

THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA MINISTRY  
OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH  
ABDERRAHMANE MIRA UNIVERSITY OF BEJAIA  
FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH



## The Corrupt Communism in George Orwell's *Animal Farm*

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for a **Master degree in English Language,  
Literature, and Civilization**

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**Academic Year: 2014 -2015**

## ABSTRACT

The present dissertation discusses the corrupt communism in George Orwell's Animal Farm, and tends to analyze the tragic mutation which occurred in the Soviet Union after the rise of Joseph Stalin. It sheds more light on the historical background as well as the aesthetics of the literary genre, the Fable, which is used in Orwell's novel as a tool for hiding his ideology and conveying his message in a very ironic and satirical manner. In this connection, the present research work establishes a parallel link between historical facts and the events of Orwell's fable in order to illustrate the dangerous foolishness of the pseudo-communist Russia, and denounce the Stalinist regime. This relationship is examined from a Marxist literary perspective. This Marxist interpretation has also revealed other aspects of Animal Farm such as being an important warning text that mainly criticizes the destructive influence of power and money.

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my lovely parents, my brothers and sisters who always encourage and support me during every moment in my life.

To my dearest friends, Mamou, Idir, Halim, Narimene, and Celia.

And a special dedication to the love of my life Farah. The unique for me and the special charming, sweet soul, whom walked with me throughout all the steps of my work. She was my glimmer of light that helped me and gave me all the necessary support during a long year of efforts. I will always be indebted to you.

## Acknowledgments

I have put a lot of efforts in this project. However, it would not have been possible without the kind support and help of many individuals. I would like to express my sincere thanks to all of them.

My deep feelings of gratefulness and respect are to my supervisor Mr. Farid KACI who spared no effort to enrich the work and to provide me with the necessary guidance and academic advice. I would also like to thank him for his unlimited support in completing the research paper. I am highly indebted sir.

My gratefulness towards my parents, my family members, and my soul mate “Farah” who have been my constant source of inspiration and gave me the drive and discipline to tackle any task with enthusiasm and determination. Without their love and support, this work would never have been made possible.

Heartfelt gratitude to every single teacher who has ever taught me a letter, a lesson, a principle, or a moral since the primary school. In this respect, I want to mention all my teachers at the University of A. MIRA-Bejaia, especially those of my years in the L.L.C.E option.

Finally, I am deeply grateful to all the members of the jury for accepting to read, examine, and travel south to discuss my dissertation.

Thank you all....

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# **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

### General Introduction

Throughout my years of study in the field of literature and civilization, I have mostly been interested and fascinated by the British literature and its authors. As a result, I have decided to consecrate my graduation research paper to analyze the corrupt communism issue in one of the most brilliant and meaningful British fable which is Animal Farm, written by George Orwell.

Animal Farm is considered as an allegorical fable and a dystopian novel, published in England on August 17, 1945. According to Orwell, the book is reflecting events leading up to the Russian Revolution of 1917 and then on into the Stalin era in the Soviet Union. (Wikipedia Free Encyclopedia)

Orwell, a fervent democratic socialist, was a strong critic of Joseph Stalin and very hostile to Moscow under his rule. This attitude was critically shaped and developed as a result of Orwell's experiences during the Spanish Civil War that occurred between 1936 and 1939. Consequently, his view of the Soviet Union was completely altered. The great symbol he believed in had become a brutal dictatorship which stood upon a cult of personality and strengthened by a reign of terror. (A Preface to Orwell 86)

Orwell declared publicly that his book Animal Farm is a satirical novel against Stalin. He also wrote in his essay; " Why I Write ", published in Such, Such Were the Joys collection, that Animal Farm was the first book in which he had tried, with full consciousness of what he was doing, both the political purpose and the artistic purpose into one whole.

The present investigation will then be entitled: **Corrupt Communism in George Orwell's Animal Farm**. The main purpose of the present dissertation, hence, is to elucidate and analyze the concept of the fake or the pseudo communist ideology, which is



to my mind the engine of the writer's fable. So the problematic of my dissertation will be as follows: How does George Orwell's Animal Farm depict the tragic change which occurred in the Soviet Union after the rise of Joseph Stalin and what are the aspects of corrupt communism involved in the novel?

Based on a historical truth, George Orwell in his novel Animal Farm attacks obviously the concept of totalitarian communism and its tyrannical leadership which spread in Russia after 1917. Shaped as satire and considered as allegorical, Animal Farm was directly inspired from the writer's thoughts, principles, together with his views of humanity and politics. Through the story of animals' rebellion against a tyrannical farmer which goes wrong, and their success in overthrowing him and building a free and fair farm without avoiding the emergence of some new and unexpected events, Orwell wanted to enlighten the political events that happened in Russia from the Bolshevik revolution until World War II. He highlighted the development of Soviet communism in the form of an animal fable, criticizing mainly Stalinism, and then showing the corrupting influence of power.

George Orwell met several difficulties in getting Animal Farm published because of some political reasons; the British at that time wouldn't offend the Soviet Union and create a tension that could threaten the alliance during World War II, since the book was clearly a satire of communism and dictatorship. But after its publication, the novel was seen by the literary world as a wonderful and meaningful satirical fable of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. According to the English author and academic Malcolm Bradbury, this novel will remain the greatest satirical fable of the darker modern history and the most important political critique written in Britain in 1945[('Introduction' to 'Animal Farm: A Fairy Story' by George Orwell). For the British social and political cartoonist, Ralph Steadman, Animal

Farm has sent off all the opposition and it is as valid today as it was fifty years ago; in other words, its concept may be applied and extended to other revolutions in the world.

In addition to these two scholars, many other critics have produced several articles about this novel. Kearny Anthony, for example, in Orwell's Animal Farm and 1984, analyzed the equality of the animals in the novel through considering the writer's famous phrases.

Tom Hopkinson, in Short Story Criticism, made a description of Animal Farm as a masterpiece and a successful satire of dictatorship written with good humor and detachment. Katharine Byrne also analyzes in her remarkable article, "Not All Book Are Created Equal: Orwell and His Animals", Orwell's work and its political aspect and examines the story's relevancy in the modern era. William Mattingly, for his part, states in, "How Orwell's Animal Farm Highlights His Belief in Marxist Communism", that Orwell's fairy tale highlights his belief in Marxism and personifies the failure of Stalinist communism. Spenser Brown, in his critical essay; "Mealymouthed critics ignore Animal Farm's Anticommunist Flavor", considered Animal Farm as one of the best anticommunist books criticizing the communist leadership in the USSR. There are also many writers and researchers who were fascinated by the novel and investigated it. For instance, Stella Zavera Monica has conducted a thesis entitled; Tyrannical Control Over the Proletariat in George Orwell's Animal Farm, in which she compares between Napoleon's and Mr. Jones' systems in managing the farm and the ways in which the two characters control other characters. Redden John in his well elaborated work; Appreciating Animal Farm in the New Millennium considers Animal Farm's origins, its attitude towards revolutionary change, and pictures Orwell as a "literary Trotskyist ". In addition, he comments that Ralph Steadman's illustration in the 1995 edition does not do justice to the text. Barton Geoff's "Nature Tale" in Times Educational Supplement, considers both the fiftieth anniversary

edition of Animal Farm and the contemporary relevance of Orwell's tale. Newsinger John builds a remarkable work devoted to Orwell's book; Review of Animal Farm. He analyses and examines how the perceptions of Animal Farm have been changed over the years by historical facts and conditions.

From this, I can assume that many critics were interested in Orwell's novel and several essays and investigations have been conducted to analyze his fable. So, my personal purpose in the present research work is to tackle an important concept in this novel by providing my own perceptions and arguments about Orwell's masterpiece, more specifically about the corrupt communism throughout the fable. In the same time, I aim to furnish some tangible evidences about the theme of my research from historical facts.

