Chapter - II

THE CRYSTAL SPIRIT
Orwell's experience in the Spanish Civil War revolutionized his world view and eventually led to such works as Animal Farm and Nineteen Eighty-Four which secured an enduring literary position for Orwell. Before writing Homage to Catalonia, the acknowledged classic of the Spanish Civil War, he had written one polemical essay, "Spilling the Spanish Beans" (1937) on the same experience, besides a few letters from Spain on the Spanish situation.

Orwell, with his newly acquired insight and political maturity, sees through the situation in Spain clearly and points out accurately that the real struggle in Spain was not between the Republicans and the Fascists. It was "between revolution and counter revolution" ("SB", 302).

In fact, it was Orwell, who happened to be the earliest among the intellectuals, political thinkers and analysts of the time to observe with conviction that "Communism is now a Counter-revolutionary force" ("SB", 302). Of course, Orwell had to pay dearly for his bluntness as the Leftist Press nearly declared a war against him. But eventually when more and more intellectuals saw the ways of the Communists from close quarters, everyone realized the truth in Orwell's observation. Nevertheless, the illusion about Communism did not recede completely till at last, half a century after Orwell's warning, has lost its magic spell and has been eventually overthrown in Eastern Europe and Soviet Russia, the very land of its inception. Though not in 1984 exactly the truth of Orwell's prophecy, has been realized in the late

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eighties and early nineties. This shows the foresight that Orwell acquired from the Spanish Civil War exposure. Thus, an open-minded and objective critic like Lionel Trilling comments on Orwell thus:

"And what matters most of all is our sense of the man who tells the truth" (Int. to HC, P.xiii)

And Stephen Spender, yet another Spanish Civil War veteran too, gives his tribute to Orwell thus: "He was really classless, really a socialist, really truthful". (Critical Heritage, 134). David Wykes, on the other hand, calls Homage to Catalonia as "the least distorted of the Spanish Civil War books". (53)

According to Keith Alldritt "...of all the many works of literature in English inspired by the Spanish Civil War, there is none that is more moving or memorable than Orwell's Homage to Catalonia.

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In fact, Orwell's observations in his early letters and his essay "Spilling the Spanish Beans" on the Spanish Civil War and the role of the Russian Communist Party in it reappear in Homage to Catalonia in somewhat greater detail. But the major breakthrough that Homage to Catalonia achieves is its focus on Orwell's political maturity, gained directly from his first-hand observation of the Spanish Civil War that gave a solid foundation...
to his hitherto insecure, vague notion of Socialism. Obviously, before Orwell attained his political convictions he had cast off his last vestige of class prejudice, his grave doubts and misgivings about mechanization and above all, his deep pessimism bordering almost on cynicism. And against Orwell's fast growing political conviction and his faith in Socialism, his earlier emphasis on the physical and biological necessities of the individual with regard to his notion of 'Socialism' came spiraling down. The whole process came off so fast and so dramatically that any explanation, however strong and elaborate, may still appear inadequate.

To recall Orwell's last stand, by the end of The Road to Wigan Pier (1937), he still looked forward to Socialism as nothing "more than better Wages and shorter hours and nobody bossing you about" (154). And what he meant by "justice and Common decency" (154) was unmistakably the economic justice and a tolerable decency in existence, such as, just enough to eat, to dress and to be protected against the vagaries of nature.

But, as soon as Orwell touched the Spanish soil, the revolutionary euphoria which was still there, caught him instantly. Orwell, who came from a class-ridden, money-tainted, snobbish atmosphere of England, found Spain as though it was some earthly paradise. His feeling of awe and wonder is clearly
reflected when he almost exclaims:

It was the first time that I had ever been in a town where the working class was in the saddle. (HC,8)

It may be recalled, till Orwell finished The Road to Wigan Pier, he was feeling disturbed and tormented at the terrible plight of the working class people, but saw no way to ease their plight. He therefore, with some vague, second-hand ideas, looked upon Socialism as the only possible way out. He felt all the more diffident because he acutely realized the deep apathy of the middle class people, who were supposed to be in the Vanguard of the revolution, if there should be any. Orwell, with deep despair and misgivings, still looked upon the middle class to break the impasse as he had the least faith in the potential of the working class. In his wildest dream, Orwell could never think that the working class can really fight for themselves, hence the surprise, the ecstasy.

And the Italian militia man, whom Orwell meets and remembers all his life, represents the new faith that Orwell suddenly had in the potential of the working class to assert their own rights. The meeting with the Italian militia man that features the very beginning of Orwell's Spanish Civil War account in Homage to Catalonia was indeed the 'moment of truth' for Orwell: "It was as though his spirit and mine had momentarily succeeded in bridging the gulf of language and tradition and meeting in utter intimacy." (HC, 7)  

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The Italian militia man symbolized the very cause and the ideal, for which so many volunteers laid down their lives. He writes in "Looking back on the Spanish Civil War":

This man's face which I saw only for a minute or two, remains with me as a sort of visual reminder of what the war was really about. He symbolizes for me the flower of the European working class. (HC, P225-247)

As a matter of fact, the numberless Spaniards, like the unknown Italian militiaman, whom Orwell came across, reinforced his faith in human decency. As John Ferns (1988) rightly analyses this meeting with the Italian militiaman of Orwell: "Here we move towards the human center of Homage to Catalonia's meaning and value." (119). Firstly, Orwell realized, as John Mander would say, "a solidarity with his fellow human beings almost religious in its intensity." (92) Secondly, Orwell developed a massive faith in the ability of the working class population whom he had so long been treating with pity and sympathy. In fact, his final triumph over his class prejudice synchronized with his discovery of the potential of the working class and as such, his pity and sympathy turned into love and respect.

This dramatic transformation itself explains Orwell's conviction about a new social order based upon complete equality and 'common decency' that corresponds to the purest, and the best form of 'socialism'. Orwell recollects his days on the Aragon front:

Up here in Aragon one was among tens of thousands
of people . . . all living at the same level and mingling on terms of equality. In theory it was perfect equality, and even in practice it was not far from it. (HC, 101-102)

The above excerpt makes the point very clear that Orwell's period as a militia man brought him the direct experience of equality which was only a theoretical possibility with him so far. Bernard Crick (1988) points out the transformation in Orwell thus:

... in Catalonia, his Socialism had been cerebral or intellectual . . . the Catalons had made him feel a Socialist and convinced him that an egalitarian Society was possible.(8)(emphasis mine)

As Orwell acknowledges its greatness: "It would be true to say that one was experiencing the foretaste of Socialism" (HC, 102).

Orwell not only felt awe-struck at his discovery of the working class in the saddle, but was still more moved to see the 'state-of-the-art' experiment of a social order based on near-perfect equality:

Waiter and shop-walkers looked you in the face and treated you as an equal. Servile and even ceremonial forms of speech had temporarily disappeared . . . every one called everyone else 'comrade' and 'Thou' (HC, 8-9)

In particular, the thing that attracted Orwell greatly and impressed him most was that, "Human beings were trying to behave
as human beings and not as cogs in the Capitalist machine". (HC, 10)

As Orwell further notes:

The essential point of the system was social equality between officers and men. Everyone from general to private drew the same pay, ate the same food, wore the same clothes, and mingled on terms of complete equality. (HC, 28-29)

Orwell, who was nearly a cynic, with his continual exposure to the poverty and squalor of the working class population since he left Burma, along with his bitter experience as a child in a lower-upper-middle-class English family and his days at St. Cyprians had almost sealed his mind from any possible infiltration of optimism, hope or joy. Thus, his sudden exposure to the classless society in Spain made him mad with ecstasy.

Orwell fondly remembers his short, but precious days as a proud member of the Spanish militia when he says with nostalgia and a feeling of loss: "the Spanish militias while they lasted were a microcosm of a classless society." (HC, emphasis mine)

The memory arouses great regret as well as reverence when Orwell adds:

In that community where no one was on the make, where there was a shortage of everything but no privilege and no boot-licking, one got, perhaps, a
crude forecast of what the opening stages of Socialism might be."

These direct experiences in Spain of the experiment with 'Socialism' in its pristine, undiluted form, which in fact Orwell was dreaming all his life, not only made him ecstatic but also gave a solid foundation to his hitherto amorphous political outlook. Besides, Orwell, for the first time in his life, experienced joy, cheerfulness, hope and optimism in Spain. His deep-seated pessimism almost as chronic as his class prejudice finally gave way like the piles of snow through the long winter melting at the touch of the summer Sun. As Orwell acknowledges: "One had been in a community where hope was more normal than apathy or cynicism." (HC, 102) He cherishes the memories of his brief period in the Spanish Civil War: "one had breathed the air of equality" (HC, 102), and honestly admits the enduring marks of that experience on his life: "And it was here that those few months, in the militia were valuable to me" (102).

In the perspective of the above experience, it needs no great argument to justify why Orwell, despite the subsequent failure of 'Socialism' in Spain, still looked upon his experience as greatly positive and benign: "And, after all, instead of disillusioning me it deeply attracted me." (HC, 103) "This period which then seemed so futile and eventless", writes Orwell, "is now of great importance to me". (HC, 103) For this period and this experience, however brief it may be, laid the foundation for Orwell's political ideas, his ideas of Socialism particularly. As
Orwell regrets, "I wish I could convey to you the atmosphere of the time." (HC, 103)

As Peter Stansky and William Abrahams observe, "His six months in Spain proved the most decisive experience of his life." (187)

Thus, the failure of 'Socialism', the classlessness and equality in Spain, instead of disillusioning Orwell, rather strengthened his faith in 'human decency'. It became possible because the Spanish Civil War exposure was enough to open the eyes of Orwell and to equip him with adequate political insight to see through the things. Had it been earlier, the miserable failure of the Spanish people to establish Socialism could have disillusioned Orwell and thwarted his political ideals instantly. But Orwell, as if by some magic touch, gained an incredible maturity of political vision and reasoned out clearly where the problem lay. That protected him from all possible disillusionment or defeatism which was widespread during the thirties in Europe.

-IV-

It is really interesting to study the process that applied a sort of magic touch to Orwell's political insight and reason in so short a time.

It is not improper to say that Homage to Catalonia is the political autobiography of Orwell, based entirely on his Spanish
expedition. As Orwell admits:

I had come to Spain with some notion of writing newspaper articles, but I had joined the militia almost immediately, because at that time and in that atmosphere it seemed the only conceivable thing to do. (HC, 8)

Sometime later, with some kind of introspection and frankness Orwell acknowledges that, though he had no idea about the prevailing political climate and the war in Spain he promptly enrolled himself in one of the Spanish militias as he "recognized it immediately as a state of affairs worth fighting for" (9). And he makes his main objectives quite clear:

If you had asked me why I had joined the militia I should have answered: 'To fight against fascism', and if you had asked me what I was fighting for I should have answered: 'common decency'. (HC, 46)

As Atkins has rightly observed: "These Spaniards reinforced his belief in human decency" (11)

'The faith in human decency or the common decency', that in turn, consolidated Orwell's faith in Socialism basically grew out of the revolutionary atmosphere in Spain, during the early months of the Civil War. It was a period of incredible decency, when Orwell saw and breathed a blissful atmosphere with everyone respecting the other and the entire social life deriving its energy from an inexhaustible source of mutual love, respect and
trust. And in that unprecedented heavenly atmosphere of Spain, brief though, Orwell realized his moment of truth when he met the unknown Italian militia man. Their short conversation is still more elevating in its spirit and temper: The Italian asked first, breaking the silence and shyness:

"Italino".

I answered in my bad Spanish. "No, Ingles, Ytu?"

"Italino".

As we stepped out he stepped across the room and gripped my hand very hard. Queer the affection you can feel for a stranger!" (HC, 7) (emphasis mine)

The above excerpt of the brief conversation between Orwell and the Italian militia man is truly the Crystal Spirit (emphasis mine) that gave the magic touch to Orwell and instantly made him free from his long persisting pessimism, his last vestige of class prejudice, and above all, gave him a solid foundation of Socialism, by which he meant nothing more than human decency.

But Orwell, to make his experience palpable, puts them down in concrete terms like "a microcosm of a classless society", "a crude forecast of what the opening stages of Socialism might be like" and so on. (HC, 102-3)

Orwell's meeting with the Italian militia man which stood for the final test of 'common decency' as found plentifully in the Spanish Civil War was further reinforced by a number of such
encounters that Orwell ran into, and strengthened his faith in human decency.

