

## Exploring the Issue of Alienation in Orwell's Animal Farm through the Eyes of Marxism

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### Abstract

Orwell included the issue of alienation in almost major of his writings particularly his famous book Animal Farm. The current research paper highlights the major argument of the Marxist approach which is alienation throughout Animal Farm. In this regard, the researcher focuses largely on the critical-analytical study of the idea of alienation based on the Marxist point of view. A deep exploration is paid to the analysis of all forms that are closely related to the concept of alienation concerning socio-political alienation, economic alienation, self-alienation, psychological alienation, and religious alienation. Based on the rereading of the whole incidents of the book, the present study investigates the major concept of Marxism namely alienation in the light of the Marxist perspective. It is seen that both ruling authority groups either the previous Manor Farm that is led by Mr. Jones or the latter the Animal Farm that is led by the Pigs, Old Major before revolution and Napoleon and Snowball after revolution practiced alienation on their subjects in order to dominate them.

### Keywords

alienation, proletariat, bourgeoisie, exploitation



## I. Introduction

Marxist theory is considered one of the major schools of thought of the temporary age that took much concern from many critics, philosophers, thinkers, scholars, and literary-critical students. The current research work sheds light on one of the Marxist arguments that a lot of writers included in one way or the other within their literary pieces which is alienation. According to Marx, alienation is an objective social state that can only be resolved by historical transformation rather than being a simply subjective phenomena (cf. Hardimon 1994, 119–22). The issue of alienation had occupied a special status in most English literary writers either directly or indirectly adopted in their articulations. Orwell as one of the prominent writers of the 20th century embodied alienation in the course of events of his books, particularly Animal Farm. According to the story incidents, it is seen how the class structure of the Animal Farm reveals the hierarchical division between the animals that form the population of the Animal Farm. Before that, alienation was practiced by Mr. Jones, the leader of the Manor Farm that represents the Russian Empire. Evidently, the exploitation of people through many deceiving devices is employed socially, politically, economically, intellectually, psychologically, and religiously.

In this respect, Mr. Jones, the leader of the Manor Farm, exploited his people using many tactics especially the religious ideology that was performed properly by the sophisticated figure Moses who could persuade the other animals to forget the concentration on their materialistic needs and instead thinking about the life after death. The same thing recurrently occurred in Animal Farm wherein the pigs, the intelligent animals, exploited the other animals especially the working class that is represented by

Boxer, and other classes. They are being alienated through exploiting their efforts without appreciating them. This is similar to Marx's allegation about the upper class (bourgeoisie) alienating the working class (proletariat) which makes them increase the income of the means of production while they do not get their benefits. This means the exploitation of the poor people's efforts by their possessors who alienate them. According to this, their lives will become worse while the rich people become better. In brief, the researcher in the current study provides a deep critical-analytical investigation of the issue of alienation in George Orwell's *Animal Farm* in the light of the Marxist Perspective.

## II. Review of Literatures

### Concept of Alienation: Critical Overview

The concept of alienation is one of the most significant notions of the Marxist approach. It is a historical phenomenon since the early centuries according to the Holy Quran and the Old Testament allegations that it had taken place in the time of Adam and Eve who felt alienation, loneliness, and isolation as mentioned in the Fall of Adam and Eve as a result of God's disobedience. In this case, Adam and Eve felt alienated and tried to regain heaven after their expelling. The feeling of alienation led them to a continuous struggle to break this isolation by the return to paradise. Before Marx, the term 'alienation' had been highlighted by Hegel. The concept of alienation had been the central argument of the Hegelian philosophy. According to Hegel, alienation can be treated as a whole notion that can be counted as absolute mind, absolute thought, absolute soul, and absolute God. On this essence,

The human mind separated from nature, is isolated and lost in a world that is not its own. It is alienation. This may be overcome by growing human consciousness, which can recognize that both nature and itself are aspects of a wider unity The Absolute Spirit, or God (Muhammad Shah, 2015, p. 47).

Marx's approach of alienation was one of his many theories. Western religion and philosophy have a long history of using the term "alienation" (Oppolzer 1997). This basic argument is generally concerned with the conscious and unconscious minds of society members. It can be defined as the state of being isolated from your society or another group. For Hegel and Feuerbach, alienation can be regarded as a form of intellectual, mental, and psychological estrangement. But on the contrary for Karl Marx, it is a material, economic, and social phenomenon. The product of labour appears as alien property, as a mode of existence confronting living labour as independent . . .and establishes itself opposite living labour as an alien power.. (Marx, 1973:453-4).

