist of J.B. Clark's request for and receiving of assurances that Martin was being supervised. Martin then broadcast a talk contravening security rules, a "direct provocation," West asserts, "probably with Orwell's agreement." The only record of Orwell's role appears to be his unsuccessful attempts by telephone to get the broadcast censored.

44. W.J. West, Introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.55.

45. W.J. West, Introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.55.

46. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,pp.347-349.

47. W.J. West, Introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.55.

48. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.349.

49. W.J. West, Introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.57.

50. W.J. West, Introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.58.

51. W.J. West, Introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.59. See also Crick, p.417. In his biography of Orwell Crick does not represent Orwell's Ministry of Truth as a parody of the MOI. Crick, on basis of full access to all of Orwell's private papers asserts the following: "He made free use of the BBC's physiognomy in constructing NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR'S Ministry of Truth, but he never seriously suggested that the one was a step to the other - for good or ill.

52. W.J. West, Introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.64.

53. Crick, p.454-463. Crick offers a detailed account of the problems Orwell encountered getting a publisher to accept ANIMAL FARM. After it was rejected by Gollancz and Cape, the latter having voluntarily submitted the manuscript to the censorship of a senior MOI official, Orwell wrote in his TRIBUNE column of a "veiled censorship" extending to books. Crick suggests that Orwell "seemed to relapse into being Gordon Comstock again and lashed out in all directions." Crick quotes from an unpublished preface Orwell intended for publication with the first edition of ANIMAL FARM which shows the proportions of Orwell's anger: "I know that the English inteligentsia have plenty of reason for their timidity and dishonesty," he writes. "In our country... it is the liberals who fear liberty and the intellectuals who want to do dirt on the intellect..." Orwell's cyncial attitude towards the intelligentsia predates the BBC and the war itself, but the idea that the intelligentsia worked in collussion with the ministries comes in response to the problems associated with publishing ANIMAL FARM.

54. W.J. West, Introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.59. West is careful to make a distinction between Orwell's feelings for the BBC and his attitude to the Ministry of Information, disputing Crick's claim that Orwell wrote NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR as a parody of the BBC. West argues that NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR is a satire on the MOI, but he cites Orwell's BBC experience of being victimized by the MOI which as the basis for that satire.

55. In 1941 Orwell told the readers of PARTISAN REVIEW, "I believe that the BBC , in spite of the stupidity of its foreign propaganda and the unbearable voices of its announcers, is very truthful." [CE. Volume 2,p.139] April of 1944 he defended a similar statement to a reader who challenged, "Would Orwell suggest that anybody now looks upon the BBC as they did in the days of Sir John Reith?" [TRIBUNE,21 Apl, 1944, cited in A.S.A.Briggs, p.58, note 1] Orwell responded referring directly to his own experience, "the BBC is relatively truthful and has a responsible attitude towards the news." [CE. Volume 3, p.155] His attitude in his diaries and private correspondence is equally and consistently charitable with regard to his freedom from political coercion and the general integrity with which he was able to realize his duties as

broadcaster and talks producer. [CE. Volume 2, p.372]

56. Mansell, Gerard. LET THE TRUTH BE TOLD, (London,1982) pp.93-94.

57. Mansell, p.94.

58. A.S.A. Briggs, THE WAR OF WORDS, THE HISTORY OF BROADCASTING IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, Volume III, (London, 1970), pp.34-35; Burton Paulu, BRITISH BROADCASTING, (Minneapolis,1956), pp, 37-38, 161, 164-165, 382. Mansell's assessment is echoed by A.S.A. Briggs, another BBC alumni, whose conclusions also stress the independence and integrity of the BBC's wartime broadcasting. Burton Paulu compares the relative freedom of British government sponsored broadcasting to American broadcasting under the constraints of commercial pressure. Paulu comments on the "consistent fairness" and idealism of the news staff at the BBC.

59. W.J. West, TRUTH BETRAYED, (London, 1987). West elides the suggestion that the wartime headquarters of the MOI, Senate House on Malet Street acted as a "direct model" for Orwell's "Ministry of Truth," with his discussion of the MOI's censorship of BBC broadcasts. He cites MOI communication concerning a censored broadcast by Barbara Ward and a memorandum explaining the operation of the system or Canada House which includes the statement, "The execution of policy in the fields of broadcasting technique and the actual preparation of material for programmes remains in the hands of the Corporation." [WAR BROADCASTS, p.279] This quotation supports the observation of wartime BBC employees Gerald Mansell and A.S.A. Briggs that the censorship at the BBC was largely an internal matter, as well as Orwell's own claim that in the Indian service they were pretty much left alone. [CE, Volume 3,p.72] West, despite citing Ward's statment, argues otherwise, in his TRUTH BETRAYED, a study of Ministry and BBC war-time relations based on MOI and BBC archival documents. [Mansell, LET THE TRUTH BE TOLD, (London,1982) pp.93-94. A.S.A. Briggs, THE WAR OF WORDS, THE HISTORY OF BROADCASTING IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, Volume 2, (London, 1970) pp.34-35.

60. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.349.

61. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.361.

62. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.472.

63. See Chapter 1, note 80 for discussion of the accuracy of Orwell's perception of the effectiveness of his broadcasts. It is important to recongize that it was on the basis of this opinion that he made his decisions, whether that opinion truly represented the actual situation among the BBC audience in India or not.

64. W.J. West, introduction to WAR BROADCASTS, p.57.

65. Crick, p.416.

66. Crick, p.421.

67. Crick, p.421.

CHAPTER 3

"Truth Transmogrified"

NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR and Orwell's BBC Experience

William Steinhoff described NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR as "a culminating work which expresses, almost epitomizes, a lifetime's ideas, attitudes, events, and reading."[1] The themes of NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR were well seeded by 1937 when Orwell returned from Spain.[2] But it was Orwell's war-time experiences which motivated and shaped the evolution of those themes.

After Orwell left the BBC he completed ANIMAL FARM and went in search of a publisher. No one would touch the book: Cape, Nicholas and Watson, Faber and Faber, and the Freedom Press all refused to publish ANIMAL FARM in 1944 because it criticized the regime of an ally in the struggle against Hitler.[3] Orwell believed that what he met was the intransigence of the literary establishment acting voluntarily in collusion with the Ministry of Information and the agencies of oppression. Orwell's distrust of the political intelligentsia dates from his Spanish experience. It was however the publishing industry's reluctance to publish ANIMAL FARM that engendered Orwell's vision of an intelligentsia setting themselves up at the head of a bureaucratic tyranny whose sole purpose was the retention of power and the exercise of control.

Locating the "Hidden Power" of MOI

Self Censorship and The Publishing of ANIMAL FARM

In seeking a publisher for ANIMAL FARM Orwell encountered what Cape's company historian called, "The force of moral rather than governmental pressure which deterred publishers from risking damage to the common war effort..."[4] Jonathan Cape, having already begun negotiations for the book's copyright, voluntarily submitted Orwell's manuscript to an official of the MOI for an informal assessment. The official responded with a plea to Cape not to publish something which was so obviously anti-Soviet and detrimental to the image of Britain's Russian ally. Orwell received a copy of Cape's letter to his agent More, in which Cape reported this reaction to account for his belated rejection of ANIMAL FARM.[5]

ANIMAL FARM already had two rejections behind it: the first, from Victor Gollancz, he had anticipated knowing Gollancz's would not publish what he would perceive to be an attack on the Soviet Regime for reasons of his own political agenda. The second was from Nicholson and Watson. According to Crick, Cape's rejection brought Orwell to both "rage and laughter" over Cape's procedure.[6] When T.S. Eliot rejected the manuscript of behalf of Faber and Faber, Orwell stopped laughing and wrote in anger.

In July of 1944, Orwell observed in his TRIBUNE editorial that the "veiled censorship" which restricted the broadcast of

certain kinds of news stories, also extended to books: "The MOI does not of course, dictate a party line, or issue an index expurgatorius, it merely advises," he wrote. "Circus dogs jump when the trainer cracks his whip, but the really well-trained dog is the one that turns his somersault when there is no whip."[7]

Orwell's reaction was extreme. Bernard Crick fittingly enough writes "For a moment George Orwell seemed to relapse into being Gordon Comstock again and lashed out in all directions."[8] Orwell wrote a scathing but unused preface for ANIMAL FARM which shows the transformation of what have been considered a not necessarily unscrupulous, if not entirely democratic, war-time reticence to publish unhelpful opinions in the interests of the nation's morale, into a wholesale conspiracy on the part of the literary establishment to suppress independence of thought. "I know that the English intelligentsia have plenty of reason for their timidity and dishonesty... but at least let us have no more nonsense about defending liberty against fascism," he raged. "In our country ... it is the liberals who fear liberty and the intellectuals who want to do dirt on the intellect."[9]

Orwell's experience with ANIMAL FARM gave substance to his distrust of the intelligentsia. Whatever real grounds there may have been for his accusations, it was Orwell's creative imagination that turned a series of publisher's rejections into a conspiracy of the literary establishment to

suppress undesirable truths. When Orwell left the BBC he wrote, in "Poetry and the Microphone," of the possibilities of subversion within a large bureaucracy by the writers, poets and musicians which such a bureaucracy requires in order to function.[10] It was this experience which brought into focus Orwell's concerns about the integrity of the intellectual community, and raised the spectre of what might happen should that intelligentsia serve and seek to dominate, rather than undermine that bureaucratic machine.