Since Marxist critics view literature within a socio-historical context, and that literature is inseparable from history and society, it could be helpful to espouse a Marxist literary approach in the present research. I shall seek help from such works as Karl Marx's The Communist Manifesto, Terry Eagleton's Marxism and Literary Criticism, together with the French Marxist literary critic Pierre Macherey in his work: A Theory of Literary Production (1978).

To implement this orientation on my present research, I shall rely on a three-chapter outline. The first chapter is entitled **Animal Farm: text and context**. It is concerned with supplying the historical background of the novel, the biography and works of the writer, together with an analysis of the major characters and themes of the novel.

The second chapter deals with: **The Corrupt Communism in Animal Farm**. My endeavor in this chapter is to directly investigate the concept of Communism and its different and corrupt aspects as shown throughout the novel. Besides, I shall discuss George Orwell's critical allegory and satirical portrayal of the rise of a new dictatorship in the novel.

The third and last chapter is devoted to **Marxism and Animal Farm**. In the first part, I shall discuss the Marxist ideology and the ways in which it was adopted by George Orwell, especially in Animal Farm. Then I shall provide a Marxist reading of the novel by relying on the theories of Karl Marx and the French Marxist critic, Pierre Macherey. This kind of reading will reveal some “unspoken” realities in the novel, and show how the Bolshevik revolution deviated from its initial Communist ideals.

In the Conclusion, I will show how the text and the context in Orwell’s novel are intricately bound. I shall also examine the extent to which Orwell succeeded, through his fable, in unveiling and criticizing the fake communist principles, and the establishment of a new dictatorial regime. This, however, will end while incorporating some seeds of hope for building a strong and resistant empire if the true socialist and communist principles are respected.

**CHAPTER ONE:**  
**ANIMAL FARM: TEXT AND CONTEXT**

**Chapter One: Animal Farm: Text and Context**

My aim in this first chapter is to provide the historical context of Animal Farm in order to show the relationship between the content and the context in Orwell's novel. It will include too, a biography of George Orwell and an overview his works. At the end, a general presentation of Animal Farm, its genre, plot summary and themes will be presented.

**1 / Historical Background of the Novel**

In his novel, George Orwell rewrites the story of the Bolshevik war with a touch of criticism and allegory about a corrupt and power-starving leadership. He uses animals, which stand for the Russian figures of that time, instead of humans, and manages to perfectly order his fable's events in a way that respects the chronological development of the revolution. In 1917, Russian poor peasants launched a great revolution which allowed them to change their history and get rid of the Tsar dynasty from Russia. With the leadership of Lenin who conducted that wind of change, the USSR was created to guarantee a peaceful and fair life for the population, and this is how the world's first Communist state was born. However, between 1917 and World War II, the peasants' beautiful dream turned into a frightening nightmare, when a tyrannical leader called Stalin led the Soviet Union to a totalitarian ruling atmosphere. His government disfigured the socialist principles in order to oppress the population and keep power in their bloody hands. This tragic reversal is what mainly prompted the British author George Orwell to react and produce Animal Farm. Many of the animal characters in the novel have direct relations to personalities or institutions in the then Soviet Union.

During the cold war, the western countries, especially the United States, saw Orwell's novel as weapon of propaganda against the eastern pole. So, they presented it as a

work of an outstanding figure of the left writers, who by time discovered that they were wrong and became anti-communist. This idea worked well and it sold more than it had done in England, but Orwell was disappointed at this and reacted on the Ukrainian translation of Animal Farm by saying: "It was of the most importance to me that people in Western Europe should see the soviet regime for what it really was. ...Nothing had contributed so much to the corruption of the original idea of socialism as the belief that Russia is a socialist county and that every act of its rulers merits excuses, if not imitation."(A Preface to Orwell 108)

The misunderstanding of his work pushed Orwell to react. He explained that his wish was to tell the western countries, who started to believe in the Soviet Union and to accept it for what it was, the reality of the situation. The writer also argued that he aimed at showing to the ordinary English people the realities of totalitarianism. This is what explain his simple and direct language.

## **2/ Orwell's Biography and Works**

George Orwell, an English novelist, essayist, journalist and critic, was born Eric Arthur Blair in Bengal (India) on June 25<sup>th</sup> 1903. His father was working for the Opium Department serving the British Empire in its colony.

A year after his birth, his family left India to England. At the age of five, he entered an Anglican school in Henley. After two years, the young Arthur was sent to Cyprian's school in Eastbourne where he pursued his education.

Few years later, he earned a good scholarship to Willington and Eton Colleges. He expressed his life's bad experience in his essay "Such, Such, Were the joys....." in 1952, identifying and realizing how the rich use their power to make the poor obey them. This would later shape his political and social tenets about the elites (Moran 3).

Once finishing his studies at Eton College, and due to financial circumstances, Orwell couldn't carry on his instruction at the university; he decided to move to India where he worked as a police officer for the Indian Imperial office in Burma and where he got in touch with the poor. This inspired him to write his first novel Burmese Days (1934) in which he adopted his pen name "George Orwell".

After years of poverty, he lived in Paris for two years, then returned to England and worked as a teacher in a private school, and later as a bookshop assistant. Down and Out in Paris and London was published in 1933, a description of years of misery in Paris and London.

Sympathizing with the Spanish civil war, Orwell traveled to Spain and fought close to the Independent Labor party against Fascism. In "Homage to Catalonia" he describes his own experience in the civil war (12).

During World War II he started to work for the BBC Eastern Service for the sake of gaining the Indian and Asian sustainment for Britain's war efforts.

His awareness of the political corruption in Russia and his beliefs in "democratic socialism" pushed him to write his masterpiece Animal Farm, an allegory of the corruption of the socialist principles of the Russian revolution and his foresight of the consequences of totalitarianism in Nineteen Eighty Four (13).

George Orwell died in 1950 after a long suffering from a serious lung disease. Near the end of his life, Orwell proposed to Editor Sonia Brownell. He married her in 1950, only a short time before his death. Brownell inherited Orwell's estate and made a career out of managing his legacy.



**3 / A General Presentation of the Novel Animal Farm as a Fable**

Under this sub- title we attempt to shed light on the story by conducting a brief presentation including the definition of the novel's genre, a synopsis of the tale, its characters, and finally the fundamental themes that the author explored in this story.

**3-1 / Definition of Fable**

Fable is a literary genre, a short fictional story in prose or verse which bestows the human attributes to animals, plants or inanimate objects. The latter are "anthropomorphized"; that is to say; animals often talk and act like humans. Fables in general teach a moral lesson.

It is one of the literary genres that can be found in each civilization; from Aesop's tales in ancient Greek to One Thousand and One Nights in the Middle East literature, until it reached its apex in the 17<sup>th</sup> century in works of the famous French fabulist Jean de la Fontaine. (The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics.)

In the modern era, a fable is not only intended for children, but is also adopted in modern adult literature. Many writers make use of a fable to hide their ideologies and therefore transmit their messages in a very ironic way. This is actually done because of some social or political circumstances, or even authorial censorship. For instance, the English writer George Orwell in his famous fable Animal Farm uses the animals' revolt as a metaphor for the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 and thereby satirizes Stalinist communism.

**3-2 / A Synopsis of the Story**

The events of the story happened in Manor Farm where an old wise boar called his mates to a meeting in the barnyard and invites them to react against their oppressor. The rebellion took place and Mr. Jones left the farm by force. The farm declares its independence and a new reign begins under the rule of the most intelligent animals in the farm, the PIGS.

They established an “Animal Farm” under the concept of “Animalism” based on the seven commandments. The pig leaders Napoleon and Snowball take the initiative to control the farm through the meetings; they plan and organize the work of the animals, except for the pigs whose responsibility is leadership. They also send pigeon to extend the precepts of Animalism and discuss the economic increase of the farm.

