

Totalitarianism and Class Warfare in George Orwell's *Animal Farm*

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Abstract

This article studies the struggle between classes in George Orwell's novel *Animal Farm* (1945). The most suitable school of literary criticism to tackle such a subject is that of Marxism. Two basic Marxist principles are at the center of the study: class conflict and the notion of base and superstructure. The article addresses the ongoing class conflict occurring at the base between humans and pigs on the one hand and lower-class animals on the other. Three main questions have been addressed: In what ways does the upper class oppress the lower? How does the lower class respond? What is the outcome of the struggle? The study uncovers the major factors that allow the upper class to overcome the lower in *Animal Farm*. The lower-class response consists of both constructive and destructive attitudes. The balance is ultimately tipped towards authoritarianism, leading the animals to live in conditions worse than those of the pre-revolutionary period.

Keywords: *Animal Farm*, class conflict, George Orwell, Marxist criticism, totalitarianism

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Introduction

Animal Farm is a 1945 satirical allegorical novel by English novelist, essayist, and critic George Orwell, pseudonym of Eric Arthur Blair, (1903-1950). In his novel, George Orwell uncovers and assesses the human inclination toward opponents' political, economic, physical and emotional oppression. Orwell loathed totalitarianism in particular, and his most prominent novels, *Animal Farm* (1945) and *1984* (1949), are intense denunciations of the terrible restrictions authoritarian regimes are capable of imposing on human freedom. Among the interesting themes in *Animal Farm* is totalitarianism and class conflict as the novel abounds in class divisions and issues related to revolution and anti-revolution. The most suitable school of literary criticism to tackle class conflicts is that of Marxism. We studied Marxist criticism in one of the courses during our BA process. This is a great opportunity for us to explore and experiment with the field of literary criticism. To our best knowledge, this article's topic has so far not been dealt with in a way that applies Marxism through a close detailed reading of the novel.

Thesis Statement

This article aims at studying the conflicts between classes in *Animal Farm* using the Marxist notions of base and superstructure, where class conflict, as part of the base, is reflected in the novel, being part of the superstructure. It is also important to investigate the views of great writers like George Orwell, especially when it comes to equality, social justice and authoritarianism, exploring a number of key questions.

Key Research Questions

The study seeks to answer important questions posed in Marxist literary criticism through the investigation of *Animal Farm*. In what ways does the upper class oppress the lower? How does the lower class respond? What is the outcome of the struggle and why?

Significance and Purpose of the Study

This literary study is very beneficial in that it fills a gap in knowledge that has not been dealt with previously, namely the application of Marxist criticism to a close reading of *Animal Farm* in the pursuit of the universal principles of equality and justice in the world. It aims at scrutinizing the work in order to find out where it stands in this respect.

Literature Review

Animal Farm has stimulated numerous reactions from many critics who have studied the novel from various perspectives. Segreti (2011) studies *Animal Farm* by applying Conceptual Integration Theory to the character of Napoleon. Dwan (2012) explores the theme of equality in the novel. Kumar (2014) focuses on identifying the type of society Orwell wrote about in *Animal Farm*. Nouasri (2015) studies the relationship between power and corruption through the character of Napoleon. Fajrina (2016) matches the animal characters in the novel with real individuals who played active roles in the Russian Revolution. Najmalddin (2018) focuses on the causes and effects of revolution. None of the above-mentioned studies uses Marxist criticism with the thesis, antithesis and synthesis triplet coupled with a close reading of the novel.

Theoretical Framework

The present study concerns itself with two fundamental principles of Marxism: class struggle and the base and superstructure relationship. The first one concerns the evolution of society through a struggle between conflicting forces, resulting in social transformation. Mambrol (2016) sheds light on the fact that class conflict emanates from the exploitation and oppression of the lower class by the upper.

But what relation does this conflict have to literature? The second major principle in traditional Marxist theory is that society is made up of two parts: a base and a superstructure. Class conflict, the first principle, is part of the base which forms the superstructure. The superstructure includes literature which, in turn, is part of the system that upholds the base, where class conflict takes place. It is noticeable that the relation of the two parts is bi-directional but the impact of the base on the superstructure is prominent.

Marxist criticism considers literary works as reverberations of the ongoing social struggles at the base. Therefore one of the aims of Marxist literary criticism is to critique class struggle in texts by answering questions about whether a given text serves 1) to preserve and maintain the ruling class ideology, 2) to disrupt and destabilize that ideology, or 3) to suggest both a perpetuation of a class-structured society while condemning the negative aspects of the existing state of affairs (Saoudi et al., 2020).

Research Design

The study of class conflict in the novel is divided into three main parts: Part one concerns the study of the ways the upper class takes advantage of the lower to seize power, enrich themselves and fulfill their own desires at the expense of others; Part two studies the reaction of the lower class towards authoritarian rule; Part three concerns the result of the class struggle by studying the possibility of a new social order.

The division of the study into the three main parts mentioned above follows another Marxist principle, that of the dialectical triplet: thesis, antithesis and synthesis. The triplet signifies an evolution of three notions in which the first one, thesis, is followed by a second one, antithesis, that contradicts it, and the conflict is resolved by the third notion of synthesis (Schnitker & Emmons, 2013, p. 978).

Upper Class Abuse

This part explores how the upper class takes advantage of the lower in order to augment their wealth and satisfy their desires at the expense of others. It is divided into four main sections: Superiority, Exploitation, Terror and Manipulation.

Superiority

Social hierarchy is developing on the farm due to the fact that the pigs feel superior to the rest of the animals and believe they deserve to assume positions of power (Chap. 3). From the outset, as Old Major delivers his speech from a raised podium, pigs and dogs come and settle in the front (Chap. 1). The way they settle themselves suggests that they are to play an important role on the farm (Chap. 1). The very fact that a pig, Old Major, is delivering the speech suggests that pigs are somehow at a higher level than the other animals, signaling the initiation of class differences on the farm (Chap. 1).

