

Allegorical Reification in George Orwell's *Animal Farm*: Text and Contexts

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Abstract

In the novella *Animal Farm* (1945), George Orwell uses allegory in tandem with satire to create an intricate textual tapestry populated by regular farmyard animals engaged in ludicrous warfare. Although indicated only obliquely, the historical canvas that provides context to the rather deceptive foreground is an important point of focus. The chimeric fabric of text in *Animal Farm* intertwines inextricable threads of history and fantasy, complicating attempts to interpret the narrative and problematizing the overall reading. The reader is required to deeply inquire into the historical allusions embedded into a different discourse; this is not only to infer political references in terms of historical figures and events but also to speculate about the significance placed on these allusions because of the use of heavy symbolism in the surface text. A close reading of the text along with a contextual investigation complemented by discourse analysis is the key to developing a comprehensive understanding of Orwell's fable, which is the potential novelty factor of this study. This study is informed by critical theory and guided especially by the idea of "political unconscious" proposed by Fredric Jameson (1981).

Keywords: allegory, history, narrative, discourse, analysis

1. Introduction

George Orwell in *Animal Farm* offers a "symbolic resolution" to a real historical contradiction (Jameson, 1981, p.77). The context which carries coherent evidence is deliberately kept out of the text. Orwell's manoeuvre lies in supplanting an imaginary resolution through narrative means of the text. Orwell's story has an ambiguous end where it becomes difficult to distinguish pigs from the humans but throughout the narrative there is complete clarity that the authority should never be transferred to pigs and therefore, the communists cannot be entrusted with the running of the state. This solution is obvious though stated only allegorically in the functioning of the *Animal Farm*. The central problem emerges from Orwell's ability to appear neutral while completely taking sides in the binary created by him and his continued guidance of the reader's choice despite the opportunistic overlaps and swapping of positions that occur in the narrative. Intriguingly, these projections reflect ironically on communists rather than calling to question Orwell's convenient and dismissive acknowledgement that capitalists and communists actually share the dinner table because the whole narrative has done so well to establish the communists as villains that the ending can be conceded and the capitalism can only appear to be the lesser evil. The paper thus notes how Orwell simplifies and reduces the historical complexities through the employment of allegory and bestiary to create disfavor for communists while yet appearing to be a neutral and objective critic of all forms of totalitarian state.

Thus, the main aim of the study is to uncover the hidden political meanings and to bring the "political unconscious" to the surface (Jameson, 1981, p.9). This study proposes that an apparently apolitical narrative like *Animal Farm* can covertly and intriguingly serve as the very kingpin in a political contest. In this novella, George Orwell uses allegory to assimilate, represent, reproduce, and reify the ideology he seeks to critique. *Animal Farm*, touted as a comprehensive critique of communism, seems to take all forms of totalitarianism into its wide gamut. However, it exaggerates the demerits of communism and underplays those of capitalism, emphasizing the first and effacing the other. Orwell shares the insecurities and ideological unease of the imperial-capitalist state in the face of communism. These tensions are retrievable from just below the surface text, which demonstrates a "conscious" (Jameson, 1981) position seemingly encompassing a critique against all sorts of totalitarian regimes so that Orwell cannot be easily blamed for partisanship. Orwell's masterstroke comes at the very outset, where he projects Farmer Jones, the representative human on the capitalist side as opposed to the rebellious animals on the communist side. Therefore, the hidden anthropocentric prejudices and cognitive biases guide the readers to side with Farmer Jones and ultimately with the capitalists. Any ambiguity is provisional and only benefits the capitalist side in the polemics raised by Orwell. The employment of allegory, in the form of a beast fable in *Animal Farm*, is not coincidental but rather a well-thought-out ploy through an analysis of which this study explores what Fredric Jameson might call "the situation-specific function of its aesthetic" (Jameson, 1981, p.9). For instance, in the Tzarist regime, the Tzar's sceptre and crown were not just beautiful, gilded or bejewelled gold objects but were mark of imperial power including the power to punish and hold feudal vassals. Nicholas II's Winter Palace, similarly, was not just a lavish palace for the royalty but it was the seat of power and decision-making. It is not just an aesthetic possession but function towards declaration of imperial power. In the Soviet regime as it was run by Stalin, a 200-metre-high skyscraper was built in Warsaw, Poland called the Palace of Culture and Science by the architect Jozef Sigalin on the commission/orders of Joseph

Stalin as a mark of Russian authority over Poland. For his own distinctive ideological assertion in his own country, however, Stalin chose to build the Stalin Dacha that was ‘minimalistic’ in style. It had comfort and quality but primarily it was a well-camouflaged building to provide security to Stalin.

In the allegorical world, Stalin’s aesthetics of minimalism, functionality and imperial authority of the USSR are presented by Napoleon’s choice of the windmill which itself is an intellectual theft since it was initially proposed by Snowball. The irony of the windmill, however, lies in the fact that just like the earlier regime that the Soviet displaced, it does believe in inequality as Stalin chooses to build the mammoth windmill despite the endless sacrifice and labour it demands to glorify and aggrandise himself and not the people.

1.1 Research Objectives

Orwell’s text provides minimal context regarding the atrocious conditions ubiquitous during the imperial rule which led to the revolutionary outbreak in Russia. The present study however, seeks to emphasize these very gaps and omissions by highlighting the historical episodes that may have ultimately led to the people’s uprisings and put an end to the Tzarist regime in Russia. A comprehensive tabulation of such episodes is created to expose how the narrative functions and deliberately shifts the focus from other equally exploitative regimes and is fixated only towards the atrocities of Stalinist regime. On the novel’s narrative level as Orwell who has a capitalist agenda too uses the aesthetics of the bestiary and satirical genres whereby, he is able to conveniently superimpose the image of the pig on that of the communist to confute aesthetics and ideology that functions to create aversion and disgust against the Soviet regime. The “situation” demands dealing with communism in a covert way and the best genre for this is allegory, especially when doubled with satire. Additionally, in satire, it is better for the enemy to be dehumanized, and so the best “aesthetic” form to serve Orwell’s political aim could be a fable or bestiary where his enemy factions could be associated with the worst rather than best animal qualities. Therefore, this study attempts a “demystification and ideological unmasking” of *Animal Farm* (Jameson, 1981, p.12).

