

**The Rhetoric of Disillusionment: Orwell, Koestler and the Spanish
Civil War**

by

Frances Lynne Horwitz

B.A. University of British Columbia, 1983

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS
in
the Department of English

© Frances Lynne Horwitz

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

June 27, 1990

All rights reserved. This work may not be reproduced in whole or
in part, by photocopy or other means, without permission of the
author.

APPROVAL

Name: Frances Lynne Horwitz

Degree: Master of Arts (English)

Title of Thesis: The Rhetoric of Disillusionment: Orwell,
Koestler and the Spanish Civil War

Examining Committee:

Chair: Kathy Mezei
Graduate Chair

Mason Harris
Associate Professor
Senior Supervisor

Janet Giltrow
Senior Lecturer

Geoffrey Durrant
Professor Emeritus
Department of English
University of British Columbia
External Examiner

Date Approved: 29 June 1990

PARTIAL COPYRIGHT LICENSE

I hereby grant to Simon Fraser University the right to lend my thesis, project or extended essay (the title of which is shown below) to users of the Simon Fraser University Library, and to make partial or single copies only for such users or in response to a request from the library of any other university, or other educational institution, on its own behalf or for one of its users. I further agree that permission for multiple copying of this work for scholarly purposes may be granted by me or the Dean of Graduate Studies. It is understood that copying or publication of this work for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Title of Thesis/Project/Extended Essay

The Rhetoric of Disillusionment: Orwell, Koestler and the Spanish Civil War

Author: _____

(signature)

Frances Lynne Horwitz

(name)

June 29, 1990

(date)

ABSTRACT

The subject of this work is the connection between ideological disillusionment and its written expression--how George Orwell and Arthur Koestler came to abandon or reject political ideals they once cherished--as illustrated in Orwell's Spanish Civil War text and Koestler's autobiography. Specifically, the work argues that Orwell and Koestler were inspired more by their disillusionment, in the end, than by the war itself, to write about their experiences.

Orwell and Koestler's disillusionment centered, in part, on the lies about the role of dissent and revolution in the Spanish War, lies required by Russia to maintain its foreign policy. Koestler, especially, was troubled by that same government's expedient ethics which not only permitted the distortion of the truth but also the sacrifice of human life, to further its aims. As they reveal their illusions both writers are aware that they have to prove that their new vision--their disillusionment--is not just another imperfect vision, another illusion. And they develop certain strategies to demonstrate that their disillusionment is not just more smoke and mirrors. But for both, the process of rejecting their ideals led to an affirmation: this process expedited the transformation of Eric Blair into George Orwell; and for Koestler, the process led to a more personal ideology and humane ethic.

Through a comparative analysis, this work explores the

illusions and disillusionments of these two writers. As well, a brief political and social context is provided for Orwell and Koestler's textual expression of their old imperfect visions and new clearer visions. The thesis closely examines the strategies both men use to convince their readers that their disillusionments are valid.

Table Of Contents

1. APPROVAL	ii
2. ABSTRACT	iii
3. INTRODUCTION	1
4. CHAPTER ONE	7
5. CHAPTER TWO	44
6. CHAPTER THREE	78
7. CONCLUSION	153
8. NOTES	160
9. WORKS CITED	163
10. BIBLIOGRAPHY	165

INTRODUCTION

The Spanish Civil War, fought in the first third of this century, was very much a rallying point for writers and intellectuals, and also very much a literary phenomenon. About ten years before the War, in the 1920's, many European intellectuals and artists--such as the French Surrealists and the German Dadaists--had come together to foment a revolution of their own. Coming out of the First World War, they wanted to smash traditional artistic, religious, political, and social institutions, which they felt had contributed to the War. The young artists and intellectuals derided established traditions and institutions: they condemned the bigotry these institutions manifested through militaristic ultra-nationalism. They condemned the short-sightedness of the political leaders who provoked ultra-nationalism resulting in war and death. The writers, poets, painters, and musicians would attempt to change the political morality that had led to the First World War by establishing new values through the creation of new art forms. To many of the artists and intellectuals, the Spanish Civil War was revolution in action. This revolution promised a clean break with the past and a possible utopian future. In this revolution the fight was for the survival of art and culture in a free society.

Literacy for all Spaniards was actually part of the revolution. The Spanish Republican Government, as Raymond Carr

says in his introduction to a pictorial history of the Civil War,

honoured intellectuals, in contrast to the Nationalists' distrust of them, and paid great attention to the education of children. The commissars attached to army units distributed newsletters and conducted a campaign against illiteracy. There were also literacy campaigns in the countryside (*The Spanish Civil War: A History in Pictures*, 15).

So, much of the Spanish population hoped that learning to read and to write, that becoming literate, would be one of the outcomes of the war for them.

But as the war became, through the politics of non-intervention, part of the power conflicts of Europe, so this involvement, or lack of it, gave Spanish issues an international importance. For many intellectuals the war became a contest between the ideologies that divided the continent, a contest between fascism and democracy. For exiled or alienated German intellectuals on the Left, for example, who were seeing the rise of the Nazis in their own country, the war in Spain seemed one way to stop fascism, so they could eventually return to their own country. And, as Carr says, a generation of intellectuals in England, who were "beaten down by the depression, unemployment and the National Government" felt "the sensation of effective action" in helping the Spanish resistance (*The Spanish Civil War: A History in Pictures*, 21). Writers in other countries, in the process of identifying with one or the other of the two main combatants of the war, transformed the war into intellectual discourse through their writings. Their writings could serve either art or propaganda.

No matter what the divisiveness of sides revealed by the

Spanish war, the war's impact on writers and intellectuals was huge. Those writers who were broadly liberal, saw their support in the Republic at war as "the last cause". The fact that their commitment was often ruthlessly organized and exploited by Communists not just in Spain, but in many countries, or that their writing could be self-centered, should not prevent us from recognizing the genuine nature of the writers' commitment. Carr tells us that people all over the world responded to the "last chance" call "precisely because they were liberals of one sort or another, shocked at the overthrow of a 'progressive' government. . . . Intellectuals felt on the side of history for once; they identified with Spaniards 'fighting for freedom'" (*The Spanish Civil War*, 21). But the consequences of their involvement resulted in many left-wing intellectuals feeling apolitical and disillusioned. Having to abandon certain ideals, some writers felt renewed: they had new ideas to write about; others felt a terror: they had to face an emptiness left by the rejection of ideology, but they could write about that emptiness. Some writers, in the end, were compelled more by their disillusionment than by the war itself to write about their disillusionment. Two such writers were George Orwell and Arthur Koestler.

In Orwell and Koestler we have disillusioned polemicists; and both are aware that the revelation of their illusion is double-edged. Coming out of their disillusionment, they show themselves as clear-sighted now but previously blind in their illusions. As they write about their old imperfect visions--their illusions--they are aware that they have to

demonstrate that their new visions--their disillusionments--are not just more mirages. To check such criticisms, Orwell uses two strategies: first, he creates, through his narrative, a naive, non-partisan persona who is learning through his experiences; second, he interrupts the narrative to create a highly informed persona who, with great logic, analyzes his experiences. Koestler is Orwell's strategic counterpart when he creates his alternative to a past that betrayed his trust: a private, personal cosmology and humane ethics which impress his new vision.

For Koestler, who was a Communist to begin with, and for Orwell, who was and remained an unorthodox Socialist, the Communist Party's doctrines concerning dissent, revolution, and the truth about these matters were a main source of disillusionment. Dictated by Moscow's foreign policy, the Communist Party policy maintained that dissent and revolution in Spain were traitorous acts, and that an individual who bore witness to such dissent and revolution was also a traitor. But having been itself the child of dissent and revolution, the Communist Party could not denounce traitorous acts and persons aloud. So, with twisted reasoning, the Party also maintained that to lie about such events was virtuous. These mandated lies contributed to Koestler's loss of his illusions because, as a member of the Party, he was required to use his writing to create such lies. These lies disillusioned Orwell too, which, in turn, moved him to write the truth. Orwell was also disillusioned with the lack of unity in the fight against Fascism; in Spain, he saw

through the Popular Front. But, in the end, Orwell would be reaffirmed in his Socialism. Unlike Orwell, Koestler was disillusioned with politics as a whole: his illusions had involved a whole world view. Koestler's disillusionment was more profound--he had more to lose.

But, as we shall see, the issues of illusions and disillusionments, of partisans and non-partisans, of dogma and non-dogma, of traitorous acts and virtuous acts, of writing lies and truths are too complex to be dealt with only in outline. The complexities of such issues are covered in the chapters which follow.

The first chapter examines Orwell's disillusionment, as expressed in *Homage to Catalonia*. But I do not analyze the whole text: only those sections of text that reveal Orwell's imperfect vision coming out of his experiences with the POUM militiamen at the front are examined. I also look into Chapter Eleven, which counters any possible criticism of the new vision coming from his experiences of the riots in Barcelona and distorted press reports about those riots.

Chapter Two briefly compares the social and political contexts for Orwell's one text and for Koestler's first three Spanish Civil War texts, *L'Espagne Ensanglantée*, *Spanish Testament*, and *Dialogue with Death*. This chapter also describes some of the differences between Koestler's three texts but we will find that these texts cannot account for Koestler's ideological abandonment of Communism.

The third section does examine Koestler's disillusionment,

which is more complex and reflexive than Orwell's rejection of ideals, as expressed not in his Spanish Civil War texts but, rather, in his autobiography *The Invisible Writing*. We will see that Koestler's ideological illusions lasted for seven years, and that he had more to lose than Orwell, whose illusions endured for less than a year. Part of the complexity not only has to do with the duration and strength of Koestler's ideological commitment, but also with his imprisonment in a Spanish death cell. And whenever possible, I compare Koestler's abandonment of his illusions to Orwell's.

But before we turn to the thesis, sources which provided crucial and inspiring information must be acknowledged. Murray A. Sperber's essay "Looking Back on Koestler's Spanish War" seems to be the only work that acknowledges and compares all three of Koestler's Spanish Civil War texts. The first two texts are out of print, and Sperber's essay brings to light the existence of a purely propagandistic French text. Bernard Crick's excellent biography of Orwell, *George Orwell: A Life* has informed the whole of the section on Orwell and provided some perceptive and sensitive insights on Orwell and his relationship to the Spanish War. And various writings of Raymond Carr, acknowledged in the text, have been useful in certain political and historical aspects of this work. I am indebted to Octavio Paz and his *Children of the Mire*, which increased my understanding of the "void", and to Helmuth Plessner's essay "On The Relation Of Time To Death", which demonstrated the timelessness of a totalitarian world. To these scholars in particular, I express gratitude.

CHAPTER ONE

Orwell and *Homage to Catalonia*

Orwell's primary disillusionment was his discovery that the truth in the Spanish press and the press outside of Spain was distorted or repressed to serve the politics of the provincial Catalan government, the central Republican government in Madrid, and governments outside of Spain. So when he discovered the distortion or repression of the truth in the press about the role of the Anarchists and the dissident POUM militia, Orwell was determined to present the truth based on the authenticity of his own experiences, a truth which would contradict the press reports. And he does present the truth through a particularly intense analysis of press distortions. In order to appear neutral and non-partisan himself, Orwell warns the reader of *Homage to Catalonia* that it is not easy for him to arrive at the truth. Furthermore, in the interest of objectivity, Orwell also warns the reader not to accept everything he says, that his account is bound to include distortions.

In order to be disillusioned in the first place, however, Orwell had to hold illusions. Therefore to better understand Orwell's disillusionments--his abandonment or rejection of certain ideals, political and otherwise--let us first look at his illusions. Orwell says that he went to Spain "simply to fight Fascism", and that is how he saw the Spanish Civil War initially--simply as a fight against Fascism. And along with an

over-simplified idea of what the war was about, Orwell also brought to Spain his unconscious "lower-upper-middle-class" prejudices of superiority and condescension, as well as a romantic and idealized vision of socialism recently formulated in his writing of *The Road to Wigan Pier*. Furthermore, the contradiction between Orwell's middle-class prejudices and his simplistic vision of socialism may have been the cause of his illusions about political parties on the Left being united in their fight against Fascism in Spain. His political idealism and romanticism caused him at first to see the parties on the Left acting in concert for equality. When Orwell finally saw that there was no concerted effort for equality, but rather the Communist Party fighting with other Left-wing groups for power, he rejected the idea of a united Left; he was compelled to expose the distortions of the truth by the Communist press. Moreover, part of his expression of disillusionment with partisanship can be seen in his own efforts to appear neutral.

In exposing the press distortions, and as part of his persuasive strategy, Orwell does not always present an exact replica of his experiences. For example, Orwell attempts to appear neutral in the circumstances of his joining the POUM. He says that he joined the POUM militia quite by accident, that he had really wanted to join the Communist Party's International Brigade. He does not tell us that he couldn't get sponsorship from the English Communist Party because it distrusted him as the result of his critique of the Party in *The Road to Wigan Pier*. However, he does tell us that he was sent to the headquarters of

POUM by the socialist Independent Labor Party (ILP) in England, which considered itself a sister-party to POUM. And again, he does not mention that while he was antagonistic to the Communist Party in England, he was somewhat sympathetic to the ILP. Even though the ILP was socialistic, it was not part of the English Communist Party which strictly adhered to policy dictated by the Russian Communist Party.

So, given Orwell's sympathy for the ILP, and given the ILP's introduction of Orwell to POUM, it really was not accidental that he joined the POUM after all, as he claims. He was predisposed to favor and join the POUM in the first place. When Orwell conceals his predisposition to the POUM, the reader concludes that Orwell's assessment of the POUM is objective, not the judgement of a friend of the POUM, and that Orwell's partiality and partisanship for the POUM during the May riots in Barcelona are only the result of unprejudiced experience. But Orwell's partisanship for the POUM is not just the result of unprejudiced experience in Spain as he leads his readers to believe. Orwell was sympathetic to the ILP, the POUM's sister party, even before he left England for Spain. Orwell's sympathy for the English ILP, however, does not mean that he accepted, or understood the POUM, before he arrived in Spain. Still, when Orwell does not reveal his predisposition to the ILP, it is fair to say that some of Orwell's claims and parts of his narrative are not exact replications of what actually happened, but, rather, persuasive tactics in the interest of appearing impartial.

Such liberties with the facts of his life are part of

Orwell's strategy of persuasion, and the case just mentioned is a tactic to enhance his appeal to his readers: he wants to demonstrate that he is neutral and has no investment in showing the POUM in a good light. Orwell benefits from his readers' vision of him as neutral. By establishing his neutrality, he establishes his reliability; he wards off any expressions of doubt, such as, "are you sure this disillusionment of your is not just another illusion?" Throughout the first part of the text (up to Chapter Five) Orwell appears to be uncommitted; here he consistently claims he is ignorant of and uninterested in politics, which is not so. Thus he appeals to those readers who are also possibly ignorant of and uninterested in politics, but he also shows those already suspicious of partisan writers that he is not a partisan, not predisposed to one side or the other. This way he can appear, at times, to be revealing what he is learning rather than what he already knows. He can appear to have had no prejudgement, no text in mind before he left England for Spain.

In other words, he can appear to be non-partisan through inexperience to readers who are also non-partisan, and to disarm readers who are suspicious of partisanship, first to get their sympathy, and then to persuade them of his vision of socialism because of the authenticity of his experiences of socialism in Spain. This persuasive device is what Kenneth Burke, in his *Rhetoric of Motives*, calls "identification"--a strategy used "to persuade a man by identifying your cause with his interests", and by identifying his cause with your interests (p. 24). If it

works such a persuasive tactic results in solidarity with the reader. Moreover, Orwell uses rhetoric based on the undeniable authenticity of experience. In Chapter Eleven, which outlines the events of the Barcelona riots and the lies about the events, he uses the authenticity of his experiences to bolster his argument against the distortion and suppression of the truth about the riots. But more will be said about this particular persuasive tactic later on.

Still, despite the assumptions and sympathies he carried with him to Spain, Orwell really did not know much about Spain and its political factionalism. Lacking such knowledge, Orwell not only believed that all parties on the Left were anarchistic, but he also believed that they were united in their fight against Fascism, and this resulted in his first disillusionment. Orwell says that what he thought was typical in the attitudes of POUM--in their practice of equality as he saw it in Barcelona when he first arrived in January 1937 for training, and among the POUM militiamen at the front--was typical of the rest of Spain. At the front, Orwell saw the militiamen exercise equality when they refused military ranking and made decisions as a group. After his four-month isolation at the front with the POUM militia, Orwell was shocked to discover that not all of Spain was socialistic or anarchistic in the sense that the POUM were. He says, using his innocence to give the reader a sense of his neutrality:

All this time I was at the front, and at the front the social and political atmosphere did not change. . . . I was breathing the air of equality, I was simple enough to imagine that it existed all over Spain. I did not realize

that more or less by chance I was isolated among the most revolutionary section of the Spanish working class. (*Homage to Catalonia*, 66)

His realization that PDUM's practice of socialism was not the general rule came during his second visit to Barcelona, during his leave in May, 1937. Orwell says:

No doubt to anyone who had been there in August, when the blood was scarcely dry in the streets and militia were quartered in the smart hotels, Barcelona in December [when he first arrived] would have seemed bourgeois; to me, fresh from England, it was liker to a workers' city than anything I had conceived possible. Now [during his second visit] the tide had rolled back. Once again it was an ordinary city, a little pinched and chipped by war, but with no outward sign of working-class predominance. (*Homage to Catalonia*, 106)

Orwell, with his idealistic vision of socialism in front of him, was wearing "rose-colored glasses" when he arrived in Barcelona in December, and saw only what he wanted to see. "He did not realize," as Bernard Crick says in his biography of Orwell,

in fact, that the revolutionary phase of the red flags or the anarchist red and black flags was nearly over--republican normality was about to be restored by the central government for the sake of a united war effort and to placate foreign opinion, particularly that of the British and French governments. (*George Orwell: A Life*, 320)

As witness to and participant in the Barcelona conflict, Orwell finally had to reject his belief that all political parties on the Left would unite in their fight against Fascism, a misconception which may have arisen through his first illusion that the Spanish Civil War was only a fight against Fascism. Now, more than three months after his arrival in Spain, Orwell knew that the Spanish Civil War was a war-within-a-war, where the various political factions on the Left were not only fighting the Fascists but also each other for political dominance. But it was not only the factionalism that disillusioned Orwell when he

returned to Barcelona; he also had to revise his confidence in the socialistic capabilities of human nature--as demonstrated by the POUM militia at the front--and the capability of socialism to change human nature.

The street-fighting in Barcelona, tangible evidence of the factionalism, was followed by unauthentic press reports of fighting which shocked Orwell even more than his discoveries that not all of Republican Spain was socialistic, or that the various political factions were not united. Orwell was horrified to learn that almost all of the press reports of the fighting in Barcelona were distorted to suit the political affiliations of the newspapers reporting the Barcelona events. His discovery that the press was lying to suit its own political ends would influence him more profoundly than his other disillusionments, because he, a journalist himself, was already aware of his own power to distort the truth. Orwell, moreover, warns us that because no one can be completely objective, there are necessarily mistakes even in what he himself is writing:

I have tried to write objectively . . . though, obviously, no one can be completely objective on a question of this kind. One is practically obliged to take sides, and it must be clear which side I am on. Again, I must inevitably have made mistakes of fact. . . . It is very difficult to write accurately about the Spanish War, because of the lack of non-propagandist documents. I warn everyone against my bias, and I warn everyone against my mistakes. (*Homage to Catalonia*, 153)

Especially because he was aware of the power a journalist can wield, Orwell had nothing but contempt for those journalists who knowingly used that power to twist the truth.

With his idealistic belief in socialism, Orwell thought that

the Left-wing press should challenge the crusade of the Right-wing press, a crusade which was authorized by the conservative power elite. Dominant conservative elements, such as the Church and the landowners, supported Franco's insurrection by using the press as a vehicle for self-serving distortions. These distortions served the power elite in maintaining its feudalistic dominance. Thus Orwell assumed that the press on the Left had the special job of refuting the distortions on the Right, and that by being magnanimous toward one another rather than self-serving, the elements of the Left-wing press would encourage the social change necessary to defeat the predominant conservative elements. But Orwell implies that those on the Left were just as bad if not worse than the insurgents at twisting the truth to suit their own purposes. More than once he expresses his contempt, usually typifying war-time journalism as a "racket." For example, he condemns the Left-wing parties for being more vindictive towards one another than towards their enemy:

One of the dreariest effects of the war has been to teach me that the Left-wing press is every bit as spurious and dishonest as that of the Right. . . . As far as the journalistic part of it went, this war was a racket like all other wars. But there was this difference, that whereas the journalists usually reserve their most murderous invective for the enemy, in this case, as time went on, the Communists and the POUM came to write more bitterly about one another than about the Fascists. (*Homage to Catalonia*, 64-65)

In his loathing for the "spurious and dishonest" press, and to dissociate himself from others who wrote about the events of the war, Orwell warns the reader to "beware" because all political writing is partisan writing. Orwell's warnings to the reader not

only serve to acknowledge the dangers of the tremendous powers of the text--that is, how the text can stand-in for experience and become the reader's experience of the Spanish Civil War--but also acknowledge the dangers inherent in the suppression or distortion of the truth, suppressions or distortions which can erase or rewrite history.

Orwell alerts us to the danger of an extreme political situation where no one but those in authority can discern the difference between an actual experience and an untrue, authorized version of that experience, where no one but those in authority can say what is actual and what is not, who can, in fact, control our reality. And when Orwell sees this happening in democratic countries to the extent that an unreliable, and sometimes corrupt, press is knowingly or unknowingly serving totalitarian aims, he is particularly concerned about those readers who do not know the truth and who accept the authorized version of an experience as the reality. But he is also concerned about those readers who know about and protest the difference between the untrue, authorized version of an experience and the true experience, and who are punished--and silenced--by authority.

On the one hand, Orwell knows that his inexperienced readers have no way of knowing what was true and what was not true. He knows that such readers are gullible and credulous enough to accept the authorized versions of reality represented by inaccurate texts. On the other hand, Orwell also knows that there are readers who do know the difference between the authorized version and reality. He knows that these people are

often silenced when they oppose the denial or the twisting of reality. After all, Orwell saw that in Spain those who challenged the authorized version of an experience were considered to be politically unorthodox, and politically dangerous, and were often jailed without charge, or murdered. Moreover, he would soon know about the Moscow trials where people who were in a position to question authority confessed to sins of political wrong-doing that they had not committed, after they were tortured, and before they were executed.

Orwell's warnings serve to renounce the power of the text to duplicate reality because neither he nor his readers could be absolutely sure of the authenticity of his text. For Orwell to assume this power, moreover, would be to implicate himself in what he considered the corruption, the "racket" of war-time journalism. To avoid contamination by association, Orwell not only warns the reader of the corruption in his own text. He also exposes and denounces the corruption of the truth in news accounts through the structure of his text.

Orwell structures his text on two levels. The first level is comprised of the narrative, where we see the politically naive Orwell learning through his experience. Here we have the "lower-upper-middle-class" Orwell who is the original English boy-scout in his enthusiasm to seek out the action of the war, and who is let down when he finds there is little action to be had. Here we also have Orwell the condescending, middle-class tourist complaining to the folks back home about the lack of military efficiency, basic equipment, and creature comforts. The

first level of the text represents Orwell's superficial experience of the war, an experience which is *au courant*: as another writing-tourist, Simone Weil says, it was ". . . in fashion to go on a tour down there, to take in a spot of revolution, and to come back with articles bursting out of your pen" (*Spanish Front: Writers On The Civil War*, xxx). At this level of his text Orwell is almost a character in his own narrative, a character who is ignorant of and uninterested in politics, a character strategically created by Orwell to persuade his readers that his partisanship is the result of unprejudiced experience.

But at the second, less superficial level of text another Orwell is revealed; here we have the political Orwell with his greater knowledge gained from experience. Here we have Orwell the socialist who presents a historical and political analysis of his experience of the war. And with this presentation of greater knowledge, Orwell almost becomes an omniscient narrator in the re-telling of his experiences. He interrupts or breaks into his more personal and naive narrative with his greater knowledge at least twice, once in the fifth chapter, and again in the eleventh chapter; these two chapters represent distinct breaks in the narrative pattern of the text as whole, but Orwell will often break into his narrative at other points within a chapter to analyze the events.

On this second level Orwell is able to expose and denounce the corruption of the truth in news accounts by revealing his individual discoveries and the process of how he acquired this

knowledge--a structure which counters the "Party Line". He does this first in Chapter Five to re-tell the story from a political rather than a personal point of view, from the time he arrived in January 1937. And he goes even further back in time to reveal how the War began in July of 1936. As well, Orwell gives both his text and the War itself a context by moving beyond the boundaries of Spain to examine the "rising tide of Fascism" in so-called democratic countries.

By revealing the political and historical genesis of the Civil War, and giving it a context, Orwell exposes issues important to understanding the War as a whole, and especially his argument for socialism. Here he reveals what he has learned through his experiences--through his disillusionments--and what he hopes can happen in England. He would like to see the same kind of egalitarian and cooperative efforts from English workers that he saw among the POUM, and was disgruntled not to see among the rest of Republican Spaniards.

But, rather than start with the worker, Orwell begins his context at the top, with the heads of government. He points out that Franco "was not strictly comparable with Hitler and Mussolini" because Franco's "rising was a military mutiny backed up by the aristocracy and the Church, and in the beginning, it was an attempt not so much to impose Fascism as to restore feudalism." Orwell goes on to say:

This means that Franco had against him not only the working class but also various sections of the liberal bourgeoisie--the very people who are the supporters of Fascism when it appears in a more modern form. More important than this was the fact that the Spanish working class did not, as we might conceivably do in England, resist

Franco in the name of 'democracy' and the *status quo*; their resistance was accompanied by--one might almost say it consisted of--a definite revolutionary outbreak. (*Homage to Catalonia*, 48)

Twice more Orwell makes the point that the Spanish working class was fighting for something more than the *status quo* and capitalist democracy so that he can distinguish the revolutionary Spanish working class from the complacent English working class. He repeats this point to bolster his argument against English Capitalism in favor of the Spanish Socialism he wanted to see in England. But Orwell misleads his readers when he connects Spanish democracy with a *status quo* because, in favoring Socialism against Capitalism, he neglects to mention that the Spaniards' democracy was still a fragile infant (only four years old at the time of his writing), and that after 300 years of feudal monarchy and ten years of a dictatorship under Primo de Rivera from 1923 to 1933, there had not been time to firmly establish a capitalist democracy and its concomitant *status quo*, which was certainly not the case in England. So even someone with as much intellectual integrity as Orwell is not above concealing certain facts to make his argument more persuasive. One of his most glaring inconsistencies occurs in this revelatory chapter when Orwell talks about the impossibility of making a "large-scale appeal for working-class aid abroad." He links the impossibility to the collusion between the Russian and Spanish governments to check the revolutionary aspect of the war, which was also part of his disillusionment.

At this point in Chapter Five, he has just described how every revolutionary tendency was checked to make the war as much

like an "ordinary" war as possible. These measures resulted in the loss of strategic opportunities when the improperly armed Anarchists could not take proper offensive action against the Fascists in certain areas of Spain. But, he says, the fact that the poorly armed Anarchists could not move against the Fascists was a small matter compared to the more important fact that the working classes of democratic countries would not assist their Spanish comrades once the conflict became "ordinary" rather than "revolutionary".

What was more important was that once the war had become narrowed down to a 'war for democracy' it became impossible to make any large-scale appeal for working-class aid abroad. If we face facts we must admit that the working class of the world has regarded the Spanish war with detachment. Tens of thousands of individuals came to fight but tens of millions behind them remained apathetic. During the first year of the war the entire British public is thought to have subscribed to various 'aid Spain' funds about a quarter of a million pounds--probably less than half of what they spend in a single week on going to the pictures. The way in which the working class in the democratic countries could really have helped her Spanish comrades was by industrial action--strikes and boycotts. No such thing ever happened. (*Homage to Catalonia*, 67-68)

Even though Orwell's need to solicit aid for those Spaniards fighting against Franco and his fascist forces is understandable, his solicitation is polemic based on flawed reasoning. He attributes the failure of workers in other countries to support the Spanish working class *not* to their own inabilities (such as natural divisiveness and groupings among humans that prevented them from being aware of the problems of workers in other countries) but to high-level governmental strategies, such as the policies of the Russian and Republican Spanish governments, that took the revolutionary edge off the war.

