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Applied Marxist Criticism in both novels *Mother* and *1984* as a Study of Socialist Realism in Literature

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Abstract

In this research, I will explore the experiences of those who are suffering in life will reign over his people with knowledge if he is a savant. Adopting a Marxist criticism approach, I will focus on the depiction of suffering, particularly through the lens of class struggle, as portrayed in Gorky's "The Mother" and Orwell's "1984".



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In this novel, "Mother," we witness the progression of the revolution through different stages. Mother symbolizes the initial stage and the continuation of the revolution. Pavel and his comrades embody the essence of the revolution, enlightening the workers about their lives. When Pavel and some of his comrades are imprisoned due to the red flag, Mother takes it up as a symbol of continuity, representing socialism.

On the other hand, in "1984," corruption and totalitarianism prevail. It reflects a political system that controls and suppresses individuality, love, and independent thinking. Big Brother, as depicted in the novel, monitors everyone, creating a society where freedom is forbidden.

Key words: Marxism, Socialist realism, Maxim Gorky, George Orwell, Literary Criticism, class- struggle, Proletarian, Dystopia, Capitalism.



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Introduction

It is very true that one cannot always go by the principles of Marxism in deciding whether to reject or accept a work of art. A work of art should, in the first place, be judged by its law, that is, by the law of art, but Marxism alone can explain why and how a given tendency in art has originated in a given period of history; in other a demand for such an artistic form and not for another, and why? (Trotsky 180)

In this research I will explore Marxist Criticism, specifically proletarian literature within the framework of social realism in both novels *Mother* by Maxim Gorky and *1984* by George Orwell. It is a pen issue; whoever want liberty wrote for the people, and whoever want enslavement wrote for money.

Maxim Gorky; Alexei Maximovich Peshkov was born in 1868, a Russian writer and a Marxist political activist. Founder of the Socialist Realist school that adopts the Marxist approach to literature. Since literature is based on economic activity in its origin, growth, and development. Therefore, it appreciates the community with its strength, which means employing it the service of society.

Gorky in Russia means bitter, which reflected the bitter life he had in his childhood. At the age of five his father died of cholera, and his mother married again, which forced his grandparents to raise him. His grandfather

had a clothes grille, but the financial interest was minimum. So he had to work with his grandfather after that worked in washing dishes on a ship. Subsequently he moved to work in a factory. He learned to read and write during his work. However, he becomes unemployed so he decided to go on a tour throughout Russia for two years. During his tour, he saw the suffering life during Caesar rule at that time. As this appeared in his writing through *the Children of the Sun*, *The Life of a Useless Man*, and *Mother's*.

The novel *Mother* shows the stages of revolution. Via several meetings and Exchange of ideas between the characters. To become a rare work for encouragement to change the realty for the best. However, this revolution evokes the enthusiasm of people.to fight for justice and equality. He adopted and donated Marxist thought, followed the Bolshevik Party but did not become a formal member. He died in 1936. (Sharma 277)

In addition to George Orwell; Eric Arthur Blair, born in 1903, is a British journalist and novelist. His work is best known for clarity, intelligence, and metaphorical in his novel *Animal Farm*, and his writing warns of the absence of social justice. As he is opposed to totalitarian rule and believes in social democracy.

George is best known for the *1984* novel. Which was known as the work of the dystopian, meaning in the Greek language the malicious place, that is, the opposite of utopia. In addition to the symbol; the *Animal Farm*. His works had a clear impact on the prevailing political culture. So he came up

with the Orwellian term that describes the practices of authoritarian and totalitarian control.

Orwell was born to a middle-class family and grew up with his mother and sister. They read books and dreamed of becoming writers one day. Until he grew up and could not enter the public school because of the high cost. He sent to the monastery school in Henley, which is situated on the Times River as a morning student. To strive to achieve a grant for admission to public schools.