1.2 Literature Review

Fredric Jameson’s *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (1981) is arguably the seminal critical work which informs that literary texts have “social, historical and political resonance.” (Jameson, 1981, p.17). Jameson’s contends that the text as a cultural product has an inextricable relation with the political and socio-historical conditions of its time, though it claims to be “apolitical.” *Animal Farm* is no exception and therefore Jameson’s approach sits well in the critical analysis of this text. This study adopts Jamesonian approach to interpret the “political unconscious” in the text *Animal Farm*.

Terry Eagleton’s *Criticism and Ideology: A Study in Marxist Literary Tradition* (1976) is a pivotal study in understanding the “material critical procedure” that is the material conditions in which a text is produced. In the case of Orwell, Eagleton’s argument seems appropriate in decoding the aesthetic choices of the author and exploring the “eloquent silences” (p.89) present in the text. Clearly, allegory works as a cover and facilitates Orwell to lambast communist regime with an understated capitalist agenda.

The essay “Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat in the seminal text *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics* (1923) by Georg Lukács explores the dynamics of “reified relations” (p.91) and argues the necessity to understand any event in its historical and social milieu which has produced it. By substituting pigs for communists Orwell succeeds in making a mockery of relationship of peasants and proletariats to the communist state. Thus, the relation is reified as peasants overthrow Tsar (humans) to actually make communists (pigs) their rulers.

Russia in Revolution: An Empire in Crisis, 1890 to 1928 by S.A.Smith published in 2017, has enriched the research with a compilation of deeper details about the revolution. The book exposes the failure of the tsarist autocracy in Russia.

Fundamentals of Historical Materialism: The Marxist View of History and Politics (2006) by Doug Lorimer has prepared the ground of the study. The text informs significantly about understanding history, politics and social development.

1.3 Research Hypothesis

The primary hypothesis is that Orwell’s choice of allegory is a “socially symbolic act” (Jameson, 1981, p.20) rather than an impartial literary choice. Interestingly, Orwell makes a farmer the representative of capitalist or imperialist. In the narrative, Farmer Jones fits the capitalist-*bourgeoisie* paradigm rather than farmer- *proletariat* model. Farmer Jones holds the highest authority on the farm creating metaphorical and analogical equivalences with the Tsar in Romanov Russia and monarch in Bourbon France when the revolution occurs. The question remains as to why Orwell chose to make allegory his gateway for satire. The paper contends that allegory aids covert attacks and helps avoid direct confrontation while guaranteeing reduction of antagonistic arguments and cultivates favourable orientations towards favoured positions through mere aesthetics, forms and formalities.

The following table is a depiction of how Orwell is able to create disgust and suspicion against the leader of the new-found state and linking the leader in the role of pigs to communists to carry out the ideological task. Orwell is critical of communist discourse and hegemony; he systematically and deliberately fails to critique imperial and capitalist practices.

Table 1. A working demonstration of Jameson’s “political unconscious”

Representative of Imperial Regime	Cause of change	Agents of change
Louis XVI	French Revolution	Napoleon
Tsar Nicholas II	Russian Revolution	Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin
Farmer Jones	Battle of Cowshed	Pigs

Description: This table is a model where Farmer Jones substitutes the position occupied by Tsar/ Monarch/Capitalist which is a quirk that Orwell employs, but Orwell also shows that people themselves are foolish (Boxer etc.) as they are ready to make Napoleon, the pig their ruler instead of Farmer Jones (the humans). But actually Tsar/Monarch never do a farmer's work. That is, there is no comparison between Tsar Nicholas II or Louis XVI and Farmer Jones. The people of Russia made a real substitution by replacing the Tsarist regime with Communist regime. Orwell makes a metaphoric substitution replacing the human (Farmer Jones) with pigs (Napoleon) in his narrative.

In *Animal Farm*, Orwell argues that capitalism is better than communism through an imaginary story where the imperial master is ironically represented by Farmer Jones and the communist by the pig Napoleon. This is clearly a working demonstration of what Jameson calls the "political unconscious", where a cultural text like *Animal Farm* "gives an imaginary resolution to real social contradictions" (Jameson, 1981, p.77). The "resolution" can be merely "imaginary", as the tangible historical and material realities are carefully excluded through the use of allegory. Orwell's narrative manoeuvring can be ultimately surmised from the total negation of narrative focus on Farmer Jones's administration of the farm. In fact, such a narrative would be superfluous as people experientially seem to know how a farm is run and therefore, by association and substitution Orwell does not need to show how the Tzarist regime or the capitalist regime work as in the allegorical universe of the farm and by generic conventions the farm can, quirkily, oddly, uncannily, strangely, stand for the Tzarist regime or the capitalist regime where the Tsar taxed and suppressed and the capitalist reduced and destroyed the farmer.

2. Method

The study is supported by critical theory to understand the historical context. This study adopts Jameson's useful slogan, "Always historicise!" (Jameson, 1981, p.9). The Jamesonian approach yields benefits by underlining the historical context in which the text was written. Fredric Jameson's idea of the "political unconscious", in this context, is useful, as it lends transparency to the "history" and "ideology" operating in the subtext. Although Orwell aims to unmask and debunk the myth of equality and Marxist ideals through allegorically rendering these ideals in *Animal Farm*, he subscribes to biases against communists. This study attempts to investigate the ideological underpinnings of an apparently innocent surface text through contextualization and discourse analysis; the latter shows the way the allegory is inspired by ideological interests, cognitive biases, and anthropocentrism and uses rhetorical devices and political demagoguery from the Cold War. Context plays a significant role in the analysis of texts and co-texts, and discourse analysis helps in understanding the use of language and genre in selected texts to investigate authorial intent. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) under the wider rubric of discourse analysis will further help in examination of political and ideological themes embedded in the text to maintain or challenge power relationships.

