

Traces of Secularization in George Orwell's *Animal Farm* and 1984

George Orwell'ın *Hayvan Çiftliği* ve 1984 Adlı Eserlerinde Sekülerleşme İzleri

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Abstract

Literary works, which are independent of the concepts of time and space, are among the most effective tools that reflect, transmit, and analyze social change and present it back to society. Religion, on the other hand, draws attention both because it is one of the most frequently addressed subjects of literary works and because it is one of the values that have suffered the most from change. The transition from traditional society, where religious values and institutions were highly influential and important, to modern society, especially with the emergence of parameters such as industrialization, urbanization, scientific and technological developments and capitalism, has led to significant and radical changes in the understanding of the phenomenon of religion. Secularization, which is defined as the loss of significance, power, and visibility in everyday life of the supernatural realm, the sacred in its more comprehensive form, religion, religion-like structures, religious beliefs, and religious teachings, is one of the most noticeable changes in relation to religion, both in terms of society and the individual. As a result, this study, which is a literature review on both secularization and the two books in question, aims to show how the secularization theory, which has effects on both individuals and society, can be seen in 1984 and *Animal Farm* by George Orwell.

Keywords: Modernization, Secularization, George Orwell, 1984, *Animal Farm*.

Öz

Zaman ve mekân kavramlarından bağımsız olan edebi eserler, toplumsal değişimi yansıtan, aktarımını sağlayan ve analizini yaparak tekrar topluma sunan en etkili araçlardır. Din ise hem edebi eserlerin sıklıkla ele alınan konuları arasında yer alması hem de değişimden en fazla nasibini alan değerlerden biri olması nedeni ile dikkat çekmektedir. Dinî değer ve kurumların son derece etkili ve önemli olduğu geleneksel toplumdaki, özellikle sanayileşme, kentleşme, bilimsel ve teknolojik gelişmeler, kapitalizm gibi parametrelerin ortaya çıkışı ile modern topluma geçiş, din olgusu anlayışı üzerinde belirgin ve köklü değişimlerin oluşmasına yol açmıştır. Hem toplumsal hem bireysel anlamda, geçmişle şu an kıyaslandığında, doğaüstü olarak nitelenen alanın, daha kapsamlı şekliyle kutsalın, dinin, din-benzeri yapıların, dinî inanışların ve öğretilerin önem yitirmeleri, güç kayıpları, saygınlıklarının belirgin bir şekilde azalması ve gündelik yaşamda görünürlüklerinin neredeyse yok olması şeklinde tarif edilen sekülerleşme ise din ile ilgili görülen en belirgin değişim olarak tartışma konularının başında yer almaktadır. Dolayısıyla hem sekülerleşme hem de söz konusu iki edebi eserle ilgili literatür taramasının yapıldığı bu çalışma, bireysel olduğu kadar toplumsal etkileri de kaçınılmaz bir şekilde görünür olan sekülerleşme teorisinin, George Orwell'ın 1984 ve *Hayvan Çiftliği* adlı eserlerindeki yansımalarını ortaya koymayı amaçlar.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Modernleşme, Sekülerleşme, George Orwell, 1984, *Hayvan Çiftliği*.

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With the existence of human beings, the concept of believing in beings that they think is stronger than themselves in every aspect, in the sense of "sublimation-obedience", has started to draw attention day by day. Therefore, religion or religious values have always taken place in people's lives from past to present. In this long process, society inevitably affected religious values, and religious values affected society. As the wind of change increasingly influenced both, people observed the course of daily life shifting in different directions. In this context, in the transition process from traditional society to modern society, change has become very different and effective in all areas, especially religion and religious values.

The society, which started to industrialize with the industrial revolution, with scientific and technological developments, reason and mind coming into the forefront, urbanization, the increase and diversification of education and health opportunities, etc. with these developments, has begun to adopt and carry the characteristics of modern society. Because of the change and transformation from traditional to modern, the innovations brought by modernity and incorporated into daily life have sparked big changes and transformations in many areas and things. While religion, religious values and the sacred are an extremely dominant power on both the society and the individual, the effect of the modern perception on the sacred, which permeates the lives with the change felt in every aspect at all points, has been made visible both individually, socially, and institutionally, with secularization theories consisting of different views of the names known as the founders of sociology.

Secularization theories, at the end of a long process, have taken their place in the top ranks among the topics discussed intensively in the sociology literature. People thought that religion would go away over time as the supernatural started to be affected by change. These ideas were popular in the early stages of secularization. In the later period, with the continuation of the phenomenon of religion and the emergence of new religions, desecularization theories have been produced and discussed. However, in this respect, theories put forward by sociologists who adopt the views that these theories are incomplete in some respects, which are also called eclectic paradigm by blending and accepting both paradigms, and which carry the views that secularization and desecularization processes are lived together and are still being experienced, have revealed that secularization theories are handled comprehensively and multidimensionally.

