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George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* as the Final Consequence of Political Idealism

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INTRODUCTION

The following treatise deals with arguably one of the most important novels of the 20th century, written by one of its most influential authors, Eric Arthur Blair, better known under the pseudonym George Orwell. The zeitgeist opinion on Orwell has changed recently enough, as was amusingly expressed by the late Christopher Hitchens, who with tacit annoyance observed in the early 1990s that "[E]veryone now pretends to admire him, but there was a long time when he wasn't well known and certainly not well liked" ("Booknotes" 25:46-25:52). The latter is to be expected, however, of all pariahs worth their salt, as their talent for being a badgering thorn in both the rabid and the more anesthetized side of "bluepilled" opinion signifies their most cardinal virtue.

Although it would be somewhat presumptuous to claim that totalitarianism has not been dealt with adequately by any other author, Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* does exhibit a discernable superiority, despite being a work of fiction, insofar as it does not merely draw reference to totalitarianism as it occurred – i.e. was occurring at the time of writing – but as it is to occur if its inner logic were ever to be finalized. However, being focused so much on the final consequence, the question about the origins and the nexus of human thought that leads to the creation of Ingsoc, or more specifically, the philosophy of *collective solipsism*, seems therefore somewhat unanswered by the novel, or at least not answered entirely. The Austrian philosopher Karl Raimund Popper once posited the figure "lurking deeper in the shadows to whom the blame for the rise of modern totalitarianism could largely be attached" (Herman ch. 29), and prompted by Popper's position (though *not* inspired by it) this treatise was written. "That figure was Plato" (ch. 29).

The aim of this treatise is the following: 1) to provide an account of Orwell's background and thought process which were consequential to the formation of his radically anti-totalitarian worldview; 2) to discuss the manner in which modern totalitarianism as depicted in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is politically rooted in Platonism, as well as the idealist thought process in general; 3) to explain the formation of collective solipsism and the mental capacity for doublethink; 4) to dissect the existential drives and motivations of the novel's antagonists, i.e. *the priests of power* ruling Oceania; and 5) to examine the formation of totalitarianism in reference to Orwell's view that totalitarianism is a direct consequence of the so-called death of God (Bounds 140).

The reading of Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* as a critique of idealism requires that the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche be referenced in the process, for he is the philosopher with the well-earned reputation of being idealism's greatest and most strident enemy. Alongside Nietzsche, the work of American economist and social theorist Thomas Sowell – primarily his notion of the unconstrained vision and his thorough critique of the intellectual profession – is also referenced fairly extensively. Alongside the aforementioned authors and many other tremendous names, this treatise does not shy away from referring to ideas of academically less recognized authors either, especially since to treat Orwell from the purely established perspective seems outright reprehensible, not to say – *Kafkaesque*.

Since Orwell is one of those rare people that "really would follow logic and honesty to their full conclusion" and "not be deflected by the fact that this might offend someone" ("Booknotes" 26:24-26:32), this treatise also comes with a trigger warning – for both warmongering neocons (Bloom 5) and *moraline*-addicted progressives alike. And as history teaches (Malice and Woods 0:40-13:50), the latter two attributions are very much interchangeable.

AN EXCEPTION IN THE MAKING

The sheer amount of text written throughout history, as well as the sheer amount of works being published as we speak, might drive the aspiring writer to the depths of despair. Chances are their creation shall return to dust without even a proper chance at sinning, let alone a decent chance at greatness; and on occasion that there does emerge a writer who amounts to an exception, a lot of the times, the worms have, alas, already munched up their deceased brain. One such exception is George Orwell. Apart from the fact that most of his writing stands the test of time almost flawlessly – bearing perpetual relevance, for better or for worse – one of Orwell's most impressive qualities was, what he himself called, "'a power of facing unpleasant facts'" (qtd. in Hitchens 13). In practice, this meant never making allegiances that come at the cost of one's principles, as well as genuinely putting one's position or preference to the test without conveniently evading the implications of unpleasant discoveries (Hitchens 13-14). This quality of his, albeit commendable in most contexts, is what made Orwell a very unpleasant bedfellow to his contemporaries – and what makes him easily invocable now.

There are two crucial epiphanies in Orwell's life which shaped his worldview and permanently defined him as an author and a critic (Hitchens 3): the first one he experienced while serving as a young man in the Indian Imperial Police in Burma (Orwell, *Road to Wigan Pier* ch. IX); the second one while fighting in Catalonia on the Republican side during the Spanish Civil War. Both experiences, aside from having disillusioning effects as far as his previous notions were concerned, are instances where Orwell's "power of facing" had come to the fore.

Orwell's experience in Burma is laid out at length in several of his works, most notably in the autobiographical piece *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937), the short essay "Shooting an Elephant" (1936), and, fictionally, in the novel *Burmese Days* (1934). There are two aspects of Orwell's political outlook that came about as a direct consequence of said experience: a growing sense of solidarity toward the lower classes and the realization that "imperialism nearly always ends up dehumanising the colonisers themselves" (Bounds 17). Orwell admits that the growing solidarity with the lower classes primarily came as a result of the guilt he felt for having been part of the imperial system (Orwell, *The Road to Wigan Pier* ch. IX). An ardent reader of Kipling in his youth (Bounds 17), the Burmese experience made Orwell realize that Kipling's grand notion of "white man's burden" – that is, the idea that imperialism is ultimately a noble cause for bringing modernity to the non-Occident – was far detached from the ignoble reality he was being faced with.[1] As he reveals on one occasion in *The Road to Wigan Pier*:

> I should expect to find that even in England many policemen, judges, prison warders, and the like are haunted by a secret horror of what they do. But in Burma it was a double oppression that we were committing. Not only were we hanging people and putting them in jail and so forth; we were doing it in the capacity of unwanted foreign invaders. The Burmese themselves never really recognised our jurisdiction. The thief whom we put in prison did not think of himself as a criminal justly punished, he thought of himself as the victim of a foreign conqueror. The thing that was done to him was merely a wanton meaningless cruelty. His face, behind the stout teak bars of the lock-up and the iron bars of the jail, said so clearly. And unfortunately I had not trained myself to be indifferent to the expression of the human face. (ch. IX)

[1] However, one should also note that the many candid conversations between Flory and the very charming and very pro-imperial Dr. Veraswami in *Burmese Days* do not seem to treat the matter as self-evident one way or the other: "'British prestige, the white man's burden, the pukka sahib *sans peur et sans reproche* – you know. Such a relief to be out of the stink of it for a little while.' – 'My friend, my friend, now come, come, please! That iss outrageous. You must not say such things of honourable English gentlemen!'" (37, emphasis in original). This is especially the case when considering Flory's depiction and fate as an intimation of "something deeply disconcerting about the motivation of the progressive enterprise" (Bounds 180-181).

Though this experience had not yet shaped Orwell into a self-described socialist,[2] it certainly laid the foundation for his intellectual development in that direction as it impelled him to re-align his stance from a tentatively pro-imperial, middleclass one to an openly anti-imperial, anti-bourgeois one (ch. IX). As already mentioned above, having witnessed "the dirty work of Empire at close quarters" (Orwell, "Shooting an Elephant" 91), Orwell also got grossly familiar with the dehumanizing aspects a position of power and authority involves. In "Shooting an Elephant," for example, Orwell offers a presumably non-fictional account of himself shooting a tamed elephant on the loose that had previously terrorized the inhabitants of Moulmein (91-92). At the time already disillusioned with the imperial enterprise (91), Orwell nevertheless recalls an instinctive need to display his authority as a Burmese policeman in front of the natives, despite the situation not decisively requiring it:

> I perceived in this moment that when the white man turns tyrant it is his own freedom that he destroys. He becomes a sort of hollow, posing dummy, the conventionalized figure of a sahib. For it is the condition of his rule that he shall spend his life in trying to impress the 'natives', and so in every crisis he has got to do what the 'natives' expect of him. *He wears a mask*, and his face *grows to fit it*. I had got to shoot the elephant. I had committed myself to doing it when I sent for the rifle. (95, emphasis added)

The idea of "the face growing to fit the mask" is of greatest importance here because it not only describes the dehumanization process as already materialized, but also accounts for the willingness of the dehumanized imperial constable to fulfill the role *beyond* what is necessary, lest "the mask" make him look a fool (99). The air of banality Orwell attributes to such decision-making is rather evocative of Hannah Arendt's concept of "the banality of evil," a concept through which she

[2] From *The Road to Wigan Pier*: "That was more or less new to me, after Burma, but the drivel which the middle classes were still talking ('These unemployed are all unemployables', etc. etc.) failed to deceive me. I often wonder whether that kind of stuff deceives even the fools who utter it. On the other hand I had at that time no interest in Socialism or any other economic theory" (ch. IX).

attempts an explanation of the human capacity to commit atrocities by predicating it, not on nefarious or malevolent ends, but the sheer capacity to fulfill and/or advance in a role:

> for when I speak of the banality of evil, I do so only on the strictly factual level, pointing to a phenomenon which stared one in the face at the trial. Eichmann was not Iago and not Macbeth, and nothing would have been farther from his mind than to determine with Richard III "to prove a villain." Except for an extraordinary diligence in looking out for his personal advancement, he had no motives at all. And this diligence in itself was in no way criminal; he certainly would never have murdered his superior in order to inherit his post. He *merely*, to put the matter colloquially, *never realized what he was doing*. (*Eichmann in Jerusalem* 287, emphasis in original)

"[T]he will to command is not as corrupting as the will to obey," sayeth an old radical adage (Hitchens 15). Even though Arendt's *Eichmann in Jerusalem* was published more than a decade after Orwell's death, taking into consideration his account in "Shooting an Elephant," it would not be ridiculous to assume that, as early as his service in Burma, Orwell was made aware of a similar phenomenon, that is, what "a face growing to fit the mask" may entail. Moreover, this realization might also account for Orwell's unwavering stance against authoritarian coercion in radical favor of freedom – a theme which, of course, reaches its literary apotheosis in the novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

When Orwell arrived in Catalonia to join Andrés Nin's POUM militia (Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista) in the fight against Franco's forces (Bounds 23), his political outlook had already been formed for the most part: Orwell was a "libertarian socialist" (102) with a strong populist streak (19). What he did not anticipate at the time, however, was the extent to which adherence to orthodoxy is keen on betraying current alliances. At the time of receiving military training at the Lenin Barracks, the Spanish Civil War presented to Orwell what he called, "a state of affairs worth fighting for" (*Homage to Catalonia* ch. I). Though in the beginning the fighting

itself consisted for the most part of the bodily ability to withstand the cold, the boredom and other "discomfort[s] of stationary warfare" (ch. III), as the conflict proceeded, Orwell did find himself partaking in a small-scale, yet quite serious military operation (ch. VI), as well as surviving a fascist sniper shot through the neck (ch. X). However, the crucial moment occurred when the Spanish government was taken over by the communist faction as result of Soviet aid making communist influence grow rapidly within it (Bounds 23). Ideological closeness breeds contempt, as the saying goes, and the communist side thereupon decided to cleanse away all the militias and political rivals which might pose a threat in the long term (Orwell, *Homage to Catalonia* ch. XI). As a result, scores of anarchists, Trotskyists and radical leftists were being incarcerated (ch. XI; Bounds 23). Among the groups targeted was also the militia to which Orwell himself belonged: POUM. The mass incarceration proceeded systematically, without trial or charges for the prisoners (Orwell, *Homage to Catalonia* ch. XI), and with the more prominent figures being murdered in prison (ch. XI). In addition to the persecution, a propaganda campaign was launched by pro-Soviet allies in the press, insisting that the groups being persecuted were actually collaborating with the fascists. As Orwell observes about his comrades at the front who were oblivious of the betrayal underway: "there must have been numbers of men who were killed without ever learning that the newspapers in the rear were calling them Fascists" (ch. XI). Orwell did manage to escape incarceration and flee back to England, however, but it had been a rather close affair (ch. XII).