By the late summer, the farmers of the neighboring lands were angry at “Animal farm” and its leaders. Mr. Jones tried to recapture the farm with the help of other farmers, but he failed. The animals celebrate this victory in what they call the Battle of the Cow Shed.

Snowball and Napoleon are always in disagreement. Napoleon opposes whatever Snowball suggests or plans including the building of the Windmill to shorten the work and supply the farm with electricity. Napoleon contrasts and conspires against Snowball who was sent away by a group of dogs trained secretly by Napoleon. After getting rid of Snowball, Napoleon ordered to build the windmill as if it were his own idea.

Napoleon and his companions begin to swerve of the principles of Animalism; he engages in trade with the other farms through an intermediate, Mr. Whymper, to buy materials for the windmill. His Draconian measures make the work harder, for the pigs

invaded the farm house; they sleep in beds, drink alcohol, behave like humans, while the animals are working hard and suffer from cold and food scarcity.

One day, a tempest destroyed the windmill; the pigs especially Napoleon accuses Snowball for the fall of the windmill. He succeeded to change the mind of the animals by considering Snowball as a traitor who represents a danger for the farm through the speeches made by Squealer. Napoleon grows despotic; when the windmill was built it took the name of Napoleon's mill.

Over the years, the animals' life conditions became harsh, in spite of the technological growth. While the other animals live in misery, the pigs live in comfort, their behavior has been changed, and the seven commandments have been altered and replaced by a single maxim: "All the animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others". The pigs continue to behave like humans. They became indistinguishable from them.

The story ends in the farm house where Napoleon receives Mr. Pilkington for dinner and declares that "Animal Farm" will become "Manor Farm". He also declares that the farm flag will be without the rebellion symbols.

### **3-3 / Major Characters**

#### **3-3-1 / The Humans**

##### **Mr. Jones**

In George Orwell's fable, the story begins with Mr. Jones, a drunk farm owner; he represents the Tsar of Russia Nicolas II who ruled until 1917. He is an example of the lazy and cruel leader of Russia neglecting his duties towards the state and people. Mr. Jones is also portrayed to satirize capitalism and starvation of the working class (Benhaddad 24).

**Mr. Frederick**

He is one of the figures who are assaulted by George Orwell in his novel. Mr. Frederick is the owner of Pinchfield who led to the suffering of the world population. He plays the role of Adolf Hitler (Moran 55).

**Mr. Pilkington**

Orwell's attack is also expressed towards Mr. Pilkington, Frederick's foe and the owner of Foxwood. He portrays the role of Winston Churchill, the Prime Minister of England during World War II.

**3-3-2 / The Animals****Old Major**

He is the first important figure in the story, Old Major, an old middle White boar, whose rousing speech inspires the animals to rebel against their oppressor. He stands for a combination of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, the prominent socialist theorists of the nineteenth century. Orwell also alludes to Lenin, the leader of the revolution.

In the tale, Old Major's enthusiastic speech is a simplification of the Communist Manifesto of 1848. It contains the socialist principles. He also represents a general view of the Manifesto, Blaming "Man" (Capitalism) for all animals' distress.

**Snowball**

Snowball is the most popular pig among the animals. He is characterized by his smooth speeches, devoting himself to other animals. He teaches them morals, and brings literacy to the farm so that the animals could read and understand the seven commandments (the principles of Animalism). In this novel, Snowball stands for Leon

Trotsky. Unlike Stalin who wanted to develop an agricultural land, Trotsky thought that the society is in need of developing an army which can defend and prevent the country from the outsiders and foster education. Moreover, Snowball wanted to spread the precepts of Animalism in all over the world which is symbolised in the the story by sending pigeons to the neighbouring lands.

The disagreement between Stalin and Trotsky is represented in the story by the total unsuitability between Snowball and Napoleon and ended with the exile of Trotsky and expulsion of snowball (Moran 27).

### **Napoleon**

Napoleon is portrayed as the antagonist in the novel. He is ruthless towards the animals and represents a typical portrait of Joseph Stalin who became the General Secretary of the Communist Party after the death of Lenin in 1924. All Napoleon's acts in the story show his cruelty by committing many crimes against his fellow animals. For instance, he secretly gets the puppies and trains them so that they will become his killer dogs, steals the cows' milk, and finally reduces the seven commandments into one single maxim full of despotism and inequality "All animals are equal, BUT some Animals are more equal than others".

Through this figure, Orwell wanted to shed more light on Stalin's cruelty and his devilish acts of corrupting the revolution and betraying the principles of communism.

### **Squealer**

He is Napoleon's friend. Squealer is known by his smooth speeches and powerful argumentation. He knows how to convince other animals of any change of the commandments, showing them that Napoleon works for their benefits. He succeeds to

draw in their minds the picture of the farm as a Utopian land. In the novel, Squealer is representing the propaganda of the Russian system.

**Boxer**

The role of Boxer in the story is to represent the working class in Russia. He is known by his famous axiom “ I will work harder” (Orwell 38). He devotes himself to the farm and believes whatever Squealer says; “comrade Napoleon is always right” (Orwell 37). His character pictures the common people who were sacrificing their lives for their countries and worship their leaders.

**3-4 / Major Themes**

Animal Farm is an allegory of the Russian Revolution and the rise of the corrupt and despotic government led by the dictator Joseph Stalin. In the tale, the clash between Stalin and Trotsky comes out between Napoleon and Snowball. It is shown clearly how Stalin’s conspiracy against Trotsky ends with his exile, and how he maintains power in his hands.

Orwell also shows the danger of the working class naivety. Their ignorance led them to believe every thing their rulers say or do. Consequently, their beautiful dream has been transformed into a real nightmare: working hard, suffering from hunger and the ruling class oppression.

At the end of this part, I can assume that George Orwell has portrayed the political and social situation in Russia in a very smart way so that it reflects what really happened. His arrangement of the events and the choice of the characters, especially for the animals, reflects their behaviour in real life. Moreover, his description of the pigs gives the reader an image of the characters. For instance the black boar seems to be savage, harsh

and cruel towards other animals. So did Stalin with the Russian population; his ruthlessness made the Russian people live under his tyrannical government which was the result of his communism principles corruption.

This dramatic situation gave the rise or the birth to a new generation of oppressors. In his novel, Orwell shows how the corruption of the Animalism fundamental principles, which indirectly refers to Communism basic ideals, lead the tyranny to move from the tyranny of men ( Tsars ) to that of pigs ( Staline rule ). This will be the focus of my analysis in the coming chapter, dealing essentially with the Corrupt Communism in Animal Farm and how Orwell demonstrates this chaotic distortion of the Communist ideology.

**CHAPTER TWO:  
CORRUPT COMMUNISM IN ANIMAL  
FARM**



**Chapter two: Corrupt Communism in Animal Farm**

My endeavor in this chapter is to analyze the corrupt communism in Orwell's novel. I shall begin with a definition of Communism as an ideology and as a political system and then directly link it to Animal Farm. This part will also include both a depiction of all the aspects of corrupt communism in Animal Farm and an explicit explanation of Orwell's allegory about the rise of a new dictatorship. This chapter represents mainly the core of my research paper because it will provide direct answers to its problematic issues.

**1/ Definition of Communism**

In its general meaning, the word communism refers to a theory or system of social organization based on the holding of all property of a country in common, actual ownership being ascribed to the community as a whole or to the state. In other words, it is what we call an organization system in which all economic and social activity is controlled by a totalitarian state dominated by a single and self-perpetuating political party.

The communist concept is also defined as the political ideology and an economic doctrine that aims to replace private property (liberalist system) and a profit-based economy with public ownership and communal control of at least the production's major means of a nation such as mines, mills, and factories and the natural resources of a society. (Cultural and Society 1780-1950 256)

Communism is, according to its advocates, the extreme radical form of socialism, a higher and more advanced form of this later. How communism differs from socialism has long been a matter of debate, but the distinction rests largely on the communists' adherence to the revolutionary socialism of Karl Marx (the founder of this ideology). It is mainly divided into a variety of schools of thought, which broadly include:

Marxism, anarchism and anarchist communism . All these political ideologies are grouped around each other and hold in common the idea that the current order of society stems from its economic system, capitalism.

