

George Orwell (1903-1950), *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. 1949.

1 which you had a hallucination. You believed that you had  
actually held it in your hands. It was a photograph something  
like this. 20

An oblong slip of newspaper had appeared between  
O'Brien's fingers. For perhaps five seconds it was within the  
angle of Winston's vision. It was a photograph, and there was  
no question of its identity. It was *the* photograph. It was another  
copy of the photograph of Jones, Aaronson and Rutherford at  
the Party function in New York, which he had chanced upon  
eleven years ago and promptly destroyed. For only an instant  
it was before his eyes, then it was out of sight again. But he  
had seen it, unquestionably he had seen it! He made a desperate,  
agonising effort to wrench the top half of his body free. It was  
impossible to move so much as a centimetre in any direction.  
For the moment he had even forgotten the dial. All he wanted  
was to hold the photograph in his fingers again, or at least to  
see it. 35

'It exists' he cried.

'No,' said O'Brien.

He stepped across the room. There was a memory hole in  
the opposite wall. O'Brien lifted the grating. Unseen, the frail  
slip of paper was whirling away on the current of warm air; it  
was vanishing in a flash of flame. O'Brien turned away from  
the wall. 40

'Ashes,' he said. 'Not even identifiable ashes. Dust. It does  
not exist. It never existed.'

'But it did exist! It does exist! It exists in memory. I remember  
it. You remember it.' 45

'I do not remember it,' said O'Brien.

Winston's heart sank. That was doublethink. He had a  
feeling of deadly helplessness. If he could have been certain

1 Winston drew in his breath. He opened his mouth to speak  
and then did not speak. He could not take his eyes away from  
the dial. 1

'The truth, please, Winston. Your truth. Tell me what you  
think you remember.' 5

'I remember that until only a week before I was arrested, we  
were not at war with Eastasia at all. We were in alliance with  
them. The war was against Eurasia. That had lasted for four  
years. Before that —'

O'Brien stopped him with a movement of the hand. 10

'Another example,' he said. 'Some years ago you had a very  
serious delusion indeed. You believed that three men, three  
one-time Party members named Jones, Aaronson and Ruther-  
ford — men who were executed for treachery and sabotage after  
making the fullest possible confession — were not guilty of  
the crimes they were charged with. You believed that you had  
seen unmistakable documentary evidence proving that their  
confessions were false. There was a certain photograph about

that O'Brien was lying, it would not have seemed to matter. 50  
 But it was perfectly possible that O'Brien had really forgotten  
 the photograph. And if so, then already he would have forgot-  
 ten his denial of remembering it, and forgotten the act of  
 forgetting. How could one be sure that it was simply trickery?  
 Perhaps that lunatic dislocation in the mind could really 55  
 happen: that was the thought that defeated him.

O'Brien was looking down at him speculatively. More than  
 ever he had the air of a teacher taking pains with a wayward  
 but promising child.

'There is a Party slogan dealing with the control of the past,' 60  
 he said. 'Repeat it, if you please.'

"Who controls the past: controls the future: who controls  
 the present controls the past," repeated Winston obediently.

"Who controls the present controls the past," said O'Brien, 65  
 nodding his head with slow approval. 'Is it your opinion,  
 Winston, that the past has real existence?'

Again the feeling of helplessness descended upon Winston.  
 His eyes flitted towards the dial. He not only did not know  
 whether 'yes' or 'no' was the answer that would save him from 70  
 pain; he did not even know which answer he believed to be  
 the true one.

O'Brien smiled faintly. 'You are no metaphysician, Winston,'  
 he said. 'Until this moment you had never considered what is  
 meant by existence. I will put it more precisely. Does the past 75  
 exist concretely, in space? Is there somewhere or other a place,  
 a world of solid objects, where the past is still happening?'

'No.'

'Then where does the past exist, if at all?'

'In records. It is written down.'

'In records. And —?' 80

'In the mind. In human memories.'

'In memory. Very well, then. We, the Party, control all  
 records, and we control all memories. Then we control the  
 past, do we not?' 85

'But how can you stop people remembering things?' cried  
 Winston, again momentarily forgetting the dial. 'It is involun-  
 tary. It is outside oneself. How can you control memory? You  
 have not controlled mine!'

