

The Utopian Dilemma in the Western Political Imagination

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First published in 2023

ISBN: 978-1-032-43157-4 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-032-43158-1 (pbk)

ISBN: 978-1-003-36594-5 (ebk)

Chapter 16

George Orwell's Dystopian Socialism

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DOI: 10.4324/9781003365945-17

The funder for this chapter is The Gould Center at CMC.



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Taylor & Francis Group

NEW YORK AND LONDON

16 George Orwell's Dystopian Socialism

George Orwell opposed every manifestation of the heroic spirit: aristocracy, caste and class privilege, economic inequality, nationalism, militarism, and fascism. England, to his mind, was “a land of snobbery and privilege, ruled largely by the old and silly.”¹ Identification with the oppressed and contempt for privilege were fundamental to his outlook and motivation beginning with his school days and his youthful experience of colonialism in Burma. His commitment to democratic principles of equality deepened through his years of tramping and studying the poor, and in his own lifestyle he conscientiously refused the comforts of his middle-class childhood, spent, as he put it, among those “few million favoured human beings who live ultimately on the degradation of the rest.”² He was renouncing something he possessed only painfully, being aware that the gentility of his own class position was “almost purely theoretical,” that he inhabited the ranks of the “shabby-genteel,” the “lower upper-middle class,” people whose entire income goes into “keeping up appearances.”³ The egalitarian spirit Orwell found among his anti-Fascist comrades in Spain sparked his belief in the possibilities of brotherhood across class barriers. He had none of Huxley’s Malthusian anxieties about the rampant breeding of the lower orders; instead, he worried about the declining British birthrate and the imbalance of generations it might produce.⁴ His key insight into communism was that, no less than capitalism, it could become the way for an exploitative elite to establish its rule under the guise of the people’s benefit. There was a utopian fervor in Orwell’s commitment to socialism and democracy which no amount of disappointment with his fellow Left intellectuals could dampen.

But Orwell found many of his fellow socialists “unsatisfactory or inhuman types,” unpalatable “cranks” whose fads and eccentricities were hurting the movement by making socialism “inherently distasteful” to the ordinary folk he had striven to know.⁵ He believed that working-class people were baffled by the eccentric mindset of Left intellectuals and that the propaganda disadvantages of the socialist image were truly damaging. *The Road to Wigan Pier* is dotted with salvos against the association of the words “Socialism” and “Communism” with “every fruit-juice drinker, nudist, sandal-wearer, sex-maniac, Quaker, ‘Nature Cure’ quack, pacifist and feminist in England”

(174). Orwell also regretted that socialism, even more than capitalism, was associated with the dominance of the machine and that socialism seemed to promise “a foolproof world” (195), “a world in which *nothing goes wrong*” (193), a world requiring so little expense of energy that it would “frustrate the human need for effort and creation” (200), leading to “some frightful subhuman depth of softness and helplessness” (201). In *Brave New World*, Orwell says, Huxley had seen through the “swindle of progress” (203) which was already making “a fully human life impossible” (191) by removing the occasion for meaningful work and effort. Orwell worried that the prospect of disgusting softness might lead to a “spiritual recoil from Socialism” (187). He could even detect “a huge contradiction” in the idea of progress itself; utopians, he feared, would wind up creating “artificial dangers in order to exercise their courage” (194). And while the need to escape the “repulsive softness” of the machine world seemed to push all of life toward the work-for-work’s sake realm of art, the socialism of the present also condemned the respect for tradition as conservative and real art as bourgeois.

Orwell, then, felt compelled to confront head-on a fact he believed Wells would not confront—that “the machine itself may be the enemy” (203)—while at the same time believing the machine to be indispensable because there is no going back to the simpler world of the past. Socialists must play the role of a “permanent opposition” to the “machine-world” (219) but without giving it up. Instead, to avoid the “spiritual recoil from Socialism” (187) on the part of people who are not already committed to the Left, Orwell urges that socialist propaganda should stress not the “materialistic Utopia” of the machine but the simple moral basis of the revolution—“justice, liberty, and the plight of the unemployed” (230). It is not the absolute state of bliss that socialism should offer but a relative state of equality with the governing class.

The onset of World War II increased Orwell’s concern that the hedonistic outlook of the Left, inadequate in its understanding of the human need for work and struggle, was even more inadequate in response to the demands of politics and war. “The energy,” he wrote,

that actually shapes the world springs from emotions—racial pride, leader-worship, religious belief, love of war—which liberal intellectuals mechanically write off as anachronisms, and which they have usually destroyed so completely in themselves as to have lost all power of action.⁶

Faced with the threat of Nazism, Orwell believed, it was dangerous to abandon these heroic resources. H. G. Wells again emerges as a salient example of the problem, representing those who simply could not understand the threat posed by Hitler and Stalin because they had intellectually distanced themselves from heroic struggle. Orwell locates Wells as belonging to the “non-military middle class” who are left cold by all the inspiring spectacles

of war—"the thunder of guns, the jingle of spurs, the catch in the throat when the old flag goes by" (151). Wells's work is built on the contrast between the man of science and the man of war.

Orwell overlooks the elitist side of Wells and the fact that, by the mid-thirties, his enthusiasm for samurai airmen had acquired a fascistic tinge. But Orwell's oft-repeated complaint fits the pacifist Left as a whole. It was disturbing to him that a lunatic like Hitler could touch the strings which motivate human beings more skillfully than the people who shared Orwell's own democratic ideals. Hitler, he says, reviewing a new edition of *Mein Kampf*, has understood the weakness of utopian hedonism.⁷ "In his own joyless mind," Hitler

knows that human beings *don't* only want comfort, safety, short working-hours, hygiene, birth-control and, in general, common sense; they also, at least intermittently, want struggle and self-sacrifice, not to mention drums, flags and loyalty-parades. However they may be as economic theories, Fascism and Nazism are psychologically far sounder than any hedonistic conception of life. The same is probably true of Stalin's militarised version of Socialism.

Orwell finds the proof of this psychological insight in the practical success Hitler had enjoyed in marshaling the economic resources of the German nation to the service of war, while the wasteful capitalists of his own country are still being served by their butlers.

