

**IDEOLOGICAL CHANGE FROM SOCIALISM TO  
CAPITALISM IN GEORGE ORWELL NOVEL "KEEP THE  
ASPIDISTRA FLYING"**



**A Thesis**

*Submitted to the Faculty of Cultural Sciences Hasanuddin University  
as Partial Requirements to Obtain Bachelor Degree in  
English Literature Study Program*

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**2023**

**LEGITIMATION**

**THESIS**

**IDEOLOGICAL CHANGE FROM SOCIALISM TO CAPITALISM IN  
GEORGE ORWELL NOVEL *KEEP THE ASPIDISTRA FLYING***

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It has been examined before the Board of Thesis Examination on Friday, October 13<sup>th</sup> 2023 and is  
declare to have fulfilled the requirements.


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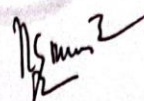
  
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**AGREEMENT**

On July 2023, the Board of Thesis Examination has kindly approved a thesis by **RIDWAN MUSTAMIN (F041191070)** entitled "*Ideological Change from Socialism to Capitalism in George Orwell Novel Keep the Aspidistra Flying*" submitted in fulfillment of one of the requirements to obtain Sarjana Degree in English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University.

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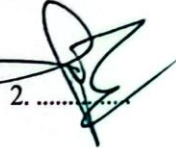
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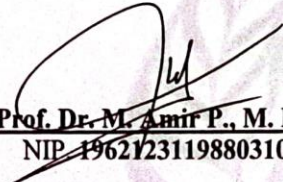
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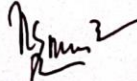
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Makassar, 10<sup>th</sup> October 2024

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First of all, the author would like to express all praise and gratitude to Allah SWT for the blessings, abilities and health given the author can complete this thesis entitled *Ideological Change From Socialism To Capitalism In George Orwell Novel "Keep The Aspidistra Flying"*.

Secondly, the author would like to express his deepest gratitude to the two supervisors Prof. Dr. M. Amir P., M. Hum.m and A. ST. Aldilah Khaerana, S.S., M.Hum. for their patience in guiding and sharing knowledge with the author. It is a valuable thing to be able to find new knowledge from both supervisors in the process of completing this research. Thanks to the mother and father of the examiners who have provided criticism and input on the thesis that the author has done it is very meaningful for the development of the author's knowledge.

In addition, the author also expresses his deepest gratitude to the author's parents, Mustamin and Ramlah, for all their prayers and support both morally and financially in helping the author achieve the future. Thousands of thanks will never be enough to repay all their kindness. Thanks also to the author's four siblings, Rahmin, Muslhina, Muslinda, and Muslima for all the help and sincere support given to the author.

Thank you to my best friend Rezkika Putri S.P who has accompanied and struggled together in the preparation of this thesis and also many stories of joy and sorrow that have been faced which the author will continue to remember.

The author would also like to thank the members of the Perisai KMFIB-UH Management for the 2021/2022 period who have accompanied and collaborated in carrying out their duties and responsibilities until the end of the period.

Therefore, for any errors or inadequacies that may remain in this thesis, the writer extremely welcomes the readers to give criticism and suggestion.

Makassar, 10 Octoberts 2023

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## ABSTRAK

**Ridwan Mustamin. 2023. Ideological Change from Socialism to Capitalism in George Orwell Novel “ Keep the Aspidistra Flaying. (dibimbing oleh M. Amir P. dan A. ST. Aldilah Khaerena.).**

Penelitian ini berfokus pada analisis konflik karakter utama pada novel berjudul *Keep the Aspidistra Flaying* karya George Orwell. Penelitian ini tentang konflik yang terjadi kepada karakter utama yang menjadikan adanya perubahan ideologi yang terjadi dari Sosialisme menjadi kapitalisme.

Penelitian ini menggunakan teori atau pendekatan strukturalisme genetik yang di ciptakan oleh Lucian Goldman, Dimana teori ini menganggap bahwa kehidupan dan ideologi seorang penulis itu mempunyai dampak yang signifikan dalam membentuk jalan cerita pada suatu karya sastra. Penelitian ini juga menggunakan metode Kualitatif deskriptif. Objek dan data utama dalam penelitian ini adalah Novel karya George Orwell yaitu; *Keep the Aspidistra Flaying* yang di terbitkan ulang di Indonesia pada tahun 2021 oleh Indolestari.