Indeed pigs prove that they think differently about the revolution as they seem to become part of a highbrow class interested in conceptual and educational pursuits (Chap. 2). Napoleon and Snowball exhibit the traits of frontrunners as they lead the animals into the luxurious house and call them for announcements (Chap. 2). The pigs spend months learning how to read and write in order to gain more power than the other unlettered animals (Chap. 2). Snowball changes “Manor Farm” into “Animal Farm” in an attempt to rewrite history the pigs’ own way (Chap. 2). The pigs also work hard towards raising their status above the other animals by taking over high-ranking posts rather than bodywork (Chap. 3). Squealer proclaims that the pigs are brainworkers (Chap. 3) who need to take on the harness room as their command post (Chap. 3).

The clearest epitome of superiority is Napoleon. He loves to be publicly seen as more powerful than the other animals and even humans to magnify his stature and validate his worth in the eyes of the other farms (Chap. 6). He allots the animals’ entire retirement pasture to the production of barley and alcohol for himself (Chap. 8). He gives birth to thirty-one piglets from four sows. He teaches them and prevents them from mingling with other animals. He decrees that all animals should step aside for pigs who become the only animals allowed to wear ribbons (Chap. 9). The pigs consider themselves smarter and more knowledgeable than the other animals. That is why they do not do actual work but take positions of control (Chap. 3).

The pigs are the ones who set the rules. They come up with seven ideal commandments that summarize the rules animals have to abide by (Chap. 2). The rules identify humans as the enemy, so animals are prohibited to carry out human practices like wearing clothes, sleeping in beds, drinking alcohol, or killing each other. The Seven Commandments thus strangely vilify everything human, be it good or evil. The Commandments also clearly state that all animals are equal (Chap. 2).

The pigs also devise plans ahead of seasons (Chap. 5) and prescribe the way animals sit separated during meetings (Chap. 5). Besides, instituting anniversaries to celebrate the Rebellion and the Battle of the Cowshed is a way to remind the animals of their great achievements and the need to keep them up by following rules (Chap. 4). Napoleon unearths Old Major’s skull to be regularly revered by the animals and as a sign of loyalty to the state (Chap. 5). Hoping for their rules to be observed outside Animal Farm, Snowball and Napoleon dispatch pigeons to spread word about the Rebellion to animals on other farms in England and teach them their revolutionary song “Beasts of England” (Chap. 4).

Theoretically, everyone is entitled to speak up. Yet, in practice, only the pigs do thanks to their education. They read humans’ books from the farmhouse (Chap. 3). They learn how to perform difficult tasks like threshing the corn and bringing the hay in without using humans’ machines that require standing on two legs (Chap. 3). They are also able to condense complicated notions into repeatable phrases easily understood by animals (Chap. 3). The pigs, particularly Napoleon and Snowball, are the only ones who debate and offer resolutions during meetings (Chap. 3). Even The pigs’ guard dogs learn to read the Seven Commandments (Chap. 3). Snowball’s good command of language allows him to interpret maxims the way he wishes (Chap. 3). Napoleon chooses to prevent the vast majority of animals from learning. He only educates the young dogs instead of teaching all the animals how to read, thus dictating who can move up the social ladder and seize power (Chap. 3).

Exploitation

Their superiority complex paves the way for the upper class to legitimize their exploitation of the lower class both physically and mentally. Believing in their supremacy, farmers, and later pigs, work towards accumulating power regardless of how that might affect the rest of the animals' livelihoods (Chap. 4). Mr. Jones's farmhouse actually represents an emblem of corruption and of totalitarian rule, containing unlawfully accumulated riches (Chap. 2). The humans' only duty seems to be profiting off of animal labor and eating up animal products without producing anything in return or caring for the animals (Chap. 1).

Mr. Jones, the farm owner, becomes a heavy drinker, which causes him to neglect the animals (Chap. 2), even forgetting to shut doors before he falls asleep (Chap. 1). When the hay is ripe, Mr. Jones is absent and his lazy workers stop feeding the animals (Chap. 2). Mr. Pilkington and Mr. Frederick try to keep their animals unaware of what happened on Animal Farm (Chap. 4). In fact, many humans abhor Animal Farm and wish it will be impoverished and will soon collapse, and its windmill fail (Chap. 6). In addition, Mr. Whymper expresses his readiness to work for Napoleon and have commercial relationships with Animal Farm while turning a blind eye to the atrocities committed against the animals (Chap. 6).

The pigs soon take advantage of the new system (Chap. 3) and Napoleon keeps reducing the animals' rations while the pigs grow fatter and fatter (Chap. 9). The missing buckets of milk and apples that are supposed to be equally divided between all animals become among the ingredients of the pigs' meals; they need them in order to be able to look after the rest of the animals as Squealer claims (Chap. 3). Furthermore, Snowball embarks on preparing the lower-class animals to be totally loyal to their leaders and obedient to their commands (Chap. 4). When Snowball reassures Boxer that he did the right thing when he presumably killed the stable boy, he is in fact exploiting Boxer's strength to reach his unethical goals (Chap. 4). Napoleon also asks the hens to sacrifice willingly (Chap. 6). They have to give up their eggs in exchange for grain (Chap. 7). Napoleon makes the animals work on Sunday afternoons or risk suffering a reduction in their food shares (Chap. 6). The pigs abuse Boxer and use his strength until the very last minute in his life (Chap. 9). They also use Moses' Sugarcandy Mountain notion and grant him beer to help them lull the animals into accepting their dire situation (Chap. 9).

Terror

When the animals show any signs of disobedience due to extreme exploitation, the humans and pigs alike resort to terror, Mr. Jones shoots his gun into the side of the barn to disrupt the animals' meeting (Chap. 1). He and his farmworkers whip the animals (Chap. 2). Even after Mr. Jones's departure, Squealer frightens the animals with the former's possible return should they not be disciplined and continue to refuse to let the pigs have the milk and apples, to which the animals yield (Chap. 3). Armed with a gun, Mr. Jones and other men from Foxwood and Pinchfield farms wage a war in an attempt to regain Animal Farm (Chap. 4). Furthermore, rumors of the cruelty of Mr. Frederick to animals go around frightening Animal Farm of an imminent attack on their newly-built windmill (Chap. 8).

