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## TWO "LAST MEN IN EUROPE": A. KOESTLER'S DARKNESS AT NOON AND G. ORWELL'S NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR

Motto: It is 1971, and Mirak says that  
the struggle of man against power  
is the struggle of memori against forgetting.

Milan Kundera: *The Book of Laughter and  
Forgetting* (1)

In the 20 th century science and technology developed at breathtaking speed, faster than ever before in the history of mankind, At the same time ideologies came into being that strove to create the faceless "mass man".

These two trends, unaccompanied by the parallel development of humanist values, resulted in the emergence of strong concentrations of power, curtailing the freedom of the individual, thus making him easy subject to surveillance and manipulation.

In our century it has been the "Theatre of the Absurd" and the political novel depicting instances of individual heroism in the age of mass ideology<sup>2</sup> that have been able to give the best account of the human predicament.

The 1930's and 1940's proved to be frightfully fruitful in terms of giving birth to representatives of the political novel. Two books, both of them products of the 30's and 40's cover all the major issues and themes that ordinary people, politicians or political novelists, for that matter" were and have been concerned with: the mechanism of totalitarianism, Arthur Koestler's enduring masterpiece, *Darkness at Noon* (1940) poses the problem in a concrete, easily identifiable context. The context is the Soviet Union of the 1930's; It is a great evocation of Stalinist milieu",<sup>3</sup> with "psychological interest."<sup>4</sup>

George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) discusses the same theme in a more generalised context, The book "speaks for our time"<sup>5</sup> and "illustrates the nature of societies that do exist",<sup>6</sup> "is not so much a prophecy".<sup>7</sup> Violence, power, and the problem of truth are the main themes of the book. However dissimilar they are in terms of approach, they have it in common that both are the concentrated expressions of the

horror of modern politics, our age which is dominated by politics as the 4th century was dominated by theology".<sup>8</sup>

In *Darkness at Noon* Koestler explores the dilemma which caught any man, forced to make a political decisions. In the case of this book the man's political decisions are all subservient to the idea of building a better future, the "Sun State".

*Darkness at Noon* is concerned with the ends-means dilemma, with a stage on the way towards the Promised Land, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* focuses on the End. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* presents the "end of the road", the road paved with the maxim "The end justifies the means". Revolution is achieved world-wide, the Promised Land became reality.

The paper does not want to get involved in the debate between critics concerning the satyric and parodic elements of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, and to what extent can the book be considered a satire, Neither is the paper to be concerned with the origins of the two books.<sup>9</sup>

What the paper seeks to do is to compare the two books along certain lines, bring out certain differences and similarities between the characters and the ideas, to point out certain aspects of ideological kinship between the books.

There are two ways of writing the title of Orwell's book. Throughout the paper the longer version, the one made up of letters and not digits, will be used, As B.Crick aptly remarks, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is a book with characters and complex ideas, whereas *1984* is a number, referring to a certain date and likewise is perhaps more readily interpretable as a prophecy.<sup>10</sup>

Both Orwell's and Koestler's book are major documents of contemporary politics, complex novels of ideas read by a wide public. Their special importance lies in the fact that during or after reading them we inevitably ask questions like: what kind of society should we live in? To what extent are we supposed to or can we tolerate restrictions on our liberty? We are also very likely to ask where the trends and tendencies of our time will lead to.

Since these seem to be questions that each generation asks anew when it reaches political maturity, it is worth putting these books under scrutiny and taking a fresh look at them.

### On Time and Tenses.

In Koestler's book, *Darkness at Noon* the reader is immediately plunged into the frightening microcosmos of a prison and transported into the consciousness of a political prisoner, Nikolai Salmanovich Rubashov, ex-Comissar of the People, arrested on

charges ranging from espionage and high treason to plotting to assassinate the leader of the country, No 1.

Rubashov, the modern materialist and rationalist, stripped down to his political essence, is a composite image of many leading Soviet party officials, who fell victim to the putting into practice of what Stalin said at the Thirteenth Party Congress: "Sometimes from time to time, the master must without fail go through the ranks of the party with a broom in his hands".<sup>11</sup>

From the very beginning of the book two facts are obvious for us: one is that the charges are fictitious, trumped-up, a frame-up is in the making. The other is that Rubashov is inevitably doomed.