It is a condition of carelessness and indifference of being treated as an unworthy considerable individual. "Alienation is characterized as alienated labour." (Roudro 2020). According to Marx, the relations of society are marked by class structures. The exploitation of the relationship between the classes of society is masked. The human mind is lost in a world that is not its own, estranged from nature, and alone." It's estrangement. Growing human consciousness that understands that nature and one are parts of a greater unity may be able to overcome this. God, or the Absolute Spirit. (Alex 2004) Obviously, the subjects of the working class are alienated from the means of production of their work. Alienation from a Marxist perspective appears in the form of increasing the production of goods and commodities by the laborers where the profit goes directly to the owners via exploitation. Marx, for this reason, confirms that this concept is the greatest evil of

capitalism and the worker must be liberated from this evil. According to Marx, alienation can be understood as,

The externalization of the worker in his product means not only that his labor becomes an object, an external existence but that it exists outside him and that begins to confront him as an autonomous power; that life which he has bestowed on the object confronts him as hostile and alien (1977).

In this context, it is clear that Marx has attacked the notions of religion. Marx has counted religious ideology as a source of alienation. Some critics observed that Karl Marx is anti-religious, and he is against a certain kind of society that has blind loyalty. According to Marx any critic, thinker or philosopher should criticize religion as the same as any other aspect of life. Most people live miserably but they don't blame any certain system of society. If you want to get to heaven after death, no need to focus on the most materialistic needs of life. Marx remarks that "religion is the Opium of the poor people" (Niebuhr, 1964, p. 42). Sayers in his article "*Alienation as a critical concept*" mentioned that according to Leopold (2007, 68), for Marx alienation is 'a kind of dysfunctional relation (for example, an unnatural separation or hostility) between entities'. Therefore, the state can be maintained and controlled by repressed structures such as the army, the court of law, intelligence, police, surveillance, trials, violent tools, espionage, and so on. It is seen that the mode of production changes the social institutions. The result of exploitation is alienation and isolation that are masked. To maintain the domination of a particular class or state control, it is essential to establish repressed structures.

The exploitation of one social class by another is seen especially in modern industrial capitalism, particularly in its unrestricted nineteenth-century form. The result of this exploitation is alienation, which is the state that comes about when the worker is de-skilled and made to perform fragmented, repetitive tasks in a sequence of whose nature and purpose he or she has no overall grasp (Barry, 2013, p.151).

### III. Results and Discussion

#### Orwell and Alienation in Animal Farm

The issue of alienation is observed clearly throughout the book Animal Farm. Orwell devoted all his efforts to criticizing the socio-political issue practiced with a kind of dictatorship putting the Marxist tenets aside. Marxism is a theory that can organize the life of people in Russia symbolically Animal Farm that inspired by Old Major. But after the revolution, all these commandments changed gradually into totalitarianism. Throughout the book, incidents appeared some behavioral techniques against the revolution principles practiced by the farm leaders. These practices were undergone by the working forces, particularly the proletariat. Bourgeoisies reappeared again through the pigs where they exploited economically and politically their subjects. Here, three main alienations are revealed by the writer; one is the economy and this can be seen through the taking advantage of the workers by making them make much effort to produce goods but they have been prevented from their profits. This shows the inequality after the revolution that led again to capitalism. On the other hand, there is another alienation called religious alienation where at first Mr. Jones of the Manor Farm used religion to give drugs to his subjects and tempted them to not think about their materialistic needs and think about life after death. This role is performed by Moses, the clever raven who managed to distract the

animals' attention from the changes in people's life into better. According to the Marxist arguments, religion alienates citizens from thinking to improve their current lifestyles. Finally, the revolutionary leaders who were repressed by their leader Napoleon deviated deliberately and used religious ideology again for their interests. They used religious tactics in order to exploit people and urge them to do much effort without thinking about their interests. To tempt their supporters, Napoleon gradually replaced the revolution principles from the group or general (ownership) into private ownership. It can be said that the system shifted from communism to capitalism or from feudalism to dictatorship. Workers made great efforts in order to increase the state income but the state leaders did not appreciate these ordinary people and improve their standard of life. This, therefore, indicates clearly exploitation.