Orwell saw that the greatest danger to Liberty came not from the imposition of censorship by the Ministries, but the self-censorship practised voluntarily by the individuals who controlled the publishing industry. If Spain taught him to distrust political parties, it was the problems with ANIMAL FARM which proved to him that the intelligentsia was no more dedicated to truth and liberty than the revolutionary leadership was concerned for the well-being and dignity of the workers. The hidden power of MOI was not the power of the Ministry at all, but the susceptibility of the intelligentsia to power-worship.[11]

John Wain in an astute criticism of Orwell's attitude, underlines the discrepancy between Orwell's perceptions and the actual record of intellectual integrity:

> Considering how much "intellectuals" have done to fight regimes based on cruelty and power, how many of them have died under torture in the last thirty years because they refused to get into line with "power-worship", his seems a particularly uncalled-for judgement. But it is a very centrally

> Orwellian judgment. It was... a main pillar of his creed that the intelligentsia have gone over to power-worship, whereas the common people, partly by reason of their old-fashioned and incurious outlook, have remained in a world of toleration and justice."[12]

Orwell's tendency to simplistic extremism and paranoia derives from the fact that his judgment was based almost entirely on his own private experiences. Nowhere in his criticism of the forces that kept ANIMAL FARM in manuscript until August of 1945, does Orwell address the likelihood that the book might have had a detrimental effect on the morale of the British people joining forces with Stalin to defeat the Nazis. Orwell, who didn't trust the literary establishment anyway, decided that the publishers were collaborating with the bureaucratic powers in the interest of gaining and keeping personal power. His general distrust of the intelligentsia now became sharply focused on their infiltration and manipulation of the bureaucratic institutions proliferating in response to the exigencies of war.

NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR's harsh denunciation of the collusion of the intellectual elite with the agents of bureaucratic control, as much as it was prompted by any one experience, derives from what Orwell made of the publishing industry's refusal to handle ANIMAL FARM. But NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR does not represent an autobiographical treatment of any one experience in Orwell's life. Orwell was first and foremost a creative, literary writer. NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR is

fiction, not autobiography. Winston Smith is not George Orwell.

"Orwell's Rhetoric of Experience and the Art of What If?"

Truth and Fiction in Orwell's Writing

NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR is a work of fiction by a polemical literary writer who built both his political judgement and his novelistic fantasies from a subjective response to things he experienced. The correspondence between Winston Smith and George Orwell consists in Orwell's literary treatment of his own experiences to authorize arguments derived from those same experiences. Orwell's imagination was literary; all of his writing represents experience transformed by literary means for propagandist purposes.

"All art is propaganda," Orwell declared on more than one occasion.[13] He described the purpose for which he wrote as "political in the widest possible sense," meaning, "a desire to push the world in a certain direction, to alter other people idea of the kind of society that they should strive after."[14] If Orwell perceived in all art a propagandists agenda, it follows that he conceived his own work as controlled by a rhetorical agenda. Orwell exercised his literary creativity in both his documentary works and his fiction, in order to compel his reader to share his own vision of how things should be.

What Orwell had to argue almost always represented his own moral response to something experienced. His political agenda represented a personal moral reaction to the indignation and remorse he experienced when confronted with poverty. DOWN AND OUT IN PARIS AND LONDON demands sympathy and understanding for those unfortunate casualties of capitalist inequality whose lives the book describes.[15] Orwell became a socialist when he came to know and respect the unemployed miners of England's depressed north. Full knowledge of their plight engaged his moral outrage bringing him to advocate a political solution for the economic ills of capitalism. THE ROAD TO WIGAN PIER is a clarion call to an idealistic kind of socialism based on his admiration for the Wigan miners, and his belief in the essential decency of the working classes.[16]

His idealism was tempered by political realism when he became the victim of communist party oppression in Spain. "What I saw in Spain," he wrote, "and what I have seen since of the inner working of left-wing political parties, have given me a horror of politics," he confessed.[17] None the less, he also saw Socialism at work in the early days of the Spanish war, and wrote to Cyril Connolly shortly after returning, "I have seen wonderful things and at least really believe in Socialism, which I never did before."[18] Orwell then advocated, for the rest of his life, a democratic socialism which took its tenor from his idealisation of the

common man born of his trip to Wigan Pier,[19] and the distrust of political parties he acquired in Spain.

Orwell returned to England from Spain in 1937 full of enthusiasm for the revolutionary spirit of the common man, and the conviction that it was his responsibility as a writer to advocate democratic socialism and expose hypocrisy and tyranny wherever he found it. What Orwell had to say, indeed the very compunction to say it, represented the judgement of his very moral conscience on what he knew of it through his own experience.[20] A writer is inevitably influenced by his experience: Orwell's ideas were generated directly by his experience and experience became the touchstone and validation of his convictions.

This example from HOMAGE TO CATALONIA shows how Orwell's logic derived from a subjective reaction to experience. He writes of coming across an old abandoned harrow. The description becomes an argument for technology and material progress. He describes a primitive implement of a kind "that took one straight back to the later Stone Age" Meticulous details lead to a feeling exposition:

> I remember my feelings almost of horror when I first came upon one of these things in a derelict hut in no man's land. I had to puzzle over it for a long while before grasping that it was a harrow. It made me sick to think of the work that must go into the making of such a thing, and the poverty that was obliged to use flint in place of steel. I have felt more kindly towards industrialism ever since.[21]

From feeling observation to a political conclusion: this movement is typical of Orwell's rhetoric. The progress from subjective reaction to political or social judgement and is the basis of his political thought.

Orwell's "habitual homage to concrete experience," in the words of one admirer, is the characteristic trademark of his polemical writing.[22] Orwell's political ideas were influenced most strongly by his experiences: Richard Rees advocated socialism to Orwell for years before his trip to Wigan.[23] But it was no Marxist argument which brought Orwell to seek a political solution. It was the plight of men he came to respect and like which engaged his moral indignation, and persuaded him of the socialist idea.

Because he relied on personal experience, Orwell's political judgement depended on his own involvement with the things he described. Richard Rees, referring to Orwell's hard learned lessons about the real nature of Russian communism, concluded that it was Orwell's best contribution to politics was his "realism about fundamentals based on personal experience." But Rees challenged Orwell's grasp of the issues of Russian involvement, observing that Orwell spent most of his time in Spain in the remote Aragonese mountains.[24]

Orwell's analysis of the political situation is easily challenged.[25] But his evocation of the atmosphere of Spain what it felt like to be a part of the Spanish Civil war, the fighting in Barcelona, and the Communist party betrayal of the

revolution, remains a powerful immediate reality even after the politics of Spain became history. HOMAGE TO CATALONIA is a work of literature; it is literature with a political message, but that message is supported by personal anecdote and delivered by literary means.

Orwell's literary way of making a rhetorical point out of something he witnessed can be followed in this example. Early in HOMAGE TO CATALONIA Orwell defines the positions of the various parties in the Spanish political tangle. First he declares his preference for the practical policies of the PSCU, despite his association with POUM and a tribute to their high ideals in an earlier paragraph. An explanation of the theoretical priorities of each group, he then contrasts the sensible Communist party line to their calumny of their POUM allies in the interest of defeating the revolution according to Stalinist dictum. Orwell observes the "peculiarity of Communist tactics."[26] Then he drives his point home, not with an analysis of those tactics, but with this descriptive judgement:

> It is not a nice thing to see a Spanish boy of fifteen carried down the line on a stretcher, with a dazed white face looking out from among the blankets, and to think of the sleek persons in London and Paris who are writing pamphlets to prove that this boy is a Fascist in disguise.[27]

Detail observed becomes an image, a singular portrait is invested with thematic meaning.

Emblem and image are among the literary techniques by which this writer transformed scrupulously detailed observation into polemical argument. Orwell's Italian Militia Man, the idealized Revolutionary soldier who opens Orwell's story of the Spanish Civil War is another such example. The author describes an encounter with a militiaman in Barcelona's Lenin Barracks. We are not told who this man was. Orwell's did not seek to record an individual meeting, but to create an image which summed up what socialist revolution meant to him.[28]

The ROAD TO WIGAN PIER, commissioned as a documentary report of the living conditions of the working class unemployed in England's depressed north, shows how Orwell idealized the subjects of his observation, creating heroes and heroines to persuade his reader to share his faith in the working classes. WIGAN PIER is a literary argument against the evils of capitalism. The following example shows how Orwell derived that argument from things seen.

The narrator claims to have viewed a young woman cleaning a drain-pipe from the window as his train departed the town:

> At the back of one of the houses a young woman was kneeling on the stones, poking a stick up the leaden waste-pipe which ran from the sink inside and which I suppose was blocked. I had time to see everything about her - her sacking apron, her clumsy clogs, her arms reddened by the cold. She looked up as the train passed,and I was almost near enough to catch her eye. She had a round pale face...

A poignant scene is evoked; Orwell, the polemicist now

t[illegible]cription into argument:

> the usual exhausted face of the slum girl who [illegible]enty-five and looks forty, thanks to misc[illegible]iages and drudgery; and it wore, for the secon[illegible] in which I saw it, the most desolate, hopeless expression I have ever seen. It struck me then that we are mistaken when we say that "it isn't the same for them as it would be for us", and that [illegible]e bred in the slums can imagine nothing but [illegible]ms. For what I saw in her face was not [illegible] suffering of an animal. She knew well [illegible]was happening to her - understood as [illegible] how dreadful a destiny it was to be [illegible]ein the bitter cold, on the slimy [illegible]lum backyard, poking a stick up a foul [illegible]-p[illegible]

A camera glimpse of a young woman's face becomes an image, an unknown stranger a character, and all that was wrong about middle class notions of poverty and the poor is conveyed in the description. Documentary becomes moral judgement, commentary turns into propaganda as the eyewitness report rendered as a literary exposition becomes the springboard from which the Socialist message of WIGAN PIER is launched.

The hero of WIGAN PIER was the working man. Part one of Orwell's treatise ends with a portrait of the working class family, headed "Father," who, so long as he is employed has, Orwell states, "a better chance of being happy than an 'educated' man." An idyllic vignette follows, featuring Father in his shirt sleeves reading the race results, Mother on the other side of the hearth sewing, children munching humbugs, and even a dog lolling on the rag mat. The reality of this scene, so far as Orwell was concerned, depended entirely on whether or not Father was in work.[50]

The book opened with an horrific description of the squalid surroundings into which the narrator first descended as he began his excursion into the world of the unemployed. The contrast is obvious, the message clear. Not only do individuals suffer from the poverty endemic under capitalism, but that cradle of human decency, the working class home, is undermined and debased, the logic of Orwell's socialism is uncertain; his practical agenda for revolution virtually nonexistent. But his conviction that capitalism was wrong is undeniable, and his talent for description leaves the reader quite convinced that the situation is untenable, and Orwell's solution if impractical, certainly desirable.