To further frighten the lower class, Napoleon spends most of the time surrounded and watched over by ferocious dogs (Chap. 7). He often stands on a raised platform, surrounded by the dogs, frightening the animals while hinting at their low level of intelligence (Chap. 5). The animals are stunned to watch the dogs wagging their tails at Napoleon the same way they used to wag at

Mr. Jones (Chap. 5). Napoleon brutally sets his nine felonious guard dogs against another pig like himself, Snowball, to chase him down in an open demonstration of brute strength, terrifying anyone who might be convinced of Snowball's rhetoric (Chaps. 5 and 7). Besides, the way the young dissatisfied pigs are silenced by the dogs demonstrates the prevalence of the use of brute force over discussion and open communication (Chap. 5).

When the animals see three dogs with Squealer, they refrain from even asking questions (Chap. 5). The grisly dogs silence the young pigs and frighten the sheep, paving the way for Squealer to say anything he wants without any objection (Chap. 6). Napoleon also meets the animals, surrounded by the dogs and wearing his Animal Hero medals (Chap. 7). And when the hens rebel, Napoleon kills nine of them and cuts their food portions (Chap. 7). His guard dogs tear the four pigs' throats out after confessing to conspiracy with Snowball to give Animal Farm to Mr. Frederick (Chap. 7). Three dogs also jump at Boxer who is made unaware of his own capability to fight and beat the dogs (Chap. 7). In a show trial, a goose that stole corn and a sheep that followed Snowball's orders are executed. Napoleon also kills three hens after confessing that they dreamt about being told by Snowball to go against Napoleon.

The other animals are stunned at the bloodshed (Chap. 7). Three hens are executed after pleading guilty after allegations that Snowball incited them to try to assassinate Napoleon (Chap. 8). Napoleon himself lives in terror. He can sleep only when protected by dogs (Chap. 8). He often assigns a pig to taste his food and make sure it has not been poisoned (Chap. 8). Not only does Napoleon terrorize the animals, he also orders the pigeons to spread the message "Death to Frederick" among the animals, and then changes it to "Death to Pilkington" depending on the whereabouts of his rival, Snowball (Chap. 8). Humans behave in the same manner; Mr. Jones slaughters pigs, drowns old dogs, and sells debilitated horses to be slaughtered at glue factories (Chap. 1) as Napoleon did with Boxer (Chap. 9). Mr. Frederick and his men blow up the windmill and the rest of the humans are overjoyed when it fell apart (Chap. 7). When in charge, both humans and pigs cruelly exploit and terrorize the lower-class animals leaving them susceptible to all types of manipulation.

Manipulation

Because of the pigs' manipulation, the animals fail to realize that Napoleon, one of the revolutionary leaders, has in fact turned into a ruthless dictator (Chap. 7). The pigs use such notions as sacrifice and leadership in a manipulative manner. They also use Snowball and the windmill project to gain more power in a devious way. And in order to cling to that power, the pigs are ready to tamper with the very principles of the revolution, the Seven Commandments.

The Sacrifice Story. Snowball stresses the need for animals to be willing to sacrifice everything, including their lives, for Animal Farm even if they get nothing in return (Chap. 4). Squealer delivers speeches on the dignity of toiling and hard work (Chap. 7). Even the Sunday work declared to the uneducated animals to be optional is in fact obligatory (Chap. 6). Napoleon also succeeds in his endeavor to raise the image of hard working laborers such as Boxer to an exalted level that would be the aspiration of the animals (Chap. 7). Napoleon praises Boxer's sacrifice and gives a lip service speech in his honor and lays a wreath of flowers on his grave (Chap. 9). He, in fact, sold Boxer to the glue factory, providing the pigs with more money (Chap. 9).

Napoleon holds weekly demonstrations and military parades to celebrate and focus the animals' attention on Animal Farm and lull them into forgetting about the things that are going wrong (Chap. 9). Squealer tries his best to lift animals' spirits by making their defeat look like a major victory that calls for joyous celebrations, distracting the animals from the dire circumstances caused by the state (Chap. 8). He falsely claims that Animal Farm is doing better than it did under the rule of Mr. Jones and has more food and backs it up with false figures. The animals are often urged to sacrifice, but only to the benefit of the ruling class.

The Windmill Manipulation. Napoleon's fluctuating attitudes towards the windmill project are affected by his own personal interests. He tries to convince the poor uneducated animals that the windmill will lead them towards starvation (Chap. 5). However, when the animals are on the verge of starvation, their attention is refocused and led away from their real problems and they are made to feel good by the state windmill project (Chap. 6). Squealer explains that Napoleon has always been in favor of the windmill plan, but Snowball stole his project (Chap. 5). He explains Napoleon's tactics of pretending to take issue with the windmill in order to eliminate treacherous Snowball. He deliberately uses words unknown to the animals in order to look smarter and more knowledgeable and convincing (Chap. 5)

The Leadership Aura. The pigs magnify leadership positions in order to gain more power at the expense of the rest of the animals. Squealer explains that Napoleon is totally devoted to the arduous and burdensome job of leadership because it is tough for the other animals to assume (Chap. 5). He maintains that animals other than Napoleon are incapable of making the right decisions. When the pigs move into the farmhouse and take it as their exclusive dwelling place against the principles of animalism, Squealer denies the existence of a decision prohibiting animals from living there. On the contrary, unlike the rest of the animals, the pigs, especially the leader, Napoleon, do not only need but also deserve to keep their wits about them and take care of state affairs in a quiet, dignified and luxurious environment. Otherwise, the animals will have to face the catastrophic return of Mr. Jones (Chap. 6). The pigs also notify the animals that they will wake up an hour later than them (Chap. 6). Squealer makes it clear that the ignorant animals can never grasp the great scale and seriousness of the pigs' responsibilities in running the farm (Chap. 10).

The Snowball Syndrome. The pigs, mainly Napoleon and Squealer, launch a campaign aimed at demonizing opposition figure Snowball (Chap. 5). Squealer falsifies all the facts about Snowball denying that he ever received "Animal Hero, First Class." On the contrary, claims Squealer, he turned out to be a coward at the Battle of the Cowshed. He thus puts the memories of the animals into question as they are undereducated and overworked (Chap. 8). Squealer claims that Snowball's overemphasized courage is far less important than loyalty and compliance (Chap. 5). Fabricated graphic descriptions of Snowball's alleged treason lead the animals towards doubting what they witnessed of Snowball's bravery (Chap. 7). Squealer also tells the animals that Snowball sold himself to Mr. Frederick with whom he plans to launch an imminent attack on Animal Farm. (Chap. 7). Squealer pronounces Napoleon dying due to food poisoning perpetrated by Snowball (Chap. 8). Squealer reminds Boxer that he is unable to read the documents that incriminate Snowball and that he has to trust the pigs' integrity (Chap. 7).