The Catalan experience represented a turning point in Orwell's political outlook. It developed in Orwell an outright hostility toward the world communist movement, whereby "to expose orthodox communism as a terrible [totalitarian] perversion" of socialism became thereafter one of Orwell's main objectives as a writer (Bounds 24): "The Spanish war and other events in 1936–7 turned the scale and thereafter I knew where I stood. Every line of serious work that I have

written since 1936 has been written, directly or indirectly, *against* totalitarianism and *for* democratic Socialism, as I understand it" (Orwell, "Why I Write" ch. 1, emphasis in original). Moreover, it had been in Catalonia where "Orwell suffered the premonitory pangs of a man living under a police regime: a police regime ruling in the name of socialism and the people" (Hitchens 55) – a theme which is, yet again, crucial to his magnum opus *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

It is a prominent casuistry of bad scholarship to mistake multi-perspectivity for inconsistency; yet, George Orwell has often found himself on the receiving end of such wised-up remarks, accusing him of "veering wildly between differing perspectives, mixing radicalism and conservatism, patriotism and internationalism and elitism and populism in bizarrely unstable compounds" (Bounds 177). Granted, there is an argument to be made that Orwell bears a share of the fault himself, for he did not shy away from choosing sides, thus, necessarily putting himself in a category whether he intended it or not. And furthermore, when one chooses a side, it is not nonsensical to expect of that person to be a "team player" too – however, it is to Orwell's greatest credit that, ideologically speaking, he could not bring himself to be a "good party man" for its own sake (15). This becomes all the more obvious the moment Orwell makes the stern decision to abandon the idea of "socialist unity" on the Left (22) and goes on the offensive, viciously attacking British Marxists (6) and all other contemporary apologists of Stalin, communism and "the Soviet experiment." However, instead of merely denouncing them, Orwell had also made it his objective to understand them (137).

Though many socialist writers with either a blind spot or a soft spot for communism, such as Raymond Williams, have as a consequence denounced Orwell for making "unconscionable attacks on socialism" (Bounds 2), Orwell personally never abandoned socialism as his political position (171). He was, however, very cognizant of the disastrous failures adherents of socialism

tended to cause and indefatigably make excuses for, especially with regards to communism (the Soviet strain in particular), accurately defined by Thomas Sowell as: "socialism with an international focus and totalitarian methods" (*Intellectuals and Society* 99). By retelling the very failed history of the Russian revolution in *Animal Farm*, as well as putting English Socialism as the godhead of the totalitarian dystopia in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Orwell was keen on providing an answer to the question: what makes socialist ideologies susceptible to totalitarian distortions (Bounds 137). However, unlike *Animal Farm*, which is a story retold in allegory form, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is an attempt at telling a story that is yet to unfold. Thus, it is in the latter novel that Orwell explores what he perceived to be a society that is suffering under the final form of totalitarian ideology. Though many of the themes in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* have to do with the totalitarian dangers a centralized economy is susceptible to, along with the role collectivism serves in establishing totalitarian rule in the first place – both notions probably coming to fruition as a consequence of Orwell's reading and reviewing Hayek's masterpiece *The Road to Serfdom* (Hitchens 81-82) – a significant portion of the novel also deals with the nature of objective reality in a totalitarian system. Since the Party in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* claims that its mind and its ideas necessarily precede, i.e. make up, reality, it follows that *Nineteen Eighty-Four* also functions as a weighty critique of political idealism.

WHAT IS POLITICAL IDEALISM?

There is an elegant, but somewhat simplistic quote attributed to Samuel Taylor Coleridge which says that every person is born either an Aristotelian or a Platonist (Herman Prologue). To find oneself among the latter stock would invariably mean that the person in question is a political idealist. However, in order to define what political idealism is, one essentially needs to establish what *idealism* itself is – the godfather of which is Plato, and the father, arguably, Socrates.

As already outlined in the previous section, idealism refers to a way of perceiving the world as if "the idea" within the human mind "precedes reality" (Fridman 2:12:46-2:12:50). Thus, the idea is perceived to be "more real" than manifold matter manifesting itself empirically through the senses, rendering the material world primarily as "a realm of illusion and error" (Herman ch. 4) when compared to the standard set by the idea itself. Yet this is not the only manner idealism can be fathomed and approached. Another possible way of defining idealism would be to call it a psychological phenomenon that molds the way a mind perceives reality. As such, it is not merely a means or a method with which reality is grasped and interpreted, but a state of mind feasibly inherent, if not even congenital to the psyche – alluding back to the Coleridge quote. In other words, it is not a theory or *organon* one can accept or dispense with based on its compliance with a set of predefined merits, but a cognitive condition one cannot do without, and which, in fact, exists as the predefined merit itself. Therefore, in a similar vein, idealism can also be conceived of as a *vision*[3] of the world, or more specifically – to borrow a phrase by Thomas Sowell – an "unconstrained vision" of the world (9). Though Plato and his teacher Socrates predicate their

[3] "A vision has been described as a 'pre-analytic cognitive act'" (Sowell, *A Conflict of Visions* 4).

philosophy of idealism on what they call an external, otherworldly realm of perfect Forms (Herman ch. 2) from which material reality is imperfectly derived (i.e. copied), the aforementioned realm is by their own admission attainable only by means of contemplation and reasoning, thus unavoidably setting the mind – that is, their own minds – as both the starting and the end point of the entire epistemological endeavor. When looked at in those terms, the reason behind denoting idealism as an "unconstrained vision" becomes rather straightforward: by making the mind the be-all-end-all of the epistemological process, it is by definition only as constrained as the mind itself is, so to speak, "willing" to acknowledge. As the Russo-American anarchist Michael Malice once shrewdly observed: "there is no difference between how something 'works in theory' and 'works in my imagination'" (@michaelmalice A).

Political idealism, consequently, refers to the way idealism manifests or purports to manifest itself politically. It amounts to a belief in the implementation of the dictates from the "ideal realm," either literal or figurative, to shape and reshape human society in order to imitate said realm as perfectly as possible. That the realm is, furthermore, predefined as indubitably beneficial and estimable on all accounts goes without saying. Just as access to the ideal realm is predicated on the mind's capacity to reason successfully, so too is reason here, or better yet, rationality, emphasized as the primary tool to conceive of the ideal polis and find a way to *prescribe* it onto reality: "Politics on Plato's terms becomes *prescriptive*, a series of formulae for shaping man and society into what they should be rather than accepting things as they are" (Herman ch. 5, emphasis in original). The blueprint for this type of political vision has most famously been laid out in Plato's central work *The Republic* (ch. 5), but is, of course, present in many other works by many other authors throughout history who have advocated the creation of a perfect (ideal) state, a perfect (ideal) society.

Before going any further, however, one needs to emphasize the point that the occurrence of idealism is by no means reducible to an idiosyncratic phenomenon that has developed out of thin air. At the time of its conception idealism was a system of thought that had managed to reconcile two major ontological paradigms of Greek pre-Socratic thought, each respectively regarding the nature of reality in mutually exclusive terms: the philosophy of Heraclitus on the one hand, whose theory of the *Logos* argued against the notion of static existence, famously proclaiming that change is all there is (*Panta rhei*); and the Eleatic School on the other, which claimed that the nature of existence is necessarily static, i.e. that the perception of change in the world is, in fact, the illusion[4] (Herman ch. 2). By positing the existence of ideal reality, i.e. the realm of "the Forms" (ch. 2), Platonic idealism managed to retain both the Eleatics' vision of a static existence: the world of Being, which it, furthermore, elevated to "'the [divine] realm of the pure[,] everlasting[,] immortal and changeless'" (Socrates qtd. in Herman ch. 2), while at the same time assigning the paradoxes and the ostensible chaos within the observable world to the illusory and erroneous nature of material reality: the world of the Becoming (ch. 2). But apart from feasibly conceiving of idealism as the result of the reconciliation of two pre-Socratic schools of thought, one should, of course, also note the aforesaid psychological aspect driving the mind toward, and/or imbuing it with, idealism.