Among such memorable encounters, the few that Orwell records in *Homage to Catalonia* and in "Looking back on the Spanish War" are worth noting. They are in fact, as I strongly believe, greatly instrumental in bringing about the transformation in Orwell's mind and art. They are indeed the force behind the magical atmosphere of Spain, despite all its violence and counter revolutionary actions, that gave Orwell a new, fresh belief in human decency and redeemed him from the prospect of eternal damnation into cynicism and misanthropy.

One such experience Orwell had in his Barcelona barracks, when he found a bundle of his cigars stolen. As the revolutionary militia was very hard on stealing and in theory one could be shot for it, a thorough investigation started. And the suspicion fell upon a new recruit, most likely an Arab, a ragged, wild-looking boy. The officer, as usual, ordered him to take off his clothes, but finally nothing was found and some days later, Orwell found himself cornered and was on the point of being heckled and roughed up. On this occasion, among the few who took Orwell's side and defended his action, the Arab youth was one. Orwell still vividly remembers that boy: "But the point is that the one who took my side the most warmly of all was the brown-faced boy" ("LBSW" 232). He pleaded fervently in favor of Orwell calling him the "best Corporal" and later on applied to get transferred to Orwell's section. The experience, so subtle and delicate that it
can best be realized in the context of the seriousness of that particular situation. It just can not be expressed, communicated verbally. But the effect on Orwell's mind and heart was tremendous all the same.

The other such factor that greatly shielded Orwell from the touch of disillusionment and despair was the manner in which the young Fascist officer helped him in his bid to locate a friend, Maj Kopp. Maj. Kopp was an exceptionally courageous and committed officer in the P.O.U.M. Who, like thousands others, was arrested without any cause or notice. Orwell, before leaving Spain, took his last chance to ascertain Maj. Koop's whereabouts. The manner in which the Young Spanish fascist Officer conducted him all along when the spy-scare was at its height and the P.O.U.M. was already declared as illegal and all its men were being hunted down, left a lasting mark in Orwell's mind. Had the Officer so liked, he could have taken Orwell into custody. But instead, the sort of goodness, the nobility that he showed to him left Orwell his admirer all his life. When they parted at last Orwell vividly remembers:

And then there happened a strange and moving thing. The little officer hesitated a moment, then stepped across, and shook hands with me. (HC, 212)

Orwell visibly fails to convey the feeling that went between them:

I do not know if I can bring home to you how
deeply that action touched me. It sounds a small thing, but it was not. (HC, 212)

Yet another incident took place during the period that gave Orwell a tremendous spiritual boost and greatly broadened his ideas about Spain, as a nation. It so happened when, by the instructions from the Russian Communist party, the revolutionary forces were hunted down, a search was made in the hotel room where Orwell’s wife was staying. As usual, in the 'Gestapo style' (ibidem, 213) the search was conducted in the early hours of the night. Every nook and corner of the room was thoroughly combed, but the bed was spared where his wife lay. And obviously, under the mattress even, as Orwell comically puts it: "half a dozen machine-guns" or "a library of Trotskyist documents" could have been hidden. (ibidem, 214)

But the only thing that made such a great difference was the fact that, as Orwell emphasizes, the policemen were Spaniards. And "to turn a woman out of bed was a little too much for them ". (Ibidem, 214) Thus, such are the examples of the Spaniard's high morals, their human values and their generosity above all. About the Spaniards, Orwell speaks thus:

They have, there is no doubt, a generosity, a species of nobility, that do not really belong to the twentieth century. (HC, 213)
It is the Spaniards, with their great regard for the basic human values, their 'generosity' as Orwell calls it and above all, their potential to make a sacrifice for any common cause precisely brought about a thorough change in Orwell's mind and heart. As Alex Zwerdling very rightly observes: "Spain changed his mind" and "...gave him the sense of achieved human brotherhood" (77). As Raymond Williams observes on the change: "But there is also a clear break, from a personal option to a common cause." (56-57) His life-time prejudices, narrow visions, and his restricted ideas about human decency were promptly abandoned soon after he came in contact with the revolutionary atmosphere of Spain like the dew drops vanishing at the first touch of sunlight. Moreover, Orwell's concept of human decency or common decency, greatly broadened with his exposure to the Spaniards during the charged atmosphere of the civil war. Orwell was particularly fortunate to reach Spain just in time, when the revolutionary atmosphere still prevailed with the working class in control, and the elemental virtues of the Spaniards impressed him instantly.

And this exposure, very much like some powerful therapy, worked a miracle on Orwell's mind and thereafter, we find Orwell a changed man. His chronic pessimism, his old doubts and misgivings about his own middle class attitude vis-à-vis the possible reformation toward Socialism or simply a classlessness as he understood initially, and above all, his lack of conviction.
which was primarily due to his absence of self-confidence were no
more found in any of his post-Spanish Civil War writings.

Besides gaining a tremendous political conviction, Orwell
effects a phenomenal improvement in his style of writing. The
'purple passages' could not betray him any longer, nor his
thought-process was clumsy marring the clarity any more. The
change, as such, was clear, distinct and perceptible. As Orwell
frankly acknowledges:

My book about the Spanish Civil War, Homage to
Catalonia, is, of course, a frankly political
book. But in the main it is written with a certain
detachment and regard for form. (CEJLS, 28-29)

The very touch of conviction, clarity, and detachment is
unmistakable in the writings of Orwell after the Spanish Civil
War. As he, with a hindsight, looks upon the Spanish Civil War
with a great conviction, yet detached:

Shall people like that Italian soldier be allowed
to live the decent, fully human life which is now
technically achievable, or shan't they?
("LBSW", 245) (emphasis mine)

He promptly substantiates:

I myself believe, perhaps on insufficient grounds
that the common man will win his fight sooner or
later. ("LBSW", 245) (emphasis mine)

And calling the Spanish Civil War as "class war" primarily,
Orwell asserts thus: "That was the real issue; all else was
froth on its surface." ("LBSW", 240). In every syllable, Orwell's clarity and conviction is well reflected, which was not seen anywhere previously among the thousands of printed leaves he had so painfully published. As David Kubal observes on this point, Homage to Catalonia "produced a greater clarity of idea than before" (112). Kubal further asserts that the success of Homage to Catalonia comes for the "distance between the author and the first person narrator" (108). George Woodcock too believes strongly that in Homage to Catalonia, "Orwell comes nearest to his ideal of writing: 'good prose' that is 'like a window-pane'" (133).

Even as late as 1936, just before joining the Spanish militias the documentary The Road to Wigan Pier that Orwell finished did not have a passage like this:

The struggle of the working-class is like the growth of a plant. The plant is blind and stupid, but it knows enough to keep pushing upwards towards the light, and it will do this in the face of endless discouragements. ("LBSW", 239)

More and more such examples, with much greater frequency are marked as one moves into his other writings of this post-Spanish Civil War phase; such as Animal Farm, Nineteen Eighty-Four besides the major essays and the polemics. As Lee strongly believes: "What turned Orwell from a minor to a major novelist was the Spanish Civil War." (xiii)
However, the discussion on Orwell's Homage to Catalonia would remain incomplete without a few lines on Orwell's freshly acquired political insight and his farsightedness, both of which he developed out of his exposure to the Spanish Civil War complexities. This helped him get over the shock and disillusionment at the failure of the revolution, and later fed him with ideas which go into his great works like Animal Farm, Nineteen Eighty-Four and the brilliant polemics of the period.

Interestingly, Orwell who confesses that he scarcely knew anything about the intricacies of the war in Spain (HC, 46) when he landed there as a reporter initially, soon joined their militia and finally emerged as one of the most mature and frontline political reporters of the period and since then remained in the top flight of journalists all his life.

While many leading intellectuals of the west like Ignazio Silone, Arthur Koestler, Andre Gide and Stephen Spender were taken for a ride by the glamour of Communism, Orwell looked into the future and gave the first cry of warning to the whole world against Communism. That insight, which dawned on him in course of the Spanish Civil War itself, saved him from the powerful wave of disillusionment and defeatism that ravaged the otherwise eminent intellectuals of the time. The God that Failed stands testimony to the disillusionment and rancor that took hold of the great
continental figures soon after their participation in the Spanish Civil War and their first-hand experience of Communism therein.

Besides the brilliant insight that Orwell exhibits in the process, his extraordinary self-control is evident from his stand of great objectivity. Though he was an avid defender of the loyalist cause, he just could not approve of their falsehood. As he reacts exasperatingly,

One of the dreariest effects of this war has been to teach me that the left-wing press is every bit as spurious and dishonest as that of the Right. (HC, 64)

As Orwell puts it candidly in Homage to Catalonia; in the perspective of the intrigues, persecutions, lies and misunderstandings the Republicans were as bad as the Fascists. This very realization had a far-reaching educative value for Orwell and made his political vision sharper and stronger.

Particularly, the whirlwind of lies, hypocrisy, and dishonesty that Orwell witnessed and confronted to some extent (in the face of terrible hostility from the left wing press) soon after he got out of the Spanish Civil War baffled him completely:

This kind of thing is frightening to me, because it often gives me the feeling that the very concept of objective truth is fading out of the world. ("LBSW" 235)

Further, Orwell is once again reminded of what he had told
Arthur Koestler: "History stopped in 1936" ("LBSW", 233-34)

All these exposures that Orwell received and the realizations that he attained gave him a sound political insight on the basis of which he took his onward imaginative flights to explore the remote worlds of the Animal Farm and Nineteen Eighty-Four.

-VII-

Homage to Catalonia is, therefore, the seminal work that anticipates Orwell's major post-Spanish Civil War fictions and polemics, while simultaneously serving as the most important document showing Orwell in his great transition. Stephen Spender looks at it as "a better book than 1984 which it foreshadows". (Critical Heritage, 135). Jenni Calder calls it as "perhaps Orwell's most important work politically" (100). While Lionel Trilling (1952) found it as "one of the most important documents of our time." (V)

Commenting on Homage to Catalonia, George Woodcock calls it as the book he "liked most" (133). Again; while Laurence Brander describes Homage to Catalonia as "the happiest and richest . . . the longest and most satisfying work (21), Stansky and Abrahams treat it as "inseparable from the Spanish Civil War" and further, call it "as much a part of its literature as Man's Hope or For Whom the Bell Tolls." (194)
The manner in which the sonorous concluding paragraph of Homage to Catalonia receives a jerk before it is drawn to a screeching halt is highly suggestive of the sudden change in the theme and atmosphere, and the overall perspective commencing with the first post-Spanish Civil War novel of Orwell; Coming Up for Air. As Homage to Catalonia concludes:

Down here it was still the England I had known in my childhood: the railway-cuttings smothered in wild flowers, the deep meadows where the great shining horses browse and meditate, the slow-moving streams bordered by willows, the green bosom of the elms, the larkspurs in the cottage gardens; and then the huge peaceful wilderness of outer London, the familiar streets, the posters telling of cricket matches and Royal weddings, the men in bowler hats, the pigeons in Trafalgar square, the red buses, the blue policemen — all sleeping the deep, deep sleep of England, from which I sometimes fear that we shall never wake till we are jerked out of it by the roar of the bombs. (221) (emphasis mine)

The paragraph which begins on a brilliantly vibrant note with the ecstasy of home-coming ends abruptly in a discord. The wakeful dream, the rapture is snapped dramatically. Obviously, the sudden awareness of the impending war gives a jerk to the otherwise lyrical flow of Orwell's thoughts. The painful awareness of war and something hideous in the offing that marks
the conclusion of Homage to Catalonia directly overlooks the next novel: Coming Up for Air.

The book, thus clearly marks the great transition that commences with the Spanish Civil war experiences of the writer. There is a perceptible change in the motif and the tone at the very outset. There is no more the cry against poverty and its concomitant circumstances. The protagonist is not in total despair either as it is invariably the case with all in the previous phase.

Coming Up for Air, on the other hand, comes with a significant message of its writer to his fellow-Britons. The message, as such, has much force in it as the declaration of Orwell himself that: "All art is propaganda" (CEJLS 1:492). The message, which is unmistakably the immediate offshoot of Orwell's great realization through his Spanish Civil War experience, is however, two-fold.

Firstly, it tells us that looking back on the past or wishfully residing in the past is utterly futile and meaningless, for the past can not be restored again.

Secondly, with the least reservation or ambiguity it intends to raise an alarm at the imminent war, the inevitable culmination of the organized violence and horror in the wake of the menacing rise of the Fascist forces. For Orwell is fully convinced, as the concluding lines of Homage to Catalonia shows, that the relatively innocent English people are yet to be awake from their
smug complacency and sense of invulnerability.