In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, a model and vision of a totalitarian wasteland, where an endless war between the three superpowers Eurasia, Eastasia, and Oceania is used as a means of controlling the population and demanding sacrifice on part of the individual on behalf of the State, Winston Smith is a member of the Outer Party, working for the Ministry of Truth. In the Ministry his job is rewriting the back issues of newspapers so that they conform with the latest view on events. He actually does what Rubashov only mentioned to Arlova in a humorous context. "Rubashov remarked jokingly to Arlova that the only thing left to be done was to publish a new and revised edition of the back numbers of all newspapers".<sup>12</sup> He begins to feel twinges of doubt concerning the State and the Party and steps on the way of rebellion. He is a frail creature, a doomed rebel, desperately trying to become a revolutionary. In these terms Rubashov's case is just the opposite: He is a revolutionary, trying to rebel.

It is *Darkness at Noon* where the focus is primarily psychological, but both books provide glimpses into the totalitarian abyss and can be read as insights into the totalitarian mentality. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* carries this examination a step further and examines totalitarianism from an epistemological point of view.

Both Nicolai Rubashov and Winston Smith had a past, entirely different from their present. (In the context of the novel Rubashov has two pasts: his pre-revolutionary past-his childhood-which can tentatively be termed "Past Perfect", and his past as a revolutionary, the "Simple Past"). Winston's memories are rather faint of his past, he can recall the scenes of bickering over a piece of chocolate with his ill sister. Rubashov's memories are, however, very clear and distinct.

He is an ardent defender of the new religion, the dogma of the disbelievers, the faith of the faithless, the religion of the State-Communism.

Winston seeks to defend something very old, even ancient - the Self. *Darkness at Noon* on the psychological level at least, is the story of the discovery of what Winston

eventually loses, whereas *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is the conversion to what Rubashov, despite his doubts, cannot eventually shed, the public mind. On the psychological level they are reciprocal stories.

Rubashov destroy his past when he decides to devote his entire life to the Party and to the Cause which the Party serves. He willfully submits his personality to the Party, the embodiment of the collective consciousness, assimilates the Party's ideology both emotionally and intellectually. The Self is dissolved in the multitude. In the present he does not exist as an I, he is an unreal person. His Ego is in darkness, he may have a future, but that is uncertain as well. In a sense he is hovering between the past and the future.

He is doomed to die, so he cannot reach the future in his physical reality. His only hope (a slender one) is that he will appear in the future as part of history...

Continuity is, however, ensured. Gletkin, his second interrogator a second generation revolutionary, static and unchangeable as the system is, belongs to and stands for the future. He is not one of the men of ideas, the revolutionaries (The Rubashovs), he ushers in a new age, the age of the bureaucrat. "In those days we made revolution, now you make politics".<sup>13</sup>

Rubashov, the representative of the Old Guard is much superior to Gletkin, who stands for the New Guard. Gletkin is not a revolutionary, he only makes use of revolutionary dialectics, not handling it creatively, as Rubashov does, only using it as an instrument. Apart from being the bureaucrat, Gletkin is also the technician. He is used to manipulating people as if they were inert objects, as if they were material for use or subjects for experiment. He has no pre-revolutionary memories, no hesitations, no scruples.

He draws his methods from experience, and is the precursor of O'Brien, the Ingsoc Commissar.

It is tragic for Rubashov to realise that he is one of those who are responsible for having created the Gletkins. Gletkin is the ideological son and rightful heir of the revolutionaries.

Rubashov's total submission to the Party made it impossible for him to discover that the Party abolished decency and the autonomous individual. In exchange it offered a chance to serve it and through it the historical process. Conscience was only a clog on social progress.