Their analysis states that this system divided the society into two major classes : the working class ,who must work to survive, and who make up a majority of social masse, and the capitalist class , a minority who derive profit from employing the proletariat through private ownership of the means of production (the physical and institutional means with which commodities are produced and distributed).

This political, social, and economic conflict between these two classes will stimulate the consciousness of the masses and trigger a fundamental change in the economic system, and by extension a wide ranging transformation of society. As Marx said:

The mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political processes of life. it is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but, on the contrary, their social existence determines their consciousness .  
(Karl Marx's Preface to the Contribution to Political Economy 158)

The primary element which will enable this transformation, according to communists, is the social ownership of the means of production, but this process is not always safe and may lead to disastrous situations as it was explained by George Orwell in his work Animal Farm.

To finish and concerning the etymology of the word "Communism", it is a calque of the German word *Kommunismus* (from Marx and Engels's *Manifesto of the German Communist Party*), in turn a calque of the French word *communisme*, which was formed from *commun* ("common"), from Latin *communis*, and the suffix *-isme* .

**2/ The Aspects of Corrupt Communism in Animal Farm**

George Orwell intelligently resorts to satire in order to, indirectly, set an attack on Russian Communism, and more specifically on Stalinism. Throughout a humorous and effective animal allegory, Orwell targets his satirical attack on the events of the Russian Revolution and on the totalitarian regime. Orwell has succeeded to combine political purpose with artistic purpose to voice and express his pessimistic belief, which came from his various experiences that he had acquired during the Spanish civil war and the results of the Bolshevik Revolution. According to him, people can only change the tyrants through revolutions but the system remains the same.

The concept of "corrupt communism" can be taken as the engine or the fuel which supplies Animal Farm. After the success of the Animals to throw out human's dictatorship from the farm, the pigs impose themselves to rule the ignorant rest. They were accepted and then started to manage animal's life in the farm by applying Old Major's main Animalism commandment: "*All animals are equal*" (Orwell 15). This is what closely corresponds to Marx's vision of the collapse of "class distinction" between the owner of capital and the proletariat. With Animalism, animals will no longer work for humans, and all animals will be equal. With communism, workers will no longer work for capitalists, and all workers will be equal. And in both cases, the workers will own the means of production as well as the products.

The most prominent leaders of the post-revolution period were two pigs; Napoleon and Snowball. The farm at that period was also characterized by fairness and equality especially in work. With time, things began to change, and a kind of division started to appear in the horizon between the leaders of the farm.

As a result of their disagreement, Napoleon prepared a Machiavellian plan to throw away Snowball from leadership. The malignant pig succeeded to reach his purpose which consisted of the banishment of Snowball from the farm by using as a pretext the windmill disagreement.

As soon as Napoleon and his group took the absolute power in the farm, the animals' life shifted from a prosperous equality to a cruel tyranny. They began to change the commandments to serve their interests (sleeping in beds, drinking alcohol ...), and to exploit the other non-educated animals.

Throughout Orwell's novel, some obvious hints of the betrayal and the reversal in policy (equality to tyranny) by the pigs are revealed and denounced implicitly by the writer. For example in this passage "this work was strictly voluntary, but any animal who absented from it would have his ration reduced to half" (Orwell 40). The writer here, the previous quotation, lays emphasis on the exploitation policy followed by the pigs towards the animals and criticizes their tyrannical attitude.

'Comrades', he said, 'I trust that every animals here appreciates the sacrifice that comrade Napoleon has made in taking this extra labour upon himself. Do not imagine comrades, that leadership is a pleasure! On the contrary, it is a deep and heavy responsibility. No one believes firmly than comrade Napoleon that all animals are equal. He would be only too happy to let you make your decisions for yourself. But, sometimes you might make the wrong decision comrades, and there where should we be'. (Orwell 37)

Orwell in this passage wanted to demonstrate the political dystopia, and denounce the techniques used by the pigs to indoctrinate the uneducated animals. He is also showing the demagogy of their speech and how they are justifying their tyrannical rule.

"Four legs good, two legs better! Four legs good, two legs better! Four legs good, two legs better! " (Orwell 89),

And

“All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others ” (Orwell 90)

These quotations are the most meaningful passages used by Orwell to highlight the betrayal of Old Major’s concept of Animalism, to show the corrupting influence of power and to affirm the notion that the animal’s revolution went finally wrong.

The seven commandments, which mirror the communism manifesto, start out fair and equal for all, but towards the end of Orwell’s book, power corrupts the pigs' motives and push them to alter the original rules. They switch and change the seven commandments whenever it suits them because simply they have to do it. Stalin's violation of the communism principles is perfectly depicted in the novel through all of Napoleon's actions against the animalism ideology principles. This results in dictatorship and hierarchy, which are the opposite of the ideal communism. Personally, I think that both Stalin and Napoleon are utter hypocrites and have gone power mad, and no one dares to question them.

George Orwell ends his work by saying: “the creature outside looked from pig to man and from man to pig and from pig to man again; but already it was impossible to say which was which ” (Orwell 95).

This is to draw the catastrophic image of the farm under the hands of the wrong leaders, and how it is hard to distinguish between the animals and the humans, as if all the sacrifices of the animals were in vain. This concept is exactly matching with the Bolshevik revolution and its consequences. George Orwell also wanted to underline the point that any attempt to build up a perfect system will inevitably end into a corrupt one.

**3/ Orwell's Animal Farm as an Implicit Political Satire**

It is worth noting that Animal Farm was written during the Second World War, a period when propaganda and censorship were highly present in daily life. In order for his work to be published, Orwell opted for symbolism. His fable may be considered as an assessment of the first thirty years of the Russian Revolution, as well as a masterpiece that is questioning this traced Utopia which contrarily had led into a dictatorship.

This chapter's part would account for the assumption that Orwell's fable was an attack against Russia through the explicit clarification of the allegory used by the writer, with a reference to history and a special interest in the aspects which he wished to criticize.

**3-1/ Animal Farm's Characters as Historical Figures**

The story starts with Mr. Jones, a hard master who owns Manor Farm until the rebellion of the animals. He represents the Tsar of Russia Nicolas II until 1917 when he was deposed and killed. He is introduced drunk which is not an appealing state, and this is what made him forget to close the pop holes, letting the hens at the mercy of foxes. In addition, his men are not less easy going than himself, for the rebellion was a result of their neglect to feed the animals.

So Mr. Jones, his deep sleeping wife, and his men are a representation of the ruling class as well as the Capitalists in general. Their behavior stands for the rulers' neglect for their duties. They are examples of the lazy members of the aristocratic upper-class and their carelessness towards the ruled.

Orwell despised capitalism for this irresponsible behavior which led to injustice, and the suffering of the working classes. He was convinced that Socialism would do better for societies.

In this fable, Orwell attacked not only Russia but also the outstanding fascist figure of the age namely Adolf Hitler through the character of Mr. Frederick. The latter whose name reminds us of the eighteenth century Prussian King Frederick the Great, is the owner of pinch field, the neighboring farm, which in itself represents Germany. (Animal Farm; York Note 73)

In the story, we are told that he was sever and cruel towards his animals, and this is completely what was Hitler doing with his people. Orwell despised **the Führer** and rejected the fact that he called his party the National Socialist Party. In fact, his frightening experiences in Spain, and his rejected try to enlist in the Army at the outbreak of the War, are convincing arguments for his repugnance for all forms of fascism. (The History of The World)

Part of Orwell's attack went also to the easy-going and neglectful government of his own country. Mr. Pilkington represents Churchill who was then prime minister. He is the owner of fox wood, the other adjoining farm and which stands for England. The term itself reminds us of the English aristocrats who hunted fox in the vast woods of the country.