But Orwell did know that the failure of English workers to support Spanish workers had to do with more than governments suppressing the revolutionary aspect of the war. He had just written, the year before in *The Road to Wigan Pier*, a damning report on the appalling working conditions of the miners in the Northern England, a report on how they spend their money, whether it be earned or from the "dole", on junk food and entertainment to "escape" the dreariness of their lives. Given this, how can he then expect these same workers to be aware of or care enough about their fellow workers in Spain? Moreover, in his condemnation of the apathy of the English worker in aiding the Spanish worker, Orwell ignores the world-wide economic depression which would not allow many of those in the working class to contribute financially to their Spanish counterparts.

But Orwell's avoidance of important facts in this chapter of revelation, even though it leads to flawed reasoning, is not so much concealment to distort the truth but concealment to simplify the truth into a persuasive tool. He simplifies the truth so that his arguments for a revolutionary socialism against static capitalist democracy, and his arguments for aid to the Spanish anarchists, are more accessible to those non-partisan readers who are not interested in politics and history. He simplifies the truth to persuade those partisan readers--especially English Communists--to change their minds in favor of the socialist cause Orwell saw in Spain and would like to have seen in England.

Orwell does not, however, just promote a unified socialist cause. Out of his disillusionment--especially with the press--he

needs equally to expose and blame those who would splinter or suppress or destroy a united socialist cause through lies; this he does most clearly in Chapter Eleven. He knew that when lies are used to serve a group's need for political power, the group seeking power will fragment according to pockets of special interests. He also knew that the group which uses lies to gain power will expel the truth-tellers who see reality independently, and that for such a group neither reality nor common interest can be the source of the group's meaning or texts. He attempts to expose all this in Chapter Eleven which is a climax to the preceding narrative chapters.

Orwell explains that he must cut into his personal narrative with Chapter Eleven so that he can counter the lies of the press, and that he will use the authenticity of his own experiences to do so. He says, as he has said before and will say again,

It will never be possible to get a completely accurate and unbiased account of the Barcelona fighting, because the necessary records do not exist. Future historians will have nothing to go upon except a mass of accusations and party propaganda. I myself have little data beyond what I saw with my own eyes and what I have learned from other eye-witnesses whom I believe to be reliable. I can, however, contradict some of the more flagrant lies and help to get the affair into some kind of perspective. (*Homage to Catalonia*, 144)

In the above, Orwell presents his reader with a both an ethical appeal--an image of himself as sincere--and a guide for interpreting Chapter Eleven. First he lets the reader know that there are few reliable sources on the events in Barcelona. But then he assures the reader that, unlike other accounts, his material is reliable because it is based on what he and others actually saw in Barcelona, and that with these reliable data he

will counter the unreliable press material. With this in mind the reader is bound to accept that what follows will be both authentic and accurate, even though it is not the whole picture of the Barcelona events.

But it is more the chapter's structure as a whole that gives the chapter strong credibility. To organize his exposition for clarity, to give it cohesiveness, and to establish the grounds for his argument, Orwell uses the rhetorical principle of division in the first half of his chapter. Instead of chronological narrative, Orwell uses division to give Chapter Eleven the appearance of reason or logic so that he can more effectively refute the unreasonable or illogical polemic of the press. He divides the first half of the chapter into four numbered sections: the first division consists of an explanation of what happened in Barcelona; the second division attempts to clarify the after-effects of the fighting; the third division comprises the "why", the purpose of the outbreak, and the fourth division, which leads into the second half of the chapter, consists of Orwell's judgement of the events--what he calls the "rights and wrongs of the affair".

In clarifying the Barcelona situation, Orwell's rhetorical appeal is, in classical terms, to reason (logos) rather than to sentiment or ethics. Using classification as his appeal to reason, Orwell can appear to be unfolding the topic (topos)--the Barcelona situation--in a logical and rational manner.

But it is only in the third division of the chapter--after he has laid the groundwork for his refutation of the press and

classified the Barcelona situation in his own terms--that Orwell begins to attend to the misleading press accounts. Here he exposes the true motivation of the POUM in the part they played in the Barcelona riots, and then he reveals how the press, to suit their own ends, twisted the motivations of the POUM.

And to make sure that no one will misunderstand his intent in exposing the press, Orwell explains why he discusses the accusations against the POUM at such length, which takes us back to an earlier point: the disillusioned speaker has to work hard to demonstrate that he has not simply fallen victim to another set of illusions. When Orwell explains his lengthy discussion of the press accusations, he wards off possible criticism that he is deluded about the POUM while the Press sees the POUM clearly.

Orwell says that the accusations--"libels and press-campaigns", as he calls them--and the habits of mind they indicate, are capable of doing the most deadly damage to the anti-Fascist cause. The libelous accusations are capable of doing deadly damage because such lying, "press-smears", and "frame-ups", if they continue, will make the split between the Left-wing parties "irreconcilable. . . . The only hope", against an irreconcilable split, he says, "is to keep political controversy on a plane where exhaustive discussion is possible."

Between the Communists and those who stand or claim to stand to the Left of them there is a real difference. The Communists hold that Fascism can be beaten by an alliance with sections of the capitalist class (Popular Front); their opponents hold that this manoeuvre simply gives Fascism new breeding-grounds. The question has got to be settled; to make the wrong decision may be to land ourselves in for centuries of semi-slavery. But so long as no argument is produced except a scream of 'Trotsky-Fascist!' the discussion cannot even begin. (*Homage to Catalonia*, 170-71).

Orwell knew that the lies promulgated by the Communists on behalf of a united Popular Front were an attempt to silence dissident elements such as the POUM. The Communists wanted to silence the dissidents for two reasons: the dissidents had no desire to unite with either the Communists or with "sections of the capitalist class" in the Popular Front; and what is more, the dissidents believed that only a totally revolutionary restructuring of society would defeat Fascism. But Orwell realized that unless the various factions on the Left settled their differences through frank and rhetorically undistorted discussion--especially the Communists and the POUM--the Fascists could not be defeated.

Orwell clearly saw that in the political arena--especially in Spain--the use of deceitful and accusatory language could not only silence but could also "conquer and divide". Each convinced of its own cause, and some wanting power, the various factions on the Left used manipulative language to convince others that theirs was the better cause. Nonetheless, Orwell recognized that the use of lies and accusations by one faction would not convince a second faction that its cause was better. Rather, he saw that the use of lies and accusations encouraged silence more than discussion, and divisiveness more than unity. With this in mind, Orwell encouraged the use of a different kind of language in the political arena through his own exposition.

Instead of the evasive and accusatory language of political factionalism which bred silence and divisiveness, Orwell sought political unity through the use of clear and truthful language which he hoped would encourage argument and discussion. The use

of clear and truthful language to promote open political dialogue was to be a recurring theme, if not a preoccupation, in Orwell's future writings. Perhaps one of the most famous future examples of his preoccupation with clear and truthful language appears in his essay "Politics And The English Language" written nine years later, in 1946, after his fable *Animal Farm* and two years before his even more famous *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Almost a decade after the Spanish Civil War--with the occurrence of events such as Auschwitz and Hiroshima and Nagasaki--Orwell is even more concerned about language used not only to accuse and deceive, but also to defend what is indefensible. He says:

In our time, political speech and writing are largely the defence of the indefensible. Things like the continuance of British rule in India, the Russian purge and deportations, the dropping of the atom bombs on Japan, can indeed be defended, but only by arguments which are too brutal for most people to face, and which do not square with the professed aims of political parties. Thus political language has to consist largely of euphemism, question-begging and sheer cloudy vagueness. ("Politics And The English Language" 135)

At the end of this essay Orwell reminds his readers, as he does earlier in *Homage to Catalonia*, that he has been considering the use of language not for literary purposes but merely "as an instrument for expressing and not concealing or preventing thought".¹ Now, we return to that earlier work where, with his own exposition, Orwell tries to free the political factions from their narrow views and deceitful language.

Chapter Eleven, in *Homage to Catalonia*, is an attempt to liberate the arguments of the various Left-wing factions from the distorting captivity of their partisan aims so that the factions could discuss their aims rationally, rather than hurl lies and

accusations at one another. To promote such discussion, Orwell exposes the strategy of lies the Communist Press used to silence the POUM. And he not only exposes the lies, but also exposes how each lie contradicts the other, that is, the inconsistency of the lies. When Orwell detects such fallacies in the Communists' argument, he appeals to logic by making his own refutation, in contrast, seem very rational.

On the one hand, Orwell tells us, when the Communists defined the event in Barcelona as a *coup d'état* or a revolutionary outbreak, they made more of the event than actually occurred. But, on the other hand, the Communists circumscribed and minimized the cause of the event when they accused the "disloyal" Anarchists and "Trotskyists" (read POUM) of "stabbing the Spanish Government in the back". In either case--by puffing up the cause of the event in Barcelona or by limiting the cause--the Communists were out to make the POUM look bad. And when the Communists inflated the event into a *coup d'état*, they could then use over-blown and inflammatory terms such as "disloyal" and "traitorous" to describe those they accused of causing the event. But when the Communists conveniently overlooked the roles of the other factions, they could severely limit the cause of the event by placing the blame solely on the shoulders of the POUM and by using slogan-like epithets such as "Trotskyist". Yet, even though the Communists appeared to contradict themselves through the language they used to both enlarge and to reduce their definition of the event, they also used powerful deductive logic behind the contradictory language. Orwell not only points out

the apparent contradictions in the Communists' use of over-blown and limiting language, but he is also able to grasp the reasoning underlying the contradictions and to prove the Communists wrong.

Through relentless logic, in Chapter Eleven Orwell is able to prove that the Communists' arguments are not only wrong but also crude. Orwell attacks the crude deductions of the Communists with inductions, notably copious in detail. He attacks the deeply rooted major premise of the Communists' argument which is deliberately buried below the surface reasoning of the argument, and which is directly related to the foreign policy of the Soviet Union. And with his logic, Orwell also attacks the very lexicon of the Communists' argument through the rhetorical topic of definition. Orwell's relentless and complex logic is a direct contrast to the crude and simple reasoning of the Communists. He counters the Communists' lies with the facts of his personal experiences. With the absolute clarity of his discourse Orwell exposes the muddiness of the Communists' assertions: while Orwell lays bare the very foundations of his argument, the Communists, in contrast, conceal certain assumptions in their argument. When the Communists conceal their efforts to quash the revolutionary aspect of the war, they are well on the way to being dogmatic.

Underneath both their over-blown and reductive language, the Communists use a form of syllogistic reasoning to promote their argument about the events in Barcelona. They use truncated syllogistic reasoning--an enthymeme--which would look like this:

Minor Premise: The event in Barcelona was a revolutionary outbreak.

Conclusion: The event in Barcelona was traitorous.

What the Communists' suppress in their argument is the major premise--that revolutionary outbreaks are traitorous. Given that the Communist Party was born through revolution, the Party could hardly state openly that revolutionary outbreaks are traitorous. But even though the major premise is not openly stated in the argument, it is implied.

Orwell, like the POUM, disagreed with the Communists' major premise, that revolutionary outbreaks are traitorous, because he and the POUM believed that social change, such as eliminating capitalism and defeating Fascism, could not take place through the United Front, a movement that not only included capitalists but was not, in reality, united. Social change could only take place through a united revolutionary movement that brought the workers control of their work and equal footing with other classes. On the other hand, the Communists thought that potential allies against Fascism, such as France and Britain, would be alienated if they saw continuing revolution in Spain--especially after the Soviet Union became involved in the War.

Furthermore, Russian Communists under Stalin, who had already carried out their own revolution, wanted to consolidate the gains they had made rather than fomenting further revolution in other countries. So the Communists, betraying their own first principles, made sure that any continuing revolutionary efforts in Spain were seen as traitorous to the cause against Fascism: hence the Communists' major premise--that revolutionary outbreaks are traitorous--in their arguments about the event in Barcelona.

Orwell was not just disillusioned with the Communists' dogmatic and anti-revolutionary stand, he was more disillusioned to discover the factionalism among those who dissented with the Communists and the Capitalists, in what should have been a united effort against the Fascists. As a result of his disillusionment with their dogmatic stance, Orwell attempts both to expose the Communists' strategy of lying and to free the dissidents from their own distorted partisanship so that they could unite to discuss their aims in a clear and truthful manner.

Orwell is so successful in disputing the Communists' major premise--that revolutionary outbreaks are traitorous--because he works back from the Communists' minor premise--that the event was a revolutionary outbreak--and the conclusion--that the event was traitorous--to prove the minor premise and the conclusion false. Orwell uses the specifics of inductive reasoning in his disputation, which entails numerous details, to counter the generalities of the deductive reasoning in the Communists' argument. The Communists work from the general to the specific in their argument; to counter this, Orwell works from the details of his specific experiences in Barcelona back to the generalities of the minor premise and conclusion of the Communists' argument.

First Orwell explains the Barcelona event could not be defined in such puffed-up terms as a *coup d'état*, or a revolutionary out-break, as the Communist Press defined the event. Then he explains that the Barcelona event was not caused solely by any one group, such as the POUM, as the Communists Press would have us believe in their constraining accounts of the

event. Orwell attacks the Communists' simplistic interpretation of the events through his own more complex interpretation. He tells us that along with the POUM, the Anarchists and other factions were also involved in the events. To counter the Communists' assertion that the event was a revolutionary uprising caused solely by the POUM, Orwell not only reveals that the Communists themselves played a part in the events, but he also reveals that the part the Communists played was dictated by the foreign policy of Russia, a policy that could not allow the dissident POUM and the revolutionary Anarchists to be armed. Consequently, the POUM and the Anarchists were fighting not to overthrow the Republican Government but just to keep their arms.

In revealing the complex motives of the factions, Orwell tells us that even though the members of the Anarchist Trade Union Party, the workers, came out into the streets, the official and more conservative leaders of the party "disowned the whole affair" from the beginning for three reasons: they did not want to antagonize the Catalan provincial government because they had representation there; they wanted to form an alliance with the Socialist Trade Union Party and the fighting would have further split the two groups; lastly, they quite rightly feared foreign intervention.

The leaders of the POUM, in contrast to the Anarchist leaders, encouraged their followers to stay at the barricades in Barcelona. "But," Orwell says, "in reality the attitude of the POUM leaders was hesitating."

The leaders of the POUM were not in favour of insurrection until the war against Franco was won; on the other hand, the

workers had come into the streets, and the POUM leaders took the rather pedantic Marxist line that when the workers are on the streets it is the duty of the revolutionary parties to be with them. Hence, in spite of uttering revolutionary slogans about the 'reawakening of the spirit of 19 July' [recalling the day the War began in 1936], and so forth, they did their best to limit the workers' action to the defensive. (*Homage to Catalonia*, 148)

By seeming to approve the uprising by encouraging their followers to stay at the barricades, Orwell says, the POUM leaders made it easy for the Communist press to say that they were fighting a kind of insurrection instigated only by the POUM. But Orwell is certain that the Communist press would have said this in any event, and that it "was nothing compared with the accusations that were made both before and afterwards on less evidence" (*Homage to Catalonia*, 149).

In spite of the accusations of the Communist press, Orwell tells us that what occurred in Barcelona was not an insurrection on the part of the POUM, but, rather, what occurred was a "riot", because "there was no real revolutionary intention anywhere," and the people behind the barricades, ordinary workers, were attempting "not to overthrow the government but to resist what they regarded, rightly or wrongly, as an attack by the police" (p. 149). Furthermore, he says, "Their action was essentially defensive, and I doubt whether it should be described, as it was in nearly all the foreign newspapers, as a 'rising'" (*Homage to Catalonia*, 149).

Orwell says that the foreign anti-Fascist press made more of the events in Barcelona than actually occurred, that what was a "riot" was portrayed by the press as an insurrection by disloyal Anarchists and Trotskyists who were "stabbing the Spanish

Government in the back." But the issue was not quite so simple as the press made it, Orwell says, and he explains that there were complexities not considered by the foreign press, especially the foreign Communist Press.

The complexities arise from the fact that, as part of their foreign policy, the Russian Government did not want continuing revolution in Spain, and, even though it was not spoken aloud, this became the major premise of their argument about the events in Barcelona. Because the Russians were the major supplier of arms, they were able to coerce the Spanish Government into ordering the Anarchists to surrender their arms.

The English press conveniently ignored the cause of the order. The press interpreted the order to surrender arms to mean that the Anarchists were being disloyal in holding back arms desperately needed on the Aragon front. But the press' interpretation of the Government's order to surrender arms, according to Orwell, not only ignores the cause of the order, but also ignores actual conditions in Spain. The press ignored the fact that both the Anarchists and the Catalan Communist Party were hoarding arms, and the fact that Communist Party members would retain their arms even if the Anarchists surrendered theirs. The press also did not reveal that the arms were retained by the Anarchists not out of disloyalty to the Government but as a defense against 'non-political' police forces in the rear who wanted to suppress the revolutionary activists. Nor did the press reveal that underneath all of this were the "irreconcilable differences" between the Communists and the

Anarchists, differences which were bound to lead to a struggle.

But Orwell exposes the struggle:

Since the beginning of the war the Spanish Communist Party had grown enormously in numbers and captured most of the political power, and there had come into Spain thousands of foreign Communists, many of whom were openly expressing their intention of 'liquidating' Anarchism as soon as the war against Franco was won. In the circumstances one could hardly expect the Anarchists to hand over the weapons which they had got possession of in the summer of 1936. (*Homage to Catalonia*, 152)

Given the history of this internecine conflict, Orwell says that the first event of the riot, the seizure of the Barcelona Telephone Exchange by the civil police from the hands of the anarchists, was "simply the match that fired an already existing bomb" (*Homage to Catalonia*, 152). The "already existing bomb," the situation in Barcelona, however, was not just a simple binary opposition, nor a spontaneous and treacherous "uprising" as the press made it out to be. Rather, the Barcelona situation was an element in a long-standing paradigm of both concealed and open forces, among them international aims of a foreign government--the Government of the Soviet Union. And Orwell's exposé of the situation in Barcelona is an attack on the Communists' dogmatic policy of non-revolution, a policy which, although unspoken, is the major premise of the Communists' argument about the events in Barcelona.

After he exposes the complexities of the events in Barcelona to counter the simplified press accounts, Orwell returns to the subject of press bias to say that the reason a "one-sided version has been accepted is simply that the Spanish revolutionary parties have no footing in the foreign press," especially in the

English press where one would have to search a long time before finding any favorable reference to the Spanish Anarchists. The Communist Press outside of Spain, particularly in England, was guided by the foreign policy of the Soviet Union, and so argued against revolution in Spain. The idea of revolution, moreover, to the non-Communist English Press was unspeakable: revolution in Spain would mean the end of the large English investments in Spanish companies, and revolution would further shake an unstable Republican Government which could lead to anarchy.

Orwell's discussion of the press bias against the Spanish revolutionary parties leads us into the fourth and final division in Chapter Eleven, to the "rights and wrongs of the affair," as Orwell calls it, and to the second half of his account where Orwell refutes line by line as many as ten specific quotations from the (mostly English) press. He makes this lengthy effort to refute the Communist press in the second half of this chapter because, he says, the Communist account of the events in Barcelona was published world-wide and was probably the most widely accepted version--a version that is completely different from Orwell's account, which is, at least, based on the authenticity of his experiences of the riots. The Communist press, as Orwell has informed us, not only blamed the Barcelona riots on the Anarchists, but also blamed the POUM, calling the riot a "Fascist rising engineered by the POUM". The accounts of the raid on the Telephone Exchange, the raid which precipitated the fighting, are completely different from one another. Orwell presents a summary of all the different versions to demonstrate

just how contradictory and manipulative, and tactical rather than informative, they are.

The occupation of the Telephone Exchange by 50 POUM members is what one might call a picturesque circumstance, and one would have expected somebody to notice it at the time. Yet it appears that it was discovered only three or four weeks later. In another issue of the *Imprecor* [a Spanish Communist newspaper] the 50 POUM members become 50 POUM militiamen. It would be difficult to pack together more contradictions than are contained in these few short passages. At one moment the CNT [the Anarchists] are attacking the Telephone Exchange, the next they are being attacked there; a leaflet appears before the seizure of the Telephone Exchange and is the cause of it, or, alternatively, appears afterwards and is the result of it; the people in the Telephone Exchange are alternatively CNT members and POUM members--and so on. (pp. 157-8)

Orwell says he has taken only the reports of one incident for reasons of space but that the same discrepancies run all through the accounts of the Communist press, and some statements are out-and-out lies.

Finally Orwell shows us just how the Communist press, in its desire to suppress dissident tendencies, targets the POUM with their accusation that the POUM is "Trotskyist", and therefore Fascist, an accusation which Orwell believes is doing the most damage to the anti-Fascist cause. By narrowing the focus of his argument finally to one word, and to counter the "press-smears," Orwell demonstrates how one word alone can be used both indiscriminately and, often, misleadingly. He refutes the press accusation that the POUM is Trotskyist-Fascist, by presenting three distinct definitions of the word Trotskyist:

- (i) One who, like Trotsky, advocates 'world revolution' as against 'Socialism in a single country.' More loosely, a revolutionary extremist.
- (ii) A member of the actual organization of which Trotsky is a head.
- (iii) A disguised Fascist posing as a revolutionary who acts

especially by sabotage in the U.S.S.R., but, in general, by splitting and undermining the Left-wing forces. (p. 169)

When Orwell focuses in on one word, he gives us a glimpse of his obsession with unequivocal utterance. But the focus on one word is more than just Orwell's obsession with unambiguous language. He uses his definitions to specifically focus the topic of the events in Barcelona on the accusations the Communists made against the POUM and the role the POUM played in the riots. And then he uses his definitions to counter the accusations.

Orwell uses the specifics of each definition to show us how the definition either does or does not fit the actual facts concerning the POUM. He uses his definitions to show us how the Communists lie when they define the POUM first as Trotskyist, i.e., as "advocates of world revolution", and then as as Fascist, because the POUM are "splitting and undermining Left-wing forces" which in turn is traitorous. The POUM could probably be described as Trotskyist in the first sense, Orwell says, that is, as advocates of 'world revolution', as he would define them. But the POUM could not be described as Trotskyist in the second or third sense, as the Communists define them, that is, as members of an organization headed by Trotsky, or as Fascists in disguise "posing" as revolutionaries who act "especially by sabotage in the U.S.S.R., but, in general, by splitting and undermining the Left-wing forces."

To expose lies in the Communists' definition, Orwell explains that the POUM was in no way connected with Trotsky as the Communists assert. He reveals that Trotsky himself ordered his followers, a small number of whom had come to Spain before

the war to work for POUM, to attack POUM policy, after which the Trotskyists were purged from POUM. Andrés Nin, the leader of the POUM, had at one time been secretary to Trotsky, but, as Orwell explains, Nin had left Trotsky to form the dissident POUM through an amalgamation of Left-wing groups opposed to the Communist Party. Orwell says that "Nin's one-time association with Trotsky has been used in the Communist press to show that POUM was really Trotskyist" (p. 169). But the Communists did not just use lies in their attempts to suppress and silence the dissident POUM: Nin, as leader of the POUM, was enough feared by the Communists in Russia to be murdered by an agent of their secret police who came to Spain to commit the act in 1937.

Orwell also uses his definitions to further refute the Communists' accusation that the POUM was not just Trotskyist but also Fascist: he says that the POUM was not Trotskyist in the second sense (a member of an organization headed by Trotsky) which is the only "exactly defined sense of the word," and that "it is important to make this distinction because the majority of Communists take it for granted that "a Trotskyist in sense (ii) is invariably a Trotskyist in sense (iii))"

-i.e. that the whole Trotskyist organization is simply a Fascist spying-machine. 'Trotskyism' only came into public notice in the time of the Russian sabotage trials, and to call a man a Trotskyist is practically equivalent to calling him a murderer, agent provocateur, etc. But at the same time anyone who criticizes Communist policy from a Left-wing standpoint is liable to be denounced as a Trotskyist. Is it then asserted that everyone professing revolutionary extremism is in Fascist pay? (p. 170)

Orwell answers his rhetorical question by saying that whether one professing revolutionary extremism is or is not accused of being

in Fascist pay depends entirely upon the strength of the libel laws of the country. In Spain he saw the Spanish Communist Press make such accusations, but the Communist Press in England, after "several sharp lessons", came to dread the law of libel, and therefore no longer made such accusations. So, the Communists, in their attempt at suppression, could accuse dissidents of being Trotskyist-Facist only in countries where such lies were legally sanctioned.²

In concluding his eleventh chapter, Orwell again touches the source of his disillusionment--the factionalism as indicated by the press distortions--when he advises the warring factions on the Left to stop their smear campaigns, which will lead to an irreparable breach if continued. As a solution, he suggests, perhaps naively but in good faith, that the Communists and the other Left-wing parties settle their differences through discussion. That is, Orwell suggests that the Left-wing factions find some common ground through frank and rhetorically undistorted discussion. And when he predicts the outcome if Left-wing parties do not settle their differences, Orwell is not naive but prescient. He says that the Left-wing factionalism could lead to a Fascist victory and "semi-slavery" possibly under a totalitarian dictatorship.

Because we know from his writings following *Homage to Catalonia* that Orwell's concern about the distortion or suppression of the truth was on-going, we can assume that his expressed horror, his disillusionment, was real. But some of his other disillusionments did not affect him so deeply; rather, they

are created to add specific rhetorical elements to his narration about the actual fighting--of which he saw very little. Such disillusionments are created by Orwell as appeals to ethos and pathos. They allow Orwell to seem uninformed and non-partisan. These disenchantments balance Orwell's appeal to reason (logos) created through his presentation of the omniscient narrator--Orwell the socialist--who presents the extensive political analyses, which come out of deeply-felt political disillusionments. The more personal disillusionments balance what might otherwise be dry political and historical analyses, and hard-going for the reader. These disillusionments take place on the first level of Orwell's text, the level which represents Orwell's superficial experience of the war, and which represents the middle-class, politically naive character, learning through his experiences. By creating the naive character, Orwell can appear to be politically uncommitted and thus appeal to the sentiment of those readers who also have no commitment to politics. At the same time, he can demonstrate to those readers who are suspicious of partisan writers that he is not partisan, not predisposed to one side or the other, and to these readers, Orwell's appeal is ethical.

Orwell's more minor disillusionments begin when he arrives at the front. Being ignorant of the actual topography, he was disillusioned to discover that such landscape would not permit the kind of active and dangerous fighting he had hoped for. And he was dismayed to discover that the POUM militiamen and the Anarchists were not as militarily efficient or as competent as

British fighting forces. Here Orwell appeals to his readers both ethically and sentimentally: not only does he present the middle-class, politically naive character, but he also presents a character who is assertively masculine in his desire for some action on the front, and a character who has some knowledge and experience of efficient military tactics. But instead of action and military efficiency, Orwell found that being on the front was tedious, lacking in necessary basic equipment and creature comforts. The tedium came from the fact that the mountainous terrain, the great distances between the POUM militia and the Facists, didn't permit hand-to-hand combat or major offensive battles. These, then, are some of Orwell's minor disillusionments, which form the content of the narrative sections of his text.

And even though Orwell tells his readers to skip the expository sections of his text if they are not interested in history or politics, it is the revelatory exposition of Chapters Five and Eleven, rather than the narrative--the minor disillusionments--that not only reveals his more profoundly felt disillusionment, but also reveals his argument for socialism. But Orwell is also using the strategy of persuasion when he advises his readers to ignore the expository sections of his text. When he says: "If you are not interested in the horror of party politics, please skip; I am trying to keep the political parts of this narrative in separate chapters for precisely that purpose", he is appealing both to his partisan and non-partisan readers (p. 46). Just before he asks his readers to skip the

"party politics" he says, "At the beginning I had ignored the political side of the war, and it was only about this time that it began to force itself upon my attention" (*Homage to Catalonia*, p. 46). With this statement he appeals to those of his readers who are non-partisan by identifying with them through his lack of political knowledge. At the same time, he appeals to those partisan readers who might be suspicious of a particular bias: Orwell lets them know that his exposition will not reveal a bias, but, rather, what he has learned through actual experience. Still, Orwell's exposition is biased, as we come to find out, because his exposition acts as counter-text to the bias of the distorted texts which so horrify, disillusion and anger him.

* * * * *

To sum up then, we can say that through his experiences Orwell rejects his earlier idea that the Spanish Civil War was simply a war against Fascism. Furthermore, once Orwell leaves the isolation of the front to return to Barcelona, he not only abandons his conception that all of Spain was socialistic in the sense that the POUM were socialistic, but when he begins to read the press accounts of the Barcelona riots he also abandons any illusions he has that the truth would be told about the role of the Anarchists and the dissident POUM and their desire for revolution. Moreover, when he saw the misleading accounts, Orwell also had to reject his idealistic illusion that the press on the Left, which represented various political factions, would altruistically unite to challenge the crusade of the Right-wing

press.