To critique Platonism, one usually sets it against the philosophy of Plato's most renowned student: Aristotle, who, unlike his teacher, strongly maintained the empiristic position that "reason must be linked to the power of observation" (Herman ch. 4) and *not* be set against it. Thus,

[4] To give an example, Zeno's famous paradox called the *Dichotomy* makes an observation about the inherent illogicality – hence impossibility – of motion, a process upon which all change is unavoidably predicated: "There is no motion, because what is moving must reach the midpoint before the end. It is always necessary to cross half the distance, but these are infinite (*apeiron*), and it is impossible to get through things that are infinite" (McKirahan 142, emphasis in original).

according to Aristotle, as Arthur Herman paraphrases it, "Reality with a capital R is not (for the most part) something ultimately above or behind the world we see and hear and smell and touch. It *is* that world" (ch. 4, emphasis in original). But in order to dissect idealism as a *psychological* condition, one will, however, have to set one's sights on another famous philosopher, arguably, the most fervent anti-Platonist to have ever existed – Friedrich Nietzsche. This becomes all the more necessary in the context of this paper in particular, as George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* completely abandons the possibility that a mere grasp of material facts and empirical evidence can be set against the power of the Party's hegemony over human cognition. The concept of doublethink virtually renders any attempt at an Aristotelian critique utterly futile. As such, the only real evidence available to the novel's protagonist that goes against the lies of the Party, is his deeper bodily instinct unable to deny the loathsome existence within a totalitarian collective:

> How could you tell how much of it was lies? It *might* be true that the average human being was better off now than he had been before the Revolution. The only evidence to the contrary was the mute protest in your own bones, the instinctive feeling that the conditions you lived in were intolerable and that at some other time they must have been different. (Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* 61, emphasis in original)

In fact, the "empirical aspect of Aristotle's thought" (Herman ch. 15) is presented as methodically even more problematic as endless Party statistics are being propagated to the contrary:

> Day and night the telescreens bruised your ears with statistics proving that people today had more food, more clothes, better houses, better recreations – that they lived longer, worked shorter hours, were bigger, healthier, stronger, happier, *more intelligent*, *better educated*, than the people of fifty years ago. Not a word of it could ever be proved or disproved. (Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* 62, emphasis added)

Moreover, the healthier the instincts of the protagonist Winston Smith are, the more resolved his rebellion becomes, whereby the Party in the end has to implement continuous bodily harm in order to break his truth-seeking spirit, subsequently cauterizing away what is instinctual within him.

Though the latter expedients of coercion are in no way unbeknown to history, nor the human condition, it is worth highlighting them when taking into consideration a seemingly innocuous remark that the character of Socrates makes in Plato's *Republic*: "You see, I, for my part, do not believe that a healthy body, by means of its own virtue, makes the soul good. On the contrary, I believe that the opposite is true: a good soul, by means of its own virtue, makes the body as good as possible" (Plato 86). Granted, there is nothing objectionable in saying that a healthy body does not "by means of its own virtue" make the soul good, but it is somewhat disconcerting to have the idea of the "good" body as something separate from, and potentially even inimical to, a healthy body. It is, in fact, in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* where such a conceptualization serves as the basic rationale whereupon the Party intentionally vitiates healthy life, either in form of systemic malnutrition, the repression of the sexual instincts, the destruction of the natural family or the physical destruction of the body through torture, to "save" its members from committing the ultimate evil (Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* 193): the denouncement of the good as conceived and imposed by Big Brother and the Party. Thus, moral orthodoxy according to the Party's ideals is categorically set *against* healthy life, i.e. healthy life instincts, to the extent that those instincts could rally against what the Party deems to be the "good," orthodox life. This is where Nietzsche's critique of idealism enters the arena.

"Plato is a coward in the face of reality – *therefore* he takes flight into the ideal" is, in so many words, Nietzsche's diagnosis of idealism (*Twilight of the Idols* A 78, emphasis in original). Thus, what has so far been referred to as a "psychological phenomenon," a "cognitive condition"

and an "unconstrained vision" amounts to mere euphemisms: Idealism, apart from being a form of "'exalted swindle'" (*Twilight of the Idols* B 87), denotes from a Nietzschean perspective a pathology – the decadence of the healthy instincts of life (17).

The meme-gene dichotomy brought to attention by the evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins serves to show that what are usually called the distinct and even mutually hostile realms of nature and culture are, in fact, much more alike than one initially realizes. Among the people who seem to have been ahead of the curve in the same regard is also Friedrich Nietzsche. He claims that philosophy, far from being a realm of thought and differing opinions validly or invalidly claiming hold over objective reality, is nothing but the philosopher's vehicle for giving meaning to the deeper *physiological* configuration whereupon his psyche is grounded – or to state it in terms of the aforesaid meme-gene dichotomy: the genes forming the physical body of the philosopher greatly influence the memes the philosopher is keen on spreading:

> What provokes one to look at all philosophers half suspiciously, half mockingly, is not that one discovers again and again how innocent they are – how often and how easily they make mistakes and go astray; in short, their childishness and childlikeness – but that they are not honest enough in their work, although they all make a lot of virtuous noise when the problem of truthfulness is touched even remotely. They all pose as if they had discovered and reached their real opinions through the self-development of a cold, pure, divinely unconcerned dialectic (as opposed to the mystics of every rank, who are more honest and doltish – and talk of "inspiration"); while at bottom it is an assumption, a hunch, indeed a kind of "inspiration" – most often a *desire of the heart* that has been filtered and made abstract – that they defend with reasons they have sought *after the fact*. (*Beyond Good and Evil* 12, emphasis added)

As Nietzsche furthermore stresses in *Beyond Good and Evil*, "[b]ehind all logic and its seeming sovereignty of movement, too, there stand valuations or, more clearly, *physiological demands* for the *preservation of* a *certain type of life*" (11, emphasis added). The "valuations" and

"physiological demands" standing behind the logic of *idealism* ultimately add up to what Nietzsche deems to be a deep-rooted hatred of reality itself. As he insists in his critique of Christian idealism, the "Platonism for 'the people'" (2), as he calls it – though the same, naturally, applies for secular forms of idealism as well: "that whole fictitious world is rooted in a *hatred* of the natural (– of reality! –), it is the expression of a profound sense of unease concerning reality . . . *But this explains everything*. Who are the only people motivated to *lie their way out of* reality? People who *suffer* from it […] this provides the *formula* for decadence . . ." ("The Anti-Christ" 13, emphasis in original).

That idealism is, indeed, a consequence of suffering from reality can even be noticed in the conclusion that Socrates himself arrives at when in the final days of his life he famously asks of Crito that he sacrifice a rooster to Asclepius, the god of medicine, on his behalf: "It was Socrates's way of announcing that he had finally been cured of life, meaning life in a world filled with lies and illusion" (Herman ch. 1). Though Herman's depiction of Socrates' last moments furnishes the situation with an air of pathos and tragedy, Nietzsche takes Socrates' words far less kindly, and far less forgivingly: "This ridiculous and terrible 'last word' means for those who have ears: 'O Crito, *life is a disease*.' […] Socrates, Socrates *suffered life*!" (*The Gay Science* 272, emphasis in original). Thus, according to Nietzsche, "the real germ of life from which the whole plant had grown" (*Beyond Good and Evil* 13), the extraordinary system of thought irrevocably impacting millennia of Western thought, shaping over the course of history its standards, its morality, its *ideals*, had ultimately been conceived and professed by what is essentially an unwavering and "deadly hostility to life"; whereby the idealist's "concept of the 'beyond', the 'true world', [was] invented to devalue the *only* world there is" – "our earthly reality" ("Ecce Homo" B 150, emphasis in original).

The main goal of idealism – the purpose guiding the logic of its being, so to speak – is to "establish a permanent state of *daylight*" ("Twilight of the Idols" C 166, emphasis in original), which is the only state that is adequate for the type of life unable to bear reality as it is. This goal is achievable in two ways: either by taking the hemlock and betting that the soul will access the perfect state upon death, as Socrates did; or by implementing the dictates from idealism onto reality in terms of creating a *political* state – a utopia – as Plato and many other ideologues after him have tried to. Upon witnessing the world sentence his teacher to death (Herman ch. 1), Plato made it into his mission to conceptualize this "permanent state of daylight" politically and create a society in which the Socratic type of life is not only not being persecuted, but also preserved and revered as its godhead. Thus, the notion of so-called "philosopher-kings" (Reeve xiii) in Plato's *Republic* was created. As such, there exists a flagrant isomorphic relationship (Peterson 195) between the psychological state driving idealism in the individual mind and the vision of a political state which wishes to achieve idealism, i.e. project it onto the real world. Moreover, the entire phenomenon is *self*-referencing (not to say self-aggrandizing and unconstrained) as the relationship between what works in theory and what works in one's imagination is also indistinguishably isomorphic. Therefore, even in Plato's *Republic*, when the character of Socrates professes that the polis he is trying to conceive of is quintessentially based on "justice," i.e. something external and ostensibly valid, such claims are always and without exception conducive to the meaning of "'I like it'" (@michaelmalice B) – or when put in roughly Nietzschean terms: what my existence, otherwise unable to bear reality, *demands*. It is a concept that in any abstract or moral or cosmic sense exists only theoretically, which is to say, it only exists – in *Imaginationland*. "But this is an ancient, eternal story: […] as soon as any philosophy begins to believe in itself. It always creates the world in its own image; it cannot do otherwise. Philosophy is this tyrannical drive itself, the most spiritual

will to power, to the 'creation of the world'" (Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil* 16, emphasis in original).

Before analyzing the way in which George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* offers a stunning account of political idealism in its finalized form, one obvious, but still somewhat insufficiently highlighted point needs to be made: namely, although idealism has primarily been referenced within the confines of Platonism and Socratic philosophy, it is a phenomenon transcending any type of such definitional boundaries. In other words, it is a mode of thought, a mode of being, that cannot be confined by the contingencies of a particular historical period, let alone the contingencies of particular historical persons. Thus, Plato and Socrates's strain of idealism may, indeed, be grounded upon a belief in the existence of the realm of the true Forms specifically, yet the phenomenon, the principle of idealism itself is much broader, much more abstract, and much more widespread. One talks about idealism whenever an idea is deemed to precede reality, whenever one purports to act *as if* an idea precedes reality; whenever, for example, the nature of reality is set against some *ideal* presupposed as a higher merit in of itself. The latter is predominantly the case with moral attitudes and convictions, that is, whenever one feels propelled to derive an *ought* from an *is* (as David Hume's lengthy quote[5] warns *against*), thereby bringing into conflict a self-righteous (self-referencing) notion of morality on the one hand, and

[5] "In every system of morality, which I have hitherto met with, I have always remark'd, that the author proceeds for some time in the ordinary way of reasoning, and establishes the being of a God, or makes observations concerning human affairs; when of a sudden I am surpriz'd to find, that instead of the usual copulations of propositions, *is*, and *is not*, I meet with no proposition that is not connected with an *ought*, or an *ought not*. This change is imperceptible; but is, however, of the last consequence. For as this *ought*, or *ought not*, expresses some new relation or affirmation, 'tis necessary that it shou'd be observ'd and explain'd; and at the same time that a reason should be given, for what seems altogether inconceivable, how this new relation can be a deduction from others, which are entirely different from it. But as authors do not commonly use this precaution, I shall presume to recommend it to the readers; and am persuaded, that this small attention wou'd subvert all the vulgar systems of morality, and let us see, that the distinction of vice and virtue is not founded merely on the relations of objects, nor is perceiv'd by reason" (Hume 469-470, emphasis in original).

the nature of reality on the other. For all intents and purposes, idealism *is* the drive to *impose* an *ought* on an *is*.