All three of the great dictators [Hitler, Stalin, and Mussolini] have enhanced their power by imposing intolerable burdens on their peoples. Whereas Socialism, and even capitalism in a more grudging way, have said to people 'I offer you a good time,' Hitler has said to them 'I offer you struggle, danger and death,' and as a result a whole nation flings itself at his feet. (251)

This recognition of the charm of "lofty suffering" over "cheap happiness," to recall once again the words of Dostoevsky's *Underground Man*, and the threat it poses for a rational attitude toward the world, brings Orwell to confront the imaginative poverty of utopia as it is envisioned by Wells and other socialists. Utopia is a merely negative condition, a freedom from all evils. "We all want to abolish the things Wells wants to abolish," Orwell concedes⁸; the trouble, however, is that when this dream is realized in concrete form, it loses all of its vitality. "Is there anyone who actually wants to live in a Wellsian Utopia?" In fact, the prospect of winding up in such a place, of waking up in a "hygienic garden suburb infested by naked schoolmarms" (Orwell's description of the world of *Men Like Gods*), is not only uninspiring but frightful enough to generate resistance. "The desire to avoid a too-rational and too-comfortable world" actually furnishes one of the driving motives for fascism (204). When Orwell wants to identify a

source of relief from the heroic side of life that animates both fascism and those who fight against it, it is not to utopian horizons that he looks but to simple pleasures like the humor of the smutty postcards by popular artists like Donald McGill, vulgar outlets for the “worm’s-eye view of life” which in real life “never gets a fair hearing.” “Like the music halls, they are a sort of saturnalia, a harmless rebellion against virtue.” Playing Sancho Panza to the high-minded quixotism of the middle class, they offer a mockery of bourgeois respectability and the heroic spirit of military culture without pretending to abolish them.⁹

In his contempt for the stereotyped conveniences of the modern world, Orwell can sound like Huxley or even Mencken. In an essay called “Pleasure Spots,” for example, he contrasts the sublimities of Coleridge’s “Kubla Khan” with the air-conditioned “return to the womb” provided by a contemporary vacation pleasure dome (985). It is important to recognize, however, that Orwell’s reservations about utopia are not limited to bourgeois fantasies or liberal daydreams. Human life in general was to him “not thinkable without a considerable intermixture of evil.” “It is obvious,” he says, “that humour and the sense of fun, ultimately dependent on the existence of evil, have no place in any Utopia.”¹⁰ And in his great essay “Can Socialists be Happy?” Orwell surveys the most traditional images of happiness—the various heavens and paradises and interminable Rabelaisian feasts—and finds that all of those, too, would quickly cloy. Even the powerful imagination of Swift, Orwell’s literary idol and model, when he tries to portray the image of perfection, comes up with nothing better than those “remarkably dreary creatures” the Houyhnhnms.¹¹ The spectacle of the Cratchit family eating their Christmas goose brings more joy than any utopia because, for the Cratchits, a good meal is a rarity. “Their happiness is convincing just because it is incomplete” (203). Orwell comes to the sad conclusion that “human beings are not able to describe, nor perhaps to imagine, happiness except in terms of contrast” (207). Utopia is not a positive condition but a mere relief from suffering. The lesson is a stern one—“Whoever tries to imagine perfection simply reveals his own emptiness” (209). (It is perhaps to spare himself from the indignity of this error that old Major, the prophetic pig of *Animal Farm*, pronounces himself unable to describe to his fellow animals his utopian “dream of the earth as it will be when Man has vanished”; he replaces it with an ancient visionary song.)¹² Given the false glamour of perfect happiness, it was necessary for socialists, Orwell writes in a column published in the same issue of *Tribune* as “Can Socialists be Happy?”, to “dissociate Socialism from Utopianism” because “Socialists don’t claim to be able to make the world perfect”; rather, he insists, “they claim to be able to make it better.”¹³

Orwell’s turn against happiness implies a very radical shift away from the common view of human action and from the view of most philosophers. It suggests that, in a deep and very general way, the pursuit of happiness is

a false lead, and we take up this false lead because we do not really know what we want. Orwell puts pain rather than pleasure at the center of human motivation—the removal of our own pain and the imposing of pain upon others by having more than they have; indeed, going back to the classic insight expressed by Montesquieu, Orwell lends credence to the idea that being happy is less important than being happier than other people—or, as Adam Smith would put it, than having more of the purported means of happiness than other people even if those means do not bring the promised happiness. Orwell himself put the paradox of opulence in a maximally ironic form: “The rich lose almost as much by their wealth as the poor by their poverty.”¹⁴ Generally speaking, Orwell does not pursue the dystopian implications of his anti-hedonistic attitude for individual psychology, preferring to keep the discussion on the level of the social imagination. Faced with the dreadful situation facing the world at Christmas 1943, it was easy for him to say what the world would be better off without, but as always, the positive replacement remained elusive. “The world wants something which it is dimly aware could exist, but cannot accurately define.”¹⁵

Orwell, however, does have a suggestion. While the world’s unconscious desire is not for “some painless, effortless Utopia,” happiness being nothing more, perhaps, than a “by-product” of human efforts, he ventures that “the real objective of Socialism is human brotherhood.” The following sentences epitomize Orwell’s point of view.

Men use up their lives in heart-breaking political struggles, or get themselves killed in civil wars, or tortured in the secret prisons of the Gestapo, not in order to establish some central-heated, air-conditioned, strip-lighted Paradise, but because they want a world in which human beings love one another instead of swindling and murdering one another. And they want that world as a first step. Where they go from there is not so certain, and the attempt to foresee it in detail merely confuses the issue.

It is striking that Orwell goes so far as to appeal to love as the alternative to swindling and murder when he might have aimed at a more reachable target—at the fairness, for example, and the respect for human dignity which support individual freedom and democracy. He did not speak of love very often, yet he confessed that the bleakness of the world since 1930 and the impossibility of accepting that bleakness as final had left him only “the quasi-mystical belief that ... somewhere in space and time human life will cease to be the miserable brutish thing it now is.”¹⁶

Orwell combined the belief that his brand of socialism was a kind of mysticism with the belief that, deprived of religion, the human spirit is sadly maimed—that without belief in God, the soulless human being is, in his striking metaphor, like a wasp that does not notice it has been cut in two until it tries to fly.¹⁷ Orwell wishes, then, for something between faith and soullessness. “The real problem,” he says, “is how to restore the religious

attitude while accepting death as final.” The thought leads him to one of his most quoted sentences. “Men can only be happy when they do not assume that the object of life is happiness.”¹⁸ But if the quest for happiness is not the answer, if the religious attitude is necessary not only for private motivation but for resistance to fascism, how is it to be preserved in secular terms? Orwell’s last resort will be the hope of brotherly love buttressed by the love of nature and a belief in basic human decency. Put in the wartime context that was the crucible of so much of his thinking, this meant patriotism in defense of England, a sentiment to which Left intellectuals were reflexively allergic and which he had himself had labeled as an “atavistic emotion.”¹⁹

The problem for Orwell, though, was how to distinguish patriotism of the positive sort from nationalism and its familiar horrors. In one of his most ambitious and penetrating essays, “Notes on Nationalism,” he takes up this task, though the term “nationalism” was much too narrow for what he had in mind. The essay’s subject is group-based judgments, positive or negative—those strokes of false wit by which “whole blocks of millions or tens of millions of people can be confidently labelled ‘good’ or ‘bad’.”²⁰ The same irrationality, Orwell argues, is the governing element in group feeling of all kinds. The neo-Orwellian term “groupthink” would apply neatly to this tendency, though sociologists have used it for a narrower purpose.²¹ The key trait is the “habit of identifying oneself with a single nation or other unit, placing it beyond good and evil and recognizing no other duty than that of advancing its interests.”²² Or, in the vocabulary of *Animal Farm*, “Four legs good. Two legs bad.”