Vilifying Snowball allows Napoleon to gain the animals' trust at the expense of anyone else (Chap. 7). Demonizing his rival as the perpetrator of all the evils on Animal Farm also paves the way for Napoleon to tighten his grip on power and be seen as the savior (Chap. 8). That is why he runs a smear campaign against Snowball and stages awful acts in order to blame his own failures on him (Chap. 7). Napoleon claims that he has documents substantiating Snowball's treason even though none of the undereducated animals could verify it (Chap. 7). In addition, in order to hold Snowball responsible for any possible evil deed committed on the farm, the animals are falsely told that Snowball sneaks into the farm every night in order to steal their products and wreak havoc (Chap. 7). Napoleon accuses him of deliberately destroying the windmill and sentences him to death in absentia. (Chap. 6). He then urges the animals to work even harder through the winter to rebuild the windmill and put Snowball to shame, thus uniting them against a common enemy of the state in a clever and deceitful way (Chap. 6).

The Anti-Human Lie. In compliance with the Seven Commandments, the pigs assert that there will be no relationships with the humans who will never be allowed to benefit from animal work (Chap. 6). When rumors spread that Napoleon is about to strike a deal with humans, Squealer reassures the animals that the news about Napoleon's engagement in trade with the humans and use of money are mere lies spread by Snowball (Chap. 6). Napoleon grows paranoid as he realizes how risky his position is with Mr. Frederick or Mr. Pilkington possibly planning to take over Animal Farm. So he does his utmost to persuade the animals to trust none but him and not to cooperate or conspire with the humans against him in the event of an invasion (Chap. 8). Ultimately, Napoleon explains that there will indeed be contact with the humans, but it will not be direct. Mr. Whymper is to mediate between animals and humans (Chap. 6).

Twisting Commandments. In order to further tighten their grip on power, the pigs prove to be prepared to falsify the Commandments on which the revolution has been built whenever they wanted (Chap. 8). The commandment prohibiting animals from sleeping in beds has been cunningly changed into one that eliminates beds with sheets (Chap. 6). Squealer tries to convince the animals that animalism is not about equal food rations, as the pigs need the largest share to be able to lead (Chap. 9). The Sixth Commandment states that animals should not kill other animals. Yet Napoleon starts executing a number of them after secretly amending the commandment to include the killing of animals if there is a reason for it (Chap. 8).

The principles of the revolution get gradually violated to satisfy the urgent needs of the animals (Chap. 6). Contrary to the recommendations of Old Major, Napoleon starts building trade relationships with neighboring farms (Chap. 6). He soon acknowledges the urgent need to import grain (Chap. 7). His policies clearly go against the Seven Commandments when he hires Mr. Whymper for the job (Chap. 6). Napoleon boosts relationships with Pinchfield and Foxwood despite the possibility that his rival Snowball is hiding at one of the two farms (Chap. 7). The pigs and dogs go as far as doing away with the revolutionary song "Beasts of England", deeming it unnecessary and useless since the revolution has achieved its goals as they claim (Chap. 7). While Squealer asserts that the punishment for drinking alcohol is the death penalty, the next day Napoleon arranges for alcoholic drinks to be produced from barley grown on the pasture reserved for retired animals (Chap. 8). Moses who represents religion no longer represents a threat

to the pigs now they are in power. His notion of Sugarcandy Mountain keeps the animals submissive to the state as it promises far better living conditions in the hereafter (Chap. 9).

Complete Fabrications. The pigs lie about social class, food shortage, and friends and foes alike. They insist that social classes are senseless while at the same time they work towards becoming the upper class (Chap. 5). Squealer publicizes fake statistics that would supposedly substantiate to hungry animals that food production has gone up by two hundred and even five hundred percent (Chap. 8). And to look more powerful and in control, Napoleon deceives Mr. Whymper into believing that the nearly starving Animal Farm has, in fact, an abundance of food (Chap. 7). Napoleon reassures everyone not to worry about the milk, but it later disappears (Chap. 2). Napoleon also makes up fabricated lies about Snowball, his rival, in order to draw attention to himself as the only trustworthy leader (Chap. 5).

Napoleon turns corrupt and deceitful but blames it all on Snowball (Chap. 6). He even discloses fake documents specifying Snowball's communications with Mr. Jones, accusing him of leading human forces set against animals (Chap. 9). Besides, after expressing his disinterest in Snowball's project, Napoleon declares that they will build windmill (Chap. 5). The pigs also lie about the hard working and loyal Boxer. To calm the animals down, Squealer falsely claims that Boxer, who was brutally butchered, actually died in the hospital and that his last words expressed staunch loyalty to Napoleon (Chap. 9). While Boxer lies slaughtered at the glue house, Squealer reassures the animals that Napoleon would never allow him to be harmed (Chap. 9).

Thus, stricken by a superiority complex, the upper class takes advantage of the lower, exploits, terrorizes, and manipulates them in order to augment their wealth, tighten their grip on power and satisfy their own desires to the detriment of the weak. How would the lower class react?

Lower Class Response

The lower-class animals face their oppressors with unity, organization, realism, hard work, protest and revolt. However, all of these qualities are coupled with such traits as would ultimately bring them to no avail. Excessive idealism, lack of knowledge, naivety, fear, indifference, opportunism, disagreements and submission would once again give the upper hand to the upper class.

Constructive Qualities

Unity and Organization. Dire living conditions under human oppression on Animal Farm cause all the animals to come together and listen to Old Major's address (Chap. 1). Old Major considers man's greed as the root of all evil. Taking action through an uprising is the only way to be free of men. He insists that humans and animals have dissimilar interests. That is why humans must be considered foes and animals friends (Chap. 1). Old Major teaches animals "Beasts of England", an easy-to-learn unifying revolutionary song proclaiming a "golden future time" in which they will be set free from man's oppression (Chap. 1). Old Major's thinking attract the interest of the pigs. Napoleon, Snowball and Squealer arrange for the Rebellion. They hold secret gatherings and fine-tune Old Major's thoughts into an "Animalism" scheme (Chap. 2).