In his disillusionment, Orwell is compelled to warn the reader of the power of the text, how the text can stand in for experience, and sometimes distort or reject the actual meaning of the experience. In warning the reader, Orwell rejects such power and removes himself from possible contamination by a corrupt press. But, at the same time, Orwell is compelled to refute the lies about the dissident POUM. To counter the strategy of lies used to silence the dissidents, he promotes the idea of further discussion. And he does successfully refute the vagueness of the lies through the specifics of his exposition which, through its organization, strongly appeals to the reader's sense of reason.

CHAPTER TWO

**Historical And Social Contexts for Orwell and Koestler's Journey
to Spain**

The whole process of political commitment, disillusionment, and reaffirmation was shorter for Orwell than for Koestler. For Orwell the process occurred over a period of about eight months--from December 1936 to June 1937; whereas for Koestler the process took from 1931 to 1938--seven years. Orwell became committed to Socialism during the months he spent with the POUM militiamen at the Front. While on leave from the Front in Barcelona, and during the riots there in May 1937, Orwell became disillusioned with the political in-fighting of the Left, and with the tactics the Communists used to eliminate dissidents. However, when he had returned to England and had time to reassess his experiences in Spain, Orwell reaffirmed his belief in Socialism. And once he had done so, he maintained that belief until his death in 1950.

Rather than experience commitment, disillusionment and reaffirmation in succession, as Orwell did, Koestler went through a series of disillusionments, and his first disillusionment came very soon after he had committed himself to the Communist Party. Furthermore, from the time he adopted Communism until he rejected his faith in it, Koestler vacillated between commitment and disillusionment, hanging on to his faith like a lover unwilling to give up a soured love affair.

Koestler became disillusioned with the Communist Party

shortly after he had affiliated himself to the Party when Hitler rose to power in Berlin in 1931. And from that point on, Koestler was in a state of constant vacillation, except during the early months of the Spanish Civil War and the formation of the Common Front, both occasions momentarily causing him to feel reaffirmed in his belief that Communism could defeat Fascism. But in spite of his constant vacillation, Koester clung to his political ideals and took a long time to abandon them--seven years, in fact--and when he finally did abandon them, he did so for good.

When Koestler adopted Communism in 1931, during Hitler's rise to power in Berlin, Orwell was "down and out" in London and Paris--choosing periodically to live among the destitute. At this time Orwell had not yet embraced any specific political ideology. His anti-authoritarian, anti-imperialistic attitudes, gained during his five-year stint as an imperial policeman in Burma (1922-27), "took a 'Tory anarchist' form rather than anything specifically or even latently socialist", as Bernard Crick says in his biography of Orwell (*George Orwell: A Life*, 211). It wasn't until the early 1930's that Orwell began to investigate basic Socialist tenets, and although he had adopted Socialism theoretically, Orwell did not become a confirmed Socialist until he experienced the Socialism practised by the POUM militia during the Spanish Civil War in 1936.

Koestler tells us in his autobiography that he joined the German Communist Party in Berlin as "the only apparent alternative to Nazi rule." His commitment to Communism was more

than just a political affiliation, as was Orwell's commitment to Socialism, and both became attached to their respective political doctrines out of a sense of middle-class guilt. But Koestler's commitment had a spiritual dimension, a metaphysical dimension, that was absent in Orwell's case. The spiritual dimension for Koestler came through his predisposition to search for the infinite, for the "arrow in the blue", as he calls it, a search which the more pragmatic Orwell would have rejected. But more must be said about what motivated each of them to become politically involved in the first place.

When Hitler came to power in 1931, Koestler felt he had no choice but to join the German Communist Party because he felt betrayed by the Socialists and the Liberals when they, each in their own way, contributed to Hitler's power. Koestler felt particularly betrayed by his employers, who were Liberals. He had simultaneously been employed as science and foreign affairs editor for two Berlin newspapers in the Ullstein group. The Ullstein chain of newspapers was one of the largest in Western Europe, and the owners of the chain of papers were Liberal Jews who expediently became pro-Nazi as Hitler's power grew. As a result, those employees of the Ullstein group who were Jews or Communists or both became a liability to the Ullsteins. Koestler, who was both a Jew and a Communist, was fired from his job with Ullstein in 1932. So when Liberals such as the Ullsteins betrayed their own cause, and when the German Socialists competed with the Communists for power instead of joining with them to fight the Nazis, Koestler felt that he had

no choice but to become a member of the German Communist Party to combat the Nazis.

The Ullsteins are a good example of what Orwell talked about when he compared Spain with more modern countries and characterized the "liberal bourgeoisie" of those countries as being "the very people who are the supporters of Fascism when it appears in a more modern form" (*Homage to Catalonia*, 13). Many Liberals, such as the Ullsteins, capitulated to Fascism in Germany, abandoning their principles and values. But there was no hope for the German Socialists either. Koestler says that the record of the Socialists for the preceding quarter-century was one of "unprincipled opportunism and spineless compromise". Koestler recalls that two years before World War I the Socialists had promised to make it impossible for their government to go to war, but two years later, in 1914, they "enthusiastically supported Kaiser Wilhelm's war of conquest" (*Arrow in the Blue*, 295). Talking about the German Socialists' betrayal that led to the rise of Fascism, Koestler goes on to say,

In the 1932 presidential elections, their candidate was doddering old Field Marshall Hindenburg, the Petain of Germany. They got him elected, and six months later he called Adolf Hitler into power. . . . Their only firm and uncompromising stand was taken against the Communists. It was inspired not so much by questions of principle as by jealousy of the rival who had dared to challenge the Socialist monopoly in representing the working class. (*Arrow in the Blue*, 295).

So for Koestler, and other "progressive intellectuals" in Germany, the *only* political alternative to the Nazis was Communism, because the remaining two political options, Liberalism and Socialism, once available to those intellectuals,

were no longer available.

The issue of no choice but Communism certainly was not an issue for Orwell in England. While Germany was politically volatile during the first unsettled years of the 1930's, England remained politically stable at that time, and even more so through the years of World War II. Because of England's political maturity and stability, neither Liberals nor Socialists ever had the opportunity, on a large scale, to abandon their principles and values to Facism. Nor was anyone overtly persecuted because of his or her political affiliation. And Socialism in England was obviously not the same as Socialism in Germany: English Socialists did not betray their principles to Fascism, so "progressive intellectuals" in England, like Orwell, could and did choose to affiliate with Socialism. Therefore, unlike Orwell, Koestler didn't have to identify sympathetically and imaginatively with the oppressed--he was himself oppressed and endangered. Koestler, unlike Orwell, didn't have to "go down and out" to obtain a more literal experience of oppression. Orwell deliberately searched for the literal experience of oppression--he chose to live among the poor from time to time, and he chose, on commission, to tour and live among the unemployed miners of Northern England to gather material for *The Road to Wigan Pier*. In contrast to Orwell, Koestler had to face real oppression, and, in reaction to the oppression, Koestler's strategy was to join the German Communist Party.

Koestler's new commitment to the Communist Party was not in any way frivolous: after he was fired from his job as editor for

the Ullsteins in 1931, Koestler was committed enough to the Communist Party to travel in the Soviet Union from 1932 to 1933 under the sponsorship of Russia's Agitprop Comintern, which commissioned him to write a book on the first Five-year Plan. Koestler completed his book in 1934, but it was rejected by Soviet censors. So Koestler too, like Orwell, was silenced by authority. But in the case of his book on the first Five-Year Plan, Koestler was silenced by authorities with whom he supposedly agreed politically. He was learning that his ideology required of him self-censorship and self-rule, whereas Orwell was usually censored by authorities who disagreed with his politics as he expressed them in *Homage to Catalonia*, and his articles against Communist propaganda in Spain. When Koestler finished his travels in the Soviet Union, he knew that he would suffer more than the censorship of his texts if he returned to Germany so he fled to Paris, which had become the center for anti-Nazi exiles, and where he eked out a living. Orwell, on the other hand, did not have to flee from England because of religious or political persecution. In England Orwell could choose to recreate and imitate poverty for himself. Unlike Koestler in Germany, and later in France, Orwell in England could choose the means to earn a living or not. Koestler's texts came directly out of his experiences of oppression and persecution, after his disillusionment, but Orwell had to create the experience of oppression before recreating the experience into text.

And Orwell was aware of this difference in experience between English writers like himself and European writers like

Koestler. When Orwell returned to England from Spain in 1937 he found that, on the whole, the intellectual writers on the left (usually members of the Communist Party) were lying about or were ignorant of the betrayal of the workers' revolution by the Communist Party in Spain. They either knew the truth and chose to lie believing that they were helping the fight against Facism, or they were ignorant of the truth and refused to believe the truth when confronted with it. Orwell thought that the English writers distorted the truth or simply refused to believe the truth because their real political experience was narrow: they simply couldn't imagine themselves as victims of totalitarianism.

And Orwell still believed this seven years later in 1944 when he reviewed Koestler's writings. In England, Orwell felt the lack of the kind of political writing he defines as a "special class of literature that has arisen out of the European political struggle since the rise of Fascism" ("Arthur Koestler", in *Collected Essays, Journalism of George Orwell, Vol 3*, 271). In his article on Koestler, Orwell goes on to say that the writers of the European political struggle against Fascism are "all alike . . . in trying to write contemporary history, but *unofficial history*, the kind that is ignored in the text books and lied about in newspapers" (*CEJOGO, Vol. 3*, 271). The writers of this "special class of literature", Orwell says, are also alike in being continental Europeans, and in having been or being able to think of themselves being victims of totalitarianism. Orwell points out that the middle-class European writer has had things happen to him that would never happen to working-class

Englishmen. He is talking about the fact that European writers have had to "break the law" to be political; i.e., some have "thrown bombs, fought in street battles, many have been in concentration camps, fled across frontiers with false name and forged passports" ("Arthur Koestler", 272). Koestler, of course, is one of these writers.

And Koestler, a victim of totalitarianism in Fascist form, chose action over contemplation, politics over art. He loaned his art to the Communist Party where he worked for the anti-Fascist movement by writing propaganda pamphlets and the first of his Spanish Civil War texts, *L'Espagne Ensanglantée* for the Comintern in Paris. Yet, at the same time, the process of Koestler's disillusionment began almost as soon as he had committed himself to the Communist Party. During the time that Koestler was living in Paris and working for Comintern there, he began to write *The Gladiators*, a novel that covertly expresses his doubts about the end justifying the means--a policy that had become an active part of the Communist Party's doctrine. Koestler took four years to write *The Gladiators* because of lack of money and because he was, as he so mildly states, "under pressure of political events". He finished this book during the months before and after his break with the Communist Party, and he says that the writing of it filled him "with peace and relief". The writing of it became an "occupational therapy":

It gave me a sense of continuity which tided me over that period of outer loneliness and inner emptiness. Before the break, I had thought of myself as a servant of the Cause, and of writing as a means of serving it. Now I began to regard myself as a professional writer, and writing as a purpose in itself. (*The Invisible Writing*, 478)

Writing to serve the Cause, Koestler says he was the Pavlovian "barking dog", reacting neurotically by censoring and controlling himself. But when he doubted the Cause, and finally broke from it, he began to write only for the sake of writing, without the control of self-censorship. Koestler, in other words, stopped producing one form of "political", commissioned text--propaganda, which is "publicity" and has a short-term effect--to produce another form of "political", non-commissioned text--art, which is creative and personal, and has a long-term and universal effect.

Still, Koestler's doubts had begun even earlier than his first expression of them in the writing of *The Gladiators* in 1934. His disillusionment began in 1932, shortly after his commitment to Communism, during his travels in the Soviet Union when "by a strange hazard," he says he "stumbled upon the first great show trial in Central Asia--a foretaste of things to come" (*The Invisible Writing*, 148). This "show trial", along with the others held later in Moscow, was also a form of propaganda, of "publicity", that required censorship of the self, a censorship that usually required the accused to admit to deeds he or she had not committed. In turn, this false admission usually led to the ultimate form of censorship--to the silencing of words and texts through the silencing, the murder, of speaker and writer.

Koestler says the "first great show trial" took place in Ashkabad, which is located in the Republic of Turkmanistan. Koestler, who had been invited as a visiting dignitary to sit with the judges, recalls that the defendants "wore expressions of complete indifference and apathy".

So did the spectators behind the guards. In fact, the expressions of the spectators were the same as those of the accused. I must have vaguely felt, even then, that they were all one--the defeated victims, the people down there before us; and that we who faced them from the raised platform were their conquerors and rulers. Not the representatives of the Workers' State and the People's Court; but simply the rulers. They did not hate us. They were too apathetic and resigned even for that. How much of this did I consciously understand at the time? I am unable to decide; but I do vividly remember feeling, while I sat exposed on that raised platform, that not the accused but I was being pilloried. (*The Invisible Writing*, 148)

At this trial the apathetic victims of Koestler's chosen ideology--the accused and the spectators alike--were being taught self-censorship: even "hate" as form of free expression had been eliminated through apathy and resignation.

Koestler goes on to say that while he was on the platform with the judges he felt that he was on the wrong side, that he should have been with the accused rather than with the judges:

It gave me the same guilty feeling that I had experienced towards . . . the common people who had no access to privileged co-operative stores, no priorities for food, housing, clothing and living. They were the powerless and I was on the side of Power, and so it went wherever I turned in Russia. A revolutionary can identify himself with Power, a rebel cannot; but I was a rebel, not a revolutionary. (*The Invisible Writing*, 148)

So Koestler realized early on that the road to revolution, at least the Russian Revolution, led not to better conditions for the oppressed but to power for further oppressing the oppressed. And because he was not seeking power when he committed himself to Communism but rather the infinite, the "arrow in the blue", Koestler became disillusioned when he found that those in power sought only to maintain their power, and did so mainly by oppression. And he, who had been persecuted by Nazi sympathizers and who had joined the Communist Party to fight such persecution,

now felt guilty because he found that the Party was committing similar acts of persecution instead of fighting against such acts.

Orwell also had become politicized because he had felt guilt when he witnessed the persecution, the brutalization of the natives of Burma by the Imperial British police of which he was a member. When Orwell returned to England he did not immediately adopt a particular political ideology, but rather he chose to go "down and out" among the working class and the destitute to expiate his guilt. Orwell says:

When I came home on leave in 1927 I was already half determined to throw up my job [with the Imperial Burmese Police], and one sniff of English air decided me. I was not going back to be a part of that evil despotism. But I wanted much more than merely to escape from my job. For five years I had been part of an oppressive system, and it had left me with a bad conscience. . . . I was conscious of an immense weight of guilt that I had got to expiate. . . . I felt that I had got to escape not merely from imperialism but from every form of man's domination over man. I wanted to submerge myself, to get right down among the oppressed, to be one of them and on their side against their tyrants. . . . At that time failure seemed to me to be the only virtue. Every suspicion of self-advancement, even to 'succeed' in life to the extent of making a few hundred a year, seemed to me spiritually ugly, a species of bullying. (*The Road to Wigan Pier*, 129-30)

Both Orwell and Koestler experienced being on the level of oppressors, Orwell as an Imperial Policeman in Burma, Koestler as a minor Communist Party official. And both felt guilty for being part of an oppressive regime. But here the similarities between the two men end: unlike Koestler, Orwell never felt constrained to join one political party because another was persecuting him. Nor did Orwell ever find himself in Koestler's position of practising self-censorship because his chosen ideology

oppressively demanded it.

But in spite of the oppression Koestler felt, and in spite of his being of two minds, and whether or not he was a revolutionary or a rebel, he determinedly hung on to his faith and remained an active member of the Communist Party for seven years. And, in fact, it was the formation and strength of the Popular Front against Fascism, especially in Spain, that lured doubters of the faith, like Koestler, firmly back to the Communist fold--for a while. The formation of the Popular Front in Spain as a reaction to the insurgence of Fascism was, in a way, a replica of the situation in Germany, a situation which had caused Koestler, and others like him, to join the Communist Party in the first place. Once again Fascism was on the rise, and if Fascism could not be defeated in Germany perhaps it could be defeated in Spain--through the Popular Front. In short, the rise of Fascism in Spain and the formation of the Popular Front was another "call to arms" to those fighting Fascism in Continental Europe.

But instead of defeating Fascism, the Popular Front became a tool of Soviet foreign policy: the Popular Front became an instrument of suppression. The Communists used the Popular Front to suppress their political enemies--anti-Stalinists, revolutionaries, those who were against the Popular Front itself--accusing them of being in league with the Fascists. Thus the Communists not only attempted to render ineffectual dissidents who might have been effective in the fight against Fascism, but in their attempts to suppress the dissidents, the

Communists also further splintered the Left in its fight against Fascism. And it was such acts of suppression in the name of a Common Front that disillusioned both Orwell and Koestler. In his disillusionment, Orwell would expose and denounce the lies used by the Communist Press to destroy its enemies. And he would attempt, through the example of his writing, to demonstrate how the truth could be obtained through frank and rhetorically undistorted discussion, which he hoped would lead to a unification of the various Left-wing factions. Koestler, in his disillusionment, would eventually renounce his faith in the Communist Party. And he too would expose the expediency and corruption of the Communist Party while returning to liberalism, rather than remaining Left-wing. Because the Communists' manipulation of the Popular Front not only played a crucial role in the political life and the writings of Orwell and Koestler, but is also rather complicated and not easily understood, it requires a brief explanation.

The Popular Front in Spain, and in other countries, became for the Comintern an instrument of Soviet diplomacy, the means by which France and Britain might be aligned against Germany in a common defence of "democracy" against Fascism. Thus, the Popular Front not only consisted of bourgeois democrats but also Socialists and Communists. It was the Communist aim to manipulate the fronts in the diplomatic interests of the Soviet Union--an understandable strategy--and to hunt out as heretics all who sought to resist such manipulation.

This manipulation was first evident in Spain. The Popular

Front parties had won a majority in the election of February 1936. And it was against the Popular Front-supported, non-socialist Republican Government, harassed by extremists of the Right and Left, that the army conspirators rose in the name of order in July 1936. Because the workers' organizations had played an important part in defeating the military rising, above all in Madrid and Barcelona, the Socialists and the Communists, and the anarcho-syndicalist CNT entered the Government, during the 1936 September–November election, and remained the real force of the Republic at war.

The historian Raymond Carr tells us in his essay on Orwell and the war, that the policy of the Communists and the purpose of Comintern propaganda was to present the Republican Government as strictly a bourgeois democratic concern ("Orwell and The Spanish Civil War", 64). A "Red Spain" supported by the Soviet Union, Carr goes on to say, would scare France and Great Britain away from becoming anti-Facist allies. With substantial financial investments in Spain, the last thing the governments of France and England wanted to see was a Spain revolutionized by the workers, with the workers in control of the means of production. But the workers' organizations which were long-standing, particularly in Catalonia, had fomented a spontaneous social revolution: farms and factories had been "collectivized", i.e., brought under various forms of workers' control. Communist foreign policy could not allow for such revolutionary tendencies and demanded that this revolution be suppressed, if not reversed.

The Communists and the Spanish Government could justify

their suppression of the workers' revolutionary tendencies as a demand for an efficient war effort, and as an essential process if non-workers, ie. the bourgeois democrats and the socialists, were to be kept loyal to the Republic. And the suppression of the revolution was also presented as the condition for the supply of arms to a weapon-starved Republic by the respectable bourgeois West. But there were groups in the Republic, especially the militants of the CNT and the POUM, who watched these goings-on with suspicion. They became uneasy because they saw the destruction of the workers' revolution implied in the Communist presentation of the Popular Front as a bourgeois democratic government. But the militants could not contend with the Soviet Union's relatively undimmed prestige. And they could not fight the leverage the Soviet Union had with the Spanish Government, a leverage that was gained through the supply of arms (the only supplier of arms, except for Mexico, as it turned out). With their prestige, and using their leverage as arms supplier, the Communists set out to destroy those who opposed the Popular Front. And most of the European Left supported the Communists uncritically.

The failure of the pro-Communist Left to protest against the political persecution of the revolutionary Anti-Stalinists in Spain had disillusioned Orwell. Party members like Koestler at least had a theory to justify their distortion of the truth--that truth itself was class-conditioned and objective truth was a bourgeois virtue to be superseded by historically correct proletarian truth. And Party members like Koestler had a

psychological need for the emotional support of Party life at whatever cost.

But Raymond Carr believes that Orwell is unfair to insist so much that the intellectuals on the Left lied more because they were attracted to power rather than because they wanted to unite the effort against Fascism. Orwell, Carr says, does not consider enough the allure the Popular Front had for intellectuals like Koestler. Carr says that Orwell

underestimates the almost hypnotic qualities of the Popular Front. It was no doubt morally reprehensible and profoundly mistaken to swallow the Communist version of the Spanish War, entailing, as it did, the deliberate destruction of convinced anti-Fascists whose views were inconvenient to Stalin. But it was easy. Only in Spain was Fascism being resisted and only the Soviet Union was supplying that resistance, for whatever purposes of its own, with arms. To criticize the role of the Communists in the Popular Front was to weaken it and thus help the victory of the Fascists. . . . the mystique of the Popular Front was tremendous. . . . Many Communist intellectuals--Koestler, Regler and Muenzenberg among them--who knew more about the purposes of Stalin than did their left-wing allies, were on the point of leaving the Party. The prospect of a victory over Fascism in Spain brought them back for a short second honey-moon. Stalin was a lesser evil than Hitler. To Communists in doubt and to the Left in general--even after the Moscow trials--this was the fundamental political equation of the late thirties. ("Orwell And The Spanish Civil War", *The World of George Orwell*, 64-65).

But among the intellectuals on the Left, as Carr points out, Orwell was one of the few "strong souls" to summon up enough courage to fight the tone of a whole literary establishment and the influence of the Communists within it in England. As a result, Orwell was boycotted by certain publishers who refused to publish his articles on Spain, such as the publisher of the *New Statesman*, and Orwell's own publisher Victor Gollancz who rejected *Homage to Catalonia* even before he had seen it (CEJOGO,

Vol. 1, 312).

Koestler, on the other hand, who was working for those who had abandoned the truth, would have his first Spanish Civil War account, *L'Espagne Ensanglantée*, commissioned and published in 1936 for French and German consumption by *Editions du Carrefour*, the Comintern's Paris publishing company. Moreover, and ironically, Victor Gollancz, who had refused to publish Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia*, would ask to publish Koestler's second Spanish Civil War text, *Spanish Testament*, in 1937 for the Left Book Club. And Koestler would have no problem in finding a publisher in 1942 for *Dialogue With Death*, his third Spanish Civil War text. So while Orwell was boycotted in his attempt to tell the truth, Koestler was encouraged to lie--at least for the first of his three texts. And being encouraged to lie was one of the factors that caused Koestler to vacillate in his commitment to the Communist Party. As a member of the Communist Party Koestler not only witnessed the false testimony of other members of the Party but he himself also lies on behalf of the "cause". Such lying contributed to the long process of Koestler's disillusionment with the Communist Party.

And while Orwell essentially wrote only one text about his political disillusionment during the Spanish Civil War, Koestler could not fully admit to his loss of faith until he came to write his fourth text. Orwell did not need to say more about the Spanish Civil War after he had written *Homage to Catalonia*. He had been changed by his experience of the Spanish Civil War, but rather than experiencing a loss of belief, Orwell experienced an

affirmation of his belief in Socialism, a belief he had held tentatively before he arrived in Spain. Koestler, who had begun to lose his faith in Communism before he arrived in Spain, also experienced a reaffirmation with the formation of the Common Front. But Koestler's reaffirmation did not last. He, like Orwell, realized that the Common Front had become a weapon in the hands of the Communists, a weapon used to demolish revolutionaries who were inconvenient to Stalin's foreign policy but who could have effectively fought the Facists, given the proper training and arms. For Koestler the manipulation of the Common Front not only meant the loss of effective anti-Fascists; this loss also meant the betrayal of the revolution--the original cause of Communism. When Koestler finally understood the betrayal, he was left with no illusions that Communism would be the revolutionary force to equal and best Fascism.

Finally, painfully, Koestler had to abandon his faith in Communism. But his brief "second honeymoon" with Communism and the painful loss of his illusions were such complex and wide-ranging experiences that Koestler had to write more than one text to account for them. Koestler was compelled to write at least three documents--plus chapters in his autobiography--before he was finished going through the shattering psychological upheavals necessary to shed his political illusions and his faith of seven years. Koestler's three texts, however, are not merely editions of one another. As Professor Sperber says in his essay on Koestler's three texts, Koester had made

crucial changes from text to text: the first half of *Spanish Testament* [second text] consisted of . . . over a hundred

pages more than the earlier . . . *L'Espagne*, and the "Dialogue" section of *Spanish Testament* was significantly altered for *Dialogue with Death* [third text]--there are hundreds of major and minor deletions and additions. The revisions, in fact, point to important changes in Koestler's politics, personality, purposes, and literary skills. ("Looking Back on Koestler's Spanish War", 109).

Because of the crucial changes Koestler made from text to text and the fact that the texts represent the changes Koestler himself went through, it is to the analyst's advantage to see all three texts as one text, representing the psychological, political, historical and literary life of one man. To fully understand each text, each must be seen in the light of the other two. But we will stop only briefly to look at the three Spanish Civil War texts because none really deals with Koestler's disillusionment. The next section will be devoted the fourth text--to parts of those chapters from Koestler's autobiography *The Invisible Writing*--that grapple with his rejection of his ideology. The next section will also present a comparative analysis similar to the analysis of Orwell's expression of his disillusionment. Now, however, we will go on to look at the first three texts.

Each of Koestler's Spanish Civil War texts represents a stage in his life. As Sperber says in his essay, "The three different but complementary texts form a kind of modern *Bildungsroman*: the hero's character emerges from the trials and temptations of politics to discover spiritual meaning and to be born anew" ("Looking Back on Koestler's Spanish War", 110).

The three texts, however, do not exist in a linear relationship to one another: that is, the texts do not represent a straight progression from the first text (which represents

Koestler's commitment to Communism) to the third text (which represents Koestler's rejection of Communism), because Koestler's loss of faith was itself not a linear progression. Rather, Koestler vacillated in his commitment almost from the moment he joined the Communist Party. And his vacillation results in a certain amount of over-lapping from text to text. But finally, the new "Dialogue with Death" material in the second text, Spanish Testament totally displaces the over-lapping contents of the first and second texts, *L'Espagne Ensanglantée* to become the third and final text, *Dialogue with Death*. So by the time the third and final text is composed, there is nothing at all left of the first text.

The first of Koestler's three texts was written in the last months of 1936 after he had gone from Paris to Spain as a Communist spy to gather information against the Fascists. This first Spanish Civil War record-- *L'Espagne Ensanglantée*--is essentially a Comintern propaganda book, replete with atrocity stories about the Fascists and horrifying photographs of the corpses of children, some lying in ranks on the floor of their orphanage. This first text reflects Koestler's doomed infatuation with the Communist Party as well as his dependence upon Willy Muenzenberg who, as the head of Comintern's West-European Agitprop Department, was in charge of the propaganda campaign favoring the Spanish Republic. And in his autobiography written nearly twenty years after the event, Koestler says that he was not serving art, but rather "the Cause" when he wrote *L'Espagne Ensanglantée*.

L'Espagne Ensanglantée is written in a hectic, scattered, at times almost bloodthirsty style, a style which reflects both Koestler's and Muenzenberg's obsession with the War. Take for example Koestler's description of Franco's bombing of Madrid from October 24th to November 20th, 1936, entitled, under a sub-section, "*Quatre semaines d'enfer*", ("Four Weeks of Hell"); here Koestler uses specific location to authenticate and highlight the slaughtering of innocent victims during the bombing of civilians:

Dans la Calle de Luna, une bombe tombe au milieu de plusieurs femmes qui font la queue devant un laiterie, 35 femmes avec leurs enfants sur les bras, sont massacrées. En face, il y a une boucherie. Le boucher a été tué au milieu des beoufs et des veaux accrochés au murs. A une femme qui était en train d'entrer chez le boucher, son bébé sur le bras, la bombe arracha la tête (L'Espagne, 155). (In the Calle de Luna a bomb fell in the midst of a queue of women waiting outside a dairy. Thirty-five women, some with children in their arms, were killed. The butcher was killed amongst his hanging carcasses of sheep and calves. A woman who had just entered the shop holding a child by the hand was beheaded. My translation.)

Koestler also, with little subtlety, uses the killing of the butcher of innocent sheep and calves to highlight the greater butchery by Franco of innocent civilians--women and children--in his bombing raids on Madrid.