He died of tuberculosis in 1950 after writing the *1984* novel. (Ventura 1)

The 1984 novel shows illustrates the consequences of ignorance and conformity within society. Supportive of a totalitarian rule in a Dystopian state. To represent the submissive of people to the leader.

Both in his view of the human being and suffering. A person is affected by suffering, persecution, and injustice. In addition to poverty, sorrow and lamentation in the case of wars; that is, war is an armed conflict between two or more states that are inconsistent entities to control either politically, economically or culturally. Sometimes Warfare is an interaction between more than one opposing force _that has a conflict of desires _ is called non-combatant conflicts such as class struggle. And since the class struggle is a war since the beginning. Karl Marx represented the defense of the working class, explaining that the struggle is between the head class (the bourgeoisie), and the working class, i.e. the proletarian. So the workers in

the factories, after the enlightenment of the truth through books. Distributed brochures to everyone to convey the idea of freedom. The idea of humanity and non-slavery. To be the art of expressing freedom, the art of proletarian literature created by the authors of the working class.

Thus the art of writing presides upon the throne of revolutions, therefore, art is the expression of what is hidden in the human soul. Either by drawing, sculpting, writing, etc. Where art is considered a way to immortalize those feelings. The proletarians followed the method of writing to perpetuate their suffering and to communicate the idea of liberation. So the Mother's account of Maxim Gorky shows how The proletarian revolution or the workers' revolution arose and how it began with Bushurart and ended with novels and books. But Edwin Robinson in his poem *Richard Cory*, everyone looks to Richard as a king, the protector, the controlling and how he has money and prestige. But at the same time, he was humble. While William Blake in his poems *Chimney Sweeper*, how the chimney has become an integral part of child laborers. Hence in *We Are Seven*, how the search for money separated the family by the death of three individuals. the little girl still considers them alive. Even though in the 1984 novel detailed the parties English political and socialism and explains the dystopian and the corruption in Airstrip.

This is an interpret Marxist thought in literature. Besides the suffering, comes out art as such as proletarian literature comes from socialism_ or as class wars_. Therefore, Marxism provides for the defense of justice and



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equality. It showed the fire and painful situation that workers lived. To try hard to find the best solution for them. However, how is suffering in life will reign over his people with knowledge if he is a savant.

Socialism as in Marxism

Poverty, ignorance, and factories. These names represent the worsening economic and political conditions that have affected the lower class. Many economists and politicians have used these terms to further their own interests. The upper class, known as the bourgeoisie, exploits the lower class, represented by the proletariat, to gain more wealth and advantages. On the other hand, there is another group that believes in equality and freedom in all aspects, including thoughts. They address important issues like social realism. So according to Engels "Socialism is, in its essence, the direct product of the recognition, on the one hand, of the class antagonisms existing in the society of today between proprietors and non-proprietors, between capitalists and wage-workers; on the other hand, of the anarchy existing in production". (Engels, Marx 14)

That's right! Karl Marx is recognized as one of the most influential writers and philosophers. He is best known for his book "Manifesto of the Communist Party." Marx's ideas on social realism shed light on the historical conflict between two classes: the capitalists, represented by merchants and the bourgeoisie, and the proletariat. "symbolized to worker, labors. Regardless of that according to Marxism theory, proletariat the class of modern wage laborers who, having no means of production of their own, are reduced to selling their labor-power in order to live". (Engels, Marx 17)

And if the proletariat has any skills they will take the benefit to raise their money The skills of employees are considered essential for the workforce in an organization. However, with the knowledge revolution and the knowledge economy, organizations have started to focus on the capabilities possessed by workers that can be treated as capital" (Alqadi,Alattar 16)

For Marx, "human history begins with the desire for food and shelter. Marx took a materialist perspective, as opposed to the idealist perspective of traditional European philosophy from Plato to Hegel". (Parker 188) According to Marx, proletarians fight for their basic physical needs, similar to Maslow's hierarchy of needs. If the foundation of the hierarchy is compromised, it can have a detrimental effect on the rest of it.