Realism. At certain stages, the revolting animals manage to overcome their difficulties and assess their situation with a great deal of realism. When they find themselves isolated from the outside world, the animals realize they need oil, horseshoes, tools and other items they cannot make on

their own; they need to open up and trade with others, even if it means breaking one or more of their Commandments (Chap. 6). Also, the ordinary animals that fought off the armed men are realistic in their assessment of the situation as they affirm that they cannot claim victory while they lost the windmill (Chap. 8).

Hard Work. The animals work hard and overwork themselves to achieve their revolution's goals. Snowball believes that building the windmill would be challenging and would require a long period of hard labor. Indeed, the process of construction proves exhausting (Chap. 6), but ultimately the animals are promised to have to work only three days a week (Chap. 5). The animals passionately work sixty hours per week through the heat of the summer, bearing in mind that humans will not be able to benefit from their efforts (Chap. 6). All animals work as hard as they can and knuckle down to bring the hay in a short period of time even when the harvest is ampler than in Mr. Jones's time (Chap. 3).

The animals are excited to discover that their ways of accomplishing farm duties are more efficient than those of humans (Chap. 6). Boxer works harder than three horses (Chap. 3), ignoring Clover's warnings against overworking himself (Chap. 6). Boxer, the ideal worker, is stimulated to tragically sacrifice his own health, safety and comfort for the sake of national interest (Chap. 6). He works even at night (Chap. 6). He painfully splits his hoof, but refuses to stop working on the windmill, ignoring Clover and Benjamin's warnings that he should look after himself (Chap. 9). Even when Boxer's lung collapses, that does not deter him from hard work (Chap. 9). Enthused by Boxer, the animals willingly work like slaves on the windmill even during awful weather (Chap. 7).

Protest. The animals grow dissatisfied with the way Mr. Jones runs the farm and start to speak up (Chap. 2), although some animals, such as Clover, are too tired to do that. She seems too weary, overworked and illiterate to be able to express her concerns about the two-facedness and corruption of the upper class (Chap. 7). However, Old Major draws the animals' attention to how horrendous animal life on the farm has become because of human domination. The animals themselves, he insists, are allowing humans to subjugate and exploit them and make use of their effort, milk, eggs and meat (Chap. 1). Boxer and Clover sum up the pigs' resolutions into simple ideas that can be shared with the other animals (Chap. 2). As time goes by, animals that were once indifferent begin to take action and sing their revolutionary song "Beasts of England" (Chap. 4). When Snowball is unfairly criticized, one of the animals reminds them that Snowball acted heroically at the Battle of the Cowshed (Chap. 5).

Revolt. Most animals decide to take action due to the injustices they suffer. Old Major describes the life of animals as unbearable: they do not get enough food even though they are being extremely overworked and exploited like slaves, and many are slaughtered for man's food or just killed when no longer needed. They need to eliminate humans in order to stop those injustices (Chap. 1). The hens become incensed and turn rebellious when their plan to raise chicks is thwarted (Chap. 7).

The famished animals break into the store shed in order to eat (Chap. 2). They rise up and use their unified strength to attack the horrified men who run away with their leader Mr. Jones. The animals shut the gate behind them (Chap. 2). They do away with symbols and marks of Mr. Jones's authority throwing such tools as chains and knives down the well, and burning whips, reins and horse ribbons (Chap. 2). Snowball dispatches animals to their tasks. The pigeons and geese

attack and frighten the men. Muriel, Benjamin, and the sheep butt them. The men prove stronger and the animals retreat and then charge again and cause the men to flee the scene (Chap. 4). Boxer kills three of the men and the dogs bite and scare the others away (Chap. 8).

The animals take pride in the achievements of the revolution. They proudly watch Napoleon giving orders to a human being (Chap. 6). They feel honored to have finished the great achievement of the windmill (Chap. 8). They feel extremely proud of their flag and of the short time they have been equal on Animal Farm (Chap. 10). The animals celebrate their achievements but that does not last for long. Things work perfectly well for the rebels, at the beginning at least. They are overjoyed to eat from the food they produce without having to share it with human beings (Chap. 3). They are excited about their victory and celebrate running up the flag and singing "Beasts of England".

The animals also give the honor of "Animal Hero, First Class" to Snowball, and "Animal Hero, Second Class" to the martyred sheep (Chap. 4). Before the destruction of the windmill, they spend their leisure time looking at it with admiration and pride (Chap. 6). When the situation deteriorates and the animals are famished, the only thing the animals are excited about is freedom. That would also be taken away from them towards the end (Chap. 9) due to a number of destructive attitudes, namely excessive idealism, lack of knowledge, naivety, fear, indifference, opportunism, disagreements, and finally submission.

Destructive Qualities

Unwarranted Idealism. The revolution is guided by a farfetched perfectionist ideology with absolutely no room for compromise, especially with humans (Chap. 2). Old Major uses overly strict language that considers man as the enemy, so animals are warned against mimicking their oppressors' habits like trading, drinking alcohol, and sleeping in beds (Chap. 1). Animalism claims that class is meaningless (Chap. 5) and all animals should enjoy upper-class privileges. Snowball claims that the revolutionary windmill project will enable all the animals to delight in the benefits of electricity in operating machines and enjoy leisure time like the upper class (Chap. 5). All animals should also have the right to approve or disapprove of the pigs' decisions (Chap. 5). Their song, "Beasts of England", views the revolution through rose-tinted glasses, describing the present as a golden time, not taking the complications of reality into account (Chaps. 1 and 2).

Napoleon soon starts spending lavishly serving animals a double portion and Boxer throws his much needed straw hat into the fire, conforming to the ideal that anything reminiscent of humans should be disposed of (Chap. 2). The animals avoid humans like Mr. Whymper as much as possible (Chap. 6). They decide to turn the farmhouse into a museum; no one should take it for a dwelling place because that would be considered corruption (Chap. 2). Besides, Snowball idealistically works towards spreading Rebellion nationwide in order to sweep away all enemies once and for all (Chap. 5). The success of the animals' Rebellion also relies on such enthusiastic hard-working peasants as Boxer who is excessively committed to placing the ideals of the revolution above his own personal safety (Chap. 3).