Through this character, Orwell showed his rejection of the English Socialism of his age which deceives his claiming expectations by a tendency that did not really change.

Because the other characters of the story are not humans, I personally preferred to deal with them as figures, and the following are the most outstanding ones in the story.

The first important figure introduced in the fable is **Old Major**, the wise and appreciated Middle White Boar. He is the one who predicted the coming of the rebellion.

His figure is an intelligent combination of Friedrich Engels and Karl Marks, the outstanding socialist theorists of the nineteenth century, and Vladimir Illich Lenin, the leader of the revolution.

His speech (Animalism Ideology) is an oversimplification of the communist Manifesto of 1848, written by Marx and Engels at the request of the ‘Communist League’, the first form of the communist party. It includes the socialist principles and ideals, and serves as a source of theory for many countries including Russia. Old Major presents a summary of the Manifesto in animal words. Thus, for example, ‘Man’ who is the evil in his terms stands for ‘Capitalism’, and the Golden Age which he spoke about as the illusion to Utopia of the communist age, which the previous theorists referred to. (Modern English Literature)

In the story, the skull of Old Major is revered by the animals on Sundays and this is a reference to Lenin’s body which is preserved in the Lenin mausoleum in Moscow.

Marion Wayne, in his book The Bloomsbury Guide To English Literature, asserts that Orwell has questioned some aspects of Marx’s theories. His different experiences had shown him that the age of equality and justice which the latter referred to, was not automatically to come after the revolution. In fact, if it comes, it fades away rapidly as he witnessed in Spain, then in Russia. The skepticism of Benjamin in the story carries Orwell’s thoughts about the matter.

The other animals that came to listen to Old Major’s speech stand for the Russian peasants and workers who contributed to the success of the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917. They gathered secretly and listened to him in the same way that the revolutionists listened to their leaders. (The Bloomsbury Guide to English Literature 166)

Marx himself asserted that the revolution would be accomplished by the proletariat, firstly because they were the largest cast of the society, and secondly because



they are the direct victims of the hardships of the ancient system. (Cultural and Society 1780-1950 297)

Their submission to Man had put them on the same footing, but after the rebellion things altered, and this community became a set of different types as was the case in Russia after 1917.

Right after the rebellion, the pigs declared themselves the leaders of the animals, for they were considered as the most intelligent and thus the brain workers of the farm. They stand for the Bolshevik intellectuals who led the Revolution, and who became members of the Party later. Orwell satirizes through these figures their transformation into a new upper-class.

These pigs organized themselves into a committee which stands for the party. Marx and Engels claimed that there should be a political party, composed of Scientists and intellectuals in general, whose task would be the organization of the nation and the achievement of the workers' needs. Lenin reinforced the idea and explained that the party would be a weapon against exploitation. He added that the party would teach the proletariat the way to behave and appreciate correctly their interests. (The History Of The World)

He also stressed that the party would make sure that the decisions were well executed, and it would punish any fraction who would dare to act against the principles of communism.

All this power helped the members of the Party in the Russian to become tyrants over the ruled. For the writer, as I mentioned before, this act was far from the ideals of democratic socialism; because it rather obliged people to behave and conform, rather than sympathize with them.

In Animal Farm, there are three important figures among the pigs who shaped the story and who are real representations to persons or organisms in the Soviet Union.

First, we find Napoleon who is the central character. He is fat, deep and cruel in look. He is the portrait of Josef Stalin who used to be a close collaborator of Lenin, and who became the general secretary of the communist party after his death in 1924. Soon after, he took control of the nation alone and made of Russia a dictatorship in the same way that Napoleon became unchallenged and made of Animal Farm a tyranny. He is known for his notoriousness, greed, and lust for power.

Through this figure, Orwell attacked the evil force which led Russia to its failure. Stalin used to be the head of all the branches of the government in a way that nobody could check or oppose his decisions. Bearing in mind that the Russian political system was based on centralization, it was then the party which was the principal organism. Stalin was its president and the head of the Army. Subject to his 'Folie des Grandeurs', Stalin decided anything that he wished and this was executed, like any other fascist.

Then comes the very popular and eloquent speaker Snowball. He stands for Leon Trotsky, another collaborator of Lenin, who became Commissar of War after his death. His continual disagreement with Napoleon is commented in the novel by Orwell who says that the "*these two disagreed at every point where disagreement was possible.*" (Orwell 31)

In fact, this was the reality. Like Napoleon, Stalin wanted to develop agriculture and rise up the food production. He also thought that the country should develop an army to prevent any foreign attack; and promote the education of the young generations. On the contrary, Snowball, like Trotsky, advocated the idea of developing heavy industry and spreading the revolution ideals throughout the world, which is symbolized in Orwell's

work by the sending out of the pigeons to neighboring farms. They also emphasized the necessity of educating all the population including the proletariat.

This ended in the expulsion of Snowball and the exile of Trotsky in 1929 after being expelled from the party in 1927. His assassination in 1940 in Mexico by a Stalin's agent is referred to in the story through his chase by the dogs and his slipping through the hole which suggests a tomb.

Throughout the story, the reader may understand that Orwell sympathizes with Snowball. In fact he does not support him. He has only presented him as a victim of Napoleon. He attacked him in two different situations in his book. The first is the episode of the milk. Snowball did not object when the pigs took the milk for themselves and did not share it with the other animals. The second is the Battle of the Cowshed. When Boxer went to check if the stable-boy whom he had kicked was dead or not; Snowball ordered him not to be sentimental for; "*the only good human being is a dead one.*" (Orwell 28)

Snowball was not less bloodthirsty than Napoleon. As history witnessed, Trotsky himself defended the assassination of the Tsar's children on the behalf of the working-class.

Moreover, George Orwell seems to reject the idea that the two were different, but affirms that Snowball was more intelligent than Napoleon. Snowball's schemes for the construction of the mill were executed by Napoleon but they did not serve the original aims. This is the same way that Trotsky's industrial plans were executed by Stalin and resulted in a complete failure.

Finally come Squealer, one of Napoleon's very closest friends. After each perversion of the commandments or anytime the pigs felt that the animals suspected their decisions, they sent him to valid the change in their eyes, by giving some arguments. His 'twinkling eyes' show his cunning. He delivered speeches in which he presented Animal

Farm as Heaven, the animals as the angels and even Napoleon as God. His ability to speak with eloquence and fluency kept animals in deep ignorance and stupidity; which prevented any chance of rebellion against the corrupt and tyrant pigs.

He is the perfect representation of the great machine of propaganda demagogy of the Russian system which worked to maintain Stalin in power. People were usually told that they enjoyed rights and liberties which none in the world did. They were told through false statistics that they lived in a prosperous country.

Orwell remarks concerning these fashionable numbers asking:

“who does not know those Soviet statistics...in which the curve of everything except morality goes up and up and up? And how much do they tell one...” (The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell 196)

Apart from the pigs, there are the other humble animals who suffered from their dictatorship. We find the strong horse Boxer who worked hard and who did volunteer work ; for he asked the cockerel to call him first half an hour, then three quarters and finally a complete hour to accomplish some needed task, a thing that nobody else did. His adopted maxims were to work harder and “*Comrade Napoleon is always right.*” (Orwell 55). He represents in the Russian society, those loyal and enthusiastic common people who sacrificed their lives toiling for the success of their cause, and who followed blindly the communist leaders whom they worshipped.

He always believed in what Squealer invented to cover some lie, and this makes him a portrait of the people who were easily swayed by propaganda. His tragic death symbolizes the readiness to die for one’s country as did many Russian workers.

Another major figure of the story is Benjamin the donkey. He is the only animal who changed throughout the story and who did not make any effort. He did not even believe in the Rebellion and the changes it was supposed to bring about. Benjamin is known among animals through his stupid statements such as “Donkey *lives a long time...*” (*Orwell 19*) which suggests that they live so long that they had discovered if rebellion will occur or not.