Orwell, as we have already discussed at length, underwent a transformation in the course of his Spanish Civil War experience. Thus Orwell before the Spanish Civil War does not continue to be the same thereafter. It is his realization of the imperishable human decency ('the crystal spirit' as he would say) and his finding through it, the very core of his political faith made all the difference. Orwell as a man came out with massive self-confidence; while Orwell the artist came out with finer sensibility and greater dexterity to handle his craft with renewed mastery. Among the changes that were immediately perceptible is the shift of his point of focus from poverty to liberty. As Stansky and Abrahams observe in this context:

... it was a crucial step for Orwell himself, determining the shape of his Spanish experience, and his commitment then and thereafter to the cause of human freedom. (193) (emphasis mine)

Besides this change at the thematic level; Orwell's hitherto deep-rooted naturalism makes way for the subtle symbolism hereafter.

In fact, the changes are clear since Homage to Catalonia. Firstly, the documentary-cum-memoir-cum-autobiography that Homage to Catalonia indeed is, the whole book is essentially a protracted account of the writer's quest for liberty and equality, the excitement at its sudden realization and the shock at its loss again. The fact is so conspicuous that Orwell's chronic obsession
With the issue of poverty never shows up again. The shifting of the focus is clearly reflected in the following extract in which Orwell dismisses the purely materialistic preoccupation of the socialists who believe that "all problems lapse when one's belly is full" (CEJLS, III : 127). As Orwell strongly refutes, he asserts that "the truth is the opposite" and continues:

When one's belly is empty, one's only problem is an empty belly. It is when we have got away from drudgery and exploitation that we shall really start wandering about man's desire and the reason for his existence. (CEJLS III : 127)

The powerful exposure that Orwell received during his militia days in Spain thoroughly convinced him of the truth that man does not live by bread alone; hence the change, the transformation. Never again does the theme of poverty recur in any of the novels or polemics of Orwell after the Spanish Civil War. Such was the impact, so remarkable, so massive.

Secondly, from the point of view of prose-style, Orwell's post-Spanish Civil War writings commencing with Homage to Catalonia till Nineteen Eighty-Four show tremendous clarity in thought and representation as against the clumsy, vague and decorative stuff of his previous writings. As John Ferns (1988) asserts:

Moving through politics to human nature, Orwell found a simple, sincere and flexible language in which to speak the truth. (125)
Besides, Orwell's naturalism gives way to symbolism soon after the Spanish Civil War. As Orwell acknowledges to this effect:

I wanted to write enormous naturalistic novels with unhappy endings... and also full of purple passages in which words were used partly for the sake of their sound. (CEJLS, I:25)

But no more "the purple passages, the sentence without meaning... and humbug..." (CEJLS, I:30) appear in the later writings of Orwell.

Thus Orwell achieves what he had been aiming at all his life, like Hemingway's 'fifth dimension': "Good prose like a window pane" (CEJLS, I:30) And Orwell takes care to garnish this prose with a pint of symbolism as it becomes evident from Homage to Catalonia itself which continues till the very last.

Orwell, soon after leaving Spain (June '37) found himself down with tubercular lungs and on the advice of the doctors and the charity of a friend, moved to the African/Morocco for a change to a warmer climate. His first post-Spanish Civil War novel, Coming up for Air, was written in Morocco between September 1938 and March 1939. The book which contained Orwell's profound political insight acquired from the Spanish Civil War perspective clearly looked forward to the imminent war that loomed large on the western skyline. As a matter of fact, the second world war broke out shortly after this novel was pub-
lished. The book, indeed, catches the mood of the period very effectively, reflecting the prevailing tension, uncertainty, and fear with minute accuracy.

Before anyone could realize it Orwell had detected the cloak-and-dagger nature of the Russian Communist Party and summarily dismissed it as a "Counter revolutionary force" ("SB", 302). By Orwell's reasoning, Communism was as bad as Fascism, rather more insidious and unpredictable. Thus, despite this shocking realization Orwell could promptly pull himself together, unlike scores of intellectuals later who found themselves in pieces after all their faith crashed with the Communist betrayal, and prepared himself to raise a timely alarm to those who were still "sleeping the deep, deep sleep of England". And Orwell was afraid, they shall never wake till they were "jerked out of it by the roar of bombs." (HC, 221)

Coming Up for Air is peculiarly different from all the novels that Orwell wrote before and the ones he wrote after as well. Its peculiarity lies in the fact that the novel is written in the first-person narrative from beginning to the end and the protagonist all along speaks only in monologues. The pattern, curiously enough, best suits the theme that Orwell projects. Hammond makes the following observation on Orwell's narrative art in Coming Up for Air:

Certainly in Coming Up for Air he brought to perfection the art of narrating a memorable story in the simplest possible language, and doing so captured the mood of the times in a way which no other novel of the period has equaled. (154)
The conclusion of Homage to Catalonia directly anticipates the theme of Coming Up for the Air. Orwell shows a great concern for the English people who are in a deep deep sleep when Communism as the last hope has failed and Fascism is out to set the world ablaze.

Thus Orwell, with a tremendous sense of urgency, fixes up his protagonist, whose sole function is to draw the attention of the people away from the vanishing past and to make them realize the imminent horror that awaits round the corner. The focus, therefore, continually moves back and forth, between the dead past and the oncoming future.

George Bowling, the protagonist, is a middle-aged insurance man with a set of 'false teeth', a nagging wife and some pesterling children. As he himself admits "I'm fat, but I'm thin inside" (24). This thin man in a fat covering was in fact greatly typical of the millions of English people between the two great wars, who hung onto a dead past sentimentally while wishfully thinking that they were safe.

George, who is married to a lady from an Anglo-Indian Community, is perpetually nagged and harassed and finds himself at odds with her all the time. But, as usual, he is too good to break off, and thus suffers perennially. But, despite the sad circumstances in his life, he has a happy vision that lurks in his mind every now and then. It is the vision, the happy memory of his native town, Lower Binfield, where he spent his days till his youth. Lower Binfield, as such, is studded with all the
bright memories for George. And in all the moments of depression, which in fact he had had in wild frequency, George used to give himself over to his mental excursion into the Lower Binfield, where "it was summer all the year round." (38)

George, like the millions of English people during those early decades of this century looked back on their golden past and nostalgically brooded over the endless bouts of fishing and bird-nesting. George very effectively represents the sense of deep nostalgia of the English people for the unchanging rural order of their by-gone adolescence:

It was a wonderful June morning. The butter cups were up to my knees. There was a breath of wind just stirring the tops of the elms, and the great green clouds of leaves were sort of soft and rich like silk. And it was nine in the morning and I was eight years old, and all around me it was early summer, with great tangled hedges where the wild roses were still in bloom, and bits of soft white cloud drifting overhead, and in the distance the low hills and the dim blue masses of the woods round Upper Binfield. (60)

Finally, George plans to go back to his Lower Binfield and makes it at last. But all his excitement and the expectation break into pieces when he reaches Lower Binfield, the center of his dream, the source of his inspiration all his life. Reaching there, George wonders: "But where is the Lower Binfield? Where
was the town I used to know?" (180) George finds his Lower Binfield completely swallowed by a big modern town, where no one recognizes him, nor does he make out anything. He is deeply frustrated with his long standing dream shattered to pieces in a moment: "You know the feeling I had. Coming Up for Air! Like the big sea-turtles..." (171)

And George hits the climax of his disillusionment when a bomb falls on Lower Binfield, by accident though, while he was in the town. It shatters all his illusions completely. And he presently reflects:

To begin with, I had come to Lower Binfield with a question in my mind. What's ahead of us? Is the game really up? Can we get back to the life we used to live, or is it gone for ever? Well I'd my answer. The old life is finished, and to go about looking for it is just a waste of time. There is no way back to Lower Binfield. You can't put Jonah back into the whale. (227)

The sort of incredible change that has come over Lower Binfield, making it ugly, distorted and frightful in the process is typical of England as well. It is not the case of Lower Binfield alone, that has grown from a beautiful little place to a frightful sprawling mechanical town; it is very much typical of the whole British Isles, the modern world for that matter, in the grip of mechanization.
As Orwell brings in the Italian militiaman as a symbol of human decency, of liberty and equality in Homage to Catalonia; the Lower Binfield and Elsie stand as symbols of the fleeting past that would never come back again. They, indeed, are reduced to "powdered corpses" simply. (CUA, 31)

And this fast, incredible deterioration could not possibly have been expressed better than by the symbol Orwell has chosen rightly. Like the unknown Italian militiaman in Homage to Catalonia, here Orwell has chosen Elsie, the lover of George in his early youth in Lower Binfield, to convey his feelings, his message.

Elsie, who was beautiful, graceful and shapely twenty years ago, and continued to inspire George as a part of Lower Binfield memory, in all his moments of despair, has now become ugly and horrible. This one time beauty, and the dream girl of George now looks "exactly like a bull dog" (209) and is greatly symbolic of the general deterioration in the old natural beauty in all the fast growing industrial cities. The feeling aroused in George at seeing the dream-girl of his youth twenty years later is typical of the millions of English who are still under the illusion that the old exists for them, and would continue to sustain them into infinity: "who'd ever have foreseen that Elsie would end up like this?" (211). George thoroughly disillusioned now, reflects:

... I am finished with this notion of getting back into the past. What's the good trying to revisit the scenes of your boyhood? They don't exist. Coming Up
This novel besides its stroke at the very base of English complacency and illusion, looks forward clearly to Orwell's later novels such as Animal Farm and Nineteen Eighty-Four. Calling this novel Coming Up for Air as 'apocalyptic', Hammond looks at it as "a bridge between Homage to Catalonia and Nineteen Eighty-Four". (149) Hammond further feels that:

It occupies an important place in the corpus of his work for it is not only a transition between the concerns of his early writings and those of his last but is an extended essay on a theme which, explicitly or otherwise, underlay all his life: the tension between his professed desire for social change and a passionate longing to return to a world in which time stood still. (149).

When the bomb accidentally falls on Lower Binfield from one of the British fighter planes in their routine exercise, there is a terrible commotion in the town. And George suddenly notices something like a herd of pigs, but soon finds them not pigs but only the schoolchildren in their gas masks:

It wasn't pigs at all, it was only the schoolchildren in their gas masks... But I tell you that for a moment they looked exactly like a herd of pigs. (224)
The vision of pigs that vaguely occurs in Coming Up for Air becomes stronger and captures the whole focus in Animal Farm. Again, the atmosphere of mechanical, involuntary association at gun-points that marks the co-operative movement in Soviet Russia is prefigured in the following lines of Coming Up for Air:

It was like an enormous machine that had got hold of you. You'd no sense of acting of your own free will, and at the same time no notion of trying to resist. (114)

Coming Up for Air anticipates Nineteen Eighty-Four much more vividly and directly than it does Animal Farm. George Bowling, the protagonist, who frantically looks around to get a place where he can possibly breathe peacefully and quietly, and of course, no other place could be more soothing to him than Lower Binfield.

When George puts the old life against the present, he admits that the former was a "dull, sluggish vegetable kind of life" like "turnips" (171). "But the turnips", George reasons out, "don't live in terror of the boss." (171)

No other passage in the book points to the atmosphere of Nineteen Eighty-Four much more vividly and forcefully than the following:

The world we're going down into, the kind of hate-world, the slogan world. . .The secret cells where the electric light burns night and day, and the
detectives watching you while you sleep. And the processions and posters with enormous faces, and the crowds of a million people all cheering for the leader till they deafen themselves into thinking that they really worship him, and all the time, underneath they hate him . . . (152)

The above excerpt shows clearly that Coming Up for Air directly anticipates Orwell's last, the apocalyptic novel Nineteen Eighty-Four.

Again, Coming Up for Air catches up most effectively the motif of fear in modern life in a declared Fascist or Nazi regime somewhere, or in an undeclared cloak-and-dagger Communist control as in Spain. And it is 'fear' precisely, as George argues out in his mind, that differentiates the past from our present. There was poverty, squalor, disease and hardship in the old days, but there was "a feeling of security", "a feeling of continuity" (109). Thinking about the old days George analyses:

"It's not that life was softer than now. Actually it was harsher. People on the whole worked harder, lived less comfortably and died more painfully. (103)

But despite all physical discomforts, material wants, still they had some feeling of predictability, or 'continuity'. They never felt that "the ground they stood on" would ever "shift under their feet." (110) Whereas, fear, insecurity and unpredictability are the watch-words of modern life. As the protagonist
reflects:

Fear! we swim in it. It's our element. Everyone that isn't scared stiff of losing his job is scared stiff of war, or Fascism or Communism, or something. Jews sweating when they think of Hitler. (19)

Thus, Orwell very effectively catches the mood of the time and with his political insight and reason analyses them threadbare, leaving no scope for illusion or any hope further. George and his wife Hilda go to attend a lecture in the Left Book Club, where a speaker hits mercilessly at the Fascists: 'Hate, hate, hate. Let's all get together and have a good hate over and over."

