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***Report:*** George Orwell and Soviet Russia: Fascination and Disillusionment with Socialism

***Annotation:***

The report is focused on analysing the life and work of the famous English writer George Orwell in the context of his perception of socialism. Orwell's understanding of socialism was contradictory. The author discusses the key stages of his attitude to it. In 1936 Orwell
got acquainted with the life of miners, their hardships and problems aroused sympathy in him. As a result, the book “The Road to Wigan Pier” was written, in which Orwell expressed his attitude to the plight of workers and hope in socialism. He sympathized with the leftist movement; however, he denied the ideology imposed by the agitators among the workers, their “heavy language” of propaganda, and their desire for leadership over the working class. A trip
to Barcelona in 1936 ultimately converted Orwell into a socialist, but he began to distinguish between two types of socialism: Stalinist and Barcelonian. Wholly denying the Stalinist model, he believed in democratic socialism without purges and repression, considering that such socialism could only originate in a country with strong democratic principles, such as Britain. It is pointed out that Orwell rejected the Stalinist dictatorship but not the idea of socialism itself. However,
by rebuffing double standards, Doublethink, Newspeak, Thought Police, etc., Orwell himself was striving to ensure that sympathy for the USSR did not spread throughout England. It is known that for many years he had been keeping a notebook in which he wrote down the names of people
he suspected of having “criminal” inclinations towards communism and the Stalinist regime.
In 1949 he submitted his list to the Foreign Office. The author concludes by analysing Orwell's attitude to Russian literature. He acknowledged his writing debt to E.I. Zamyatin, and later many researchers highlighted the similarities between them. He also drew in-depth parallels between Yevgeny Zamyatin's novel “We” and Aldous Huxley's “Brave New World”and believed that Zamyatin's political statement surpassed the idea of Huxley's book.