PREFACE

George Orwell has very vividly presented the characteristics of his age. His works depict the social and political changes that took place, especially during the course of his literary journey between 1933 and 1953.

There were a number of factors which left a deep imprint on Orwell’s mind, primary amongst them were the First and the Second World Wars, the developments on the scientific and technological fronts and the development of the spirit of socialism. He would be change society and to “push the world in a certain direction, to alter other people’s idea of the kind of society they should strive after”. His novels are a powerful satire on the social and political hypocrisies.

The following dissertation is an attempt to ground Orwell’s satire in the context of the socio-political developments of his times. Attempt will also be made to understand what role he envisaged for the writer in public life, since he stuck to a concept of activism that always weaned him away from the esoteric. He was by nature a believer in the moral values of politics. This concept is artistically woven into the fabric of the novels of this realist, who is unmistakably a sensitive, a little hesitant gentleman, “a
necessary man” with the rushes of strong feelings. Evidently enough, literature can be studied more meaningfully when, besides being analyzed in its own right, it is set against the background of the society that produced it. A perusal of Orwell’s novels and essays reveals the kind of social milieu he was familiar with and which he so limpidly mirrored, as it also reveals Orwell the man, “full of the milk of human kindness”. He was cosmopolitan in taste and outlook, “an unbeliever with a religious temperament.”

In the first chapter, origin of satire is traced, and the place Orwell occupies in the tradition of the satirists is also discussed.

In the second chapter titled “Social and Political Background”, the socio-political developments, right from his early age down to the last days when he was writing Nineteen Eighty Four have been discussed. Here the main concern has been to see how he was influenced by those events and how he turned out to be an artist of liberal outlook.

The third chapter titled “Orwell the Socialist” focuses on the social and political views of George Orwell. In this chapter, an attempt has been made to establish that though he satirised the political establishment of the communist system Orwell was a
socialist not only in his mind, but also in blood. He was disillusioned with the practice of communist ideals, and not with communism itself. The fourth chapter deals with his two masterpieces, *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. In the fifth chapter Orwell's other works, particularly his non-fiction writings, are discussed and analyzed. The last chapter, "Conclusion", ties up the loose ends and sums up the place that Orwell occupies in the tradition of English satirists.

For references, the traditional model has been followed in the thesis.

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