Proletariat and Class Struggle

Proletarians rely on their physical strength to fulfill their basic needs and earn money. so they fall on the Stone Age; except that they are in 19_20 c, the bourgeoisie held control over them. The daily routine of proletarians is filled with challenges - waking up early to the sound of bells, navigating through dirty areas, trudging on muddy roads, encountering hypocritical people. It's a tough and wild life! They work in factories, expected to be like machines, devoid of speech, sight, and hearing. However, when the bell rings again, they gather to eat and have a little chat. At the end of the day, when the bell rings to signal their departure, some may choose to unwind by

drinking, getting into fights, or simply heading home to regain some sense of control.

So, for a long time, the capitalists have been spoon-feeding the proletarians with their own beliefs. If we consider the company as a capitalist, "The company's goal is profit, it doesn't give anything in return, as money buys action and buys influence." (Al-Obaidi 3) They make them believe in illusions, like the idea that working under harsh conditions is a divine command. They use the names of religious figures like Jesus and Lord to manipulate them into being obedient servants to their masters. In return, they offer them material possessions like money and shelter. "Capitalists understand their practices as the only natural, because capitalist privilege capital over labor, whereas Marx privileged labor over capital. Rather than string history as a series of wars and changing ideas, he saw it as an ongoing class struggle between those who labor and those who own". (Parke188)

According to that capitalists are confused and afraid of proletarian because if they gain a piece of knowledge and start to thinking, they will understand the concepts of equality, humanity, and liberty. However, If the working class is liberated, the upper class will fade away.

But, the stone age will go by proletarian themselves. the knowledge evokes around them with human rights being back. Equality has solved. The revolutionary of liberty upon capitalist, bourgeois via Socialism Marxist branch. Marxism theory; "theory and practice of socialism including the

labor theory of value. didactical materialism, the class struggle, and dictatorship of the proletariat until the establishment of classes society, advocated by Marx". (Parker 189)

Maxim Gorky

The founder of the socialist realist school that adopted the Marxism approach to literature is Alexei Maximovich Peshkov known as Maxim Gorky. A Russian writer and a Marxist political, since literature is based on economic activity in its origin, growth, and development, therefore it appreciates the community with its strength, which means employing it at the service of society.

Socialism, according to him, was that the workers lived under the new system in constant joy and welfare. So he was friends with Lenin and Stalin. thus, his view was that society cannot develop without a huge cultural project.

Subsequently, He surprised in the setbacks of covenants and promises. He settled in Germany and wrote articles and novels of a revolutionary, in support of the working class. the most important novel was the *Mother* who wrote before the start of the revolution. And published in Russia afterward because of the fear of inciting the people. Russia was in that time in civil wars, so Stalin worked the possible to bring Gorky back to Russia. He presented the organization of cultural movements in the country. Stressing

that the country has got rid of the effects of war and totalitarian regimes. And always seek cultural and scientific personalities under their control to use them to improve the country's image at home and abroad.

Gorky returned and visited parts of Russia and saw the progress that the country had reached. They brought him to one of the luxurious palaces in order not to travel outside and return to Europe. After gradually obeying Stalin, Gorky died and his body was abused, as they removed all the body's parts. Removed his brain, and force into the trash, and his body was cremated at his request. He removed his brain for panic of his knowledge. The mother is a symbol of his genius brain in the fight against injustice.

Criticize *Mother*

For all, mother dear, for all! The world is ours! The world is for the workers! For us there is no nation, no race. For us there are only comrades and foes. All the workingmen are our comrades; all the rich, all the authorities are our foes. When you see how numerous we workingmen are, how tremendous the power of the spirit in us, then your heart is seized with such joy, such happiness, such a great holiday sings in your bosom! (Gorky 54)

Pavel to his mother. This quote captures the harsh reality of the working class. It paints a vivid picture of the dirty and grimy environment the workers face, with the smoke and mud under their feet. It also highlights the rough

behavior and drunkenness that sometimes comes with their daily struggles. Despite the mother's expectations, her son chooses a different path, focusing on cleanliness and helping her with household chores instead of getting caught up in alcohol and trouble.