Nationalism is “power hunger tempered by self-deception” (43). Among the general English population, the dominant form is “old-fashioned British jingoism” (45). Among the intelligentsia it is communism. Other current examples are “political Catholicism,” Scottish nationalism, Zionism, antisemitism, and Trotskyism (46–48). People of these mindsets are obsessed and unstable in their allegiances and biased even in their aesthetic judgments, but Orwell’s most impressive observation is how insensitive their commitment to a cause makes people to the reality around them. On account of the “loyalty or hatred” attaching to groups, “certain facts, although in a sense known to be true, are inadmissible” (64). It was simply inadmissible, for instance, for British Tories, that Britain was not coming out of World War II without loss of power and prestige; it was equally inadmissible for British communists that Russia could not have defeated Germany without British and American help. The power of group attachment and pride would not allow these facts to be faced. Even more disturbing, group loyalty suspends ordinary moral sentiments.

There is no crime, absolutely none, that cannot be condoned when “our” side commits it. Even if one does not deny that the crime has happened, even if one knows that it is exactly the same crime as one has condemned in some other case, even if one admits in an intellectual

sense that it is unjustified—still one cannot *feel* that it is wrong. Loyalty is involved, and so pity ceases to function. (66)

With this grim and all-too-persuasive account, Orwell has not made it easy for himself to distinguish “nationalism” in his special sense from the “patriotism” he is counting on to save England from capitalist greed and Left-wing fecklessness. He defines “patriotism” as

devotion to a particular place and a particular way of life, which one believes to be the best in the world but has no wish to force on other people. Patriotism is of its nature defensive, both militarily and culturally. Nationalism, on the other hand, is inseparable from the desire for power. The abiding purpose of every nationalist is to secure more power and more prestige, *not* for himself but for the nation or other unit in which he has chosen to sink his own individuality. (42)

From his earliest writings Orwell was intensely aware of the importance of social status as a human imperative. In *Down and Out in Paris and London* he observes the elaborate caste system even among the workers at the Paris hotel and the order of prestige among the various modes of begging on the London streets. The need to be socially superior to subject peoples and the fear of being laughed at by them are shown to be the motivating forces of colonialism in “Shooting an Elephant.” And Flory, the protagonist of *Burmese Days*, is so painfully confined by the status hierarchy of the colonial setting that he commits suicide after a traumatic social shaming. What Orwell is looking for in patriotism is a form of attachment which can motivate loyalty and sacrifice without status competition or the need to dominate. Such a patriotism, a kind of “honourable bigotry,” to recall Wordsworth’s phrase, would not undermine that individuality which makes generosity, decency, and creativity possible.²³ The social image fostered by this vision would be an England without the empire and, above all, without the tyranny and waste of the upper classes whose position depends upon it. In another essay, “My Country Right or Left,” Orwell acknowledges the unlikeliness of the amalgam he has set his heart on, “the possibility of building a Socialist on the bones of a [Colonel] Blimp,” a socialism that does not neglect “the spiritual need for patriotism and the military virtues.”²⁴

As a personal defense against the blinders of groupthink, Orwell does go on to offer a superb description of the specifically moral effort needed to acknowledge one’s own feelings and to identify the facts they compel us to ignore.²⁵ As his essay on Dickens makes clear, however, while he recognized the power of moral criticism, Orwell was not counting on a moral change of heart to make fundamental political alterations, and certainly not to overcome the three-fold threat of Leftist alienation, capitalist selfishness, and

Fascist violence. In *The Lion and the Unicorn*, his veritably Churchillian call to the defense of England in early 1941, it is to patriotism and the already established distinctness of national character and culture that he appeals—which is to say, to the peculiar characteristics of the English people. He plainly acknowledges that one has to go beyond rational thinking to find unity in a historical entity like a nation that is “always changing and yet is felt to be mystically the same” (342). Yet, while admitting the foibles of the English—their insularity, their anti-intellectualism and parochialism, their lack of care for beauty and nature—he cannot imagine them committing Nazi crimes. There is a distinctive moral quality in English life that is visible to Orwell in a thousand artifacts and customs, down to the “comic coloured postcards that you see in the windows of cheap stationers’ shops.” (In 1984, Winston is constantly trying to make contact with this older England effaced by the regime, seeking it in antique artifacts and snatches of old rhymes.) Here one can find the “old-fashioned outlook of the English, their graded snobberies, their mixture of bawdiness and hypocrisy, their extreme gentleness, their deeply moral attitude to life” (295). “You notice it at the instant you set foot on English soil.” What Orwell calls “the gentleness of English civilization,” though “mixed up with barbarities and anachronisms,” can also be seen in the fact that off-duty British Army officers do not wear uniforms and that the goose-step—“simply an affirmation of naked power”—has never been adopted by the English military. It is not that English officers would not enjoy goose-stepping but that, if they did, the common people of England would have the freedom to laugh them out of it (297). Elsewhere Orwell concedes that English gentleness is due not to some natural goodness but to the relative security and wealth of England compared with other countries, but that makes it no less real.²⁶ He was encouraged that, during World War II, the British press had not demonized the Germans to the same extent as in the First, nor had it returned to the term *Hun*. Such names, he believed, do more harm than dropping bombs on people because, though we are all individually going to die, hateful terms damage “the fabric of civilization” and undermine the basis of peace for future generations.²⁷