O'Brien's manner grew stern again. He laid his hand on 90  
 the dial.

'On the contrary,' he said, 'you have not controlled it. That  
 is what has brought you here. You are here because you have  
 failed in humility, in self-discipline. You would not make the  
 act of submission which is the price of sanity. You preferred to 95  
 be a lunatic, a minority of one. Only the disciplined mind can  
 see reality, Winston. You believe that reality is something  
 objective, external, existing in its own right. You also believe  
 that the nature of reality is self-evident. When you delude  
 yourself into thinking that you see something, you assume that  
 everyone else sees the same thing as you. But I tell you, 100  
 Winston, that reality is not external. Reality exists in the human  
 mind, and nowhere else. Not in the individual mind, which  
 can make mistakes, and in any case soon perishes: only in the  
 mind of the Party, which is collective and immortal. Whatever  
 the Party holds to be truth, is truth. It is impossible to see 105  
 reality except by looking through the eyes of the Party. That  
 is the fact that you have got to re-learn, Winston. It needs an  
 act of self-destruction, an effort of the will. You must humble  
 yourself before you can become sane.'

He paused for a few moments, as though to allow what he 110  
 had been saying to sink in.

'Do you remember,' he went on, 'writing in your diary, "Freedom is the freedom to say that two plus two make four"?'  
 'Yes,' said Winston. 145  
 O'Brien held up his left hand, its back towards Winston, with the thumb hidden and the four fingers extended.  
 'How many fingers am I holding up, Winston?'  
 'Four.'  
 'And if the Party says that it is not four but five — then how many?' 120  
 'Four.'  
 The word ended in a gasp of pain. The needle of the dial had shot up to fifty-five. The sweat had sprung out all over Winston's body. The air tore into his lungs and issued again in deep groans which even by clenching his teeth he could not stop. O'Brien watched him, the four fingers still extended. He drew back the lever. This time the pain was only slightly eased:  
 'How many fingers, Winston?'  
 'Four.'  
 The needle went up to sixty.  
 'How many fingers, Winston?'  
 'Four! Four! What else can I say? Four!'  
 The needle must have risen again, but he did not look at it. The heavy, stern face and the four fingers filled his vision. The fingers stood up before his eyes like pillars, enormous, blurry and seeming to vibrate, but unmistakably four.  
 'How many fingers, Winston?'  
 'Four! Stop it, stop it! How can you go on? Four! Four!'  
 'How many fingers, Winston?'  
 'Five! Five! Five!'  
 'No, Winston, that is no use. You are lying. You still think there are four. How many fingers, please?' 140

'Four! Five! Four! Anything you like. Only stop it, stop the pain!'  
 Abruptly he was sitting up with O'Brien's arm round his shoulders. He had perhaps lost consciousness for a few seconds. The bonds that had held his body down were loosened. He felt very cold, he was shaking uncontrollably, his teeth were chattering, the tears were rolling down his cheeks. For a moment he clung to O'Brien like a baby, curiously comforted 150 by the heavy arm round his shoulders. He had the feeling that O'Brien was his protector, that the pain was something that came from outside, from some other source, and that it was O'Brien who would save him from it.  
 'You are a slow learner, Winston,' said O'Brien gently. 155  
 'How can I help it?' he blubbered. 'How can I help seeing what is in front of my eyes? Two and two are four.'  
 'Sometimes, Winston. Sometimes they are five. Sometimes they are three. Sometimes they are all of them at once. You must try harder. It is not easy to become sane.' 160  
 He laid Winston down on the bed. The grip on his limbs tightened again, but the pain had ebbed away and the trembling had stopped, leaving him merely weak and cold. O'Brien motioned with his head to the man in the white coat, who had stood immobile throughout the proceedings. The man in the white coat bent down and looked closely into Winston's eyes, felt his pulse, laid an ear against his chest, tapped here and there; then he nodded to O'Brien.  
 'Again,' said O'Brien. 170  
 The pain flowed into Winston's body.

Bertrand Russell (1872-1970), *Power. A New Social Analysis*. « The Forms of Power ». 1938.

