

PORTRAYAL OF MOOD OF REVULSION AGAINST TOTALITARIANISM IN GEORGE ORWELL'S WORKS

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ABSTRACT

George Orwell in his novels, essays, and journalistic writings brings before the mind of the reader the reaction of a man whose basic tendencies had been thwarted. It is the purpose of this study to show that as Orwell's characters are thwarted or denied these basic inclinations they react accordingly. Their different moods or reactions are the reactions of Orwell himself. The article deals with the mood of revulsion against totalitarianism and its effects upon humanity and literature. In his novel "Nineteen Eighty-Four" Orwell projects present day structures and policies of totalitarian rulers, predicated upon conditions of permanent war and the development of the technical means of espionage and surveillance, to the point of complete extinction of private life.

Keywords: totalitarianism, political writing, surveillance, imperialism, literary criticism, Newspeak, freedom, slavery.

ИЗОБРАЖЕНИЕ НАСТРОЕНИЯ ОТВРАЩЕНИЯ К ТОТАЛИТАРИЗМУ В ПРОИЗВЕДЕНИЯХ ДЖОРДЖА ОРУЭЛЛА

АННОТАЦИЯ

Джордж Оруэлл в своих романах, эссе и публицистике представляет читателю реакцию человека, основные тенденции которого были подавлены. Целью данного исследования является показать, что, когда героям Оруэлла мешают или им отказывают в этих основных склонностях, они реагируют соответствующим образом. Их разные настроения или реакции — это реакции самого Оруэлла. В статье рассматривается настроение отвращения к тоталитаризму и его влияние на человечество и литература. В своем романе «1984» Оруэлл проецирует современные структуры и политику тоталитарных правителей, основанные на условиях перманентной войны и развитии технических средств шпионажа и слежки, вплоть до полного угасания частной жизни.

Ключевые слова: тоталитаризм, политический роман, надзор, империализм, литературная критика, новояз, свобода, рабство.

ЖОРЖ ОРУЭЛЛ АСАРЛАРИДА ТОТАЛИТАР ТУЗУМГА НАФРАТ КАЙФИЯТИНИНГ ИФОДАЛАНИШИ

АННОТАЦИЯ

Жорж Оруэлл ўзининг романлари, эсселари ва журналистик асарларида ўқувчига асосий тенденциялари бостирилган одамнинг муносабатини тақдим этади. Ушбу тадқиқотнинг мақсади, Оруэллнинг қаҳрамонлари ушбу асосий тенденцияларга тўсқинлик қилганда ёки рад этилганда, улар шунга мос равишда жавоб беришларини кўрсатишидир. Уларнинг фарқи кайфият ёки реакциялар Оруэллнинг ўзига хос реакциялари. Мақолада тоталитаризмдан нафратланиш кайфияти ва унинг инсониятга ҳамда адабиётга таъсири тўғрисида сўз боради. Ўзининг «1984» романида Оруэлл тоталитар ҳукмдорларнинг замонавий тузилмалари ва сиёсатини доимий уруш шароитларига, жосуслик ва кузатувнинг техник воситаларини ишлаб чиқишга асосланган ҳолда шахсий ҳаётнинг тўлиқ йўқ бўлиб кетишига қадар лойиҳалаштиради.

Калит сўзлар: тоталитаризм, сиёсий роман, кузатув, империализм, адабий танқид, янги тил, эркинлик, қуллик.

INTRODUCTION

It is evident that prominent British writer and journalist George Orwell (Eric Arthur Blair) (1903-1950) has recently been recognized in our country as the author of the two fictional novels “Animal Farm” and “Nineteen Eighty-Four”, however, considerable part of his literary heritage contain articles and essays raising the line of severe problems connected with socio-political life in the middle of the twentieth century. The central focus which Orwell’s thoughts concentrated on is the problems of deprecation of people as persons, infringement of the freedom of thought and speech along with totalitarian regime and fascism. George Orwell’s philosophy of language and anti-utopian views propose to warn society of the serious dangers posed by totalitarianism and imperialism to a greater extent demonstrating the terrifying degree of power and control they maintained. Till his death George Orwell continued working hard hurrying to warn humankind about the approaching dangers being as a prolific writer on the issues connected to a modern English society and literary criticism. Thus, his works showed his humanistic essence as a person, a writer and a

journalist. His works are true examples of courage and bravery waiting for deep research.

