

SYMBOLISM IN GEORGE ORWELL'S "1984" AND "ANIMAL FARM": A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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ANNOTATSIYA: George Orwell, a master of political allegory and dystopian fiction, uses symbolism extensively in his novels "1984" and "Animal Farm" to critique totalitarian regimes and explore themes of power, control, and corruption. Though the two novels differ in narrative style and setting, their symbolic elements serve similar purposes, offering profound insights into the nature of oppressive governments and the human condition.

Keywords: George Orwell, 1984, Animal Farm, Symbolism, Totalitarianism, Propaganda, Control, Power, Corruption.

Introduction

Both "1984" and "Animal Farm" portray societies where the quest for power leads to corruption and the erosion of individual freedoms. Orwell employs vivid symbolism and a stark narrative to illustrate how language can be manipulated to control thought, how propaganda sustains oppressive regimes, and how fear is used to enforce compliance. Through characters like Big Brother and Napoleon, Orwell presents a grim depiction of the lengths to which authoritarian leaders will go to maintain their dominance.

The Totalitarian State: Big Brother and Napoleon

In "1984," Big Brother symbolizes the omnipresent, all-seeing leader of the Party. He is the face of the regime's absolute power, representing surveillance, control, and the suppression of individuality. Big Brother's ubiquitous images reinforce the idea that the Party is always watching, ensuring that citizens remain obedient and docile.

Similarly, in "Animal Farm," Napoleon the pig symbolizes Joseph Stalin, the dictator who leads the farm after the rebellion. Napoleon's rise to power and subsequent tyranny reflect Stalin's manipulation and ruthless control over the Soviet Union. Through Napoleon, Orwell illustrates how revolutionary leaders can become as oppressive as the regimes they overthrow.

Propaganda and Manipulation: The Ministry of Truth and Squealer

The Ministry of Truth in "1984" epitomizes the regime's use of propaganda to manipulate reality. This institution is responsible for altering historical records and spreading false information to ensure that the Party's narrative remains unchallenged. It symbolizes the manipulation of truth and the erasure of objective reality, crucial tools for maintaining the Party's dominance.

In "Animal Farm," Squealer the pig serves a similar role as the chief propagandist. Squealer's eloquent speeches and ability to twist facts convince the other animals to accept Napoleon's increasingly oppressive policies. Through Squealer, Orwell demonstrates how language and rhetoric can be used to control and deceive the populace.

Control of Information and Thought: Newspeak and Commandments

"1984" introduces Newspeak, a language designed to eliminate unorthodox thoughts and make dissent impossible. By reducing the range of thought through language, the Party seeks to control how people think and express themselves, thereby preventing any potential rebellion. Newspeak symbolizes the ultimate form of thought control.

In "Animal Farm," the Seven Commandments represent the principles of the animal rebellion. However, as Napoleon consolidates power, these commandments are gradually altered to justify the pigs' actions, reflecting the betrayal of the revolution's original ideals. The changing commandments symbolize the manipulation of ideology to serve the interests of those in power.

Fear and Intimidation: The Thought Police and the Dogs

The Thought Police in "1984" embody the regime's use of fear and surveillance to maintain control. They monitor and punish any signs of dissent, ensuring that citizens live in a constant state of anxiety and self-censorship. The Thought Police symbolize the extreme measures totalitarian states use to stifle opposition and control their populations.

In "Animal Farm," Napoleon's trained dogs serve as his enforcers, using fear and violence to suppress dissent and intimidate the other animals. The dogs symbolize the use of brute force and terror to maintain authority, reflecting the mechanisms of state control and repression in totalitarian regimes.

Betrayal and Disillusionment: Winston and Boxer

Winston Smith, the protagonist of "1984," symbolizes the struggle for individuality and truth in an oppressive society. His eventual betrayal and re-education by the Party highlight the futility of resistance in a totalitarian state. Winston's journey reflects the broader theme of betrayal and the crushing of human spirit under oppressive regimes.

In "Animal Farm," Boxer the horse represents the hardworking and loyal proletariat. Despite his dedication and sacrifices, he is ultimately betrayed by Napoleon and sent to his death when he is no longer useful. Boxer's fate symbolizes the betrayal of the working class by those who exploit their labor and loyalty for personal gain.

Conclusion

Through the use of rich symbolism in "1984" and "Animal Farm," George Orwell offers a scathing critique of totalitarian regimes. Both novels explore how power can corrupt, how language can be manipulated to control thought, and how fear can be used to maintain dominance. By comparing the symbolic elements in these works, readers gain a deeper understanding of Orwell's warnings about the dangers of unchecked political power and the importance of safeguarding individual freedoms and truth.

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