Berdasarkan analisis data yang menggunakan unsur intrinsik dan ekstrinsik pada novel karya George Orwell, peneliti menemukan bahwa karakter utama dan penulis novel yaitu George Orwell mempunyai kemiripan dalam menolak sistem kapitalisme dan mendukung ideologi sosialisme sebagai ideologi alternatif dan perubahan ideologi yang terjadi pada karakter utama di sebabkan oleh sistem kapitalisme yang sangat besar dan susah untuk di lawan.

**Kata kunci:** *George Orwell, novel, strukturalisme genetik, Keep the Aspidistra Flaying, kapitalisme.*

## ABSTRACT

**Ridwan Mustamin. 2023. Ideological Change from Socialism to Capitalism in George Orwell Novel “ Keep the Aspidistra Flaying. (Supervised by M. Amir P. dan A. ST. Aldilah Khaerena.).**

This research focuses on analyzing the conflict of the main characters in the novel *Keep the Aspidistra Flaying* by George Orwell. This research is about the conflict that occurs with the main character which causes a change in ideology from socialism to capitalism.

The study uses the theory or approach of genetic structuralism created by Lucian Goldman, where the theories assume that the life and ideology of a writer have a significant influence in shaping the course of the story on a literary work. This research also uses descriptive qualitative methods. The main object and data in this research is the novel by George Orwell; *Keep the Aspidistra Flaying* which will be re-published in Indonesia in 2021 by Indolestari.

Based on data analysis using intrinsic and extrinsic elements of George Orwell's novel, the investigation found that the main character and author of the novel, George Orwell, had similarities in rejecting the system of capitalism and supporting the ideology of socialism as an alternative ideology and the ideological changes that occurred in the main characters caused by a vast and difficult to counter capitalism system.

**Keywords:** *George Orwell, novels, genetic structuralism, Keep the Aspidistra Flaying, capitalism.*

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# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **A. Background**

Talking about ideology is very interesting to discuss. Ideology is one of the terms that has a broad coverage because the term real ideology can be spoken in many contexts. Ideology can be discussed in the context of education, science, and of course in the political context. Given the widespread scope of the term ideology, it is therefore important to state at the beginning of this study that the ideology studied in this study is political ideology; that is, ideology that is the basis or that develops in the practice of political life.

Ideology is an important term that becomes one of the focal points of discussion in discussions about politics, or discussions relating to state life. This is because ideology is one of the important and at the same time absolute factors in order to preserve the existence and survival of a nation or country. Ideology, in short, becomes a source of value that becomes the reference in society's life, which in turn becomes guidelines for citizens' behavior through the formulation in the form of legal regulations. Ideology can also function as the personality of a nation or state because ideology also indicates the orientation of a society. related to the values considered important by that society. Ideology in literary works can emerge through characters, backgrounds (which include place, time, and social), as well as events. In this study perspective, all these elements are ideological representations inherent in each of them. Therefore, literary works are also referred to as ideological sites. Because, literary texts are a dialectic of the author's own thinking that arises through

characters, backgrounds, and events. Ideology has been used to refer to the same conceptual form as popular culture and culture making it an important term in the understanding of the nature of popular culture.

Storey confirmed that: Ideology suggests a certain masking, distortion, or concealment. Ideology is used here to indicate how some texts and practices present distorted images of reality. They produce what is sometimes called ‘false consciousness’. Such distortions, it is argued, work in the interest of the powerful against the interests of the powerless (2009:3).

This definition speaks of capitalist ideology. Capitalism is an economic system of private ownership in terms of property and production, as well as the development of financial institutions. What this use will imply will be the way the ideology conceals the reality of domination from those under control; the dominant class does not see themselves as extortioners or oppressors. Per more importantly, the way the ideology uses hides the reality of subordinate devotion of the helpless; the underclasses do not see themselves as being oppressed or exploited.

Etimologically, the term socialism or in English The term “socialism” is derived from the French word social, which means “society” and historically, the term socialism first appeared in France around 1830.

Socialism has at least two purposes: in the first place, according to the socialists, capitalism is exploitative because of its arrogance, which only thinks of profit by encouraging the increase of production and the reduction of production costs, and in the second place by cutting labor wages. Second, capitalism creates superstructures so that the social class does not change, the workers remain within

their class and cover up the exploitation of the workers. Both of these reasons led the socialists to want to free the working class from exploitation and the view that there is no social class in society.