3. Results

George Orwell reinstated this old literary form, borrowing from the tradition of Fontaine and Aesop to satirize the communist regime. This was a deliberate ploy which suits the author's purpose in restoring the confidence in a capitalist regime. Referring to Table 1, two major revolutions in human history, the French Revolution and the Russian Revolution are undermined by this one stroke of calling a pig by the name of "Napoleon" (Orwell, 1945) as it works on old English fears that required shift from Romantic to Victorian approach which was pro-imperialism. The contradiction may be determined on whether to side with capitalism or communists and "imaginary resolution" is to reject pigs, that is, communists over humans (capitalists). Pigs and humans dialectic pervades throughout the substantial part of the novel, persisting till the closure. Orwell conflates the polarities at will, thereby advocating that the only kind of system possible is a capitalist one and that communism is an inferior copy of capitalism in inferior hands. The close-reading, contextualization, and discourse analysis make it evident that the narrative appears partisan to a capitalist cause. Moreover, Orwell refrains from offering a solution to the problem faced by the farm animals. His antagonism to communist principles is clear but there is no such articulation or hint of direct critique of imperialism or fascism.

4. Discussion

4.1 A Reified Model of Communism in the *Animal Farm*

Animal Farm is just a model of communist system visualised as dystopia by Orwell; it is not a real communist or soviet state but an abstract reduction of it where it is not even competitively compared and fairly juxtaposed with either capitalist or Tzarist-imperial regimes. Thus, Orwell has reified the communist system projecting it as an animal farm full of barn yard animals pretending to be rational beings. However, he uses various false analogies to establish his setting and characters and furthermore indulges in several fallacies and anthropocentric biases while treating them. The use of allegory in *Animal Farm* devalorizes and debunks the communist assertion of a utopian existence. Communist discourses and Marxist approaches insist that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) was based on equality. The use of allegory and particular choices of roles and casting in *Animal Farm* is instrumental in emphasizing and exposing the abnormality behind these Marxist axioms, put forth as the "commandments" (Orwell, 1945). These, however, inspire ridicule rather than reverence because the commandments refer to lower animals with limited intelligence and revolt against the more practical and experiential aspects of the "anthropocentric" approach as well as the rational Renaissance humanism of the intellectual and aesthetic overtones. In suggesting that communists are comparable to animals, Orwell became a target of communist ire. Bansal and Singh (2022) highlight that the setting of *Animal Farm* follows an 'anthropocentric tradition' that significantly manifests itself in the Western tradition (p. 130). Needless to say, anthropocentrism directs the human cognitive bias, colouring each reading of *Animal Farm*, compelling readers to position themselves opposite to dehumanized characters depicted in the narrative, and aligning readers' response with capitalists in a circuitous manner.

4.2 Inheriting from Bestiaries

Employing bestiary and fable modes, Orwell sought to vanquish his ideological opponents on the battlefield of propaganda warfare. The bestiary as a genre has a long and recognized tradition of being associated with didactic writings and satire. In one publication, the English scholar MR James begins with a reminiscence referring to *Anecdotes of Animals*, a “popular picture book,” featuring “woodcuts, perhaps by Briket Foster” that “besought us to note what valuable lessons for the conduct of life we might receive from imitating the fidelity of the Dog or the intrepidity of the Titmouse, and, doubtless, by shunning the voracity of the Pig” (James, 1930-31). Here, it is emphatically observed that the pig is associated with a “voracious” nature and depicts qualities to be “shunned”. James points to the descriptive as well as didactic traditions of the bestiary and claims that the *Physiologus*, written in Greek, is a predecessor of the didactic–moralistic tradition of the bestiary in both the East and West. James notices that each of the beasts referred to in a bestiary helps connote one overriding or predominant quality by which they are identified. It may be brought to the reader’s notice that even Mr Jones of George Orwell is no medieval oppressed “Piers Plowman”. Rather, he is a farmer who is presented as a somewhat ridiculous and therefore quite harmless face of the “bourgeoisie” to the extent that capitalism itself is made to appear naïve and even vulnerable through him, thereby circuitously evoking sympathy rather than censure for capitalist operations and oppression. This, however, can be distinguished from the world represented in “*Piers Plowman*, where the oppression of the poor by the arrogant rich and the corruption of church and state are described in racy vernacular by one whose soul was on fire with devotion to truth and justice. Social problems are enunciated, and the misery wrought by human ignorance and selfishness is depicted in satire keen, shrewd, and piercing” (Shackford, 1913). Moreover, the following excerpt from the text is suggestive of Mr Jones being a “capable” master but who “had fallen on evil days” (p. 22). According to Orwell, the Tsar was a fairly competent leader who had just fallen off, not because of his personal limitations but probably because of the bad times. Moreover, Orwell is deeply concerned for the poor Tsar’s health as he had been drinking more than his appetite. The whole anger and frustration are shifted to the men of the Tsar for being negligent and corrupt. Such a textual analysis make one inquire and understand the reason why Mr. Jones is depicted as harmless and innocent and the pigs as shrewd and sly.

Additionally, if Orwell inherits the bestiary tradition, he still chooses to ignore the popular anti-ecclesiastical and anti-aristocratic compositions articulating the voices of the people in Europe like *The Land of Cockayne*, a burlesque of the medieval monks which Shackford notes, “illustrates the contemptuous tolerance of that day for the greed, the gluttony, the slothfulness, and the immorality of the inmates of the monastery. The satire directed against literary conventions of the day is particularly amusing, if we notice how the various catalogues of animals, birds, spices, flowers, jewels, and food parody similar catalogues in the romances and in the poems describing paradise” (Shackford, 1913).

In fact, America also inherited its political satire from the English tradition of the bestiary. Alison Olson notes in her essay “The Monster of Monsters and the Emergence of Political Satire in New England” that New England first found this market in America with the publication of Thomas Thumb’s *Monster of Monsters* (Thumb, 1754). She notes that satire emphasizes the factor of “incongruity” which emerges when the ideal and the real do not cohere or conform. Olson (2001) remarks, “The incongruity works because the author tells his story in such a way that the political events behind it are transparently clear to the reader: the reader would not laugh if he didn’t get the point and the satire wouldn’t work if it didn’t flatter the reader that he could figure out the parallels himself”.

However, she further notes that transparency and obfuscation work hand in hand. Obfuscation helps the author to appear politically correct, avoid easy confrontations by opponents, and be immune to legal persecutions. She observes that “the satirist must obfuscate his descriptions enough that particular victims will not be able to prove in a court of law that the satirist actually meant them and thereby sue him for libel” (Olson, 2001). Orwell operates in *Animal Farm* using the same strategy.