It sounds like there was a change in the way he spoke, becoming more tactful and pleasant. Even though they didn't talk much, she had a feeling that something was wrong with her son. So she asked him about it, and he reassured her that everything was fine. She didn't know any of his friends, except books and silence. But one day, he told her that his friends from the city would be coming on Saturday night. She was happy and started preparing the samovars and cleaning the house. When the first visitor arrived, she was a bit scared, but he spoke kindly and she felt more at ease, treating him like her own son, along with Pavel. Then a girl arrived from the city, walking all the way, and later she found out that she was from a higher social class but had chosen to separate from her family to fight for the rights of the working people.

It is a full stomach, just what we seek! Start nothing like that! We must show those who ride our backs, and at the same time put the cover on our eyes, that we see everything. We are not stupid, and we are not animals that only ask for a full stomach. We want to live a life worthy of human beings! We must prove to our enemies that the life

of slavery with which they bridle us does not prevent us from being equals to them, but also reconciled to them! (Gorky 79)

Pavel to his friends, Andrei (Ukrainian) replied, "There are a large number of people who find their subsistence from food, but the honorable people are few! We have to build a bridge over the swamps of this lame life leading us to the next human fraternity kingdom! That is the duty that confronts us, comrades" (Gorky 79)

Through these encounters and civilized dialogues, the mother began to understand the principles of the revolution from the very beginning. It's not just about the workers demanding to fill their stomachs, but they seek humanity. Gorky believed that the revolution starts with books and knowledge. He also expressed that they are in a difficult situation, and he would lead them out of it by building a strong bridge to reach the kingdom of human brotherhood.

Gorky emphasized that the revolution is no walk in the park. Revolutionaries face numerous challenges and hardships. It takes courage and sacrifice, even to the point of martyrdom, to bring about real change. Mere words are not enough; society must be awakened to the injustices and inequalities through words and reinforced through actions. As he indicated through Ribin's words in the novel, "People do not want to listen to naked words - you must suffer, your words should be dipped with blood ...", "The further we get away from the masters, it just better, that is the issue!" (Gorky

Ch.5) In this context, the feudal lords were referred to as the masters, and Ribin stood with the peasants who also endured suffering, just like the factory workers.

Pavel, the Ukrainian, and many of their friends were imprisoned under the pretext of inciting other workers to refuse to pay any rubles for the reforms. This left Pelagueye feeling lonely and sad as she embarked on her journey of struggle. She made sure to complete the distribution of leaflets to keep educating the people and to honor the departure of her son and comrades, ensuring that the distribution of publications continued. Even after her son and Andre, who wanted to teach her writing, left, she remained determined. They later launched a new campaign on May 1st, proclaiming socialism as a labor movement that demands justice and freedom for workers.

“What can we do? We are compelled to hate people to accelerate the time in which we can only conspire for them but pure love. We are obliged to eliminate all who stand in the way of life, everyone who sells the people for money to buy himself pride, comfort, and luxury” (Gorky Ch.7) . Andrei's anger flared up upon learning about the soldier's death before May. He expressed that people need to toughen up and not rely too much on hope until they achieve their goals. Anyone who opposes the revolution must be eliminated, and no one has the right to exploit their workers. It's unjust to

work them to exhaustion while seeking comfort and luxury for oneself. He continued,

You are compelled at times, to fight yourself to continue moving forward. You should be giving everything ... your entire heart ... and it is easy to give your life and die for the cause ... but you have to You give more than that, too ... What is dearer than your life itself. And when you give it, you know how the truth for which you are fighting strength, to make strength, grows ... That fact is the most precious thing in the world over your heart . (Gorky Ch.17)

It's clear from Gorky's words that he wholeheartedly embraces the truth. Every revolutionary must believe in it and strive to attain justice for all. The first part concludes with the events of May, including the arrest of Pavel and his friends. However, it was the mother who bravely defended and fought, carrying the red flag as a symbol of truth and freedom. to become a new symbol in the Red Revolution.