The writer has chosen this topic in the context of the ideology of capitalism and socialism, which has the same common goal of well-being but has a difference in how to its goal. Capitalism demands greater responsibility toward individuals to the wealth of a group or person. Socialists have the understanding that each person has his own responsibility to common well-being. The distinct differences between these two ideologies have never disappeared over time, and without us realizing the conflict between social classes in the real world it is still happening due to the exploitation of the capitalist group against the working group. Therefore, it is important to study the issues of capitalism and socialism so that society can be more dependent especially on those parties who want to profit themselves.

Researching the question of the opposition to an ideology can be done in a literary work in which the work of literature can be a reflection and history of the human world at a certain time. The researchers chose George Orwell's novel, "Keep the Aspidistra Flying", because of the issue of social disparity and the capitalism system that underpins the novel's narrative.



## **B. Identification of Problem**

The researchers found some issues about the two ideologies of capitalism and socialism in the novel *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* by George Orwell:

1. The influence of capitalism's ideology is so great that the majority of people think money is everything.
2. There is a social gap that occurs in the novel.
3. Internal conflict of the main character.

## **C. Scope of the Problem**

The author focuses on the Ideological Change that occurs on the main character, using the genetic theory of structuralism of Lucian Goldman. This Theory is applied by researching the history of the British society at the time which becomes the setting of the novel and also the issues in the novel, in order to know the purpose of the author against the change of ideology that occurred within the main character, Gordon Comstock.

## **D. Statement of the Problem**

Focus the discussion only on the following issues:

1. How does George Orwell depict capitalism ideology in *Keep The Aspidistra flying*?
2. What is the impact of capitalism toward the ideology of the main character?

### **E. Objectives of the Study**

Based on the formula of the problem above, then the objectives of the research are as follows:

1. To describe capitalism ideology through in *Keep The Aspidistra Flying*.
2. To discover the impact of capitalism toward the main character ideology.

### **F. Significance of the Study**

This study focuses on revealing how the ideology of the author and the life of society at the time of a literary work can influence a work of literature itself and also becomes a foundation for readers who want to investigate the class contradictions that exist in the novel by using the theory of genetic structuralism of Lucian Goldman.

### **G. Sequence of Chapter**

The study consists of five chapters. The first chapter is an introduction that covers the background of the research, the reasons for choosing the topic of the survey, the scope of the problem of the formula, the purpose of the study, the importance of this research, and the sequence of the chapter. The second chapter is a literature review consisting of previous studies and theories related to research. The third chapter consists of a research methodology that explains how the authors analyze the research object. And also how to collect data and the types of data used for analysis. Then, the fourth chapter is the core of the research which contains the results of the analysis of the object of research. The fifth chapter is the final chapter that concludes the entire research into a summary of analysis and advice.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **A. Previous Study**

Nenin Astiti Ayunda conducted a study entitled Capitalist Domination that was discovered in the Shirley Jackson vote in 2006. Your study deals with Marxism capitalism as a social step towards theory, in particular Marxism. Analysis of capitalist domination in the lottery of Shirley Jackson. one of her research objectives is to find out the background of the growth of capitalism. The reason for capitalism. The result of their research is that capitalists control workers through workplace and civil activity. They are two different social classes living in the village where the lottery is located. It is not permitted to have power and status in the society where lotteries exist. Manage the lottery, which is considered to be the most prominent and deceived tradition. Capitalists take the opportunity to run the lottery. In this way, they affirm their strengths and strengthen their capitalism. An ideology to strengthen their presence in society. Other studies on similar topics are being carried out by Amat Mudir, In 2007 Amat Mudir wrote his final task entitled "Conflict". Jack London Irons London Iron Hill Jack The conflict of interest between capital and capital interests between labour and labour. He made a novel sociological analysis of the conflict between the working class and the American capital class. His work shows that conflict between them is caused by humans. Human egoism, selfishness, individualism, individualism, and just freedom Individualism and spirit freedom freedom. This research is aimed at



supplementing previous research or journals that have been conducted or created. Two previous studies conducted by Nenin Astiti Ayunda and Amat Mundir tended to focus on capitalism and the social class. But this study is quite different from previous studies, this study focuses on the main character who tries to reject the system of capitalism that exists in the novel *Keep The Aspidistra Flying* by George Orwell beside that, this research also investigate the influence of the author's ideology as well as the life of society at the time of the creation of the novel became the basis to know what the purpose of the writer to make this novel.