In the context of wide scope and multidimensionality, the change seen in the religious field has affected many fields, while literature has been one of the most affected fields. From past to present, the literary world has used the concept of religion as the main theme of many studies. The purpose of this study is to ascertain how secularization is reflected in *Animal Farm* and *1984* by George Orwell, which depict the gradual waning of religious beliefs and their eventual extinction, depending on the existence of mutual interaction. Sociologists who perceive certain shortcomings in these theories have developed "eclectic paradigms." These paradigms integrate and acknowledge both secularization and desecularization processes, maintaining the belief that they occur simultaneously and continue to do so. These paradigms have shown that secularization theories are comprehensive and multidimensional.

Methodology

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the insights of secularization theory in two major works of George Orwell: *Animal Farm* and *1984*. The analysis will trace how Orwell condemns manipulation of religious and secular ideational structures for control of society through completely pure and strict totalitarian rule. The research methodology will integrate literary analysis, theoretical exploration of the concept of secularization, and comparative analysis of Orwell's works.

The first part of the methodology involves the theoretical framework of secularization with a specific exploration of the relationship between secularization and power. By concentrating on Orwell's political beliefs and secularisation, the second part of the methodology will examine the relationship between secularization and literature with the involvement of Orwell's own ideological position. Orwell was a vocal critic of both religious dogma and the rise of secular totalitarian ideologies, especially in light of his experiences with Soviet communism, fascism, and the political climate of his time. Thirdly, the literary analysis section will handle characterization, symbolism, themes and plot development in accordance with the references and examples in the novels. The final component of the methodology is a comparative analysis of how both religious and secular ideologies are used as tools of oppression in Orwell's novels. For this comparative analysis, resistance and rebellion, social and individual impacts, and ideological control will be the special points to search for.

In the end of this paper, it is aimed to show how *Animal Farm* and *1984* can be seen to show the dangers of secularized forms of ideological control by putting together what we have learned from the literary analyses, the secularization theory, and Orwell's own criticism of ideology. The conclusion will highlight Orwell's fundamental observations about the fragility of freedom and the perils of religious and secular dogma in the context of totalitarianism. So, this method combines three different areas: a literary analysis, a theoretical perspective, and the historical background in order to come up with a more complex way to understand Orwell's works that criticize secularization and the control of ideology.

On Secularization

Renaissance, which literally means "rebirth" or "resurrection", between the 14th and the 17th century, after the Middle Ages in Europe, refers to a process in which renewal and change movements and initiatives in the fields of politics, culture, economy, science, art, architecture and education are observed and their effects and results spread from Italy to the whole world (Burke, 2000). According to some social scientists, this process, which completely encompasses all aspects of social life, is the most important series of events that started the secularization process for the Western World. In particular, bringing ancient classical works to society through translation, the rise of modern science and technology in the process, economic development, the sprouting of rational thought and similar social changes naturally resulted in the emergence of views in the direction of secularization by causing a change in perceptions about the phenomenon of religion. However, some social scientists, who claim that the process started at a later date, drew attention to the Enlightenment period (Toulmin, 2002) and tried to reveal the relationship between the Enlightenment process, where the authority of the Catholic Church began to weaken, and the secularization process. Immanuel Kant, John Locke, Rene Descartes, Denis Diderot, Montesquieu, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Voltaire, and David Hume, who are among the first representatives of the Age of Enlightenment, expressed their philosophical views on religion-society relations as well as on many other issues. Therefore, according to some social scientists, the beginning of secularization debates dates back to the Enlightenment period.

The Thirty Years' War, which started as a result of the religious problems between Catholics and Protestants in Europe, ended with the Treaty of Westphalia (Gross, 1948), which was strongly accepted as the starting point of the secularization process. Why has such a view become dominant in the academic community? First of all, considering the thesis that modernization and secularization are parallel to each other, that is, secularization is seen with modernization, and there is an increase in secular life with the spread of modern life, The Treaty of Westphalia, which is accepted as the beginning of the modern age, directly affects the secularization thesis with its results. This agreement also plays a crucial role in secularization by addressing and resolving religious issues. In this period when the importance of the sacred began to decline (Esposito, 2000), it is possible to say that secularization

theories became controversial. Therefore, secularization, which originally meant the transfer of religious property to civil or state ownership, began to be the subject of debate for many sociologists with the Treaty of Westphalia signed as a result of the Thirty Years' War. Secularization, which means the transfer of the Church lands to the states in the institutional sense, has come to refer to a process where the religious influence on the government, institutions, ideas and behaviors has decreased and the trust in worldly values and assets for these areas has increased (Gay, 1992).