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A very different type of character comes to the fore where power is achieved through learning or wisdom, real or supposed. The two most important examples of this form of power are traditional China and the Catholic Church. There is less of it in the modern world than there has been at most times in the past; apart from the Church, in England, very little of this type of power remains. Oddly enough, the power of what passes for learning is greatest in the most savage communities, and steadily decreases as civilisation advances. When I say 'learning' I include, of course, reputed learning, such as that of magicians and medicine men. Twenty years of study are required in order to obtain a Doctor's Degree at the University of Lhasa, which is necessary for all the higher posts except that of Dalai Lama. This position is much what it was in Europe in the year 1000, when Pope Silvester II was reputed a magician because he read books, and was consequently able to increase the power of the Church by inspiring metaphysical terrors.

The intellectual, as we know him, is a spiritual descendant of the priest; but the spread of education has robbed him of power. The power of the intellectual depends upon superstition: reverence for a traditional incantation or a sacred book. Of these, something survives in English-speaking countries, as is seen in the English attitude to the Coronation Service and the American reverence for the Constitution: accordingly, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Supreme Court Judges still have some of the traditional power of learned men. But this is only a pale ghost of the power of Egyptian priests or Chinese Confucian scholars.

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While the typical virtue of the gentleman is honour, that of the man who achieves power through learning is wisdom. To gain a reputation for wisdom a man must seem to have a store of recondite knowledge, a mastery over his passions, and a long experience of the ways of men. Age alone is thought to give something of these qualities; hence 'presbyter', 'seigneur', 'alderman', and 'elder' are terms of respect. A Chinese beggar addresses passers-by as 'great old sire'. But where the power of wise men is organised, there is a corporation of priests or literati, among whom all wisdom is held to be concentrated. The sage is a very different type of character from the knightly warrior, and produces, where he rules, a very different society. China and Japan illustrate the contrast.

We have already noted the curious fact that, although knowledge plays a larger part in civilisation now than at any former time, there has not been any corresponding growth of power among those who possess the new knowledge. Although the electrician and the telephone man do strange things that minister to our comfort (or discomfort), we do not regard them as medicine-men, or imagine that they can cause thunderstorms if we annoy them. The reason for this is that scientific knowledge, though difficult, is not mysterious, but open to all who care to take the necessary trouble. The modern intellectual, therefore, inspires no awe, but remains a mere employee; except in a few cases, such as the Archbishop of Canterbury, he has failed to inherit the glamour which gave power to his predecessors.

The truth is that the respect accorded to men of learning was never bestowed for genuine knowledge, but for the supposed possession of magical powers. Science, in giving some real acquaintance with natural processes, has destroyed the belief in magic, and therefore the respect for the intellectual. Thus it has come about that, while men of science are the fundamental cause of the features which distinguish our time from former ages, and have, through their discoveries and inventions, an immeasurable influence upon the course of events, they have not, as individuals, as great a reputation for wisdom as may be enjoyed in India by a naked fakir or in Melanesia by a medicine-man. The intellectual, finding their prestige slipping from them as a result of their own activities, become dissatisfied with the modern world. Those in whom the dissatisfaction is least take to Communism; those in whom it goes deeper shut themselves up in their ivory tower.