In the menace of the early Forties, then, Orwell came to pin his hopes for the future on two resources he labeled “mystical”—a socialist dream of love that could not and *should* not be fully articulated or made concrete and a national sense of unity based on the pre-rational or unconscious but nonetheless deeply binding fabric of social life. At the moment, the heroic note of patriotic resistance to evil was more urgently needed than the note of class solidarity and brotherhood, and it is not hard to see why. Fascism, abetted by Left pacifism, posed a far stronger threat than capitalism, and there was also the hope that the collective effort to defeat Hitler would require the nationalizing of industry and the demolition of the wasteful class system, bringing about the socialist revolution Orwell longed for. After all, hadn’t Hitler’s victories in France already served as a “debunking” of capitalism?²⁸ If Orwell’s critique of a too-passive socialist hedonism in this

period makes him sound like a dystopian socialist, that is partly because the unhappiness of war concealed the promise of a revolutionary silver lining—that England, under the pressure of Nazi aggression, might assume, through “equality of sacrifice,” what Orwell calls its “true shape,” which is to say its socialist character (324). Years later Cyril Connolly remembered how congenial Orwell found the wartime atmosphere. “He felt enormously at home in the Blitz, among the bombs, the bravery, the rubble, the shortages, the homeless, the signs of rising revolutionary temper.”²⁹ Orwell saw even the wartime shortages and the shift toward cheaper, less passive entertainments like games, local sports, and literature as already improving the tone and character of English culture.³⁰ He would have liked the government’s clothes-rationing policy—which was making snobbish class symbols like dinner jackets and top hats hard to find—made permanent after the war.³¹

It was during this same period that Orwell was also beginning to take up the political problem of utopia—not that socialism would be too weak and flabby-minded to face fascism but that it would itself become heroic and conservative enough to threaten democracy. The shift of emphasis corresponds with a change of focus from Hitler and Nazism to Stalin and communism as the primary threat. *Animal Farm* treats this theme with reference to the Soviet Union, showing with biting humor how the Bolsheviks coopted the revolution merely in order to replace the oppressive capitalist elite with a new and equally exploitative ruling class, thus fulfilling Bakunin’s famous prediction. The fact that this witty beast-fable could have such an impact lends credence to Orwell’s observation that people are aware of more than they admit to themselves; the mere clarity of the picture was politically significant and the fact that it was written at a time when England was still allied with the Russians made its message all the more salient, and indeed more controversial. England’s most prestigious editors, including T. S. Eliot, refused to publish *Animal Farm*.³² Orwell was determined to highlight facts which groupthink made it almost impossible to admit.

1984 goes beyond *Animal Farm*’s rueful and witty demonstration of how easily heroic psychology can exploit dreams of utopia and turn them into nightmares. The playing out of the totalitarian scenario on English soil and under the garbled name of English Socialism (“Ingsoc”) made it easy for early readers to take the novel as an attack on the British Labour Party, but its subject is far more general (565–70). As Orwell and his publisher emphasized, the book is not a prediction but a warning. It is also a satirically hyperbolic compendium of things that had already happened.³³ The story is set in the grubby, shortage-ridden atmosphere of post-war London, whose hardships, rather than producing cross-class solidarity, are being used to whip up nationalist hatred. The novel’s protagonist, Winston Smith, with his plebeian surname, also bears the name of Britain’s wartime leader, which makes him a distinctly British everyman and a figure of its national destiny, reminding the reader of England’s survival of the Nazi onslaught while suggesting that even the most resilient elements in the

English character could be destroyed by a sufficiently powerful enemy. Big Brother is clearly Comrade Stalin, an icon of leader-worship magnified in his ever-vigilant image. Soviet propaganda and torture were the models for “doublethink,” the “Thought Police,” and the “Ministry of Truth.” The Spanish war had taught Orwell all about them, particularly in the way the events on the peninsula had been distorted by participants on every side. Orwell returned to this theme in an unpublished essay on Spain, written at an undetermined later date, where he notes that as recently as 1925 it hadn’t seemed possible to imagine the “shifting phantasmagoric world in which black may be white tomorrow and yesterday’s weather can be changed by decree.”³⁴ The distortions of “nationalist” thinking and “all-prevailing schizophrenia” were in some ways an even more irresistible form of doublethinking humbug in democratic societies than in communist ones.³⁵ The disappearance of the past, the erasure of its human reality, as practiced by the Soviets and many others, was one of the things that Orwell found most disturbing about history in general. It frightened him to think of the hundreds of millions of slaves whose names and labors had been erased from ancient history.³⁶ In *1984*, O’Brien, interrogating Winston Smith in the Ministry of Love, tells him “You will never have existed.”³⁷

The truth-suppressing abuse of language satirized in *1984* was another trend that Orwell famously observed in the political writing of his own time, one that the regime of Oceania would only take to an extreme. And *1984*’s division of the world into rival superstates run by a managerial elite who keep their citizens under control with unwinnable but never-ending wars was a projection of current trends that Orwell found very plausible as an account of what had been happening over the last fifty years. Clearly, the mad logic exposed in *1984* was only a Swiftian exaggeration and intensification of what Orwell saw already happening across the globe.

The novel’s account of superstates is presented in a document called “The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism” (184) given to Winston as a means of entrapment by his torturer, O’Brien, under the pretense that it was written by Emmanuel Goldstein, the novel’s version of Leon Trotsky (originally Lev Bronstein). “Goldstein” is nothing but a propaganda vehicle for the regime, the bogeyman face of the subversive opposition just like Snowball in *Animal Farm*. Later in the story, O’Brien reveals that he himself is one of the document’s authors, telling Winston that it is accurate as a description of the current world, though the program of resistance it proposes is absurd (261). The coming of superstates frozen in static opposition to each other was actually predicted in a widely discussed book called *The Managerial Revolution* by the American political theorist James Burnham, whose thinking Orwell followed closely through the mid-1940s. In Orwell’s account, Burnham highlights the increasing dominance of technocratic managers across the globe, the “business executives, technicians, bureaucrats and soldiers” who constitute a new elite class

shaping the masses to their own ends.³⁸ “As an interpretation of what is happening,” Orwell considered Burnham’s theory “extremely plausible, to put it at the lowest,” but he was harshly critical of Burnham’s general attitude toward politics and entirely skeptical about his predictions. Since Oceania and its mirror-image rivals are a Burnhamite fantasy, Orwell’s critique of Burnham is of the greatest interest in understanding *1984*.