(151) Next to fear, hatred is the major motif in Nineteen Eighty-Four, as it is really the major force in a totalitarian regime.

Finally, the book ends as George Bowling, the protagonist, sheds his illusion about Lower Binfield completely. The awareness of the imminent war becomes uppermost in his mind.

The bombs, the food-ques, the rubber truncheons, the barbed wire, the colored shirts, the slogans, the enormous faces, the machine-guns squirting out of bed-room windows. (228)

Thus ends the book, effectively bringing the journey of George Bowling, its protagonist from London to Lower Binfield and to London again. And the protagonist, after coming a full circle, is now convinced that "there's no way out. It's just something
that's got to happen". (229)

He has no illusion any more and is very clear that "There's no way back to the Lower Binfield, you can't put Jonah back into the whale". (227)

George Woodcock very accurately observes: "The tunnel that leads to the nightmare world of Nineteen Eighty-Four is open already in Orwell's mind". (149)

- IX -

From Coming Up for Air to Animal Farm Orwell's literary excursion is punctuated by one of his powerful polemics "Inside the whale" (1940). This (Comparatively) long polemic marks a continuation of the impending gloom and apprehension of the prevailing atmosphere of Coming Up for Air while clearly anticipating the betrayal, falsehood and the hypocrisy that feature the Animal Farm.

As Orwell makes his point clear in "Inside the Whale", the basic problem with the intellectuals and writers of the thirties in England and more so with the general public was that they "belonged to the soft-boiled emancipated middle class and were too young to have effective memories of the Great War". Thus it was natural enough for this generation not to have any idea, let alone apprehension, of such sinister means of Totalitarianism like "Purge trials, secret police, summary executions, imprisonment without trial, etc., etc." (36) Orwell again
diagnosed their case very accurately as "a sense of personal immunity" (37). Such insight into life and politics was clearly due to his Spanish Civil War experience. It was there that he was sufficiently initiated into the complex dealings of the political organizations, particularly the so-called leading socialist organization, the Russian Communist party. It was there that Orwell abandoned his naivety and innocence and acquired the wisdom about reality and human nature in general. As John Ferns (1988) rightly points out, "Orwell reaches the human world through the political in Spain". (120).

Thus, with the force of that wisdom and insight, Orwell could criticize boldly and with conviction the intellectuals and artists, by and large, who like Henry Miller, preferred to be "inside the whale" as "willing Jonahs". (43). Their attribute Orwell denounces as the "unsurpassable stage of irresponsibility" (43).

Above all, the thing that directly looks forward to the theme of hypocrisy, falsehood and betrayal in Animal Farm viz. the reduction of the seven commandments into one, "All animals are equal. But some animals are more equal than others" is powerfully suggested by Orwell's observation on the Communists, in general:

Every Communist is in fact liable at any moment to have to alter his most fundamental convictions, or leave the party. (33)

And Orwell becomes more blunt and merciless when he adds:
"The unquestionable dogma of Monday may become the damnable heresy of Tuesday." (33)

Thus, this provocative essay "Inside the Whale" clearly overlooks his next book Animal Farm that brought recognition, popularity, and money to Orwell. Jeffrey Meyers goes to the extent of commenting that "Orwell had defined the theme of Animal Farm as early as "Inside the Whale". (Reader's Guide, 131) Thus, the major discrepancy, the discord that caught the attention of Orwell and fed him with the brilliant idea of the subtle political allegory came directly from his Spanish Civil War experience.

Orwell too candidly acknowledges the fact in "Why I Write": "The Spanish Civil War and other events in 1936-37 turned the scale and thereafter I knew where I stood." He further admits that Animal Farm (CEJLS. I:28) was the first book in which he tried consciously of what he was doing "to fuse political purpose and artistic purpose into one whole". (CEJLS. I:29) This maiden experiment turns out to be brilliantly creative and imaginative besides its accomplishment of the writer's long cherished desire of writing "prose like window-pane" at last.

In the ensuing discussion, an attempt is made to find out how far the Spanish Civil War helped Orwell shape his ideas which eventually led to Animal Farm. Besides, it examines Animal Farm as a work of art while a sustained effort is made to assess the
The genesis of the fable Animal Farm is clearly traced by Orwell himself in his preface to the Ukrainian edition of the book in 1947:

These man-hunts in Spain went on at the same time as the great purges in the USSR and were a sort of supplement to them. (CEJLs, III:457)

Thus, the purge of the P.O.U.M. in Barcelona, which Orwell witnessed, reinforced the accounts of the Moscow Purge Trials in his mind which he refers as 'a sort of supplement' above. It is interesting to note that Orwell had never visited Russia in his life-time. Thus, whatever details we get from Animal Farm of the Russian Revolution were drawn partly from books and pamphlets, and mostly from the immense parallels of situation Orwell experienced himself during the Spanish Civil War which was primarily commanded by the Communists through their strategists and war-experts.

On the basis of his direct experience of the modus operandi of the Russian Communists, mainly their double dealings, falsehood and treachery, Orwell firmly states in the preface:

Nothing has contributed so much to the corruption of the original idea of Socialism as the belief that Russia is a Socialist Country...

(CEJLs, III:458)
Orwell continues:

And so for the past ten years I have been convinced that the destruction of the Soviet myth was essential if we wanted a revival of the Socialistic movement. (458)

The above extracts show Orwell's acute bitterness for the line of functioning of the Russian Communists. The thing that aroused his deepest contempt was the lies, hypocrisy and the act of cold-betrayal of the very cause that they professed to be fighting for. Particularly the manner in which the committed revolutionaries were vilified, falsely accused of treason, insubordination and all sorts of serious offenses and were cold-bloodedly executed during the Spanish Civil War, turned Orwell the sworn enemy of the Communist ideal. As he acknowledges: "In Spain as well as in Russia, the nature of accusations was the same." Orwell adds with great conviction: "...and as far as Spain was concerned I had every reason to believe that the accusations were false." (Ibidem : 457).

Since Orwell came out of Spain, he had set his mind on writing something powerful enough to expose and explode the Soviet myth. As William T. Blair very aptly observes in this context: "It was this double-cross, it would seem, that provided Orwell with enough political betrayal to last him for an artistic life-time." (370). But he couldn't make it though several years passed in the meantime, until one day, he saw a small boy "driving a huge cart-horse along a narrow path, whipping it whenever it tried to turn." (CEJLS,III:458-59)
That very sight brought a flash of insight to Orwell and struck him immediately that the way the brute (with great physical potential) is exploited by a small boy, the teeming millions (proletariat) are exploited by the rich (the bourgeois). Both the brute and the proletariat share the same fate, because neither is aware of its strength.

Thus Animal Farm, though a fable to all appearances, is indeed a powerful political satire. It is an allegory drawn from the writer's own first-hand experiences of the Spanish Civil War which he later imaginatively constructed on the historical facts he had so wonderfully assimilated from the reports on the Russian Revolution. Oxley calls the Animal Farm an "extended metaphor" that "embodies his first-hand experience of Spain and what he had read about Soviet Russia." (75) Edward M. Thomas believes that the Spanish experience "provided Orwell with the inside knowledge on which he drew in Animal Farm and 1984." (48) George Woodcock also believes that Orwell knew so much about the "totalitarian police methods" (1984, the hounds in Animal Farm) and about the "totalitarian distortions of history" from his experiences with the Communists in Catalonia during the early parts of 1937. As Woodcock strongly feels, those impressions "stayed in his mind and helped to shape both Animal Farm and Nineteen Eighty-Four (139). Referring to the Spanish Civil War, Peter Stansky and William Abrahams affirm: "Here, surely, were the seeds of Animal Farm
and Nineteen Eighty-Four". Even Pravda, the Communist Party Paper in Soviet Russia (and allegorised as Squealer in Animal Farm) declared:

So far as Catalonia is concerned, the cleaning up of the Trotskyites and Anarchists has begun and it will be carried out with the same energy as in the USSR. (7 August, 1936)

This suggests the manner in which Snowball (Trotsky) is chased out of the Animal Farm by a pack of ferocious hounds reared secretly by Napoleon (Stalin), closely followed by a reign of terror in which the melodrama of confession and execution is carried out. Particularly the victims were those who either supported Snowball, or were critical of Napoleon.

Animal Farm, as the title itself suggests, is a fable. It is, in fact, an immaculate story of beasts worked out with brilliant unity and symmetry. Possibly nothing could prove its neatness as a fable more than the fact that, an American publisher turned down the book as he thought "it was impossible to sell animal stories in the USA" (CEJLs, IV:110). Never before, any of the earlier works of Orwell had received such overwhelming response from the readers, nor such acclaim from the critics as the Animal Farm did. As Hammond very rightly points out: "The book is totally different in style and conception from anything Orwell had previously written." (160) The same critic again affirms that Animal Farm is the "most perfectly constructed work" of Orwell, and calls it "a work of admirable symmetry and unusual
imaginative power."(163) While Tom Hookinson says that this book is "one of the two modern works of fiction before which the critics must abdicate (Reader's Guide, 132), Woodcock firmly states that "the critic is usually non-plussed as to what he should say about it; all is so magnificently present there". (192)

Besides such high estimations by the critics, Animal Farm received an incredible popularity not only in England, but the world over. Nothing could be a greater testimony to its overwhelming popularity than the astronomical figure its record-sale showed that crossed eight-million, apart from its rendering into a large number of languages in both the hemispheres. As Orwell's close friend and publisher, Frederic Warburg states: "... in terms of sales which to me is conclusive proof that it will remain for generations a classic of English and world literature". (Hammond, 160)

It would be too simplistic to call it just a satire or an allegory on the Russian Revolution. Among its marks of excellence or principal literary traits are its clear and simple prose which was inevitably the product of his transparent thought and thorough comprehension of the issue. Besides, the immaculate handling of language makes the otherwise most complex and impenetrable thoughts of the beasts accessible to the readers who participate in and identify themselves with the otherwise inaccessible corners of the animals' mind primarily with the skillful use of the third-person narrative perspective. It could only be made possible by the masterly craftsmanship and the superb manipulation of language. As George Woodcock very rightly points out, in Animal Farm Orwell at last accomplishes his most ideal prose style,"that
is like window-pane"(133). Duly recognizing Orwell's simplicity and clarity of prose Edmund Wilson calls the book "absolutely first-rate" while comparing him with such great masters as Le Fontaine, Gay, Voltaire and Swift. (Critical Heritage, 205) While Hammond, on the basis of the literary position and recognition of the book, compares it with Candide and Gulliver's Travels (167) Jeffrey Meyers places it beside Nostromo for the gravity and seriousness of its theme. (Reader's Guide, 143)

The secret of Orwell's sudden emancipation from his earlier limitations is firstly, the absence of his over-bearing authorial self, his alter-ego' (Hammond, 167). As Orwell acknowledges he developed a sort of detachment' since Homage to Catalonia and tried to write 'more exactly' rather than picturesquely (as earlier). (CEJLs, I : 29) Animal Farm, where he consciously fuses "political purpose and the artistic purpose into one whole" (CEJLs, I : 29) is, however, written consistently in a plain, spontaneous, dispassionate manner and is free from the shadow of his over-bearing self. In the Animal Farm Orwell almost achieves a quasi-negative capability that every great artist zealously looks forward to.

In the estimation of Raymond Williams "Animal Farm is unique in Orwell's writing in the absence of an Orwell figure"(69).

Besides, the emancipation of Orwell's style was made possible partly by his choice of a theme that rises far above the localized Russian issue into a general, universal one. "As Orwell himself wrote to one of his friends, he intended the book to be a
History consists of a series of swindles, in which the masses are first lured into revolt by the promise of Utopia, and then, when they have done their job, enslaved over again by new masters.

(CEJLS, IV:177)

As Bernanos, a Spanish Civil War veteran writes of his own painful civil war experience: "The tragedy of Spain is a foretaste of the tragedy of the universe." (Readers Guide, 116). Robert A. Lee who pleads strongly in favor of Orwell's universality, affirms that "instead of being just an allegory of twentieth-century Russian politics, Animal Farm is more meaningfully an anatomy of all political revolutions." (206)

Above all, Orwell develops the fable in such an immaculate manner that even as an independent literary genre, it can, with all fairness, claim a place beside the Panchatantram and the Aesop's Fables, the two great classics in the world literature.