Koestler not only repeats such grisly details time and time again throughout the chapter on the bombing of Madrid, but he also laces the whole text with details of atrocities. This constant detailing of atrocities reflects Koestler's and Muenzenberg's preoccupation with the war, a preoccupation which Koestler describes in his autobiography:

Willy was impatient to get the books out. He would burst into my flat--a thing which he never used to

do before--to see how mine was getting on. The Spanish War had become a personal obsession with him as with the rest of us. He would pick up a few sheets of the typescript, scan through them, and shout at me: 'Too weak. Too objective. Hit them! Hit them hard! Tell the world how they run over their prisoners with tanks, how they pour petrol over them and burn them alive. Make the world gasp with horror. Hammer it into their heads. Make them wake up...' He was hammering on the table with his fists. I had never seen Willy in a similar state. (*The Invisible Writing*, 407)

Koestler goes on to tell us that Muenzenberg believed in using the strategy of atrocity propaganda rather than using the strategy of mundane, factual, functional information because Muenzenberg had so successfully used atrocity propaganda against Hitler in the first *Brown Book*, a book which "had created a world sensation through the horrors it disclosed" (*The Invisible Writing*, 407). And Muenzenberg wanted Koestler to use the same kind of propaganda. Koestler, however, argued with Muenzenberg that "Hitler's was a one-sided terror, whereas in a war the atrocity stories of both sides cancel each other out" (*The Invisible Writing*, 407).

But, Muenzenberg was hard to argue with, according to Koestler; Muenzenberg also insisted on adding a supplement of "horror-photographs on glossy paper". Among other atrocities, Koestler says that the photos showed "civilian prisoners being led to execution, roped together on a cord, and then the actual shooting. When I myself became a prisoner a few weeks later, I had those photographs before my mind's eye" (*The Invisible Writing*, 407). Even though Koestler could not convince Muenzenberg to leave those photographs out of the text, he says that he "cut down the part dealing with the atrocities to a dozen pages", and that

In the main, this part was based on the memorandum of Franco's deeds of terror during the first days of the insurrection drawn up by the Madrid Faculty of Law, and published by its President, Ortega y Gasset. But there were also some less well authenticated items from doubtful or unidentified sources which Willy had received through the apparatus and passed on to me. My misgivings about these were brushed aside by him with the argument that, as we both knew the allegations to be true, the details did not matter and had sometimes to be 'interpolated'--I remember this conversation vividly, for Willy otherwise never used such scientific expressions. If I still retained scruples, these were dispelled by the unscrupulousness of Franco's propaganda. In England and France, Franco relied on the hoary story that the insurrection had started just in time to forestall a Communist rising. In Germany, the line taken was simply that it was the Spanish Government who began the Civil War by bombarding the Army's barracks in Madrid without provocation. Compared with the enormity of these lies, our propaganda was, in the early stages of the war, relatively honest. (*The Invisible Writing*, 407-408)

So even though Koestler believed that "in a war the atrocity stories of both sides cancel each other out", he was not above fighting lies with lies, his rationale being that the lies of the Fascists were more unscrupulous and much larger than his lies for the Communists. And by writing to serve the Cause, rather than writing only for the sake of writing, or from personal scruples, Koestler, unlike Orwell, was still censoring and controlling his self-expression. Now we pause in our brief examination of Koestler's texts to compare the functions Koestler and Orwell were performing as writers--Koestler as a Communist, Orwell as a non-partisan, but with Socialist leanings.

Self-censorship and self-control over personal scruples to serve a political cause were never part of Orwell's rhetorical strategy in the composition of *Homage to Catalonia*. Orwell, unlike Koestler, was more concerned with exposing the truth behind the lies, but not the lies of the Right-wing factions--the

German and Spanish Facists--so much as the lies of the Left-wing factions--the Communists in Spain and England. Orwell knew that to write only to serve a cause was to become a slave to that cause, just as Koestler had become a slave to Communist propaganda. But Orwell, unlike Koestler, was never engaged in the fight against Spanish and German Right-wing Fascist propaganda. Orwell never attempted, as did Koestler, to expose, for example, the German connection to the Spanish Civil War. Exposure of Right-wing Fascist strategies by people on the Left, like Koestler, was not unusual. Orwell, however, was unusual even though he too was on the Left: first of all he belonged to no specific political party, and was, consequently, more objective than many on the Left; secondly, not only did Orwell attack Communist propaganda, he was also more unbiased in his attack because of his desire to unite and strengthen the Left, especially after he saw the Communists in Spain deliberately distort the truth in their attempt to further divide Left-wing factions.

Unlike the politically atypical Orwell, Koestler was the more typical Communist fighting against Right-wing Fascist propaganda tactics. Talking about those tactics, Koestler says that he was "astonished" not only by the "malignity of Franco's propaganda", but also by

the abyss of ignorance and stupidity that it revealed. Goebbels was a formidably intelligent opponent, but the stuff that Burgos turned out looked as if it were concocted by illiterates. To show up the contradictions in the enemy's propaganda was a task I enjoyed, and thought more effective than listing atrocities. Willy held the opposite opinion; and in the medium of mass propaganda he was, of course, right. 'Don't argue with them', he kept repeating,

'Make them stink in the nose of the world. Make people curse and abominate them, make them shudder with horror.'
(*The Invisible Writing*, 40B)

Here Koestler is arguing that mass propaganda can have a strong emotional effect on its audience, an appeal that is quite different from Orwell's appeal to reason in Chapter Eleven of *Homage to Catalonia*, where he concentrates so heavily on dissecting the Communist propaganda that appeared in the newspapers.

Koestler goes on to say that what infuriated them most about the Fascist propaganda was that "Franco, like Hitler before him, pretended that he had staged his coup just in time to forestall a revolution of ours".

As we were openly advocating revolution, we had no reason to wax indignant, except on the technical grounds that we had not been planning a revolution in that particular country at that particular time. But a professional burglar would, I imagine, be equally indignant if charged with a burglary he did not happen to commit. It was humiliating to serve as an involuntary midwife at the birth of one Fascist dictatorship after another. (*Invisible Writing*, 40B)

It is not surprising that propagandists Koestler and Muezenberg were infuriated: not only were the Communists not planning a revolution in Spain, they were doing everything they could to actually sabotage any revolutionary effort in Spain, as Orwell so ably points out in *Homage to Catalonia*. The anti-revolutionary stance of the Soviet Government and that Government's sabotage of revolutionaries were two factors often buried under contradictory and distorting rhetoric. Orwell enjoyed being able to cut through such contradictions and distortions to expose the intervention of the Soviet Government, just as Koestler enjoyed cutting through the propaganda of the Fascists.

But unlike Orwell who wrote for no political sponsor, Koestler, under the aegis of Willy Muenzenberg and the Paris Comintern office, produced his first and sensationalistic text, *L'Espagne Ensanglantée*, to counter the sensationalistic propaganda texts of the Right-wing German and Spanish Facists. Koestler had to make his enemies "stink in the nose of the world", and Koestler was able to do this in *L'Espagne Ensanglantée* when he documented Fascist atrocities in Seville.

Under the influence of Muenzenberg and his "hit them hard" atrocity campaigns, Koestler, in *L'Espagne*, reports his visit to the Seville headquarters of the rabid Rebel general, Queipo de Llano. He quotes from the general's famous radio broadcasts from Seville, i.e., from July 23, 1936:

Nos braves legionnaires et Regulares ont montré à ces lâches de Rouges ce que c'est qu'un homme. D'ailleurs, ils l'ont montré aussi aux femmes des Rouges. Ces femmes communistes et anarchistes, par leur doctrine de l'amour libre, se sont elles-mêmes déclarées prêtes à appartenir au premier venu. Maintenant, elles viennent du moins de connaître, au lieu de ces gringalets de milices, de véritables hommes; elles ont beau se démener pour leur échapper, cela ne leur sert à rien. (L'Espagne Ensanglantée, 23). (Our brave Legionaries and Regulars have shown the Red cowards what it means to be a man. And incidentally the women of the Reds too. These Communist and Anarchist women, after all, have made themselves fair game by their doctrine of free love. And now they have at least made the acquaintance of real men, and not milksops of militiamen. Kicking their legs about and struggling won't save them. My translation.)

And from August 12th, 1936: "*Les marxists sont des bêtes féroces, mais nous, nous sommes des caballeros. Le señor Companys mérite d'être égorgé comme un cochon*" (*L'Espagne Ensanglantée*, 23).

("The Marxists are ravening beasts, but we are gentlemen. Señor Companys deserves to be stuck like a pig".) By quoting General

de Llano's virulent Right-wing rhetoric, Koestler is trying to counter more subtle propaganda.

Koestler, not yet having undergone his crisis of faith, was still under the influence of Muenzenberg, and he still believed that Communism could defeat Fascism in Spain. Koestler was still writing to serve the Cause rather than to reveal his personal feelings when he wrote *L'Espagne Ensanglantée*. Yet, as Sperber says, Koestler does "suggest his confusion and pessimism", and

He fears lying--and according to his later memoirs, he felt that his life in the Communist Party was mainly a lie--and he says of the propagandists [in *L'Espagne*]: 'Un agitateur qui connaît son métier peut répandre dans le monde, en dix minutes, plus des mensonges que l'on pourra réfuter au cours d'une année.' [An agitator who knows his work will introduce more lies into the world in ten minutes than one can refute in one year'.] He is referring to Hitler, and, indirectly, Goebbels and Franco, but because he and Muenzenberg were engaged in Comintern propaganda, he implies a self-description as well. (Sperber, 111)

But in spite of his confusion and his pessimism about the Communist Party, and in spite of his fear of lying for the cause of Communism, Koestler was able to overcome his doubts to compose *L'Espagne Ensanglantée* to counter what he felt were the more vicious lies of the Facists.

The second text, *Spanish Testament*, was written in the summer and fall of 1937 for Gollancz's Left Book Club, after Koestler deliberately allowed himself to be captured by the Fascists, was released from his Spanish death-cell by Franco, and returned to France. This second text incorporates some of the impersonal propagandistic historical and political analyses of the first text because Koestler could not yet fully admit to the loss of his tattered faith, a loss which had finally occurred

during his imprisonment. The book is divided into two parts: the first part into nine chapters, the second part into two chapters. Koestler says, in the Foreword, that in the first chapter he describes how he, "wishing to see the war from the rebel side . . . went in the first month of the outbreak, to Seville by way of Portugal;" he tells what he saw in Lisbon, gives an account of his interview with Quiapo de Llano, and tries to convey the atmosphere at rebel headquarters (*Spanish Testament*, 11). He interrupts his "personal narrative" with the next five chapters--two through six--with what he calls "the historical roots of the struggle, its outbreak and background, as well as . . . the complicated problem of the Spanish church" (*Spanish Testament*, 11). In the following chapters, six through nine, Koestler says that he takes up his "personal narrative again, describing successively the siege of the Alcazar, the bombardment of Madrid, the last days of Republican Malaga, and [his] arrest" when Malaga fell into rebel hands (*Spanish Testament*, 11). What Koestler calls "personal narrative" is not personal in that he seldom reveals thoughts and feelings. Rather, as he says, he, tell us about the events of the War. But this text now also contains Part II, called "Dialogue with Death", which does reveal the personal and profoundly disturbing psychological experience of Koestler's imprisonment in a Spanish death-cell, from February to June of 1937.

Both *L'Espagne Ensanglantée* and *Spanish Testament* are documents of pro-Communist and anti-Fascist propaganda. But *L'Espagne* is strictly impersonal Comintern propaganda that

centers on Fascist horrors, whereas *Spanish Testament* is less propagandistic and more personal because it also begins to reveal Koestler's rejection of his faith in Communism. Furthermore, these two texts were aimed at different audiences. *L'Espagne* was published in 1936 in France and Germany (in translation) where Fascism had taken a strong hold, and where there were even stronger polarities between Fascists, Communists, and Socialists than in Orwell's England. Koestler wrote *L'Espagne* to reaffirm the Communist presence in its stance against Fascism in France, Germany, and Spain. But *L'Espagne Ensanglantée* was more than just a pro-Communist document. Koestler also wanted to convince those not committed to Communism or Fascism that Fascism under Franco had indeed taken hold in Spain. And Koestler also wanted to warn those who were politically neutral that Franco's Spanish Fascism was no less brutal than Hitler's German Fascism. Koestler, moreover, was so strongly anti-Fascist that he risked his life to fight Fascism: he went to Spain as Communist spy to prove that Hitler was aiding and abetting Franco's rise to power in Spain by supplying Franco with German military supplies and personnel.

And even though *Spanish Testament*, published in 1937, contains anti-Fascist propaganda taken directly from *L'Espagne*, Koestler was commissioned to write *Spanish Testament* for an audience quite different from those in France and Germany who read *L'Espagne Ensanglantée*. The English publisher Victor Gollancz had commissioned Koestler to write *Spanish Testament* for members of the Left Book Club who were, for the most part,

Communists and Socialists--the very people Orwell often confronted for their narrow political experience and for their political ignorance. But in spite of the fact that Victor Gollancz's political experience was also narrow, especially when compared to the practical political experiences of Koestler and Orwell, Gollancz was not ignorant of the betrayal of the workers' revolution in Spain by the Communist Party. Still, Gollancz strongly believed in the Communists' fight against Fascism, and was eager, therefore, to publish Koestler's *Spanish Testament*, which was a pro-Communist, anti-Nazi text. For people on the Left in England, for people like Victor Gollancz, the Communists' fight against Fascism in Spain was more important than their betrayal of the workers' revolution. Any condemnation of the Communists in Spain was seen as traitorous to the Republican fight against Fascism--hence Gollancz's refusal to publish Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia*, before he had even seen the text.

Koestler had not yet gone through the harrowing experience of being imprisoned in a Fascist death-cell when he wrote his first text *L'Espagne Ensanglantée*, but he had already been imprisoned and released back to France when he wrote *Spanish Testament* for Victor Gollancz's Left Book Club. And even though he had become irrevocably disillusioned with Communism, he could not yet publicly admit to the loss of a faith that he had kept for seven years. But because he still firmly believed that Fascism must be fought, and as a compromise to his ideological rejection, he incorporated whole portions of the propagandistic *L'Espagne* into the text of *Spanish Testament*, especially those

portions that dealt with Fascist atrocities, but he either toned these down or excluded the stories that could not be proved. Charts in *L'Espagne*, for example, are put into words in *Spanish Testament*, and English references are added; the appendix of photographs entitled "Photographies Documentaires de la Barbarie Fasciste En Espagne" in *L'Espagne*, photographs of the wreckage of bombed cathedrals and rows of the corpses of school children, no longer appears in *Spanish Testament*. But what is more important is that Koestler added a second part to his *Spanish Testament* text that could not have been part of the *L'Espagne* text. He added a section called "Dialogue with Death". And by adding that section, Koestler began to reveal the cracks in the remaining shell of his faith in Communism.

Thus *Spanish Testament* now contains rhetorical devices not found in *L'Espagne Ensanglantée*. By adding his more personal prison experience to the impersonal propaganda, Koestler's second text contains an authentic and universal emotional appeal not found in the first text. So now the second text not only includes the appeal to reason through the rhetoric of propaganda, but also a strong personal appeal to emotion based on Koestler's experience of being imprisoned in a death-cell. This appeal to emotion does not use the same kind of strategy that Koestler talked about when he argued for the effectiveness of mass propaganda, although the feelings aroused in both cases might be the same. As Sperber says in his essay on Koestler:

In the first half of *Spanish Testament* . . . he [Koestler] falls into various didactic styles: sometimes he is the echo of Comintern propaganda, often he quiets to passages of liberal reason, and frequently he turns Marxist analysis

into apocalyptic vision. But in the second or "Dialogue with Death" half of the book, he allows his individualism to emerge ("Looking Back on Koestler's Spanish War", 110).

Koestler's second text is more authentic than his first text because he begins to reveal his personal feelings. His second text, however, is not as rhetorically consistent as his first text because his rhetorical purpose is not as consistent: in his first account, Koestler consistently tries to convince his readers of the atrocities of Fascism in Spain and to show them how Communism fights the atrocities--Koestler is just a mouthpiece for the Comintern. In his second text, Koestler still wants to convince his audience of Fascist atrocities, but now he tones down the Communist rhetoric, and, by also including the revelation of his personal experiences in a death-cell, he is no longer a Comintern mouthpiece.

Without political illusions, Koestler finally published his third text, now called *Dialogue with Death*, in 1942. Koestler chose the title of the new section of the second text, "Dialogue with Death" for the title of the third text, *Dialogue with Death*, and he eliminated the propagandistic historical and political analyses of the first and the second texts to concentrate only on his personal experiences in prison. For him partisan politics and Marxist historical analyses, even the Spanish Civil War itself, paled in significance to his wait in a death-cell where, night after night, he heard others taken from their cells and placed before a firing squad, and where he waited for his execution before the same firing squad.

But after his seven-year commitment to Communism, Koestler had difficulties in admitting his loss of faith; he took a long

time to publicly admit to and write about his *Dialogue with Death*. The assimilation of his experience with death and the subsequent loss of his faith in Communism was protracted and painful. And even though he had rejected his faith in Communism during his stay in the Spanish death-cell in 1937, he did not publicly admit to his loss of faith until two years later, in 1939, under the impact of the mass arrests and the show trials in the Soviet Union. But by the time his third text, *Dialogue with Death*, was published in 1942, Koestler had assimilated his traumatic prison experience to the point where he could recreate the experience through the composition of his text.

But Koestler's commitment to Communism had been of sufficient strength that he had willingly placed his life in jeopardy every time he went to Spain to gather material against the Fascists. Koestler was always at risk of being captured by the Nationalists as a Communist spy, which is, in fact, what he was. Koestler claims that when his situation eventually became intolerable--when he could no longer stand the lies and his subsequent feelings of guilt--he deliberately allowed himself to be captured by Rebel troops on February 9, 1937, during the fall of Malaga. Koestler's stay and capture in Malaga forms part of his second and third texts *Spanish Testament* and *Dialogue with Death*, but not his first text, because *L'Espagne Ensanglantée* was written before he visited Malaga and was captured there. However, Koestler finally fully reveals his feelings of guilt and his disillusionment only in the fourth document of his war

experiences, in parts of his autobiography, *The Invisible Writing*, which we will examine in the next section.

CHAPTER THREE

Koestler and *The Invisible Writing*

Koestler tells us that his decision to remain in the doomed city of Malaga was "due to a variety of reasons". The primary reason he chose to remain in Malaga was his newly acquired friendship with the seventy-two year old Englishman, Sir Peter Chalmers-Mitchell, who, after a distinguished career in zoology, had retired to Malaga in 1934. Koestler allowed himself to be captured by Franco's troops, and to be imprisoned in a death-cell because of his sense of loyalty to Chalmers-Mitchell. But this was an external motive. Koestler's motives were more complex than that of loyalty to a friend. Koestler says that he chose to stay because of his feelings of "inverted cowardice" and "the fear of being afraid", and because he had also experienced "the tortuous ways of the death-wish" (*The Invisible Writing*, 413)

Koestler had paid two previous visits to Spain--to Madrid and Seville specifically--on behalf of the Paris Comintern office to collect evidence against Nazis; during the second visit, he was almost apprehended as a Communist spy but he managed to escape and return to Paris. In spite of the risks, Koestler agreed to go back to Spain for a third and last time because, he says, the Republican Government had "at last managed to set up an international news agency--a thing which should have been done months earlier, but had been delayed by the eternal wrangling between the various parties" (*The Invisible Writing*, 409). The

Government news agency was called *Agence Espagne* in France. The European head-office in Paris was directed by Otto Katz, second-in-command of the Comintern's West-European AGITPROP Department. As one of the first correspondents for the newly formed news agency, Koestler was sent from Paris by Katz to cover the southern front of the War from Malaga. Unlike Orwell who was in Spain of his own volition, Koestler, once again, was serving the Cause, acting on behalf of a Communist-sponsored agency.

First, Koestler went to Valencia to discuss matters related to the Spanish News Agency with various Government departments; then he went on to Malaga. He arrived in Malaga on January 27th, 1937, where he stayed for ten days while he visited various front-lines, all a few miles away. Koestler tells us that Malaga "was cut off from supplies of food and ammunition, half-starved, in a state of near-chaos, and practically defenceless" (*The Invisible Writing*, 412). When asked by Koestler how long Malaga could hold out against a rebel offensive, the aide-de-camp to the Military Commander of Malaga replied, "Three days." The offensive began on February 4th; Malaga fell on February 8th, and Koestler was arrested on February 9th. Koestler fully describes these catastrophic events in his second and third Civil War texts, *Spanish Testament* and *Dialogue with Death*, but offers only a partial account of his reasons for remaining in Malaga as it fell.

As we shall see, however, fifteen years later, in his fourth--and strictly autobiographical--text, *The Invisible Writing*, Koestler completely reveals his reasons for remaining,

which not only included his friendship with Sir Peter Chalmers-Mitchell, but also his sense of guilt for being a member of the Communist Party and, at the same time, for no longer wanting to be a member. He was experiencing deep distress at knowing what was wrong yet doing nothing about it. Equally important, for the first time Koestler tells us that while he was in prison he experienced, in turn, a sense of peace, a spiritual awakening, and a sense of self-affirmation. But before we look at his personal revelations, let us turn back to his account of Malaga's fall, and his recognition that his reasons for staying are not easy to pin down.

Koestler says he had decided to remain in the "doomed city for a variety of confused reasons", one of the reasons being Sir Peter Chalmers-Mitchell (*The Invisible Writing*, 413). On the sixth of February all the hotels in Malaga closed and Koestler moved to the villa of Sir Peter Chalmers-Mitchell, an eminent English zoologist who had retired to Malaga in 1934. Earlier, Koestler had presented a letter of introduction to the seventy-two-year-old zoologist, who immediately befriended Koestler and whom Koestler begged to leave. When he arrived at Sir Peter's villa, Koestler says that it was Sir Peter's turn to beg Koestler to leave, but he did so in a tone of voice that Koestler imagined expressed "an undertone of hope that he would not be left to face the ordeal alone" (*The Invisible Writing*, 413). The villa, Koestler says, had a large Union Jack flying from its roof, and both sides had so far avoided interfering with British citizens and British property. And although Koestler was

not a British citizen, the house, the flag, and the dignified old man living in it gave Koestler "a spurious sense of security." But beyond Koestler's friendship with Sir Peter, and beyond the sense of security he felt under Sir Peter's Union Jack, Koestler was motivated to stay for a journalistic scoop. Moreover, he says he felt that as non-partisan witnesses to the insurgent take-over, possibly he and Sir Peter could save lives, which is very curious indeed because at the time of the insurgents' take-over of Malaga Koestler was *not* a "neutral observer" at all. He was in Malaga as a Communist spy. But he says:

Never before had a foreign journalist in Spain witnessed what happened when the insurgents took over a town; from the point of view of the newly-founded 'Agence Espagne', this prospect seemed worth the risk. Besides in view of General Queipo's repeated threats of a 'terrible retribution against the Anarchist stronghold' (which Malaga in fact was), we [Koestler and Sir Peter] both had the irrational and rather silly conviction that the presence of two 'neutral observers' would have a restraining influence on the behavior of the insurgents when they entered the town. (*The Invisible Writing*, 414)

Even though Koestler was a Communist at the time of Malaga's fall, it is possible that because he was not directly involved in the conflict in a physical sense, and because he was in the process of letting go of his ideology at the time, he felt more like a "neutral observer" than a partisan member of a political party. But in spite of his strong journalistic and humanistic reasons for remaining in Malaga, the day before the city fell Koestler almost changed his mind about staying. To see what contributed to his very deliberate and dangerous choice, it is necessary to examine in some detail the circumstances of Koestler's aborted attempt to leave the city, and why he changed

his mind about leaving. By examining his decision to stay and put himself at great risk, we will see that the fall of Malaga not only contributed to Koestler's feelings of disillusionment and "spiritual crisis", but also conspired to allow Koestler to atone for his feelings of guilt.

On February 8th, the day before Malaga fell, and the day before he was arrested, Koestler visited military headquarters for the last time. There he heard that Rebel army tanks were less than five miles from the town's center and that resistance had collapsed. The Military Commander promptly left for Valencia, where he was later courtmartialled and shot for desertion. The staff officer, with whom Koestler was friendly, virtually forced Koestler into his car, a car which Koestler says was "already crammed full of weeping women". To Koestler, these weeping women symbolized the town's final chaos and panic. Koestler hoped that they might drive up to Sir Peter's villa to get Sir Peter to change his mind, but the driver pretended that the road leading up to the villa was cut off. They drove on with the stream of refugees heading toward Valencia.

Koestler says that all during the hasty exit he was reminded of Madrid, which he had also left in a panic, believing the town lost, even though it was later saved. Then, at least, he had accomplished his mission, which was to obtain proof of German aid to Franco. But now, leaving Malaga, Koestler says,

I was running away without having said good-bye to Sir Peter, leaving even my type-writer and manuscripts behind In the end, as we approached the city barrier, I jumped out of the moving car which Alfred refused to stop and walked back on foot to Sir Peter's house When I told him the news, he said that I had been a perfect fool

not to leave.

He was of course, right. There could be no doubt that Malaga was lost, that after my Seville adventures [where he was almost arrested as a Communist spy] I would not have much of a chance if caught, and that my presence in Chalmers-Mitchell's house, instead of being a help, would merely endanger his safety. (*The Invisible Writing*, 415)

So Koestler chose to remain in Malaga, even though he knew that the city was about to fall into the hands of the insurgents, and that his chances of being arrested were very great if he were caught.

But Koestler says that when he was writing his third Civil War account, *Dialogue with Death*, his explanation of the reasons for his decision to stay in Malaga are "slurred over" because at the time he wrote the text he was still not able to understand his reasons. Koestler goes on to say: "I could not yet face the fact that inverted cowardice, the fear of being afraid, had played a major part in my actions; nor understand the tortuous ways of the death-wish" (*The Invisible Writing*, 415).

Subconsciously Koestler *wanted* to be caught--he wanted to pay for his feelings of guilt. Like Orwell, Koestler was feeling guilty for being part of an oppressive regime, albeit a regime much different from the one Orwell had been part of, and as Orwell had felt the need to atone for his guilt, so too Koestler felt he must atone. Koestler's method of atonement, however, was not the same as Orwell's: Orwell had chosen to go "down and out", to live among the oppressed and the poor; Koestler chose to stay in Malaga as it fell to Fascists, who would imprison him.

And if Koestler felt unprepared to reveal his feelings in his third text, he certainly could not reveal his sense of guilt and his need to atone, nor could he reveal his disillusionment in

his second text, *Spanish Testament*, if indeed he was conscious of these feelings at the time.

But as much as Koestler wanted to be caught, his actual arrest was an ironic coincidence. Until he returned to Sir Peter's, Koestler did not know that the house next door to Sir Peter's belonged to Don Tomas Bolín, uncle of Captain Louis Bolín, the man in Seville who had wanted to shoot Koestler five months earlier. Until Malaga fell, the house had been used as a hospital, so Koestler did not know it was Tomas Bolin's house; otherwise he might not have remained in Malaga as he did. Koestler explains the coincidence of Sir Peter's neighbor being related to the man who wanted to arrest Koestler in Seville. He goes on to say that Sir Peter had saved the lives of his neighbor and his family while risking his own life:

It will be remembered that the head of Franco's Press Department, who I had fooled in Seville and had promised to shoot me 'like a mad dog' if he ever laid hands on me, was an army Captain by the name of Louis Bolín. By a remarkable coincidence the house neighbouring Sir Peter's belonged to Captain Bolin's uncle, Don Tomas Bolín. At the outbreak of the Civil War, Don Tomas, who was a Monarchist, had taken refuge with his whole family in Sir Peter's house. . . . For a while Don Tomas had been imprisoned by the Loyalist authorities in Malaga, but Sir Peter obtained his release, and in the end he had smuggled out the whole Bolin clan, at the peril of his own life, to Gibraltar. (*The Invisible Writing*, 416)

Koestler and Sir Peter hoped that Don Tomas would return from exile soon and intercede with the Rebel authorities on behalf of the man who had saved his life and the lives of his family.

Don Tomas did in fact return the day after the Rebel Army entered Malaga, and he did intercede for Sir Peter, but not for Koestler. On February 9th, the morning after the insurgents

took over Malaga, three uniformed men carrying revolvers rushed Sir Peter's house. The man in command was Louis Bolín, who recognized Koestler from their earlier encounter in Seville. He again accused Koestler of being a spy, and called for a rope in a voice so threatening that Koestler thought he was immediately to be hanged, the first of three times that day that he thought he was to die. But the rope was used only to tie Koestler's hands. Sir Peter, hoping that the presence of Don Tomas might mitigate the situation, asked one of his servants to run across for him. When Don Tomas arrived he had a few whispered words with his nephew Louis, and then he left. Both Koestler and Sir Peter felt that those words saved Sir Peter's life. Koestler and Sir Peter were then taken into the center of Malaga where they were made to wait in the car for hours. Finally, Sir Peter was released to go to England; Koestler was imprisoned, first in Malaga for four days, and then in Seville for three months.