Orwell recognizes that Burnham’s dystopian vision of the future was by no means novel. He lists Hilaire Belloc, G. K. Chesterton, Jack London, Wells, Zamyatin, Huxley, Peter Drucker, and F. A. Voigt as precursors (1054–1055). (He could have added that Burnham’s managerial class is the dark and perverted version of Wells’s heroically progressive *samurai*.) For Orwell, what sets Burnham apart from these precursors is his attempt to diagnose the “managerial revolution” as an inevitable development on a world scale (1055). Burnham’s key error is taking it for granted that the future must be like the past, that fundamental change is not possible, historical revolutions bringing only more of the same. Burnham sees history as nothing but a merry-go-round of regimes replacing one another, aided by empty political slogans like liberty or democracy or even utopia—all “humbug ... covering the ambitions of some new class which is elbowing its way into power” (1053).

This is, of course, the very process that Orwell had depicted in *Animal Farm*. But he insists that the fact that things have happened this way does not mean they must keep happening this way in the future. Burnham goes wrong in believing that power is the only driver of history, whereas, as Orwell tells Jonathan Swift in an imaginary interview, human beings are not condemned to repeat the past; “human society, and therefore human nature, is capable of change.”³⁹ Orwell sees Burnham’s kind of historical determinism as a tendency to worship the current victors. Burnham is “fascinated with the spectacle of power.”⁴⁰

Burnham’s Machiavellianism and submission to the power of the victors make him no different from the Left intellectuals Orwell was always mocking except that Burnham is clearer in his view of the present and more serious in following out the implications of his vision. He has “intellectual courage” (1223). But Orwell takes an unmistakable delight in showing how far from the mark were Burnham’s predictions of the future, especially regarding Hitler’s inevitable victory. Orwell is also astonished that a person of Burnham’s gifts can take a morally neutral view of the Nazis. Amoral observers like Burnham do not understand that evil has a self-limiting character, that “the crimes and follies of the Nazi régime” had to lead “by one route or other to disaster” (1072). This makes it impossible to believe that Orwell’s ultimate attitude was one of despair.

Along with his ringing refutation of Burnham’s historical determinism, Orwell offers an explanation of why Burnham is clinging to an out-of-date conception of society from the early sixteenth century. It can “only be because his own power instinct leads him to brush aside any suggestion that

the Machiavellian world of force, fraud, and tyranny may somehow come to an end" (1070). This makes Burnham's theory an important symptom of the age. It is a variant, "an American variant," of the "power-worship" so pervasive among intellectuals, including the Soviet rulers and the British communists. They themselves all belong to Burnham's "managerial class," the class of intellectuals, scientists, technocrats, and politicians, "middling people who feel themselves cramped by a system that is still partly aristocratic, and are hungry for more power and more prestige" (1071). Such "middling people" are driven to look favorably on the Soviet Union as a place where intellectuals like them are in charge. Thus, Burnham's theory, rather than being a key to the future, is merely a symptom of the ambitions of the intellectual class (1071).

There is a real danger in Orwell's diagnosis, for while it reduces Burnham's theory to a mere rationalization driven by lust for power, the currency of thinkers like Burnham and that of the Machiavellians Orwell sees on the Left, provides evidence for Burnham's "realist" thesis. Everywhere intellectual elites are taking over and supporting a power philosophy which puts people like them in charge. Given that *1984* not only furnishes a broad exposition of Burnham's theory but a supremely vivid portrayal of the theory in action, Orwell was posing a difficult task for the reader who wants to distinguish Burnham/Goldstein's view from Orwell's own. Shortly after the publication of *1984*, Orwell felt it necessary to issue a statement through his publisher denying that the book was a prediction of the inevitable, though he repeats Burnham's superstate theory while doing so. "Allowing for the book being after all a parody," he writes, "something like NINETEEN-EIGHTY FOUR *could* happen." The statement goes on to specify that the envisioned danger lies in "the acceptance of a totalitarian outlook by intellectuals of all colours" and that this danger is present not among the members of the present Labour government, "nurtured in a Liberal tradition," but in the younger generation among whom "the seeds of totalitarian thought are probably widespread." The key point is "*Don't let it happen. It depends on you.*"⁴¹

The notion of parody is difficult to apply here. Burnham's thesis itself is not being parodied in *1984*; it is borne out by the state of things as presented in the novel and, though its implementation is carried to absurd extremes, they are the very extremes that Orwell has been witnessing in the politics of his own era. What Orwell seems to be saying with his portrayal of Oceania is that the power philosophy of totalitarianism, with its erasure of history and truth, and its need for contradictory logic—"schizophrenia" or "doublethink"—may be absurd and akin to madness but, if enough people give in to it, civilization could be destroyed, either forever or for a very long time. The prospect was so frightening to Orwell that he could prefer a future dominated by nuclear war instead of the three-way standoff between superstates pictured in his novel.⁴²

It is interesting that, in “The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism,” the fictional author does make up for one weakness that Orwell found in its Burnhamite model—the assumption that class division always serves the same purpose.⁴³ Orwell believes this is obviously not the case. In Machiavelli’s day there were only the means to support a small privileged intellectual class without which no progress could be made, but now, with the advent of the machine age, the need for inequality has been removed. In another essay, Orwell explores the paradox further. At the very moment, he observes, when abundance could be available to everyone, without seizing territories or materials or markets, when rationality and freedom could be attainable for all, that is when the worst violence has been unleashed. “The fact is,” he says, “that human beings only started fighting one another in earnest when there was no longer anything to fight about.”⁴⁴

Pure lust for power was Burnham’s answer, but that answer leads to a question the American should have asked: why is *this* the moment when the lust for power is becoming absolute.⁴⁵ The answer given in Goldstein’s imaginary treatise is that the dissemination of prosperity was threatening to destroy “hierarchical society.” In a world where the good things of life were widely distributed, “wealth would confer no distinction.”⁴⁶ The continuous war policy of the regime of Oceania, therefore, is aimed not at victory but at destroying enough resources to justify the chronic poverty and shortages which keep social distinction in play. It does so all the more effectively because “scarcity increases the importance of small privileges and thus magnifies the distinction between one group and another” (191). Oceania, then, is an “anti-utopia” in the strongest sense, a regime designed to keep the utopian goals of equality and general happiness from being achieved.