Solitary confinement enables Rubashov to analyze himself, his role in history. The prison releases in him feelings, instincts which erupt into consciousness. Because of his blind obedience to the Party, he had no compromise for mankind, only zealous passion to achieve the ultimate goal. Pity became a bourgeois sentiment. The situation was as

follows: in order to free man in the future, it was necessary to oppress man in the present, to impose greater suffering than there was in the past. There appeared a tragic rift between existing humanity (the past) and its desired fulfilment (the future). His having embraced Communist ethics-moral fervour, selfless devotion, cynical hypocrisy - made it easy for him to accept evil means wilfully and readily.

In Rubashov's psychological transformation his - childhood memories (Past Perfect) and his memories as a revolutionary (Simple Past tense) - play a crucial role. His having denounced Richard to the Gestapo for not conforming to the official Party line, Little Loewy's suicide in Belgium all contribute to the process.

These are however, memories of abstract deaths, just like the case of his secretary and lover, Arlova, who was called back home, tried and executed because of deviationism.

(This is one of the themes - how love becomes tainted with politics - which is later added to and elaborated on in Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.)

However important these abstract deaths are, they can only cause him pangs of conscience, but cannot push him beyond the "point of no return". He needs something much more tangible.

The moment of immediate involvement arrives when through the judas he sees Bogrov, one-time comrade and friend, being frogmarched to his death. This spectacle is the decisive step on his way towards the discovery of the I.

The basic conflict of the novel is between humanist values - the past - (Rubashov's Past Perfect) and the new values of the present (and the future?).

In the context of the novel Rubashov is the last man to carry those "outdated" values, (symbolically, at least) he can be referred to as the last man of the Old Guard, a "last man" in Europe...

In the neighbouring cell there is a Tsarist officer, obviously a one-time class enemy of Rubashov. In the process of Rubashov's spiritual transformation even he takes on a human shape, he becomes somebody to whom one can talk, a bit of the humane past in the dehumanized present.

Rubashov Gletkin took over, Rubashov's interrogation had been conducted by Ivanov, linked to Rubashov by their common past experience: the Revolution. Ivanov, just like Rubashov, is an intellectual, member of the Old Guard, which, when they began the Revolution, started out of a value, the value of man. Gletkin, the "Neanderthaler" did not know this value. All he knew was the abstract goal.

It is Ivanov, who immediately scents heresy when on one occasion Rubashov says You instead of the compulsory we.

How well Ivanov understands the situation is illustrated when he says: "Our positions might equally be reversed".<sup>14</sup> By this statement he had predicted his own fate: he was shot for sentimental weakness, for trying to save Rubashov's life.

The three persons of the novel, the interrogators Gletkin and Ivanov: and the interrogated Rubashov represent the future of the Party, the present of the Party and the past of the Party, respectively.

Ivanov and Gletkin, "Rubashov's alter egos",<sup>15</sup> are complimentary persons in terms of the methods they use trying to wring out the confession. Ivanov, another man of ideas, appealed to reason, whereas Gletkin, the practical man, used brute force (the glaring light, lack of sleep, constant questioning). The methods they respectively applied can give full account of why the accused confessed. Cruel, severe torture is part and parcel of both books: "Technically" speaking in *Darkness at Noon* it is torture by ideas, in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* it is torture by instruments. Both are and will be, however, interchangeable. Ivanov's place can easily be filled by Gletkin, another cog in the Party machine. Both *Darkness at Noon* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* illustrate how worthless the individual is in totalitarianism, anyone can be changed for anyone else without the slightest harm done to the collective whole.

Rubashov as a Party man served history of which the Party was only the instrument. History, the "mocking oracle" appeared for them as an unfathomable will before which all individual aspirations are fragile. It appears as an external force, something which knows better where it is going. What does Rubashov have to oppose this allmighty force? He has the slowly awakening I, what he calls the "grammatical fiction". Up to this point Rubashov has been an incomplete human being, without a Self. Up until now his human ideas have been absorbed in cruelty. Now he realizes that there is (there would have been) something else, something infinite, the "oceanic sense", the existence of which is not conducive to the maintenance of his closed system.

It is so much dissimilar to everything he has known so far that he does not really know how to handle it. He tries to apply the dialectic method to it, but has to realize that it does not work, here is no dissecting it, there is no real answer in his closed system to the grammatical fiction.