In this regard, by creating the Seven Commandments that represent the principles of revolution, the animals will not interact with other farms where people own the land. Every animal was enthralled, labored nonstop, and was content with the outcome of their labor and their compensation. They believe their hopes have been realized. Nonetheless, it is unfeasible to rule the farm entirely and certain animals were chosen as leaders who are prepared to guide others; these were the pigs. Later on, the pigs themselves selected two clever pigs to lead them that is Napoleon and Snowball. They engage in combat which Napoleon wins and uses to impose new rules. It was declared that pragmatism was a new ideology that they should follow. So the farm is expanding, human interactions start and the economy is growing. But other animals who make up the majority of the labor force continue to live the same style of life. There was little correlation between their remuneration and the outcomes of their job. The pig leaders stole all of the farm's excess profits. This leads to the expansion of the ruling class and the emergence of a substantial managerial class which is followed by the emergence of bureaucracy. At the tale's conclusion, everything returned to its initial state. While other animals received nothing, the pig leaders were content because they got everything they wanted. The innocent delusion of the animals in servitude vanished. The farm is in the process of creating a new power shift.

According to the story events, one of the most notable examples of a workaholic on the farm is the workhorse, named Boxer. He made great efforts but eats little. It is evident in his motto "I will work harder" and "Napoleon is always right" (Orwell, 41). This indicates blind affiliation. It denotes how the new authority influenced completely on their supporters mentally, intellectually, religiously, and socially. The farm leaders exploited the lack of education among their followers and managed to drive them to do more than their ability. He woke up earlier than other animals and worked through the night. He put in work till he was exhausted. Boxer has actively participated in a large portion of the work that has been done on the farm following Mr. Jones's dismissal. Regrettably, his physical well-being has been impacted by his intense workload. He hurt his leg building the windmill which caused him to become crippled. He is now a burden to his fellow agricultural worker who is the most active. Hence, the pigs no longer saw him as valuable when he was able to complete his tasks and they had him transported covertly to the slaughter.

Furthermore, a clear instance of the religious alienation promised by Moses to the animals after death,

He claimed to know of the existence of a mysterious country called Sugar Candy Mountain, to which all animals went when they died. It was situated somewhere up in the sky, a little distance beyond the clouds, Moses said. In Sugar Candy Mountain it was Sunday seven days a week,

clover was in season all year round, and lump sugar and linseed cake grew on the hedges (Orwell, AF, 2019, p.10).

Through the lines mentioned above, it is obvious that the second alienation after the economic can come is religious alienation Marx warned about it and considered it a dangerous ideology that makes people not think about improving their material life. Ordinary people make great efforts not to improve their standard of life but to get paradise after their death. This incident reinforces Marx's allegation about religion. So the rulers either the previous that is represented by Mr. Jones the leader of the Russian Empire or the new rulers represented by the pigs headed by Napoleon who used religion to drug his subjects and distract their attention from thinking about regime change. Both believe that religion can threaten their position so they exploit the religious men for their interests as a political technique to control their subjects. By religion, they managed to repress the ordinary people and astray them far away from thinking about rebellion.

In the same respect, there is another alienation called socio-political alienation that can be seen through competition between the two cleverest pigs, Snowball and Napoleon. It is seen that Snowball is smartly sophisticated and adopts Marxist principles. In order to get a reputation, he is a thinkable figure and suggested to build a windmill. As a kind of jealousy, Napoleon disagreed with Snowball's thoughts because if he followed them. Snowball becomes a well-known person. In this case, Napoleon will become the less important character and Snowball will become the first figure of Animalism. Above all, Napoleon thought to suppress Snowball by creating a secret police. Through the secret police that is the dogs, Napoleon managed to exile Snowball and assassinate all his loyalists. After that, Snowball escaped but Napoleon still felt at risk, therefore, he sent spies to assassinate him. In order to repress his supporters, Napoleon spread spies and secret police to capture all the rebellions and opened prisons, trials, courts, and cells for them. He utilized terrorist techniques to dominate the state. But in the end, Napoleon replaced democracy, socialism, and communism with a capital totalitarian regime ruled by force. Orwell uses history to criticize the methods in which people are corrupted by power, how Stalin ( the fictional Napoleon) bends philosophy to suit his ends, how he uses powerful propaganda ( embodied in the book by the talkative pig Squealer) to fabricate, retell, and alter the nation's history, and how he manipulates statistics showing the nation's growing levels of poverty, unemployment, famine, and suffering to keep control over the populace and hold onto power. In addition, he condemns Stalin's cruelty and the way he massacred his people in order to maintain power.