Knowledge Insufficiency. Since knowledge is power, the animals try their best to learn as much as they can. They do not have the same degree of literacy and that affects how class is divided according to the level of knowledge. Even though Snowball succeeds in making every animal literate to some degree (Chap. 3), the animals' reading level remains low. Muriel just learns how

to read newspapers to get informed about events outside the farm. Clover can only read the alphabet and Boxer simply learns a few letters. As for Mollie, she could barely spell her name (Chap. 3). The sheep learn only the letter A and find it so hard to memorize the Seven Commandments (Chap. 3). The dogs' only interest in learning the Seven Commandments demonstrates their loyalty to the cause rather than concern about education itself (Chap. 3).

Some animals are unable to comprehend a drawing even though they find it impressive (Chap. 5). Others cannot decide to agree or disagree with any of the speakers in (Chap. 5). The unschooled animals cannot confirm whether Squealer tells them the truth and are deceived into believing his lies (Chap. 9). Even well-read Benjamin declines when asked to read (Chap. 3). Snowball simply sums the Seven Commandments up into "Four legs good, two legs bad" for all animals to understand (Chap. 3). Rebellion spreads to other farms and unifies their animals through language thanks to "Beasts of England." (Chap. 4). Realizing the power of knowledge, uneducated Boxer promises to study the alphabet and educate himself when he retires in order to be able to spend the final part of his life with wisdom like Old Major (Chap. 9). The animals' low literacy level falls short of allowing them to preserve the benefits of their Rebellion.

Naivety. One of the major weaknesses of the lower class and a consequence of knowledge insufficiency are naivety and blind trust of the upper class. Boxer unquestionably states that if Napoleon utters something, it must be true (Chap. 5). He knows that Snowball acted bravely at the Battle of the Cowshed, but if Napoleon says he is a conspirator with Mr. Jones, he thinks he must be right (Chap. 7). Boxer use force against Napoleon's guard is obliged to use force against dogs who attack him. He overpowers them, but soon refrains out of loyalty when Napoleon asks him to let them go (Chap. 7).

Boxer's unwavering commitment to the windmill and to Animal Farm until the end at the expense of his own health and wellbeing indicates that he can be easily manipulated into blindly serving Napoleon's plans (Chap. 9). When the pigs tamper with the commandments, Clover does not seem to suspect her leaders in the least for changing them (Chap. 8). Napoleon even succeeds in convincing the other animals that the Battle of the Windmill, in which the windmill was destroyed and many animals died, was in fact a huge victory (Chap. 8).

The animals believe that they still live in dignity just because Napoleon says so (Chap. 9). One night at about midnight, the animals wake to a crash. They discover a broken ladder by the Seven Commandments along with Squealer, who is stunned on the ground next to a lantern, a paintbrush, and white paint. The dogs surround Squealer and escort him back to the farmhouse. No one but Benjamin seems to understand anything. A few days later, Muriel sees that Squealer secretly changes the Commandment that the animals thought absolutely prohibited drinking alcohol into a Commandment that prohibits drinking to excess. Muriel takes the bait (Chap. 8).

Uneducated Clover is fooled into thinking that if something is in writing, it must be incontestably true (Chap. 6). Boxer's belief that he'll be able to retire is indicative of his blind trust that Napoleon still has his best interests at heart (Chap. 9). Enfeebled Boxer is simply taken away to be slaughtered (Chap. 9). Naivety is a major factor that contributes to the failure of the revolution.

Fear. While humans like Mr. Pilkington and Mr. Frederick are terrified that the Rebellion on Animal Farm may spread to their farms and overthrow them, the animals are also afraid of them

(Chap. 4). Not only are the animals afraid of humans, they are also terrified by their own animal leaders and the choices they might make. Being scared of the gun, Mollie hides in her stall (Chap. 4). Mr. Frederick's men charge with guns and the animals run for cover. (Chap. 8). Despite their victory at the Battle of the Cowshed, the animals fear that humans may try to reestablish Mr. Jones in the farm (Chap. 5).

Besides, the animals become scared of their leader. They tremble as Napoleon groans. Some try to protest, but the sheep start baaing "Four legs good, two legs bad!" (Chap. 7). The animals are stunned by the extent of lies Napoleon and his associates have reached, but are obliged to take their words for fact, given their scary tight grip over the farm (Chap. 8). Many animals also fear that the windmill project might put an end to their happiness (Chap. 5).

Indifference and Opportunism. Some of the animals seem to be totally unconcerned with standing up to their oppressors for various reasons. Some of them are comfortable with the status quo, some blindly trust their leaders, some do not believe revolutions will ever change anything, and others believe they will be able to receive justice only in the hereafter. While the other animals do their utmost to defend their rights, Mollie and the cat do not show any interest in their endeavor (Chap. 3).

Middle-class Mollie and the cat, apparently comfortable with their position, do not seem to pay attention to Old Major's speech at all (Chap. 1). Mollie is only concerned about whether she will be able to keep her privileges, such as the availability of sugar and ribbons, after the revolution. Snowball fails to convince her that hair ribbons are symbols of slavery (Chap. 2). When looked for, she is found playing with ribbons (Chap. 2). She comes to work late and leaves early and the cat shows up only for meals (Chap. 3). The rich cat ultimately leaves the farm when the other animals stop serving her (Chap. 7). Some animals' blind trust of their leaders causes them to take no action at all in the face of oppression and exploitation. Boxer's thoughtless devotion to Animal Farm prevents him from disrupting Napoleon's oppressive rule in due time (Chap. 9).

Other animals' indifference stems from their belief that revolutions lead nowhere. Intellectual Benjamin thinks that the uprising cannot change anything (Chap. 3). He is able to foresee that the revolution will cyclically get back where it started, all endeavors will come to no avail and life will remain terrible (Chap. 3). That is why he spares himself the trouble of taking sides concerning the windmill controversy (Chap. 5). Benjamin even declines to read the Commandments to the animals, making it easy for the pigs to continue with their oppression (Chap. 8). Only his best friend Boxer's imminent death moves Benjamin, belatedly though (Chap. 9).

Belief in an ideal reward in the hereafter prevents other animals from taking part in the revolution. The pigs have difficulties dealing with Moses and other animals who believe in religion and paradise, an ideal place called Sugarcandy Mountain they would enter after death and be recompensed for their sufferings in life. For the pigs, religion only diverts animals' attention away from what matters to them. It promises them justice in the next life, not in this one (Chap. 2). Ultimately, the miserably exhausted animals lean back on Moses' holy concept that represents a safe haven for the oppressed (Chap. 9).

