

## ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF ALLEGORY IN GEORGE ORWELL'S "ANIMAL FARM"

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### Abstract

*George Orwell's Animal Farm is a highly satirical allegory of the Russian Revolution and the rise of the totalitarianism under Joseph Stalin. Through the revolt of farm animals against their owner, Mr. Jones, Orwell criticizes the corruption of revolutionary ideals, illustrating how a noble intention can turn into an oppressive regime. The characters in the novel symbolize key figures in history, such as Napoleon as Stalin and Snowball as Trotsky, allowing readers to explore the power dynamics and betrayal. The analysis uses formalist and a sociological method to examine how allegorical elements, propaganda, and character portrayals reflect broader social and political themes. In the end, Animal Farm emphasizes the dangers of absolute power and the importance of accountability in leadership.*

**Keywords:** *Allegory, Totalitarianism, Power Corruption, Revolutionary Ideas, Animal Farm, George Orwell*

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## INTRODUCTION

Animal Farm, the novel by Georgie Orwell, was written in 1945 as a satirical allegory to depicting the real-life events of Russian Revolution 1917 and the subsequent rule by Joseph Stalin. The story focuses on the animals who rebelling their human owner, Mr. Jones, to seek equality and liberty. Key characters symbolize real people: Snowball represents Leon Trotsky; Napoleon depicts Joseph Stalin and Old Major embodies Karl Marx. The story revolves about revolutionary ideals can be corrupted, leading to a totalitarian regime that worse than the previous oppression.

Understanding narrative strategies in literature is important because it can enhance readers understanding of themes and characters, and make them more involved in the story. Writers use narrative techniques to shape the meaning of the story and influence the reader's perception, making the message more impactful. On the other hand, a well-presented narrative can create an emotional bond, allowing readers to feel the experiences and messages. Examining narrative structures also encourages critical thinking about story development and the consequences of those choices. Also, narrative strategies play a crucial role in the process of creating and understanding literary works nicely.

The focus alone aims on the analysis about the allegory on Animal Farm. The study objectives revolving around the discussion about: allegorical elements, politics and power that conveyed on the story, and also moral values.

This analysis using two methods in literary studies to understand the narrative strategies on Animal Farm: formalist and sociological analysis. Formalist analysis focuses on internal elements of the novel, the allegory. While sociological analysis exposes the background, historical

and political context of the novel, explaining the connection to Russian Revolution and totalitarianism. Also, by analyzing the characters that representing the societal figures, for examples like Napoleon (Stalin) and Snowball (Trotsky), Orwell critiques how big the power and corruption in the society nowadays.

## **LITERARY AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

George Orwell's novel *Animal Farm* was written in 1945. Orwell wrote this novel as a satirical bent that depicts one of the major events in history, the Russian Revolution of 1917, and also the rise of a totalitarian communist regime. The novel uses farm animals to depict various characters and political ideologies as a form of interpretation of the time (Sewlall, 2002). The writing of *Animal Farm* is also heavily influenced by Orwell's political views and beliefs, namely the destructive power of totalitarianism, which Orwell illustrates through the original ideals of the animals on the farm (Haliti, 2019). This novel is a monumental literary work that depicts Orwell's critique of the absolute authorities and moral failures of the revolutionary movement, making this an important novel for understanding the dynamics of authority and the ideologies that took place in the 20th century.

In this novel, Orwell presents a complex social and political context through themes such as Totalitarianism, the struggle of the lower classes, and the betrayal of Revolutionary ideals. The novel is used as an allegory for the Russian Revolution, depicting how the rise of the communist regime, of the Soviet Union led to the corruption of socialist principles, as the ruling pigs manipulated power for their benefit. The manipulation of the pigs was illustrated by Napoleon, with his authoritarian regime exemplifying the dangers of absolute power and the oppressive character of totalitarianism (Umam, 2016). The conflict between the upper class or ruling class interpreted as the pigs and the lower class or working class interpreted as the other animals on the farm, highlighted how social, political, and economic inequalities and criticized the exploitative practices inherent to the system.