The novel ends with the mother's demise following her son's trial. In a courageous act, she confronts the soldier, appealing to her son's speech and distributing Red Flag leaflets. Unfortunately, the soldier violently silences her, preventing the distribution. However, a man from the crowd steps in to carry on the distribution.

George Orwell

George is famous for his novel "1984," a dystopian work that portrays a malicious place, the opposite of utopia. He also wrote "Animal Farm," which is a symbolic work. His writings greatly influenced political culture, leading him to coin the term Orwellian to describe authoritarian and totalitarian control practices. Which means:

Totalitarianism is a political system or a form of government that prohibits opposition parties, restricts individual opposition to the state and its claims, and exercises an extremely high degree of control over public and private life. It is regarded as the most extreme and complete form of authoritarianism. In totalitarian states, political power has often been held by autocrats who employ all-encompassing campaigns in which propaganda is broadcast by state-controlled mass media. (Conquest 74)

Criticize 1984

“Big Brother is watching you” (Orwell Ch. 2). "1984" is centered around the totalitarianism and the struggle against it. It features three significant characters: Big Brother, Oren, and Winston. Big Brother serves as the president of Oceania and its ruler. The people are like a flock of sheep, prohibited from thinking, loving, and expressing individuality. They

conform to a single style, rather than the other way around. Life in Airstep is a grim illustration of death caused by the city's squalor, scarcity of food, and homelessness. In essence, it is a prison of injustice for humanity.

Regarding Winston, the main character, he engaged in various offenses, such as the act of independent thinking, keeping a diary, and experiencing love. He had feelings for a girl with dark hair, yet he also harbored a dislike towards her. This contradiction caused him to resent her beauty and liveliness, as he was unable to attain a connection with her.

“Thought Crime does not entail death, thought crime is death” (Orwell 27). Orwell makes it clear that thinking is considered a crime that the law takes seriously. Big Brother keeps a close watch on everything, including people's thoughts and ideas. In Winston's dream, he envisions O'Brien as the savior who can liberate them from this oppressive system and restore humanity. "Winston saw in a dream... we shall meet in the place where is no dark” (Orwell 22). it's pretty clear that the system needs a major overhaul. Once liberation happens, darkness will vanish. That's why O'Brien is seen as the Savior.

“Power is in training human minds to pieces and putting them together again in the new shape of your own choosing” (Orwell Ch.3). Orwell believes that by gaining knowledge of the truth, ideas can be transformed once again. Through careful analysis and making connections, a revolution can occur, leading to a better society with democracy and freedom of

thought. It's important not to blindly follow the crowd. Winston and the girl confess their love for each other, and their relationship starts to flourish. They feel like they had a victory over Big Brother.

But then, Winston's hope for freedom started to take shape when he witnessed the working class fighting for their desires through rebellion. Unfortunately, Big Brother saw them as nothing more than animals. Winston had the opportunity to meet O'Brien, who convinced him that the power to bring about change was in their hands. He believed that the situation could be improved. O'Brien even gave him a book to read, highlighting Orwell's belief that knowledge and books are catalysts for change. Surprisingly, it turns out that O'Brien is actually a follower of Big Brother, representing a false sense of freedom and rebellion. Eventually, Winston and Julia were arrested while they were together in Winston's apartment.

“The picture had fallen to the floor, uncovering the telescreen behind it” (Orwell 182). The painting fell down, revealing Big Brother. They tried to hide him to maintain their freedom, but he's all-knowing and forbids them from expressing their love. However, after their arrest, they were subjected to torture and humiliation. In a moment of desperation, Winston said, "Do it to Julia, not me," hoping to spare himself. O'Brien then brings out the rats, threatening to unleash them on Winston's face.