The fable begins naturally with an old boar called Major stirring the sleepy, stupid animals against their human master, the tyrant Jones. In his provocative address to all the fellow-animals in a late-night gathering, the old major makes each one of them aware of the exploitation, harassment and ignominy in the hands of its human master. He impresses upon them the horror...
of their inevitable doom that no animal can escape "the cruel knife at the end" (AF, 10). Inspired by his imposing personality, insightful rhetoric and the force of his argument, all the animals soon rise against their human master, the incorrigible tyrant Jones. His words were more than convincing to one and all. Yet, more compelling was his vision of the future:

Only get rid of man, and the produce of our labor would be our own. Almost overnight we could become rich and free. (ibidem, 10).

And finally the old Major, before he concluded his speech, thundered out his maxim: "All animals are equal" that charged the atmosphere to such an extent, even the dullest creature of the farm came into his element in no time. And a chorus followed the historic address of Major, with all the animals bellowing to the hoarse tune of the old Major again:

Beasts of England, beasts of Ireland...
Hearken to my joyful tidings of the golden future time...
Rings shall vanish from our noses.
And the harness from our back, Bit, and spur shall rust forever, Cruel whips no more shall crack. (13)

The magic words of the Major and the evocative chorus not only stirred them out of their age-old slumber; it made them look forward to a golden future of liberty, equality and self-respect. But before the movement is launched, Major dies. The animals, however, were so much inspired, that even the death of their mentor, their philosopher, the architect of their dream and future, didn't deter them. Soon the responsibility of organiza-
tion and leadership was enthusiastically shouldered by two young, promising boars; Napoleon and Snowball.

Orwell once again shows his excellence in his portrayal of the animal characters of the fable. Its beauty lies in the fact that the readers, who are fully aware of the limitation of beasts, still cannot help feeling concurrently the human-like traits in them and fully participate in their affair to the best of their enjoyment. As Orwell neatly draws each of his characters with the typical as well as individual traits, it adds a great amount of humor to the essentially serious, somber theme.

For instance, Napoleon is portrayed as a large, fierce-looking Berkshire boar "with a reputation of getting his own way" (15), while Snowball is comparatively more "vivacious" (15), ingenuous, dynamic and communicative. They are ably and actively assisted by a "small fat pig named Squealer" (15) who had distinguished himself as a "brilliant talker" and was well known for his knack of manoeuvre, of turning "black into white" (16). Among the prominent members of the farm were Mollie, the pretty foolish white mare who was rather silly and flirtish, Jones' favorite pet Moses, the raven (the Orthodox Russian church), the clever talker, who always tempted others towards a mysterious sugar candy mountain (the Heaven) the land of eternal spring, happiness and plenty where everyone goes after death. Moses, of course, escapes soon after Jones' expulsion and appears again several years after, but with no change in its attitude. Then Boxer (the proletariat), the massive cart-horse who was an enormous beast, nearly eighteen hands high and as strong as any two ordinary horses put together." It reminds us of Orwell's accidental
encounter with the boy who was whipping a huge cart-horse while driving it along, the very sight that gave him the flash of insight to work upon a theme like Animal Farm. (CEJLs, III: 458-59)
The image of the cart-horse, which was deeply implanted in Orwell's mind comes out vividly in this fable. About Boxer's features again:

A white stripe down his nose gave him a somewhat stupid appearance . . . But he was universally respected for his steadiness of character and tremendous powers of work. (6)

And finally, there is Benjamin, the old cynical donkey, who scarcely talks and never laughs. He takes everything stoically and has no enthusiasm or excitement over anything.

As it turns out, owing to the sheer unity and commitment of the animals, their rebellion succeeds in no time without any bloodshed or violence for that matter. It so happened that even before they could fully grasp at what was happening, the fight was won: "Jones was expelled, and the Manor farm was theirs." (19) Such sudden, unexpected turn of events left the animals dazed, flabbergasted. "For the first few minutes the animals could hardly believe in their good fortune" (19) They were caught up in a spell of perfect rapture, bliss and ecstasy and were thoroughly at a loss as they didn't know how to react:

In the ecstasy of that thought they gamboled round and round, they hurled themselves into the air in great leaps of excitement. They rolled in the dew, they
cropned mouthfuls of the sweet summer grass, they kicked up clods of the black earth and snuffed its rich scent (21)

How neat and immaculate is the treatment of the dumb-animals' reactions to their sudden spurt of fortune: with their rings, harnesses, bits and spurs thrown away and the cruel whips vanished, the animals "slept as they had never slept before" (20). When the Sun rose next morning, it was a different Sunrise for all of them. All the animals rushed to the roof top and what they saw they couldn't really believe. It was really incredible, they couldn't just trust their own eyes: "Yes, it was theirs — everything that they could see was theirs." (21)

The response of the dumb-animal characters in this fable greatly correspond to Orwell's own reactions to the exciting, unbelievable atmosphere of the Spanish Civil War that he ran into straight from the sham, middle-class English pigeon hole. As Orwell struggles to convey his feeling to a friend, he is visibly at a loss: "I wish I could convey to you the atmosphere of that time." (HC, 103)

Again, the atmosphere of boundless joy and ecstasy that we find in Animal Farm soon after the glorious victory of the beasts against the tyrant Jones is strongly reminiscent of the atmosphere of Spain during the civil war, even when it was on the decline, Orwell recalls in Homage to Catalonia how he felt a strong bond of brotherhood, fellow-feeling and goodwill. Orwell's meeting with the Italian militiaman that left an indelible mark on his mind and heart which he so fondly carried all his life. In his words "crystal spirit" was the inevitable
by-product of such atmosphere. Such rare spiritual experiences could only be possible in a pure, untainted atmosphere of perfect understanding, and good will. And in such moments that only come once in a thousand years one can say: the man-made barriers like language, religion, and nationality give way to an unadulterated flow of brotherhood and intimacy. As Orwell recollects his blissful meeting with the Italian militiaman whose name he does not even know:

Queer, the affection you can feel for a stranger:
It was as though his spirit and mine had momentarily succeeded in bridging the gulf of language and tradition and meeting in utter intimacy. (HC_, 7)

Thus, such moments of bliss and rapture prevailed during the early phase of the Animal Revolution, and in the Russian Revolution as well. The point worth noting is that, such moments though rare and short-lived, invariably flash in every Revolution in the human history. But, as usual, they vanish as soon as human frailties begin to assert themselves, turning dream into nightmare. Thus Orwell, with his tremendous insight and wisdom pushes forward this universal truth into his theme and gives the fable a bearing, a relevance for all time, for all ages. Orwell intends to repeat the eternal truth that human nature never changes. And Orwell is absolutely correct. The creature who could not realize and change itself even after such a loss as that of paradise is simply incorrigible. Human nature, as such, repeats itself. Orwell has chosen such a universal theme to put into his fable and thus succeeds enormously.
The animals, soon after their return to normal after a phase of unprecedented joy and jubilation, passed a series of resolutions. All the resolutions were not only passed unanimously, but reflected the lofty ideals and the high ethical values which were drawn in strict conformity with the old Major's ideas and visions. It was resolved that the cursed farm house, where their human tyrant lived, shall not be used by any animal, but would be preserved as a Museum for the posterity. The name 'Manor Farm' which stood for tyranny and exploitation was promptly changed into 'Animal Farm.' And finally, Seven Commandments were drawn, and adopted as the inviolable, unalterable laws of the Animal Farm.

After such a brilliant beginning, particularly with the adoption of the Commandments, that ensured perfect equality, tolerance and security which was so seriously wanting previously, the Animals felt greatly assured and relieved. Each of them, even the rodents and the fowls had a strong feeling that they could now get a fair deal and have equal rights as their mentor, the old Major had assured them and that their dreams would be realized. This phase of the Animal Revolution (or the Russian Revolution for that matter) greatly corresponds to the prevailing atmosphere during the early days of the Spanish Civil War. Orwell looks back on those glorious days of the Spanish Civil War as he reminisces in "Homage to Catalonia": "Above all, there was a belief in the revolution and the future, a feeling of having suddenly emerged into an era of equality and freedom." (10) He further remembers vividly the strange atmosphere of that time:

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One had been in contact with something strange and valuable. One had been in a community where hope was more normal than apathy or cynicism, where the word Comrade stood for comradeship. (60)

And Orwell's voice has a deep note of loss when he recalls his experience over there: "One had breathed the air of equality." (66)

More impressive and remarkable was the fact that, "human beings were trying to behave as human beings and not as cogs in the capitalist machine." (10)

And Orwell so fondly recalls how he was "breathing the air of equality." (HC, 66) As Orwell records the atmosphere of complete equality during the early months of the Spanish Civil War thus:

The essential point of the system was social equality between officers and men. Everyone from general to private drew the same pay, ate the same food, wore the same clothes, and mingled on terms of complete equality. (HC, 28-29)

He further remembers how, in that atmosphere, many of the normal motives of civilized life such as "snobbishness, money-grabbing, fear of the boss etc. had simply ceased to exist." (HC, 102) There was a shortage of almost everything but there was "no privilege, no boot-licking" (102). Such liberated atmosphere as Orwell experienced during the early days of the Spanish Civil War greatly anticipates the corresponding phase of the Animal
Rebellion or the Russian Revolution for that matter. It was found that "nobody stole, nobody grumbled over his rations, the quarreling and biting and jealousy which had been normal features of life in the old days had almost disappeared" (HC, 27). The beasts in the Animal Farm embraced all discomforts, shortages and hardships willingly and worked with all their heart and soul for the progress of their farm. Everyone, as old Major had said worked to the best of his capacity. In this matter, Boxer, the massive cart-horse was always in the lead, with his implicit faith in the common cause and his firm commitment to it. And Boxer, they say, was ever in the front with the slogan: "I will work harder" (AF, 55) Boxer, as such, was the ideal, the symbol of sacrifice and dedication for everyone including Squealer who invariably used him as his example whenever anyone shirked his duty. It is not Boxer alone, the atmosphere of the period was such that even the fragile creatures like the hens and the ducks did their best by way of picking up every bit of grain from the ground and in the process subscribing to saving a lot that season. As Graham Greene comments in this context: "Never had the animals worked with such elan for Mr. Jones as they now work" (Critical Heritage, 196). Although the food was in short supply and the farm went like clockwork (AF, 26) the animals were still happy and cheerful:

Every mouthful of food was an acute positive pleasure, now that it was truly their own food, produced by themselves and for themselves, not doled out to them by a grudging master. (AF, 26)
Thus, the thing that made all the difference, worked the miracle and smoothened all discomforts was obviously the absence of the tyrant and their supposed equality.

But such enviable atmosphere, marked by understanding, unity, goodwill and co-operation did not last long. With the lapse of time, the revolutionary euphoria declined and discrimination, inequity, falsehood, treachery and terror set in. Soon after the animals win their victory over Jones, the pigs "taught themselves to read and write from an old spelling book which had belonged to Mr. Jones' children." (22) Besides, the very first day when the animals returned after their day's hard-work they found the pail of milk missing and soon they discovered that it was mixed in the mash meant for the pigs specially. Again, it became clear within a few days that "the pigs did not actually work, but directed and supervised the others." (25)

More unfortunate and ominous was the fact that the two leaders, Napoleon and Snowball clashed ideologically. While Snowball was dynamic, innovative, and quite articulate, and thus commanded a great support, Napoleon was a shrewd, scheming rogue who always had his way. When Snowball came forward with all sorts of progressive plans like windmill (five year plan) Napoleon had nothing, but always made it a point to dismiss all those proposals. Finally, when Snowball's proposal for the windmill came to the point of being accepted in the meeting, Napoleon used a pack of ferocious hounds (G.P.U./ the secret police) to chase Snowball out of the farm. This issue is clearly suggestive of the Stalin-Trotsky rivalry in the course of Russian Revolution though, it is
presented so skillfully in the fable that the underlying allegory is scarcely perceptible. The real trouble starts in the story, as soon as Snowball finishes his speech. There is not even a shred of doubt on the acceptance of Snowball's proposals:

But at this moment Napoleon stood up and, casting a peculiar sidelong look at Snowball, uttered a high-pitched whimper... At this, there were a terrible baying sound outside, and nine enormous dogs wearing brass-studded collars came hounding into the barn. They dashed straight for Snowball, who only sprang from his place just in time to escape their snapping jaws. (47-48)

So thick is the texture of the fable that "the main political allegory that provides the story with its raison d'etre is not obtrusive" (Hammond, 162). This precisely explains the incredible popularity and world-wide reputation of the book. With this Orwell gives a sudden twist to the otherwise narrow, limited scope of a political allegory on the Russian Revolution and gives it a universal meaning. As it happens, the rivalry between the two contending leaders comes to a point of polarization and finally one is thrown out under the threat of violence. This again closely resembles the internecine war between the revolutionaries and the counter-revolutionaries in the Spanish Civil War.