Based on Goldstein’s treatise, it appears that Orwell sees totalitarianism as a reflex of the heroic need for distinction in the face of capitalist-democratic leveling, a development akin to fascism, but curiously enough, that does not turn out to be the final answer to Burnham’s neglected question about why the power crisis has emerged at this particular time. Just as Winston gets to the part of Goldstein’s treatise containing the “central secret” about the “original motive, the never-questioned instinct that led to the seizure of power and brought *doublethink*, the Thought Police, continuous warfare, and all the other necessary paraphernalia into existence,” he quits reading in mid-sentence, distracted by Julia’s silence, and never has a chance to resume (217). Later, it will be his torturer, O’Brien, who answers the question for him. Winston thinks he knows what O’Brien will say—“that the Party did not seek power for its own ends, but only for the good of the people.” Winston is expecting O’Brien to play the role of the Grand Inquisitor, making the argument that “the choice for mankind lay between freedom and happiness, and that, for the great bulk of mankind, happiness was better” (262). But O’Brien treats that idea with contempt. “The Party,” he tells Winston,

seeks power entirely for its own sake. We are not interested in the good of others; we are interested solely in power. Not wealth or luxury or long life or happiness; only power, pure power. What pure power means you will understand presently. (263)

In the end, the essence of Big Brother is neither the need for heroic distinction cited in the Goldstein treatise nor the misguided utopianism of a Grand Inquisitor but this more absolute will to power.

O'Brien insists that this honesty about the desire for power sets the regime of Oceania apart from previous oligarchies, all of which made use of some ideology to justify their position, an ideology in which they themselves at least in part believed. Such "cowards and hypocrites," he says, "never had the courage to recognize their own motives" (263). They pretended their regimes were a way station on the road to utopia. For the Big Brother state, O'Brien explains, there is nothing but power and no further aim than maintaining power. "Power is not a means; it is an end.... The object of persecution is persecution. The object of torture is torture. The object of power is power" (263). Means and ends have collapsed into identity.

The simplicity of this logic is absolute. O'Brien is at pains to insist that the world he is creating is "the exact opposite of the stupid hedonistic Utopias that the old reformers imagined" (267). It will be "a world of fear and treachery and torment" in which the liberal idol of progress becomes "progress toward more pain." Family will be demolished and sexual love channeled into hate. Even the orgasm will eventually be abolished. O'Brien ends his account with a famous, typically concrete Orwellian metaphor—"If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face—forever."⁴⁷

Orwell's vision of totalitarianism is of a pure anti-utopia, its vision of brotherhood as intentionally cruel and hateful as utopia is kind and happy. It is also just as perfectionistic, but in a way that cannot be rational in secular terms. It is driven by something more absolute than status hunger. Not even the most "abject submission" will satisfy it (255). Winston must surrender of his own free will, just as the Christian God would demand. "I shall save you. I shall make you perfect," O'Brien tells him (244). O'Brien "had the air of a doctor, a teacher, even a priest" (245). A heretical Winston is cosmically unacceptable, "a flaw in the pattern" (255). It is "intolerable to us," O'Brien tells him, "that an erroneous thought should exist anywhere in the world, however secret and powerless it may be." Winston can recognize that O'Brien's is mad, that he is speaking with "a lunatic intensity," yet O'Brien's mind "*contained* Winston's mind" with godlike comprehension. It is not, of course, really intellectual power that Winston is responding to but the magnitude of O'Brien's power itself. "We are the priests of power. God is power" (264).

It is something of a puzzle that, among the literary dystopias, Orwell's is perhaps the most religious in form and motivation and also perhaps the

most purely sadistic, even though Orwell himself rejected the lapsarian religious view of human nature and made a creed of human decency. Oceania has, of course, all of the practical, secular aspects of totalitarianism that Orwell obsessively warned about—its destruction of truth and logic to the point of “collective solipsism” (266), its spasmodic alterations of the past, its distortions of language, and so on. But its ultimate model is the Catholic Inquisition. It wants to dominate not just Winston’s body but his entire mind and soul. Orwell always considered the Catholic Church to be a major obstacle to a socialist future,⁴⁸ and Oceania possesses one of the Church’s most frightening qualities—its meritocratic rather than hereditary form, which gives it special longevity.⁴⁹ Still more important, though, for explaining Orwell’s vision of totalitarian evil, was his view that modern people, who largely believe that human life is finite, lack the motivation for the sacrifices needed to change the world, while it is the religious belief in immortality that offers that motivation. Orwell’s fear is that totalitarianism can tap into that trans-individual motivation, leading to a brotherhood not of love but of hate.

It is easy to see Orwell’s hostility to Catholicism as a residue of his Protestant and English upbringing, though strengthened, no doubt, by his experience in Spain. Orwell is in so many ways a moralizing Protestant individualist *après la lettre*. On the other hand, the fact that Catholicism provides the ultimate paradigm of totalitarian behavior was troubling to Orwell because he knew that his socialist desire for universal human brotherhood demanded a submerging of the self in something higher that was directly akin to what he saw in Catholicism. Orwell believed he could see the possibility for such merging of the self in the willingness of men to die in battle. “They are aware of some organism greater than themselves, stretching into the future and the past, within which they feel themselves to be immortal.”⁵⁰ Heroic struggle involves a learning process, a dialectical, almost Platonic ascent in which people gradually rise to the true object of their love. They sacrifice, “facing bullets” for local loyalties, only gradually transferring their loyalty to the human race itself. This is precisely the religion of humanity that Winston pins his last hopes on, and it is described in the very terms used by O’Brien—an overcoming of mortality by the merging of the human cell into the great common organism, only for Orwell that common organism is not the Kingdom of God but “humanity,” the Brotherhood of Man, a brotherhood demonstrated most clearly in heroic martial behavior. Orwell sees socialist humanity and totalitarianism as competing for the role of superorganism once occupied by the Catholic Church. In 1940, wartime solidarity was priming his optimism for social progress. In 1945 he was still capable of believing that human brotherhood could be achieved based on an argument he often mocked when applied to communism—that true socialism had never really been tried and that “no serious effort has been made to eliminate the power instinct.”⁵¹ It is hard to imagine what form the “elimination” of such an instinct could possibly take; the process has

an “Orwellian” sound which does not suit the author who inspired that adjective. The great organism of humanity would have to be the socialist alternative to Big Brother, and Orwell still hoped for such a brotherhood, though he also saw how easily the collectivist instinct could be perverted into its totalitarian opposite. It is interesting to reflect that Dostoevsky, who thought of the Catholic Church as the Antichrist, could find a sympathetic note in the misguided utopianism of the Grand Inquisitor, while Orwell’s inquisitor is a figure of pure evil with no pretense to utopian idealism.

Orwell’s entire career was an intense struggle with the utopian dilemma. For the most part he recoiled from the religious character of utopian perfection, hoping to moderate socialist goals—from happiness to brotherhood, from perfection to making things better. He sought a place for patriotism that was not based on “nationalism” and “competitive prestige,” yet he struggled to imagine a world from which the “power instinct” could be eliminated. His final vision of that instinct was not of mere status competition but of a merging of the individual in a larger, social organism, but he knew that such an organism could be devoted as easily to hatred as to love. He was subject to an irony we have seen before—the irony of viewing the human capacity for sacrifice for the public good as being supremely illustrated not in the brotherly sharing of life’s necessities but in the heroic violence of war.