Totalitarian states ruthlessly manipulate human beings, degrading and destroying them at will, sacrificing bodies and minds on the altar of political opportunism without the slightest respect for the value of the human person. One might almost say that the modern dictatorships have displayed everywhere a deliberate and calculated hatred for human nature as such. The techniques of degradation used in concentration camps and in staged trials are familiar to us. They all have one purpose: to defile the human person beyond recognition in order to manufacture evidence for a lie. A society becomes totalitarian when its ruling class has lost its function but succeeds in holding on to power by force or fraud. Such a society can never be tolerant or intellectually stable. Literary creation demands truthful recording of facts and emotional sincerity. Many people believe that a writer can outwardly comply with the totalitarian government and then secretly in his attic he can record his thoughts in perfect freedom. Orwell writes: “The secret freedom which you can supposedly enjoy under a despotic government is nonsense, because your thoughts are never entirely your own. Philosophers, writers, artists, even scientists, not only need encouragement and an audience, they need constant stimulation from the people. It is almost impossible to think without talking. Take away freedom of speech, and the creative faculties dry up.” [8]

LITERATURE REVIEW

George Orwell’s own novels including “Nineteen Eighty-Four”, “Animal Farm”, “The Road to Wigan Pier”, “Burmese Days” and “Homage to Catalonia”, 16 articles and essays in “Complete works of George Orwell” and “The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell” compiled by Orwell’s wife. As the research theme covers the area of journalism, several textbooks and articles regarding the issue have been used, too. Harold Bloom’s “Modern Critical Reviews: George Orwell”, Peter Davison’s “George Orwell: A Literary Life”, John Rodden’s “Scenes from an Afterlife: The Legacy of George Orwell”, Jeffrey Meyers’ “George Orwell and The Art of Writing”, Timothy Garton Ash’s “Orwell in 1998” and Russian critic Vyacheslav Nedoshivin’s “George Orwell: An Innocent Soul” have played a great role in the illustration of Orwell’s life, career, evolution of points and the historical context he lived in. Various critics presented different interpretations of Orwell’s outstanding book “Nineteen Eighty-Four”. Some compared it to Swift's “Gulliver's Travels”. One critic saw parallel structures in Zamyatin's “We”, Anthony West saw it

as an aggregation of facts from past experience, namely, that of Crossgates. Woodcock compared this work with the works of other contemporary ex-Utopians and anti-Utopians. Still others saw in “Nineteen Eighty-Four” a projection of present day situations into the future. A critic in Time magazine compared Orwell's “Nineteen Eighty-Four” to Swift's “Gulliver's Travels”. Swift pilloried commonplace human failings. Orwell projected with urgency the final shape of a modern political drift. In the Yahoos Swift propounded the theory that men were essentially bad and that there was no hope for the world. There is a defense against the world of “Nineteen Eighty-Four” against the dictators, the regimenters, the left-wing totalitarians, against all the ambitious men who wish to impose their will on others. Time magazine carried a comparison of Orwell's “Nineteen Eighty-Four” to Zamyatin's “We”. The points of comparison are the following: In the Russian's novel the characters live in glass houses where state agents can watch them; in “Nineteen Eighty-Four” they are spied on by the “telescreen”. Zamyatin's dictator, the Benefactor, is a counterpart of Orwell's Big Brother. In both, a love affair leads to the undoing of a hero. In both, he rebels against the state, is trapped, punished and spiritually crushed.[10]

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In 1937 Orwell went to Spain in the capacity of a journalist for the Independent Labour Party of England. Once he reached Spain, however, he joined the Party of Marxist Unification, (the Loyalist Party), which was against Franco who stood for Fascism. Orwell recorded the atmosphere, the dirt, the noise, the discomfort, the ragged clothes, the feeling of privation, the lack of training, the lack of ammunition in a book entitled “Homage to Catalonia”. In 1945 Orwell's “Animal Farm” was published. It is a famous parody of the Russian Revolution and its developments. The allegory in “Animal Farm” represents parallel political realities and Orwell's revolt against them. After his graduation from Eton, Orwell served as a sub-divisional officer in Burma for five years. Here he received first hand information on the evils of imperialism which he portrayed in his book “Burmese Days” and two essays entitled, “A Hanging” and “Shooting an Elephant”.[6] He returned to England in 1927 with a feeling of guilt and a strong desire to atone for his past actions.