The expulsion of Snowball, or the purging of the opposition marks the beginning of two sinister trends: the reign of terror and the betrayal of the revolution. To be more clear and specific, we can call this new phase of their revolution as the Napoleon-regime (or, the Soviet Russia under the ruthless rule of
that promptly takes a series of measures, following the expulsion of the arch-rival, Snowball. Among the measures, the first was the immediate suspension of the Sunday morning meetings where everything was proposed, discussed, and voted previously. In the next move, in order to keep the working-habits and the fitness of the animals and to rebuild the farm, a sixty-hour week rigorous schedule was forced on the animals. Even the weekends were not spared. Worse still, the enormous hounds who had chased Snowball out growled menacingly at the animals who ever dared question any of the words or deeds of Napoleon, while they kept wagging their tails at Napoleon all the time.

Soon after Snowball's expulsion, however, Squealer went about announcing Napoleon's decision to go for the windmill. Some of the comparatively less stupid animals were surprised at this and got really puzzled as they remembered how Napoleon opposed Snowball's plan for the windmill just the other day, and how Snowball was chased out by the enormous hounds. But Squealer, with his 'twinkling eyes', 'nimble movements', and his perfect knack of 'turning black into white' convinced those animals effortlessly that the plan was originally the brain-child of Napoleon which Snowball had stolen away. The stupid animals' confusion, as it were, got more confounded with every successive move that Napoleon adopted and Squealer propagated with his manoeuvres. Finally, the matter came to such a point that Snowball was branded as a villainous, subversive element who was allegedly behind all that went wrong in the farm. When the first windmill (first five year plan of Soviet Russia) collapsed by a
powerful storm (the World War-I) Squealer went about telling everybody that it was Snowball's work. And further, herein lies the seed of 'Newspeak' as we find later in Nineteen Eighty-Four:

If a window was broken or a drain blocked up, someone was certain to say that Snowball had come in the night and done it, and when the key of the store-shed was lost, the whole farm was convinced that Snowball had thrown it down. (68)

Correspondingly, on the other hand, each of the Seven Commandments was violated by the pigs and Napoleon himself till there was nothing left of the original. They not only violated the Commandments, they tampered with them to suit their own purpose and convenience leaving the other animals perplexed. Instead of questioning the tampering, the stupid animals who were carefully manipulated by Squealer questioned their own memory, their own sanity. In this process, the entire past, the whole history was tampered thoroughly till nothing original was left finally. In fact, the next generation would have nothing to compare with their present, except the facts and figures that Squealer gave. As a matter of fact, Squealer, with his slow, gradual, calculated moves, conditioned the minds of the animals to such an extent that they at last completely failed to recognize the reality. As Robert Lee puts it:

Far more terrifying is the overt alteration of consciousness which follows the slaughter, the blatant misrepresentation of the past, which goes unchallenged. (121).

The betrayal of the revolution reaches a point of climax.
when a large number of animals are accused of treason, insubordination, disloyalty, and all sorts of serious offenses in collusion with Snowball. It was followed by a macabre scene of confessions and executions that went on:

Until there was a pile of corpses lying before Napoleon's feet and the air was heavy with the smell of blood which had been unknown there since the expulsion of Jones (74).

This ghastly, melodramatic scene is mainly patterned on the Moscow purge Trials though, it strongly resembles the horrible state of affairs during the later days of the Spanish Civil War:

Later, when the Right-wing forces were in full control, the Communists showed themselves willing to go a great deal further than the Liberals in hunting down the revolutionary leaders. (HC, 57)

Particularly on the point of confessions, Orwell gives an exhaustive and a thoroughly convincing report that shows the terrible conspiracy the Communist press hatched in Spain. Orwell notes in his preface to the Ukrainian edition of the book:

In Spain as well as in Russia the nature of the accusation (namely, the conspiracy with the Fascists was the same and as far as Spain was concerned I had every reason to believe that the accusations were false. (CEJLS, III : 457)

Orwell's voice rings with shock and alarm when he mentions:

No one who was in Barcelona then, or for months later, will forget the horrible atmosphere produced
by fear, suspicion, hatred, censored newspapers, crammed jails ... (HC, 142)

As regards the falsity of the charge against the revolutionaries, Orwell observes that most of them who are just thrown into the dark cells of the prisons are accused of "communicating with Franco by radio" (HC, 167). The validity of such charges are greatly suspected for they were never formulated and the prisoners were never given a fair trial. This clearly anticipates the confession scene of Animal Farm where three hens who are accused of insubordination confess that "Snowball had appeared to them in a dream and incited them to disobey Napoleon's orders." (AF, 73)

Further, Orwell strongly refutes all those fake, framed up charges against the committed revolutionaries in Spain as "not a scrap of evidence was ever produced except the unsupported statements in the Communist press" (HC, 167). Thus Orwell dismisses all those fabricated charges outright by calling them as "two-hundred efforts of somebody's imagination." (HC, 167)

These findings that Orwell so painfully gathers, reinforce the episodes of the Animal Farm fable as much as they look forward to the nightmarish scenario of 1984. As Orwell painfully recalls, "It is not easy to convey the nightmare atmosphere of that time . . . the notion of liquidating or eliminating everyone who happens to disagree with you." (HC, 189) Orwell's first-hand experience of the course of events during the Spanish Civil War, as noted above, has a one to one correspondence with the macabre scene of execution in this fable. We may recall that the first four pigs who were seized by Napoleon's ferocious hounds and
produced before him were "the same four pigs who had protested when Napoleon abolished the Sunday meetings" (AF, 73). As Orwell reports on the betrayal of the revolution thus:

In particular the Communist party, with Soviet Russia behind it, had thrown its whole weight against the revolution. (HC, 51)

As a matter of fact, the Communist betrayal, and their usurpation of power in the Spanish Civil War that Orwell had experienced personally could give such a powerful touch of realism to the story of betrayal in the Animal Farm. Again, the way Snowball was vilified and his character mercilessly assassinated very much corresponds to the account given by Orwell on the development of the situation during the Spanish Civil War:

I saw troops who had fought bravely denounced as cowards and traitors, and others who had never seen a shot fired hailed as the heroes of imaginary victories. ("LBSW", 234)

Particularly, the manner in which Snowball's case was blatantly misrepresented strengthens the link between Homage to Catalonia and Animal Farm. As a matter fact, the latter is a logical extension of the former and this clearly looks forward to 1984. In fact, the Communist party which was in command in Spain and in Soviet Russia during their Revolutions, had no dearth of instances where, as Orwell so accurately observes, people who had never fired a shot have been hailed as heroes while those who fought bravely have been denounced as cowards and traitors.
Orwell, precisely because of his bitter experience with the Communist regime and its lies, falsehood and double-dealing, told Arthur Koestler that "History has stopped in 1936" ("LBSW", 233-34) when he realized that "the very concept of objective truth is fading out of the world" ("LBSW", 235)

The way all the original Commandments which were adopted at the outset of the Revolution were violated, and altered clearly reminds us of the Spanish Civil War. Orwell remembers how the anarchist newspaper La Batalla was "censored almost out of existence" (HC, 188) and the censored portions were neatly filled up with all the false, fabricated, concocted matter. This very fact clearly points to Nineteen Eighty-Four.

And finally, the Animal Revolution that begins so gloriously fails to pieces when all the Commandments are replaced by a single, comprehensive one:

ALL ANIMALS ARE EQUAL. BUT SOME ARE MORE EQUAL THAN OTHERS (114)

And as though to mark the full circle; a total reversal to the Status Quo; the "Animal Farm" is changed all over again back to Manor Farm and; the pigs come out on their hind legs with Napoleon carrying a whip in his trotter. And the flock of sheep promptly burst out bleating:

"Four legs good, two legs better". (114) 

This is again reminiscent of the final stage of the Spanish Civil War that was marked by "a general 'bourgeoisification, a
deliberate destruction of the equalitarian spirit of the first few months of the revolution" (HC, 55).

Orwell again reports that towards the later part of 1937, the socialists under Negrin were declaring publicly that "we respect private property." (HC, 55)

With this the wheel comes full circle and marks the total reversal of the whole move. As it happens in the case of the Spanish Civil War, so it happens in the case of the Animal Revolution (and the Russian Revolution too). As Orwell records, it all happened so swiftly that those who visited Spain at a few months interval could scarcely recognize the country. Literally, the 'less equal' animals of the Farm (now 'Manor Farm' again) fail to recognize the pigs when they peep into the Banquet Hall where the human neighbors are invited by the pigs for a party :

Twelve voices were shouting in anger, and they were all alike. The creatures outside looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again; but already it was impossible to say which was which. (128)

Thus ends the Animal Revolution leaving the mass in a state of quandary. They wondered "Whether to be more frightened of the pigs or of the human visitors" (115). And as Oxley suggests: "The end is a community constructed not only on lies but also on terror like Barcelona of those Summer months in 1937." (79)

Thus, as we see, the 'perspective' that dawned on Orwell
During his days as a militia in the Spanish Civil War sustained him effectively through Homage to Catalonia and Animal Farm. As Oxley strongly believes, Homage to Catalonia and Animal Farm were "the twin-summits" of Orwell's achievement. (65) And it is so obvious that both these works were the direct offshoots of Orwell's exposure to the Spanish Civil War.

Thus Animal Farm, with its theme of continual misrepresentation, alteration and distortion of facts, the monopoly control of media by the State or the leader who eventually becomes 'Big Brother' in 1984 and literally assumes control of and determines the thought of the animals clearly looks forward to 1984. While the human tyrant Jones was only controlling the action, the Pigs went further by controlling even the thought. Thus the ground is now ready for 1984.

This new 'perspective' which commences with Homage to Catalonia finally culminates in Nineteen Eighty-Four.

Animal Farm though a fable, has its roots in the Spanish Civil War. Its roots in fact lay in the very acts of intrigue, treachery and horror practised by the Communists, which in turn vindicated to Orwell the more gruesome Russian Purge Trials, reinforced by the other sinister moves like Stalin-Hitler Pact and Stalin-Trotsky rivalry. And finally, the fable assumes the neat shape of a "Revolution betrayed". As clearly noted in Homage to Catalonia and experimented in Animal Farm, the mutability or the falsification of the past, the elimination of privacy and freedom — all through the means of the complete monopoly of
the media by the totalitarian state and the deliberate distortion of facts -- finally leads to and culminates in Nineteen Eighty-Four.

Orwell's journey that begins with the Spanish Civil War comes full-circle and draws to an end in Nineteen Eighty-Four. As George Woodcock rightly observes, the road comes to an end with 1984, the journey terminates. (162) In a slightly different manner, but exactly in the same spirit Jeffrey Meyers states:

And there is a direct line of political thought from Homage to Catalonia through Animal Farm to 1984 (Reader's Guide, 148)

The atmosphere of 1984 as it were, that has earned its name good or bad as apocalyptic or gloomy and nightmarish as manifested in the state of perpetual warfare and terror in Oceania or the Airstrip One for that matter, is derived mostly from Orwell's experiences of the Spanish Civil War, and partly from his experiences in London, during the protracted period of World War II.

In this context, particularly the two most sinister and malignant modes of control of individual liberty (of action, thought and emotion), the two most well-known and widely used words in Orwellian jargons; 'Newspeak' and 'Doublethink' were the rich products of Orwell's imagination based directly on this Spanish Civil War experience. In fact, 'Doublethink' and 'New-
speak' are the two malignant, but very effective means to bring an end to individual integrity. They not only eliminate the integrity; they reduce the very sanity of the individual to a schizophrenic. The point is very clear. Unless one develops schizophrenia one can't possibly become a split-personality to suit the purpose of 'Doublethink' as desirable in the interest of the Totalitarian state. On this, Steinhoff who has explored this aspect exhaustively, states thus:

Orwell first encountered this deliberate denial of an obligation to the truth -- indeed a denial that it existed -- on anything like a large scale in Spain and as he became more sensitive to the phenomenon he found it to be characteristic of all political thinking and writing. In Spain it was at first only a matter of lying propaganda from both sides: battles manufactured for foreign readers out of sporadic exchanges of gunfire, massacres invented and massacres denied. Then it became more serious. The communists, for example, lied deliberately about their supposed allies on the left; the P.O.U.M. became "Franco's fifth column" and "traitors in the pay of the enemy" (Steinhoff, 162)

For that matter, 1984 and Homage to Catalonia or Coming up for Air or Animal Farm have umpteen parallels, innumerable points in common that confirm their common origin, i.e.; in the murky atmosphere of the Spanish Civil War with the communists as Big Brothers watching and directing the whole affair in their
Orwell's candid declaration that "All art is propaganda" in course of his extended essay on Dickens. (CEJLs: I,492) has a significant bearing on the whole perspective of his post-Spanish Civil War writings that commence with Coming up for Air.