His features stand for Russians who did not believe in the new system, and who were like Benjamin, aware of the treacheries, but who were powerless to act.

Mollie the frivolous mare is also characterized by her stupidity. She did not understand much in rebellion. She asked disgusting questions like "will there still be sugar after the rebellion?" (*Orwell 10*) She used to be well enough in Jones's time who dressed her with ribbons and fed her with sugar. Mollie made no effort and deserted work whenever she could, to go and lean to the neighboring farms trying to get some sugar from the farmers.

She stands for the type of people who like to be dominated, and in the very case of Russia, for those who were well enough before the revolution and who fled away after as did Mollie.

Then come the nine fierce dogs which play an important role in the story, and which represent a huge organism of the USSR. These had been taken by Napoleon after their birth to educate them and had been forgotten. They appear the day of the strong opposition between the two leaders, and it was them who chased Snowball. They became the bodyguards of their master, and helped Squealer in the task of calming down the scene at every step of corruption.

They, of course, stand for the Military Police which Stalin himself had created secretly, and which haunted the spirits of the party members, the officials and millions of people. Trotsky had been its victim and the purge trials were partly their masterpiece.

**3-2/ Animal Farm's Plot Meaning in History:**

Many events in the story have their real counterparts too. The following ones may be considered as the most important for the study.

To start with, the rebellion seems to be the most prominent event in the story. This was led by oppressed creatures against their owner, and it had been prepared by the most intelligent among them to put an end to their harsh life. They succeeded to throw their master and establish a society led by themselves. It stands implicitly for the Revolution of October 1917. Led by Lenin and the Bolshevik intellectuals, the peasants and the workers destroyed the Tsarist system and established a communist one which aimed at ending with exploitation and bringing about equality.

The rebellion took place in Manor Farm which stands at first for Russia. Still, Orwell's descriptions are mostly of English farms which accounts for his inner wish to see revolutions take place in his country, but at the same time for his fear that the same end would accompany them as in the story.

Another significant event of the story is the battle of the Cowshed. Mr. Jones, assisted by his men and others from the neighboring farms, attacked the animals and tried to get his lands back. The animals, who happened to be very organized, succeeded to throw their enemy once more. This represents the civil war which followed the revolution. This wave of attacks was led by the old aristocrats and leaders who wanted to re-establish the ancient system. In the same way that Jones was helped by men from Foxwood and Pinchfield, those anti-revolutionists had been backed by some European countries namely England and France.

The Hen's Revolt is also an important event in the novel. Napoleon decides to sell eggs in order to get some money to buy machinery and crops. Disappointed by this measure, the hens rebelled and decided to let their eggs fall and break. As a result

Napoleon ordered their rations to be stopped. After some days, some of them died and the others gave up their action. This event is a parody of the peasants' brave resistance against Stalin's schemes of farming collectivism. Like the hens, they burned their crops and killed their animals. As a result, Stalin stopped the government's helps for them and many were arrested.

The building of the windmill is not a less important event, because it shows to the reader Napoleon's hypocrisy. The idea of building it was Snowball's. The aim was generating electricity to facilitate work on the farm, work less, and achieve extraordinary prosperity for the animals.

Some of them joined him and advocated this idea, but Napoleon rejected it and claimed that it was senseless and impossible to be carried out. Later, the dictator pig executes the plans, turning them to be his own ideas.

This is an oversimplification of the post-revolution first Five-years schemed by Trotsky in which he gave priority to industrial development rather than agriculture. Because of this, Stalin discarded it and plotted his departure from the party and later from the country. Still like Napoleon, he adopted these plans by the end. ([A History of the Soviet Union from the Beginning to the End](#) 177)

The windmill had been destroyed by a gale which symbolizes the failure of these plans that led Russia to a wide crisis of starvation. Napoleon took profit of the situation to confirm that Snowball was an enemy. He gathered them and said, "*do you know the enemy who has come by night and overthrown our windmill? SNOWBALL!*" (Orwell7)

This of course is among Stalin's assertions that there were Trotsky's agents in the party, who worked to botch its actions. After the mill had been finished, Napoleon announced that it would be called Napoleon Mill, and this is a symbol of the various



institutions and places which took the names of political tyrants like Stalin. An eminent example about this is the city of Volgograd which became Stalingrad (Stalin's city).

The writer also referred to one of the infamous historical passages of the Russian revolution through the episode of the confessions. The animals were ordered to gather in front of Napoleon who was in presence of his closest friends, including the dogs. Then came some animals who claimed that "Snowball *had appeared to them in a dream and incited them to disobey Napoleon's orders.* ",(Orwell 56) such as the hens. Others came and confessed that they committed crimes against the farm like the goose who revealed "*having secreted six ears of corn during the last year's harvest...*". (Orwell 59) These animals had been killed immediately by the dogs that were ordered by their master in the presence of the animals.

This episode portrays the public and the purge trials of the 1930's, where many party members, officials, military men confessed publicly false deeds. Among them, those who claimed being Trotskyites, and those who revealed their anti-revolutionary feeling; and they affirmed having perpetrated crimes against the goals of the revolution. Many of them were deported to forced-labor camps in Siberia or shot. (*Bukharin and the Bolshevik Revolution*)

Jeffrey Meyers mentioned a passage from one of the trials of Bukharin in 1938 in which Gorky's secretary Kryuchkov confessed:

" I arranged long walks for Alexei Maximovitch, I always arranging bonfires. The smoke of the bonfire naturally affected Gorky's weak lungs.(17)

This brings to our minds the confession of the two sheep of having murdered an old ram, an especially devoted follower of Napoleon, by chasing him round and round a bonfire when he was suffering from a cough.

Orwell was also alert at Stalin's foreign policy and his behavior on the international scene. One of the contradictions of this policy is expressed in the fable through the deal with Mr. Whymper. Contrarily to the ideals of Animalism, and Napoleon's assertions that Man was their eternal enemy, he engaged in trade with Whymper. He argued that this was needed to acquire some necessary material for the windmill. This is a reference to Russia's Treaty of Rapallo with Germany. In the pig's way, Stalin signed this treaty for importation of heavy machinery in a period when he overtly criticized this country. (Animal Farm; York Note 63)

A second reference to Stalin's conduct in foreign matters is parodied through the episode of the Stock of Timber. It happened that the farm owned some timber which Napoleon wished to sell to get some money. Frederick and Pilkington were both interested in buying it. The animals were sometimes told that it was one of them who would buy it and sometimes the other. At the end the timber was sold to Frederick. Later it was discovered that he paid in forged money. Napoleon insulted him and the latter attacked Animal Farm ; which ended in the death and wounding of many animals, as well as the destruction of the windmill.

The stock of timber stands for the Nazi-Soviet non-invasion treaty of August 1939. At a time when Stalin was dealing with France and England preparing for an eventual war, and without informing, he signed this treaty with Hitler. The forgeries in which Frederick had paid him stand for the betrayal of Hitler of the pact, and his attack on Russia in 1941.

The destruction of the windmill by Windmill by Frederick's men is a symbol of the German destruction for the Russian industrial achievements. (*Collapse of an Empire: Lessons for Modern Russia*)

Orwell's corollary to his attacks was done through the party organized by the pigs and to which the neighboring farmers, except Frederick, were invited, to visit the farm and

have dinner together. The farmers remarked that life in Animal Farm was prosperous and congratulated the animals for their system. Men and animals decided that past was past and that they should work together.

This meeting is a parody of the Teheran meeting of 1943 in which Stalin, Churchill and Roosevelt gathered to plan for the rest of the war. Stalin ‘the communist’ sitting with capitalists his ideological eternal enemies. The congratulations stand for the approval manifested by the two westerners and their acceptance for the Union for what it was. (The History Of The World)

The return to the old name explains the similarity between the old owner of the farm and the new masters that is the pigs. I would add that after more than fifty years from the communist revolution of 1917, Russia adopts Capitalism, which once used to be its enemy and the subject of its Revolution. This is then another prophecy of the writer, whose ideas remained true long after his death.