Presumably, it is very seldom the case that an honest confession from an idealist can be procured, especially considering how far superior the human mind is at *rationalizing* than at reasoning; however, the article written by American historian Eugene D. Genovese titled "The Question" serves as a notable exception. It is a stunning account of political idealism encountering empirical reality and thereupon, if not utterly relinquishing, then at least significantly reconfiguring its own *bluepilled* programming, so to speak. Due to being quite *en retard*, it exhibits a power of facing that may not be on par with Orwell's, but remains well-worth mentioning nonetheless. "The Question" is meant to be an open letter to the political Left by a long-time intellectual leftist, with the purpose of addressing the ideological complicity of the Left with atrocities of Soviet and other left-wing totalitarianisms in the 20th century. "The Question" and the answer to it, according to Genovese, go as follows:

> What did we know, and when did we know it? We knew everything essential and knew it from the beginning.
> […]
> The horrors did not arise from perversions of radical ideology but from the ideology itself. We were led into complicity with mass murder and the desecration of our professed ideals not by Stalinist or other corruptions of high ideals, much less by unfortunate twists in some presumably objective course of historical development, but by a deep flaw in our very understanding of human nature – its frailty and its possibilities – and by our inability to replace the moral and ethical baseline long provided by the religion we have dismissed with indifference, not to say contempt. (374, 375)

When a person as creepy as William Godwin, for example, – or any other type of deluded *philosopher-king-wannabe* for that matter – insists on lofty statements such as "'we must bring

everything to the standard of reason'" (qtd. in Sowell, *A Conflict of Visions* 39), invariably having his own reason in mind, they often conveniently forget to weigh their ideals against the cost of achieving them (27). Thus, "claims of intellectual and/or moral superiority" (52) are often presented as reasons sufficient enough to withstand any objections reality itself may have, even when, as Genovese sardonically points out, "in a noble effort to liberate the human race from violence and oppression […] all records for mass slaughter, piling up tens of millions of corpses in less than three-quarters of a century" are broken (371). As such, the ideologue/philosopher-king almost perfectly epitomizes Adam Smith's notion of the *man of system* – "apt to be very wise in his own conceit" and "enamoured with the supposed beauty of his own ideal plan of government" (Smith 275).

That conceit and the propensity for self-righteousness make easy bedfellows when one's ideals are being rationalized against reality, is best summed up in the words of the great Austrian economist Joseph Alois Schumpeter: "'The first thing a man will do for his ideals is lie'" (qtd. in Sowell, *A Conflict of Visions* 59). And it is the very ability to lie for one's ideals whereupon Orwell's notion of *doublethink*, i.e. the essential *modus operandi* of Ingsoc, is grounded.

I THINK, THEREFORE I AM – THE WORLD

Although the term doublethink is frequently perceived as something intended for a dystopian future, it is a capacity that appears very much inherent to the human condition at all times. The reason for this assumption is the aforesaid proclivity of the human mind to rationalize instead of to reason, as well as its eagerness to tell noble lies for "the greater good" of an espoused ideal, as Socrates explicitly encourages in Plato's *Republic* (99). According to Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the definition of doublethink goes as follows:

> *Doublethink* means the power of holding two contradictory beliefs in one's mind simultaneously, and accepting both of them. The Party intellectual knows in which direction his memories must be altered; he therefore knows that he is playing tricks with reality; but by the exercise of *doublethink* he also satisfies himself that reality is not violated. The process has to be conscious, or it would not be carried out with sufficient precision, but it also has to be unconscious, or it would bring with it a feeling of falsity and hence of guilt. *Doublethink* lies at the very heart of Ingsoc, since the essential act of the Party is to use conscious deception while retaining the firmness of purpose that goes with complete honesty. (169, emphasis in original)

Doublethink involves a faculty which at first glance seems somewhat paradoxical, but this is the case only on the linguistic level. Considering the multidimensionality of human consciousness (e.g. the existence of the conscious and the unconscious), it is not difficult to make the assumption that there exists a leeway for cognitive dissonance between the dimensions, thus enabling the mind to facilitate extraordinary cognitive discrepancies, and nonetheless perceive them as normalcy. An even less difficult task is to assume a willfulness on the part of the human mind to make use of said leeway should the situation prove opportune. There are two more points worth examining

which the aforesaid passage reveals: the cognitive basis for doublethink, and the type of being most prone to utilize it.

The point worth underlining once again is the relation extant between political idealism and appeals to morality. The worship of a preconceived notion of an ideal good is the driving force encouraging the mind possessed by an idealist vision to impose that vision onto reality, even if it comes at the cost of reality itself. In the context of political idealism in particular, this reality usually equates to human lives. However, what needs to be granted to the earliest type of the idealist vision, i.e. Platonism, is that, despite essentially drawing its origins from subjective imagination, it nonetheless seems compelled to presume that this espoused idea in the mind also has *external* validity; in other words, that it is *externally* true. As already discussed, Platonism does this by means of conceptualizing the realm of the Forms. Naturally, this externality amounts to a mere pretense since the first cause of Platonism is inevitably Plato's subjective imagination; but the very need to make a pretense about externality in the first place is rather indicative. Thus, one is not dealing with doublethink yet – perhaps, only the bridge leading up to it. What seems to make doublethink very distinct from the cognitive process subsisting in Platonic idealism – although both are related – is the fact that doublethink operates independently of even the pretense of externality: "'But I tell you, Winston, that reality is not external'" (Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* 197). Or to be even more precise, the pretense of externality is shifting and keen on accommodating itself to the idea in the mind with such agility that it may as well not exist: "'But it did exist! It does exist! It exists in memory. I remember it. You remember it.' – 'I do not remember it,' said O'Brien. – Winston's heart sank. That was doublethink" (196). Plato may be the godfather of idealism, but even he did not manage to cultivate its final form that is *solipsism*: the whole of reality not only preceded by ideas, but preceded by the ideas of a single human mind – one

philosopher-king to rule them all. As such, the final form of *political* idealism amounts to what O'Brien calls "collective solipsism" (211).

The cognitive basis being solipsism, the point that doublethink seeks to avoid a "feeling of guilt" at all cost in order to retain a "firmness of purpose that goes with complete honesty" (Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* 169) leads to the conclusion that the solipsistic mind, despite conceiving itself to be the whole of external reality, is on some level aware of the fact that something external to be avoided, to be memory-holed still exists. We have already stated that the notion of externality in the process of doublethink is constantly shifting, and that this is what gives the solipsistic mind its peace; but the fact that the shifting needs to take place in the first place is crucial to notice. To perceive solipsism presented in Orwell's novel, one need imagine a game with rules that the player changes at his convenience in order to win, and then proceeds to torture the opposing player until he not merely submits, but becomes convinced that the trickery being pulled on him is, in fact, in complete accordance with the rules, and has been all along. (To use the game of chess as an example: queen captures queen on D8 in the first move resulting in checkmate.) Thus, while mere political idealism, when taken at face value, operates on the pretense that morality, i.e. adherence to the rules posited by the idealist vision, is the key to the creation of a "better world," political solipsism, on the other hand, conceives of morality as solely being in a position to always claim absolute righteousness over the rules, regardless of any externality to the contrary: "Nothing exists except an endless present in which the Party is always right" (126); "At all times the Party is in possession of absolute truth, and clearly the absolute can never have been different from what it is now" (168). To make matters worse, the political solipsist (i.e. the political idealist in his final form) neither wants his opponent dead nor merely obedient, but wants to make his opponent's mind coincide with his own. He seeks to nullify the externality that the other mind represents in

order to secure genuine conviction and adherence to himself. In return for this magnanimous gesture, the solipsist mind would also like to receive praise, gratitude and *love*. As O'Brien reveals about Big Brother before sending Winston to Room 1O1: "'It is not enough to obey him: you must love him'" (224).

Words cannot describe the extent of failure, depravity and sheer "loserdom" the political solipsist manages to embody here, but as a quote by Nietzsche presciently outlines: "*Definition of morality*: morality – the idiosyncrasy of *décadents*, with the ulterior motive of avenging themselves *on life – and* succeeding..." (*Ecce Homo* A 94, emphasis in original).

Now that the foundation of doublethink has been laid out, it is time to analyze the type of being most liable to take a liking to such an ability. According to the definition quoted above, the being presented as the most exemplary to think in terms of doublethink is "the Party intellectual" (Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* 169) – i.e. the ideologically engaged intellectual. Already in his essay "Notes on Nationalism" (1945) Orwell identifies that, when it comes to thinking, intellectuals and members of the intelligentsia regularly exhibit a special proclivity for *les pensées bizarres* when their precious ideals and ideologies are at stake: "There is no limit to the follies that can be swallowed if one is under the influence of feelings of this kind. […] One has to belong to the intelligentsia to believe things like that: no ordinary man could be such a fool" (ch. 24). But considering that *Nineteen Eighty-Four* came out just four years later, it did not take Orwell long to recognize intellectual "foolishness" as an aptitude for the downright sinister.

That an aptitude for doublethink is a feature rather than a bug of intellectualism can be corroborated by the fact that intellectual work itself seems to operate on a predominantly solipsistic basis. As professor Sowell observes: "***An intellectual's work begins and ends with ideas***"

(*Intellectuals and Society* 5, emphasis in original). As such, intellectuals are, unlike any other occupation, "ultimately unaccountable to the external world" (10). This is because: "Ideas, as such, are not only the key to the intellectual's function, but are also *the criteria of intellectual achievements*" (5, emphasis added): "An engineer whose bridges or buildings collapse is ruined, as is a financier who goes broke. […] But the ultimate test of a deconstructionist's ideas is whether other deconstructionists find those ideas interesting, original, persuasive, elegant, or ingenious. There is no external test" (8). Moreover, as the Genovese example certainly gives to show: "The great problem – and the great social danger – with purely internal criteria is that they can easily become sealed off from feedback from the external world of reality and remain circular in their methods of validation" (9). The same goes for the proclamation of an idea's orthodoxy and unorthodoxy, which is also a motive pertinent to Orwell's novel: "Ideas that are 'complex,' 'exciting,' 'innovative,' 'nuanced,' or 'progressive' are admired ['goodthinkful'], while other ideas are dismissed as 'simplistic,' 'outmoded' or 'reactionary' ['ungoodthinkful']" (8). As such: "There is ample room for attitudes [and visions], rather than principles, to guide the work of intellectuals, especially when these are attitudes [and visions] prevalent among their peers and insulated from consequential feedback from the outside world" (175).