Setting indifference aside, some animals are reluctant to take part in the revolution lest they lose their current comfortable position. The cat can only be ready to support the revolution if it goes in line with its interests (Chap. 4). Mollie decides not to participate in the battle in order to

avoid the possibility of being excluded from having access to ribbons and sugar (Chap. 4). She actually disappears and is later seen in Willingdon wearing ribbons (Chap. 5).

Rivalry and Disagreements. Another disheartening factor in the struggle is animosity among the rebels. The animals, particularly Boxer, are demoralized by internal disagreements, especially those between Napoleon and Snowball who seem not to see eye to eye on literally everything to the detriment of their cause (Chaps. 3 and 5). Snowball plans farming projects, such as the windmill, but Napoleon opposes considering them nonsense and even urinating on them, preventing animals from voting for them (Chap. 5). Besides, while Napoleon insists they must work on their own revolution protecting it with firearms, Snowball recommends spreading Rebellion to other farms as a priority (Chap. 5). Furthermore, when four pigs express their discontentment, dogs silence them (Chap. 5). All of the above factors ultimately lead to submission and surrender.

Submission. A number of animals feel desperate, unable to improve their situation and ready to submit, sit at the back, and remain loyal to their oppressors, whether human or animal, satisfied to be treated equally under oppression. They are mostly worried about making ends meet and have little faith that their situation could ever improve. (Chap. 2). They just meet every Sunday to get instructions from their leaders (Chap. 5), preferring to pledge loyalty to Mr. Jones and warning they would starve to death without him (Chap. 2). Even after the revolution, the animals, particularly Clover (Chap. 7), do not contemplate uprising since they blindly hold Napoleon in the highest regard and consider his rule better than Mr. Jones's control (Chap. 8). While the pigs boldly stand at the front, the sheep and cows sit behind them and horses Boxer and Clover, old donkey, Benjamin and goat Muriel in the back. (Chap. 1). These animals are, to a certain extent, satisfied to share a somewhat equal life under Mr. Jones's oppressive rule (Chap. 1).

Some of the animals even feel they need their oppressor as the cows complain about not being milked and the animals mull over the use of milk (Chap. 2). Furthermore, some animals are ready to give up their own rights. Since they are inclined to exclusively accept the pigs as more intelligent than them and more qualified to speak up for them and make decisions in their stead, this entails that they are willing to give up their own basic right to express their opinions (Chaps. 3 and 5). Other animals, particularly those belonging to the middle class, would rather cling to their interests than rebel. Mollie, who, by some means, leads a comfortable middle-class life, is concerned about her chance to maintain the same lifestyle following the revolution. Snowball then criticizes her being enslaved by the upper class (Chap. 2).

Even though lower-class animals unite, organize, work hard, protest and revolt, their endeavor turns out to be unproductive. Excessive idealism, insufficient knowledge, naivety, fear, indifference, opportunism and rivalry would lead to their submission and pave the way for an even more ruthless dictatorship.

Back to Square One

The result of the struggle between the upper and lower classes in Animal Farm evidently tips the balance heavily in favor of totalitarianism. Although the Rebellion has had ideal and honorable beginnings, Napoleon's corrupt authoritarian rule coupled with the animals' destructive attitudes took it in the opposite direction back to square one. As Old Major's speech implies earlier in the

novel, revolutions generally follow a cyclical pattern, with the possibility of relapsing into authoritarianism and corruption (Chap. 1), leaving the lower classes in frustration. Most of the animals are left unsatisfied with the revolution as they continue to work harder and yet live thriftily. There is no electricity and no three-day workweeks as they had been promised (Chap. 10). Benjamin insists that life has always been awful for animals be it before or after the revolution. In fact, Old Major's vision for a brighter future came to no avail (Chap. 10).

Totalitarianism

The frustration of the animals does not only emanate from dire living conditions. It is also the result of the infringement of the principles of the revolution by the upper class. One main principle is severing all ties with humans. What happens on the ground is a close rapprochement between the pigs and humans. Whenever they want, neighboring farmers visit to explore the farm and have fun (Chap. 10). They bear witness that the pigs are now capable of running a farm just like them (Chap. 10). Mr. Pilkington expresses his delight with the end of animosity between animals and humans (Chap. 10). The real antagonism is now between the pigs who paved the way for the rest of the animals to be back under the same old cruel and corrupt human rule (Chap. 10). Mr. Pilkington laughs at the fact that Animal Farm has to deal with its lower animals the same way humans have to deal with their lower classes (Chap. 10).

The difference between the new oppressors, the pigs, and the old, humans, becomes blurry (Chap. 10). The pigs produce nothing, just like the humans they revolted against (Chap. 10). And just like them, they actually start walking on two legs, in stark violation of the ideals and rules of the revolution (Chap. 10). Napoleon and the pigs also start drinking beer and playing cards with the men (Chap. 10).

Other infringements of revolutionary principles include ordering animals to stop calling each other "Comrade" and marching past Old Major's skull on Sundays (Chap. 10). Napoleon also cancels Sunday meetings and debates considering them needless and a waste of time. A special committee of pigs shall instead unilaterally decide farm policy for the rest of the animals (Chap. 5). Furthermore, Napoleon decides that the rebellious name of the farm, Animal Farm, will revert back to its original name, Manor Farm (Chap. 10). He makes every possible change to erase the farm's revolutionary history and make it acceptable to the outside world (Chap. 10). In his frustrating oppression, he proves to be far worse than the humans themselves (Chap. 10).

Indeed, Napoleon's rule is more ruthless than Mr. Jones's. Napoleon shows full readiness to corrupt the ideals of the revolution in order to serve his own interests (Chap. 10). Leading a luxurious life, he maintains that Animalism necessitates that the rest of the animals live thriftily (Chap. 10) even though the pigs and dogs eat so much yet produce nothing (Chap. 10). The Seven Commandments have been altered and corrupted beyond recognition in order to make them serve the interests of the ruling class (Chap. 10). The main commandment about all animals being equal is altered into: "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others" (Chap. 10). Furthermore, the pigs realize that the revolutionary song "Beasts of England" must be censored and prohibited before it could stir the animals to revolt and oust the pigs and dogs from power (Chap. 7).