It is interesting to explore the possibilities of a narrative such as that of *Animal Farm* without the particular conditions extant in the world at that time. *Animal Farm* does not have the same value or a deep meaning without reference to its immediate historical context, although it can continue to have relevance even in the contemporary geopolitical scenario where surveillance is not just speculation but actually pervades reality. What the pigs do to other animals makes sense only in the context of communism, but surveillance itself is a state approach that is a shared trait of communists and capitalists. Additionally, surveillance is the hallmark feature of Orwellian texts. Several critics acclaim Orwell’s writings as prophetic, but historical accounts give testimonies of intense surveillance practices even during aristocratic regimes which went unnoticed. The intent of “Russifying” (Smith, 2017) the whole empire by Alexander III in the late nineteenth century severely marginalized ethnic groups. Smith (2017) asserts, “From the 1880s especially, this spurred the state into undertaking greater centralization and uniformization of administration. One dimension of this policy of homogenization was the policy (or, more accurately, the policies) of Russification” (p.15). Another equally repressive force which defined the Tsarist period as a “police state” (Smith 2017) was “Okhrana” (Smith, 2017), that is the political police. The *Okhrana* practiced intense surveillance upon any revolutionary movement and used torture tactics to attain information. With time the police were gaining more and more power to bar people from their livelihoods and restrict their movement. The autonomy of several key institutions like universities and judiciary was diluted to almost negligible. Alexander III (1881-1894) strongly adhered to orthodoxy and autocracy. He pushed towards *Russification* of the whole empire. The forced cultural assimilation amplified ethnic tensions and marginalized non-Russian minorities. S.A Smith (2017) elaborates:

Certainly, the police worked vigorously to suppress organized political opposition and public dissent. Anyone deemed ‘seditious’ could expect imprisonment or administrative exile to Siberia. The Okhrana, or secret police, intercepted mail and placed agents in public institutions and factories, and they were required to write regular reports on any unusual activities or deviant opinions (p.18).

Orwell's writings on totalitarianism have a very narrow and selective context as they plunge into the abyss of silence in the case of imperial powers' "unambiguous colonial rule" (Smith, 2017). *Animal Farm* is clad as an animal fable to retell the failure of the Bolshevik Revolution and the rise of Stalinism. Napoleon's usurpation of power, the change in the commandments, and the rise of dictatorial rule is clearly emphasized in the text. David Dwan (2012) rightly notes, "Those who have examined Orwell's tale have understandably focused on its immediate polemical function: its damning indictment of contemporary Bolshevism" (p.655). In other words, a question may be posed as to whether *Animal Farm*, "a fairy story," as it is called in the subtitle, which may be a fantasy or dystopia, can possibly be imagined without industrialism or Marx, Lenin, or Stalin ever coming into existence.

Donald E. Morse (1995) maintains, "But his success is also due equally to his finding the ideal vehicle for both his political and artistic purposes in the oral conventions of the fairy tale combined with the oxymoronic nature of composed fantasy." Orwell borrows the familiar genre of the fairy tale to pursue his political aims. Orwell depends upon the literary tradition of storytelling writers like Apuleius and Lewis Carroll to embed a deeper political message under the garb of a simple narrative. Morse succinctly suggests that the plot of *Animal Farm* is inspired by oral tales, particularly Apuleius's *The Golden Ass* (p.86). While Apuleius's protagonist is transformed into an ass, in *Animal Farm*, the pigs are turned into new oppressors. Donald E. Morse (1995) explicitly mentions that "The very choice of the pigs for transformation is not only appropriate for all the satiric, political ramifications virtually every reader of the book has discerned, but is also a very Victorian choice" (p.89). Orwell's choice of pigs aligns with the Victorian tradition of using animals symbolically to critique social issues and human nature.

Paul Kirschner (2004) mentions, "'Fairy tale' of course may simply signify fantasy, but this hardly fits *Animal Farm*, which derives its authority from historical events that are in turn illuminated by it. The subtitle points, therefore, to a parodic impulse, like that which the Teheran conference inspired." The fairy tale form is a deliberate and conscious choice to mock real historical and political events.

In a dictionary article, J.E. Luebering (2024) affirms that *Animal Farm* is "a political fable based on the events of Russia's Bolshevik revolution and the betrayal of the cause by Joseph Stalin." Similarly, Bansal and Singh (2022) mention, "George Orwell wrote *Animal Farm* with the deliberate intention of subverting the generic mode of narration in which humans are the central characters, and thereby to generate irony and satire under the veil of an innocent fable." (p.126). The scholars further add the following:

Farms have been ideal settings for fables as they are invested with a certain idyllic charm. George Orwell has probably exploited this age-old attribution while working on his novella. He transforms the innocent setting of the farm with his putative quiescence and bucolic simplicity into a site for the unravelling of a trenchant political satire. Sagacious readers can identify in the nature of the farm where the ruling animals degenerate into raucous peddlers of inflexible political philosophies a reflection of the totalitarian political dystopia of the late twentieth century (p.127).

4.3 Political "Red Herrings" and Logical Fallacies

The surface text of *Animal Farm* operates as a "red herring," which is employed to distract and entertain the reader. The immensely important subtext of *Animal Farm* remains elusive in the absence of a historical context and frame. Authorial intent must be teased out by considering the cumulative narrative cues collected through textual and discourse analyses Eagleton draws from Marxist scholar Pierre Macherey and cites that "literary works are internally dissonant" due to their relationship with ideology (89). The "absences" in Orwell's text, that is, his silence on imperial and capitalist regime speaks about his ideological affiliations. Eagleton suggests:

The literary text, far from constituting some unified plenitude of meaning, bears inscribed within it the marks of certain determinate absences which twist its various significations into conflict and contradiction. These absences-the 'not-said' of the work -are precisely what bind it to its ideological problematic: ideology is present in the text in the form of its eloquent silences (p.89).