But Rubashov has been the prisoner of his closed system too long to be able to break free. The "secret sharer" is not capable of dislodging him from behind the bastion of reason...

He senses that the "grammatical fiction" is a very precarious, elusive thing, something not worth leaving the shelter of history for. The I threatens the validity of his entire life, his past as a revolutionary. His entire life has been spent in the service of

history. Rubashov decides that he belongs to history. Sticking within history is the only way for him to secure his bond with his past. He is afraid of being "pushed" out of history, since it is history that he can pin his last hope to, only it can grant him absolution. "Confession is the only way that he can return to his fold".<sup>16</sup> He knows that he is doomed anyway but if he fails to confess to the charges brought against him, he will be "vapourised" in silence, dropped into oblivion through the Party's "memory hole".

Rubashov accepts his own perjury and death as a last service to the Party. He has no place to go, having given his mind to the Party, he has no mind to resist when the Party demands his death and life. He came a long way towards repudiating totalitarianism, but he dies without final certainties, having been humiliated through confession.

In *Nineteen Eighty-Four* the almighty and omnipotent Party seeks to control the past, the present and the future. "He who controls the past controls the present, who controls the present controls the future".<sup>17</sup> The Party wants to turn the past into the creation of the present, to destroy any idea of objective truth.

When Julia and Winston are arrested in the room above Mr. Charrington's shop, where, significantly most of the action takes place, Winston's crystal is smashed by the Thought Police. The mutability of the Past... It is worth noting here the difference in the quality of Winston's and Julia's relationship between the country and the junk shop. In the country there was an aggressive hardness about their relationship in spite of the calmness of their surroundings. Winston knows that: "No emotion was pure, because everything was mixed up with fear and hatred".<sup>18</sup>

The junk shop, an intimate place, is their own world, where everything is as real as it was in the past. They can get much closer to each other, indulging in their privateness and in the sense of the past that the room generates.

The hope of being remembered has sustained free men in dark times throughout history. The Greeks, the Romans carried out their valorous civic deeds in the hope of being remembered by the ages coming after theirs.

Such hope does not exist for Winston Smith, the unheroic hero of the book, "You must stop imagining that posterity will vindicate you, Winston. Posterity will never hear of you".<sup>19</sup> Winston's problem is the same as that of Rubashov's. But whereas Rubashov has a faint hope of being remembered, Winston has no hope at all.

In *Nineteen Eighty-Four* the basic conflict is similar to that in *Darkness at Noon*: the humanist past and the totalitarian sadism of the present (and of the future?).

As it has already been mentioned, the past is a natural enemy of the totalitarian state. To create the past, we need memories. Love and the sexual act are abundant sources of memories. The Anti-Sex League serves the very purpose of stifling the sexual instinct. The sexual act is not collective, the relationship is between individuals and not between the individuals and the state.

The act is always the same, the experience and the ecstasy are always different, but the most important thing from the point of view of the state is, that, it cannot be controlled. A new, twisted morality has been created: to be "abstinent" means to be "virtuous". The only legitimate pretext for having sex is procreation. To ensure that this should not be otherwise, the Party seeks to abolish the orgasm.

Sex which can provide love for the present and lives for the future and links with the past is, by necessity, anathema to such regimes.

The regime of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is putting tremendous effort into doing away with the majority of the vocabulary of the language. What it is doing is a plot against human consciousness. The deeds of our ancestors, their knowledge and culture what we can base our present spiritual life on are communicated to us through the medium of language. If the state does violence to language, it, consequently, violates the past. A twofold war is conducted against language: the Party desires an ever-diminishing vocabulary and parallel to it, words that mean more than one thing (the majority of words are such) are being "purged" from the language. Connotations are especially frowned upon by the totalitarian "linguists", since connotative meanings are especially suitable for evoking moments of the past.