## **B. Review of Related Theories**

### **a. Intrinsic Elements**

#### **1. Plot**

Plot is a sequence of events intertwined in the story to build a storyline from beginning to end. According to Saad (in Rahmanto, 1988:30), plot is divided into two types: linear and flashback. The linear plot also called progressive plot, which is the story that starts from the beginning, middle, and end of the story. Meanwhile, a flashback plot is a plot that tells the main character's life's past events and then to the present.

In general, the elements of the plot can be explained as follows:

- a. Exposition: At the story's beginning, the author introduces the characters, setting, conflict and theme.
- b. Rising action: The story's conflict appears, after the exposition and before the climax.

- c. Climax: The conflict faced by the main character is getting more complicated; it is the turning point of the story, and this stage forces the main character to solve the conflict.
- d. Falling action: After the complicated conflict in the climax before, the conflict starts to fall
- e. Resolution: The resolution is the end of the story

## 2. **Character and Characterization**

Abram's in Nurgiyantoro, says that the character of the story is the person(s) shown in the narrative or drama work, interpreted by the reader as having certain moral qualities and tendencies as expressed in the speeches and actions taken. (Nurgiyantoro, 2012: 165). A summary character is a figure created by a writer in a story to play a role so that the path of the story and a message from the writer can be well conveyed to the reader.

characterization is how the author describes and develops character characteristics of fictional stories (Esten 1990:27). The simplest form of characterization is to give a name or nickname to a character in a literary work. By a name, the author can add a character's personality or characteristic to support the story. Characters and can be described as humans, animals, plants, objects, and others.

According to M. Saleh Saad in terms of attitude, characterization, idea, and so on, the characters in the story can

be divided into three, namely: (1) the protagonist, (2) the antagonist, and (3) the tritagon character. (Tjahjono, 1988: 142-143). In A Story, characters are created to be a container for authors to convey the message they want to convey. The characterization described in the character is the most important thing to get the message transmitted correctly.

The author draws the conclusion from some of the expert opinions above, the character is the figure shown in the literary work. Characters are the most important component for making the story go, while characterization is the character's personality description, which is divided into three, namely the protagonist, the antagonist, and the tritagon.

### **3. Settings**

According to Abrams (1981:175), setting dividends into three types: setting of place, time and atmosphere. The setting of a place is the place where the events of a character occur, for example, at home, at school, in a city and etcetera. While the setting of time shows when the events experienced by a character occur. Then, the setting of the atmosphere shows the inner condition experienced by the character. Usually contains the environmental conditions in which the character is located so that we will know the character's feelings.

According to Abrams (1999:284) divided setting into three, namely: Setting of Place, Setting of Time, and Setting of Society.

#### **4. Theme**

The main idea of a story is its theme, which serves as the author's starting point when describing the fictional works he or she writes. Fananie (2000:84) explain that theme is ideas, opinions, and views of life that lay behind the creation of literary works. It is similar to Stanton (2007:70) that theme is the meaning of a story that specifically explains most of its elements in a simple way. The theme plays a crucial role in the story, just like other elements do, because without a theme, the plot would not have life and would not have a clear path. Because the theme is not explicitly stated in the story, we must comprehend and identify messages in the story and its constituent parts in order to identify the theme.

#### **B. Genetic Strukturalism**

Genetic structuralism is one of the methods of literary research that is popularly used in analyzing literary works of both novels, cerpen, and poetry. This theory is one of the branches of literary sociology that blends textual structure, social context, and authors worldview (Yasa, 2012:28).

All the earier works and most the university works undertaken subsequently to the appearance of this conceptions were concerned and still are conserved, in this discipline, with the content of literary works and

the relationship between that content and the collective consciousness, that is to say, the ways in which men think and behave in daily life (Goldman, 1967:494). Furthermore, this type of study must, by its actual method, break up the unity of the work by directing its attention above all to whatever in the works is merely the reproduction of empirical reality and of daily life. This theory emphasizes the relationship between the literary work and the social environment faced by the author. In society, human beings are faced with norms and values, and in literature, norms are also reflected in values that are consciously focused and endeavored to be implemented in society. Literature also depicts human anxieties, hopes and aspirations. Therefore, the probability of such literary works can be used as the most effective sociological measure to measure human reactions to social forces. (Goldman, 1967:495).