Orwell's objectives were polemical, his means literary. All of his works draw on his experiences. The editors of his COLLECTED ESSAYS suggested that all of Orwell's works, excepting ANIMAL FARM and NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR contained, "straight descriptions of himself or his experiences in one guise or another."[31] This is accurate in so far as it identifies Orwell's use of his own experiences in his works, but it is misleading. The guise was that of the polemicist, the means were that of the artist. Orwell's experiences were but the raw material on which his literary imagination worked to persuade the reader of the truth of the author's vision, ANIMAL FARM and NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR not excepted.

For the effectiveness of Orwell's fiction also rested on his ability to invoke his own experience.[32] The heroine,

Dorothy, of A CLERGYMAN'S DAUGHTER, offers instruction in both Orwell's strengths and his weaknesses as a creative writer. Dorothy herself is a rather flat figure, Dorothy is neither a very interesting nor successful character, but her story comes to life when she embarks upon Orwell's own adventures.

The parts of the story that draw directly on things Orwell knew from his own experience are vigourous and highly engaging. Freezing in Trafalgar square, discovering the not so subtle indignities of a tramp's life and the self-serving camaraderie of the hop-pickers, the helpless frustration of glue-and-paper drama in a third rate private school: the feelings invoked by these descriptions passages are real, despite the implausible plot which brings them into being.

It is Dorothy's circumstances which are compelling, not her character. Richard Rees noted Orwell's inability to write a convincing woman character, observing that Orwell was not a psychological writer.[33] Orwell did seem to be able to project his imagination into a personalities other than his own and the people in his novels are psychologically convincing only when they are doing what Orwell did. Orwell's characters exist to tell the stories of his experiences. They are made to behave in a way that will demonstrate their creator's view of significance of those experiences. Dorothy returns home after her escapades, having learned only to be as cynical as Orwell after her "down and out" days.[34]

Orwell's works do contain descriptions whose sources can be identified in Orwell's life, but the correspondence between Orwell's actual experience and what he wrote is rarely direct. One such notable exception is the autobiographical passage in WIGAN PIER, another is an autobiographical preface he was asked to prepare for an anthology collection. However even the ostensibly autobiographical essay "Such, Such Were the Joys," shows Orwell inventing himself for the purpose of furthering an argument.

The veracity of the claims Orwell made about his school days in this essay have often been challenged. Bernard Crick referred to the accounts of Orwell's classmates, to demonstrate that the situation in the extremes Orwell described, simply did not exist.[35] Jacintha Buddicom, a childhood friend of Orwell does not remember him as the morose, unloved little boy who is the central character of "Such"; she refers to the essay as a story.[36] In the interest of making a point about the kind of education offered by the British school system, Orwell created, from his own experience, a situation which would demonstrate the full depth of his feeling about that experience.

The essay in fact tells us a great deal more about how Orwell felt about his school days than what actually happened to him at St.Cyprians.[37] Orwell's literary talent was that of turning a demonstrated capacity to exaggerate actual situations from his own life into persuasive realistic images.

He was good at it: all of his novels required editing before the publishing firms' libel lawyers would recommend publication.[38] But the fact remains that Orwell's treated real experience as literary source material with a rhetorical, usually didactic agenda.

Tosco Fyvel, BBC colleague and friend of Orwell, made this distinction in a 1984 interview. Fyvel carefully identified the difference between things he read in Orwell's work, and the actual experiences Orwell wrote about, some of which Fyvel shared. He referred to Orwell's "literary feeling for making a picture and creating a scenario, which didn't it seemed to me, sometimes actually coincide with reality."[39] An earlier statement of Fyvel's clarifies Orwell's literary performance as that of the creative artist, and not an unscrupulous reporter:

> Some sort of picture of his spiritual road can be constructed from his writings, yet no more than a rough outline. To assume more than that is to forget that he was always an artist, transmuting his experience.[40]

Orwell did not invent situations in order to write;[41] he sought experience in order to have something to write about. But his imagination was creative, and it operated most effectively on the field of experienced reality. Orwell describes the process of exaggeration which was the heart of his creative dynamic, as a beginning with a childhood habit, "the lonely child's habit of making up stories and holding conversations with imaginary persons." The stories became a

kind of mental diary, a magical diary where the child was the hero:

> As a very small child I used to imagine that I was, say, Robin Hood, and picture myself as the hero of thrilling adventures, but quite soon my 'story' ceased to be a mere description of what I was doing and the things I saw. For minutes at a time this kind of thing would be running through my head: 'He pushed the door open and entered the room. A yellow beam of sunlight, filtering though the muslin curtains, slanted on to the table, where a matchbox, half open, lay beside the ink pot. With his right hand in his pocket he moved across the window...'[42]

Orwell's fiction was based on experience, but it was experience given the child's treatment of "What if?" For Orwell real life was a springboard, from which his imagination could then conjure an adventure, a character, a world, an argument.

Orwell's best fictional writing shows this progression from reality, through the creative process of "what if," to created world and polemical objective. The simplest and most obvious example is that of ANIMAL FARM. Orwell has said that his inspiration for this story was the sight of a young boy flogging a cart horse. What if the horse realized how much stronger he was than the boy? What if animals had the human capacity to recognize their strength, and their oppressed situation? What if an animal were capable of vision, of organizing the resources of his fellows, of taking control?

Somewhere in this process, the political imagination takes over. What if the working classes could recognize and organize their strength? Orwell's fable of barnyard

revolution is born: the political writer creates a work of literature because his creative imagination is directed by the imperatives of his sensitivity to the political forces controlling the real world around him.

Orwell's imagination was creative, and it operated most effectively on the field of experienced reality. ANIMAL FARM with its barnyard revolution and NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR set in a futuristic dystopia show Orwell following the logic of "what if," to the point where his fantasy disconnects entirely with actuality. Yet, as much as Gordon Comstock's frustrations in KEEP THE ASPIDISTRA FLYING are an exaggeration of Orwell's own book store days irritations, so caustic old Benjamin in ANIMAL FARM embodies the disillusionment with revolutionary politics characteristic of Orwell after the Spanish Civil War.

Similarly the psychological depth of the character Winston Smith is indebted to Orwell's own experience of frustration working with a bureaucracy at the BBC, as well as the atmosphere of paranoia he experienced in Spain and wrote about in HOMAGE TO CATALONIA. These works of apparently pure fantasy, draw as much on Orwell's life as did his earlier works in which his own experiences are much more obvious. In all of Orwell's work, Orwell's experiences are the primary source from which he conjures the worlds which make his arguments persuasive.

But Orwell's fiction did not imitate reality, it was created from it. Experience transmogrified, reality recreated

to make a polemical point: this was Orwell's agenda. Literary style and didactic purpose: these are the forces that shaped the reality represented in Orwell's works. "NINETEEN EIGHTY FOUR distils the reading, writing and experience of an observant and sensitive artist in an age dominated by wars and politics," William Steinhoff wrote.[43] The unique and particularly terrifying flavour of Winston's story derives from the operation of Orwell's creative imagination on the sum of his life experience, under the catalyst of his fears for the fate of human decency. This is the correspondence to actual reality we can look for in NINETEEN EIGHTY FOUR: The truth as revealed to a creative, politically responsible thinker convinced of the human capacity for decency humanity's potential and obsessed by his own nightmare comprehension of the political tendencies of his times.

Experienced Truth to Controlled Reality: George Orwell at the BBC and Winston Smith

Orwell drew on his BBC experience in creating the world of Big Brother. The verisimilitude of NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR owes a great deal to many of Orwell's war-time and post war experiences, not the least of which was the physical reality of day to day life under bombardment, rationing and the bureaucratic organization of society for the purpose of fighting a war, along with his work for the BBC. The novel's

parody of bureaucratic control is probably indebted to Orwell's own experience as a government employee for the details, but owes its cutting edge to his experience with publishing ANIMAL FARM. Many of the themes driving NINETEEN EIGHT-FOUR however can be traced back through his pre-war writing, most obviously to his experience of the Spanish Civil War.[44] What can be attributed specifically to Orwell's broadcasting experience is the psychological realism with which he conjures Winston's mental ordeal in the congested world of Doublethink, Thoughtcrime and Newspeak.

For over two years Orwell explored in his day to day work the kind of metal gymnastics Winston employed to compose and recompose history for the Ministry of Truth. Orwell had to balance his own stand of pro-Indian liberation against the imperatives of Indian loyalty to the Allied and therefore Imperial cause. "Appalling policy handout this morning about affairs in India,"[45] he wrote in his diary, 12 August, 1942: "The riots are of no significance - situation is well in hand..." His news commentary for that week contained absolutely no mention of the arrests of Nehru and Gandhi, nor of the ensuing violence. Instead he countered Axis propaganda concerning these events with reference to riots, shootings, arrests, reprisals and threats, in occupied Europe, showing that life would be, at least, no better under Fascist domination.[46]

Orwell's job was to interpret the events of the war in

such as way as to persuade his listeners to remain loyal to the British, according to policy dictated by something other than his own moral judgement. The content of his broadcasts was derived from Ministry of Information press releases, material from the BBC home service broadcasts, along with transcriptions of Axis propaganda broadcasts and policy directives from the Ministry.[47] Orwell also listened in to Axis propaganda himself.

Working for the BBC was virtually Orwell's sole experience of harnessing his creative and artistic abilities to a task pre-determined and not associated with the subjective morality which shaped his own work. Orwell returned from Spain, and wrote propaganda,[48] but it was propaganda motivated by his own compulsion to tell the "truth" of what he had seen. Orwell deliberately detached himself from party politics, in the interest of the journalistic freedom to tell the "truth."

His BBC job required him to propagate a vision according to a prescribed equation of meaning, without reference to real experience, and often in contradiction to his real feelings about a situation.

Orwell indulged a kind of "double-think" in his own right at the BBC as a result. The hesitancy with which he wrote to George Woodcock of his uncertain commitment to BBC service in December of 1942 shows him working hard to distinguish between fighting the Nazis and serving the British Ruling classes.

