

GEORGE ORWELL (1903-1950)

The life

George Orwell is the pseudonym of Born Eric Blair.

He was born in India in 1903, because he was the son of minor colonial official, but he was taken to England by his mother when he was a small child where he was sent to a preparatory boarding school on the Sussex coast, where he was distinguished among the other boys by his poverty and his intellectual brilliance.

Orwell won scholarship to Eton's University where he stayed from 1917 to 1921.

From 1922 to 1927 Orwell returned to Burma (India), to work as assistant district superintendent in the Indian Imperial Police. His first novel, *Burmese Days*, is inspired to his colonial experience.

In 1928, he took the decisive step of resigning from the imperial police and became novelist and journalist. He went to report on the Civil War there and stayed to join the Republican militia.

Orwell was a prolific book-reviewer, critic, political journalist and pamphleteer.

In 1944 Orwell wrote *Animal Farm*, a political fable based on the story of the Russian Revolution under Joseph Stalin. This small masterpiece made him famous and financially secure.

Orwell's last book was *Nineteen Eighty-four*, he started writing it in 1946 when he was seriously ill with tuberculosis. He worked between bouts of hospitalization. The book was published in 1949 and soon became a best-seller. Orwell died the following year (1950) in a London hospital.

Social Themes

Orwell believed that writing meant to interpret reality and had a useful social function. However Orwell believed that the writer should be independent.

He wrote about social theme and used realistic language. He insisted on tolerance and justice in human relationships (*nei rapporti umani*), and warned (*ha messo in guardia*) against the increasing artificiality of urban civilisation (*l'artificiosità crescente della civiltà urbana*). He criticized totalitarianism and the tyranny in all its forms.