Orwell also made hints at some ways adopted by Russia after the revolution, and which come here not only to reinforce the assumption that the fable was an attack against Russia; but also a satire on these insignificant actions.

Animal Farm had adopted ‘spontaneous demonstrations’ and ‘processions’ in which speeches, songs, poems in favor of the rebellion were performed to remind the stupid animals of the achievements of the rebellion and the bounty of their leader Napoleon. Squealer told them about the changes it had brought to their lives. This stands for the celebrations and military shows which were performed in Russia as a means of propaganda inside and outside the country. The citizens were told that they should be proud of being Russians and that the goals were being achieved. It also served to show for the western countries that the socialist system of the Union was a complete success.

In the novel, the flag of Animal Farm is composed of a hoof (of the horses) and a horn (of the cows). These were weapons as well as means of working of the animals. They stand for the hammer (of the workers) and the sickle (of the peasants) of the Soviet flag.

Old Major taught the animals « Beast of England », a song which after the rebellion had become their anthem. It told the animals of a day when they would be free and equal. It stands for the '*internationale*', the song of the Communist Party.

This explanation confirms Orwell's reliance on real facts in his works. In his exercise of revealing an agonizing reality which his followers could not or did not wish to see, he refused to look at the situation under the pressure of any force or trend. Risky but great, especially at that time. Orwell proved his sincerity towards his community, and interest in them by a mean of a satirical work which is built upon strong implicit meanings and in the same time, embraces Marxist ideals. This is widely what it will be interested in, throughout my dissertation's next chapter; Marxism and Animal Farm.

**CHAPTER THREE:  
MARXISM AND ANIMAL FARM**

### Chapter Three : Marxism and Animal Farm

This third and last chapter will deal with Marxism and Animal Farm. I will first show how Marxism is the ideology which triggered off Orwell's work. Then I will discuss the Marxist literary theory which seems to be the most appropriate perspective for Animal Farm's analysis. The Marxist reading of the novel will shed more light on some unspoken realities that were experienced by the Bolsheviks, and how their revolution deviated from true communism to a corrupt one .

The first step before our analysis of Orwell's novel will be a brief definition of Marxism and Marxist literary theory.

#### 1/ Definition (s) of Marxism

##### 1-1/ As a Philosophical Ideology

Marxism is an economic and sociopolitical theory which developed in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century by two philosophers, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. This theory is based on a materialist understanding of social development and class relations when analysing and criticising the development of the capitalist system.

According to Karl Marx in The Communist Manifesto, the class conflict within capitalism arose due to the growing of production performed by the *proletariat* and the minority of private owners called the *bourgeoisie*. The gap between the two classes led to a social revolution, which in its part gave birth to Socialism— a system based on sharing the ownership of the means of production.

Besides being an economic and sociopolitical theory, Marxism is also adopted as a theory of criticism by many academic disciplines, such as Media studies, political science, theatre, history, and literary criticism.

##### 1-2/ Marxism as a Literary Criticism Theory

Marxist literary criticism is defined by the literary world as an approach to literary criticism, mainly based on the socialist and dialectic theories. It views literary works as the mirrors or reflections of the social institutions and environment from which they originate. According to Marxists, even literature itself is a social institution and has a specific ideological function, based on the background and ideology of the author. (Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction)

In Marxism and Literary Criticism, the English literary critic and cultural theorist, Terry Eagleton, defines Marxist criticism as being:

not merely a 'sociology of literature', concerned with how novels get published and whether they mention the working class. Its aim is to explain the literary work more fully; and this means a sensitive attention to its forms, styles and meanings. But it also means grasping those forms, styles and meanings as the product of a particular history. (553-554)

With his specific definition, Eagleton wanted to present the real aim of the Marxist criticism and the simplest goals of this theory. For him, it is an assessment of the political tendency of a literary work, determining whether its social content or its literary form are progressive. It also includes the analysis of the class constructs demonstrated in the literature.

In the field of literary criticism, literary critics use the theory to focus on class conflict between *the base* and *the superstructure* and show the exercise of hegemony by the dominant and ruling class upon the dominated one.

This is in fact what the Italian Marxist theoretician and politician Antonio Gramsci stated in: "The intellectuals are the dominant group's "deputies" exercising the subaltern functions of social hegemony and political government" (Gramsci 691).

### **1-3/ Marxist Literary Criticism Ideology**

It is through Engel's and Marx's theories and the ideology of class struggle, politics and economics that Marxist literary criticism emerged and developed. The principal and major aim behind a Marxist Criticism, in K. Siegel's view, is to demonstrate that works of literature are mere products of history, and that these works can be analysed by looking at the social and material conditions which prompted their production and publication. (Introduction to Modern Literary Theory, 187)

Marx, in his famous book Capital, states that the mode of production of material life determines altogether the social, political, and intellectual life process. His most prominent sentence in The Communist Manifesto: "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but on the contrary their social being that determines their consciousness" might be considered as the basic tenet of Marxist literary criticism. In fact the social position of the author, among other things, may determine the types of characters that will be used, the political ideas to be displayed, as well as the economical statements that will be developed in his text. Thus, and in the following section, I will analyse George Orwell's Animal Farm from a Marxist lens, by relying on Marx's political consciousness included in his The Communist Manifesto, together with the French Marxist literary critic Pierre Macherey in his work: A Theory of Literary Production (1978).

## **2/ Marxism in Animal Farm**

Our Marxist reading of Orwell's novel will inevitably look into and make use of two main theories. The first one is that of Pierre Macherey which is developed in his work: A Theory of Literary Production. Macherey states that every text has both "explicit" and "implicit" content. Besides, and always in relation to the previous statement, the reader or the critic, for discerning deeper implications, must differentiate between what the work is compelled to say in order to decipher the writer's message. For the second main theory to consider, it is that of Marx's political consciousness included in The



Communist Manifesto. Marx in fact asserts that one's thoughts usually originate from one's political, social, and economic circumstances□

According to Pierre Macherey, the French Marxist literary critic, the ideology of a literary piece resides in its incompleteness, in its significant gaps and silences: “The text says what it doesn’t say” (quoted in Carter 65).

It may be understood, from this quotation, that a Marxist literary critic must focus on the text’s gaps and silences to point out its hidden sense and message. Thus, the literary critic will try to unveil the author’s message in his work in order to reveal his ideology and his orientations. In other words, the author cannot come out and explicitly state what he means, as he sometimes fears social or political repercussions, or even because what is meant is not something he can overtly articulate. Moreover, to borrow Macherey’s words, the discussion over the terms “implicit” and “explicit” as well as the author’s statements, makes it clear that “... the visible is merely the hidden in a different guise.” ( 17)

So the good literary critic, in Macherey’s view, should not only comment or expend upon a literary work, but should also explore the margins and provide answers to questions like: what does the text say? what does the text not say? Then why does it not say it ?

Criticism in Animal Farm then, should necessarily move beyond what is explicitly written and look for the hidden parts by offering answers to the previous interrogations.

On the surface, Animal Farm appears as a simple story about an uprising of a bunch of pigs on a human traditional farm. Some people, of course who have no background history or knowledge of the “Stalin era” in the Soviet Union, may look to the book as an ordinary fantasy. However, the book in nowadays’ American society, even in the whole world, is considered as a brilliant satirical metaphor for the failure of communism. The book has no direct references to communism; the main characters are animals with names such as “Old Major,” “Snowball,” and “Boxer.” None of the animals

or humans in the book are directly named after the historical people they resemble (as I explained in the previous chapter).