Recognizing that, at the moment, they were the same thing, and that he was being used by the capitalist-imperialist establishment for their own purposes, he nonetheless strove to reconcile this work with his image as a Socialist revolutionary.[49] Orwell's ambivalence, a smouldering private uncertainty born quietly throughout his entire BBC career,[50] could have provided the emotional experience from which the writer built the double life of Winston Smith, one where outward conformity to Party discipline was belied by a private but profound resistance to the comfortable deceit of double-think. For Winston double-think requires a conscious act of both release and discipline. Exercising in front of the telescreen, Winston's memory repeatedly reasserts itself. "All that was needed was an unending series of victories over your own memory," he thinks, and then consciously lets his mind slide into "the labyrinthine world of double think."[51]

Induced unconsciousness: this was the essence of doublethink. Orwell's BBC work required him to replace the touchstone of moral reaction to personal experience with dictated policy. To broadcast as truth, something he had constructed from MOI policy handouts, and information heard on other broadcasts, must have required a certain suspension of Orwell's lifelong habit of referring to his own experiences as the basis of his conclusions.

Winston's job consisted in "delicate acts of forgery," prepared according to the writer's knowledge of Ingsoc's

principles and personal judgement as to what the party wanted to hear.[52] A comparison can be made between the kind of work Orwell did, and that with which Winston Smith was occupied.[53] That Orwell was very conscious of suspending his "habitual homage to concrete experience," shows in his diary entry of 14 March 1942: "All propaganda is lies, even when one is telling the truth. I don't think this matters so long as one knows what one is doing, and why..."[54]

Orwell knew what he was doing: he was deliberately suppressing, or choosing his words carefully for their implications as much as their real content,[55] to shape the way his listeners perceived political events. He knew he was doing it in order to prevent certain harmful, even untruthful, ideas, such as the notion that India might achieve liberty from a Fascist victory, from taking hold.[56] Orwell did not distort the truth in his broadcasts,[57] but he did manipulate suggestion and implication in the interest of engendering anti-Fascist sentiment in India. He knew why he was doing it: he did it to ensure the long term survival of democratic institutions.

But Winston did his work under the cloak of deliberate unconsciousness. Winston begins his work day fully aware, fully conscious that the alliance of the hour was not the alliance of yesterday, even though there was no record of yesterday's reality, anywhere other than in his own memory: "Only in his consciousness," we are told, did the knowledge of

Oceania's alliance with Eurasia exist, and that consciousness, "must soon be annihilated."[58] For Winston to be able to function in his work, information had to be detached from knowable reality. And it is only in his work that he achieves this detachment. Once he begins his work, it is only when he is finished his "delicate task" and has to drop the old reality down the memory hole, "with a movement which was as nearly as possible unconscious," are we reminded that Winston is all too aware of the discontinuity between what he writes, and what might be real.

The "truth" Orwell handled at the BBC was dispensed in official documents and mediated by official policy: it is not difficult to imagine the Orwell, whose journalism previously consisted mostly in reflections about things he'd seen and people he'd met, feeling uncomfortably detached from the realities these impersonal documents identified. Orwell also spent much time listening in to Axis propaganda broadcasts and pouring over reports prepared by Ministry monitors conveying the content of those broadcasts. In his diary Orwell compares the inconsistencies rampant in British propaganda to those characteristic of the German brand, concluding, "German propaganda is inconsistent in quite a different way - i.e. deliberately so, with an utter unscrupulousness in offering everything to everybody."[59]

Orwell attributed inconsistencies in Allied propaganda largely to incompetency and poor communication between

departments.[60] But Orwell's job also gave him access to the "news" broadcast by the enemy. A daily comparison of the conflicting content of Axis reports with what he heard on the BBC,[61] could only have heightened the sense that there was no reality behind all these words, only the differing agendas of opposing manipulative political regimes.[62] Suppose there were in fact no reality behind the reports? that the role of the broadcaster was explicitly to harangue the masses into hatred of whatever national group the leadership decided was the enemy at the moment?

Winston Smith's daily construction of political reality out of material expelled from the pneumatic tube on his desk is very much a product of Orwell's imagination. It is however a short exercise in extrapolation from the feeling Orwell must have had listening in to Axis broadcasts many of which contained deliberate distortions and obvious contradictions, and then re-constructing his news broadcasts to counter it to Winston's game of rearranging the words to make a different reality.[63] It is an even shorter step from Orwell's awareness of the shifting alliances between leaders like Stalin and Churchill to the contrived wars of NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR and the job of Winston as a writer to direct the hatred of the masses at the new object.

Orwell did not do what Winston did. Clearly however what Winston did was born of Orwell's long hours huddled over his type writer, with his intelligence and political sensitivities

focused on monitors' reports of Axis propaganda, Ministry policy outlines, and his ear tuned to both Axis and Allied broadcasts. The seeds of the idea that society that could be motivated to hate and wage war against a largely imaginary enemy entirely by words could surely have been planted in Orwell's exposure to both sides of the propaganda war during his time at the BBC.

Orwell's exposure to the enemy's propaganda machine is reflected in the means by which Big Brother controls his world. The "Volksaufklarung," or "Ministry of People's Enlightenment," for example, resembles, even in title, Orwell's Ministry of Truth. Viktor Reimann, in his biography of Goebbels, introduces his subject as the creator of the Hitler myth, describing the Fuehrer image as "not only of the masses...(but) also above them, focusing in himself all their individual, and without him ineffectual wills."[64] Orwell went one step further: In NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR, Winston doubts the existence of Big Brother as a real person. No doubt Orwell's NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR was influenced by what he learned through working against the very propaganda machine which aided Hitler in gaining and maintaining power in Germany.[65] The possible associations between the institutions by which Hitler controlled Nazi Germany and the means by which Orwell's Big Brother controlled the world of Winston Smith bears investigation in its own right. There can be no doubt however that, ingesting and countering the

material broadcast by Goebbel's propagandists, Orwell saw first hand how a master propagandist manipulated reality, even created it, trained an entire society trained to believe entirely in what they were told.[66] Exposure to this material was a part of Orwell's BBC experience and surely contributed to the psychological realism of NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR.

In its essence Orwell's Ministry of Truth reflects more of what the author learned of the enemy's propaganda machine than what he experienced at the BBC. However his own work as a propagandist provided him with insight into the psychological implications of practising institutionalized deceit. Orwell's experience as a propagandist taught him the importance of retaining one's hold on reality. Orwell knew what he did and why, his diary entries provide an honest forum in which he records his own commentary on some of the things he wrote about for the BBC. Orwell did what he did in order to win a war and save democracy and kept a diary to make sure he remembered what was important. Orwell was allowed to keep such a diary; Winston was not.

Winston did what he did because he had no choice. Chapter one of NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR records Winston's continuous slide back into memory, but the last third of the book chronicles the destruction of his consciousness of reality, and his final disassociation of sentient awareness from mental knowledge. In the end Winston learned to "forget" what he was doing, and "why." Winston tried to keep a diary,

like Orwell, and was punished for it. To "forget" was the only route to "sanity" in a world where a powerful elite remained powerful because they had discovered that they could control what people thought was real much more easily than they could control reality. Winston did what he did in order to perpetuate the very tyranny which compelled him to do it, and so nurtured the destruction of his own mental integrity. Orwell did what he did in order to avoid the hegemony of such potential tyranny.

Both situations are an interesting extension of Orwell's initial response to his BBC experience. The essay, "Poetry and the Microphone" discusses the fact that bureaucracy does indeed require the services of the intelligentsia. It goes on to suggest that the larger the bureaucracy the likely it is to find ways by which an entrenched subversive could undermine it. The warning of NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR is that if we forget that why we are doing what we are doing then we may end up enthraled to those very systems of control we have inaugurated to defeat tyranny.

In the world of Big Brother there was no place for a subversive intellectual to hide because the kind of self censorship that Orwell raged against when ANIMAL FARM was refused for publication, had become imperative for personal survival. Supervision at the BBC offices was not malevolent[67] and Orwell did not seem to find the censorship overly oppressive.[68] But what if the bureaucratic employee could

not subvert the bureaucracy because every the vigilance of every individual was conscripted into the service of universal censorship?

Orwell's office at 200 Oxford street was similar to Winston's cubicle. The building which housed the war-time expansion of foreign broadcasting services was an old department store: "offices" were created by throwing up plaster walls which for reasons of economy did not reach the ceiling. Orwell wrote letters, designed programs, planned talks, and interviewed speakers against a background noise composed, according to John Morris who shared the working conditions, of "conversation, dictation, clattering typewriters and, owing to the shortage of studios, even the rehearsal of talks and features in various oriental languages."[69] Continuous, relentless community; such is the background against which Empson and Morris describe themselves and Orwell working.

Such was also the background to Winston's daily employment, over the noise and confusion of which he conducts his communication with Julia. In Big Brother's world, the attention of co-workers expresses something far removed from the benevolent sociability and harmless gossip mongering of the BBC community.[70] But Orwell had never before been a part of a congested working environment as he had been at the BBC. How far, in Orwell's imagination, was it to go from the voluntary enthusiasm of those who refused to publish ANIMAL

FARM to the threat of the all pervasive Thought Police in NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR? Big Brother's Thought Police were all pervasive, not because of a proliferation of professional agents, but because of the perpetual vigilance of co-workers,neighbours, even children, who would, without a moment's hesitation report the least sign of any subversive, non-party opinions or behaviour to the authorities."[11]

To "forget" that the only reality was that which was dictated by the powers of Big Brother in the moment of its dictation, was "thought-crime." To arrange one's mind so that one was entirely unconscious of the act of denial one had to perform in order to be so unconscious, was double-think. "Orthodoxy was unconsciousness," Winston reflects."[12] Thoughtcrime and doublethink were not products of Orwell's BBC experience: they are the twin progeny of his imagination and the fears he had for the future of a society where the intelligentsia could talk of "necessary murder" and enjoyed wielding power more than the pursuing truth."[13]

In his usually wry manner, Orwell entered in his diary the fact that Empson's department was told to delete references to possible Japanese attacks on Russia, while he himself was broadcasting the this as a real threat."[14] This passage is from NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR:

> Winston glanced across the hall. In the corresponding cubicle on the other side a small, precise-looking, dark-chinned man named Tillotson was working steadily away, with a folded newspaper on his knee and his mouth very close to the mouthpiece of the speak write.... Winston wondered

> whether Comrade Tillotson was engaged on the same job as himself. It was perfectly possible....[75]

It would strain the text to suggest a direct comparison between the fictional and actual incidents; to suggest that Orwell might have glanced over at Empson writing the Russian threat out of his propaganda is pure speculation.