Syme, Winston's colleague, describes the aim of Newspeak as follows: "In the end we shall make thoughtcrime literally impossible, because there will be no words in which to express it. Every concept that can ever be needed will be expressed by exactly one word, with its meaning rightly defined and all subsidiary meanings rubbed out and forgotten".<sup>20</sup>

The "cleansing" process must go on until words become incapable of evoking memories, both the past, and communication, in general, is reduced to the barest minimum.

Memory and hope can most efficiently be done away with through language.

The new consciousness lives locked up in the moment, the moment which is practically a protracted present. Ingsoc strives to bring history to a standstill.

Rubashov's and the commissars self-deception finally gave rise to the all pervasive double-think in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, just as the shifts in allegiance Koestler refers to led to the enormous allegiance against all peoples of the world.



### Crime and Punishment.

Rubashov's crime is twofold: by neglecting, during his entire political career, the grammatical fiction, morality, he has committed a crime against humanity. By flirting with the silent partner, the I, the first person singular, he committed a crime against the Party. So he has two bills to settle, and, caught in the thick cobweb of obedience to the Party and moral responsibility towards Mankind he does not see any way out. He realizes that he deserves his death. He deserves his death at the hands of the Party, that "can never be mistaken".

He is guilty because he considered that anything was morally permissible for something outside morality. It is important to note here that in this respect Winston Smith and Julia are also guilty. By taking the oath before O'Brien they fell into a moral trap: they took the oath of (in the case of necessity) throwing acid into a child's face. It is obvious that a revolution carried out by such means ("without ethical ballast") can only lead to a new and similar tyranny. "New Goldstein would be but old Big Brother writ large".<sup>21</sup>

Rubashov in *Darkness at Noon* chooses the confessions and the trial in the name of revolutionary honour. "Honour is to be useful without fuss".<sup>22</sup> - says Rubashov when reacting to the notion of honour of the Tsarist prisoner.<sup>23</sup>

In *Darkness at Noon* Koestler reveals that the totalitarian mind is not only to be understood in terms of the Machiavellian ethics. That is old style politics and hardly explains historical incidents like the Moscow Trials or the imprisonment of a party leader, like Rubashov. The execution of Rubashov and of the others does not make good political sense, if seen from a pragmatic point of view. Since they are all good party men, it seems that No. I. would be undermining his own position by liquidating them. This apparent gap seems to be bridged by the use of unconventional methods; a mystique is created, which cannot be tested on rational or logical grounds. In Rubashov's world politics becomes an irrational mystery that can easily be betrayed even by the insiders, by its most faithful adherents.

Rubashov evokes the memory of a conversation at a diplomatic reception with a foreign diplomat. He certainly did not betray his country. The only thing that happened was a really cordial conversation. However tenuous this thread is, according to the Party's logic, which Rubashov wholeheartedly subscribed to, it can lead to betrayal. What he achieved with the diplomat was friendly neutrality. But even a friendly smile is a spontaneous reaction, which is immoral and may lead to anything.

Rubashov committed the crime, now he awaits the punishment.

In Orwell's totalitarian state, where everything has hardened into politics, society is the property of the state. In Oceania everything is crime that does not directly strengthens the State, like the life of contemplation and the joy of purposelessness. Sexual gratification is sternly frowned upon and is termed sexcrime. Instinctual lust and its polar opposite, pure reason, the basis of the state, are incompatible. Another major crime one can commit is the defence of private memory and of being against the uniformity of opinions. Winston has committed both sexcrime and the heresy of individualism.

Julia, the other main personage of the book, exhibits her contempt towards the regime by engaging in several love affairs. She is an average girl who enjoys her job in the Ministry of Truth and sports the red sash of the Anti-Sex League. She seems to share her vitality with the proles, she is a rather harsh, unfeeling sexual heretic. Since her past sexual activity is not part of a bigger, more elaborate pattern of rebellion, for her it is sex for sex, her particular "non-serviam". She is shrewd (she thinks that the bombs are in fact dropped by their own government).

She only hates the system for sexual repression and frustration. She has no metaphysical notions of freedom. It is also through her that the reader finds out about the doublethink of the Inner Party members. She committed sexcrime with quite a number of leading Party members. In such circumstances having sex becomes a political act, an act transcending political reality.