Koestler offers a much fuller description of his arrest and the events following in his earlier two texts, *Spanish Testament* and *Dialogue with Death*, than in his final text *The Invisible Writing*, because he feels that to fully describe his arrest and his imprisonment for a third time would be repetitious. Instead, he describes his psychological state, which he does not feel free to account for in the earlier two texts. In his brief chronology of arrest and imprisonment Koestler says that even though he was only held in Malaga briefly compared to his stay in Seville's prison, he was kept in solitary confinement in both places. And in both prisons, he says he heard fellow prisoners being

executed, which led him to believe that he too would die:

I was arrested on February 9 [1937], kept for four days *incommunicado* in the prison of Malaga, and was transferred on February 13 to the Central Prison of Seville. I was kept in solitary confinement for three months, and during this period was on hunger strike for twenty-six days. For the first sixty-four days, I was kept *incommunicado* in my cell and not permitted exercise. After that I remained in solitary confinement but was permitted two hours exercise a day in the company of three other prisoners. I was exchanged against a hostage held by the Valencia Government on May 14, after ninety-five days of imprisonment.

I was neither tortured nor beaten, but was a witness to the beating and execution of my fellow prisoners and, except for the last forty-eight hours, lived in the expectation of sharing their fate. (*The Invisible Writing*, 421)

Even though he was not physically harmed in any way, the combination of being in solitary confinement for three months and hearing others being led to their death during that time so thoroughly convinced Koestler that he too was going to be executed, that he held the belief right up to the time he was released. Living so closely with death caused Koestler to question and examine for the first time the value of life in general and his life in particular, but he reveals this only in his fourth text.

What Koestler does feel bound to repeat in all three texts are the statistics of death: he reiterates the numbers of men being shot, how often men were shot, when they were shot, and the procedures leading up to the shooting for those readers who might not have read *Spanish Testament* or *Dialogue with Death*. These details of death are significant to Koestler not only because they were burned into his memory and were the reason why he thought he too would be shot, but also because these deaths validate for Koestler his experiences of the War in a way that

his ideology could not. Koestler had joined the Communist Party in Germany in 1931 when Hitler came to power, hoping that the Party could reckon with the forces of Fascism. But six years later in Spain in 1937, he was not only disillusioned to find that Communism could not equal or best Fascism, but he was also horrified to find that Communists in Spain used the same brutal tactics as the Fascists in eliminating enemies of the Cause. And as he was to learn, the ultimate price of war is not the triumph of one ideology over another; rather, the ultimate price of war is death. Koestler, like so many other artists, came to know that the Spanish Civil War as a manifest programme of ideology enacted, in reality, turned out to have at its heart the nulling fact of death, which destroys the birth of idea.

But even though they both paid a price for their experiences of the war, neither Koestler nor Orwell paid the ultimate price of war. Koestler did not go to war as a foot-soldier, who could at most die fighting man-to-man, or at least pay part of the price by getting dirty, or lousy, or wounded, as did Orwell. The dirt, the lice, and the wound Orwell suffered were the price he paid for being in the War. What Orwell suffered in the War finally allowed him to atone for being part of an oppressive regime in Burma. Orwell suffered physically more than he did psychologically, whereas Koestler suffered more psychologically. Koestler, unlike Orwell, went to War as a confirmed ideologue, fighting only words with words, and lies with lies, armed only with an ideology that would fail him in the end. Thus, Koestler did not have a complete acquaintance with death--he did not die

on the front-lines of the War, nor was he executed in prison. He did not have to pay the ultimate price. He did pay a very high price, nonetheless, when he had his "dialogue with death" in prison, where he did see men led to their deaths, heard them being shot, and waited for his own death. And because the deaths were so important to Koestler, it is worth looking at his details of them in full. He recalls the numbers of death, the "smooth" and quiet procedures, and the inscrutable system of choosing the prisoners for death:

During the first few days after the fall of Malaga, prisoners in that town were taken out in batches and shot at any hour of the day; later on in Seville, things settled down to a more orderly routine, and executions were carried out three or four times a week between midnight and 2 a.m. During March, altogether forty-five men from our prison were shot. During the first thirteen days of April, there were no executions, but during the next six nights, between Tuesday, April 13 and Monday the 19th, fifty men were executed, the greatest number in a single night being seventeen (on April 13). After that I lost count as I had worked out a technique of sleeping through the critical hours.

The proceedings were as a rule smooth and subdued. The victims were not forewarned, and mostly too dazed or proud to make a scene when they were led out of their cells by the guards, accompanied by the priest, to the waiting lorry. A few of them sang, some wept, muffled cries of 'madre' and 'scorro' were frequent. Sometimes I saw the whole procession--the priest, the guards and the victim--quickly pass in front of my spyhole, but mostly I only heard them, ear pressed against the cell door. Sometimes the victims were fetched from the mass detention cells on the second floor, or from a different wing; sometimes from among the *incomunicados* of the death row where I was housed; it was impossible to discover the system. On one night, Thursday, April 15, the inmates of cells 39, 41 and 42 on my left and right were all marched off, with only my own cell No. 40 spared, after the warder had put his key, no doubt by mistake, into my own lock, and then withdrawn. (*The Invisible Writing*, 422, 423)

After we have looked at these specifics of death--the numbers and the procedures of execution--it becomes clear why Koestler not

only believed that he too would be shot, but also why these executions validated his Civil War experiences. His growing knowledge of death was the high price Koestler had to pay for his experiences. Furthermore, when Koestler recalls these deaths he acts as a witness for the victims and gives their deaths significance: his recall is both testimonial to and memorial of the men who died. But there is more to be said for Koestler's experiences of death.

Equally important is the fact that by being forced to live almost daily with the executions of others and with the possibility of his own execution, Koestler felt free of guilt and (amazingly) of anxiety for the first time since his childhood. The daily executions not only forced Koestler to consider death, but also forced him to examine life in general, and his life in particular. In the face of death, Koestler had to revise his vision of life. And so he was led to a new vision--to a spiritual awakening--that would fill the void left by his lost ideology. Thus, with a new vision in place, Koestler was safe and free to review his ideology critically, and then to let Communism go.

But even before Koestler recalls his trip to Malaga, his arrest and imprisonment, and the details of the executions, and even before he documents the subsequent spiritual experiences, he explains why he did not include in his second and third texts the spiritual feelings which so profoundly changed him. He has a problem with his current text, *Invisible Writing*, his autobiography, he says, because of the past two texts: having

already written *Spanish Testament* and *Dialogue with Death*, he believes that he has lost his rights to write his own life. Expressing attitudes of obligation and constraint--"I must ask," "I have no other choice," "I must confine myself"--Koestler refers the reader to the book he published fifteen years earlier, *Dialogue with Death*. He says:

At this point a major difficulty arises with this autobiography, for which I must ask the reader's indulgence. The next six months formed the most decisive period in my life, its spiritual crisis and turning-point. Yet the detailed story of that period I have already written and published fifteen years ago under the title of *Dialogue with Death*; and I have no other choice but to refer the reader to it. In this book I must confine myself to a summary outline of events, and to the elaborations of certain aspects of the experience which could not be treated in the earlier book. (*The Invisible Writing*, 422)

Even though the period he wants to write about--his imprisonment and the months following--was the most important of his life, he is obliged and constrained by the past texts to write only a summary of some events while elaborating other events in his current text.

And he found that he could not incorporate the past text into his current text because of the vast differences in style and perspective between *Dialogue with Death* and *The Invisible Writing*.

When I started this autobiography, I intended to incorporate *Dialogue with Death*, with a few cuts into the present volume. But this did not prove feasible. The book is written in a different style, and from an entirely different perspective, by a man fifteen years younger, still under the impact of a shattering experience, and while the Spanish War was on. The last-mentioned circumstance was responsible for a deliberate under-playing of the spiritual side of the experience, as it would have been frivolous to indulge in introspective reflections while my comrades fought and died in Spain--or so at least it seemed to me at the time. Also the transformation that I underwent during that experience

was at first an unconscious one, and it took some time before it seeped through and altered my conscious outlook; thus, for instance, I only broke with the Communist Party nine months later. (*The Invisible Writing*, 422, 422)

Koestler had to take the situations of war and death into consideration when he wrote his earlier text--to write about his spiritual crisis when others were still dying during the War would have been inappropriate. And Koestler needed some time to absorb the spiritual transformation he had undergone before he could put it into practice to officially eliminate Communism from his life.

Yet he does not reveal that he had actually given up the rights to account for a certain part of his life because of the rhetorical nature of the previous two texts. He does not tell us that he could not document his psychological changes in *Spanish Testament*, and *Dialogue with Death* because they are both so much more rhetorical than *The Invisible Writing*, which is mostly reflexive and personal. *Spanish Testament* is a combination of propaganda, history, and personal narrative; *Dialogue with Death* is a cut-and-dried account of the previous text's narrative--the externals of Koestler's imprisonment--without any of the earlier text's history and without much of its propagandistic rhetoric.

Besides being unable to reveal his psychological changes in his previous texts because of their rhetorical nature, Koestler also needed a long time to absorb the "spiritual crisis and turning-point", to become conscious of what the crises would mean to him in the long run. It took him fifteen years before he could fully illuminate the event in Volume II of his autobiography, *The Invisible Writing*, a text so much more

personal and intimate than the previous two documents that Koestler does not even entertain the possibility that this text is yet another rhetoric. This reflexive text is by its very nature literary: it is written in a "confessional" mode, and it is no longer identifiable with a political situation--the politics are fifteen years in the past.

But *The Invisible Writing* is also rhetorical: the rhetorical dimension of Koestler's autobiography arises out of the very act of publishing the text. When Koestler publishes his text, he moves it from the private and personal realm into the public and rhetorical world. And as personal as Koestler's text seems to be when he reveals his psychological crises, it is still rhetorical because his revelation also has the appeal of *pathos*, a strategic appeal to feelings to achieve an end. But even though Koestler's reflections by their very nature will arouse strong feelings of sympathy and antipathy in his reading public, those reflections are not really documented with a large public in mind, but, rather, for private redemption. So, in a sense, even though all published texts are rhetorical, some are more literary than rhetorical and some more rhetorical than literary. Compared to Koestler's final text on his Civil War experiences, Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia* is more rhetorical than literary, on the whole, because it does identify so strongly with a political situation. But Orwell's document also contains a literary element, because it is autobiographical to a certain extent: for example, he does express at some length his personal disappointment in not seeing more action at the front; and he

does vividly recall his feelings when he finally sees some action. Compared to Koestler's autobiographical text, however, Orwell's text is not nearly as reflexive. The "I" in Orwell's account is a fabrication of the strange combination of the omniscient narrator and the innocent non-partisan. Orwell's narrating self is "suspect": this self is impersonal as well as limited and evasive compared with Koestler's more revealing and reflexive narrative. The personas Orwell presents, in his text, could be so limited perhaps because, outside the text and in reality, the more private and personal Eric Blair was becoming the more public and rhetorical George Orwell.

With his Spanish Civil War experiences, and with his text, Orwell finally moved out of the private, formative realm of Eric Blair, where he needed to "go down and out" to create contexts for his texts, and where he needed to assuage his guilt, into the guilt-free, public world and the formed persona of George Orwell. As his biographer, Bernard Crick, says at the end of his chapter on Orwell in Spain:

After the ordeals of Spain and writing the book about it, most of Orwell's formative experiences were over. His finest writing, his best essays and his great fame lay ahead. From 1937 onwards he knew where he stood, what he was capable of doing and he was able to give out great riches from the store of his experiences, he no longer needed to seek out new experiences . . . for the necessities of writing. (*George Orwell: A Life*, 352)

Like Orwell, Koestler too used the context of the war for his texts. But unlike Orwell, Koestler would move in the opposite direction: Koestler would move from the public and political arena of spying and writing propaganda for the Cause, and feeling guilty about it, into the private and personal, into the

psychological world of writing for the sake of writing and writing to confess and relieve his guilt.

Koestler had been feeling guilty for a long time because he was working for an oppressive regime; for that regime, he had lied, written propaganda, and he had spied. He also knew that the Soviet Union's foreign policy was playing a role in the denial of arms to Anarchists and members of POUM, many of whom were imprisoned like Koestler, but unlike Koestler were executed, and had fought and died in front-lines against the Fascists. And even though he felt guilty for being a Communist, he also felt guilty because he was withdrawing from Communism. For all his guilt Koestler felt he must be punished--he had a craving for "justice". So he not only satisfied his craving for justice by offering up himself--by allowing himself to be caught and imprisoned--but also by confessing the psychological crises in the revelation of his autobiography. When Koestler is imprisoned and put into solitary confinement, he no longer feels guilty. He finally feels that "justice" is being met.

The first of the "internal developments" Koestler reveals is that all during his solitary confinement in Seville, "the anxiety-neurosis and the accompanying feeling of guilt were suspended". He goes on to say that he "was, of course, often apprehensive and fearful, but it was a rational and, as it were, healthy fear, not the obsessional and morbid variety" (*The Invisible Writing*, 424). Koestler felt so guilt-free he says that he even slept well, except on those nights when he could hear his fellow prisoners being led to their execution, and even

then he found sleep later. He does admit to "hours of acute despair, but," he says, "these were hours, and in between were entire days of a newly discovered peace and happiness" (*The Invisible Writing*, 424).

Koestler explains the "paradox" of his sense of "peace and happiness" while imprisoned as "the effect of a satisfied craving for punishment". Being guilty of espionage or of any law-breaking crime does not bother Koestler, but he is troubled about working for an oppressive regime. And he does feel guilty about the deceptions of the regime--even though he does not mention these "crimes". So he agrees with his punishment. He says that

the neurotic type of anxiety is the irrational anticipation of an unknown punishment for an unknown crime. Now retribution had come in a concrete, tangible form for a concrete tangible offence; the cards were on the table. Whether I was technically guilty of espionage or any other crime before the law was beside the point; I had gained entry to the enemy camp through deception, and I had done everything in my power to damage their cause. My condition was thus a logical consequence of a consciously taken risk, the whole situation was clean, proper and equitable. (*The Invisible Writing*, 425)

The fact that he feels and says that his punishment is "logical", is "clean, proper and equitable" shows that he feels guilty, whether he is or not. And he goes on to say that his "reflections" on his crime and punishment have been on "the rational level" and form only one part of the psychological process he's been discussing, and its most superficial one. But now, Koestler warns his readers, what is to follow is even more personal, but less logical and more contradictory, than his previous reflections.

As a guide to interpretation, Koestler warns us that as he

moves to other parts of the process "in an inward direction, they will become more embarrassing and more difficult to put into words." These parts of the process will become less logical, and "will contradict each other--for we are moving here through strata that are held together by the cement of contradiction" (*The Invisible Writing*, 427). But first Koestler must reveal what led to this "new type" of experience before he tells us about it. First, he is obliged to tell us about certain incidents that caused such a psychic shake-up, at such a fundamental level within him, that he was unresisting and laid open to the new experiences. Koestler took part in four incidents that shook him to the core.

The first three occurred on the day of his arrest when, he says, three times he believed he was about to be executed. The first time occurred at Sir Peter's villa when Bolin called for a rope; the second time when the car transporting Koestler and Sir Peter from the villa into Malaga stopped on an improvised execution site; and the third time when, after Bolin had told Koestler that he would be shot at night, Koestler was taken from the Malaga police-station at night, and put into a truck with five men who had rifles on their knees, so that Koestler thought that he was being driven to the cemetery to be shot by a five-man firing-squad, instead of being driven only to the prison. Each time he thought he was to be executed, Koestler experienced, he "benefited from", a separation of consciousness, where one part of the self is observing the self in action, and where the active-self is like a robot. As he says:

I benefited from the well know phenomenon of a split consciousness, a dream-like, dazed self-estrangement which separated the conscious self from the acting self--the former becoming a detached observer, the latter an automaton, while the air hums in one's ears as in the hollow of a seashell. It is not bad at all; the unpleasant part is the subsequent reunion of the split halves, bringing the full impact of reality in its wake. (*The Invisible Writing*, 427).

As bad as those three episodes were, and as unpleasant as the return to reality from each episode was, Koestler also experienced that day a fourth episode which he says was "much worse" than the other three episodes.

The fourth episode occurred on the same day when Koestler was being photographed for, as he says, "the rogue's gallery", standing against a wall with his hands tied, and in the midst of a hostile crowd. This time, instead of being relieved by "the anaesthetic of self-estrangement", he recalled a painful childhood memory because he was feeling the same kind of horror and powerlessness that he had felt during an operation when he was a child. And as a child, he invented the word "Ahor" for the feeling. He says:

I felt as helpless as at the age of five when, in a doctor's surgery, I was without preliminary warning tied with leather straps to the operating chair, then held down and gagged by way of preparation for a tonsillectomy. I have described this scene in *Arrow in the Blue*, [part one of his autobiography] and have explained how the sensation of utter helplessness and abandonment to a hostile, malign power had filled me with a kind of cosmic terror. It had been my first conscious acquaintance with 'Ahor', and a main cause of the anxiety-neurosis.

As I stood against the wall in that street in Malaga, equally defenceless and exposed, obediently turning my head at the bellowed commands of the photographer, that trauma was revived. This, together with the other events of the same day, and the next three days with their mass executions, had apparently caused a loosening up and displacement of psychic strata close to rock-bottom--a softening of resistances and rearrangement of structures

which laid them temporarily open to that new type of experience that I am leading up to. (*The Invisible Writing*, 427, 428)

The four traumatic incidents--combined with the mass executions Koestler was soon to witness--so pierced and shattered his psychological defences that he says he was rendered open to a new consciousness, a new way of experiencing his world. But he could not have this "new type of experience" until he had a chance to recover from the trauma of his four experiences of horror, a recovery which came when he finally settled down into the contemplation that comes as a corollary of solitary confinement.

Once he had his new vision, Koestler could go on to re-examine and then to renounce the older vision that he had kept in front of him. He was able to relinquish his faith in Communism--or, more accurately, Marxism via Lenin via Stalin--Communism as an international power in the nineteen-thirties. Moreover, his new vision provided the means not just to a change of mind, Koestler says, but, more important, to "a change of personality". Disillusioned with Zionism, Koestler had turned to the Communist Party to give his life meaning, in his search for the absolute, for the "arrow in the blue." But, as we shall see, when the Communist Party demanded that the end justify the means, and that Party was more important than the individual--that individuality had no meaning, no place in the Party--Koestler could no longer stand the means to the end, nor could he continue to give up his individuality for the Cause. Yet Koestler could neither live in the void created when he let go of the old world-order that was Communism, nor could he live in the void that was the ultimate nothingness that he

considered death to be. In order to fill the void, and give his life new meaning, Koestler was compelled to create a new cosmology for himself, a cosmology which is faintly reminiscent of the structure of the rings of the Ptolemaic universe of classical Greece.

Koestler tells us that he first met with the new experience a few days after he been transferred from the prison in Malaga to cell No. 40 and solitary confinement in Seville's prison. To pass the time and to exercise his mind, Koestler scratched mathematical formulae on the white-washed wall of his cell, resurrecting a long-neglected, favorite hobby of his youth. He had been particularly interested in analytical geometry and was recalling "Euclid's proof that the number of primes is infinite" (*The Invisible Writing*, 428). He goes on to explain the theory, and he says that since he had become acquainted with Euclid's proof at school, it had always filled him with a deep aesthetic rather than an intellectual satisfaction. As he "recalled the method and scratched the symbols [of the formula] on the wall", he "felt the same enchantment" again (*The Invisible Writing*, 429). Then Koestler understands, for the first time, why he was always enchanted, and from the understanding comes his glimpse of "eternity."

But this glimpse of eternity is expressed in a manner that precludes any examination of a continuity and a similarity between it and its predecessor--between his new-found glimpse of eternity through a Euclidian formula and his old search for the eternal through the world-order of Communism. Koestler does not

himself seem to see certain similarities between his old vision and the "new" vision. What is similar between the two visions is loss of self: Koestler gave himself--mind and body--to the Communist Party, an organization that demanded he sacrifice his individuality, his art, to the greater, common good of the Party; and again Koestler loses his sense of self in his contemplation of the infinite number of primes.

For Koestler to see the similarities between the two experiences would invalidate the new experience--if there are similarities between the old experience of Communism and this new vision of the infinite, then the new vision is not so new, not unique after all, and Koestler is left with less than nothing. For Koestler to negate the negative once again--to fill the void again--the experience has to be new, has to be unique to give his life meaning. And when he creates new meaning he can then occupy the void that is created first by the loss of Communist ideology, and second by facing the nothingness of death.

But even though Koestler cannot recognize it, a careful reader, a late-20th century reader, who is long-adapted to living in the void, can recognize a continuity between the new vision and Communism. A reader who is used to living without a higher authority, a god-head, to give meaning to life can see continuity and similarities between Koestler's old world-order and the new cosmology he creates, especially when Koestler uses images of water or images connected with water to describe and create his new vision. Note, for example, his use of the words "wave", "evaporate", and "wake" when he talks about his unprecedented

understanding of his enchantment with Euclid's formula: we will see that these images are continuous with those he uses to describe his faith in Communism, images such as "a spring of fresh water", "a poisoned river", and "flooded" cities".

And then for the first time, I suddenly understood the reason for this enchantment: the scribbled symbols on the wall represented one of the rare cases where a meaningful and comprehensive statement about the infinite is arrived at by a precise and finite means. The infinite is a mystical mass shrouded in a haze; yet it was possible to gain some knowledge of it without losing oneself in treacherous ambiguities. The significance of this swept over me like a wave. The wave had originated in an articulate verbal insight; but this evaporated at once, leaving in its wake only a wordless essence, a fragrance of eternity, a quiver of the arrow in the blue. (*The Invisible Writing*, 429)

Koestler has caught a glimpse of the "arrow in the blue" through a finite means of expressing the infinite. But in the above passage, Koestler's use of the "arrow in the blue" image points to a continuity that originates even earlier, even deeper than the episodes linked by the water images: Koestler's images of water connect only his "new" death-cell vision and the recent Communist Party experiences; the arrow begins its flight much earlier in his life story.

The "arrow in the blue" image goes back not only to his more recent Communist Party experiences as an adult, but also (unlike the water images) to the days of his adolescence and childhood, days much further back, days which he covers *only* in the first part of his autobiography. That Koestler makes the connection between his joining the Communist Party and his quest for the "arrow" only in the first part of his autobiography is significant because he cannot consciously, overtly connect the latter two experiences--his early quest for the "arrow" and his

Communist Party membership--to the current death-cell experience he is describing in part two of his autobiography. For if Koestler were to see the similarities between the Communist Party and his "new" experience in the death-cell, he could not call the death-cell experience "new", as he does. And he could not then call himself a "new" person, a person who cannot be held responsible for the actions of the old person--the Communist Party member.

But now, before we go on with Koestler's account of his most recent, his 1937 and "new" vision of the "arrow", we must turn back eighteen years to look briefly at Koestler's 1919 adolescent experiences with the "arrow" to see how he does connect the early "arrow" experiences to his joining the Communist Party. In this brief glance at Koestler's past, we will see that his youthful interest in (now outdated) science led him to feel confident that science had solved the "riddles of the universe"--the meaning of life--but, that at the same time, he was troubled that the questions of infinity and eternity had not been included in the riddles. And so when he examines the question of infinity himself, he meets the "arrow in the blue" for the first time. Next, we will see how Koestler himself connects his quest for the infinite, the "arrow", to his membership in the Communist Party.

Koestler actually titled the first volume of his two-volume autobiography *Arrow In The Blue*, a title that stands for his continuing quest for the absolute, for the infinite, for eternity. He tells us that he once caught a glimpse of the infinite during a period of solitude, when he was a child, and

then again as an adolescent who was fascinated with mathematics and science in the days before the theories of Einstein and Freud, when it was easy to believe that "these disciplines [geometry, algebra, and physics] contained the clue to the mystery of existence" (*Arrow In The Blue*, 65). Koestler goes on to tell us that when he was a youth there were considered to be "seven riddles of the universe". Of these riddles, he says, "six appeared 'definitely solved' (including the Nature of Matter and the Origin of Life); while the seventh, "the question of Freedom of the Will, was declared to be 'a pure dogma, based on an illusion and having no real existence'" (*Arrow In The Blue*, 67). He was reassured to know, at the age of fourteen, that the riddles of the universe had all been solved. A doubt remained in his mind, however, because the "paradox of infinity and eternity had by some oversight not been included in the list" of riddles of the universe.

Koestler first came to the idea of the beatific "arrow in the blue", while he was puzzling over the "paradox of infinity", during the summer of his fourteenth year, in 1919. He was lying on his back, he says, "under a blue sky on a hill slope in Buda" contemplating the "unbroken, unending, transparent, complacent, saturated blue" sky above him when he "felt a mystic elation--one of those states of spontaneous illumination which are so frequent in childhood and become rarer and rarer as the years wear on. In the middle of the beatitude", he says,

the paradox of spatial infinity suddenly pierced my brain as if it had been stung by a wasp. You could shoot a super-arrow in to the blue with a super-force which could carry it beyond the pull of earth's gravity, past the moon,

past the sun's attraction--and what then? It would traverse inter-stellar space past other suns, other galaxies. . . and there would be nothing to stop it, no limit and no end, in space or in time--and the worst of it was that all this was not fanatasy but literally true. Such an arrow could be made real; in fact the comets which moved in open space were such natural arrows, rising in space to infinity--or falling into infinity; it came to the same thing, and it was sheer torture to the brain. (*Arrow In The Blue*, 63)

So as we can see, Koestler's image of the "arrow in the blue", is analogous to his search for the infinite, a search which goes back at least to his adolescence. Hence, the "arrow in the blue" is a longer-continuing image than the current water images of the infinite, which he connects only to his much more recent Communist Party experiences as an adult.

And just after Koestler has talked about his adolescent search for the infinite and his vision of the arrow in the blue, he does go on to make the connection between his search for the infinite, his vision of the arrow, and his joining the Communist Party. But he makes this connection only in the first volume of autobiography, not in the second volume where he is then able to talk about his experience of the infinite as being "new", and where he is able to create a new cosmology for himself.

In the first volume, where he connects the infinite to the arrow, what he says is important because here he openly acknowledges his continuing need to fill the void left by the absence of a higher authority, an authority who would have given his life meaning. And he also clearly recognizes that his need has led him to commit himself to false authorities promising false utopias which, in turn, have led to his disillusionment. He says:

My obsession with the arrow was merely the first phase of

the quest. When it proved sterile, the Infinite as a target was replaced by Utopias of one kind or another. It was the same quest and the same all-or-nothing mentality which drove me to the Promised Land [Palestine] and into the Communist Party. In other ages aspirations of this kind found their natural fulfillment in God. Since the end of the eighteenth century the place of God has been vacant in our civilization; but during the ensuing century and a half so many exciting things were happening that people were not aware of it. Now, however, after the shattering catastrophes which have brought the Age of Reason and Progress to a close, the void has made itself felt. The epoch in which I grew up was an age of disillusionment and an age of longing. (*Arrow In the Blue*, 69)

As we can see, Koestler connects his quest for the infinite to his joining the Communist Party. He admits a predilection to searching out utopias and aspiring to a god-head. But at the same time, he also admits that "God is Dead" and that this death makes the void felt. When the vacancy of God is not being filled by "utopias of one kind or another" or by the Communist Party, Koestler is driven to seek a new utopia. But when he experiences his "new" vision in the Spanish death-cell, he does not admit to the continuity between his being driven into the Communist Party and his "new" vision as he leaves Communism behind him. So now that we have seen that there is a continuity, let us return to the Spanish death-cell where Koestler has his "new" experiences which, in turn, will remind the reader of his similar youthful summertime experience.

Koestler has been scribbling the Euclidian formula which proves that the number of primes is infinite. And as he understands for the first time the reason for his long-time enchantment with the formula--that the formula "represented one of the rare cases where a meaningful and comprehensive statement about the infinite is arrived at by a precise and finite

means"--he is able to detect a "fragrance of eternity, a quiver of the arrow in the blue" (*The Invisible Writing*, 429). With that brief detection of the arrow, he stood entranced for some minutes, he says, with a wordless feeling of "this is perfect--this is perfect" until he became slightly uncomfortable.

There was a "slight nagging discomfort" at the back of his mind, Koestler goes on to say, "some trivial circumstance that marred the perfection of the moment" Then he remembered "the nature of that irrelevant annoyance":

I was, of course, in prison and might be shot. But this was immediately answered by a feeling whose verbal translation would be: 'So what? is that all? have you got nothing more serious to worry about?'--an answer so spontaneous, fresh and amused as if the intruding annoyance had been the loss of a collar-stud. Then I was floating on my back in a river of peace, under bridges of silence. It came from nowhere and flowed nowhere. Then there was no river and no I. The I had ceased to exist. (*The Invisible Writing*, 429)

But this time, instead of lying on his back on a hill in Buda contemplating the sky above him and the "paradox of spatial infinity", Koestler is now contemplating a "precise and finite means" of stating the infinite when he recalls that he has a strong reason to be dissatisfied with the "relative world of the now and here".