However one can easily imagine the writer sitting at his typewriter in his remote Hebridian retreat in 1947, conjuring Winston's confusion and paranoia from the recollection of the feelings he must have known working at the BBC. Writing, interviewing, reading monitors reports, creating propaganda cheek by jowl with others doing the same, amidst the cacophony overflowing makeshift offices, trying influence intellectual opinion in India according to policy directives and the imperatives of the British government: this is the atmosphere and activity Orwell imbibed for over two years while he performed as a BBC employee. That Orwell would have used this experience as a springboard for the creation of Winston's mental experience follows the writer's pattern of creating fictional verisimilitude out of his own experiences to infer that the atmosphere of NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR and the psychological realism of Winston's efforts at double think, his fear of the thought police and his intellectual delight in the manipulation of meaning as mere variables in an equation of dictated meaning.

Orwell's habit of deducting political conclusions from his own experiences, then arguing, by literary treatment of

those experiences for the truth which he believed they exposed can be seen at work in NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR. What he made of the reluctance to publish ANIMAL FARM coupled with his growing fear of intellectual involvement in the agencies of bureaucratic control engendered by the exigencies of war, become a viable argument in NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR. Winston's despair, his inescapable entanglement in a soul destroying existence, his own struggle for intellectual honesty in a world where it was a crime, and his ultimate defeat lend credulity to Orwell's fears. Even if the evolution of the world of Big Brother is not politically likely, the realism of Winston's story brings home to the reader the imperative of thwarting those who would substitute the imperatives of control and order for the objectives of liberty and democratic freedom.

Orwell quit the BBC feeling defeated by the system: he believed that his broadcasts had been ineffectual, and his service without measurable impact on the outcome of the war. From this sense of futility derived his assessment, "two wasted years." He left the BBC as he left the Burmese Imperial Police, dismayed by his involvement as the lackey of a bureaucratic system he despised. Winston and Flory share Orwell's experience of being defeated by the total systems in which they must play out their lives.

Unlike Winston, Orwell had a choice. The BBC was not a total system, and Orwell, in his writing was always able to

stand outside the systems he criticized and which governed his real life. It was in fact the responsibility of the writer, to stand aloof from political allegiances in order to maintain his loyalty to truth.'[76] If the intelligentsia, in the interest of accruing and retaining their own power, refused to stand outside the system and, indeed, helped create it, they could very well end up trapped by it, as Winston was. NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR is a warning to the perpetrators of and apologists for bureaucracies that intellectual freedom depends on every individual's courage to exercise it. The title dating Big Brother's regime is a warning to Orwell's readers that they must make that choice before it no longer exists.

Winston worked at the Ministry of Truth, "an enormous pyramidal structure of glittering white concrete, soaring up, terrace after terrace, 300 metres in the air."[77] Orwell broadcast from an underground studio, at 200 Oxford Street. Bernard Crick is certain that the main BBC building in Place was the model for Big Brother's Minitrue.[78] W.J. West, in keeping with his claim that 1984 was a satire on the MOI, asserts that Orwell's pyramid was drawn from the Senate House, at Malet St. piece of wedding cake architecture, the wartime headquarters of the MOI.'[79]

There is nothing in Orwell's correspondence or diaries that corroborates either of these speculations. Conceivably St Pauls, towering over the bombed out destruction could just as easily have been the inspiration for the shining tower of

oppression thrusting antiseptically above a grimy, rotting tenement skyline. Whatever specific buildings engaged Orwell's imagination, the meaning of his physical landscape is clear. THE ROAD TO WIGAN PIER, denounces the phraseology which had the common man living under socialism, succumbing to reforms imposed upon them by the "clever ones" in the name of a better world.[80] Above the bleak decay of a soulless world rises the clean white tower of authoritarian security: this is the reality picture the novel evokes, not that of the wartime headquarters of the Ministry of Information.

Orwell's NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR is about a process Orwell feared was eroding the integrity of the contemporary intelligentsia. It is about the political possibilities he feared that intelligentsia might allow to be realized, that he believed it was his duty as a responsible writer to address. The destruction and grittiness of wartime London, listening in to the broadcast speeches of a Hitler, a Roosevelt, a Bose, bending over a microphone himself reading from a censored script prepared with reference to things he had only heard and read about, all these images contribute to the frightening verisimilitude of NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR. Working for the BBC offered Orwell the forum in which to imaginatively explore feelings and ideas which contributed to the evolution of the experience of Winston Smith. Winston Smith is a great deal more than Orwell at the BBC. He is the creation of a politically sensitive, morally responsible artist reacting to

a crisis whose outcome he sought to influence through his writing. NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR represents the realities of his own life experience in politics and war, transmogrified by his own literary talent into a visionary warning. This is the truth of NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR and the reality which it was written to convey.

ENDNOTES, CHAPTER 3

1. Steinhof, p.4.

2. Slater, pp.99, 134, 135. Slater shows that Orwell's suspicion of the intelligentsia was born of his Spanish experience. He then argues that his political commitment to political action was not fully realized until his experience in Aragon, and concludes that in writing HOMAGE TO CATALONIA Orwell set forth the "themes that would obsess him till the end of his life."

3. Crick, pp.456-460. See Crick for a complete account of the rejection of ANIMAL FARM and Orwell's reaction. See Chapter 2, note 53 for summary.

4. Quoted in Crick, p.455.

5. Crick, p.455.

6. Crick, p.456.

7. Orwell, CE. Volume 3,p.212.

8. Crick, p.463.

9. Orwell, quoted in Crick, p.463.

10. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.381.

11. See Orwell, CE. Volume 1,p.468-469, 548,582, 592; Volume pp.2, 94-96, 216, 288, 349, 358; Volume 3, pp.53-54, 82, 152-153, 189. Orwell's explicit denunciation of the intelligentsia is most shrill in the writing in Volume III of his collected works, but, as remarked by Slater, it was Spain which first spawned his suspicions. [Slater, p. 165]

12. John Wain, "The Conflict of Forms in Contemporary English Literature;" "George Orwell I;" "George Orwell II" in ESSAYS ON LITEARTURE AND IDEAS, (London, 1963) pp.209-210 and 213.

13. Orwell, CE. Volume 1,pp.492, 290,379. Orwell explained, "...every artist is a propagandist in the sense that he is trying, directly or indirectly, to impose a vision of life that seems to him desirable."[CE. Volume 2,p.57] John Wain, in his influential, ESSAYS ON LITERATURE AND IDEAS, determined that all of Orwell's work was polemical arguing that if Orwell looked at all art as propaganda, then surely he exercised own creativity with a propagandist's agenda. [Wain, p.180]

14. Orwell, CE. Volume 1,p.26.

15. Orwell, DOWN AND OUT IN PARIS AND LONDON, in THE COMPLETE WORKS OF GEORGE OPWELL, Edited by Peter Davison, Volume 1, (London, 1986) pp.215 - 216. "I can point to one or two things I have definitely learned by being hard up. I shall never again think that all tramps are drunken scoundrels, nor expect a beggar to be grateful when I give him a penny,nor be surprised if men out of work lack energy, nor subscribe to the Salvation army, nor pawn my clothes, nor refuse a handbill, nor enjoy a meal at a smart restaurant. that is a beginning."

16. Stansky and Abrahams, ORWELL: THE TRANSFORMATION. Stansky and Abrahams chronicle the shift in Orwell's consciousness from sympathy for the poor, to the demand for political action to alleviate unemployment and its attendant degradation of spirit. In THE ROAD TO WIGAN PIER Orwell again reviews the experiences recounted in DOWN AND OUT, but this time he concludes, "unfortunately you do not solve the class problem by making friends with tramps. At most you get rid of some of your own class-prejudice by doing so." [WIGAN PIER, p.143]

17. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.39.

18. Orwell, CE. Volume 1,p.301.

19. Coppard and Crick, p.81. Dennis Collings in a 1984 BBC interview suggested to Nigel Williams that Orwell idealised people in his life speculating that this habit accounted for his difficulties with women. To Stephen Spender Orwell wrote that he was able to attack a writer in his criticism he had not met because without personal knowledge, the victim was "a type and also an abstraction." Once acquainted with the actual person Orwell recognized, "he is a human being and not a sort of caricature embodying certain ideas." [CE. Volume 1,p.347] WIGAN PIER shows Orwell idealizing working class people in terms of the cosy domesticity of working class interiors he remembered from his childhood. [WIGAN PIER, p.109.] This idealization of working men in WIGAN PIER and also of the Italian Militiaman in HOMAGE TO CATALONIA shows how Orwell then reversed this process in his writing, creating ideal characters out of individuals he recognized as representative of a type or class. It is Orwell's capacity for such idealization that detaches his work from the immediate political and social situations which inspired his writing. In Orwell's work this capacity to generalize become the route to the universality which accounts in part for the continuing interest in his writing despite the dating of his subject material.

20. Woodcock, p.189. "... even Orwell's philosophy is essentially personal, the rationalization of a series of highly idiosyncratic reactions to experience... [Orwell was] a writer who is always intent... on presenting his ideas in terms of his own experience."

21. Orwell, HOMAGE, p.79.

22. Slater, p.139.

23. Richard Rees, quoted in Stansky and Abrahams, p.129. "I spent more than three years trying to convert him to socialism, and he remained unconvinced, and not really interested. Then he went north. When he came back in the spring of 1936, the conversion had already taken place."

24. Rees, pp.58-64.

25. Rees, pp.61-62; Slater, pp.167-168. Rees, while admiring Orwell's way of seeing the general situation in Spain was remarkable, considering that he spent most of his time rather removed from the central conflict, questions Orwell's conclusions concerning the role of Russia. He concludes, while admitting the attractiveness of Orwell's clarity, and simple idealism, "it is hard to agree with Orwell's suggestion that an appeal to the workers of the world in the name of a revolutionary and anticlerical Spain would have met with a better response than the one that was actually made in the name of a democratic and respectable Spain." Slater acknowledges that HOMAGE TO CATALONIA is "one of the best personal accounts of the Spanish Civil War," but itemizes its flaws as political commentary. Slater concerns himself particularly with Orwell's failure to take into account the "temporary nature" of the classless atmosphere he encountered in Barcelona, and his tendency to build visions of a permanent future society on basis of temporary experiences.