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When Julia and Winston crossed paths on the street, it was clear that neither of them cared for the other. There were no emotions between them. Later, Winston whispered, "I love Big Brother," and wrote down $2 + 2 = 5$ ". In the novel, we see the downfall of the state and its suffering, just like in "Animal Farm." As the revolutionaries took control of the farm, conflicts and divisions emerged among them. The ones with the most power and knowledge took control, even if they were mistaken, and were praised for it.

Conclusion

Socialism is a cooperative approach. As Marxism emerges, which is the supremacy of the working class over the owners. It was during the last century that witnessed several economic transformations. Socialism as a stretching of communism with some improvements. However, socialism has the Eliminate the control of owners, and replace them with a set of rules that guarantee the protection of workers' rights.

Additionally, when capitalism began to fight socialism, it used almost a bureaucratic economic approach, which is represented by 1% who rule and control the world economy (the capitalists). 4% work for them and carry out the tasks (the army and those who protect the owner). 5% intellectuals know This fact (Religious men). and 90% of people do not realize this fact and live in negligence (the proletariat). All struggles revolve around 4% trying to prevent 5%, to get back 90% in favor of 1%.

Due to this, the educational people taught the workmen “the reading and writing to realize the truth”. And do the correct to get their freedom. also to have the human rights, besides the equality.

The suffering caused by the socialist revolution and the corruption that followed has been a real mess worldwide. It's like a war that has brought so much misery to countless people. That's why many authors feel compelled to speak up and express the need for change in their own countries. Take the authors you mentioned, like Maxim Gorky who wrote before the revolution,

expressing his disgust with a life of slavery. And then there's George Orwell, who wrote during or after the revolution, shedding light on the corruption and how things could get even worse.

The *Mother* is the backbone of the revolution, which showed how it should start and maintain its strength. And for the mother's character in the novel to be the symbol of change and continuity. Instead of *1984*, Winston symbolizes weakness and the lack of a solid foundation for the revolution. It's all about that powerful symbol of change and continuity.

"There's nothing wrong in suffering, if you suffer for a purpose. Our revolution didn't abolish danger or death. It simply made danger and death worthwhile" (Wells) The significance of a revolution is immense, and sometimes people are willing to make the ultimate sacrifice for a just and honorable cause. In both "The Mother" and "1984," this theme is explored. The mother's death symbolizes her unwavering dedication to the revolution's continuation, while Winston's torture showcases the lengths he endured for his beliefs.

The two novels have their differences, but they both highlight the importance of awareness and knowledge as the catalysts for revolution. In "The Mother," the foundation lies in reading and educating society, while in "1984," it's when Winston gets his hands on the book from O'Brien.

Just like those incredible writers who penned novels depicting the hardships of life during times of economic struggles. They aimed to bring

about a revolution that would triumph through peace, equality, and liberty. Ultimately, their goal was to create a change that would lead to a utopian society.

In all societies, people work and strive for freedom through money. But the sad truth is that sometimes it feels like that freedom is nowhere to be found. In this day and age, we see this class of people who are subjected to financial struggles and feel lost. It makes you wonder, can someone truly live while constantly fighting with money? Is it even possible for a person to fulfill their basic needs, like physiological needs and safety, as described in Maslow's pyramid? These are tough questions that don't have easy answers or one-size-fits-all solutions. It's like trying to generalize an answer when society is constantly changing. It's a complex issue that touches on both our humanity and financial realities.

Because society is always evolving, and throughout time, we see this pattern where history repeats itself, especially when it comes to the struggles of the working class. It's like a cycle that keeps coming back. We can only hope that this class can achieve their goals despite all the changes happening around them. It's not just about money; it's about humanity as a whole. It's about recognizing the value and worth of every person, beyond their financial status. It is a pen issue; whoever want liberty wrote for the people, and whoever want enslavement wrote for money.

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