The character of Squealer in this novel illustrates the use of propaganda, showing how language and words are used to manipulate in order to control the perception of the animals and maintain the authority of the pigs. In the end, this novel reveals the betrayal of the original goals of the revolution, equality and freedom. The pigs betray these goals to establish their authoritarian regime, which reflects how revolutions can deviate from their initial goals.

The influence of the Russian Revolution on the novel is profound, as the novel is a satirical allegory that criticizes the events and characters involved in the Russian Revolution. The novel depicts the rise of totalitarianism, especially the character of Napoleon, whose authoritarian nature symbolizes the authoritarian governments that emerged after the revolution (Bloom, 2019). Totalitarianism in the novel is depicted as an overpowering government, represented by the pigs, which illustrates the dangers of absolute power and ideological manipulation. The characters in *Animal Farm* are used as metaphors representing various figures in the communist regime of the Soviet Union, with Napoleon representing the dictatorship of Lenin and Stalin and Squealer symbolizing the role of propaganda in maintaining governmental control.

## **ALLEGORY**

Allegory is a literary device in which the characters, events, and details symbolize a deeper meaning and also a moral lesson, which allows for multiple, literal, and figurative interpretations (Berek, 1978). In this novel, allegory is used to criticize totalitarianism and betrayal of the ideals of the socialist revolution, especially in the context of the Russian Revolution and the rise of Stalinism. Almost all the characters in the novel represent figures who played a role in this

historical event such as Joseph Stalin and Leon Trotsky, allowing readers to explore the complex power dynamics and social issues of the era. The novel also illustrates the corrupting influence of power through the gradual transformation of the pigs, highlighting how political authority can lead to betrayal and moral decay. Elements in the novel such as the Farm and the Windmill serve as representations of broader social conflicts and issues, enriching the narrative and deepening reader engagement. The novel exemplifies how allegory can effectively convey critical social and political commentary through symbolic meaning and representation.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

### **A. Character Portrayal as Allegory**

Animal Farm is an allegorical fiction that depicts the process of revolution on a farm in England. Animal farm by George Orwell inspired by The Russian Revolution in 1917. According to (Fajrina, 2016, p. 80) in this novel Orwell criticizes Stalin's way of governing implicitly and analogizes it to the government and character of animals in a farm. Through animal characters, such as Napoleon, Snowball, Squealer, Boxer, and Benjamin, Orwell criticizes totalitarianism and the abuse of power in a straightforward yet sharp manner. (Gurung, 2024, p. 39)

Orwell uses animal characters to illustrate the process of revolution and then degeneration into tyranny. He chooses unique and relatable characters to represent historical figures according to (Parlindungan Pardede, Yumna Rasyid, & Miftahulkhairah Anwar, 2023, p. 454), such as Napoleon represents Stalin, Snowball as Trotsky, Major as Lenin and/or Marx, and Boxer as Stakhanov. Thus, the reader can directly connect the situation on the farm with the political reality experienced during the Russian Revolution.

### **B. Use of Propaganda language**

Propaganda in Animal Farm is used as a manipulative tool by political elites to maintain their power. The character Napoleon, who represents Stalin, uses propaganda to manipulate public opinion and control revolutionary movements. One of the most prominent examples is the change of the principle of *"All Animals Are Equal"* (chapter 1-2) to *"All Animals Are Equal but Some Animals Are More Equal Than Others"* (Chapter 10). This was done to justify the privileges of elite pigs over other animals.

Orwell also highlights how propaganda was used to betray the initial idealism of the revolution. Through the character of Squealer, a pig skilled in rhetoric, Orwell shows how easily revolutionary ideologies can be distorted to suit the interests of the rulers. This propaganda is not only in the form of sweet slogans, but also involves the revision of history and the control of information to confuse and manipulate the people.