The late twenties and the early thirties were the days of world wide depression, Orwell went to Paris where unemployment was just as bad as everywhere else. The fact that he was a foreigner made job hunting extremely difficult. He finally obtained employment in a hotel restaurant as a dishwasher. When he could stand the

conditions no longer, he went to London where he lived the life of a tramp. These experiences were recorded in “Down and Out in Paris and London”. Victor Gollancz asked Orwell to investigate the working and living conditions of the coal miners at Wigan, Orwell again projected himself into the work of the people and lived in their lodgings. Being a middle-class man himself he was extremely incensed against a society which allowed such conditions to exist. The result of his investigation was a book called “The Road to Wigan Pier”. After his experiences as a dishwasher, a tramp, a coalminer and bookseller, Orwell was ready to offer Socialism as a solution to the evils of the day. This he presented in a book called “The Lion and the Unicorn”. [6]

Orwell's outstanding quality as a writer was directness. He wasted no time in getting to the heart of the matter. This quality can be achieved only by constant vigilance and study of the best models. His models were Shaw, Gissing, Samuel Butler, Swift, and Wells. The latter dominated his fiction, but Shaw and Gissing provided tools from which he formed his style. In political writing, the thread runs back through Shaw to Cobbett, Swift and Defoe. Throughout his writings Orwell strove to create values we respect: decency, humanity and honesty. Totalitarian society systematically dissolves the firm bonds which unite men in the basic social units, families and parochial communities. The totalitarian society does this in order to uproot the individual from spontaneous human attachments and transplant him into organizations focused upon the cult of totality embodied in the leader. Every kind of pressure is brought to bear upon the individual to divest him of his true personality and of his normal social attachments. He is systematically made to distrust and fear other individuals, and to shift his confidence from those with whom he lives to a leader whom he never sees or hears at close range, but only on the radio or on the screen.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Orwell pictured a society that had hit upon a system of propaganda able to destroy the political past. He argued that when the rulers succeeded in wiping out the past, the ruled must accept the present as Utopia, because they have no basis for judging it. Winston Smith vividly presented this idea to Julia: “Do you realize that the past, starting from yesterday, has been actually abolished? If it survives anywhere, it's in a few solid objects with no words attached to them, like the lump of glass here. Already we know almost literally nothing about the Revolution and the years before the Revolution. Every record has been destroyed or falsified, every book has been

rewritten, every picture has been repainted, every statue and street and building has been renamed, every date has been altered. And that process is continuing day by day and minute by minute. History has stopped. Nothing exists except an endless present in which the Party is always right. I know, of course, that the past is falsified, but it would never be possible for me to prove it, even when I did the falsification myself. After the thing is done, no evidence ever remains. The only evidence is inside my own mind, and I don't know with any certainty that any other human being shares my memories.”[6]

Smith wrote in his diary, “Freedom is the freedom to say that two plus two makes four.” If men continue to believe such facts, and to reverence the spirit of truth in seeking greater knowledge, they can never be fully enslaved. If in addition they will fight for their freedom to worship God, to love a woman, to cherish an ill child, to stand up for the dignity of man and man's humanity to man, then the evil world of “Nineteen Eighty-Four” can never come to pass. Orwell's is the better book in every way, but his debt to “We” is apparent. Anthony West does not consider “Nineteen Eighty-Four” as an attempt to imagine a probable future, but rather as aggregate of all things Orwell had at the back of his mind. According to him, most incidents described in “Nineteen Eighty-Four” are derived from Orwell's experience at Crossgates which he so vividly portrayed in the essay “Such, Such Were the Joys”. [7] At Crossgates the headmaster's wife spied on Orwell, and whenever she caught him doing anything wrong, she reported him to the “head” for corporal punishment. This idea was developed in “Nineteen Eighty-Four” when Smith mentioned in one place that he disliked all women and above all the young ones because they were the bigoted adherents of the Part.