Furthermore, that this hypothesis is far from conjecture can be inferred from the type of people that are described in Orwell's novel as the imminent aristocracy of the world of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*:

> What kind of people would control this world had been equally *obvious*. The new aristocracy was made up for the most part of bureaucrats, scientists, technicians, trade-union organizers, publicity experts, sociologists, teachers, journalists and professional politicians. These people, whose origins lay in the salaried middle class and

> the upper grades of the working class, had been shaped and brought together by the barren world of monopoly industry and centralized government. (163, emphasis added)

Although Orwell does not mention any institution by name, one can nonetheless assume what this institution, shaping and bringing together the new aristocracy, would be when taking into account that it 1) manages to bind together "the salaried middle class" and "the upper grades of the working class"; 2) is very much prompted by centralized government, as well as other consolidating forces of established political power and 3), although not perceived as an industry per se, definitely holds a monopoly over the "production of knowledge" insofar as it is its certifying hand that anoints the educated *aristoi* – the university. It does not take much to notice that the most salient common denominator among the aforementioned "bureaucrats, scientists, technicians, trade union *organizers* [emphasis added], publicity experts, sociologists, teachers, journalists and professional politicians" is, in fact, the place where these people received their anointment of education. That the university is, furthermore, the central institution through which the power of intellectuals and the intelligentsia is facilitated and propagated, without any repercussions from an external test, goes without saying: "'They claim to be truth machines. Why wouldn't they?'" (Moldbug qtd. in Malice, *The New Right* ch. 2). To evoke, furthermore, a positively Orwellian[6] point of view in sentiment regarding the latter, articulated by none other than the famous Russian philosopher and esteemed "vampire novelist" Ayn Rand (@michaelmalice C): "'the universities are the real villains in the picture' […] 'those who didn't go to college are more intelligent and better informed and less easily fooled than the people who did go to college'" (Malice, *The New Right* ch. 2).

[6] In his work *Why Orwell Matters*, Christopher Hitchens observes that there are two usages of the term "Orwellian": "[W]e commonly use the term 'Orwellian' in one of two ways. To describe a state of affairs as 'Orwellian' is to imply crushing tyranny and fear and conformism. To describe a piece of writing as 'Orwellian' is to recognize that human resistance to these terrors is unquenchable" (5).

So far it has been shown that the finalized form of idealism is inexorably linked to the development of doublethink as its primary mode of operation. Ingsoc is hence an ideological phenomenon where the method of doublethink is not perceived as a flaw in its reasoning, but as its strongest feature. In fact, this is what makes Ingsoc different and non-hypocritical compared to similar movements of the past – movements that, too, were very much consumed by the vision of political idealism in its *total* form. As revealed by O'Brien: "All the others, even those who resembled ourselves, were cowards and hypocrites. The German Nazis and the Russian Communists came very close to us in their methods, but they never had the courage to recognize their own motives" (Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* 209). The novel discloses that the motive is power: "power entirely for its own sake" (208); however, in less esoteric terms this simply amounts to the power to secure the self-righteous supremacy of the idealist/solipsist vision.

What remains to be examined now is how the teleological development of Orwellian solipsism transpires from the idealism that uses a pretense of externality in its rhetoric and basic conceptualization (Platonism) to the idealism which has become completely unbothered by that very notion. Considering the ideopolitical context in which *Nineteen Eighty-Four* was written, as well as Orwell's loathing for his fellow intellectuals on the political Left (Bounds 1), it does not seem folly to presume that the ideology of Ingsoc (English Socialism) was in many ways paved by the ideology Orwell's greatest enemies were invariably most consumed by – Marxism. In fact, it is already in *The Road to Wigan Pier* that Orwell voices serious doubt about the compatibility between his own libertarian notion of socialism and what Marxism has in store:

> I suggest that the real Socialist is one who wishes – not merely conceives it as desirable, but actively wishes – to see tyranny overthrown. But I fancy that the majority of orthodox Marxists would not accept that definition, or would only accept it very grudgingly. Sometimes, when I listen to these people talking, and still more when I read their books, I

> get the impression that, to them, the whole Socialist movement is no more than a kind of exciting heresy-hunt – a leaping to and fro of frenzied witch-doctors to the beat of tom-toms and the tune of 'Fee fi, fo, fum, I smell the blood of a right-wing deviationist!' (ch. XIII)

Although his acolytes, admirers and epigones frequently seem unable but attest to the contrary,[7] Karl Marx' view on economics was fairly constrained (see Sowell, *A Conflict of Visions* 111), arguably, even by today's standards. However, it was his take on politics where – to put it very euphemistically – the *unconstrainedness* of his vision very much comes to the fore.

Granted, the notion of treating the domains of economics and politics as "non-overlapping magisteria" is problematic to begin with; but at the same time, it is undeniable that when the government-run economy of the Soviet Union was, for example, implementing policies that were keen on lowering prices of commodities and services by imposing "less greedy" and "more fair" *imaginary* ones, causing dire shortages in the process, this was no fault of any fallacious idea about economics that Marx ever held (Sowell, *Intellectuals and Society* 65). On the contrary, a fiat pricing scheme is something Marx vehemently spoke against (Sowell, *Marxism* 126-127), aware of the sheer fact that "prices often convey an underlying reality without being the cause of that reality" (Sowell, *Intellectuals and Society* 54). In this respect, he needs to be given his due. But the atrocities practiced by the Soviets as a matter of course under the ideological banner of Marxism, was inescapably a consequence of Marx's *politically* consequential idea that man is more real when defined from the prism of an abstract, ideal collective (Herman ch. 24), rather than when he is conceived as an individual primarily acting in self-interest. Based on the preconception

[7] An interesting observation is made by Sowell about the latter: "Much recent interpretive literature [the time of writing is the 1980s], especially in economics, inadvertently demonstrates that various interpretations of Marx *cannot* be supported by quotes from his writings. Even articles in learned journals and scholarly books have solemnly and extensively analyzed particular "Marxian" doctrines *without a single citation of anything ever written by Karl Marx*. Often this "Marxism" bears no relationship to the work of Marx or Engels. […] These modern concoctions have acquired a life of their own through sheer repetition, citation, and inertia" (Sowell, *Marxism* 6, emphasis in original).

that identity is not so much individual as socio-economically collective, the idea of self-anointed "surrogate decision-makers" (Sowell, *Intellectuals and Society* 666) freely speaking and acting in the name of the collective's "inherent interests" (or better yet, in its stead) was thereby consecrated. The parallel with Platonic idealism and the role of philosopher-kings is obvious, but there is an important difference between the Platonic basis for idealism and the Marxist one: while Platonism claims to be consumed by an ardent love of reason, one finds Marxism worshipping an equally cerebral, but significantly distinct fetish: *consciousness* (more specifically, *class* consciousness).

Consequently, the focus of the game changes. Though both fetishes are idealistic in practice because they worship a vision the human mind has itself concocted, the terms have been redefined insofar as Platonic idealism involves, as it has been stressed, at least the pretense that an *external* standard exists. Even if derivative and secondary, the material realm corresponds to the realm of the Forms, whereby reason denotes the method of deducing the existence of those Forms.[8] Thus, when Plato attempted to create an ideal state on Syracuse, for example, miserably failing at it both times, even he felt inclined to realign his idealism to some extent (Herman ch. 5). One can therefore say that even a nominal belief in the external standard, when forthright, can provide an impetus for reassessment. An appeal to consciousness, on the other hand, is much more self-referencing, for it virtually flies in the face of the external standard. It is quintessentially Hegelian in that sense (which is to be expected of Marx), since – to allude to the famous Hegelianism: "If theory and facts disagree, so much the worse for the facts." In other words: "'Things that shouldn't be true *aren't* true or *can't* be true.' […] 'What I want the world to look

[8] The acknowledgement of an external standard is in many ways due to the influence the Pythagoreans had on Plato via their discoveries in the field of mathematics, which, as a system, does seem to function perfectly and reign independently of the material world (Herman ch. 3). However, there is quite a leap to be made from $c^2 = a^2 + b^2$ to the depraved hive-state that Plato conceived of.

like, I'm gonna force it to accommodate to my will'" (Malice, "Arthur Herman" 27:05-27:39, sic). Thus, the faux righteousness of a concocted theory is being imposed upon reality like a submediocre poet forces pretentious meaning into his verses, and then, upon failing to impress anyone, forsakes the "philistines" for not being conscious enough to recognize and appreciate the poem's true brilliance.[9]

Furthermore, it can be argued that, as time went on, the economically constrained aspects of Marxism were getting ever more usurped by the politically unconstrained ones, especially postmortem, as economic literacy among the acolytes (to the extent that there was any to begin with) started to dwindle, and their self-referencing propensity toward *moral onanism* (Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality* 90) and the *moral melodrama* (Sowell, *Intellectuals and Society* 661) filled the gaps. As such, the pretense of externality was getting ever more superfluous, rendering the idealism *solipsistic* once the idealist consciousness became the arbiter of reality proper and reality "immoral." However, it should also be noted that when Marx confides to Engels in a letter saying: "'The working class is revolutionary or it is nothing'" (qtd. in Sowell, *Intellectuals and Society* 105), it becomes rather obvious that Marx's philosophy, not only postmortem, but in his own lifetime too, was not so much grounded upon derived conclusions about external reality, i.e. "dialectal *materialism*," as much as it was a value judgment that predetermined the worth of the working class insofar as they were "conscious" enough, and even more importantly, useful enough, in carrying out his particular idealist vision (106). "The

[9]The source for the analogy: "In college, he [Marx] dreamed of becoming a poet. His earliest extant work is a verse tragedy, titled *Oulanem*, which Marx hoped might become the next *Faust*. He also had a Byronic fascination with suicide pacts and pacts with the devil and enjoyed quoting the line from *Faust*'s Mephistopheles, 'Everything that exists deserves to perish' – especially the middle-class capitalist society into which he had been born" (Herman ch. 24).

proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have [my] world to win" (Marx qtd. in Herman ch. 24). Old Major, too, was a pig.

By grounding its philosophy on consciousness, as well as ascribing value to the working class only to the extent that they comply to the idealist vision, Marxism exhibits the essential elements for the establishment of collective solipsism depicted in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*: a consciousness so "great" that it perceives itself to be the world, and the exigency that type of consciousness feels, to intrude the minds of others and "cure" them of their inherent "vacuity": "three hundred million people all with the same face" – "all thinking the same thoughts and shouting the same slogans, perpetually working, fighting, triumphing, persecuting" (Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* 61) – in other words, being "revolutionary" against the enemy*, the forces of evil*. "So, after all, the 'Communism' of the English intellectual is something explicable enough. It is the patriotism of the deracinated" (Orwell, "Inside the Whale" 36).