In *Darkness at Noon* Rubashov's clandestine affair with Arlova takes on political overtones only when Rubashov fails to testify on behalf of her. He saw clearly that the testimony would have cost him his life.

Sexcrime is however, not enough for Winston. He needs somebody to trust, to belong to. It is through his search for a fellow revolter that the Thought Police tracks him down and, finally, catches him and Julia.

The Thought Police is a "peculiar institution": Its function is not so much to detect crime after it has been committed, but to detect it in its latent, embryonic form. If somebody becomes suspicious, he is given the chance to get himself deeply into the "quagmire", then he is caught and purged. O'Brien, head of the Thought Police, sniffs Winston's rebellious attitude towards the State and drags him down into the abyss. O'Brien is the one who acts on behalf of the State. He does violence to man, mind, history, and the world. He is the "Tempter" and he is the executioner. He derives his main pleasure from the "corrective" treatment of the revolters.

O'Brien gives Winston a copy of a book, written by the leader of some alleged Brotherhood, Emmanuel Goldstein, *The Book of Oligarchal Collectivism*. Goldstein's

name brings into one's mind events a decade before. His name evokes somebody who alongside with the victims of the Moscow Trials, fell victim to Stalin's broom, Leon Trotsky (Bronstein).

Goldstein is the scapegoat enemy of the state public enemy N°1 and official hate image. The two minutes hate helps to sublimate sexual energies, and it also has the purpose of uniting the people around Big Brother and the Party. It is from Goldstein's book that Winston learns the "how". However, he is more than curious to find out the "why" as well.

Both Winston and Julia are rebels. Julia only rebels with her body, hers is the rebellion of the flesh against the suppression of natural instincts.

Winston's rebellion is, however more concious. In his case the soul also participates in the rebellion. For him sexuality is the source of energy to carry on with his rebellion.

Eventually he falls in love with Julia. The difference between their sorts of rebellion is clearly illustrated by the scene when Winston reads out excerpts from Goldstein's book, and then Julia falls asleep...

They both believe in the existence of a sphere wich is entirely private. "They cannot get inside you"<sup>24</sup> - Julia says. This assumption is, however, easily refuted by the Party.

After Winston and Julia's being captured, their "reeducation" begins. The idea is that they should unlearn their previous values and learn new ones. The inculcation of the new values takes place in the brightly lit torture chambers of the Ministry of Love ("The place where there is no darkness"). The ultimate dissident mind to the absolute, the embodiment of the State: Big Brother.

The process of reintegration takes place in several stages: learning, understanding, accepting.

Totalitarianism does not only want to break the victim, but wants to turn him inside out. It seeks the entire destruction of the sphere where the individual can (possibly) withdraw. The system does not punish its deviant subject in the conventional sense of the term but exposes them to a kind of "therapeutic treatment". This "cure" means the complete destruction of the human self, ensures the surrender of the individual to the collective. The I becomes We. O'Brien does not want Winston to become a martyr, he ants no false confession, he wants him to believe what he says. *In Darkness at Noon* Rubashov's confession in only a "tactical move", he does not really believe what he says at the trial. Winston, however, comes to believe everything by the

end of the "treatment" ... The new Goad declines to lose a single soul, the loss of no sheep can be afforded, the fallen ones must be cleansed.

The citizen becomes a particle of the state, his personal consciousness has been soaked up and the collective consciousness has been built in. Winston is not given the opportunity of redemption nor even the small comfort of dying with his inner life intact. The Party takes its revenge: it will not allow its victims to die unrepentant.

O'Brien, Winston's torturer, "teacher", and "saviour" uses brute force to drive home his point. In *Darkness at Noon* Gletkin can still argue. His argumentation is dogmatic, clumsy and mechanical but at least he keeps trying. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four* O'Brien can only give one answer to reason: violence. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four* there is no discussion of ends and means, right or wrong, there is no need to justify anything. Rubashov's dialogue becomes irrelevant.