The enduring power of *1984* depends partly on the perennial character of the issues it addresses—the politics of truth and loyalty, the conflict between individual freedom and state control, and the relation of the present to the past. Orwell devised a brilliant satiric vocabulary to illuminate the treachery of modern politics. But the intensity and extremity with which he presents key issues, his vision of insane, absolute evil opposed only by ordinary human frailty, derives in large part from his vision of political motivations as having an ultimately religious character and so playing out on the widest horizon and with the starkest moral contrasts. Orwell aspired to a Religion of Man but feared that utopian perfectionism could lead to religious absolutism and sadism. This was why, it will be remembered, he preferred Zamyatin’s *We* to *Brave New World*, for its “intuitive grasp of the irrational side of totalitarianism—human sacrifice, cruelty as an end in itself, the worship of a leader who is credited with divine attributes”; in *Brave New World*, by contrast, Orwell found

no power-hunger, no sadism, no hardness of any kind. Those at the top have no strong motive for staying at the top, and though everyone is happy in a vacuous way, life has become so pointless that it is difficult to believe that such a society could endure.⁵²

What Orwell said of Jack London might be true of him—that while he was devoted to social justice, he had enough in him of the fascist’s “delight in struggle” and even “fascination with cruelty” to understand the forces of oppression.⁵³

In his review of *Mein Kampf*, Orwell made a point of putting it “on record” that, though he would have killed Hitler if he had the chance, he was unable to hate the evil creature he saw in the newsreels because there was “something deeply appealing” about his mad but heroic persona. Intuitively, Orwell could understand the fascination Hitler exercised upon his people. “He is the martyr, the victim, Prometheus chained to the rock, the self-sacrificing hero who fights single-handed against impossible odds.”⁵⁴ By contrast, Orwell confessed to an “aesthetic distaste”⁵⁵ for Gandhi, even though Orwell had long favored Gandhi’s goal of Indian independence, admired his political achievements, and, when reviewing the man’s life, could find nothing in it but fearless honesty, physical courage, and freedom from prejudice. Orwell concedes that no one can fail to admire Gandhi; he “enriched the world simply by being alive” (355). Nevertheless, whether or not he was a “lovable man” remained for Orwell an open question, and it was Gandhi’s saintly and unwavering perfectionism which struck Orwell as uncongenial. He begins his “Reflections on Gandhi” with the principle that “Saints should always be judged guilty until they are proved innocent” (352), and even though Gandhi largely survives this strict scrutiny, it is that unshakable innocence which, in a sense, makes him hard for Orwell to love. Gandhi’s conviction that to break a dietary rule would be worse than death was “perhaps a noble one,” Orwell says, but it is also “inhuman” (357). More often than not, utopian perfection has for Orwell this quality of inhumanity, while he inclines toward tragic heroism and imperfect love. “The essence of being human,” he continues, still with Gandhi in mind,

is that one does not seek perfection, that one *is* sometimes willing to commit sins for the sake of loyalty, that one does not push asceticism to the point where it makes friendly intercourse impossible, and that one is prepared in the end to be defeated and broken up by life, which is the inevitable price of fastening one’s love upon other human individuals.

I am not, of course, in any way implying that Orwell preferred Hitler to Gandhi. Indeed, I believe that Orwell was the kind of person who *would* have killed Hitler if he had the chance; he certainly made every attempt to get personally involved in World War II.⁵⁶ What I am saying is that Orwell could not hate Hitler as viscerally as he thought he *should*, while he had to overcome his visceral inclinations to do justice to Gandhi’s virtues. Clearly the reason for this is that Hitler has the persona of the embattled hero, however mad, and Gandhi the persona of the saint, and Orwell has an affinity for the persona of the hero, no matter how much he opposes the irrational and inhumane demands of the heroic imperative, while the perfectionism of the saint strikes him as an alien breach of human solidarity.

Orwell's longtime willingness to expose the hypocrisies and inconsistencies of the Left, his attempt to play the role of the Left's "loyal opposition," as one critic puts it,⁵⁷ did not endear him to Marxist intellectuals, and *1984* was the last straw. Trotsky's biographer Isaac Deutscher complained that it was a book of "fear-ridden and restricted imagination," largely borrowed from Zamyatin's *We*, and that it was serving as an "ideological superweapon in the cold war."⁵⁸ Its "mysticism of cruelty" was a symptom of Orwell's defeatism, probably due to the spectacle of the Moscow show trials of the late 1930s. *1984*, Deutscher asserts, "is a document of dark disillusionment not only with Stalinism but with every form and shade of socialism. It is a cry from the abyss of despair" (126–27). Critics as generous in spirit as Raymond Williams, Richard Hoggart, and E. P. Thompson took a similarly grudging and diagnostic approach,⁵⁹ instigating a major trend in the writing about Orwell⁶⁰ and overlooking the fact that Orwell's perennial faith in ordinary people remains present in *1984*, particularly in the humanity of the "proles" who, unlike their counterparts in the Soviet Union, have not been targeted for discipline by the regime. As Gregory Claeys points out, if we read the novel in the wide context of Orwell's writings, his choice to locate *1984* in Britain seems a deliberate attempt to leave room for the hope that Orwell found in ordinary English decency.⁶¹ There is also a hint of optimism in the fact that both O'Brien and the order he represents are clearly mad and ultimately detached from reality. Instead of despair, it was embattlement and the heroic spirit of opposition that animated Orwell's entire career. If he feared hopeful delusions more than the animosity of his socialist allies, it was because he came to the need for revolution from the other side of the utopian dilemma.