Genetic sociology and psycho-analysis have at least three elements in common, namely: (a) the assertion that all human behaviour forms part of at least one significant structure; (b) the fact that to understand such behaviour it must be incorporated in that structure which the research worker must bring to light; (c) the assertion that structure is really comprehensible only if it is grasped at its genesis, individual or historical, as the case may be. In short, just like the sociology which we favour, psycho-analysis is a genetic structuralism (Goldman, 1967:499).

As a theory, structuralism-genetics is a statement that is considered authentic about reality. A statement is valid when it contains a picture of a systematic and integrated order of life, which is based on an ontological basis of the existence of the reality and on an epistemological basis that is a systemic set of ideas about how to understand or know the reality in question. (Faruk, 2015 :56)

Genetic structuralist sociology starts from premises that are not merely different but even quite opposite; we should like to mention here five of the most important of them:

1. The essential relationship between the life of society and literary creation is not concerned with the content of these two sectors of human reality, but only with the mental structures, with what might be called the categories which shape both the empirical consciousness of a certain social group and the imaginary universe created by the writer.
2. The experience of a single individual is much too brief and too limited, to be able, to create such a mental structure; This can only be the result of the conjoint activity of a large number of individuals who find themselves in a similar situation, that is to say, who constitute a privileged social group, these individuals having, for a lengthy period and in an intensive way, lived through a series of problems and having endeavoured to find a significant solution for them. This means that mental structures or to use a



more abstract term significant categorial structures are not individual phenomena but social phenomena.

3. The relationship already mentioned between the structure of the consciousness of a social group and that of the universe of the work constitutes, in those cases which are most favourable for the research worker, an homology which is more or less rigorous but often also a simple significant relationship; it may therefore happen, in these circumstances and it does indeed happen in most cases that completely heterogeneous contents and even opposite contents, are structurally homologous, or else are found to be in a comprehensive relationship at the level of categorial structures. An imaginary universe, apparently completely removed from any specific experience that of a fairy tale, for instance may, in its structure, be strictly homologous with the experience of a particular social group or, at the very least, linked, in a significant manner, with that experience. There is therefore no longer any contradiction between, on the one hand, the existence of a close relationship between literary creation and social and historical reality and, on the other hand, the most powerful creative imagination.
4. From this point of view, the very peaks of literary creation may not only be studied quite as well as average works, but are even found to be particularly suitable for positive research. Moreover, the categorial structures with which this kind of literary sociology is concerned are precisely what gives the work its unity, that is to say, one of the two

fundamental elements of its specifically aesthetic character and, in the case we are interested in, its truly literary quality.

5. The categorial structures, which govern the collective consciousness and which are transposed into the imaginary universe created by the artist, are neither conscious nor unconscious in the Freudian sense of the word, which presupposes a repression; they are non-conscious processes which, in certain respects, are akin to those which govern the functioning of the muscular or nervous structures and determine the particular character of our movements and our gestures. That is why, in most cases, the bringing to light of these structures and, implicitly, the comprehension of the work, can be achieved neither by immanent literary study nor by study directed towards the conscious intentions of the writer or towards the psychology of the unconscious, but only by research of the structuralist and sociological type (Goldman 1967:495-496).

### **C. Capitalism**

Adam Smith in the 17th century gave birth to the theory of capitalism, his theory that everyone should have the freedom to strive in perfect competition, by dismissing government interference. Capitalism is characterized by the existence of private ownership of the means of production or distribution which it uses to profit under highly competitive conditions (Milton H. Spencer; 1990), so that it can be claimed that capitalism is an individualistic society. Adam Smith once said:

*It is not because of the generosity of the butchers, the brewers and the bakers that we have lunch, but because they care about their own personal interests. We're not talking about their humanity but their love of themselves." (Bunayya, 2021).*

According to Weber, capitalism stems from the writings of Benjamin Franklin. He said that Franklin's attitude depicts the ethos of capitalism. Franklin wrote that time is money, that credit is money and money can make money. He encourages people to pay all their debts on time, because it encourages the trust of others. He also encourages the public to present themselves as professional and reliable at all times. Weber says that this "philosophy of greed" sees capital growth as an end in itself. It's an ethic, and individuals are considered to have a duty to thrive. (Weber, 1930: 1)

Capitalism focuses on driving profit. Capitalism is not against replacing methods that the same goal. However, an ethical capitalist prohibits hedonistic lifestyles. Making more money is seen entirely as an end in itself, and not just a means to buy other things.