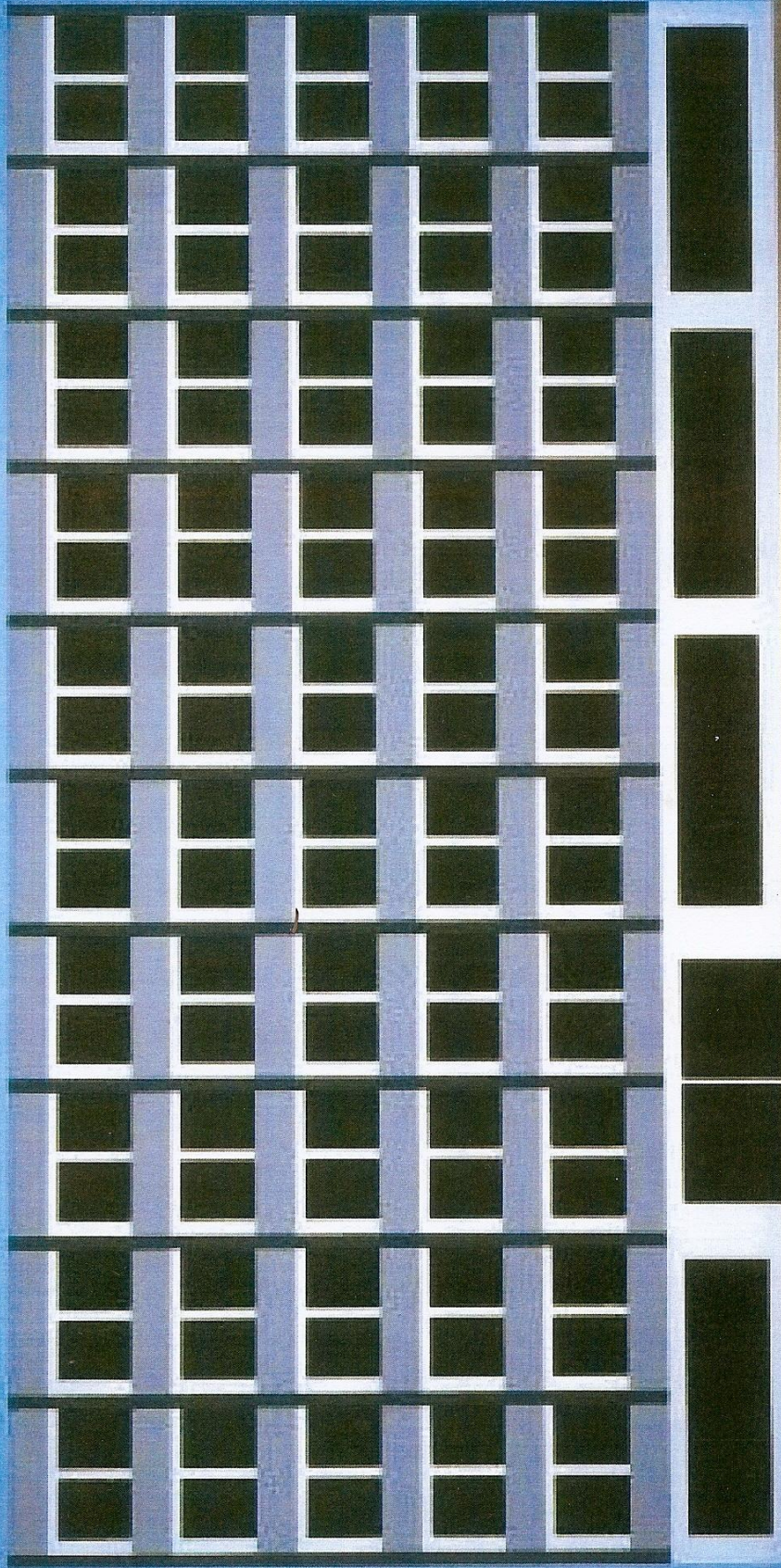
The growth of large economic organisations has produced a

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new type of powerful individual: the 'executive', as he is called in America. The typical 'executive' impresses others as a man of rapid decisions, quick insight into character, and iron will; he must have a firm jaw, tightly closed lips, and a habit of brief and incisive speech. He must be able to inspire respect in equals, and confidence in subordinates who are by no means nonentities. He must combine the qualities of a great general and a great diplomatist: ruthlessness in battle, but a capacity for skilful concession in negotiation. It is by such qualities that men acquire control of important economic organisations.

Political power, in a democracy, tends to belong to men of a type which differs considerably from the three that we have considered hitherto. A politician, if he is to succeed, must be able to win the confidence of his machine, and then to arouse some degree of enthusiasm in a majority of the electorate. The qualities required for these two stages on the road to power are by no means identical, and many men possess the one without the other. Candidates for the Presidency in the United States are not infrequently men who cannot stir the imagination of the general public, though they possess the art of ingratiating themselves with party managers. Such men are, as a rule, defeated, but the party managers do not foresee their defeat. Sometimes, however, the machine is able to secure the victory of a man without 'mag-netism'; in such cases, it dominates him after his election, and he never achieves real power. Sometimes, on the contrary, a man is able to create his own machine; Napoleon III, Mussolini, and Hitler are examples of this. More commonly, a really successful politician, though he uses an already existing machine, is able ultimately to dominate it and make it subservient to his will.

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Julian Opie (1958- ), *You See an Office Building 4*, 1996.