While emphasizing the dystopian future on the farm under the rule of new masters, that is the communists, in the role of pigs, Orwell inadvertently discloses his partisanship towards imperial or capitalist powers. The deep-seated narrative subtext is signified merely through numerous historical parallels that are perceptible because of suggestive vocabulary indicating a certain discursive tradition in world politics. The conversation and dialogue that forms the text, the commandments and dictums that are proclaimed or played with, point to a domain of the discourse recognised to be political and ideological and as having social and economic consequences. The genre fable helps Orwell to avoid talking or explaining the real issues of labour, wages, economy, production and ownership as he can easily circumvent them through symbolism or fabulous equations. This is close to the ad hominem fallacy where instead of meeting an argument squarely, a personal attack is made on the character of the speaker or the source is discredited. Orwell presents an extreme case here, where the attacked person or class is in fact equated with pigs. Orwell deliberately portrays communists as sly pigs to warn the readers and public at large, of believing in socialist ideals as they may eventually lead to a pragmatic but cruel communist state. The text is full of episodes where pigs are shown in commanding positions and other animals in subservient roles. The following lines can be examined to identify how transparency and obfuscation work hand in hand:

"The work of teaching and organising the others fell naturally upon the pigs, who were generally recognised as being the cleverest of the animals." (p.19).

"The pigs did not actually work, but directed and supervised the others. With their superior knowledge it was natural that they should assume leadership" (p.31).

“It was also found that the stupider animals, such as the sheep, hens, and ducks, were unable to learn the Seven Commandments by heart” (p.37).

“The birds did not understand Snowball’s long words, but they accepted his explanation, and all the humbler animals set to work to learn the new maxim by heart” (p.38).

Textual analysis of these lines suggests that the words chosen for pigs and other animals are indicative of difference. Pigs are referred as “cleverest” “leaders”, “knowledgeable”, and “supervisors”, while other animals are ridiculed as “stupider”, and “humbler”. Discourse Analysis informs that pigs are referred as “naturally” and “generally” clever and fit for “teaching”, “organising” and “supervision”, establishing the authority and hierarchy of pigs on the rest of the animals who automatically fall into the lower order. And Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) suggest that the authority of pigs is eventually considered as normal. CDA informs that it is most unnatural to assume pigs as natural leaders.

These inequalities are deliberately pronounced to disenchant transition from one form of government to another. As the eminent critic, Teun A. Van Dijk (2015) in his seminal essay notes, “Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, legitimated, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context” (p.352). In particular, while studying *Animal Farm*, CDA can help understand the deeper intent of the author who situates his text in specific social, historical, and cultural contexts to convey ideological beliefs. Malcolm C mentions, “Orwell focuses on popular literature’s reproduction of hegemonic constructions of class, race, manliness and the distinctively English.” These “hegemonic constructions” must be evaluated to unravel the way the discourse functions (Evans, 1984, p.13).

There is a chronological order indicated in Orwell’s plot that is reminiscent of certain world-changing events in the geopolitical arena. Though a ‘fairy story’ usually pertains to no specific calendar time, yet the sequence of action in the plot subscribes to a chronological order that parallels contextual events outside of the text and are surprisingly decipherable in a story that appears to be as timeless as the allegorical main text, thereby exposing Orwell’s latent affiliations.

Fairclough and Wodak note that “discourse is historical” (Dijk, 2015, p.353). To illustrate while *Animal Farm* is not specifically located in any space and time, it embeds indicators that throw ironic sidelights on both space and time. For instance, the character of Napoleon points towards the French Revolution which happened in the 18th century. To Orwell’s primary readership the name Napoleon would instantly ring alarming bells who would rather celebrate the battle of Waterloo and the defeat of Napoleon. In this sense Orwell is creating joke of sorts when Napoleon addresses beasts of England, since England never accepted the tenets of French Revolution and believes in Constitutional monarchy. By creating disgust and suspicion against the leader of the new found state and linking the leader to Communist Russia and French Revolution, Orwell is able to carry out ideological task. Orwell is critical of communist discourse and hegemony; he systematically and deliberately fails to critique imperial and capitalist practices.

4.4 *Animal Farm as a Reified Allegory*

Orwell uses allegory to assimilate, represent, reproduce, and reify the ideology he seeks to critique. Terry Eagleton (1976) has suggested, “In selecting a form, then, the writer finds his choice already ideologically circumscribed. He may combine and transmute forms available to him from a literary tradition, but these forms themselves, as well as his permutation of them, are ideologically significant.” (p.25).

Allegory is an ahistorical genre; it supersedes time and points to universals through particulars, which are kept deliberately vague. However, Orwell’s allegory of farmyard animals’ points to a very precise point in the history of world politics and gives more space for arguments from a socialist perspective. Furthermore, it not only allows the rhetoric of communist ideologues to reign but also, simultaneously, lambasts those arguments through imagery and unfolding action. Although several references have become axiomatic, the debate over the ideological standpoint that informs the narrative remains. There is obviously an “identification of class motifs or values in a given text,” where we witness communist meetings, rationing, parades, punishments, singing of anthems, and forms of address (Luebering, 2024). Jameson (1981) notes the following:

The literary or aesthetic act therefore always entertains some active relationship with the Real; yet in order to do so, it cannot simply allow “reality” to persevere inertly in its own being, outside the text and at distance. It must rather draw the Real into its own texture, and the ultimate paradoxes and false problems of linguistics, and most notably of semantics, are to be traced back to this process, whereby language manages to carry the Real within itself as its own intrinsic or immanent subtext (p.66–67).

In the case of *Animal Farm*, this contention suggests that the text is not merely a passive reflection of reality; rather, it actively constructs ideological implications. *Animal Farm* engages with the Marxist themes of hierarchy, governance, labour and economy since it deals with ownership and means of production, hence it dabbles with capitalism. But since the first claim of ownership lies with Farmer Jones there is ideological dissonance which creates sundry semantic and linguistic paradoxes embedded in the text. The ups and downs (changes) that happen in the Soviet regime also transpire in the *Animal Farm*. The communist propaganda phrases are either barely disguised or played upon. The allegorical narrative mocks class struggle and revolutionary ideals in the context of emerging capitalism, and its political subtext participates in what Jameson (1981) calls “perpetuating the illusion that the situation itself did not exist before it, that there is nothing but a text, that there never was any extra- or con-textual reality before the text itself generated it.” Essentially, while reading *Animal Farm*, it may appear that several historical realities are missing from the text. By depicting a reductionist view of the complex background, which led the Bolsheviks to power, Orwell’s narrative oversimplifies historical and political specificities. The Bolsheviks were leaders of the communist

movement that led to the Russian Revolution in 1917. Although Paul Flowers (2005) notes Orwell's capability as a keen observer and in "describing phenomena," he finds Orwell to be weak "in explaining phenomena". He asserts the following:

What lay at the root of the purloining of his literary legacy was his reliance upon critiques of Bolshevism presented variously by anti-communists and anarchists which view the Bolsheviks not as a militant trend within the socialist movement but as a discrete body led by a clique of intellectuals, an elite-in-waiting even, out with and parasitic upon the working class, and which consider the rise of Stalinism as the inevitable result of this leadership's coming to power, rather than primarily as the unintentional consequences of the harsh objective pressures upon the Bolsheviks once they were in power (p. 27).