Another form of alienation can be noted early in the book that schooling plays a part in the population stratification of AF. Since pigs are recognized as being the smartest of the other animals. They take on their shoulder the responsibility of rallying and coordinating the other animals after the death of Old Major. This indicates the discrimination among the revolutionary forces that is considered as the new alienation based on education. This distinction takes place as superior and inferior based on mental abilities and individual differences. The pigs are initially devoted to both the revolutionary cause and their loyalist creatures. At first, they sincerely adopt Major's futuristic vision into the Seventh Commandments of Animalism. But soon long, the pigs' knowledge and intellect become instruments of oppression rather than sources of enlightenment. When the pigs manipulate the others by desiring fresh milk for the sake of their morality and utilize their enhanced intelligence and expertise to deceive the other animals. Moreover, the pigs prevent the other animals from having early access to intelligence, knowledge, and education. They used the kid's book to educate themselves in reading and writing. In order to deprive the other animals of getting the same opportunity, they burnt the book. It is true that the

majority of animals only ever learn a few letters of the alphabet. In this regard, the pigs utilized their superior intelligence to control the other animals when they have established themselves as a well-educated faction. For instance, they amend the Seventh Commandments anytime they like for their interests because they are aware that the other animals are unable to read them. Besides, the pigs can specialize and grow economically by using their mental literacy to study trades from manuals. They are confident with their function as intelligentsia and prefer organizing bookkeeping to manual labor. This demonstrates that the pigs enjoy the freedom to turn down any opportunity they so choose in addition to the benefit of having opportunities. Because of their intelligence and education, the pigs can employ revisionism and propaganda to astray the other animals. As the novel comes to a close, we see Napoleon getting ready to teach and brainwash a new generation of pigs into adhering to the oppressive mode.

The topic that unites the animals is exploitation. At first, the animals are unaware that Jones is taking advantage of them. Because of this, Old Major's speech represents a large revelation. Major informs the animals that Man is to fault for their exploitation and enslavement. In addition to teaching them what exploitation is, he also educates them that it is not always the case. Orwell argues that when one class of society has an advantage over another, exploitation is actually inevitable. Further, Major argues that being "rich and free" is the antithesis of exploitation. Major's views on animal rights serve as a metaphor for the value and scarcity of human rights under a repressive government. Although becoming free does not translate into wealth, it is preferable to be poor and free rather than exploited. Apparently, Napoleon controls the exploitation of every animal on AF, except the pigs. Even the dogs who assist the pigs in their task are taken advantage of. Because they are used as tools of intimidation and murder, dogs may even be subjected to more exploitation than other animals. Napoleon takes advantage of the other animals' physical powerlessness and ignorance, but he uses the dogs' viciousness to his advantage and transforms them into villains against of their parents.

In this respect, Boxer is believing deeply in Napoleon. Because he completely believes that Napoleon is a wonderful man, he takes advantage of himself making himself an especially depressing example of exploitation. Ultimately, Napoleon flips the script and takes advantage of Boxer, ordering his execution for financial gain. By the book's end, it is abundantly evident how the animals take part in their enslavement. For the thirty-one baby pigs that Napoleon has fathered, they are starting to construct a schoolhouse. The swine that built the schoolhouse will never profit from it; instead, it will serve to educate and brainwash them into perpetuating the cycle of exploitation of others. Orwell, therefore, demonstrates to us throughout the book how a denial of human rights leads to complete powerlessness. The book does not offer any suggestions on how to accomplish human rights, even though it emphasizes their necessity. Once all the pigs deny the animals' rights they drive Jones out and win them for themselves, so that, the cycle of exploitation keeps on with new victims. In this context, Orwell writes,

Somehow it seemed as though the farm had grown richer without making the animals themselves any richer—except, of course, for the pigs and the dogs. Perhaps this was partly because there were so many pigs and so many dogs. It was not that these creatures did not work, after their fashion (Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 2013, p. 84).



## IV. Conclusion

It is outlined that Orwell directly or indirectly adopted the theme of alienation in his prominent novel *Animal Farm*. As a socialist who supports socialism and has been influenced by Marx's thoughts. Orwell adopted many issues of Marxism especially the critique of totalitarianism particularly in the Soviet Union which changed gradually from democracy and socialism at the time of Marx and Lenin into dictatorship at the time of Stalin's ruling authority. Orwell personally had seen the hierarchical structure of English society particularly in various parts of the world like India, Burma, Spain, and Russia in general. The exploitation of the working class which is called Marx's proletariat attracted Orwell's attention. Throughout the book incidents, it is observed that the topic of alienation predominates the book represented by the characters and the story conflicts practiced by the animals' rulers respectively before the revolution and after the revolution. Consequently, the ruler of the Manor Farm (Russian Caesar), Mr. Jones alienated his subjects and obliged them to increase the products for his sake of. On the other hand, the pigs exploited the other animals of the Animal Farm (Soviet Union) to make great efforts for their sake without taking any care for the ordinary animals' interests namely Boxer which represents the Marx's term proletariat. Their rulers (bourgeoisie) alienated their workers and reemployed the religious ideology as a device to cheat them in order to alienate them through the promise to find the Sugar Candy Mountain after their death and there they can enjoy forever.

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