Soon after his return from Spain Orwell, in a letter to his friend Geoffrey Gorer, writes (Aug.1937):

You cannot conceive the awfulness of the things that are happening in Spain: It is a real reign of terror. (CEJLs: I,314)

In his essay "Spilling the Spanish Beans" (July 1937) Orwell recollects:

When I left Spain in late June the atmosphere in Barcelona, what with its ceaseless arrests, the censored newspapers and the prowling hordes of armed police, was like a nightmare. (CEJLs.I: 311)

In this context, Oxley rightly observes that Orwell's later works, particularly Animal Farm and 1984 are based not on imagination and lies, but on "terror-like the Barcelona of those summer months in 1937". (79)

George Woodcock is also of the view that Orwell's first-hand experience of the "totalitarian distortions of history" (139) during the Spanish Civil War, particularly the suppression and elimination of the committed militias like P.O.U.M. "Stayed in his mind and helped to shape both Animal Farm and Nineteen
Bernard Crick, Orwell's biographer strongly believes in the seminal role that the Spanish Civil War experience played in determining his later novels, Animal Farm and 1984.

The two masterpieces to come, Animal Farm and Nineteen Eighty-Four were, of course, deeply influenced by the war and its immediate aftermath; but their roots lay in his Spanish experience.

(A Life, 382)

Orwell himself notes with dismay in "Looking Back on the Spanish War" (1942):

I saw in fact, history being written not in terms of what happened but of what ought to have happened . . . (234)

He adds:

This kind of thing is frightening to me, because it often gives me the feeling that the very concept of objective truth is fading out of the world . . . (235)

Orwell writes further:

If the leader says of such and such an event, "It never happened - - well, it never happened. If he says that two and two are five - - well, two and two are five" (236)

Even long before this essay, Orwell ventilates his misgiv-
ings and feeling of horror at the possible state of life under Communism or Fascism. In his review of Bertrand Russell's book Power, sometime in January 1939, Orwell writes:

> It is quite possible that we are descending into an age in which two and two will make five when the Leader says so. (CEJLs I: 413-14).

As it is already hinted, the atmosphere of 1984, of Oceania and Airstrip One, the locale of the novel which is marked by perpetual terror and insecurity, is mostly derived from Orwell's experiences of the Spanish Civil War. In fact, Orwell gives innumerable instances of the distortions of fact, frame-ups, fake confessions, and executions in the course of Homage to Catalonia that eventually assume a more horrifying shape when they are reinforced by Orwell's rich imagination as manifested in Animal Farm and 1984.

Orwell quotes a specimen of the frequently flashed news items in the Communist controlled papers:

**SPANISH TROTSKYITES PLOT WITH FRANCO**

Following the arrest of a large number of leading Trotskyites in Barcelona and elsewhere... There became known, over the weekend, details of one of the most ghastly pieces of espionage ever known in wartime, and the ugliest revelation of Trotskyist treachery to date... Documents in possession of the police, together with the full confession of no less than 200 persons under arrest, prove, etc. etc.(HC,166)
And Orwell adds his note to the above cited news item in the newspaper from the Communist press thus:

What the revelations 'proved' was that the P.O.U.M. leaders were transmitting military secrets to General Franco by radio... In addition there were sensational details about secret messages in invisible ink, a mysterious document signed with the letter N. (Standing for Nin), and so on and so forth. (HC, 167)

It clearly anticipates the charges against the pigs and the fowls in Animal Farm and their confession that followed. But Orwell takes pains to check up the authenticity of such allegations and the validity of the confessions that inevitably ended in execution. As Orwell substantiates:

But the final upshot was this: six months after the event, as I write, most of the P.O.U.M. leaders are still in jail, but they have never been brought to trial, and the charges of communicating with Franco by radio, etc., have never even been formulated. (HC, 167)

And Orwell argues further:

Had they really been guilty of espionage they would have been tried and shot in a week as so many Fascist spies had been previously. But not a scrap of evidence was ever produced except the
unsupported statements in the Communist press.
(HC, 167)

On the point of 'Confession' Orwell adds:

As for the two hundred 'full confessions', which, if they had existed, would have been enough to convict anybody. They have never been heard of again. (HC, 167)

Orwell's own conclusion, however, was this:

They were, in fact, two hundred efforts of somebody's imagination. (HC, 167) (Emphasis mine)

The above evidence of fact as advanced by Orwell clearly looks forward to Animal Farm and 1984.

About his last days in Barcelona as Orwell says: "there was a peculiar evil feeling in the air — an atmosphere of suspicion, fear, uncertainty, and veiled hatred" (HC, 166). The atmosphere very much anticipates 1984 where fear, suspicion and hatred were the major motives. Again, the atmosphere of suspicion, conspiracy, intrigue and machinations that Orwell experienced in Spain went directly into his shaping of 1984. Orwell reminisces further:

However little you were actually conspiring, the atmosphere forced you to feel like a conspirator. You seemed to spend all your time holding whispered conversations in corners of cafes and
wondering whether that person at the next table was a police spy. (HC, 186)

The meetings of Winston Smith with Julia in the Cafe, their cautious move, suspicion and fear as we find in 1984 are directly drawn from Orwell's Spanish Civil War experience as mentioned in the above passage.

Orwell seems to be at a loss to project his memories of that troubled period. As he says:

It is not easy to convey the nightmare atmosphere of that time -- the peculiar uneasiness produced by rumors that were always changing, by censored newspapers, and the constant presence of armed men. (HC, 189).

The perpetual rumor about the state of or the imminence of war amongst the three super states; Oceania, Eurasia and Eastasia as we find in 1984 seems to be patterned on the atmosphere of Spain as the above extract from Homage to Catalonia shows.

And Orwell further mentions how the Communists would "liquidate"(HC, 189) anyone promptly the moment he or she happens to disagree with them:

... the notion of 'liquidating' or 'eliminating' everyone who happens to disagree with you does not yet seem natural. It seemed only too natural in Barcelona. (HC, 189)(emphasis mine)

Similarly, the gross distortion of fact, the attempt to
eliminate the objective truth as we come across in Animal Farm and 1984 are drawn from Orwell's Spanish Civil War experiences as the following extract from Homage to Catalonia shows:

La Batalla was still appearing, but it was censored almost out of existence and Solidaridad and the other Anarchist papers were also heavily censored...There was a new rule that censored portions of a newspaper must not be left blank but filled up with other matter; as a result it was often impossible to tell when something had been cut out. (HC, 188)

The above report coincides precisely with the job of Winston Smith, the protagonist of 1984 in the Ministry of Truth. His job is to alter news reports and the records of the Past so as to make them agree with the current Party-line. The result was that, it was not possible any longer to distinguish fact from falsehood. There was nothing left for the posterity to compare with. The elimination of the Past inevitably leads to the denial of the Future. It is the leitmotif of the book, 1984. It was the same with Animal Farm too, where the Seven Commandments were altered one after another by the Pigs till nothing original remained. And everytime invariably, the alteration was accompanied by replacement. Thus, it led to a situation when the Animals were so confused that they started questioning their very sanity. And 1984 begins with that very aspect.
Winston Smith, the protagonist is the last man in Europe, the last survivor of the proud human race. When he contemplates on writing his diary he fails to remember the date clearly:

He sat back. A sense of complete helplessness had descended upon him. To begin with, he did not know with any certainty that this was 1984.

And the cause of the helplessness of Winston Smith was precisely because "It was never possible now a days to pin down any date within a year or two". (10)

Like the Communist Press in Spain, the version of Squealor in Animal Farm (The Pravda) and their ever changing Commandments, here in 1984 everything was in an eternal flux – a purely man-made, deliberate design to suit the party's objectives.

Although Winston feels that things have changed beyond recognition, under the constant vigil of 'Big Brother' in the Airstrip One in the state of Oceania he sees scarcely anything of the past to compare with:

He tried to squeeze out some childhood memory that should tell him whether London had always been quite like this . . . But it was no use, he could not remember: nothing remained of his childhood except a series of bright-lit tableaux occurring against no background and mostly unintelligible. (6-7)

This manipulation of the fact leading to the mutability and
alteration of the past eventually leads to confusion and finally ends up in neurosis. As it is clearly shown in Animal Farm the lesser animals, by and large, seeing the continual alteration of the Commandments get completely baffled. They possibly cannot think of suspecting Napoleon partly for their own stupidity and partly for the reign of terror created by the pack of ferocious hounds. Similarly, though with much greater intensity and horror, under the ever watchful eyes of the Big Brother, and the ubiquitous telescreen, backed by the omnipresent Thought-police the atmosphere of 1984 appears really nightmarish and haunted. One just cannot escape the notice of the Big Brother for his agents are invisibly present everywhere. Every moment the individual is left on his nerves and the scope of escape is completely denied.

The steady impersonalization, the elimination of the objective truth and the distortion of the past make everything hazy, murky and uncertain. Each individual with its code number (Like 6079 Winston Smith) even has a chance of forgetting his own name and identity in the process. Such is the horror of totalitarianism that Orwell goes to the farthest logical extreme in order to put up a powerful warning signal to the world against the enemies of democracy like the Communists, Fascists, Nazis and believers in authoritarianism of every hue.

Winston and Julia who, in contravention of the ethics of Oceania, fall in love and continue to have their affair with their illusion that they could possibly escape the notice of the
Big Brother, the telescreen and the Thought-Police. They, however, take the best possible precaution and restrain themselves to the farthest extent practicable. But can they escape the ever alert eyes of the Big Brother?

Always the eyes watching you and the voice enveloping you. Asleep or awake, working or eating, indoors or out of doors, in the bath or in bed - no escape. Nothing was your own except the few cubic centimetres inside your skull. (25)

Thus in Oceania the individual has no privacy, nothing to feel as his own -- not even the passing thoughts of his mind, or the emotional strains of his heart. Everything is observed, everything is questioned, everything is restricted:

Tragedy, he perceived, belonged to the ancient time, to a time when there was still privacy, love and friendship ... Such things ... couldn't happen today. Today, there were fear, hatred, and pain, but no dignity of emotion, no deep or complex sorrows. (28)

Thus broods Winston. Even such contemplation is offensive and is carried on at the risk of detection, imprisonment and execution by the Thought-Police any moment. But Winston, rightly the last man in Europe (Crick, A life, 582) as Orwell had originally conceived him to be, continues his mark of defiance and protest against the Big Brother for some years. Winston, thus, is the last survivor of the old, free-thinking, clear-
headed race of homo-sapiens who at least retains some vestiges of human scruples and reason. At least Winston has some feelings left in some closets of his heart and is capable of love. Otherwise, in the state of affairs in the Airstrip One (Oceania) where the life is determined by slogans like "war is peace", "freedom is slavery", "Ignorance is strength" (7) and things perpetually change by the 'Newspeak' and the individuals are reduced to schizophrenic neurotics and are eliminated (vapourised, as they say) if they question any act of the Big Brother — Winston Smith cannot think of resistance and human dignity.

Winston, however, carries on his love affair with Julia and leads a more or less human life in a secret chamber, above the antique shop of old Charrington. Winston buys the glass paperweight from his shop and slowly develops intimacy with the old man and gets his sympathy for his affair with Julia. Besides Charrington, it is O'Brien whom Winston respects and trusts and confides his revolutionary thoughts in. In the company of old Mr. Charrington and O'Brien Winston harbors his anarchist ideas, his last hopes about the possible rise of the Proles one day to bring an end to the tyranny of the Big Brother. And Winston continues having some self-satisfaction that at least he hasn't reached a point when he'll be forced to accept that two plus two is five under the command of the party leader.

But soon Winston's chamber is raided. The old benefactor Mr. Charrington (who had let out the room to Winston, and sold the antique glass paper-weight to him) is at last proved to be the agent of the ubiquitous Thought Police. And O'Brien, whom
Winston respected and trusted so much, who apparently encouraged Winston to keep up his spirit and integrity finally emerges as yet another important member of the inner parties, of the Thought Police.

In a few minutes after Winston's chamber is raided and they are rounded up, some cop "picked up the glass paper-weight from the table and smashed it to pieces .... "(179). The smashing of the paper-weight is symbolic of the breaking of the integrated man of the old order, the last man of Europe, Winston, who all his life struggled to defend his integrity, his scruple and his sanity, finally goes to pieces. The last hope is gone. And the little bit of sanity that Winston still struggles to preserve by not betraying Julia is at last undone in Room No.101, under the ultimate horror of the rats running over him.