Notes

- 1 "The Lion and the Unicorn: Socialism and the English Genius," in George Orwell, *Essays*, ed. John Carey (New York: Everyman Library, 2002), 303. Unless otherwise noted, quotations from Orwell's essays, reviews, introductions, and "As I Please" columns are from this selection from *The Complete Works of George Orwell*, ed. Peter Davison (London: Secker & Warburg, 1998).
- 2 "No, Not One," in Orwell, *Essays*, 386.
- 3 George Orwell, *The Road to Wigan Pier* (New York: Harcourt, 1958), 121–24.
- 4 Review of *Britain and Her Birthrate* by Mass Observation (September 6, 1945), in *I Belong to the Left*, 1945, vol. 17 of *Complete Works*, 280–82.
- 5 Orwell, *Road to Wigan Pier*, 182.
- 6 "Wells, Hitler, and the World State," in *All Art Is Propaganda*, compiled by George Packer (New York: Harcourt, Inc., 2008), 150.
- 7 Review of *Mein Kampf* by Adolf Hitler, in Orwell, *Essays*, 251.
- 8 "Can Socialists be Happy?" in *All Art Is Propaganda*, 203.
- 9 "The Art of Donald McGill," in Orwell, *Essays*, 383.
- 10 Review of *An Unknown Land* by Viscount Samuel, in *Complete Works*, vol. 14, *Keeping Our Little Corner Clean 1942-1943*, 254.
- 11 George Orwell, "Can Socialists be Happy?" in *All Art Is Propaganda*, 204. For reasons that remain unexplained, perhaps having to do with the journal's

- accounting practices, this essay was published in *Tribune* under a different Orwell pseudonym, John Freeman. See *Complete Works*, vol. 16, "I have tried to tell the truth," 1943-1944, 37-38.
- 12 George Orwell, *Animal Farm: A Fairy Story* (New York: Signet Classics, 1946), 22.
 - 13 "As I Please" no. 4, in Orwell, *Essays*, 501.
 - 14 "As I Please" no. 12, in Orwell, *Essays*, 546.
 - 15 "Can Socialists be Happy?," in *All Art is Propaganda*, 209.
 - 16 "What Is Socialism?," in Orwell, *Essays*, 1005.
 - 17 "Notes on the Way," in Orwell, *Essays*, 256.
 - 18 "Arthur Koestler," in Orwell, *Essays*, 748.
 - 19 "Wells, Hitler, and the World State," in *All Art Is Propaganda*, 150.
 - 20 George Orwell, *England Your England and Other Essays* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1953), 41.
 - 21 The term was popularized in 1972 by the sociologist Irving Janis as applied to distortions in group decision-making. See *Groupthink: Psychological Studies of Foreign-Policy Decisions and Fiascoes* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1972).
 - 22 "Notes on Nationalism," in Orwell, *England Your England*, 41-42.
 - 23 William Wordsworth, "Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*," in *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, third ed. (New York: Norton, 2018), 583.
 - 24 Orwell, *Essays*, 287.
 - 25 "Notes on Nationalism," in Orwell, *England Your England*, 67.
 - 26 "No, Not One," in Orwell, *Essays*, 387.
 - 27 "As I Please," no. 36, in Orwell, *Essays*, 702.
 - 28 "The Lion and the Unicorn," in Orwell, *Essays*, 316.
 - 29 Cyril Connolly, *The Evening Colonnade* (London: David Bruce & Watson, 1973), 383, quoted in Bernard Crick, *George Orwell: A Life*, revised ed. (London: Secker & Warburg, 1981), 393.
 - 30 "Money and Guns," in Orwell, *Essays*, 395-96.
 - 31 "As I Please," no. 10, in Orwell, *Essays*, 535-36.
 - 32 Crick, *George Orwell*, 552-59.
 - 33 William R. Steinhoff, *The Road to 1984* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1975), chapters 10-13.
 - 34 "Looking Back on the Spanish War," in Orwell, *Essays*, 442.
 - 35 "In Front of Your Nose," in Orwell, *Essays*, 1043.
 - 36 "Looking Back on the Spanish War," in Orwell, *Essays*, 443.
 - 37 George Orwell, *1984* (New York: Signet Classics, 1950), 254.
 - 38 "James Burnham and the Managerial Revolution," in Orwell, *Essays*, 1052.
 - 39 "Imaginary Interview: Jonathan Swift and George Orwell," in Orwell, *Essays*, 458.
 - 40 "James Burnham," in Orwell, *Essays*, 1054.
 - 41 *Complete Works*, vol. 20, *Our Job Is to Make Life Worth Living*, 1949-1950, 134-35.
 - 42 "Toward European Unity," in Orwell, *Essays*, 1246.
 - 43 "James Burnham," in Orwell, *Essays*, 1070.
 - 44 "As I Please," no. 63, in Orwell, *Essays*, 1137.
 - 45 "Burnham," in Orwell, *Essays*, 1070.
 - 46 Orwell, *1984*, 189-90.
 - 47 Orwell's picture of power for its own sake as the motive of totalitarian government has been a point of controversy. In the 1950s most critics found the idea of a ruling class without belief in a justificatory ideology improbable. Irving Howe, for example, writing in the late 1950s, shared the common view, but by 1977 he could find the notion of ideology as pure fiction more plausible given that the Marxist basis of Soviet power now seemed moribund, with its gerontocratic elite

- merely hanging on. It became evident, though, with the emergence of Gorbachev, that enough of the Soviet ruling class believed in communism's original ideals to try to implement them. See Irving Howe, *Politics and the Novel* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1957), 248, and Irving Howe, ed., *1984 Revisited: Totalitarianism in Our Century* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 13.
- 48 "Toward European Unity," in Orwell, *Essays*, 1246.
- 49 Review of *Notes towards the Definition of Culture* by T. S. Eliot, in Orwell, *Essays*, 1344.
- 50 "Notes on the Way," in Orwell, *Essays*, 258.
- 51 "Catastrophic Gradualism," in Orwell, *Essays*, 926.
- 52 Orwell, "Freedom and Happiness," Review of Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We*, in *Smothered Under Journalism, 1946*, vol. 18 of *The Complete Works of George Orwell*, ed. Peter Davison (London: Secker & Warburg, 1998), 13–17.
- 53 Introduction to *Love of Life and Other Stories* by Jack London, in Orwell, *Essays*, 916.
- 54 Review of *Mein Kampf*, by Adolf Hitler, in Orwell, *Essays*, 250–51.
- 55 "Reflections on Gandhi," in *All Art Is Propaganda*, 361.
- 56 Crick, *George Orwell: A Life*, 381–83.
- 57 Alex Zwerdling, *Orwell and the Left* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), 5.
- 58 Isaac Deutscher, "1984—The Mysticism of Cruelty," in *George Orwell: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Raymond Williams (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1974), 119.
- 59 Their remarks are gathered in the collection by Williams cited above.
- 60 Claey's surveys the reception history in *Dystopia: A Natural History: A Study of Modern Despotism, Its Antecedents, and Its Literary Diffractions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 431–36.
- 61 Claey's, *Dystopia*, 436. Chapter 7 of *Dystopia* is an excellent point of entry to the literature on Orwell.

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