What remains to be shown now is a brief example from the real world of how this vision manages to denounce rival visions, while at the same time modifying its rhetoric and optics so that it can still retain "the firmness of purpose that goes with complete honesty" when making avowals of moral righteousness (Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* 169).

Although it is not usually presented as such (for more or less obvious reasons), the essay written by neo-Marxist intellectual Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak "Can the Subaltern Speak?" functions primarily as a programmatic piece designed to warn two fellow left-wing intellectuals in France, Gilles Deleuze and Michel Foucault, against making statements in favor of human essentialism. Furthermore, the essay is an attempt at contextualizing the plight of the oppressed –

boldly enough, by means of denouncing "utopian politics" that presupposes oppressed people have an essence and a capacity to "speak, act and know *for themselves*" (71, emphasis in original).

"The Party intellectual knows in which direction [their] memories must be altered" (Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* 169). Why Spivak, as an ideologically engaged intellectual anxious to have intellectuals represent (Spivak 80) those who did not ask to be represented by them (but who are not able to speak, act and know for themselves, so it is okay), seems to be worried about slips of left-wing thought in favor of human essentialism becoming "the rule rather than the exception in less careful hands" (69) is of primary importance here. The worry appears to be that by acknowledging an essence in humans – a "spirit of Man," as Winston declares before O'Brien (Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* 214) – one is admitting to dealing with an external standard potentially undermining the standing of the idealist consciousness eager to impose its vision onto reality. Whenever one is dealing with an external standard, especially one capable of speech, an unconstrained vision put into practice may go very wrong, very fast. As Orwell sardonically observes in *The Road to Wigan Pier*: "With loving though slightly patronising smiles we set out to greet our proletarian brothers, and behold! our proletarian brothers – in so far as we understand them – are not asking for our greetings, they are asking us to commit suicide" (ch. X).

Quality notwithstanding, a will is always present in the individual and, as a result, a voice, a thought, a personal experience constituting personal knowledge – all of which in the end result constitutes a sense of subject. The refusal of the ideologue to acknowledge this, as well as the usage of intellectualism to defend this refusal, stems only from the fear that the oppressed might start speaking in terms that undermine the power and the righteousness prompted by the ideologue's idealist vision. Deleuze and Foucault not getting this is essentially "where they admittedly part company from the Left" (Spivak 69).

To conclude this section [as well as to hint at an existing regime said to be very close in principle to Orwell's dystopia (Hitchens 73)]: Lest the subject of revolution suddenly become its object; lest he lose its power and standing; lest the comrades start to waver and ultimately betray him to the masses in order to save themselves; lest the espoused ideology make the subject look like a narcissistic fool; lest the subject's raison d'être, the self-righteous idealist vision, fall apart before his very eyes – the notion of subjectivity in others must be *annihilated* and *consumed* by the solipsistic vision. ["Thou shalt unify the Party's ideology and will in solidarity around the Great Leader Kim Il Sung" (Malice, *Dear Reader* ch. 10).] When acquiring power, loyalty to the cause of the vision must be secured at all costs ["loyalty to me, loyalty to Korea and, most importantly, loyalty to the Great Leader and the Juche idea" (ch. 21)]. Doublethink must be implemented for the sake of keeping the vision intact. Solipsism must be implemented to make the vision into the only thing there truly is, for "what good is this world without it?" ["'What good is this world without Korea? Without the DPRK, there can be no Earth. If north Korea[10] is going to disappear, I will smash the Earth to pieces!'" (ch. 20)]. Extensive denunciations and purges must be committed against comrades that should exhibit caprice and iffiness about the vision's righteousness, for failure to do so may prove too costly. They must be forsaken as hidden traitors, the enemy in disguise all along, as the solipsist vision can be the only righteous one: "The POUM was a 'Trotskyist' organization and 'Franco's Fifth Column'" (Orwell, *Homage to Catalonia* Appendix I); "Snowball was in league with Jones from the very start!" (Orwell, *Animal Farm* ch. VII). Tyranny of the righteous vision must be implemented even if cutting at the instincts, the root of life itself (Nietzsche, *The Will to Power* 77); for life, too, is an externality, and poses an

[10] The regime of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea refers to north and south Korea as regions of one indivisible nation, whereby the southern region is considered under occupation by the "U.S. imperialists" (Malice, *The New Right* ch.1).

unrelenting existential threat to the idealist vision. In order to make sure that everybody is on the same page, the subject of revolution must consume the people whose voices he claims to represent politically with his own solipsism: he must make their mind and voice into his own. That is the impetus for the accumulation of total power. It is, moreover, the cure against Robespierre's warning. To exist in the first place, the "world spirit" needs to *become* the wheels of history.

THE PHARISEES OF POWER

So far it has been argued that all logic, in spite of its "seeming sovereignty of movement," is ultimately aimed at self-preservation (Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil* 11). This being the case, the type of life sought to be preserved by political idealism amounts to life unable to bear itself, i.e. to bear reality as it is, consequently pursuing the ideal world as a safe haven (Nietzsche, "The Anti-Christ" 13). To make matters worse, it calls this ideal world the world as it "ought to be," which is the logical conclusion such life has to draw in order to justify itself existentially, in the face of external reality. Since external reality is much more relentless than an idealist mind is willing to acknowledge, the resistance put up by said reality, lest its rules be breached, punishes the idealist with utmost brutality, leaving him humiliated and the logic guiding his existence hopelessly sterile. However, because the human mind is finite in capacity and primarily driven by existential motives, it is by definition compromised and limited in its ability to reason consequentially. This is where the mind's capacity to rationalize adamantly steps in, nourished by a passion for vengeance against reality.

If one cannot, alas, secure self-preservation playing by the rules of external reality, one can at least take hold of the minds perceiving it, and force them to believe that no aspect of reality is being violated next time the idealist vision is put into practice. Forced ever more to negate externality for the sake of its vision, the idealist mind imposing itself upon the world eventually anoints itself as the world, as the supreme arbiter of what the world is. It reaches, thus, its final form: solipsism, which entails the impossibility of perceiving reality "except by looking through the eyes" of the solipsist mind itself, "the eyes of the Party" (Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* 197-198). Thereupon it consciously begins its expansion by means of intruding other minds,

accepting no other outcome but complete acquiescence – that is, complete and pseudo-voluntary accordance. As flagrantly disclosed by O'Brien:

> We are not content with negative obedience, nor even with the most abject submission. When finally you surrender to us, it must be of your own free will. We do not destroy the heretic because he resists us: so long as he resists us we never destroy him. We convert him, we capture his inner mind, we reshape him. We burn all evil and all illusion out of him; we bring him over to our side, not in appearance, but genuinely, heart and soul. We make him one of ourselves before we kill him. It is intolerable to us that an erroneous thought should exist anywhere in the world… (202)

Every single mind must be brought under the dominion of the solipsist mind for the sake of extinguishing "once and for all the possibility of independent thought" (155). Otherwise, an independent thought left unculled might prove hazardous to the standing of the solipsistic mind in question. As long as no one is capable of registering transgressions against external reality, no rules of reality are de facto being broken, despite any possible dissonance witnessed by the natural instincts. The latter is made obvious when O'Brien states that: "'We control life, Winston, at all its levels. You are imagining that there is something called human nature which will be outraged by what we do and will turn against us'" (214). Thus, natural life is to be cut off from its roots entirely, and supplanted by the solipsist consciousness: "'Never again will you be capable of ordinary human feeling. Everything will be dead inside you. Never again will you be capable of love, or friendship, or joy of living, or laughter, or curiosity, or courage, or integrity. You will be hollow. We shall squeeze you empty, and then we shall fill you with *ourselves*'" (203, emphasis added).

What remains to be clarified now is the means by which such power is accumulated to begin with. This has been outlined to some degree by addressing the solipsistic nature of

intellectual work, as well as the *cathedral*-like standing of the university (Malice, *The New Right* ch. 2), in which idealistically (ideologically) driven intellectuals are given the opportunity to promulgate their vision as formal education in complete insulation from external reality. However, this is not a sufficient explanation insofar as it pertains to a merely incubating function. A deeper imperative that is at the core of the idealist's will to power needs to be exposed here – an imperative usually described as "categorical".[11] "*Definition of morality*: morality – the idiosyncrasy of *décadents*, with the ulterior motive of avenging themselves *on life – and* succeeding..." (Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo* A 94, emphasis in original).

The most likely reason why political idealism has not yet been more explicitly correlated with the inherent traits of a pathological psyche is precisely that it enjoys an unyielding monopoly over attitudes of righteousness, i.e. the histrionics of morality. In fact, there is no "addiction" studied *less*, let alone condemned, than the one to so-called *moraline*. Moreover, there is no stronger feeling of entitlement to "power over human beings" (Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* 210) than the one provided by the fervor of being on the "right side of history." This self-identification with the "good will" (Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* 7) is what supplies political idealism with its sense of existential self-justification, as well as the drive to accumulate as much power as possible, *for the sake of the greater good*. Prompted by this self-identification with the good will (the ought), political idealists seldom hesitate to make sacrifices on the altar of their vision's supposed righteousness, thereby asserting a belief that is altogether very sincere (as self-righteousness always is). The prime example in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is, yet again, O'Brien: "The exaltation, the lunatic enthusiasm, was still in his face. He is not pretending, thought Winston,

[11]From Kant's *Groundwork of Metaphysics of Morals*: "Now, if the action would be good merely as a means *to something else* the imperative is *hypothetical*; if the action is represented as *in itself* good, hence as necessary in a will in itself conforming to reason, as its principle, *then it is categorical*" (25, emphasis in original).

he is not a hypocrite, he believes every word he says" (203). Furthermore, political idealists do so in the face of external reality shrieking in dissent, as their ability to doublethink enables them to dispense with the notion of human essentialism and usurp the voices of those on whose behalf they claim to be fighting when promulgating the idealist vision. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four* this is how it eventually comes about that "the Party rejects and vilifies every principle for which the Socialist movement originally stood" while simultaneously choosing to do this "in the name of Socialism" (170).