*"Do not imagine, comrades, that leadership is a pleasure! On the contrary, it is a deep and heavy responsibility. No one believes more firmly than Comrade Napoleon that all animals are equal. He would be only too happy to let you make your decisions for yourselves. But sometimes you might make the wrong decisions, comrades, and then where should we be?"* (chapter 5).

Squealer uses manipulative language to justify Napoleon's authoritarian rule, suggesting that Napoleon's leadership is a burden he bears for the good of the other animals, even though his real motivation is self-interest. This reflects how propaganda can be used to control and convince the masses to accept an oppressive government.

### C. Themes and Messages Through Narrative Allegory

#### 1. The Theme of Power and corruption Through Allegory

George Orwell's *Animal Farm* uses an allegory narrative to convey a social critique of power and corruption. The main theme in *Animal Farm*, which is the critique of totalitarianism and the abuse of power, is closely related to the narrative used by Orwell. Through animal characters, Orwell illustrates how revolutions initially based on idealism can be distorted into tyranny when power falls into the wrong hands. The character of Napoleon, for example, is used to illustrate how someone with ambitions of power can corrupt the system and betray its original ideals.

*"All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others"* (Chapter 10) is one of the most iconic lines, encapsulating the essence of totalitarian corruption. Through this line, Orwell shows how the pigs, led by Napoleon, distort the original principles of equality that the revolution was founded on. What began as a movement for collective freedom and fairness becomes a regime of unequal power, where the ruling class of pigs justifies its dominance and oppression of other animals.

Orwell also highlights the theme of exploitation of the working class through the character of Boxer, a horse who works tirelessly to build Animal Farm. However, Boxer's hard work is taken advantage of by the pigs of the ruling elite, illustrating the betrayal of those who have fought for the revolution. This shows how a system that exploits the working class can sacrifice their well-being for the benefit of the ruling elite.

In Chapter 9 of, the pigs betray Boxer, one of the farm's most loyal and hardworking animals, by sending him to his death under the guise of medical care. The quote, *"The van had previously been the property of the knacker, and had been bought by the veterinary surgeon, who had not yet painted the old name out. That was how the mistake had arisen,"* illustrates how the pigs manipulate the truth to cover up their treachery. This moment highlights the cruelty and deceit often seen in totalitarian regimes, where even the most faithful are discarded when they are no longer of use.

#### 2. Moral Message Through Allegory

In *Animal Farm*, George Orwell employs allegory to convey the dangers of absolute power, social injustice, and the importance of accountability among leaders. Through the character of Napoleon, who symbolizes Joseph Stalin, Orwell illustrates how a revolution that begins with noble ideals can devolve into tyranny. The animals, initially united in their quest for equality, soon find themselves oppressed by those they once trusted. This transformation highlights the ease with which power can corrupt and how revolutionary goals can be undermined by self-serving leaders.

Additionally, Orwell emphasizes the role of propaganda and manipulation in maintaining control over the populace. The pigs alter the commandments of Animalism to justify their actions, demonstrating how language and rhetoric can be weaponized to maintain authority. By showcasing the gradual erosion of rights and freedoms among the animals, Orwell underscores the necessity for vigilance and accountability in leadership. Ultimately, *Animal Farm* serves as a cautionary tale about the fragility of democracy and the critical need for citizens to hold their leaders accountable to prevent the rise of tyranny.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, *Animal Farm* illustrates how an allegory can present a portrayal of a dynamic social and political situation. Orwell's narrative not only criticizes totalitarianism, but also highlights the complexity of power in a revolutionary movement. The transformation that takes place from the animals' search for their true selves to gain equality and freedom ends up being an oppressive regime that betrays the vision of the revolution itself. Through the representation of characters such as Napoleon and Boxer, Orwell illustrates the exploitation felt by the working or lower classes, and how language can be manipulated to maintain and preserve the image of power. The novel serves as a timeless warning about the potential for revolutionary movements to be corrupted by betraying the original principles and vision of the revolution, imploring readers to remain critical and vigilant of the ruling regime, and holding leaders accountable to the mandate of their positions.

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