So not being able to live in the present moment, Koestler wipes the moment out and finds himself "floating on his back" in a place where all time--past, present, and future--has ceased to exist. As Communism loses its promise of salvation and its hold on him, and as he faces the distinct possibility of death without salvation, Koestler creates a place where there is no beginning or end--no time and no death. Koestler has found a utopia again,

as he did when he was a youth, and as he hoped to do when he joined the Communist Party.

Now Koestler professes extreme embarrassment at having just written "The I had ceased to exist", especially because, among other things, he aims at "verbal precision", and he does not like "nebulous gushing". But such "mystical" experiences, he says, are only devalued if put into words. He must use words, however, to communicate what cannot be communicated. So then he moves in a "vicious circle".

But in spite of his protests of embarrassment and lack of verbal precision, when he generates his own words and text, Koestler becomes the author and authority who creates the meaning of life. He no longer needs the words and texts of others--of Weizmann about Zionism, or of Marx, Lenin, and Stalin about Communism--to give meaning to life and to promise a utopia. He has created his own meaning and his own utopia. About this "new" experience, he goes on to say:

When I say 'the I had ceased to exist', I refer to a concrete experience that is verbally as incommunicable as the feeling aroused by a piano concerto, yet just as real--only much more real. In fact, its primary mark is the sensation that this state is more real than any other one has experienced before--that for the first time the veil has fallen and one is in touch with 'real reality', the hidden order of things, the X-ray texture of the world, normally obscured by layers of irrelevancy. (*The Invisible Writing*, 429-430)

Even though what Koestler has experienced--this "real reality"--cannot be explained verbally, he explains and defines, anyway. Thus, he composes new meaning to replace Communism, which had given meaning to his life previously.

In his definition, he first says that his experience of "The

I had ceased to exist" is unlike other "emotional entrancements", such as music, landscapes, or love, in that it has definite intellectual, or rather "noumenal" content. That is, the experience has meaning in itself, but not verbal meaning. Then Koestler compares his experience to what it is like, and ends up using psychoanalytic terms, such as "oceanic feeling" and "catharsis", rather than political or religious terms, attempting to remove the experience from the realms of fanatical politics or religion. He does not want the experience to be seen as irrational. He says that the "verbal transcriptions that come nearest" to his sensations are:

the unity and interlocking of everything that exists, an inter-dependence like that of gravitational fields or communicating vessels. The 'I' ceases to exist because it has, by a kind of mental osmosis, established communication with, and been dissolved in, the universal pool. It is this process of dissolution and limitless expansion which is sensed as the 'oceanic feeling', as the draining of all tension, the absolute catharsis, the peace that passeth all understanding. (*The Invisible writing,*)

After his dissolution and expansion into the "universal pool", Koestler would find himself returning to the "lower order of reality" gradually, painlessly, and never knowing if the experience had lasted for a minute or an hour. But he did know that the after-effect, which dispelled fear, and sustained invigoration and serenity, lasted for "hours and days". He could never voluntarily induce this "new type" of experience. And, at first, he would have such experiences two or three times a week, he tells us, then with less frequency.

After Koestler was released from prison, the special experiences occurred only once or twice yearly. "But", Koestler

says, "by that time the groundwork for a change of personality was completed" (*The Invisible Writing*, 430). Koestler is telling us that these new sensations have created not just a change of mind but, rather, a new person. Then Koestler could say that the old person, who was a Communist, no longer exists; consequently, the "new" Koestler cannot be held responsible for his actions on behalf of the Communist Party.

Nonetheless, when Koestler describes his "new" (death-cell) experience of the "I" ceasing to exist for him, he dare not admit that he knows that one can have a similar experience through dedication to a totalitarian regime, such as the Communist regime of which he was a member. He has admitted to the connection between his earlier adolescent search for the "arrow", for the infinite, and his later joining of the Communist Party. But, even though he uses some of the same words to describe the three experiences--his adolescent search, his search through Communism, and his death-cell sensations--he does not openly admit to a similar continuity between his search for the infinite in Communism and his latest death-cell experiences of the infinite. Koestler calls his death-cell experiences of the infinite "new" because, faced with the loss of an ideology, and faced with the nothingness of death, he has to fill the void again--he has to negate the negative--to give his life meaning. He has to see the experience as new so that he can create a new person out of the experience, one who is blameless, one to whom the crimes/sins of Stalinist Marxism will not attach.

Others have also considered how the idea of timelessness, or

the infinite, and the meaning of life and of death, have been found in political ideologies--particularly totalitarianisms like Nazism and Stalinism--which became substitutes for traditional religious ideas of the infinite and the meaning of life and death. In an essay "On The Relation of Time to Death", the philosopher Helmut Plessner considers how one might lose one's self to a totalitarian regime such as National Socialism or to the "mythology of the class struggle", which both provide a "common directive for thought and action", and which promise material salvation: just as Koestler gave himself up to the promises of Communism, and used his art for the propaganda of mass control.

Plessner says that when people invoked "the disintegration of God-ordained authority", their invocation brought about "the continuous search for new interpretations and *ersatz* religions". But even though, or perhaps because, there was no longer a "God-ordained authority", these new interpretations and imitation religions, according to Plessner, could alleviate the individual fear of death and the loss of a god-head. These political ideologies promise utopia--a timelessness--here and now, a promise which relieves the fear of the "meaninglessness of the empty future" and, in turn, the "fear of death". Such fears are further reduced when the nation or the Party is placed ahead of the individual: then the individual finds meaning in furthering the existence and future of the nation or the Party. Future existence for the individual, filled by the nation or the Party, is no longer meaningless or empty. As Plessner says, these

imitation religions

strive to extract a promise of salvation from the material of experience, a promise that may provide a common directive for thought and action. As we can see from Nietzsche's theory of eternal return, there is something violent about these directives. In order to exorcise the fatal meaninglessness of the empty future, they must inhibit criticism--that is, set themselves up as dogma. The ideology of National Socialism was a product of such fear. Its regressive mythology banished collective historical fear and also individual fear of death as life grown meaningless. If the individual is nothing and the nation is everything (though possessing value because of its racial quality), the practical survival of the individual in the nation guarantees the fulfillment of his existence and prescribes his political line. The same, with appropriate transpositions, is true of the mythology of class struggle. (*Man And Time*, 244-245)

This is not Plessner's critique of Marxism--or Fascism, for that matter--but, rather, his explanation for the enthusiasm for totalitarianism in the first third of the Twentieth Century. Like one of many, Koestler had been attracted to the totality of Communism. But as an insider he would be deprived of his illusions about the Communist Party: he knew, as Plessner states, that the "I" can disappear through the collective thought and action required by his old ideology. He even comes close to expressing some thoughts similar to Plessner's when he talks about his "obsessive" quest for the Infinite driving him first to the Promised Land and then into the Communist Party after his disillusionment with Zionism. And when he reminds us that his search for the Infinite is like the aspiration of other ages, aspirations which found "their natural fulfillment in God", rather than in Zionism or Communism, Koestler's and Plessner's thoughts run along parallel lines. Also, like Plessner, Koestler says that "the place of God has been vacant", and the "void has

made itself felt".

But Koestler cannot know what he knows--he cannot acknowledge that every time he is faced with the meaninglessness of life, he searches for meaning in the same way, replacing, as he says, one utopia for another. First he believes the claims of the nineteenth-century scientists when they demonstrate that they have solved the riddles of the universe. Next he looks to the words of Weizmann who promises utopia in Palestine; and, lastly, he takes the canons of Marx, Lenin, and Stalin to heart while he heads for the "new Jerusalem" in the Soviet Union.

If he were to admit to the similarities between his search for utopia in Communism and his own current creation of a utopia, Koestler would then have to see that his "new" experience was not so new. And he would not be able so clearly to disassociate himself from the old ideology and what it required of him for its directive of controlled common thought and action. Nor would he so easily be able to overcome his disillusionment with the false utopia of Communism. When he does not admit to similarities between his old experience of utopia through Communism and his "new" death-cell experience, Koestler can now create his own texts or canons, texts which describe a "new" utopia, and which replace the texts and canons of Weizmann and Marx.

Koestler does want to disassociate himself from the old ideology of Communism. When he tells us that his "new" experiences in the death-cell had laid the groundwork for a "change of personality"--rather than just a change of mind--he is saying that he is a new person. He wants us to believe, as much

he needs to believe, that this new person sees the world in a new way, in a way that is philosophical and spiritual rather than religious or political. He needs to disassociate himself from any kind of fanaticism--religious or political--that would lead him to search for the absolute, and to end up acting in an unsavory manner, as he seems to think he did for the Communist Party. He explains that his "new" experience is not a religious conversion. Rather, he defines his experience in philosophical and scientific terms in order to seem logical and rational. He does not want to be seen as a person who has lost his senses. He is making a logical appeal, and constructing an image of himself as a careful, even sceptical thinker. He knows that his readers would not admire and perhaps even be suspicious of another "religious" experience, given his previous searches for a utopia in Zionism and Communism. So, this time, he needs to be seen as a person who is in control of himself, rather than as a person who is controlled, as he goes through his "new" experience because he needs these sensations to be valid in our eyes as well as his. He is countering any possible criticism that this new vision is just a mirage, just another distorted vision or disillusionment.

Yet Koestler does admit that "religious conversion" on the deathbed or, as in his case, the death-cell is "an almost irresistible temptation", a temptation that can play on "crude fear" and lead to a loss of the critical faculties. Or the temptation to religious conversion can be more subtle and open a person to a "mystic" experience. Koestler says that when a

person has to face nothingness, no-thing (as he did), the person may be open to a "mystic" experience, rather than to fear, which may lead to a genuine conversion. And by telling us that he did have a "mystic" experience rather than the more comforting--and less rational--"religious conversion" through fear, and by using literal rather than metaphorical terms to systematize the experience to create a timeless cosmology, Koestler appears to have remained in control and kept his reasoning powers. In fact, with his reasoning he has created something out of nothing. Deprived of his illusions, he has created a new vision. He has filled the void with his text. He has become his own author and authority and now can give to life his own meaning, rather than the meaning of Weizmann or Marx. When he faced death and meaninglessness, when he faced the void, he did not give in to terror.

Now that he has no external controller, no outside authority, Koestler needs to convince himself, more than us, that he is in control of himself. His text here is reflexive and confessional rather than rhetorical and political. And the confessional mode of the text makes Koestler his own reader--a reader in search of redemption: we can assume this from the layers of concession and defense he writes into his text. With this writing, Koestler does not just create a state of mind for himself. He also creates a state of being. And so he needs to exercise control over his mind and his being in the creation of his text--his meaning--because he does not want to see himself as some kind of irrational fanatic who has created another utopia

and more dogma to justify it. Thus, when he says that his experience was "mystical" rather than religious--to gain his reader's respect and to allay any suspicions--he appeals, as much to himself as to his reader. He explains:

Faced with the Absolute, the ultimate *nada*, the mind may become receptive to mystic experiences. These one may regard as 'real' in the sense of the subjective pointers to an objective reality *ipso facto* eluding comprehension. But because the experience is inarticulate, has no sensory shape, colour or words, it lends itself to transcription in many forms, including visions of the Cross or of the goddess Kali; they are like the dreams of a person born blind, and may assume the intensity of a revelation. Thus, a genuine mystic experience may mediate a *bona fida* conversion to practically any creed, Christianity, Buddhism, or Fire-Worship. (*The Invisible Writing* 431)

And when Koestler tells us that because his sensations cut across all religions and could be applied to any creed rather than to a particular religion, he wants us to see that he was led to transformation rather than back to doctrine. He wants us to believe that his experience was a spiritual revelation--unique and universal--rather than a conversion to unoriginal and singular religious dogma. He wants to believe that he is now the creator in control and no longer the controlled follower.

Now armed with his new experience of "real reality", he fought the comfort he might find in a religion, tempting as the comfort might be. And not only would his new mystical experiences prepare him to fight a conversion to a particular religion, but now he was also armed against his early rational and materialistic training--a training which had attracted him to the ideology of *Communism* in the first place--and now he also could face his disillusionment with and rid himself of the doctrine of *Communism*. He says:

I was thus waging a two-front war against the concise, rational, materialistic way of thinking which, in thirty-two years of training in mental cleanliness, had become a habit and a necessity like bodily hygiene--and against the temptation to surrender and creep back into the protective womb of faith. With those nightly muffled 'madres' and 'socorros' in one's ear, the latter solution appeared as attractive and natural as taking cover from a pointed gun. (*The Invisible Writing*, 431)

Koestler won his "two-front" war: he neither crept into the "protective womb of faith", attractive as that might have been in the face of death, nor did he succumb to his former way of materialistic thinking. Instead, he would have us believe that through his new experiences he arrived at a new way of seeing the world that was more spiritual and philosophical than religious or political.

As his own authority, he was able to create a new system, a new world-order for himself. He replaced the old material, rational system of Communism with a new system that, at its highest level, is spiritual rather than material or rational, he says. And this system, as he describes it, reminds one of the cosmology of Ptolemy with its order of spheres. This is a system much older than Marxist-Leninism: this system harks back to the eternal return of cyclical time, where time, in a sense, is timeless.

Koestler needed to stop time. He was uncomfortable with the past because he was giving up past meaning--past ideology. And he could not live easily in the present because he was expecting his execution. Nor could he look forward to the future because he thought death waited there, that he had no future. So Koestler created a cosmology where, at the highest level of

reality, there was no time. But, in spite of its spiritual nature, this world-view is not religious because it is more a cosmology than a theology, and it contains no doctrine. This view, moreover, demands neither adherents--it does not proselytize--nor a moral imperative.

Koestler created a world consisting of three orders of reality, with each order over-lapping the others. When he talks about the first two orders, which are perceptual and conceptual, Koestler tends to speak literally. When he describes the third order--the highest order--which is spiritual, he speaks metaphorically. Yet even when Koestler is literal, he is not doctrinal. And when he is metaphorical, he is not religious.

He describes the first order as the "narrow world of sensory perception". And the "perceptual world", Koestler says, "was enveloped by a conceptual world which contained phenomena not directly perceivable, such as gravitation, electromagnetic fields, and curved space"--here he speaks literally. The second order of reality filled in the gaps and gave meaning to the absurd patchiness of the sensory world" (*The Invisible Writing*, 431). The highest order--"the third order of reality"--was the reality he had experienced in his death-cell after he had first reflected that finite statements about the infinite were possible; and, for Koestler, the highest order "alone invested existence with meaning."

The third order of reality, Koestler goes on to say, "enveloped, interpenetrated, and gave meaning to the second" order. The third, and the highest, order of reality contained

"occult phenomena" which could not be understood or explained on the first and second levels, on the level of the senses or on the conceptual level. And yet, Koestler says, the third level occasionally invades the sensory and the conceptual level "like spiritual meteors piercing the primitive's vaulted sky." But instead of continuing in a metaphorical vein, he goes on to speak of the second and third orders of reality in literal rather than metaphorical terms, except when he talks about the third order's "ultimate reality" as "a text written in invisible ink". This invisible text is a metaphor, a figurative rather than a literal expression. Koestler says:

Just as the conceptual order showed up the illusions and distortions of the senses, so the 'third order' disclosed that time, space and causality, that the isolation, separateness and spatio-temporal limitations of the self were merely optical illusions on the next higher level . . . Just as one could not feel the pull of a magnet with one's skin, so one could not hope to grasp in cognate terms the nature of ultimate reality. It was a text written in invisible ink; and though one could not read it, the knowledge that it existed was sufficient to alter the texture of one's existence, and make one's actions conform to the text. (*The Invisible Writing*, 432)

So--facing death and the absence of God--from this void, Koestler has created a new reality, a new meaning, a new text for himself.

Octavio Paz, Mexican poet, essayist, and social philosopher, has looked at how other modern writers (for example, the French Surrealists) used the absence of God to rebel against traditional literary forms with their narrative logic and referential language. Paz demonstrates how these writers reject orthodox Christian cosmogony where one monolithic authority--one book--prevails. Koestler too had rejected the prevalence of a monolithic religious authority and one text. But, like so many

other modern writers on the Left, he did embrace, for a time, the ersatz religion and authority of Communism. Now, instead of Communist doctrine, these writers made analogy the center of their texts, as does Koestler of his text.

Paz says that "at the heart of analogy lies emptiness: the multiplicity of texts implies there is no original text. Into this void the reality of the world and meaning of language together rush headlong and disappear" (*Children of the Mire*, 71). The "emptiness", the "void" that Paz talks about is the absorption of the writer and the reader into the "multiplicity of texts". The void is the absence of an original creator (God) and of a single reality or text. The absence assumes many creators each responsible for his or her own reality or text. And if each is responsible for the creations of his or her own reality (text) then only he or she can know its meaning, thus becoming the "decipherer" or "translator" of the meaning of individual reality. So, faced with the void, Koestler too became his own creator, responsible for his own text, his own reality.

But at centre of his text--his meaning--lies analogy. And for Koestler the analogue is the metaphor. If, as Paz says, "at the heart of analogy lies emptiness", then ironically Koestler's metaphors are, as Paz would also say, "the mask of nothingness". And Paz goes on:

The universe resolves itself in a book: an impersonal [text] which is not the work of the [writer] . . . nor of anyone else. It is language which speaks through the [writer], who is now only a transparency. Crystallization of language in an impersonal work is not only the double of the universe . . . but also its abolition. The nothingness which is the world turns itself into a book: *the book*. . . [B]ut the book does not exist; it was never written. Analogy ends in

silence. (*Children of the Mire*, 76-77)

The early twentieth-century writer knew that the book is illegible--there is no book. But even though Koestler would agree that the book cannot be read, he would not agree to there being no book. Where Paz talks about the "impersonal" text which speaks through the writer who is now only a "transparency", Koestler uses the metaphor of "a text written in invisible ink"--the invisible writing--that one cannot read. And where Paz talks about "an impersonal text" which is not the work of one author(ity)--because when we each become our own author(ity), the result can only be the "crystallization of language" which is "not only the double of the universe . . . but also its abolition"--Koestler uses the metaphor of the captain of a ship setting out to sea with a "sealed order", to be opened only at sea.

And Koestler continues with the metaphor: the captain looks forward to ending "all uncertainty" by opening his orders. When he does open the order, however, he finds that the text is invisible and that no chemical treatment will make the text visible. But sometimes "a word", or "a figure denoting a meridian", becomes visible, only to fade again. The captain of the ship can never know the exact wording of the order, nor whether or not he has complied with the order. "But", Koestler says, the captain's "awareness of the order in his pocket, even though it cannot be deciphered, makes him think and act differently from the captain of a pleasure-cruiser or of a pirate ship" (*The Invisible Writing*, 432).

Thus, we can see that Koestler might agree with Paz about

the crystalline nature of the text. But we can also see that unlike Paz and the Surrealists, Koestler believes that, although invisible, there is a text. And even though Koestler would agree to the crystalline text as the "double of the universe", he would not agree that the "crystallization of language" is also "the abolition of the universe". For Koestler needs the text, he needs a higher meaning, an ultimate reality. Unlike other early twentieth-century writers, Koestler cannot live in the void; he cannot live in a world without meaning. But Koestler does not propose that he and his text are replacements for a traditional monolithic religious authority and a single text. On the contrary, whether or not Koestler speaks metaphorically or literally, he is careful to remove himself and his text from any possible religious dogma or doctrine.

Koestler likes to spin out the metaphor of the invisible writing changing the course of one's existence, and making "one's actions conform to the text". He also likes to believe, he says, that various religious founders had been able, for a moment, to read small parts of the invisible text, but had revised those parts so much that they can no longer say what is genuine. Koestler implies that before they became static, organized, and inauthentic, the origins of the traditional religions were probably much like his genuine, spontaneous and individual spiritual revelations.

I also liked to think that the founders of religions, prophets, saints and seers had at moments been able to read a fragment of the invisible text; after which they had so much padded, dramatised and ornamented it, that they themselves could no longer tell what parts of it were authentic. (*The Invisible Writing*, 432)

Koestler is saying that the kind of spiritual reality that he has been talking about, that he has experienced, could be considered religious too. But the more traditional spiritual revelations--and the newer revolutionary politics of the Communists--were spoiled by those who made a creed out of the experience and cultivated a following. After having been attracted to the doctrines of Zionism and Communism, Koestler now needs to be seen as a person who can no longer become the follower or the creator of a text that is dogma.

Clearly Koestler repudiates any religious connection that might be made with his newly-created cosmology. He tries to remove his spiritual sensations from dogmatism of any kind, political or religious. He wants to remove his new world-view from the kind of dogmatism that turned the Communist Party into a faith for him and many others like him, a faith he now rejects. He does not want his death-cell experience to be invalidated by association with any kind of organized, collective religious or political experience, or with any kind of illogical religious mysticism, or with any kind of intolerant religious or political fanaticism. To validate himself and his experience he needs to be seen as a logical and tolerant person--as a person in control of his own faculties--who has experienced a special kind of spiritual reality, rather than as an unreasonable and intolerant raving fanatic who has experienced an incomprehensible religious or political fantasy. Just as Orwell benefits from his readers' vision of him as non-partisan, so too Koestler wards off the possible accusation that what led from his disillusionment--his

new non-dogmatic cosmology--is just another illusion.

Nonetheless, Koestler's appeal is a false move, rhetorically. His appeal to logic does not completely work for a late twentieth-century reader, one who is used to living in the void without any one text or canon to give life meaning. And even though he has used the metaphors connected with water and the metaphor of "the invisible writing" to stand in for his ineffable experience, when he systematizes his sensations, his rhetorical strategy does not work for him. When he organizes his feelings into a system, and when he turns the system into a new world-order, a new cosmology, one cannot help but wonder if he has not just replaced the more political and dogmatic world-order of Communism with his own apolitical, non-dogmatic, more metaphysical system. But dogmatic or not, his creation of a "new" cosmology still signifies that he needs to fill the void left by the absence of a higher authority--he still cannot live in a world without meaning--or, without a certain type of meaning and, especially, its practice.

Disillusioned with the ideology, Koestler can no longer look for meaning in Communism. He is no longer satisfied with the higher authority and text Communism offers. Then when he is faced with death, with the ultimate *nada*--the ultimate void--he is forced once again to search for and find "the arrow in the blue" which not only provides a "new" meaning for his life, but also allows him to systematize the meaning. He has become the creator of his own world, the author of his own text, and of his own meaning. Consequently, even though the system might be

"new", his need to create meaning is the same need that drove him first to Zionism and then to the Communist Party. In other words, when Koestler talks about why he joined the Communist Party and about why he left it--why he was disillusioned--he maintains the same set of assumptions, images, and propositions for both occasions. So it is not surprising that when he leaves the world-view of Communism behind him he needs to replace that system with one of his own, just as he replaced Zionism with Communism when he became disillusioned with the former. Still, even though his need might be the same, the new vision is not the same as the old, as Koestler so painstakingly pointed out. Perhaps Koestler's new world-view is a progressive one, for him, because with his creation of it he is no longer censoring himself.

Like Koestler, and the writers Paz talks about, Orwell is a twentieth-century writer. But unlike Koestler--and so many other intellectuals on the Left who became Communists between the two World Wars to combat the rise of Fascism and the decaying institutions and traditions in religion, government, and art--Orwell attached himself to no one particular ideology or institution. Unlike Koestler who searched for the Absolute in Zionism and in Communism, and then in his own system, Orwell was an agnostic and humanist. For Orwell meaning came through experience, not through some higher power or comprehensive explanation. But Orwell was still informing himself politically when he joined the Spanish Civil War, unlike Koestler who had been a knowledgeable and confirmed ideologue for at least four

years previous to the War. The war would be a formative experience for Orwell in a way that it was not for Koestler. In fact, for Koestler the war was a shattering experience. And unlike Orwell, Koestler, an insider--a member of one of the factions--knew all too well about the factionalism on the Left; he knew there was no "united front". Koestler knew that the social redemption of the individual was irrelevant to the cold, aloof purposes of systematic Stalinism. Unlike Koestler, Orwell had to go to Spain to see the war within the war, to realize the devastation of the internecine warfare of the Left-wing factions on any united front against Franco. The factional bickering and the resulting lies gave Orwell an ideological purpose he had not had before the war, and drained Koestler's ideological purpose from him. But, at the same time, Orwell found out that he could never give himself over to any one doctrine. He had to be able to write freely about lying and truth-telling. He no longer had to go down and out to provide the material necessary for his writing: the war provided Orwell with enough of the kinds of experiences he had to previously seek out to provide for his texts. So disillusionment for Orwell was a constructive, a directive experience; for Koestler, it was a destructive, disorienting experience.

As Orwell's biographer Bernard Crick says, "from 1937 onwards", Orwell "knew where he stood" and "what he was capable of doing". The war had provided Orwell with his greatest meaning; it had given him a sense of purpose he had not previously felt. For Koestler, the war had destroyed any meaning

he had hoped to find in the ideology of Communism. With that meaning destroyed, Koestler then had to confront the yawning void, or, as he says, "the ultimate *nada*". Then, while the persona of George Orwell was being formed by the war, Koestler was having to re-form, psychologically, ideologically, literally, and metaphorically, or so he tells us.

We saw how Koestler's capture and imprisonment in a Spanish death-cell affected him, how these events allowed him to create new meaning for himself in the face of his disillusionment with Communism, and in the face of death. Now we will consider what Koestler has to say about his disillusionment, first at the beginning of *The Invisible Writing*. Then we will turn back to the end of his book to review the process of his disillusionment: we will see that Koestler took a long time--almost seven years--to let go of his ideology, and that he would feel terribly alone when he finally did let go. Yet, he would also begin to feel that he was no longer writing to serve the Cause but that he was writing for himself and perhaps for the sake of Art. Out of his disillusionment, Koestler no longer felt the necessity for self-censorship, and so he was able to create not just a new world-view, but also new texts that were artistic rather than propagandistic.

When, at the start of *The Invisible Writing*, Koestler presents his assumptions and images about joining and leaving the Communist Party, he quotes Picasso--"I went to Communism as one goes to a spring of fresh water". Then he begins his discussion about joining and leaving the Party with the same words. At

first Koestler uses remarkable images connected with water--both life-giving and life-destroying--when he discusses ideology gained and lost; next he uses images of an open text and visible ink to connect to the earlier political and dogmatic ideology of his youth. And finally he connects his image of the invisible writing to his current open-ended and non-dogmatic faith.

I went to Communism as one goes to a spring of fresh water, and I left Communism as one clammers out of a poisoned river strewn with the wreckage of flooded cities and the corpses of the drowned. This, in sum, is my story from 1931 to 1938, from my twenty-sixth to my thirty-third year. The reeds to which I clung and which saved me from being swallowed up were the outgrowth of a new faith [Communism], rooted in mud, slippery, elusive, yet tenacious. The quality of that faith I cannot define beyond saying that in my youth I regarded the universe as an open book, printed in the language of physical equations and social determinants, whereas now it appears to me as a text written in invisible ink, of which, in our rare moments of grace, we are able to decipher a small fragment. This volume, then, is the account of a journey from specious clarity to obscure groping. (*The Invisible writing*, 19)

When Koestler says that he felt that Communism--the new faith for the twentieth century--"saved him from being swallowed up", it is important to recall the context for these words. Koestler was a political liberal and a non-practising Jew who was living in Berlin in 1931--the same time and place that Hitler and the Nazi Party rapidly ascended to power. People like Koestler's employers, who were both Liberals and Jews, betrayed their Liberal and Jewish principles, not only by firing their Jewish or Communist employees, like Koestler who was both, but also by becoming Nazis themselves. The German Socialists, moreover, were competing with the Communists for power instead of joining them to fight the Nazis. Given these political circumstances, it is no wonder that Koestler felt the Communist Party to be a

life-saving if not a life-giving force, and that he had no choice but to become a Communist.

But when he visited the Soviet Union in 1932 and saw the authoritarian nature of the Party in action against non-Russian peoples, and when he saw "early" show trials, he began to have serious doubts about Communism, this "new faith" which was "rooted in mud", and was "slippery, elusive, yet tenacious". But, in spite of his early doubts, Koestler clung to his faith for seven years, even after his disquieting visit to the Soviet Union.