This development of capitalism has its pros and cons, the majority of which is opposed to a society that has a lower middle economic caste. As society that rejects the ideology of capitalism develops, it has its own ideology that is opposed to ordinary capitalism and is called a socialist ideology.

Ethymologically, the term socialism or in English the term "socialism" comes from the French language, which means socialism. Historically, socialism first appeared in France around 1830. The term "socialism" refers to a group of people who have the notion that ownership of the means of

production is the common property, not the rights of individuals or a particular group.

There are many experts against this socialism, one of which, Franz Magnis-Suseno writes, is that socialism is, (1) the doctrine and the movement that it adheres to that the social state is achieved through the abolition of the private ownership of the means of production, (2) the state of society in which the private property of the instruments of production has been abolished. (Franz Magnis Suseno, 2001: 270). There is also the Scientific Socialism which Karl Marx claimed. Marx claims that his socialism is scientific socialism. (Magnis Suseno, 2001: 270 271).

Robert Owen is an economist as well as a human and social entrepreneur. He argues that the industrial order, the financial system, wages and education need to be reformed because he thus believes that the reform is not only beneficial to the workers but also to the capitalists themselves. According to Owen, human character is not his own responsibility, but determined by his social environment. The source of all social calamities is ignorance, especially about the human race (Suseno, 2001: 20-21). Capitalism and socialism are ideologies that focus on the economic system, these two ideologies have one similarity that is to prosperity but this capitalism has a goal that is the prosperity of the individual or a group of people.

#### **D. George Orwell's Political Movement in Support of Socialism**

The long-term decline of British power formed the backdrop of Orwell's life. Born in 1903, Orwell's youth was bracketed by the signal and terminal crises of British hegemony: the Long Depression of 1873 to 1896 and the 1931 collapse of the British pound's link with the gold standard (Arrighi 1994: 179, 221). Orwell's family experienced the decay of British hegemony as a crisis of class reproduction. Eric Blair, the man who would adopt the penname George Orwell, was born into a downwardly mobile genteel family, what he described as "the lower-upper-middle class...a sort of mound of wreckage left behind when the tide of Victorian prosperity receded" (McQuade 2015:318).

the level of historical structure, Orwell is unavoidably shaped by the decline of Britain as world hegemonic power. For the intermediate era of Orwell's generation, politics were forged in the crucible of sharp ideological debates around Stalinism, fascism, the threat of war and the hope for revolution. Orwell's political trajectory is also shaped by the immediate associations and events that defined his life on a more quotidian basis. While such decisions that look random or fateful, the product of chance or charisma, Orwell's position in the political and literary field structured his reaction to events. (McQuade 2015:317).

Orwell's political development began with a rejection of his experience in Burma. As such, his first works on colonialism mainly contain an individualist perspective.<sup>6</sup> In his later political writings, however, Orwell

confronted class and empire more systematically. *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937/1958) represents the maturation of his politics and his embrace of socialism. The result of a two month study of coalminers in Lancashire and Yorkshire, *The Road to Wigan Pier* was an important political polemic written in the mid-1930s when the Miners Federation was struggling against the scab Spencer Union in an effort to improve wages and secure national bargaining (Taylor 1996).

*For in the last resort, the only important question is, Do you want the British Empire to hold together or do you want it to disintegrate? And at the bottom of his heart no Englishman...does want it to disintegrate. For apart from any other consideration, the high standard of life we enjoy in England depends upon keeping a tight hold on the Empire...Under the capitalist system, in order that England may live in comparative comfort, a hundred million Indians must live on the verge of starvation—an evil state of affairs, but you acquiesce in it every time you step into a taxi or eat a plate of strawberries and cream. The alternative is throw the Empire overboard and reduce England to a cold and unimportant little island where we should all have to work very hard and live mainly on herrings and potatoes. That is the last thing that any left-winger wants. Yet the left-winger continues to feel that he has no moral responsibility for imperialism. He is perfectly ready to accept the products of Empire and to save his soul by sneering at the people hold the Empire together (Orwell 1937/1958: 159-160).*