Winston, the main character in “Nineteen Eighty-Four”, worked eighteen hours a day altering records, Mattresses were spread on the corridors. Sandwiches and victory coffee were served to meet the sudden demands. The only aim of this war was to keep the population in subjection, to exert their energies in channels from which they themselves could not benefit. A Floating Fortress, for example, had locked up in it the labor that would build several hundred cargo ships. Ultimately it was scrapped as obsolete, never having brought any material benefit to anybody. Manufacturing war weapons would have the same effect. Another means of destroying the products of human labor was sinking in the depths of the sea materials which might otherwise be used to make the masses too comfortable and too intelligent. Orwell stated that it would be just as easily possible to gather all the surplus goods and set fire to them but this would provide only the economic and not the emotional basis for a hierarchical

society. “War Is Peace” was one of the three slogans of the super state. In the past the ruling groups did fight one another and the victors plundered the vanquished, but in Oceania war was waged by the rulers against the subjects in order to keep the structure of society intact, therefore, it was accurate to say that war being continuous ceased to exist hence “War Is Peace”.[6]

Woodcock in his article, “Five Who Fear the Future”, brought out the idea that Shaw, Wells, Koestler, Huxley and Orwell criticized the world developments of the Twentieth Century, not for the changes that have been brought about, but because the old ideals of equality and freedom have been in peril. The critic further divided the five into two categories: the anti-Utopians Huxley and Orwell, and the ex-Utopians Shaw and Wells in the past and Koestler in our own time. Shaw constructed future fantasies about long lived supermen; Wells wrote about well organized “ideal” societies, Koestler after being disillusioned by German liberalism accepted for a while the social order of the Communists. Wells and Koestler felt that for man progress had come to an end. If the ex-Utopians represented the rejection of man, the anti-Utopians showed that the over development of social and political organization was man's tragedy. In both novels, in the “Brave New World” and in “Nineteen Eighty-Four”, the Utopian society is so powerful that it can crush any spark of that spirit of freedom which the rulers recognize as the principal danger to their dominion, and so the rebellion against uniformity which provides the essential conflicts in both “Brave New World” and “Nineteen Eighty-Four” are efficiently defeated. Not only are they defeated, but they never have any real hope of success, since the work of conditioning has already grown so tight that only the sports and the freaks even think of resisting, and they can be dealt with easily by the forces of the all-molding state. Yet, we must remember that what was presented in these novels was conditional. The anti-Utopians do not consider humanity as approaching the end of a tether, but rather they suggest that if we allow regimentation which appears throughout the world to develop without hindrance then we may find ourselves in a future where freedom, and all the values that go with it, will no longer exist. While their books implied a criticism of the Nineteenth Century idea that progress was inevitable and that all progress was good, they were not anti-progressive.

CONCLUSION

George Orwell's fiction works and articles play great role in literary studies as well as in journalism. His major works and criticism can be widely investigated by scholars and students. The dissertation can be continued in the framework of the

following topics: Newspeak as a special language introduced in literature, analysis of concepts and themes in Orwell's novels; Orwell's role in British media criticism, investigation of stylistic devices reflected in his works. For those of us who live snugly under the democratic way of life, Orwell sounds a rational note of warning that we examine our motives. Hopkinson in his pamphlet on George Orwell claimed that there was nothing new in "Nineteen Eighty-Four". That the war-time world of "Nineteen Eighty-Four" is the same as that of 1944 only dirtier and more cruel, and the nobility of mankind is drained away. From the technical point of view the situations are the same. The world of 1984 is fighting its battles with the weapons of 1944, rockets and tommy-guns. The most vehement criticisms of "Nineteen Eighty-Four" came from Robert Hatch who said that Orwell must make one very broad assumption: that men are a thoroughly contemptible race of beings incapable of holding their place in the world. After examining Orwell's mood of revulsion against totalitarianism we can agree with the majority of the critics that "Nineteen Eighty Four" is a projection of present day situations into the future. It turns a skeptic's gaze on all forms of regimentation, even though momentarily they may seem to be of social benefit. But most of all it makes us examine our own lives with a new eye.

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