When Koestler joined the Party, he was still under the influence of the scientific materialism and social determinism that was part of his education. He found a political counterpart to that materialism and determinism in Communism. But the important point is that as part of his disillusionment, he would come to recognize, as we shall soon see, that under the political system of Communism the individual meant nothing, the Party everything, and that the End justified the Means. If one life or thousands of lives were needed for the greater good of the Party, then so be it. Koestler would come to find the lack of respect for individual life and freedom to be intolerable. In the end he would find, in fact, that Communism was literally life-destroying; hence his images of the "poisoned river" and of the "flooded cities" strewn with "the corpses of the drowned". What is more important, however, is that with his realization of how the Party devalued life--and with his facing death through the executions of others and the expectation of his own execution--he also came

to realize just how precious is an individual life. Also with this realization came a sense of ethics.

After his sixty-four days of solitary confinement was discontinued so that he could exercise in the court-yard outside his cell with three other prisoners, Koestler began to consider the value of a single human life. Soon he realized just how much the Communist Party discounted a single human life. He tells us that when he went out to exercise the second day, one of the other three he had met the first day, a young Andalusian peasant, a former Anarchist militiaman, was not in the court-yard. "He had been shot during the night," Koestler says; and from then on Koestler "lived in constant fear" that the other two "would have also vanished" (*The Invisible Writing*, 433).

As . . . the hour of exercise drew nearer, I would become more and more anxious and worried. . . . [I]n a completely irrational manner, I felt convinced that their fate partly depended on me, and that my willingness for sacrifice could somehow protect them (*The Invisible Writing*, 433).

Koester then began to "probe" into himself "to discover the exact amount of sacrifice" he was willing to make; and such probing led Koestler to some "grotesque reflections".

He found, for example, that he "was willing to give one limb for each, but only in the form of one leg and one arm and not both of the same kind", and he goes on to tell us that these "strange preoccupations" were not new to him:

Already in Malaga I had become prone to strange preoccupations of a similar kind. There, people had been marched off to execution at any hour of the day; and when I heard the familiar oily voice read out the lists, I felt an obsessive urge to share in imagination the fate of those who were taken out, to live and re-live the scene of the execution in every detail--for I was convinced that that act of solidarity and identification would make death easier for

them. (*The Invisible Writing*, 433-34)

And eventually, Koestler found he could give his life for either of the two prisoners, "one for one", as he says, rather than just one limb; but neither as a "noble act", nor as a "sacrifice".

He found, instead, that he could give his life as easily and as naturally as the sharing of last cigarettes. Now he could no longer understand how he had ever felt otherwise. For Koestler the truth--of a life for a life--came from his experience with the illiterate, Andalusian militiaman, who was executed the next day. The fact that the lowly Andalusian militiaman, Nicholas, had demonstrated concern for and understanding of his fellowmen, was proof enough for Koestler that all of us are responsible for one another. From these experiences--of the death of the militiaman, of his fear of the death of the other two prisoners, of his coming to value a single life--Koestler would become preoccupied with the procedures of the utilitarian social and political ethics within Communism. From this preoccupation, Koestler would develop a set of more humane ethics for himself.

Koestler goes on to say that even though he and his fellow prisoners were in solitary confinement, which he realizes is a "spiritual hothouse", their predicament was only an extreme form of the predicament inherent in the human condition. The difference, "whether measured in terms of freedom, or fear" or the length of a life, was a difference in degree, not in kind. For Koestler the "metaphysical problem of the nature of the bonds" which united him with his fellow prisoners reflected --"though in a more naked, concentrated form"--the basic problem from which all systems of social ethics are derived. And he felt

that his "seemingly absurd and overstrung preoccupations", with the bonds that unite people, had a "desperately direct bearing on the state of our society and on applied politics."

Koestler then examines how the Communist Party determines the value of human life. When he recognizes that the value of a person's life is determined by the usefulness of the person to the Party, he touches the heart of his disillusionment. And when he sees that the Party can demand the sacrifice of the less useful person over the person more useful to the Party, if there is a question about which is the more valuable life, then Koestler sees that for the Party the End justifies the Means. As Koestler says:

My party comrades . . . would say that the question whether A should sacrifice his life for B, depended entirely on the relative social value of A and B. If Comrade Arturo was more useful in the struggle against Fascism than little Nicholas [the Andalusian militiaman], then, in a concrete situation, it would be for Nicholas to lay down his life for Arturo, but not the other way round. Moreover, if the latter, led by mystic sentimentality, were to sacrifice himself for Nicholas, this would weaken the cause he was serving, and would constitute an objectively harmful, anti-social act. From there it followed that not only one, but a thousand or a hundred thousand Nicholases could and would be sacrificed if the cause was supposed to demand it. For in this view Nicholas existed merely as a social abstraction, a mathematical unit, obtained by dividing a mass of ten thousand Militiamen by ten thousand. (*The Invisible Writing*, 432)

But the equation does not work for Koestler, because an equation that relies on social determinism is subject to manipulation, to control and to propaganda: the figures can always be changed to suit the needs of the cause. And, more importantly, the equation does not work because if in this equation one human life is merely a "social abstraction", or a mathematical unit, then ten

thousand human lives are merely abstractions too, and have no value. One life, or ten thousand lives--the numbers make no real difference, as long as those lives serve the Cause.

Koestler's death-cell experiences, which forced him to see the worth of human life, and which finally deprived him of any remnants of illusions he might have had about Communism, allowed him to see fallacies in other similar political movements --historical and contemporary--that had become dogmatic. Without his illusions, Koestler is now free to create his own ideology which contains no doctrine. His system is neither contemporary nor historical, but is, rather, apolitical, ahistorical, and beyond any life-time. At its highest level, which encompasses the eternal, the arrow in the blue, Koestler's new system is beyond the concerns of life and death. This highest level, moreover, cannot be easily grasped because its ultimate reality is written in invisible ink. His disillusionment had widened his vision. Now he can see that any system that devalues and makes an object out of human life is also a system that can justify mass murder.

Not only Communism, but any political movement which implicitly relies on purely utilitarian ethics, must become a victim to the same fatal error. It is a fallacy as naive as a mathematical teaser, and yet its consequences lead straight to Goya's Disasters, to the reign of the guillotine, the torture-chambers of the Inquisition, or the cellars of the Lubianka. Whether the road is paved with quotations from Rousseau, Marx, Christ or Mohammed, makes little difference. (*The Invisible Writing*, 436)

In his disillusionment with Communism, which has allowed him to realize the dangers of political systems that are based on utilitarian ethics, Koestler is reluctant to become committed

again to any one political system.

He says that it would have been easier, more comfortable, for him to take up a "whole packet of ready-made beliefs", but without the comfort of his illusions, Koestler can now say that to replace one set of dogmas for another would "hardly be an inspiring example to those who cling to a minimum of intellectual honesty" (*The Invisible Writing*, 436). Thus, wanting to be intellectually honest and to redeem himself, Koestler, while replacing the Communist system with one of his own, at least created a system that was neither political nor dogmatic.

Koestler admits that his "spiritual crisis" and the new a-political, non-dogmatic system he created--the changes that came about through the profound sensations experienced in the death-cell, where every day was "judgment day"--did not occur over-night. But, rather, those sensations took many years for him to assimilate. He says: "It was easier to reject the utilitarian concept of ethics than to find a substitute for it", and it was tempting "to change from Lenin's way to Gandhi's way", but finding a substitute for the utilitarian concept would have been "another short-cut, a toppling over from one extreme to the other" (*The Invisible Writing*, 437).

Koestler could not go from being a revolutionary to being a pacifist; being a revolutionary had led him to experience lies and murder, to disillusionment. But being a pacifist, he says, would lead him to "quietism, stagnation, and resignation". The solution for Koestler lay in "a new form of synthesis", he says, "between saint and revolutionary, between the active and the

contemplative life" (*The Invisible Writing*, 437). Actually, the solution for Koestler was to write a number of books in an attempt to assimilate his disillusionment and his experiences of Cell No. 40. To write these books, moreover, was not only a contemplative act but also a necessary psychological act--an act of assimilation and redemption--for Koestler.

Orwell also rejected "quietism". If we turn, once more, to the last paragraph of his essay "Politics And The English Language", we see that Orwell believes that to claim abstract words as meaningless is a "pretext for advocating a kind of political quietism". For Orwell, all political language is "designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind" ("Politics And The English Language," 157). So to avoid "political quietism" for Orwell and for Koestler, the actual meaning of words, of the text, must be considered; words must be used to reveal rather than to conceal; and the simpler the language, the less likely one is to create stupidities, to lie, and to justify unjustifiable acts.

In the years following his experiences in the Seville death-cell, Koester created texts which had "ethical problems" as their central concern. Such problems, Koestler tells us, had played no part in his previous writings. Thus, Koestler no longer wrote for the Cause--for Communism--he no longer acted as self-censor, and under another's authority, to create the Party's meaning, to create lies and propaganda.

Free of illusions, Koestler is also now free to create works

of art rather than works of propaganda. Koestler tells us that in attempting to come "to intellectual terms with the intuitive glimpses" of the eternal that he gained in Cell No. 40, he wrote *The Gladiators* and *Darkness at Noon*: "Both books were variations on the same theme: the problem of the Ends and the Means, the conflict between transcendental morality and social expediency" (*The Invisible Writing*, 437). The next book he wrote, *Arrival and Departure*, was, he says, "a rejection of the ethical neutrality of science as expressed in the psychiatrist's claim to be able to 'reduce' courage, dedication and self-sacrifice to neurotic motives" (*The Invisible Writing*, 437). And finally, in *The Yogi and the Commissar*, Koestler tried one last time to "digest" the meaning of his solitary dialogue with death in Cell No. 40. "This book", he says, "written in 1943, closed the cycle; it had taken five years to digest the hours by the window" of his cell (*The Invisible Writing*, 437).

But even as he worked through his disillusionment with the utilitarian ethics of Communism in his writing, in life Koestler was not ready to completely disengage himself from the Communist Party. Koestler says that the story of his "final break with the Communist Party is a story of last-minute hesitations and confusions", a story which he finds "difficult to get into focus" (*The Invisible Writing*, 465). Part of Koestler's story about his resignation from Communism includes his recollections of his month's lecture tour of England in 1938 for Victor Gollancz's Left Book Club--which had just published *Spanish Testament*. During the tour, he finds himself *still* following the Party line,

but also for the first time speaking out against Communist policies in Spain. Gollancz had published Koestler's *Spanish Testament* because it did fall into line with the Communist Party's view of the war, unlike Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia*, which was not sympathetic to Communism or the Spanish Communist Party, and would not sit well with the members of the Book Club.

Most of the 65,000 Book Club members were sympathetic to the Communist Party, "but", Koestler says, "they were English in the first, Communists in the second place", and Koestler had difficulty taking them seriously. Koestler goes on to describe their meetings as "tea parties in the vicarage" compared to Communist Party meetings on the Continent. At these meetings, Koestler says, the English

put decency before dialectics and, even more bewilderingly, they tended to indulge in humour and eccentricity--both of which were dangerous diversions from the class struggle After two weeks of lecturing up and down the country . . . I came to the conclusion that the majority of English Communists were not revolutionaries but cranks and eccentrics, and that they were certainly closer to the Pickwick Club than to the Comintern. (*The Invisible Writing*, 465)

Koestler's description of goings-on at English Communist Party meetings, while tongue-in-cheek, also accounts for part of his disillusionment with European Communist Parties, which could permit members a sense neither of decency nor humor in the face of utilitarian ethics, nor could it allow any deviance from the class struggle through "eccentricity".

Even though, for the first time, he sometimes speaks out publicly against certain actions in Spain, at this time, Koestler is still too close to the events of the Spanish death-cell; he is

not willing to make public these experiences. Koestler tells us that his lectures were about the political and military situation in Spain, and never about his personal experiences in the Cell No. 40, which he felt "were not the proper subject for the Left Book Club". Not only was Koestler too close to the events to reveal them, but he also felt that the Book Club members lacked the political knowledge necessary to understand his death-cell experiences.

In this, Koestler confirms Orwell's condemnation of the members of the Left Book Club, although he does not condemn them as harshly as does Orwell. Both writers felt that these English Communists either would not have known what Koestler or Orwell were talking about if they had revealed their disillusionments, or would have categorically denied any sabotage on the part of the Communists in Spain. Koestler says that he was moved by the "innocence and eagerness" of the audiences who had come to regard the Spanish Loyalist Army with "passionate sympathy" and as "the rearguard of European democracy" (*The Invisible Writing*, 466). But any mention of Moscow's exploitation of the War for its own purposes, or of the activities of the GPU and SIM in civilian locations in Spain would have "met with incredulity and indignation" (*The Invisible Writing*, 466).

What Koestler finds in the English Communist as (at the very worst) crankishness and eccentricity, and (at the very least) innocence and eagerness, Orwell found, at the very least, trendiness and expedience, and at the very worst, ignorance of and lack of imagination about the kind of hardships Europeans

like Koestler had to go through to fight Fascism. In fact, unlike Koestler, who says he was moved by the "innocence" of his audiences of English Communists, Orwell was appalled at their ignorance and unwillingness to see how the Communists, Spanish and Russian, were using the Spanish Civil War for their own political ends, even committing murder to justify those ends.

Orwell did not hesitate to reveal his disillusionments to other English people, especially to people like the members of the Left Book Club. But Koestler could not do this. If these people were more English than Communist, as Koestler says, then maybe Orwell could speak freely as one Englishman to others, freely enough to tell them how ignorant they really were. Orwell, who owed no allegiance to the Communist Party, felt free to educate other English people about the fallacies in the Party's line of thought. Koestler could not speak so freely then, however, because, even though he was an "insider" as far as Communism was concerned, he was still a guest in England. So, as a guest, he could not reveal to his hosts their ignorance, even if, ironically, he was speaking as one Communist to other Communists. But what is even more important is that, still being a member of the Party in good standing, Koestler knew not to deviate from the Party line.

Because a good Communist did not question Party policy, Koestler says that he was taken completely by surprise, and that his worst moments during the lecture tour came when someone in the audience asked him a question about the deviant group, the POUM. For those of his readers who might be unfamiliar with the

POUM, Koestler provides a brief history of this Spanish splinter group, and in terms remarkably similar to Orwell's explanation of the actions of the same group in *Homage to Catalonia*. But Koestler was not free to reveal to his 1938 audience what he is exposing to his 1952 post-Civil War, post-Second World War, Cold War audience. To his earlier "innocent" audience, not only could he not reveal his disillusionments, but he also could not reveal that he thought the accusations hurled at the POUM were wrong. Koestler explains why questions about the POUM were so difficult for him.

The men of the P.O.U.M. had fought with great bravery and self-sacrifice at the front in Aragon (George Orwell had been wounded while serving as a volunteer in their ranks), and there was no doubt in my mind that the accusations against them were absurd and perfidious. But for a Party member to say this in public meant expulsion, with the inevitable sequel of being himself denounced as a Trotskyist agent of Franco or the Gestapo. That is why questions referring to P.O.U.M. put me in a critical position. (*The Invisible Writing*, 466-467)

Koestler knew that the accusations against the POUM were not true, but for him to speak the truth to his 1938 audience of English Communists meant being expelled from the Communist Party as a traitor.

Koestler goes on to reveal the workings of the Party that contributed to his disillusionment, workings that do not allow any deviant personal behavior, but do demand absolute, unthinking loyalty; so it would have been unthinkable for German or French Communists to ask questions about the POUM in Barcelona, as the English Communists were asking. Koestler clearly delineates how he would have automatically answered the question--what would be a convoluted dialectical "catechism", the Party line. And he

tells us that any deviationist action, even if carried out by the loyalists of the "old guard" such as Radek, has to be seen objectively as a traitorous action, no matter what the personal motives were. He says:

The correct line to be applied to this and similar cases was that any faction or group that cause a split in revolutionary unity played into the enemy hands, and that accordingly Nin (or Trotsky, or Zinoviev, or Radek, as the case may be) must *objectively* be regarded as an agent of Franco (or Hitler, or the British Intelligence Service), whereas the *subjective* motives of his actions were historically irrelevant. This answer was part of the catechism for the advanced classes, and I had used it *ad nauseam* in arguments with others and myself. (*The Invisible Writing*, 467)

When Koestler uses the word "catechism" to describe the Party's answer to the question, he is being consistent with his contention that Communism became dogmatism for him, and others like him. Moreover, when Koestler connects the names of Trotsky and Radek, who, like Stalin, were loyal old-guard revolutionaries, with factions, he is being somewhat ironic because people like Radek *were* part of the revolutionary vanguard. But this did not prevent the paranoid Stalin, also a comrade-in-arms with Trotsky and Zinoviev during the early days of the revolution, from having these men brought to trial (the "show" trials), where they were "purged". That is, these men--who were as loyal as anyone to the revolution--were made to confess to crimes they had not committed, and then they were executed for these same crimes, crimes such as being traitors, agents of Franco or Hitler, as Koestler says. So if *these* men were liable to execution for any kind of deviation, Koestler felt that his turn would surely come as well, for speaking out in

favor of the POUM. Even so, Koestler departed from the Party line when asked about the POUM. He was astonished, therefore, when nothing happened, but he was constantly looking over his shoulder after he returned to France when his lecture tour was over.

Koestler says that when he was first asked the question about the POUM, "the familiar answer"--the "catechism"--just did not occur to him. Instead of following the Party line, Koestler "took a plunge" and said what he thought. He said that he disagreed with the policy of the POUM for a number of reasons which he would be glad to explain, but in his "opinion Andrés Nin and his comrades had been acting in good faith, and to call them traitors was both stupid and a desecration of their dead" (*The Invisible Writing*, 467).

But even though Koestler spoke out against certain Party policies, and risked his life in doing so, he did not initiate any kind of leave-taking from the Party. Yet he felt that his days were numbered, and was surprised when he was not called to account. To his "astonishment" he was "still alive and a valued comrade of the Communist Party" (*The Invisible Writing*, 468). Koestler had mixed feelings of disappointment and relief. He says that he lived through his last months as member of the Party "like a person who knows that there is a painful and critical operation waiting for him which is being postponed from week to week. The less one thinks about it the better" (*The Invisible Writing*, 468). And, strange as it may seem, Koestler says that he did not give much conscious thought to the matter. He reminds

us that he had ceased to be a Communist long before he was conscious of his defection, that as he had faced death, he let go of Communism when he realized how little an individual's life meant in the face of the utilitarian ethics of the Communist Party. "Now," he says, "the inner change that had taken place in cell No. 40 was gradually percolating through to the surface. I no longer needed to worry about my attitude to the Party; it was taking care of itself" (*The Invisible Writing*, 468).

So for the first time, Koestler finds that he can speak out publicly against the Party, to a certain extent. But only to a certain extent, because he was not willing to be expelled from the Party as a traitor, nor was he willing to risk being murdered. Moreover, even though he says that he was now indifferent as far as the Party was concerned, he does not account for the contradictory fact that he was conscious of and worried about the distinct possibility of his murder because of his attitude to the Party. But what is even more important is that Koestler could not willingly excise himself from the Communist Party; he was not yet ready to let go of a commitment of seven years. He had to suffer several more painful disillusionments before he would resign from the Party. And, as we shall see, these events not only added to Koestler's growing disenchantment with Communism, but also allowed him further expiation and redemption from the guilt he still felt for his past actions as a member of the Communist apparatus.

The first of two events which occurred in Paris had to do with false accusations. Through a series of mistakes and

misunderstandings, a member of the German Communist Party and his Anglo-German wife, both living in Paris at the time and well-known to Koestler and others of the Communist writers' circle, were denounced as Gestapo spies in the German Communist Party's weekly paper which appeared in France. Koestler, aware of the misunderstandings, says that he knew that these people were not Nazi spies. After the falsely-accused appealed to the Party, demanding that the Central Committee (in Moscow) investigate their case, and were ignored, Koestler was their only friend who did not turn his back on them. He says that he "wrote a letter to the Central Committee protesting against the public denunciation of two comrades without giving them a hearing, stating [his] conviction that they were innocent" (*The Invisible Writing*, 470). Koestler goes on to say that he received no answer, "of course", but that the Party took no further action against him or his friends. The risk Koestler took for his friends, his speaking out on their behalf, was a way to atone for his past actions and to redeem himself in his own eyes.

Koestler calls his effort on behalf of his friends--"his siding with alleged Gestapo agents"--"another suicidal gesture that had gone off at half-cock" (*The Invisible Writing*, 470). He also figures that his "suicidal gesture" did not work because recent Communist propaganda had used him as a martyr while he had been in jail, and he could not so soon go from being called a martyr to being "denounced as an agent of Franco or the Mikado". Some months would have to elapse before he could be called a traitor. Rather than waiting for such an occurrence, Koestler

says, the sensible action would have been to quit the Party. But this he did not think to do because one does not easily walk away from such a long-term commitment.

The logical course would have been simply to resign from the Party. But this idea did not occur to me for quite a while. I knew that sooner or later I would be expelled, and this was to me the only conceivable manner of leaving the Party; to take the initiative seemed unimaginable. One may cease being a practising Catholic, but one does not send a letter of resignation to the Church. (*The Invisible Writing*, 470)

With his use of religious analogies here, Koestler is still being consistent in his contention that Communism was no longer revolutionary but dogmatic. Being a heretic, moreover, also meant expulsion in both cases. Or, even worse, being a Communist heretic could mean being executed--as it once meant in the case of Catholicism.

The second event which further compounded Koestler's disillusionment had to do with the writing of truths, half-truths, and lies. The event was a meeting of the Paris Writers' Caucus, and one of Koestler's last memories of the Party. The meeting was to discuss a new slogan of the Soviet Writers' Federation: "Write the Truth". They knew, Koestler says, that the truth was that "day after day the leaders of the Revolution" and the writers' own "comrades in Russia were being shot as spies, or vanished without a trace" (*The Invisible Writing*, 471). Yet, in spite of this terrible knowledge, the writers "earnestly discussed how to write the truth without writing the truth". Koestler goes on:

With our training in dialectical acrobatics it was not even difficult to prove that all truth was historically class-conditioned, that so-called subjective truth was a bourgeois myth, and that 'to write the truth' meant to

select and emphasise those items and aspects of a given situation which served the proletarian revolution, and was therefore 'historically correct'. (*The Invisible Writing*, 471)

The manipulation of the truth to suit the Cause--the rewriting of history--that occurred at the writers' meeting is the kind of manipulation that Orwell talks about in *Homage to Catalonia*, particularly when he refers to the lies promulgated by the Communists about the actions of the POUM during the Barcelona riots.

But what is especially important is that both Koestler's and Orwell's political disillusionment rose here, at this spot, in these occasions where writing betrayed itself and distorted events they had actually witnessed. Orwell would have completely agreed with Koestler when Koestler said that this meeting of Communist writers was "a document of our times". But Koestler was no longer serving the Party: he was no longer lying. Nor was he toeing the Party line, as the third and last event demonstrates. In fact, Koestler was to become a heretic.

Koestler tells us that the end of his association with Communism "came as another anti-climax" (*The Invisible Writing*, 472). The end occurred, he says, some time during the spring of 1938, when he gave a talk on Spain to the Association of Exiled German Writers, most of whom were Communists. When a representative of the Party approached him before his talk and asked him to denounce the POUM as agents of Franco, Koestler refused. And Koestler refused again when he was politely asked to show the representative a text of his speech and "to discuss it informally" (*The Invisible Writing*, 472).

The meeting was Koestler's first public appearance in Paris since his return from Spain, and it would be his last as a member of the Party. Koestler says that he would not attack the Party while the Spanish Civil War was going on, nor would he attack Russia in public because that idea "still carried the horror of blasphemy". Yet, he "felt the need to define where [he] stood," he says, "and not to remain a passive accomplice of [his] friends' executions" in Spain and in Russia (*The Invisible Writing*, 472). So Koestler had to be careful in choosing his ground, he says, and he decided to end his speech with what he calls "three simple phrases" each of which was "a pious platitude, and yet a capital heresy for a Stalinist". The three heresies, with the third being a quotation from Thomas Mann, are as follows:

No movement, party or person can claim the privilege of infallibility. It is as foolish to appease the enemy, as it is to persecute the friend who pursues the same end as you by a different road. In the long run, a harmful truth is better than a useful lie. (*The Invisible Writing*, 472)

Even though Koestler tells us that he would not attack the Party while the War was going on, with these "heresies", he did attack very specifically certain practices of Stalinism. This attack was greeted by his audience either with deliberate "stony silence" if they were Communists, or with applause if they were non-Communists. The "capital" heresies are Koestler's public expression of his disillusionment with the ideology of Communism, but as painful as his disillusionment was, the loneliness he suffered after quitting the Party was equally painful, if not more so. The loneliness, which began right after this meeting,

also became part of Koestler's disenchantment.

Koestler tells us that from this meeting he went home alone, and that while he was waiting for a train in a metro station, a group of his comrades, who had attended the meeting, entered the station and walked past him without looking at him, as if he were "the invisible man". Koestler, who was a man without a religion or a country, a man whose culture was being destroyed--a refugee living in exile--had found "a religion", "a country", "a culture", and "a refuge" in Communism and the Communist Party. These are the aspects he would miss when he quit the Party, rather than individual friendships. He says:

That journey home in the metro was a foretaste of months and years of loneliness to come. It was not a physical loneliness, for after the break with the Party I found more friends than I have had before. But individual friendships could never replace the knowledge that one belonged to an international brotherhood embracing the whole globe; nor the warming, reassuring feeling of a collective solidarity which gave to that huge, amorphous mass the coherence and intimacy of small family. (*The Invisible Writing*, 473)

As hard to bear as the abuse was from former friends who were still Communists, and as hard to bear as the spiritual and intellectual loneliness was, Koestler found the contempt of friends who were non-Communists equally unbearable. He says that after he left the Party, the abuse he suffered from the Communists "conformed to a pattern", but the resentment he felt from those who had never been Communists was a "different kind of unvoiced reproach". When Koestler analyses the resentment, he uses, once again, religious analogies, comparing Communism to Catholicism.

Koestler compares ex-Communists (and ex-Nazi refugees) to

"tiresome Cassandras" and "fallen angels" who, he says, "have had the bad taste to reveal that heaven is not the place it is supposed to be"; that is, Communism and Fascism are not the utopias as promised by those God-heads Stalin and Hitler. Everyone, Koestler says, respects the convert, Catholic or Communist, but hates "unfrocked priests of all faith". He goes on:

This attitude is rationalised as a dislike of renegades. Yet the convert, too, is a renegade from his former beliefs or disbeliefs, and quite prepared to persecute those who still persist in them. He is nevertheless forgiven, for he has *'embraced'* a faith, whereas the ex-Communist or the unfrocked priest has *'lost'* a faith--and has thereby become a menace to illusion and a reminder of the abhorrent, threatening void. (*The Invisible Writing*, 476)

Even though Koestler has italicized two words in this passage, perhaps the key word is neither of these. The key words here could be "illusion" and "void": when Koestler voluntarily left Communism, his non-Communist friends resented him because he stood for disillusionment. He was "a menace" to the "illusion" that Communism represented a new utopia, a new "heaven". Without that illusion, that "abhorrent, threatening void" is felt again.

If we, Koestler's late twentieth-century readers, are skeptical of Koestler's analysis of the resentment of his non-Communist friends, we only need to be reminded, as Koestler reminds his earlier 1954 readers, that "Socialism" in a "vague and undefined way" was the hope of the early twentieth century. "So much so", Koestler says,

that German 'National Socialists', French 'Radical-Socialists', Italian 'Christian-Socialists' all felt the need to include the fetish-word into their names. In the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics this hope seemed to have found its incarnation; and the magic worked, and still works

with varying degrees of intensity, on a considerable portion of mankind. The realization of the full truth about the regime which now rules one-third of the world: that it is the most inhuman regime in human history and the gravest challenge that mankind has as yet encountered, is psychologically as difficult to face for most of us as an empty heaven was for Gothic man. (*The Invisible Writing*, 475)

Koestler goes on to remind us that the difficulty in giving up the hope of Socialism (by which he means Marxist-Stalinism) was almost the same for the illiterate Italian peasant (with whom Koestler shared a cigarette in the courtyard outside death-cell No. 40) as it was for "highly literate" people like Sartre, and the "highly realistic politician", President Roosevelt, who sincerely believed, Koestler says, that "Stalin's regime was a kind of uncouth, Asiatic New Deal". That people like Roosevelt could believe so positively, Koestler says, "in spite of all the available evidence about Communist theory and Soviet practice . . . is an indication of the deep, myth-producing forces that were and still are at work" (*The Invisible Writing*, 475). So, even though they might have been non-Communists, given the political beliefs of the time, it is easy to understand why such friends might have abused Koestler for quitting the Communist Party. But even though he had resigned, is it any wonder that Koestler was still not ready to give up hope, and that he would only shed his last illusion a year and a half after his actual resignation from the Party?

