



# Orwell and Marxism: The Political and Cultural Thinking of George Orwell (International Library of Cultural Studies)

*Philip Bounds*

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## **Orwell and Marxism: The Political and Cultural Thinking of George Orwell (International Library of Cultural Studies) Philip Bounds**

Whether as a fighter in the Spanish Civil War, an advocate of patriotic Socialism or a left-wing opponent of the Soviet Union, George Orwell was the ultimate outsider in politics - insecure, scornful of orthodoxies, cussedly independent.

Best known today as the author of *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Orwell also wrote seven other full-length books and a vast number of essays, articles and reviews. A pioneering cultural critic, he addressed a range of important issues including art, literature, 'Englishness', mass communication and the spectre of totalitarianism. Famously describing his own background as 'lower-upper-middle class', Orwell had a complex relationship with Marxism and all his work reflects the influence of British communism. In this thoughtful and original study Philip Bounds argues that Orwell's writings effectively took the form of a dialogue with the leading British Marxists of his day. Bounds shows that Orwell often agreed with the Marxists and built on their insights in his writings, while on other occasions he used his disagreements with them as the basis of his own critical position.

Through close analysis of Orwell's writings as well as his historical and literary context, Bounds has produced an important study of one of the iconic writers of the 20th century. 'Orwell and Marxism' offers a thorough introduction to Orwell the intellectual, reviving his reputation as a serious cultural thinker and documenting his most important influences, as well as a convincing portrait of British Marxism and society in the 1930s and 40s.

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