The situation of the book can be juxtaposed to the Soviet Union history, not because of direct, or “explicit” language, but because of the “implicit” portraying of ideas and concepts. The greedy pigs in Orwell's fictional farm act in the same manner as the USSR totalitarian rulers. The poor horses are forced to do all of the laborious work for the pigs without benefits, just like the proletariat or the working class members of the Soviet Union. The true meaning of Orwell's novel is silent in the words of the book, but as Pierre Macherey suggests, it is that silence of Animal Farm, or what is not implicitly said, that gives the book its power and meaning. (17)

George Orwell highlights his belief in Marxist Communism in an ambiguous way for political circumstances. To understand Orwell's fable, we have to make a direct allusion to the Russian situation after the Bolshovik revolution. His novel was the spoken form of the unspoken ruthless reality which was experienced by the Russian population at that era of history.

Explicitly and as it may seem throughout the novel, The Old Major becomes like God to the animals— while he really has nothing to do with. It is implicitly, however, Moses, the tame raven, the animal who slept through Old Major's speech, that represents religion. Moses never works, he only tells stories of a wonderful country called Sugarland Mountain, where all animals go when they die. Moses is a tool of the state, and this is how Marx viewed religion. Moses is Jones' special pet. He tells lies and stories to the animals, and he gives them something to look forward to. After the speech, Moses disappears only to reappear after the revolution has taken place, when Napoleon uses him exactly the same way Jones did.

This portrayal of religion could perfectly stand for Macherey's thoughts and conceptions of the texts' interpretations. Orwell, by using the «Raven" did not manifestly and openly target religion. But some hints, holes, and descriptions which are made by the author around this bird, like his name "Moses", his sayings and speeches about the afterlife and especially his attitude towards the revolution place it, "the raven", as the personification of religion in the fable.

Karl Marx in his writings investigated the role of ideology and how we as humans make conscious and unconscious decisions. For example, Marxists believe that cultural, religious, and ethical decisions are all products of consciousness and influenced by ideological pressures. Marx believed that ideologies explain the distribution of wealth and power in society and lead people to accept the *status quo* and the subordinate people end up believing in their subordination□

Animal Farm is mainly based on the theory of social movement and Marx's view on consciousness and the use of political consciousness by Orwell can be aimed to describe this doctrine. In The Communist Manifesto and A Contribution to the Political Economy, Marx wrote about the proletariat's appreciation of social position and the corrupt ways of Capitalism: "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being," wrote Marx, "But on the contrary, the social being that determines their consciousness." (Marx Quoted in The History Of The World)

In other words, Marx's theory of the classless society and how the working classes, through a revolution, would unite and share the wealth of labour is strongly apparent in Orwell's book. The British writer discussed political consciousness, ideology, and social classes which are all important factors to Marxists, whereby Orwell satirizes the corrupt government in Russia. This is implicitly achieved by showing the class struggle between "the base" and the "superstructure" through the use of animal characters.

Marx is saying that there is no inherent reason which advocates that workers should be oppressed, and they do not see the injustice in it, because it is all they know.

This is what Old Major, in Orwell's work, says to the animals during the barn's speech:

Why do we continue in this miserable condition? Because nearly the whole of the produce of our labour is stolen from us by human beings. There comrades is the answer to all of our problems: It is summed up in a single word, man. Man is the only creature that consumes without producing. He sets the animals to work, he gives them the bare minimum that will keep them from starving, and the rest he keeps for himself. Only get rid of man, and the produce of our labour would be our own. That is my message to you, comrades, Rebellion! (Orwell 4, 5, 6)

It could be claimed that Old Major's speech is a revelation of momentous proportions. The old pig explains to the animals that they are enslaved and exploited and that *man* is to be blamed. He teaches them not only what exploitation means, but also the fact that it is not inevitable so they could change it.

Orwell's intentions through this passage is to picture Marx's view of the society ( class struggle; the base versus superstructure ) and to suggest that exploitation is, in fact, bound to happen when one class of society has an advantage over another.

The opposite of exploitation, according to Major, is the state of being "rich and free." and for Marx it is a state that guarantees equality to all people through commun ownership of the strong resources of economy.

Old Major's ideas about animals' rights in the novel symbolize the importance and scarcity of human rights in an oppressive regime. Gaining freedom does not necessarily lead people to become rich, but it is better to be poor and free than poor and exploited.

Besides, Orwell exhorted the reader to react against the tyrannical scale, not only of the Russian revolution but of all the world's corrupt revolutions. It might be argued here that Orwell wrote Animal Farm to prove that Communist governments started with

equality; but once these governments became corrupt, equality was transformed into oppression.

The book, Animal Farm, is based on the indictment of the communist betrayal of the ideals which the Soviet Union fell upon. He tells the story in the form of a fairy tale, clearly depicting the different animal's positions and power over one another□

# **GENERAL CONCLUSION**

### General Conclusion

My analysis of the corrupt communism in George Orwell's Animal Farm has allowed me to draw some conclusions dealing essentially with the relationship between the content and the context of the novel, the betrayal of the communist principles, and the establishment of a more corrupt and dictatorial regime instead.

In the first part of my dissertation, I have attempted to provide the historical background as well as the aesthetics of the literary genre; the Fable, which is used in Orwell's novel. The study has enabled me to point out the specific historical event—the Bolshevik Revolution—which the writer drew his subject matter from. On the other hand, it has allowed me to discuss Orwell's use of a fable as a means for hiding his ideology and conveying his message in a very ironic and satirical manner.

Having exposed the historical and the literary background of the novel, I have moved to the analysis of the corrupt communism in Animal Farm. This part has shown how the British writer illustrates the fundamental foolishness of the pseudo-communist Russia, and mocks on the Stalinist regime. Besides, Orwell does not find in Russia the model for a true democratic, socialist, and communist country.

The "corrupt communism" is implicitly the core concept in George Orwell's Animal Farm. Being a committed socialist, Orwell aimed to depict the post-revolution era and show how equality disappeared to be, unwillingly, replaced by a harsh tyrannical leadership initiated by dictator leaders. In fact, the study of these fake communism ideals through the fable's characters has emphasized the writer's sharp criticism of this new type of oppression in the farm (the Soviet Union), which principally emerged due to some immoral leaders. These new "dictators" swerved the real principles of Animalism

(communism) and used propaganda and demagogy to indoctrinate the uneducated animals (working people).

My Marxist reading of the novel has also brought to light other aspects of Animal Farm. This fable, which is inspired by real historical facts, contains a warning message that mainly criticizes the negative influence of power and money. This new form of power (Capitalism) can lead to the adoption of destructive dictatorship in which only the weakest is made the victim.

This is exactly what happened to the Soviet Union later on in its progress through history. In addition to all the cold war repercussions on the Eastern Bloc (the huge local and international crisis, the Eastern bloc strength and advantages...), the Soviet leaders, even after Joseph Stalin's death, carried their massacre of the communist and the socialist principles. They even continued to tear and to steal the equality of land and wealth as stated by Marx, Lenin, and many others. All of this resulted in the complete fall of an empire. In fact all of the nations that made up the USSR started to weaken and be separated from the Union, especially after the decline of the Red pole in the 1990's.

The last conclusion to be drawn from my analysis of Orwell's novel is that almost all of the scholars' critical theses or articles on Animal Farm bear much more pessimism, they emphasize the pessimistic idea that Orwell's aim was to show that all and every revolution in the world, regardless of its origins and its ideology, will end by turning wrong and fall apart from its founding principles.

Personally, I am not sharing this interpretation. I think that what George Orwell wanted to pull out, beyond all his other aims, is to give us the real ideology of communism by portraying the present fake ideology carried by the Soviets. In fact, it is not the problem of "Communism" as a socialist model to be followed; it is rather the problem of the



pseudo-communist leaders who pretend to adopt the communist principles and ideals, while they are actually bloody tyrants and everlasting dictators.

The true socialist thoughts, principles and ideals, if put in a revolution, will build a strong and resistant empire. This new socialist force will stand for years and years as is nowadays the Chinese model.

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