The most comprehensive account of the psychology behind the idealist vision and its need to purport righteousness has been provided by none other than Friedrich Nietzsche in his work *On the Genealogy of Morality*:

> What do they really want? At any rate, *to represent* justice, love, wisdom, superiority, that is the ambition of these who are 'the lowest', these sick people! And how skillful such an ambition makes them! In particular, we have to admire the counterfeiter's skill with which the stamp of virtue, the ding-a-ling golden ring of virtue is now imitated. They have taken out a lease on virtue to keep it just for themselves, these weak and incurably sick people, there is no doubt about it: 'Only we are good and just' is what they say, 'only we are the *homines bonae voluntatis*'. […] Amongst them we find plenty of vengeance-seekers disguised as judges, with the word justice continually in their mouth like poisonous spittle, pursing their lips and always at the ready to spit at anybody who does not look discontented and who cheerfully goes his own way. Among their number there is no lack of that most disgusting type of dandy, the lying freaks who want to impersonate 'beautiful souls' and put their wrecked sensuality on the market, swaddled in verses and other nappies, as 'purity of the heart': the [species] of moral onanists and 'self-gratifiers' […]. The will of the sick to appear superior in *any* way, their instinct for secret paths, which lead to tyranny over the healthy, – where can it not be found, this will to power of precisely the weakest! (90, emphasis in original)

This disposition for vengeance-seeking that Nietzsche points out is particularly discernible in the zealotry political idealism manifests when placing itself on the side of good against evil. Much like "War is the health of the State"– to quote the brilliant aphorism by Randolph Bourne (21) – so, too, is the idea of the "war on evil" the health of political idealism, insofar as it is able to justify itself morally and accrue power accordingly. "All members of the Inner Party believe in this coming conquest as an article of faith," which is why "[i]t is precisely in the Inner Party that war hysteria and hatred of the enemy are strongest" (Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* 155).

Having dissected the impetus for idealist claims about morality from a Nietzschean perspective, the salient observation made by C. S. Lewis in his essay *The Humanitarian Theory of Punishment* strikes one as rather self-evident:

> Of all tyrannies a tyranny sincerely exercised for the good of its victims may be the most oppressive. It may be better to live under robber barons than under omnipotent moral busybodies. The robber baron's cruelty may sometimes sleep, his cupidity may at some point be satiated; but those who torment us for our own good will torment us without end for they do so with approval of their own conscience. They may be more likely to go to Heaven yet at the same time likelier to make a Hell on earth. (151)

The tyrant imbued by political idealism cannot help but do otherwise, for the idealist's appeal to morality is determined existentially. It is the categorical need to justify the idealist existence in the face of external reality that drives this supposed "politics of loving care" (Malice, *Dear Leader* ch. 3). The political idealist is necessarily determined by a permanent state of war against those capable of exposing and undermining the self-referencing edifice of the idealist concoction. Seeing as they pose an *existential* threat, they have to be deemed *evil*.

An observation analogous to Lewis' was also made by Orwell almost a decade prior, in his essay "Politics vs Literature" (1946): "When human beings are governed by 'thou shalt not', the

individual can practise a certain amount of eccentricity: when they are supposedly governed by 'love' or 'reason', he is under continuous pressure to make him behave and think in exactly the same way as everyone else" (ch. 35). Specifically in *Nineteen Eighty-Four,* the latter observation is phrased the following way: "The command of the old despotisms was 'Thou shalt not'. The command of the totalitarians was 'Thou shalt'. Our command is '*Thou art*'" (202, emphasis in original).

Lastly, it has to be granted that the relationship between power and political idealism seems rather nebulous and obscure when figuring out which functions as the first principle of which. In Orwell's novel, for example, power is presented as an end in itself: "The Party seeks power entirely for its own sake" (208) – placing political idealism/solipsism in the service of power: "If one is to rule, and to continue ruling, one must be able to dislocate the sense of reality" (169). However, the reverse stands on equally plausible grounds, if not even more plausible ones insofar as an explanation based on existential presuppositions seems less arcane. At the very least, this question of *causa prima* might only be a consequence of the inevitable precondition of the human mind to perceive time as linear (Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* 180), whereby something had to have come first in order to be the cause of something else. This is not to say that either the notion of causality is flippant or that perceiving time as linear is inherently wrong – far from it. It is just that an accurate sequential conceptualization is of no consequence in this instance. To embody the Lightbringer (to have power as the end and political idealism as the means) or to serve the Lightbringer (to have political idealism as the end and power as the means) necessitates the adoption of a selfsame pattern of behavior, ultimately bringing about a tantamount conclusion: the sacrifice of the natural selfhood (the selfhood furnished by natural reality) for the sake of the idealist selfhood (the selfhood promised by an idealist vision of "reality"). As O'Brien reveals:

"Alone – free – the human being is always defeated. It must be so, because every human being is doomed to die, which is the greatest of all failures. But if he can make complete, utter submission, *if he can escape from his identity, if he can merge himself in the Party so that he is the Party*, then he is all-powerful and immortal" (209-210, emphasis added).

If there is one thing that can be learned from the Enlightenment historically: *The closer the intellect approaches the Light, the more blinded it becomes*.

THE NAZARENE ENDGAME

Having ended the previous section on the note of Luciferianism, i.e. the ungodly *light*-worship conducted by the vainglory of the human intellect, it seems rather appropriate to finish this treatise by exploring Orwell's basic assumption "that totalitarianism had been an *unintended consequence* of the decline of religious faith" (Bounds 139, emphasis added), i.e. the death of God[12]: "'There is no wisdom except in the fear of God; but nobody fears God; therefore there is no wisdom…'" (Orwell qtd. in Bounds 140). As Nietzsche teaches in his masterpiece *Beyond Good and Evil*: "the decisive value of an action lies precisely in what is *unintentional* in it, while everything about it that is intentional, everything about it that can be seen, known, 'conscious,' still belongs to its surface and skin – which, like every skin, betrays something but *conceals* even more" (44, emphasis in original).

All of life is existentially presupposed, whereby the rational capacity, the *light-shedding* capacity of the human mind is predominantly predicated on the health of the instincts, marked by their ability to *deal with* external reality. All of existentially beneficial rationality is therefore contingent upon the existence of *healthy*[13] reason, i.e. healthy life instincts guiding the logic of

[12] It may not be much, but there is a rather suggestive resemblance between how Goldstein describes the state of humanity in Oceania and the words of Nietzsche's *madman* before famously proclaiming "God is dead. God remains dead. And we have killed him" (*The Gay Science* 181). From Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*: "Cut off from contact with the outer world, and with the past, the citizen of Oceania is like a man in interstellar space, who has no way of knowing which direction is up and which is down" (158-159). – From the mouth of Nietzsche's *madman*:

> "What were we doing when we unchained this earth from its sun? Whither is it moving now? Whither are we moving? Away from all suns? Are we not plunging continually? Backward, sideward, forward, in all directions? Is there still any up or down? Are we not straying as through an infinite nothing? Do we not feel the breath of empty space? Has it not become colder? Is not night continually closing in on us?" (*The Gay Science* 181)

[13] There are, of course, more commonplace collocations, but the term "healthy reason" is the only appropriate one in this context.

reason. As such: "Reason can serve health only when it plays a *secondary* role" (Peterson 316, emphasis in original). Otherwise, a conscious effort to grant reason the *primary* role advances not the creation of *pure* reason – as some might feel inclined to deceive themselves – but the deracination of healthy life instincts extant in reason, for the sake of *un*healthy ones, as the latter by definition have no roots purposefully attached to life to begin with.[14] In fact, according to Nietzsche's philosophy, the phenomenon of an impassioned pursuit of "unbridled rationality" (Peterson 307) may be linked directly to the latency of malignant instincts, and thus indicative of life's *degeneration*:

> Throughout the ages the wisest of men have passed the same judgement on life: *it is no good* . . . Always and everywhere their mouths have been heard to produce the same sound – a sound full of doubt, full of melancholy, full of weariness of life, full of resistance to life. […] 'The *consensus sapientium* proves the truth.' – Shall we still speak in such terms today? *can* we do so? 'There must be at least something *sick* here' is the answer *we* give […]
> I recognized Socrates and Plato as symptoms of decay, as tools of the Greek dissolution … (*Twilight of the Idols* A 11, emphasis in original)

Malignant instincts, whatever their origins, wire the human mind against life, so that life is construed as a fundamental existential threat – or, to allude to the great wise man Socrates: an incurable disease (Herman ch. 1; Nietzsche, *The Gay Science* 272). These instincts signify suffering from life (from external reality) and are encoded to seek active *detachment* from life, symptomatic of which is the pursuit of the state completely deracinated from the natural world –

[14] "[T]his hatred of the human, and even more of the animalistic, even more of the material, this horror of the senses, of reason itself, this fear of happiness and beauty, this longing to get away from appearance, transience, growth, death, wishing, longing itself – all that means, let us dare to grasp it, a *will to nothingness*, an aversion to life, a rebellion against the most fundamental prerequisites of life, but it is and remains a *will*! . . . And, to conclude by saying what I said at the beginning: man still prefers to *will nothingness*, than *not* will . . ." (Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals* 120, emphasis in original)

idealism: “Who are the only people motivated to *lie their way out of* reality? People who *suffer* from it” (Nietzsche, “The Anti-Christ” 13; emphasis in original). “Plato is a coward in the face of reality – *therefore* he takes flight into the ideal” (Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols A* 78, emphasis in original).

In spite of all the defense mechanisms the rational mind has at its disposal, “[s]uffering cannot be disbelieved away” (Peterson 323), engendering as a consequence “resentment and hatred for existence itself” (307). What it can do, however, is conceal the feeling of existential inadequacy manifested through suffering by putting on a layer of “skin”: a superfluous attitude of overly proud sapience, for example – or in some cases, hide beneath the trees in wake of the *shame* such a feeling of inherent weakness exposes (324). As epitomized by the story of Adam and Eve after the fall, the ultimate externality that is sought to be avoided in a state of apperceived existential vulnerability is the judgment of God himself – the quintessential spiritual embodiment of external reality.