From this point onward, Orwell's writing on socialist strategy would be uniquely characterized by his global approach to class that led him to conclude that the British working class and Left was implicated maintenance of the colonial system. In *Adelphi* in 1939, he argued that "that the overwhelming bulk of the British proletariat does not live in Britain but in Asia and Africa." On these grounds, he criticized the abandonment of anti-imperialism during the Popular Front period,



equating it with opportunistic political posturing: “Quakers shouting for a bigger army, Communists waving Union Jacks, Winston Churchill posing as democrat” (Orwell 1939/2000: 394, 397). In a later reflection on the UK’s postwar Labour government, Orwell (1948) identified an “unsolved contradiction that dwells at the heart of the Socialist movement.” Socialism promises both “better material conditions for the white proletariat” and “liberation for the exploited coloured peoples. But the two aims, at least temporarily, are incompatible” (McQuade 2015:325).

Orwell’s world-historical imagination and related anti-modernism, however, were not simply limited to critique. Orwell also envisioned socialism as a world order implicitly based in common sense and notions of basic decency:

And all the while everyone who uses his brain knows that Socialism, as a world-system and wholeheartedly applied, is a way out. It would at least ensure our getting enough to eat even if it deprived us of everything else. Indeed, from one point of view, Socialism is such elementary common sense that I am sometimes amazed that it has not established itself already. The world is a raft sailing through space with, potentially, plenty of provisions for everybody; the idea that we must all cooperate and see to it that every-one does his fair share of the work and gets his fair share of the provisions seems so blatantly obvious that one would say that no one could possibly fail to accept it unless he had some corrupt motive for clinging to the present system. Yet the fact that we have got to face is that Socialism is not establishing itself. Instead of going forward, the cause of Socialism is visibly going back (Orwell 1937/1958: 171).

His anti-modernism translated politically into a call to humanize socialism. He realized that the formation of a professional middle class, mass mediation and mass consumerism in a changing capitalism was making proletarian revolution an anachronistic strategy in place like

Britain. As such, he repeatedly condemned the sectarianism and abstruse theorizing of communist factions as counter-productive blustering. He called on the Left to stop antagonizing the “sinking middle class” before they turn to Fascism. “The job of the thinking person,” he concluded “is not to reject Socialism but to make up his mind to humanise it” (McQuade 2015:326-327).

While Orwell’s politics evolved in relation to events, he had developed a humanist conception of socialism by the mid-1930s that would remain constant throughout his career. As an item of faith, Orwell believed that “ordinary people” could understand and act upon the world outside of the parameters set by the state, party, media or other powerful institutions. As Stephen Ingle notes, “for Orwell, reality, the external world, could be discerned by the undeceived intelligence of the ordinary individual...ready to do battle with the collective state over the issue of truth” (Ingle 2006: 128).

#### **E. The economic condition of British society in the 1930s**

The British economy in the 1930s underwent a recovery process due to the First World War and the world economic crisis after the First World War, commonly known as the Great Depression. In general the rate of economic growth in the decade seems to have been quite considerable, particularly in relation to that of most leading capitalist economies. Nevertheless, the very high levels of unemployment associated with major

structural difficulties within industry, and which formed such a prominent feature of the inter-war years as a whole, persisted throughout the recovery of the 1930s. This very high unemployment rate was caused by the economic instability that occurred in the United Kingdom, especially in the field of exports which became one of the important components of the United Kingdom national income, As Mayer and Lewis put it in the 1949:

*“ Slumps in the United Kingdom are associated with a fall in exports. There is some evidence of priority .... And there is even some plausibility in a theory that it is the fall in exports which starts or causes the British Slumps. ( Meyer, Lewis : 1949)*

This period is characterized by mass unemployment, regional divergence and acute levels of poverty and inequality in traditional industrial areas. Whilst certain regions, notably in the south of England experienced real levels of prosperity, in the early 1930s, nearly three million people were unemployed in Britain (Ward 1988). These developments stimulated an intensive round of industrial and social surveys undertaken at a regional level in Britain throughout the 1920s and 1930s. At the end of them, the various surveys and intense speculations about the dimensions of industrial unrest, unemployment and productivity would contribute to the creation of a new space of governmentality. Historians of numbers and of statistics have consistently linked the development of surveying capacity with the state. For Rose the production of numbers has an unmistakable power in modern culture (Rose 1988).

It can be concluded that the only economic condition of British society in the 1930s was still experiencing an economic crisis characterised by uneven economic growth in British regions and also a large number of unemployed people.