26. Orwell, HOMAGE, p.63.

27. Orwell, HOMAGE, p.64.

28. Orwell, HOMAGE, p.8; "Looking Back on the Spanish Civil War," in HOMAGE, p.247. The figure who introduces Orwell's account of the Spanish Civil War is an idealized Revolutionary Soldier: "With his shabby uniform and fierce pathetic face he typifies for me the special atmosphere of that time," Orwell wrote. The same figure is eulogized in the poem which concludes the later essay, "Looking Back on the Spanish Civil War," also a pean to the revolutionary spirit of the common man:

> But the thing that I saw in your face
> No power can disinherit:
> No bomb that ever burst
> Shatters the crystal spirit.

29. Orwell, WIGAN PIER, p.15.

30. See note 19 for accounts of Orwell's tendency to idealize people and situations. Orwell's socialism derives from the fusion of this impulse to idealize the essentially decent nature of working men with his own conscientious indignation when he

recognized, in Wigan, that good men were kept down by a bad system.

31. Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus, Editors Introduction to CE. Volume 1,p.17.

32. Woodcock, p.125; p.294. Woodcock asserts that Orwell's impulse to derive something meaningful from his own experiences was much stronger than any impulse to invent new situations. Woodcock also links Orwell's failure of invention to "his peculiar type of intellectual honesty" referring to Orwell's need to authenticate what he wrote with reference to the reality which spawned it. This motivation refers back to the manifestly didactic purpose Orwell imputed to all art. Orwell himself argued the political issues of the day were far to urgent and compelling for writers to indulge in the fantasies of escapist writing. [Orwell, CE. Volume 1,p.281] George Woodcock defined Orwell's literary imagination as derivative, not inventive: 'Orwell did not lack imagination," Woodcock concedes, "but his inventive powers were not very strongly developed. He found it hard to construct situations entirely outside his own experience."

33. Rees, p.28. Rees observed that Orwell was incapable of writing a woman character. True enough: Dorothy's tortured discovery of her woman's body after blacking out could only have been written by a man who could not imagine what it was to be a woman.

34. The world is not a decent place, Dorothy has discovered, because everyone is too busy grubbing out a miserable existence. Not a particularly compelling conclusion: it is the story of how she came to that conclusion which engages the readers' sympathy and understanding.

35. Crick, p.80.

36. Jacinitha Buddicom, quoted in Crick, p.80. Buddicom describes "Such Were the Joys" as "a story in the form of an autobiographical sketch written in the first person: a story so brilliantly told that it is popularly believed to have happened word for word - as some incidents undoubtedly did."

37. Ian Slater in his ROAD TO AIRSTRIP ONE dismissed Crick's investigation of "gross distortions' in the essay, arguing, "Distortion or not, Blair believed that he was made to feel different as a way of forcing him to work especially hard in the scholarship class." [Slater, p.21] Slater's argument locates the "truth" of Orwell's experience not in what Orwell described, but in the feelings his description was meant to evoke. George Woodcock came to a similar conclusion, saying, "It is the subjective rather than the objective aspects of his experiences that find their way into his books and shape them, this is the kind of truth we are seeking." [Woodcock, p.74] Woodcock paraphrases Orwell's own

argument on the matter thus: "THe polemical writer deals in fact; the imaginative writer deals in "subjective feelings, which from his point of view are facts." [Woodcock, p.334] Orwell's literary method began with actual experience, but the facts he took from his encounters were the subjective feelings he experienced as a result of what he saw, heard and participated in.

38. Peter Davison, General Introduction to THE COMPLETE WORKS OF GEORGE ORWELL, Volume 1, pp.xiii,xxiv,xxviii-xxix]. Davison, commenting on the in house censorship to which Orwell's publisher's objected his work, indicates that libel actions were a serious threat in the publishing industry at the time. Orwell was asked to edit BURMESE DAYS, KEEP THE ASPIDISTRA FLYING, and A CLERGYMAN"S DAUGHTER with such considerations in mind. Davison's introduction investigates the actual relationship of the characters in these novels to the people they appear to represent, and cites Orwell's own letters to the publishers disclaiming any actual direct correspondence.

39. Tosco Fyvel, quoted in Stephen Wadhams, REMEMBERING ORWELL, (Markham, 1984) p.125.

40. Tosco Fyvel, "A Case for George Orwell, in THE 20TH CENTURY, Sept, 1956. London, p. 255.

41. Woodcock, pp.125,293.

42. Orwell, CE. Volume 1, p.24.

43. Steinhoff, 23.

44. Slater, pp.134, 135, 147, 148, 162, 173.

45. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.500.

46. Orwell, WAR COMMENTARIES, p.135. Orwell stated for the record in his letter of resignation that he was never obliged by the BBC to say something that he would not have said on his own accord. [CE, Volume 2, p.360] He covered himself earlier by stipulation to his superior that he would take an anti-Fascist and not an Imperialist standpoint, and reserved the right to withhold comment when he could not conscientiously agree with Government policy. [CE, Volume 2, p.281]

47. W.J. West, Introduction to ORWELL, THE WAR COMMENTARIES, pp.12-13.

48. Orwell, CE. Volume 1,pp.290,344,379,492; Volume 2,p.57. Orwell wrote that all art was propaganda, that is that all artists sought to persuade their audience of the truth of their particular vision. Editing Orwell's news broadcasts, W.J. West is at pains to indicate the places where the propagandist's cunning may have

invoked the writer's capacity for "fantasy." [See WAR COMMENTARIES, p. 98 for example]

49. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p307. Orwell wrote to Woodcock that it was "of little value to argue... as it is chiefly a question of whether one considers it more important to down the Nazis first or whether one believes doing this is meaningless unless one achieves one's own revolution first. But for heaven's sake don't think I don't see how they are using me. A subsidiary point is that one can't effectively remain outside the war and by working inside an institution like the BBC one can perhaps deodorize it to some small extent."

50. Lettice Cooper in Wadhams, p.132. Lettice Cooper, a friend of Eileen, Orwell's wife, declared, "(Orwell) was never quite sure if by being in the BBC he was losing his integrity. I think he felt it was matter of defending the bad against the worse." In his diary Orwell quoted his own passage in HOMAGE TO CATALONIA where he denounces the journalists who do the shouting while the soldiers do the fighting, concluding wryly, "Here I am in the BBC less that 5 years after writing that. I suppose sooner or later we all write our own epitaphs." [CE. Volume 2, p.470]

51. Orwell, NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR, (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England, New York, New York, 1954) pp.32-33.

52. Orwell, NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR, pp.38-39.

53. Orwell, WAR COMMENTARIES, p.98. Editing Orwell's news broadcasts, W.J. West is at pains to indicate the places where the propagandist's cunning may have invoked the writer's capacity for "fantasy."

54. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.466.

55. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.465. On the 14th of March, 1942, Orwell reviews the calculation on which grounds he broadcasts the notion that the Japanese plan to attack Russia despite the fact that he does not believe it to be true.

56. William Empson, in Coppard and Crick, p.180. Empson's account shows that Orwell, far from reluctant to accept the necessity of censorship, was more stringent and enthusiastic than the officials. Empson describes Orwell's frustration as broadcasts he believed harmful to the cause by "speakers too important to offend," were not blocked. "Well then," Empson relates, "the great organisation should accept the advice of an editor, and simply tell the engineers to switch off the power. The man would be thanked and paid as usual, and could be told later if necessary that there had been an unfortunate technical hitch. He seemed genuinely indignant when complaining that the BBC had refused; surely we could not expect to defeat Goebbels, if we were so luxuriously honest as all

that."

57. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.360. Orwell assured posterity that his integrity had not been challenged by BBC policy or practice: "I am not leaving because of any disagreement with BBC policy and still less on account of any kind of grievance. On the contrary I feel that throughout my association with the BBC I have been treated with the greatest generosity and allowed very great latitude. On no occasion have I been compelled to say on the air anything that I would not have said as a private individual."

58. Orwell, NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR, p.31.

59. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.467.

60. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.466.

61. Orwell must availed himself to listen to German propaganda addressing situations other than that of India. His broadcasts are meant to interpret the International situation for his listeners and he also often refers to the other situations to provide examples of how the Germans treat their subject countries.[for example see WAR COMMENTARIES, pp.37 - 38, 191-192. See also CE, Volume 2,p.490] Orwell would have paid attention to the German interpretation of Churchill's receptiveness to an alliance with Stalin, sowing the seeds perhaps of Big Brother's kind of war where the enemy becomes an ally and the ally an enemy in the space of an hour.

62. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.307. Orwell writes to Woodcock of his perception, gained from exposure to both Allied and Axis propaganda, of what "muck and filth is normally flowing through the air." Orwell defended himself, "I consider I have kept our little corner of it fairly clean."

63. Hawkins, in Wadhams, p.128. Desmond Hawkins believed that NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR owed as much if not more to what Orwell was listening to in preparation for his own broadcasts, than in his own activity: "Orwell's 'Minitruth' may have come partly from the BBC itself, but to be fair I think it came also from what we were listening to. After all, we were listening to the full blast of the greatest revolution in propagandist broadcasting that Western Europe had seen - the German propaganda machine. ... And Orwell's job after all was to unravel it and counter it. I would have thought Orwell would have studied that in terms of a dictatorship of Big Brother and would have filled out the details with our sort of censorship....We were a poor second to that sort of method of conditioning the native population, thank goodness. We were listening to 'Germany Calling," every kind of distortion of truth and 'doublethink.'

64. Viktor Reimann, GOEBBELS, (New York, 1976), p.2, 4-5).

65. Reimann, p. 164. An example is Goebbel's "KDF" - "Kraft Durch Freude." Reimann translates the institution by the leisure time of the working population was programmed and culture organized as "Strength Through Joy." This institution comes to mind when the reader of NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR encounters the multitude of party organized activities around which Winston and Julia had to schedule their meetings, a schedule whose function was to prevent just the kind of independent, and therefore potentially subversive, activity Winston and Julia pursued.