The pigs are bent on becoming part of the human world in all its aspects, carrying whips, buying radios and telephones, wearing clothes, smoking and consuming alcohol, all forbidden in the Seven Commandments (Chap. 10). Napoleon trots around wearing Mr. Jones's hat (Chap. 8).

He and the pigs get all the barley for themselves as well as a pint of beer every day. Napoleon gets half a gallon, counting the rest of the animals out (Chap. 9). Napoleon also proceeds with a selective education of only piglets, the ones he considers high-class (Chap. 9). Ultimately, in the Animal Farm Republic, Napoleon ends up being the only candidate for the presidency, winning a landslide victory over himself (Chap. 9). He had already made clear that he would amass all the powers in the state and squash any ideas he dislikes (Chap. 5).

Napoleon's lifestyle proves him to be a paranoid totalitarian leader fascinated by his own personality (Chap. 7). He lives alone in the farmhouse constantly guarded by dogs and he is rarely seen in public (Chap. 8). Everything that he does labels him as a leader who claims to be the root of everything good on Animal Farm, revering himself above anyone else (Chap. 8). He is credited for every positive aspect of life. Minimus composes a poem in his praise and Napoleon asks for it to be painted on the barn next to his portrait (Chap. 8). He also makes a decision that a gun shall be fired on the birthday of "our Leader, Comrade Napoleon," Father of All Animals, Protector of the Sheep Fold (Chap. 8). He names the windmill after himself, Napoleon Mill and confers the new Order of the Green Banner on himself (Chap. 8). His official decisions are often affected by his own likes and dislikes. He refrains from holding trade relationships with a farm if he suspects that his adversary Snowball is taking refuge there, as in the timber sale case (Chap. 7). In contrast with the authoritarian rule of Napoleon and the pigs, the rest of the animals are left to live disappointed in even more miserable conditions.

Disappointment and Dire Conditions

Disappointment. As the animals' situation goes from bad to worse, exception made of the pigs and the dogs (Chap. 10), they grow more and more disappointed. Clover cries over what has happened to her and the other animals as they seem to realize that the ideals of revolution have been missed. They are being famished, silenced and abused, with the strong murdering the weak (Chap. 7). They are astonished when Snowball is accused of treason since he fought heroically for them against Mr. Jones (Chap. 7). A raging storm strikes the windmill and leaves it in ruins to the frustration of the animals (Chap. 6). Yet Snowball is blamed for it out of the blue.

"Beasts of England" has been emptied of its content and Clover and the other animals sing it dismally, not cheerfully this time (Chap. 7). Minimus composes a new song that does not stack up against "Beasts of England" (Chap. 7). After winning the battle, the animals, bloody and tired, suffer a heavy and disheartening loss: the windmill is damaged beyond repair. So Boxer maintains they cannot claim victory (Chap. 8). Animals also know that they had more food in the past with less of the statistics now declared by Napoleon (Chap. 8).

What troubles the animals most is the infringement of the principles of the revolution. The animals do not feel at ease when their leaders start delving into commercial transactions contrary to what the original Seven Commandments proclaim (Chap. 6). Animals are also distressed to hear that the pigs started eating in the kitchen and sleeping in beds, thus breaking the rules they set for themselves (Chap. 6). Furthermore, the animals become worried about having to work harder on the windmill and other farm tasks after the revolution than they ever had in the days of Mr. Jones, and yet in return for less food and deteriorating living conditions (Chap. 8).

Dire Conditions. By the end of the novel, life turns worse than it was under the rule of Mr. Jones (Chaps. 8 and 9). Benjamin complains that life, for the animals, has always been about hunger and

disappointment even after the revolution (Chap. 10). The animals actually live in dire conditions. They suffer from hunger, sleep on straw, and toil all day in the fields (Chap. 10). Food becomes scarce after hay and corn were sold (Chap. 6). Animals' provisions are diminished, exception made of the pigs' and dogs', and the fear of an impending starvation becomes apparent, though not to the exterior world of humans (Chaps. 7 and 9). The promises of the rebellion come to no avail: the animals still work like slaves (Chap. 9). Actually, living in such a totalitarian state means that the animals, like Boxer, must sacrifice everything for the sake of the state and yet get nothing in return (Chap. 9).

Animal Farm seems to continue to abuse animals until their very last breath (Chap. 10). Clover reaches 14 without being allowed to retire (Chap. 10). Mr. Pilkington notices that the animals on *Animal Farm* toil more and get less than animals on the other farms. That is why he and the other farm owners contemplate copying *Animal Farm*'s model (Chap. 10). In his speech, Napoleon declares that *Animal Farm* is no longer revolutionary or provocative; it is now ready to live peacefully with its neighbors with no plans to spread the revolution elsewhere (Chap. 10). Thus, instead of spreading the revolution beyond *Animal Farm*, anti-revolution practices are being disseminated.

Conclusion

Studying the struggle between social classes in George Orwell's *Animal Farm* has proven effective through the use of the Marxist principles of base, superstructure, thesis, antithesis and synthesis. As part of the superstructure, the novel accurately reflects the ongoing class conflict occurring at the base between humans and pigs on the one hand and low-class animals on the other. Three main questions have been addressed: In what ways does the upper class oppress the lower? How does the lower class respond? What is the outcome of the struggle and why? The study reaches the conclusion that four main factors allow the upper class to overcome the lower in *Animal Farm*, namely alleged superiority, exploitation, terror and manipulation.

The lower-class response consists of both constructive and destructive attitudes. On the one hand, the animals face authoritarianism with unity, organization, realism, hard work, protest and revolt. On the other hand, their unwarranted idealism, knowledge insufficiency, naivety, fear, indifference, opportunism, rivalry and disagreements lead to their submission. The outcome of the struggle leads the animals back to square one or even worse.

The revolution relapses into authoritarianism and corruption leaving the lower class in dire living conditions. Applying Marxist criticism, particularly the notions of thesis, antithesis and synthesis proves productive in the study of class struggles. *1984* is another prominent novel by George Orwell that lends itself to analysis using the same theoretical framework. That would commendably make the subject of a potentially fruitful future article.

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