An adequate effort to explore the underlying causes leading to the Russian Revolution is missing in Orwell's narrative. Without analyzing complex dynamics of the socio-political landscape, the text discusses consequences of tyranny after leadership has changed. The author appears to rely on simple generalizations, as convincing explanations for the rise of totalitarian regimes are lacking. Apparently, Orwell's objective is not to emphasize freedom or equality in human rights as essential or natural values; rather, he insistently attempts to expose the quality of the yoke or regime. Bansal and Singh (2022) suggest, "Instead of launching an overtly scathing attack against totalitarianism, Orwell chose to cloak his narrative in the form of a fable and infuse it with a liberal dose of satire so as to expose the totalitarian propaganda that despots in any regime draw on to yoke even discerning subjects to the vanguard of their partisan cause" (p 128-129). The didactic narrative indicates that it is better to be governed by hereditary rulers than by rebellious newcomers. The ruled animals in *Animal Farm* are shown to form or furnish evidence against communists, but their testimony against imperialism and capitalism is suppressed or not considered.

Jameson (1981) further adds, "the proviso that history is inaccessible to us except in textual form, or in other words, that it can be approached only by way of prior (re)textualization"(p.35). This assertion highlights the significance of constructing an understanding of history through text. Orwell transforms historical figures into narrative characters, whose individual actions are projected as collective ideological positions and representative of the entire political locus. Furthermore, the novella symbolically depicts certain selected moments in the entire history of revolutions and class contests, thereby leading to incomplete periodization. Thus, for Orwell descriptions work better and explanations will only be counterproductive.

In *Animal Farm*, talking pigs not only are a metaphor for communist propaganda machinery but also introduce the effect of contempt toward propagandist articulation. This effect further points to the fact that, although stories of capitalist and imperial atrocities may have led to the revolution, these are silenced and have lost significance, as the enemy is now closer and has risen from within the rank and file of communism. This symbolic approach underscores the idea of restoring marginalized voices to analyze cultural dialogue. In the so-called class dialogue of the text, although communists reign supreme, capitalists manage to monopolize the narrative with their voices and points of view. The voices of farmers, who suffered under the Tsarist regime and imperial excesses of cruel landlords, are silenced. It is a discourse between two reigning powers, rather than between the ruler and the ruled. The fable is informed by disenchantment and attempts to discourage all hope for utopia, especially a communist utopia.

Jameson (1981) asserts, "It is in detecting the traces of that uninterrupted narrative, in restoring to the surface of the text the repressed and buried reality of this fundamental history, that the doctrine of a political unconscious finds its function and its necessity"(p.20). Jameson's doctrine refers to the underlying but shaping forces of a text that remain hidden unless close attention is paid to them. A reading of *Animal Farm* without a deeper understanding of historical and socio-political contexts will sever the text from its context. It is essential to highlight the repressed history to frame a comprehensive interpretation of the novella.

4.5 Reification and Rhetoric: Exaggeration to Effacement

The author uses the façade of allegory so imperatively that the textual details help in exploring the "political unconscious" of the novella. Orwell exploits the allegorical form of Stalin's brutality in *Animal Farm*. In a way, the text is an "allegorical satire that has more direct reference to real-world people and events" (Rodden, 1999, p.5). Orwell employs the allegorical form to reify the ideology he seeks to critique. Lukacs notes the limited understanding of "bourgeois intellectuals" (2016) in addressing the concept of reification, contending the following:

Just as the economic theory of capitalism remains stuck fast in its self-created immediacy, the same thing happens to bourgeois attempts to comprehend the ideological phenomenon of reification. Even thinkers who have no desire to deny or obscure its existence and who are more or less clear in their own minds about its humanly destructive consequences remain on the surface and make no attempt to advance beyond its objectively most derivative forms, the forms furthest from the real life-process of capitalism, i.e. the most external and vacuous forms, to the basic phenomenon of reification itself (p.94).

According to Lukacs, such representations of certain ideologies as timeless models of human realities divorces them from the underlying capitalist foundation. Hence, such representations limit the intellectual attempts to seek the root causes of persistent inequities. What Lukacs says with respect to capitalism is learned on its head by Orwell who shows that it is actually communist state that alienates the labour from the worker in the figure of Boxer and other animals who do not get credit or appreciation for their work. Having said this, the current study poses a vital question regarding Orwell's representation of a limited time frame, which especially focuses on the failures of the Bolshevik Revolution and purposefully marks the future of revolutions as anxious and calamitous. Therefore, the text is implicated with a discursive aim, as the author portrays only select moments in the history of the whole revolution. Similarly, Paul Flowers (2005) argues that there is a deficit of historical analysis in *Animal Farm*, where the change of leadership results in dystopian outcomes. Flowers (2005) asserts, "The

main problem with *Animal Farm* is that there is no analysis of how a ruling elite came into existence. The development of the pigs from a leadership into a ruling elite is just given; it is as if any leadership will inevitably become a ruling elite once it seizes power” (p.14). The absence of this analysis is a deliberate omission. It indicates that Orwell is not interested in political regime before Communism. Orwell does not emphasize the context of when the “new productive forces” arrived and caused a shift towards a capitalist–industrial economy from the agrarian one, which led to “class dispositions” and “shaped the conditions for social revolutions” (Lorimer, 2006). Here, whether it was the Tsarist regime in Russia or imperial regimes in Europe, the transition to capitalism was doubly oppressive as bourgeoisie exploitation was superadded to the existing or declining aristocratic order. The deficiency is constructed and deliberate. To supply what is “deficient” as Paul Flowers says, which is to provide context, and since context carries evidence, context becomes integral.