66. Other institutions Orwell would have been familiar with include "The Senate of Culture" of 1935, the 'Reich Chamber of Literature.' Orwell would have been aware of the role of these bodies in controlling what literature was available to the public, along with the banning of specific authors and titles. Chamber's also were in place controlling the film industry, the theatre, and the press even as some of these agencies were also controlled directly by the Ministry. See Reimann, cited above, pp.121, 117, for descriptions of Goebbel's demagoguery and the role of his propaganda genius in bringing Hitler to power. See also Roger Manvell and Heinrich Fraenkel, DR. GOEBBELS, (New York, 1960).

67. Crick, p.416. Crick quotes Orwell's colleague Laurence Brander, saying Orwell "laughed very readily at the nonsense that went on and made it tolerable," belying W.J.West's suggestion that Orwell somehow felt oppressed and victimized by the Ministry of Information.

68. Orwell, CE. Volume 3,p.72. Orwell, after leaving the BBC, wrote to Philip Rahv, "...we in the Indian Section were regarded as very unimportant and therefore left a fairly free hand."

69. Coppard and Crick, p.172.

70. Wadhams, pp.123-126. Henry Swanzy and Sunday Wilshin recall the social club atmosphere at the BBC. Wilshin describes the cafeteria: "You could find anyone in that canteen that you'd ever heard of. It was that sort of place. Everybody met there." Swanzy refers to "a frightful snobbery... a pecking order," and Orwell's tendency to remain aloof from it.

71. Orwell, NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR, p.48.

72. Orwell, NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR, p.48.

73. Orwell, CE. Volume 3,p.123. Orwell writes of the inherent dishonesty of a realism whose mandate is personal profit and not moral decency.

74. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.466.

75. Orwell, NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR, pp.37,40.

76. Orwell, CE. Volume 2, p.39. "I believe that a writer can only remain honest if he keeps free of party labels," Orwell wrote in 1940.

77. Orwell, NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR, p.7.

78. Crick, p.421.

79. W.J. West, captions to photographs in WAR BROADCASTS, photo #21.

80. Orwell, WIGAN PIER, p.167. Orwell denounces those socialists who conceive of revolution as "a set of reforms which 'we,' the clever ones, are going to impose upon 'them,' the Lower Orders."

CONCLUSION

LEGACY: ORWELL INTO THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

"Poet-Teacher in Chains"

> *"Evidently a poet is more than a thinker and a teacher, though he has to be that as well. Every piece of writing has its propaganda aspect, and yet in any book or play or poem or what not that is to endure there has to be a residuum of something that simply is not affected by its moral or meaning - a residuum of something we can only call art."* GEORGE ORWELL[1]

"Real writer's turn all experience to use," declared George Woodcock. Orwell's life experiences informed all of his writing and NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR is no exception. The legacy of NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR is its warning to the intellectual community that their relevance in any political system depends entirely on their commitment to the pursuit and declaration of truth. The intensity and realism with which that message is delivered is indebted to Orwell's own experience of dabbling in the business of the bureaucratic control of opinion and what he learned afterwards of the intelligentsia's co-operation with the established powers.

The political decisions forced on Orwell because of the war, the personal compromises his convictions required of him, the day to day experiences of working as a government employee in a large bureaucracy, the lessons in influencing the mood of the masses he gained from studying, and creating war propaganda: all of these experiences contributed to the message, and the means by which the nightmare of NINETEEN EIGHTY FOUR became a literary reality. It is a mark of the

validity of Orwell's creative powers, that the fiction of NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR cannot be identified with what his private and public statements tell us about his days as a BBC broadcaster and director.

NINETEEN EIGHTY FOUR is neither an indictment of the BBC, nor is it a vindictive satire on the Ministry of Information. It is a novel about Orwell's fears for the kind of world that might result should a certain kind of thinking prevail. It is not a prophecy, but a warning; a political writer's warning to his fellow writers and political activists that to renounce humanity in the name of gaining and keeping power, was to court the universal tyranny of which he first warned in 1936.

Before leaving to fight the Fascists in Spain, Orwell expressed his fear of universal Fascist domination. The socialist battle cry of WIGAN PIER is essentially anti-fascist, because Orwell believed that the Capitalist-Imperialist governments were essentially fascist in aim and ambition.[2] Ten years later Orwell had refined his understanding of the ways and means of totalitarianism[3] but his fear remained the same. Unchecked by the moral impulses of common decency native to the common man, those who achieved power would retain it at all cost, and solely for the sake, as Orwell had concluded by 1946, of power.[4]

After Spain, Orwell wrote that the writer could not avoid being caught up in politics. Declaring his reasons for joining the Independent Labour Party in 1938, Orwell wrote of

the material exigencies of a writer's life which made the ideal notion that the writer to could remain out of politics "no more practicable than that of the petty shopkeeper who hopes to preserve his independence in the teeth of the chain-stores." Furthermore, no thinking person could possibly live in the world as it was, without wanting to change it.[5] These two ideas, that the financial survival of a writer predicated his involvement, whether acknowledged or not, in the political world, and the compulsion to right the wrongs of British Imperialism and the inequalities of capitalism, both reflections of Orwell's own experience as a politically sensitive writer, are reccurring themes in his literary criticism and journalism until his death.[6]

In 1941 Orwell observed that literature in the thirties had to become political, "because anything else would have entailed mental dishonesty."[7] His reasoning was as follows:

> In a world in which Fascism and Socialism were fighting one another, any thinking person had to take sides, and his feelings had to find their way not only into his writing but into his judgements on literature... One's attachments and hatreds were too near the surface of consciousness to be ignored."[8]

This passage reflects accurately Orwell's preoccupations as a writer during the thirties, if not the actual state of literature. Orwell wrote often of his own inability to write during politically anxious times. Eventually he was able to translate this sensitivity into his own identification of himself as a political writer, with the ambition to raise

political writing to an art. Doing so he came to posit that it was the writer's responsibility in society to represent, as he strove to do, the reality of things as they were,[9] and so the writer must remain independent and free of political and bureaucratic manipulation.

The survival of literature depended on this freedom, for, according to Orwell's aesthetic, art represented the subjective response of the artist to his experience. If the artist was not allowed to express that response without inhibition, there could be no true art. Consequently there would be no art under totalitarianism: a totalitarian society "can never permit either the truthful recording of facts, or the emotional sincerity, that literary creation demands," because the political stability of a totalitarian society relies on deception and fraud.[10]

What Orwell witnessed during the war, what he himself participated in as a BBC employee, was the conscription of writers, by force of personal necessity, to the ranks of the bureaucratic propagators of "truth" as determined by government policy:[11] "The tendency of the modern state is to wipe out the freedom of the intellect," he wrote shortly after leaving the BBC, "and yet a the same time every state, especially under the pressure or war, finds itself more and more in need of an intelligentsia to do its publicity for it."[12]

Orwell grappled with the ethics of his BBC activity throughout his tenure there. But he was convinced at the outset, and remained convinced throughout the war, that defeating the Nazis by any means was the first priority.[13] Orwell knew what he was doing as a BBC propagandist, and why. It was important to remember why, as he reminded himself in his own diary.[14]

After he left the BBC Orwell discovered his anti-Soviet fable, ANIMAL FARM was barred from publication by the self-censorship of the publishing industry. His journalism henceforth concerned itself with the integrity of the intellectual establishment. Prior to the war he had challenged the irresponsibility of the "Bloomsbury intellectual,"[15] but after the war his criticism is specific, and refers to those who seem to have forgotten, when working for the ministries in the service of defeating the Nazis, what they were doing and why.

In 1946 Orwell wrote the essay, "The Prevention of Literature," in which he expounded his fear that the intelligentsia, by sophistry and tricks of language had renounced intellectual liberty in the interests of serving power. In this essay he denounced as current the "dangerous proposition that freedom is undesirable and that intellectual honesty is a form of antisocial selfishness".[16] Orwell's writing after the war rages explicitly against intellectual

dishonesty and what he perceived as "a weakening of the desire for liberty among the intellectuals themselves."[17]

NINETEEN EIGHTY FOUR was directed at an intellectual community he believed was being seduced by the comfortable embrace of security within the bureaucratic structures necessitated by war or the expectation of power and control under the implementation of Soviet Communism. "Once a whore, always a whore," he declared rather uncharitably in 1944, with reference to the left wing journalists who had "developed a nationalistic loyalty towards the USSR."[18] The job of the intelligentsia was to recognize and denounce dishonest policies, and not propagate lies according to the dictation of party leadership.

In its own way, the very war against Fascism in which Orwell himself participated, had engendered the practice of compliancy and adherence to bureaucratic policy rather than individual opinion and judgement. Habits of mental obedience and the practice of representing reality according to terms dictated by others rather than with reference to one's own experience, were what Orwell feared would undermine resistance to the techniques of deception and distortion by which totalitarian regimes gained and retained power. A total society, he wrote in 1946, is that in which "the ruling class has lost its function but succeeds in clinging to power by force or fraud."[19] Such a tyranny would inevitably depend on

its intellectual community to write its propaganda.[20] This is what Orwell saw happening during the war.

What if the mental habits engendered by the exigencies of war persisted? Orwell's self appointed task after leaving the BBC and finding that self-censorship was as rampant outside of the government agencies as within, was to thwart such a progress. Scathingly, and often to excess, Orwell challenged mental dishonesty where he perceived it to be at work, and formulated a vision of the collaboration of those whose proper work as writers was to represent the truth as they experienced it, with those who would gain and keep power by deceit and distortion.

NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR is a warning to writers. Maintain your independence from all but the dictates of your own conscience, or end up, as did Winston Smith, manipulating meaningless bits of information in the service of a self perpetuating lie in which you will be trapped. Literature, Orwell wrote, was, "an attempt to influence the viewpoint of one's contemporaries by recording experience."[21] History, should represent, as did his HOMAGE TO CATALONIA, the best effort of a writer to represent his own experience however inevitable the influence of personal bias on his account.[22] In NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR, however neither history or literature represents a true accounting of experience. Writers, in NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR, engage themselves in creating, and recreating history according to party directive.