Some days after Koestler's last meeting with Communists, in the Spring of 1938, he actually sat down to write a letter of resignation. This act, too, was an "anti-climax" for Koestler because he could not make a complete break; he only had the

"courage" to go half-way in leaving. His letter was a "farewell", he says, "to the German C.P., the Comintern, and the Stalin regime"; but he ended his letter with a "declaration of loyalty to the Soviet Union" (*The Invisible Writing*, 473). Even though he opposed the system with its uncontrolled growth of bureaucracy, and the "terror and suppression" of civil liberties, he declared his

belief that the foundations of the Workers' and Peasants' State had remained solid and unshaken, that the nationalisation of the means of production was a guarantee of her eventual return to the road of Socialism; and that, in spite of everything, the Soviet Union still represented our last and only hope on a planet in rapid decay. (*The Invisible Writing*, 473-474)

Koestler held on to these beliefs for another year and a half, until Stalin signed a non-aggression pact with Hitler in 1939. The pact, Koestler says, "destroyed this last shred of the torn illusion". Koestler then goes on to talk about his illusion--the life and death of his faith, which he compares to the life and death of a butterfly.

The birth of a faith, he says, is "apparently a spontaneous act, like the bursting of a butterfly from its cocoon"; but the death of a faith is "gradual and slow; even after the seemingly last flutter of the tired wings, there is yet another twitch, and another faint convulsion" (*The Invisible Writing*, 474). Koestler goes on to tell us that every true faith stubbornly refuses to die; it does not matter if the faith is in a "Church, a Cause, a friend or a woman". This refusal to die, moreover, has to do with the faithful's horror of the void: the faithful will do almost anything rather than face that horror. He will delude his

senses. He will deny betrayal. He will even change the shape of his illusion.

Nature's horror of the void applies also to the spiritual sphere. To avoid the threatening emptiness, the true believer is ready to deny the evidence of his senses, to excuse every betrayal like a cuckold out of Boccaccio; and if the illusion can no longer be maintained in its original integrity, he will adapt and modify its shape, or try to save at least part of it. That is what I did, in the company of millions of others in the same predicament. (*The Invisible Writing*, 474)

Koestler hung on to tattered illusions for as long as he could--until Stalin shook hands with Hitler--and then he had to let go for good. Even as he was letting go in cell No. 40, even as he was creating a new faith for himself, with his universe of three levels, he was still hanging on. Even as Koestler created new meaning for himself, he could not quite let go of the old meaning until the Stalin-Hitler pact of 1939 blatantly and finally betrayed all the principles of the Russian Revolution.

In spite of the pain of disillusionment and of loneliness, Koestler would come to find that his years as a member of the Communist Party held more meaning for him than the years previous to his membership and the years after he resigned his membership. He was a young man full of illusions when he joined the Communist Party; his departure from the Party contributed to his maturation and adulthood. This rite of passage left him feeling that the most meaningful part of his life was over, even fourteen years after the event, in 1953, when he wrote:

I was twenty-six when I joined the Communist Party, and thirty-three when I left it. The years between had been decisive years, both by the season of life which they filled, and the way they filled it with a single-minded purpose. Never before or after had life been so brimful of meaning as during those seven years. They had the

superiority of a beautiful error over a shabby truth. (*The Invisible Writing*, 477).

So, now we know that Koestler's "new" vision does not quite supplant the old vision. The new vision does not hold as much meaning for Koestler as did the old vision. With the rejection of his political ideals (the old vision), Koestler finds the moral cutting edge gone--the future no longer holds promise. The significant differences between evil and good are no longer so clear. With the abandonment of his political ideals, Koestler found that old, past evils, being fought in the present, do not seem so easily eliminated for the future. We also realize that when Koestler formally left the Communist Party with his letter of resignation, this was not the last stage. It took Stalin's making a pact with Hitler to shake Koestler free of his last tattered illusions. But the matter does not even end there, for Koestler is compelled to consider his illusions and disillusionments at least one more time, fourteen years later, as he writes *The Invisible Writing*.

Conclusion

The Spanish Civil War was very much a literary phenomenon, as Koestler knew and Orwell was to find out. One of the main literary aspects of this conflict had to do with language and power, language and commitment. Not only were writers transforming the war into intellectual discourse through their writing, but some were also allowing the policies of governments to dictate what they should write. The foreign policy of Russia under Stalin demanded that the the expression of dissent and revolution in the Spanish War be silenced or discredited; and Russia, being the main supplier of arms to the Republican Government, was in a position to make such a demand stick. So, the Republican Government demanded that the anarchists and revolutionaries turn in their arms. And, to assist Russia's foreign policy, the Communist Party distorted the truth about dissenting and revolutionary activities, mainly through press reports.

Orwell, with no strong commitment to any ideology and with his experience of the anarchistic POUM at the front and the Barcelona riots, was able to recognize that the two governments--Republican Spain and Communist Russia--were halting the revolution, by withholding arms and by lying.

Koestler, a member of the Communist Party, already knew about the two governments' attempts to check the revolution. As

a result of his sojourn in the Soviet Union, he had already expended abundant literary energy fabricating a deceptively flattering portrait of Soviet Russia, a portrait that he knew was not a true likeness, as he tells us in *The Invisible Writing*. And being required by Comintern to write lies about the Fascists in Spain, he also knew about the lies being told in the press about the revolutionaries and dissidents. Unlike Orwell, he did not have to go to Spain to find out about the government policies and the lies--with his long commitment to the Communist Party, he was an insider, and he already knew about the lies before he went to Spain. But his inside knowledge did not make his disillusionment with such policies and lies any easier to bear than Orwell's lack of knowledge made his disillusionment easier to bear. In fact, Koestler's inside knowledge, due to his seven-year commitment to the Communist ideology, made his disillusionment harder to reveal through his writing. In contrast, Orwell with no strong ideological ties was eager to reveal his disillusionments: he did so almost immediately upon leaving Spain and in one text. Koestler had to write four texts before he could finally and fully reveal his disillusionments. When we examine Koestler's revelation of disillusionment, moreover, we find Koestler feeling that he has lost the right to certain aspects of his life because his own voice--his writing--had, in the service of commitment and power, betrayed him.

Orwell, unlike Koestler, was not constrained by a strong past ideological commitment from revealing his disillusionments,

so he could use his voice--his writing--as he pleased. He did not hesitate to reveal his rejection of governments and press that were capable of suppressing revolution, and lying in the service of the suppression. He was quick to expose the suppression and the lies. In fact, I think it is fair to say that the use of language as a divisive tool and a method of suppression became an obsession with Orwell. He would spend the rest of his short life promoting language as a means of clarifying thought and revealing the truth so that people could come together for discussion of ideas, rather than being divided by them. It is also fair to say, I think, that out of the obsession with language, the rather tentative Eric Blair grew to become the assured George Orwell.

Koestler was not so quick to reveal his abandonment of his ideology. He had a long struggle to free himself from his own writing, which he had used in the past to serve the Cause, by creating propaganda instead of art. Koestler had originally joined the German Communist Party not just to fight Nazi oppression, but also to give meaning to his life. In Communism he had hoped to find the Absolute, to find the "arrow in the blue". But he soon became disillusioned by the oppressiveness of Communism--in its ideology as well as its practice. Nonetheless, for him, as for many other disappointed Communists, the Spanish Civil War and its Common Front seemed like a second chance, another call to arms against fascism. So Koestler hung on to his imperfect vision--his illusions--just a little longer.

But the last remnants of his illusion were swept away in the

face of death. The ideology of Communism could neither stand up to nor fill the terrifying void that was created by the idea of what Koestler calls "the ultimate *nada*", the nothingness that comes with death. Out of his disillusionment with the practice and ideology of Communism, and to fill the void, Koestler created a "new" apolitical and non-doctrinal world view. Released for the moment from a partisan identity on which he had depended, and facing death at the same time, Koestler was able to recognize that a human life was intrinsically valuable, even if the life was not useful to the Cause of the Communist Party. In that recognition he was also deprived of his illusions about Communist ethics. He was able to see clearly that the utilitarian ethics and the practice of Communism devalued life, that life was only good when it was useful to the Communist Cause. While he was waiting to die, while hearing others die, Koestler recognized that life itself was precious. From this recognition, this new vision, Koestler created a more humane set of ethics by which he could live and was free, he tells us, to create art rather than propaganda.

Considering their differences, it is surprising that Orwell and Koestler shared aspects of their political disillusionment at all. But what may be a surprise is just what they do have in common in their rejection of their ideals. Both of them came to Spain with feelings of guilt at having served an oppressive regime, Orwell as an imperialistic British police officer in Burma, Koestler as a minor functionary in the Communist Party. Both felt a need to expiate their guilt. But Orwell never used

his writing in the service of British imperialism, as Koestler used his to serve the imperialistic Communist Party. Both writers were disillusioned with the results of the role the Communist Party played in the Spanish Civil War: the lies being told about the revolutionary aspects of the War, and the fact that the lies were told to prevent further revolution. Perhaps such similarities are not unexpected after all, but what may be surprising is both writers' need to prove that their disillusionment is not just another illusion, and the similar tactics they use to demonstrate the validity of their new vision.

To show their readers that their voice is their own, that they--and not some other force--command what they say, both men feel they must prove the neutrality of their new visions. Orwell attempts to demonstrate that he was non-partisan before he went to Spain, that he was learning by experience, so that we, his readers, can feel reassured that his new and clearer vision is not being distorted by a partisan bias. Koestler takes great care to illustrate that the new world-view he has experienced is without dogma and without a moral imperative. The neutrality of his new cosmology prevents any possible suggestion that he has created another illusion which is doctrinal or, even worse, dogmatic. And neither writer is trying to found a doctrine or a party. Both Orwell and Koestler do demonstrate that their new visions, their disillusionments coming out of the Spanish Civil War are not just more illusions, but are valid rejections of certain ideals they once cherished. Although Koestler loses far more than Orwell.

As we enter the last decade of this century, we are in a position to see that sixty years ago Orwell and Koestler's concerns with politics and language, and with the repressiveness of the Soviet Union under Communist rule, were justified--those issues are still of concern at the end of the century.

We find that Orwell was right to warn us not only about the tremendous powers of the text--how the text can stand in for experience and become the reader's experience of events--but also about the dangers inherent in the suppression or distortion of the truth, suppressions or distortions which can erase or rewrite history. For example, only now, fifty years later, does the Russian government admit to having suppressed or distorted the atrocities committed against people of its satellite countries in the name of the Cause. We have come to find, moreover, that in the late Twentieth Century we still have Orwell's "tired hack on the platform mechanically repeating the familiar phrases . . . some kind of dummy. . . . a machine. . . . " who is making the "appropriate noises" but not using his brain to choose his words for himself, and repeating the words so often that he is no longer conscious of what he says ("Politics And The English Language", 152). Not only is the hack-machine still making tired noises, what is even more dangerous is that the same hack can still defend the indefensible. For example, the newspaper columnist Allan Fotheringham tells us that Orwell's Doublespeak is still at work when the U.S. State Department "no longer uses the word 'killing' in its official reports on the status of human rights in countries around the world". In place of the word

"killing", the phrase "unlawful or arbitrary deprivation of life" is to be used (*The Province*, Nov. 22, 1984). Fotheringham goes on to recall the Pentagon's "celebrated description of the neutron bomb: 'an efficient nuclear weapon that eliminates the enemy with a minimum degree of damage to friendly territory'", and President Reagan's naming the MX inter-continental ballistic missile the "Peacekeeper" (*The Province*, Nov. 22, 1984). So, as we can see, we still have with us Orwell's tired political hack defending in Doublespeak what is indefensible.

As we come to the close of this century, we find--almost to our disbelief--the crumbling and the dissolving of a cruel and oppressive regime. This regime, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, ruled one-third of the world for more than half of this century. And as this massive and monolithic governing body decays, we are not sure what will take its place. But, as horrors are being acknowledged, we are sure that forty-four years ago, when he voiced his on-going concern about a regime which he called "the most inhuman . . . in human history", Koestler's was also a voice of truth.

Notes

¹Orwell's preoccupation with the use and abuse of language grew out of his Spanish Civil war experiences. And a line of descent can be traced from the first expression of his concerns with language and power in *Homage to Catalonia* through some of his essays such as "Looking Back on the Spanish War" (1942) and "The Prevention of Literature" (1946) to his last expression of concern in his novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, which he wrote in 1948.

In his essay "Looking Back on the Spanish War" Orwell deals with what he calls the "fantasy" and "propaganda" of the German Nazis and Spanish Fascists concerning Italian and German intervention in Spain. The propaganda, he says, frightens him because it gives him "the feeling that the very concept of objective truth is fading out of the world", and that the lies told by the Right-wing parties "will pass into history" (295). Orwell is concerned that "lie will have become the truth", and he says: "I know it is the fashion to say that most of recorded history is lies anyway. I am willing to believe that history is for the most part inaccurate and biased, but what is particular to our own age is the abandonment of the idea that history *could* be truthfully written" (296).

Four years later, Orwell is concerned with society's treatment of the writer of literature. In his essay "The Prevention of Literature" he says: "Everything in our age conspires to turn the writer, and every other kind of artist as well, into a minor official, working on themes handed to him from above and never telling what seems to him the whole of the truth" (84). Orwell goes on to say that in England in 1946 one has to defend freedom of the intellect against Communists and fellow-travellers. Then he moves from analysing the situation of the intelligentsia in England to their situation in totalitarian states where, he says, "organized lying . . . is not, as is sometimes claimed, a temporary expedient of the same nature as military deception. It is something integral to totalitarianism, something that would still continue even if concentration camps and secret police forces had ceased to be necessary" (85). Orwell is talking about the totalitarian state of Russia where "history", he says, "is something to be created rather than learned", and where the past is continuously being altered (86).

In his novel, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Orwell has created the ultimate totalitarian state--what England might become in the

future--where, with Newspeak, not only language but also the act of thought is controlled. More specifically, Orwell describes the purpose of this agent of word and thought control: "The purpose of Newspeak was not only to provide a medium of expression for the the world-view and mental habits proper to the devotees of Ingsoc, but to make all other modes of thought impossible" (241).

²Other sources corroborate Orwell's eye-witness experiences of the Barcelona riots and the subsequent persecution of the POUM. Oral historian Ronald Fraser supports Orwell's view that the POUM wanted immediate revolution and suspected that the new army being formed by the Popular Front was counter-revolutionary. Fraser says that "For the dissident Communist POUM in Barcelona, the war and revolution were 'inseparable'." Fraser goes on to recall the words of Ignacio Iglesias, political editor of the POUM's paper *La Batalla*, who expresses the party's position:

There could be no triumphant revolution unless the war were won; but the war could not be won unless revolution triumphed. The POUM's opposition to the Popular Army was based on revolutionary postulates: it was wrong to create a regular army since to do so was to pose the war in the same terms as the enemy.

Fraser also reminds us that the POUM was ousted from the Catalan government, and that its leaders were arrested by Stalin's secret police (*Revolution And War In Spain 1931-1936*, 238).

E. H. Carr, historian of Soviet Russia, corroborates Orwell's argument that the Spanish Communist Party and less directly the Republican Government were being dictated to by the Comintern in Moscow. In his book *The Comintern and The Spanish Civil War*, Carr says that Moscow believed that the collectivizing of land and industry could wait because "victory over Fascism was at stake" (Carr, 21). Carr supports Orwell's analysis that, on the Republican side, strategy and tactics were determined by those who controlled the flow of arms and equipment, and the Soviet Union was in control. But the process of take-over, Carr says, was "complicated by the situation in Catalonia, where the PCE [Spanish Communist Party] had to contend with the newly formed POUM" which "appealed successfully to the more radical sections of the Left" (Carr, 31). Carr says that the Communists retaliated against the POUM's total rejection of the authority of Moscow by branding the POUM as Trotskyist, and that "It is difficult to dissociate the savage persecution of POUM in Spain, which began at this time, from the purge trials of August of 1936 and January 1937 in Moscow" when certain high-ranking and "old guard" party members "were arraigned as agents of Trotsky" (Carr, 35).

And Hugh Thomas in his prodigious history, *The Spanish Civil*

War, also reinforces Orwell's description of the Barcelona riots. Thomas, like Orwell, describes the attempted take-over of the Telephone Exchange by the chief of police and the civil guard from the anarchist CNT workers, after important government calls were interrupted by anarchist telephone operators (Thomas, 654). Thomas also says that the Communists were out to reap "the fullest advantage from what was happening--in particular to discredit the POUM, whom they proposed no doubt to destroy one day if they could" (Thomas, 655). Thomas' description of the Communist Party later alleging "that the crisis had been caused by the agents of Franco in the CNT and, above all, the POUM", moreover, corroborates Orwell's description of the accusations that the Communists leveled at the POUM (Thomas, 656).

Works Cited

- Burke, Kenneth. *A Rhetoric Of Motives*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962, 1969.
- Carr, E. H. *The Comintern And The Spanish Civil War*. Ed. Tamara Deutscher. New York: Pantheon Books-Random House, Inc., 1984.
- Carr, Raymond. "Orwell And The Spanish War." *The World of George Orwell*. Ed. Miriam Gross. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1971.
- Corbett, Edward P. J. *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*. Second Edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 1971.
- Crick, Bernard. *George Orwell A Life*. New York: Penguin Books, 1982.
- Fotheringham, Allan. "Truth doesn't win election." *Province* [Vancouver, B.C.]. 22 Nov. 1984.
- Fraser, Ronald. "The popular experience of war and revolution 1936-39 *Revolution And War In Spain 1931-1939*. Ed. Paul Preston. New York: Methuen and Co., 1984. 225-242.
- Koestler, Arthur. *Arrow in the Blue: The First Part Of An Autobiography: 1905-31*. New York: Stein and Day Pub., 1984.
- . *Dialogue with Death*. Trans. Trevor & Edith Blewitt. New York: The MacMillan Co., 1952. 4th printing.
- . *The Invisible Writings: The Second Part Of An Autobiography: 1932-1940*. London: Hutchinson of London, 1974.
- . *L'Espagne Ensanglantée: Un Livre noir sur l'Espagne*. Paris: Editions Du Carrefour, 1937.
- . *Spanish Testament*. London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1937.
- Orwell, George. "Looking Back on the Spanish War." *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell*. 6th ed. 4 Vols. Eds. S. Orwell and I. Angus. Markham, Ont.: Penguin Books, 1982. 2: 286-306.
- . *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Markham, Ont.: Penguin Books, 1977.

- . "Politics And The English Language." *The Collected Essays, Journalism, and Letters of George Orwell*. 6th ed. 4 Vols. Eds. S. Orwell and I. Angus. Markham, Ont.: Penguin Books, 1982. 4: 156-70.
- . "The Prevention of Literature." *The Collected Essays, Journalism, and Letters of George Orwell*. 6th ed. 4 Vols. Eds. S. Orwell and I. Angus. Markham, Ont.: Penguin Books, 1982. 4: 81-94.
- . *Homage To Catalonia*. Markham, Ont.: Penguin Books, 1980.
- . *The Road To Wigan Pier*. Markham, Ont.: Penguin Books, 1962.
- Paz, Octavio. *Children Of The Mire. Modern Poetry From Romanticism To The Avant-Garde*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974.
- Plessner, Helmuth. "On The Relation Of Time To Death." Ed. Joseph Campbell. *Man And Time*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1959. 244-245.
- Sperber, Murray A. "Looking Back On Koestler's Spanish War." *Arthur Koestler: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Ed. Murray A. Sperber. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1977. 190-121.
- Thomas, Hugh. *The Spanish Civil War*. Third Edition. Markham, Ont.: Penguin Books, 1984.

Bibliography

- Abrahams, W. & Stansky, P. "Part Four: An Education in Spain." *Orwell: The Transformation*. London: Constable & Co. Ltd., 1977. 187-226.
- Alldritt, Keith. *The Making Of George Orwell: An Essay In Literary History*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1969.
- Arendt, Hannah. *Between Past And Future. Eight Exercises in Political Thought*. New York: Penguin Books, 1980.
- Ben-Ami, Shlomo. "The Republican 'take-over': prelude to inevitable catastrophe?" *Revolution And War In Spain 1931-1939*. Ed. Paul Preston. New York: Methuen and Co., 1984. 14-33.
- Benson, Frederick R. *Writers in Arms: The Literary Impact of the Spanish Civil War*. New York: New York University Press, 1967.
- Burke, Kenneth. *A Rhetoric Of Motives*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962, 1969.
- Calder, Jenni. *Chronicles Of Conscience: A Study of George Orwell and Arthur Koestler*. London: Secker & Warburg, 1968.
- Carr, E. H. *The Comintern And The Spanish Civil War*. Ed. Tamara Deutscher. New York: Pantheon Books-Random House, Inc., 1984.
- Carr, Raymond. "Orwell And The Spanish War." *The World of George Orwell*. Ed. Miriam Gross. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1971. 63-73.
- Coe, Richard M. *Form And Substance: An Advanced Rhetoric*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1961.
- Corbett, Edward P. J. *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*. Second Edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 1971.
- Crick, Bernard. *George Orwell A Life*. New York: Penguin Books, 1982.
- Deutscher, Isaac. "The Ex-Communist's Conscience." *Arthur Koestler: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Ed. Murray A. Sperber. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1977. 92-99.

- Eagleton, Terry. *Literary Theory: An Introduction*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985.
- Fotheringham, Allan. "Truth doesn't win election." *Province* [Vancouver, B.C.]. 22 Nov. 1984.
- Foulkes, A. P. *Literature and Propaganda*. London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1983.
- Freud, Sigmund. *Civilization And Its Discontents*. Trans. & Ed., James Strachey. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1961.
- Fyvel, T. R. "Arthur Koestler and George Orwell." *Astride Two Cultures: Arthur Koestler at 70*. 2nd. ed. London: Hutchinson & Co. Ltd., 1975. 149-161.
- Gide, André. *The God That Failed*. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1963. 165-195.
- Hodges, Sheila. *Gollancz: The Story of a Publishing House 1928-1978*. London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1978.
- Jones, Norman. "Regionalism and revolution in Catalonia." *Revolution And War In Spain 1931-1939*. Ed. Paul Preston. New York: Methuen & Co., 1984. 85-112.
- Koestler, Arthur. "A Rebel's Progress: To George Orwell's Death." *The Trail of the Dinosaur/ Reflections On Hanging*. London: Hutchinson & Co., Ltd., 1970. 47-50.
- . *Arrow in the Blue: The First Part Of An Autobiography: 1905-31*. New York: Stein and Day Pub., 1984.
- . *Arrival and Departure*. New York: Penguin Books, 1984.
- . *Darkness At Noon*. Markham, Ont.: Penguin Books, 1983.
- . *Dialogue with Death*. Trans. Trevor & Edith Blewitt. New York: The MacMillan Co., 1952. 4th printing.
- . *The Gladiators*. Ed. Edith Simons, and with a new postscript by the author. New York: MacMillan Co., 1939, 1965, 1967.
- . *The God That Failed*. Ed. Richard Crossman. New York: The MacMillan Co., 1952. 15-75.
- . *The Invisible Writing: The Second Part Of An Autobiography: 1932-1940*. London: Hutchinson of London, 1974.
- . *L'Espagne Ensanglantée: Un Livre noir sur l'Espagne*. Paris: Editions Du Carrefour, 1937.
- . *Scum of the Earth*. New York: The MacMillan Co., 1968.

- . *Spanish Testament*. London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1937.
- Low, Mary & Brea, Juan. *Red Spanish Notebook. The First Six Months of the Revolution and the Civil War*. San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1979.
- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. "Koestler's Dilemmas." *Arthur Koestler: A Collection of Critical Essay*. Ed. Murray R. Sperber. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1977. 69-85.
- Muste, John M. S. *Say That We Saw Spain Die: The Literary Consequences of the Spanish Civil War*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1966.
- Orwell, George. *Animal Farm*. Markham, Ont.: Penguin Books, 1974.
- . "The Frontiers Of Art and Propaganda." *The Collected Essays, Letters and Journalism of George Orwell*. Eds. S. Orwell and I. Angus. 6th ed. 4 Vols. Markham, Ont.: Penguin Books, 1982. 2: 149-53.
- . *Homage To Catalonia*. Markham, Ont.: Penguin Books, 1980.
- . "Inside The Whale." *The Collected Essays, Journalism, and Letters of George Orwell*. 6th ed. 4 Vols. Eds. S. Orwell and I. Angus. Markham, Ont.: Penguin Books, 1982. 1: 540-78.
- . "Literature and Totalitarianism." *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell*. 6th ed. 4 Vols. Eds. S. Orwell and I. Angus. Markham, Ont.: Penguin Books, 1982. 2: 161-64.
- . "Looking Back on the Spanish War." *The Collected Essays Journalism, and Letters of George Orwell*. 6th ed. 4 Vols. Eds. S. Orwell and I. Angus. Markham, Ont. : Penguin Books, 1982. 2: 286-306.
- . "Notes on the Spanish Militias." *The Collected Essays*. Markham, Ont.: Penguin Books, 1982. 1: 350-64.
- . "Politics And The English Language" *The Collected Essays, Journalism, and Letters of George Orwell*. 6th ed. 4 Vols. Eds. S. Orwell and I. Angus. Markham, Ont.: Penguin Books, 1982. 4: 156-70.
- . *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Markham, Ont.: Penguin Books, 1977.
- . "The Prevention of Literature." *The Collected Essays, Journalism, and Letters of George Orwell*. 6th ed. 4 Vols. Eds. S. Orwell and I. Angus. Markham, Ont.: Penguin Books, 1982. 4: 81-94.

- . "Red Spanish Notebook, A Review." *The Collected Essays*. Markham, Ont.: Penguin Books, 1982. 1: 320-22.
- . *The Road To Wigan Pier*. Markham, Ont.: Penguin Books, 1962.
- . "Shooting an Elephant." *The Collected Essays*. Markham, Ont.: Penguin Books, 1982. 1: 265-72.
- . "Wells, Hitler and the World State." *The Collected Essays*. Markham, Ont.: Penguin Books, 1982. 2: 166-72.
- . "Why I Write." *The Collected Essays*. Markham, Ont.: Penguin Books, 1982. 1: 23-30.
- Paz, Octavio. *Children Of The Mire. Modern Poetry From Romanticism To The Avant-Garde*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974.
- Plessner, Helmuth. "On The Relation Of Time To Death." Ed. Joseph Campbell. *Man And Time*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1959. 244-245.
- Preston, Paul. "War of Words: the Spanish Civil War and the historians." *Revolution And War In Spain: 1939-1936*. Ed. Paul Preston. New York: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1984. 1-3.
- Pritchett, V. S. "Koestler: A Guilty Figure." *Arthur Koestler: A Collection Of Critical Essays*. Ed. Murray R. Sperber. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1977. 53-68.
- Red Flags, Black Flags: Critical Essays on the Literature of the Spanish Civil War*. Ed. John Beals Romiser. Potomac, Maryland: Studia Humanitatis, 1982.
- Shubert, Adrian. "The epic failure: the Asturian revolution of October 1934." *Revolution And War In Spain 1931-1939*. Ed. Paul Preston. New York: Methuen & Co., 1984. 113-136.
- Souvaraine, Boris. "Ideology of Soviet Communism." *Dictionary of the History of Ideas*. 4 Vols. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973.
- Spanish Front: Writers On The Civil War*. Ed. Valentine Cunningham. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.
- Sperber, Murray A. "Looking Back On Koestler's Spanish War." *Arthur Koestler: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Ed. Murray A. Sperber. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1977. 190-121.
- Thomas, Hugh. *The Spanish Civil War*. Third Edition. Markham, Ont.: Penguin Books, 1984.

- Warburg, Frederic. *All Authors Are Equal. The Publishing Life of Frederic Warburg 1936-1971*. New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1973.
- . *An Occupation for Gentlemen*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1960.
- Webberly, Paul. "An Attempt at an Overview." *Astride Two Cultures: Arthur Koestler At 70*. Ed. Harold Harris. 2nd ed. London: Hutchinson & Co., Ltd., 1975. 1-18.
- Weintraub, Stanley. *The Last Great Cause: The Intellectuals and the Spanish Civil War*. New York: Weybright & Talley, Inc., 1968.
- West, Rebecca. "The Road to Communism and Back." *Arthur Koestler: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Ed. Murray A. Sperber. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1977. 92-99.
- Williams, Raymond. *Orwell*. London: Fontana Paperbacks, Flamingo edition, with Afterword, 1979.
- Woodcock, George. *The Crystal Spirit: A Study of George Orwell*. Montreal: Book Center Inc., 1984.
- . *The Writer And Politics*. London: The Porcupine Press, 1948. Reprinted 1970 by the Folcroft Press.
- Rosen, Edward. "Cosmology Since 1850". *Dictionary of the History of Ideas*. Vol. I. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973.