Table 2. provides a succinct representation of events that should be referenced in any academic or fictive exploration of agricultural or industrial systems related to the USSR. As the revolution originated in the movement of people, the conditions of peasants and workers that necessitated a revolution need to be addressed.

Table 2. A table of events depicting progress of people’s movement in Russia

Text: Close-Reading	Omitted Context	Analysis: Text/Discourse
“Mr Jones, of the Manor Farm, had locked the hen-houses for the night, but was too drunk to remember to shut the pop-holes” (p.7).	Russian serfdom (1649)	Mr Jones is represented only as a negligent master, who will later be remembered as a better choice than any other newly formed leader, glossing over the entire period of serfdom under Tsardom.
“Many meetings were held in the big barn, and the pigs occupied themselves with planning out the work of the coming season. It had come to be accepted that the pigs, who were manifestly cleverer than the other animals, should decide all questions of farm policy...” (p.51).	Peasants and taxes (1682–1725)	If the details of taxes were present, it would reveal its demerits, limitations.
French Revolution is covertly targeted by naming the pig leader as “Napoleon.” No other movement is discussed in the text.	(Pugachev Rebellion, 1773)	The author maintains silence over several crucial mass movements featuring “disobedience” and resistance, obscuring them or effacing them to mark the erroneous assertion that the rebellion was irrational and unfounded.
“One of them, which was named Foxwood, was a large, neglected, old-fashioned farm, much overgrown.... their own interests” (p.42). The role of Western powers in the history of Russian Revolution is hardly discussed by the author.	Decembrist revolt and defeat in the Crimean War (1825)	Orwell, however, could not find a reason to celebrate the sacrifices of the great authors of Russian Revolution. Further, the backward position of Russia compared with that of Western Europe was evident during the Crimean War, to which no allusion is made.
The text portrays the Tsar in a sympathetic light who “had suffered in being turned out of his property by a pack of good-for-nothing animals” (p.41).	Bloody Sunday and the 1905 Revolution	Orwell is simply confined to depicting a compromised view of the present dictatorship, people are masses without identity, significance or dignity and their bloodshed is not worth a mention.
Orwell simply throws the information on revolution as if it was a very simple act to achieve. “Major’s speech had given to the more intelligent animals.... duty to prepare for it” (p.19).	Failure of provisional government (1917)	Donald S. Zagoria (1976) mentioned that the rise of the Bolsheviks was facilitated by “the vacuum of authority created by the fall of aristocracy and the failure of the Provisional Government” (p.323). Orwell’s narratives oversimplify the historical and political specificities of the Bolshevik Revolution by depicting a reductionist view of the complex background that led the Bolsheviks to power.
“Beasts of England, beasts of Ireland...” (p.16).	The Internationale (1871)	Orwell’s satirical use of an anthem is deliberate, which underlines the false cry for rebellion
Old Major commandments “Whatever goes upon two legs is an enemy....” (p.15).	Marxist principles (Communist Manifesto, 1848)	The commandments are symbolically represented as Marxist tenets, which are eventually twisted and corrupted for the sake of power. Orwell’s focus lies in lambasting revolutionary ideologies.
“Three nights later old Major died.....Major’s speech had given to the more intelligent animals on the farm a completely new outlook on life” (p.19).	Death of Lenin in 1924 and betrayal/corruption of Marxist principles	Orwell begins his allegory just before the February Revolution in 1917 and focuses solely on the corruption of socialist ideals. It is here that he places pigs on the higher pedestal to demean the communists and rob the revolution of its dignity.
Animal committees (p.36).	Soviet Central Committees formed after 1917	Orwell underlines the concentration of power in the <i>politburo</i> and its function as a rubber stamp institution.

Animal Farm begins with a declaration of success against Farmer Jones, thereby expertly avoiding reflection on the way and the reason why the Russian Revolution occurred. Significantly, the event, i.e. the Russian Revolution that sets everything into motion spirals into dictatorial excesses and becomes blameworthy in Orwell’s narrative rather than celebrated as the first struggle for freedom, rights, and ideals, reflecting human labour and equality. Although imperialism denies these rights on its very premise, communism states these as

fundamentals but unfortunately falls far from realizing them. However, this does not negate the importance of revolutionary ideals and fundamental rights.

To find the probable answer, one needs to consider the long list of events from the end of World War II to the emergence and aftermath of the Cold War. The sequence of events compelled Orwell to reassess his position with respect to socialism, given the fact that it prevailed in its most horrendous form in Stalin's USSR, with all the vestiges of capitalism, slavery, colonialism, and Nazism barely disguised in a socialist state.

Furthermore, Orwell's narratives can be called "masterpieces in rhetoric," as they soon found their place as "core texts" in academic curricula for young students. Alan Brown (1984) succinctly mentions, "In its very form, literary education can be a subtle and coercive medium for instilling beliefs and values" (p.40). Brown (1984) further asserts, "It is characteristic of the 'Orwell' persona that it conveys a neutral, received wisdom, of 'objective' and 'human' truths. Ideas of Orwell as 'the man of goodwill', 'the conscience of an age', are supported by a vocabulary of belief which passes for self-evidence and everyday language." The adoption of Orwellian ideas as our own, without their "demythologization", makes the texts discursive and persuasive (Norris, 1984). Norris (1984) suggests, "No matter how ambivalent his writings, Orwell is now firmly established as the voice and conscience of "liberal" values against everything perceived as a threat to consensus democracy. The fact that such consensus is largely manufactured -and by methods which Orwell clearly foretold" (p.7).

Animal Farm is a convincing argument against the betrayal of socialist ideals, thereby logically appealing to the sustenance of the existing order due to the failure of the Bolshevik Movement in manifesting the ideals. Orwell, a claimed supporter of social democracy and a self-proclaimed critic of imperial regimes, is naturally believed for his scathing satire. Potentially, Orwell was trying to instill faith in "unexamined assumptions" (Brown, 1984). If he was trying to demolish the "Soviet myth," the myth of Orwell as an embracing figure was constructed simultaneously. The "Orwell" myth involves a type of canonization; a version of the individual as an embodiment of human values leads inevitably to his status as a "trustworthy guide." It is a curious rhetorical mixture: moral values of "bravery," "honesty," and "sympathy" are linked directly to the criteria of "objectivity" and "straightforward fact" (Brown, 1984). *Animal Farm* employs animals both as characters and representatives of their human counterparts, making them layered and allegorical. Their tragedy incites regret for these poor creatures and fear of rebellious action. Erik Jaccard (2018) elaborates, "At issue for Williams and his contemporaries was the notion that Orwell had effectively popularized political passivity by preemptively undermining the possibility of belief in progressive causes."