Though *Nineteen Eighty-Four*’s conceptualization of Big Brother is usually taken to be a pseudo-paternal surrogate systemically nullifying the solidarity inherent to the natural family[15] (Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* 170) – similar idealist smut can also be observed in Plato’s *Republic* (147-152) – a Biblical reading unravels an even deeper symbolism at hand when taking

[15] In Orwell's novel the undermining of solidarity within the natural family between the parents and the children is primarily conducted via Party indoctrination in the Spies. Spoken like an impassioned ideologue and, above all, a heartfelt creep, William Godwin once intimated such a perverse practice in institutional education, brazenly stating that: “Children are a sort of raw material put into our hands, a ductile and yielding substance, which, if we do not ultimately mould in conformity to our wishes, it is because we throw away the power committed to us, by the folly with which we are accustomed to exert it” (23). The great example from Soviet history of a child being successfully programmed against its parents is “Pavlik Morozov, a 14-year old ‘Pioneer’ who had turned in his family to the Soviet police for the offence of hoarding grain” (Hitchens 158). To quote an appropriate aphorism by Michael Malice: “Socialists regard your property as their property; but even more nefariously, they regard your *children* as their property” (Pool 6:29-6:35).

into account the story of Cain and Abel. This story of God, as the ultimate embodiment of external reality, favoring the brother able to thrive in it, whilst leaving the other brother jealous, resentful and self-conscious of his own failure (Gen. 4.4-8), reaches its symbolic apotheosis in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* as Cain does not take revenge upon Abel alone, but seeks to wreak it this time on God as well. This is, perhaps, best grasped upon evoking a scene from Nietzsche's novel *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, in which Zarathustra encounters the murderer of God:

> "I recognize you well," [Zarathustra] said in a voice of bronze; "*you are the murderer of God!* Let me go. You could not bear him who saw *you* – who always saw you through and through, you ugliest man! You took revenge on this witness!"
> […]
> "But he *had to* die: he saw with eyes that saw everything; he saw man's depths and ultimate grounds, all his concealed disgrace and ugliness. His pity knew no shame: he crawled into my dirtiest nooks. This most curious, overobtrusive, overpitying one had to die. He always saw me: on such a witness I wanted to have revenge or not live myself. The god who saw everything, *even man* – this god had to die! Man cannot bear it that such a witness should live."
> Thus spoke the ugliest man. But Zarathustra rose and was about to leave, for he felt frozen down to his very entrails. "You inexpressible one," he said, "you have warned me against *your* way." (264, 266-267, emphasis in original)

To compensate for his inadequacy when faced with the damning judgment of external reality, the Ugliest Man hones his rational(izing) faculty, cloaks himself in the attire of a "beautiful soul" (Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality* 90) and commences preaching the *dysangel* (Nietzsche, "The Anti-Christ" 35) of idealism: "Indeed, a hellish artifice was invented there, a horse of death, clattering in the finery of divine honors" (Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* 50). What follows has already been described at length; however, there is a part worth retelling: Once the consciousness of the Ugliest Man (the ugliest brother, Big Brother) successfully construes solipsism, perceiving itself as the whole of the world, its self-referencing conviction that it

possesses omniscience ultimately leads it to believe of itself as well that it can "replace" God (Peterson 314). In Orwell's novel this is, again, articulated through O'Brien on several occasions: "Whatever the Party holds to be truth, *is* truth. […] We are the priests of power ... God is power. […] We make the laws of Nature" (Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* 197, 209, 210, emphasis in original). The entity of Big Brother – the "'earthly ruler demanding divine honors,'" as Northrop Frye defines the concept of the Antichrist (qtd. in Peterson 316) – represents, therefore, the product of the unholy union between the spirit of vengefulness upon external reality, archetypal to Cain, and "'the spirit of unbridled rationality'" (Peterson 307), archetypal to Lucifer. A similar conclusion can be drawn when looking at Peterson's definition of the devil:

> The devil is the spirit who eternally states, "all that I know is all that there is to be known"; the spirit who falls in love with his own beautiful productions, and in consequence, can no longer see beyond them. The devil is the desire to be right, above all, to be right once and for all and finally, rather than to constantly admit to insufficiency and ignorance, and to therefore partake in the process of creation itself [the process of dealing with external reality]. The devil is the spirit which endlessly denies, because it is afraid, in the final analysis, afraid and weak. (316)

As exemplified by the pornography avidly conducted in the Ministry of Love, the Kingdom of Hell perpetuates itself by means of inflicting remorseless suffering upon those insolent enough to refuse its sanctimonious promises. And although Orwell's ending is rather "blackpilling," making it dismally clear that "[i]n the face of pain there are no heroes" (Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* 190), it nevertheless unmistakably draws reference to a famous religious story in which *proskynesis* and utter *submission* in the wake of continuous torture is *not* the final outcome. Perhaps, the Ministry of Love is too brutal in its practices; perhaps, its Pharisees have the power of modern technology at their disposal. Be that as it may, it is still a story in which the tragic bond between truth and suffering emerges victorious; in which the cruel fate is readily

accepted and ultimately overcome; in which the instincts of *strong life* do not submit to the putrid manacles of nihilistic *weakness*. At any rate, it is invariably the case that: Failure to bear the cross of life comes at the expense of the soul. *In hoc signo vinces.*

CONCLUSION

Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* provides not only an account of totalitarianism in practice, but also an account of its inner logic and final conclusion. In an attempt to understand that inner logic and final conclusion, this treatise has demonstrated that the answer can be found in deconstructing the cognitive phenomenon of idealism. This phenomenon can be traced back historically to Socrates and Plato as an ontological theory; however, as it has been shown as well, one can regard idealism as an existentially driven psychological condition, in which the thinking being is not able to deal with external reality as it is, thereby construing a notion of the ideal world as a safe haven to be established politically, for the sake of self-preservation.

Political idealism considers itself to be in possession of a superior vision of the world, which provides that conviction with an unabashed moral tone. This appeal to morality has been described as a necessary rationalization the idealist mind comes up with as justification for its will to impose its unconstrained vision upon external reality. Since such attempts are doomed to failure from the very beginning, the idealist mind eventually develops the capacity for doublethink, which Orwell's novel depicts as a mental mechanism within the idealist mind, enabling it to always vouch for the righteousness of its own vision with utmost sincerity, in spite of any evidence to the contrary. Once the capacity for doublethink is developed, the idealist mind adopts a solipsist essence, completely abandoning the notion of externality outside of itself. Thus, in order for the idealist mind to gain legitimacy, it is determined to force itself onto minds of other individuals, erasing everything in the process that might resist against it or pose an existential threat to it. This is how in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* collective solipsism is eventually established. Historically speaking, the

inception of political idealism on the principles of solipsism can be traced to the emergence of Hegelian and Marxist thought.

Furthermore, the self-envisioning of the idealist mind as the be-all-end-all of the world necessarily makes it believe of itself that it can replace God. This is why Orwell expressed the view that the formation of totalitarianism is directly linked to the notion of the death of God: God signifies the ultimate embodiment of external reality, whereby the idealist mind seeks to usurp God, lest its vision lose its standing before the ultimate judge. The notion of the ungodly usurpation by Big Brother in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* has been established symbolically by drawing reference to the story of Cain and Abel, Zarathustra's encounter with the Ugliest Man (the Murderer of God), and the story of Lucifer's fall from grace in God's heavenly kingdom.

What cannot be overstated, moreover, is the value that the perspective of Nietzschean philosophy brings to the table when properly coupled with Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, especially in terms of the hostility toward life that political idealism exhibits. Decades before the first Gulags and concentration camps were being opened for business – the only type of business the "man of system" (Smith 275) seems capable of running, one may add – Nietzsche anticipated the slaughterhouse that would become the 20th century:

> In the doctrine of socialism there is hidden, rather badly, a "will to negate life"; the human beings or races that think up such a doctrine must be bungled. Indeed, I should wish that a few great experiments might prove that in a socialist society life negates itself, cuts off its own roots. The earth is large enough and man still sufficiently unexhausted; hence such a practical instruction and *demonstratio ad absurdum* would not strike me as undesirable, even if it were gained and paid for with a tremendous expenditure of human lives. (*Will to Power* 77-78, emphasis in original)

As brutal and brilliant as Nietzsche here sounds, having written (i.e. dictated) this in 1885 (77), he underestimated the cognitive aptitude of the human mind for what, decades later, Orwell would term *doublethink*. Doublethink renders any sort of *demonstratio* – especially those *ad absurdum* – ultimately futile. And for that reason, one might be advised to bear in mind that: "The Cathedral wants genocide if it can get away with it. There is *nothing* you can put past these people" (Malice, "Dave Smith - In the White House" 27:05-27:10). The self-anointed philosopher-kings simply cannot help themselves. As Jesse Lee Peterson wittily likes to say: *They are of their father the devil, and Satan is their daddy.*

Lastly, although Nietzsche's perspective was hardly egalitarian, and in that respect at odds with Orwell's, by no means would it be amiss to end this treatise by providing a quote of his, which, at the very least, is set against the posturing of *pseudo*-aristocratic hubris:

> Every age has its own divine type of naïveté for whose invention other ages may envy it – and how much naïveté, venerable, childlike, and boundlessly clumsy naïveté lies in the scholar's faith in his superiority, in the good conscience of his tolerance, in the unsuspecting simple certainty with which his instinct treats the religious man as an inferior and lower type that he has outgrown, leaving it behind, *beneath* him – him, that presumptuous little dwarf and rabble man, the assiduous and speedy head- and handiworker of "ideas," of "modern ideas"! (*Beyond Good and Evil* 70-71, emphasis in original)

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ABSTRACT

George Orwell's most renowned masterpiece *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is not only a critique of totalitarianism as it occurred in history, but also a depiction of totalitarianism as it is to occur should the logic of its being ever reach its final conclusion. In order to understand the inner logic of totalitarian ideology, one needs to examine the principle driving it forward, which is political idealism, i.e. the willingness to impose the idealist vision of the world upon reality as it is. As this vision is completely devoid of the constraints of external reality, its self-referencing character at some point develops a solipsist essence, which in turn seeks to corrupt the minds of others so that it could gain some sense of legitimacy, as it is not able to do so on terms of external reality itself. As the idealist vision spreads among other minds, it develops into what Orwell's novel terms collective solipsism. The first philosophic concoctions of idealism in the form of collective solipsism can historically be observed in Marxian and Hegelian thought. At the core of political idealism is the inability of the thinking being to deal with external reality as it is, thus imposing a vision of a world in which it would not have to suffer, deeming it the world as it "should be" and consequently taking revenge upon the world as it is, as well as life itself, in the process. The phenomenon of totalitarianism as depicted in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* can also be observed as a direct consequence of the phenomenon of the so-called death of God, since the being of God signifies the ultimate embodiment of external reality.

key words: George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Friedrich Nietzsche, Thomas Sowell, Michael Malice, Jordan B. Peterson, Eugene D. Genovese, totalitarianism, political idealism, Luciferianism, the Cathedral, Platonism, Marxism, solipsism, Gayatri C. Spivak