After the "treatment" in Room 101, where "there is no death",<sup>25</sup> Winston's fate is sealed. There is no way back and no way out. He betrayed Julia and, through her, mankind. He stumbles out of the Ministry of Love as a living dead, a hollow image of his previous self. It becomes horrible reality what Rubashov wrote in his diary: "We admitted no private sphere; not even inside a man's skull".<sup>26</sup> His idiotic smile is suggestive of his full recovery, he comes to love Big Brother. Those who are successfully cured are destroyed alive.

V. S. Pritchett points out that, whereas in *Darkness at Noon* death is the eventual punishment for deviation, in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* the punishment is lifeless life.<sup>27</sup> The subjects of the totalitarian state cannot be allowed to retain the smallest awareness of their value, which can be the spark of resistance at any moment. Despite all his moral, intellectual and physical defects Winston Smith is the last MAN. The Last Man in Europe...<sup>28</sup> *Nineteen Eighty-Four* fights for man but loses the battle.

The destruction of the family is also inevitable in totalitarianism, where humaneness is only useless nostalgia. The family harbours all sorts of feelings, spontaneous affection. As it has been pointed out, the uncalculated is subversive.

The family has hardly any place in a world based on hate.

Emotional bonds inevitably developing and flourishing instinct is especially dangerous within the family, since it can shape and mould the family into a potentially stronger unit than the Party. What the regime can tolerate is a ghastly parody of the family, which serves the purpose of procreation and the raising of the offspring, but where the strongest influence is that of the Thought Police, and where ideology has replaced emotion and the family loyalty. Whereas in *Darkness at Noon* the porter,

Vassilij is only afraid of his daughter, in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* the Parson kids denounce their own father to the Thought Police.

Rubashov is desperate to stick to his faith, Winston on the other hand is desperate to find something to stick to before his final destruction. His tragedy is that he only finds O'Brien, the priest of power, servant of the new religion. Winston rejects the traditional God, his God is humaneness, the spirit of Man. It is this God that fails him at the end of the book after the "sophisticated" psychological treatment.

In *Darkness at Noon* Rubashov's belief in the Party is eroded but his God does not ultimately fail. It is the author, Koestler, whose belief in the God of Communism ultimately failed.

In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, just as in *Darkness at Noon*, the Party would have had enough power to create "high noon" for the people, but they chose to create darkness. (In Oceania the only purpose of war is to burn off the surplus products, which for the first time in history would make it possible to end "hierarchy" and reach "equality".) Instead, the abnormal has become the rule.

*Darkness at Noon* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* seek to show what happens when ideas are taken to their logical conclusion. The real horror of the books is formal reason, having its measure outside man, taken to its extreme and showing rational contempt for moral tradition. The stage is reached when the world is only on intellectual construct. When O'Brien kills Winston's human self, he buries the murder in dehumanized intellectual rhetoric. Once the priests of power step on the way of action, they cannot stop. The logic of their position demands that the next step should logically follow from the previous one. All that remains is politics, stripped bare of morality (*Darkness at Noon*) and the inordinate desire for power (*Nineteen Eighty-Four*).

"We should not have sailed without ethical ballast"<sup>29</sup> - says Rubashov.

In *Nineteen Eighty-Four* only the proles can preserve human qualities. "They were not loyal to any party or a country or an idea, they were loyal to one another... The proles had stayed human".<sup>30</sup>

That is why for Winston hope lies in the proles. However, "he soon discovers that they are not aware of their own potential. It is a problem that Rubashov also ponders: there can be no revolution without the people's consciousness of their condition, and they cannot acquire this consciousness with revolution".<sup>31</sup>

Towards the end of his life Orwell drew consolation from two sources: from the hope that some day, perhaps a thousand years hence, things might be better, (Koestler was a short time pessimist and a long time optimist); and from the reflection that revolutionary activity always fails but always continues.

Let us add: We hope that in the future mankind will step on the way wisdom, where reason and morality only complement, and not exclude, each other. If so, Arthur Koestler and G. Orwell were the two last men (in Europe) who had to write such novels.

## NOTES

1. Kundera, Milan. *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*. London. Penguin Books, 1983. p. 3.
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