In 1942 Orwell recalled saying to Arthur Koestler, "History stopped in 1936." He was referring to his discovery in the Spanish Civil War that what was reported in the papers bore no relation to what actually happened: "I saw, in fact, history being written, not in terms of what happened but of what ought to have happened according to various 'party lines.'[23] The theory that the writing of history might become nothing more than an exercise in creating and recreating party fiction represented by Winston's work in the Ministry of Truth, had its roots in Orwell's Spanish experience. The intensity of the fear expressed in NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR derives from his personal experience of the ease with which he fell into his own performance as a propagandist in the BBC.

Orwell's concerns had their origins in the Socialist - Fascist tensions of the thirties, and the moral dilemmas forced on him by a war which pitted Capitalist Democracy against Nazi Fascism. But the book captured the imagination of an audience much broader than that for which it was written. This is a mark of the universality of Orwell's fears, if not a vindication of his political prophecies. In an increasingly bureaucratically directed society, the Winston's circumscribed mental world becomes more, and not less, a reality with which the reader can identify.

But Orwell also believed that so long as the entire earth was not conquered it was possible to sustain and retain what

he called the "liberal tradition." As he reflected in 1942 on the actual likelihood of a totalitarian future, he posited two safeguards against the realization of such a nightmare: "One is that however much you deny the truth, the truth goes on existing, as it were, behind your back, and you consequently can't violate it in ways that impair military efficiency. The other is that so long as some parts of the earth remain unconquered, the liberal tradition can be kept alive."[24]

NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR is about what would happen if some parts of the earth did not remain unconquered. It is also about how it might come to pass that through the kind of intellectual sophistry which conceded to the misreporting of the Spanish civil war, the truth ceased to exist behind your back. The only safeguard then becomes the intellectual's allegiance to truth. Winston's profound inability to let his mind slide into doublethink, the struggle which is the story of his torture and brainwashing, the final victory of O'Brien and Big Brother over the mind of Winston Smith: the legacy of this story is its celebration of the stubborn ability of the human temperament to seek verification in concrete reality coupled with its warning that it may not survive the mechanisms of totalitarian psychological manipulation. Orwell's originally titled Winston's story "The Last Man in Europe."[25] Intellectuals who manipulate language to distort the truth, rather than use it in good faith, however

imperfectly to determine and define it, risk Winston's fate as that last, lonely, confused and disabled man.

Orwell's legacy to the twenty-first century, long after the Spanish Civil War, the Second World War, and the Soviet Regime exist only in the histories written about them, lies in his honest aspiration to make what he wrote represent the truth to the best of his abilities. Orwell was very much aware of the distorting effect of language: "the art of writing is in fact largely the perversion of words," he wrote in 1940.[26] "If thought corrupts language, language can also corrupt thought," he stated in 1940. But that essay, "Politics and the English Language," focused on the way language could conceal and prevent thought, to instruct and encourage its use as an instrument to express thought.[27] All of Orwell's writing represented his best effort to approach the reality of his own experience through language. It is the example of his aspiration and his clear exhortation that language must aspire to convey the truth that the legacy of Orwell's writing endures.

In 1948 Paul de Man came to America, earned a reputation as scholar and respected teacher, and became the centre, at Yale, of the new Deconstructionist criticism in the seventies. Deconstructionism essentially declares that the association of language with reality is entirely arbitrary and rhetorical. In 1987 David Lehman, writing as a journalist for "Newsweek," revealed that the, by then deceased, de Man had come to

America to begin life anew and with no reference to his pre-war support of the Nazis in Belgium, and his extensive involvement with collaborationist newspapers before and during the war. According to Lehman's research, de Man wrote 170 articles for these papers, advocating the Nazi vision and celebrating the historical justice of its ascendency. De Man, arriving in America, detached himself from his own wartime history, including a marriage and family, and began the new life which led to Deconstruction.[28]

It is no small irony Paul de Man's followers, pursuing the logic of his own disassociation of meaning from language, drew a rhetorical curtain across his Nazi-collaborationist past to rescue their guru's reputation. The revelation of de Man's history was answered with the detachment, following a questionable application of de Man's own critical method, of his collaborationist writings from their cultural meaning and historical significance. Nowhere could Orwell's concern for the integrity and intellectual honesty of the intelligentsia appear to be more relevant.

The hero of NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR is the intellectual. That hero is the writer, and not the character Winston Smith. Winston is defeated, as are all of Orwell's heroes who rebel against the system in which they are trapped. The achievement of NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR is that it was written by an intellectual driven to express what he had experienced as the truth of the world in which he lived. Tosco Fyvel

appropriately enough criticized Orwell for ignoring the real history of intellectuals who did indeed suffer under torture for refusing to acquiesce to the seduction of power.[29] But it is those intellectuals who are the heros of NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR.

No one, and certainly not Winston himself, could save Winston Smith. He knew from the beginning he was doomed. Even before opening his diary he knew it was only a matter of time before he would be found out. Winston's torture and defeat is the legacy of that left wing intellectual mentality which, initially impotent,[30] Orwell saw becoming powerful as the war time bureaucratic recruitment of writers and artists increased.

But Orwell left the BBC. Others, as he suggested in "Poetry and the Microphone," could choose to subvert the system from within before it was too late. If Orwell's condemnation appears complete in NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR the fact that he wrote the book betrays its purpose as a call to arms, a call to truth. Those who would abuse language, who exploit the inevitable distance between language and experience,[31] and allow the theory of political necessity to defeat common sense; those who would suppress or distort the truth in the name of retaining power should pay heed. Bind the writer to any agenda other than that of realizing his responsibility to represent the truth of his own experiences, and we bind

ourselves to the chains of those who would control us by fear and desire.

The critical pendulum will continue to swing from deconstructionist treatment of text to the interpretations of formalist realism. Intellectual sophistry may challenge the value and meaning of narrative representation of historical events. Meanwhile the poignant image of Orwell's animals chasing Boxer as he is so unwittingly carted to the knackers by the controlling pigs, will continue to evoke in its readers a subjective and undeniable comprehension of the nature of political betrayal. Meanwhile the quiet despair in a young woman's face as she pokes at a clogged drainpipe in Wigan will remind even the most comfortable reader of the insult poverty represents to us all.

What of "The Last Man in Europe?" The reality of Winston Smith cannot be found in contrived reconstructions suggested by archival material from the wartime BBC and Ministry of Information. Winston Smith's reality lies in the power of his obviously and entirely fictional existence to evoke recognition of the fragile, tenuous connection of language to experienced truth. This connection depends entirely upon the will of the writer to sustain it, and the good faith in which he employs language to invoke it. It is a connection dependant upon what Orwell called intellectual courage and decency. Winston Smith was never real. Orwell wrote NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR in the interest that the world might never exist

where he could become so. This warning is Orwell's legacy to generations who may never know what it was like to work for the BBC under the aegis of the wartime Ministry of Information.

> *... (the writer's) writings, in so far as they have any value, will always be the product of the saner self that stands aside, records the things that are done and admits their necessity, but refuses to be deceived as to their true nature.* GEORGE ORWELL[12]

ENDNOTES, CONCLUSION

1. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.157.

2. Orwell's socialism, as described in Chapter One represented an idealistic faith in the virtues of the common man. Fascism represented the interests of a privileged few in retaining and enjoying their privileges at the expense of the many. Socialism was the only enemy Fascism had to face because only Socialists acting in the name of human decency could defeat the self interest of essentially Fascist governments.

3. Orwell, CE. Volume 4,p.89.

4. Orwell, CE. Volume 3,pp.221-22; Volume 4,p.289.

5. Orwell, CE. Volume 1,pp.373-374.

6. Orwell, CE. Volume 1,pp.343, 345-46, 415; Volume 2,p.139, See for examples of Orwell's frustrated creativity. In the years of anxiety leading up to the war Orwell wrote of his own difficulties concentrating on creative writing in age of impending Fascist hegemony. He also raged against the fallacy that any creative writer should bury his head in the sand of fantasy at such a time: "Only the mentally dead are capable of sitting down and writing novels while this nightmare is going on," he wrote during the war. [CE. Volume 2,p.72]

7. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.152.

8. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.152.

9. Orwell, CE.Volume 4,p.470.

10. Orwell, CE. Volume 4,p.90.

11. Orwell, CE. Volume 4,p.82: "Any writer or journalist who wants to retain his integrity finds himself thwarted by the general drift of society rather than by active persecution. The sort of things that are working against him are the concentration of the press in the hands of a few rich men, the grip of monopoly on radio and the films, the unwillingness of the public to spend money on books, making it necessary for nearly every writer to earn part of his living by hack work, the encroachment of official bodies like the MOI and the British Council, which help the writer to keep alive but also waste his time and dictate his opinions, and the continuous war atmosphere of the past ten years, whose distorting effects no one has been able to escape."

12. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.381.

13. See Chapter 3.

14. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.466.

15. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.96.

16. Orwell, CE. Volume 3,p.83.

17. Orwell, CE. Volume 4,p.87.

18. Orwell, CE. Volume 3,p.263.

19. Orwell, CE. Volume 4,p.89.

20. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.381. "The tendency of the modern state is to wipe out the freedom of the intellect, and yet at the same time every state, especially under the pressure of war, finds itself more and more in need of an intelligentsia to do its publicity for it."

21. Orwell, CE. Volume 4,p.87.

22. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.296.

23. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.294.

24. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.297.

25. Crick, p. 582.

26. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.20.

27. Orwell, CE. Volume 4,p.169.

28. David Lehman, SIGNS OF THE TIMES: DECONSTRUCTION AND THE FALL OF PAUL DE MAN, (New York, 1991).

29. See Chapter 3.

30. Orwell, CE, Volume 2,pp.93-96. Orwell devotes a subchapter of "The Lion and The Unicorn" to explaining the decay of the left wing Intelligentsia into "purely negative creatures." Referring to the left wing papers, he wrote: "there is little in them except the irresponsible carping of people who have never been and never expect to be in a position of power." The impotence of this social group, Orwell concluded resulted from the failure of the ruling class to find a use for them.

31. Orwell, CE. Volume 2,p.20.

32. Orwell, CE. Volume 4,p.470.

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