First, after a long period of physical torture, Winston comes to the point when he accepts the fact that the Big Brother is infallible, all powerful and immortal. And he accepts the party dictation that two plus two is five. O'Brien impresses upon Winston's mind the fact that:

... reality is not external. Reality exists in the human mind, and nowhere else. Not in the individual mind, which can make mistakes, and in any case soon perishes: Only in the mind of the Party, which is Collective and immortal. Whatever the Party holds to be the truth, is truth. It is impossible to see reality except by looking
O'Brien explains further the objective of their Party. With them, as he clarifies, "Power is not a means, it is an end" (212). They do not follow the usual order of centralization of Power in the hands of a dictator to safeguard a revolution. On the contrary, as O'Brien asserts, they intend to make "a revolution in order to establish the dictatorship" (212). And O'Brien makes no bones and without the least reservations, goes further to clarify the distinction between the old and the new order. While the old civilization, as he says, was based on "love or justice", theirs is founded upon "hatred" (215). And further O'Brien continues:

In our world there will be no emotions except fear, rage, triumph, and self-abasement. . . . There will be no loyalty, except loyalty towards the Party. There will be no love, except the love of Big Brother. (215).

After clarifying Winston's doubts about their Party, and their objectives, O'Brien, however, recognizes Winston's spirit and courage: " 'You are the last man', said O'Brien. You are the guardian of the human spirit'. (217)"

And he adds promptly: "You are rotting; you are falling to pieces. (219)."

In fact, O'Brien is not wrong totally, he means to weaken
him psychologically. Winston, the last survivor of the proud race is rotting; the last man of Europe is falling into pieces with each passing day, with the mutilation of his tissues at every fresh kick and blow. But till the very last, Winston resists with formidable endurance and courage the temptation of betraying Julia. When O'Brien tries to flatten him psychologically by telling that the Party has broken Winston down completely. He promptly, though feebly in his wretched, worn out voice asserts the last hold on his integrity:

"I have not betrayed Julia". (220)

Truly enough, Winston, despite untold harassments, physical and psychological tortures still clings to his loyalty to Julia. And this act of loyalty marks the assertion of the last hold on the old values, on the integrity of the individual. But already, in the process, Winston has been forced to accept many things like the Party's Slogan: 'Freedom is Slavery' and 'Two and two make Five'. Thus, Winston has lost the status of the autonomy of the individual long since. Only, he tries frantically to cling to the worn out thread of the morality of the private individual by maintaining his loyalty to his lover, Julia.

But, can he keep it up in the face of the overwhelming pressure from the all-powerful State? The outcome is quite predictable: the defeat of Winston's resistance, however bold and determined it may be, is a foregone conclusion. And it comes soon. The ultimate torture is meted out to Winston when a cage-full of rats is brought close to him and the operator moves to open its door to let the abominable creatures loose upon Winston:
There comes the scream, the last cry of horror from Winston who gives in finally, disowns Julia, betrays her:

Do it to Julia! do it to Julia! Not me! Julia!
I don't care what you do to her. Tear her face off, strip her to the bones. Not me! Julia! Not me!

And with this the last survivor, the last man of Europe is vanquished finally. The last vestige, the last mark of humanity gives way and the individual is reduced to a mechanical organ of the gigantic Party machine. And with this again; the road to 1984 draws to an end, terminates finally. The long journey of Orwell's protagonist, commencing with the Spanish Civil War comes to a halt at last.

Orwell himself had a grave premonition about the terrible shape of things ahead, soon after he met Henry Miller in Paris en route to Spain:

Our civilization was destined to be swept away and replaced by something so different that we should scarcely regard it as human . . . ("Inside, the Whale," 41)

Commenting on Homage to Catalonia and putting Orwell's Spanish Civil War experience in its proper perspective Woodcock observes:

... his experiences in Spain had made him aware for the first time of the kind of forces which were loose in Europe, and which had to be resisted if anything good from the past were to be retained
in the new technological age to which humanity seemed irrevocably condemned. (141)

Keeping the protagonists of Orwell in mind, Woodcock puts him in the line of the great continental writers like Malraux, Silone and Camus: As Woodcock strongly argues:

... the central concern with the dialogue between the individual and his absurd or arbitrary environment. All his heroes are failures indeed, he once said that every life, seen from the inside, was a failure. In just the same way the hero of every novel by Malraux and Camus and Silone is a failure, because the human condition condemns all men in the long run to defeat, if it is only the ultimate defeat of death. This does not really matter. The important thing is to have understood the truth about One's situation and to have uttered the cry of rebellion that confirms ones' humanity. This is what real heroism consists of. (180). (emphasis mine.)

By this standard, as set by the continental masters, Winston Smith, the last Orwellian Protagonist, the 'last man of Europe' as he intended to call him is verily a hero. For he rightly understands his situation and cries out vehemently his note of protest till, of course, he is overwhelmed by the inexorable force of the State.

Although it is quite likely to infer that Orwell, while
writing 1984, was influenced by such dystopian works like Zamayatin's We, H.G.Wells' When the Sleeper Wakes, Aldous Huxley's Brave New World, Arthur Koestler's Darkness at Noon and even Jack London's Iron Heel; yet it won't be fair to call 1984 a simple imitation of any of such works. William Steinhoff, who worked extensively on the genesis of this book puts his findings thus:

The discomfort and fear of 1984 are incompatible with the chromium-plated, hygienic, efficient future imagined by Wells, Huxley, and Zamayatin.(148)

Similarly, there have been unjust critical assaults on this text dismissing it as the direct outcome of the gloom, sickness and pallor of the last days of Orwell when he was writing with consumptive lungs that had worn out badly. Orwell's new perspective, the shift of emphasis (from 'poverty' to 'liberty', from 'hunger' to 'freedom') that commences with his Spanish Civil War experiences finally culminates in the theme and atmosphere of 1984. And further, as Orwell makes it very clear in his essay on Dickens that "every art is Propaganda", (CEJLS I : 492) he had no reservation to put forward his realization across his creative works. What he saw with his own eyes in the course of his Spanish Civil War experience, the betrayal of the Revolution by the Communists and their lack of integrity became the crux of the theme of all his post-Spanish Civil War writings viz. HC, AF and 1984. And Orwell's criticism of the Communist Party was not for any of his own personal benefit or propelled by any of his
eccentricities. It was motivated by a purely altruistic desire to warn people against the Communist Party which is basically as atrocious and undemocratic as the Nazis or Fascists whom it was expected to replace. Hence, through all these post-Spanish Civil War writings, Orwell's voice is clear and consistent. It was a voice, marked by urgency and alarm. Although Orwell's unpleasant experience during the Public School days (as he recalls in "Such, such were the Joys"), his suffering through all his life and finally the failing lungs subscribed partly to the gloomy, morbid atmosphere of 1984, it can never be taken as the only cause of it. Rather, it appears more reasonable to look at it the way Bernard Crick sees the issue. The "out-line" that Orwell had drawn before writing the novel 1984 (Crick, A Life, 582-85) shows clearly that he had been contemplating the idea for a long-time, almost since as early as he wrote Animal Farm. Jeffrey Meyers corroborates it thus: "Orwell's last novel had been germinating in his mind for a very long time" (148).

Yet another critic puts the whole issue in the proper perspective and explains the thing most convincingly:

But there is no escaping the fact that he is a very different writer after Spain. The change is in his conception of the relation of man to his Community; after Spain, Orwell recognizes a new kind of society. (Lee, 161)

Our discussion of this great book may appear incomplete without a glance at the overwhelming response it received from the readers and the critics. To begin with, the book was published almost simultaneously from London and New York as well.
While it appeared on 8 June 1949 from London; its New York edition came out just five days after and, like its predecessor, Animal Farm, it never stopped selling till the figure assumed an astronomical dimension, thus giving its author both recognition and popularity as one of the great novelists of the century.

In any case, the popularity, recognition and the intrinsic merit of 1984 as a work of art cannot be ruled out. While J.R. Hammond, a leading Orwell Scholar calls it "a work of impressive and haunting imaginative power" and places it beside Camus' The Plague, Koestler's Darkness at Noon, Hobbe's Leviathan and Machiavelli's The Prince (170,172), some other critics rate it as Orwell's "best book" (Hynes,14) and his "greatest work" (Winnifrith and Whitehead,1). Above all, the perceptive observation of Robert A. Lee gives the final touch to all responses. As he puts it:

To read Orwell is to recognize the meaning of Ortega Y Gasset's indictment of twentieth century liberalism. (161)

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To sum up, Orwell's life as we have observed was the life of a missionary, inexorably committed to the welfare of the humanity. The troubled period he was born into that witnessed two World Wars and many Civil Wars, besides other worse crises of human existence like unemployment, poverty, squalor and atop all, the inevitable threat of the total elimination of the individual autonomy horrified him. And obviously Orwell was not the man to
swallow all such humiliation and remain a mute spectator of the whole process of degeneration and dehumanization that the totalitarian forces brought about.

In this context, Orwell's experience in the Spanish Civil War was an eye-opener to him. In the course of his participation during the Spanish Civil War, Orwell saw with his own eyes the horror of the Communist regime, their double-dealings, hypocrisy, lies and treachery. When finally Orwell left Spain, he was fully convinced that communism can never serve as a viable alternative to Fascism. For he himself experienced that it was as repressive and as undemocratic as the other. This experience in Spain not only gave Orwell a profound political insight, it sharpened his sensibility, made him realize the inherent truth in life as well. The 'Crystal Spirit' that Orwell so much respects and adheres to all his life thereafter was the gift of the Spanish Civil War. The sense of decency that he vaguely meant previously assumed conviction and was transformed into the 'Crystal Spirit', the love for and the implicit faith in 'human solidarity' (like Hemingway in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*) since the moment, he met the unknown Italian militiaman. (HC, 7)

Ironically, when Orwell returned from Spain fully enlightened about the true-self of the Communists and the horror of the prospect of the reins of power in their hands, no one took his words seriously in England. He went mostly ignored and was rather thrown into a whirlpool of controversy. But Orwell, the committed fighter for the cause of freedom, justice and human
decency that he was, soon found out means to project the truth that had dawned on him, the perspective that he had acquired from his Spanish Civil War experience. And this determination culminated in a series of creative works, commencing with Coming up for Air, and sustaining through Homage to Catalonia, Animal Farm and 1984. All these later works were completely different from all his works written prior to the Spanish Civil War. As Lee asserts, Orwell was "a very different writer after Spain" (161). He further maintains that after Spain Orwell recognizes a new kind of society". (161). This again comes very close to Hemingway's transformation after the Spanish Civil War. Beneath all these works there is the unmistakable and irresistible urge of Orwell to warn people against the horrors of Communism. As Jeffrey Meyers rightly observes:

Orwell felt he had to frighten people into a painful recognition of the dangers that threatened their very existence. (A Readers Guide, 144)

In fact, what Orwell realized in the thirties, the other intellectuals of England, America and the Continent realized much later. And what Orwell had categorically cautioned then, came true half a century later as the chain of historic events in Eastern Europe and Soviet Russia that took the whole world by storm. Besides what Orwell says in Homage to Catalonia or in the fable Animal Farm or 1984, his letters and book reviews too carried his message through. In the review of James Burnham's The Managerial Revolution (1946) Orwell boldly affirms: "But at any rate, the Russian Regime will either democratize itself, or it
Thus Orwell clearly sees half a century ahead into the future and anticipates the fate of communism and the disintegration of Soviet Russia. Such is the power and the depth of insight and the perspective that Orwell acquired from his Spanish Civil War experience that enabled him to see through the illusive present, to analyze the shape of things to come and to take clean stock of the past. Above all, this illuminating insight that Orwell gained flashed through his two later works, Animal Farm and 1984. And it will be redundant to mention that Orwell's status as an artist was mainly decided by his two last works which have passed through millions of hands across the globe over the last four decades. They continue to be read by people all over the world over and over again and the Orwellian terminology that come from these two works, such as, 'All are equal, but some are more equal than others' (AF), 'Double think', 'Newspeak', 'Thought-Po1ice', 'Big-Brother' (1984) are in frequent use in modern journalism, politics and literature.

1984 was precisely meant as a warning, not a prophecy. It was not meant to horrify people but to alert them against the possible horrors. Thus the message of 1984 is what Bernard Crick puts across accurately:

"Don't let it happen. It depend on you".

( A life, 566 )
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