Orwell's subject position in the historical mosaic might have determined the side of the propaganda machinery on which he found himself. Lynette Hunter (1984) contends, "Orwell is obviously fascinated by the tensions that arise between the dominated and the dominator." In the concluding chapter of *Animal Farm*, the omniscient narrator, voice, and point of view suggests that the positions of men and pigs, which were considered oppositional throughout and represented capitalists and communists, respectively, became indistinguishable. However, the images of pigs connected to the communists continue to have a deep psychological impact on Orwell's readers and cannot be effaced by the effective, equipoised, balanced, incohesive, and apolitical closure of the concluding chapter of an otherwise consistent political narrative. V.C. Letemendia observes the following:

Through his allegory Orwell plays a two-sided game with his reader. In some ways, he clearly emphasizes the similarities between the beasts on *Animal Farm* and the humans whom they are designed to represent; at other times, he demonstrates with both humor and pathos the profound differences separating animal from man-differences which in the end serve to limit the former (67).

Animal Farm is exemplary of a mechanism that Jameson (1981) astutely notes: "by means of a radically historicizing reappropriation, the ideal of logical closure which initially seemed incompatible with dialectical thinking, now proves to be an indispensable instrument for revealing those logical and ideological centres a particular historical text fails to realize, or on the contrary seeks desperately to repress." Although the narrative closure of *Animal Farm* is logical, convincing, and compelling, it remains ideologically reticent and perfidious. The failure of the Napoleonic Revolution and the formation of Stalin's Gulags are the most important moral lessons Orwell wishes for his readers to remember through *Animal Farm*.

5. Conclusion

Jameson (1981) proposed the "unmasking of cultural artifacts as socially symbolic acts" (p.20). In this sense, a literary work is a complex and dynamic cultural object produced by "a socially symbolic act" of resistance to an emergent world order where proletariats might rule. It is fascinating that most liberal humanist readings or new forms of right-wing critical interpretations dub *Animal Farm* as a fair narrative that encompasses all forms of exploitative regimes into the circumference of its satire, whereas most left-wing or historically informed readings interpret *Animal Farm* as an exclusive attack on communism, as the end is obviously synthetic and imposed. This may be imputed to the sly use of what Jameson (1981) calls the "strategies of containment" where the "local" reading is able to project its panoramic nature while minimizing inconvenient details and hewing off any excesses from the narrative that may support the opposing standpoint. He transforms historical figures into narrative characters, whose individual actions are projected as collective ideological positions and are representative of the entire political locus. Therefore, in *Animal Farm*, only select moments in the entire history of revolutions and class contests are depicted, leading to incomplete periodization. Jameson (1981) refers to the appearance of a "network of topical allusions" in a political allegory as "the symbolic narratives of class representatives or 'types'." Jameson (1981) perceives that *Animal Farm* is a skewed "utterance" in class discourse.

The concluding chapter shows an eclectic dinner table populated with rival species of political pigs and men, all indulging in trade diplomacy. The image is contrived to give the impression of non-partisanship. By mingling pigs and men, Orwell, in his conclusion of

Animal Farm, is “mechanically generating all the syntheses logically available to it”, to borrow an apt description of the narrative’s operation from Jameson (1981).

Commenting on the operations of ideology, Jameson (1981) observes, “If everything were transparent, then no ideology would be possible, and no domination either: evidently that is not our case. But above and beyond the sheer fact of mystification, we must point to the supplementary problem involved in the study of cultural or literary texts, or in other words, essentially, of narratives: for even if discursive language were to be taken literally, there is always, and constitutively, a problem about the “meaning” of narrative as such; and the problem about the assessment and subsequent formulation of the “meaning” of this or that narrative is the hermeneutic question” (p.46).

The present critique wrests with the difficulty of refuting the generally accepted proposition that *Animal Farm* is an anti-totalitarian text, but this agreement on the non-partisan nature of Orwell’s approach merely indicates the success of the allegorical deception. The greater struggle lies in offering a counter-critique to the claims that the narrative is equipoised, but the hypothesis of this study is strengthened through its methodological approach based on critical theory, including Fredric Jameson’s idea of the “political unconscious”.

There is a clear conscious and deliberate rejection of political maneuvering and machinations in the last chapter of *Animal Farm*, in which both pigs and men are engaged in diplomatic exchange at the dinner table to carry out commercial enterprises. They are viewed as indistinguishable from each other, indicating that both capitalists and communists make indiscriminate use of power and are ultimately driven by money-making goals of industry and commerce. However, there is a deeper sympathy for Western capitalist positions on a more subconscious or “unconscious” level that cannot be concealed throughout the narrative and affects the reader. The political machinations may have not just territorial facets but also ideological and economic aspects, as critical theory emphasizes. In this sense, Orwell only “consciously” and deliberately rejects an overstated pro-imperial position to appear politically correct, though his more subconscious affinities are manifested in the text.

The text ends with a closure, rather than a conclusion, and yet it achieves its purpose. Orwell’s narrative works as a double-edged sword by, first, satirizing the communists for using idealistic jargon and, second, by exposing the ideas of freedom and equality as intrinsically untenable propositions when associated with inferior beings. Commenting on the slogan “All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than the others,”(p.112). Anthony Kearney (2010) remarks, “it is both ironic and appropriate that the slogan should have engendered such misreading and misapplication; it has all the appearance of a statement deliberately designed by its author to create problems of interpretation in a context where the manipulation of language is an essential part of the political process” (p.238). This sums up the purpose of this study in emphasizing the “conscious” manipulation of language by the author to allegorically reify the ideology he sets out to expose. The slogan is especially designed to create confusion and interpretation challenges, which underscores Orwell as a conscious political figure.

Abbreviations

The following abbreviation is used in this manuscript:

USSR Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

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