For many years the meta-narrative in the social scientific analysis of religion has been the paradigm of secularization. People who wrote about society and did scientific studies believed that religion would become more and more marginal in modern societies and would become an unnecessary "thing" in time. Many believed that differentiation would bring about a general decline in religion. Religion, which was at the center of society and even everything else, would become a private matter, which could at best find a place in the center of man. Science would replace religious beliefs and even Auguste Comte, who had the status of a scientist, would declare himself the 'prophet' of the 'Religion of Humanity' (Comte, 1852) that he would establish. However, scientists and sociologists who predicted the collapse of religious organizations in the future and emphasized that religious values would lose importance also constituted a substantial number. For example, for Engels and Marx, religion prevents people from realizing and comprehending the facts, legitimizes the authority of the ruling class and suppresses the uprising of the lower classes (Pollack, 2015).

In the historical process, secularization has become more visible with some parameters and the deep views of some leading social scientists. It is possible to say that these parameters emerged as a result of the change-transformation that became evident with some turning point historical events. In this context, in order to talk about the theory of secularization, it is necessary to accept that religious institutions and values were more influential and prestigious in the past. All Abrahamic religions, including Islam, and religious-like formations (Ertit, 2019), possess multidimensional discourses about this world. Thus, by comparison, it is generally believed that religion and religious institutions in the pre-modern period had much greater power than in the modern or even post-modern period. It is noteworthy that the secularization debates continue in a multi-faceted and multi-dimensional way with the developments that cause religions, religious institutions and values to lose their current power.

Many thinkers continued to share their views on secularization with society, with the developments of the Age of Enlightenment, which ignited the fuse of secularization in Western geography both as a process and as a thesis. For example, in 1843 in his work *On the Jewish Question*, "The true religious/Christian state is not the state that defends or adopts Christianity, but the state that is secular." With his explanation, Marx managed to draw attention to his views on religious values. By saying "Religion is the opium of the society" (Marx, 2009), Marx, who handles religion with a functionalist approach, refers to the class system. Marx views secularization as a consequence of alienation. Emphasizing that workers are alienated from the work they do, the products they produce, themselves and other people in the capitalist system (Chadwick, 1975), Marx believes that over time, the class order forms the basis of the social structure and only when a classless structure is achieved in the social order, religion will no longer be needed, religions will disappear, and therefore secular societies will form. It is at the core of Marx's theory of alienation (Marx, 1967) that the social life in Marx's imagination can be reached when the masses learn the source of social distress, and when false consciousness is replaced by class consciousness. After all the alienated person's problems end, they won't need a comforting religion.

In his book called *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1905), Weber stated that industrial capitalism, which is expressed as the accelerator of secularization (Ertit, 2019), was born and developed with the Protestant Ethic. Weber views working in the Protestant faith and striving to excel in his

profession as the most important form of worship. Therefore, the expectation of the capitalist system is that people work hard, spend less and ensure capital accumulation; in the Protestant faith, on the other hand, professionally, it is to do the best one can do, to work hard, and thus to fulfill the requirements of his faith. Therefore, for Weber, the religion-capitalism interaction started with the Protestant belief leading the economy and continued with the capitalist order's influence on the Protestant belief system. Believing that the "iron cage" (Weber, 2003), which consists of the rules that all humanity is subject to and must comply with, will lead people to rational thinking and that "the world will be disenchanted" with rational thought, Weber stated that he expects a secular society in the new modern world that has emerged (Weber, 2015).

The French sociologist Durkheim predicted that religion would collapse over time, especially in the Western geography, at first, but he was not far from the view that sacred values could manifest in different ways in the eyes of society. According to Durkheim, there is a social evolution from primitive society to modern society (Durkheim, 1984), so it is expected to see secular values in modern societies. Religious values are extremely important for people with mechanical solidarity and undifferentiated functions in primitive societies. In modern societies where population growth, scientific-technological developments and organic solidarity are seen, religious values lose importance for people with differentiated functions, and different religious values gain importance. For Durkheim, religion and religious values, traditionally known, no longer have much to contribute to modern societies intellectually, morally or socially. For this reason, traditional religion faces death, but the sacred remains. According to Durkheim, who approached the secularization process from a different angle and offered a different interpretation, we certainly live in a more secular age, but this age is definitely not an age that is purified from sanctity.

When it comes to secularization theory, it is impossible not to mention Peter L. Berger. Although he stated that his initial thoughts were falsified (Berger, 2007) and that religiosity increased in contrast to secularization, his first views on secularization are extremely important and it can be said that these views changed the course of secularization debates. Berger thought that modernization in the 1960s brought about secularization and that religions would lose their social power over time. He defined secularization as "the process by which social and cultural sectors are removed from the dominance of religious institutions and symbols" (Berger, 1967). Berger, who claimed that industrialization and scientific thought led to secularization, started to adopt the view that religions did not disappear, on the contrary, became more vividly visible due to the formation of new religious forms all over the world towards the end of the 90s (Berger, 1999).

Another name to be mentioned related to secularization is Bryan R. Wilson. Pointing to the processes of social differentiation, societalization and rationalization as the main reasons for the losses experienced from the perspective of religion and religious values, Wilson also includes the emergence of new religious movements among the secularization indicators. According to Wilson, social differentiation means that religion loses its pre-existing decisive influence on other institutions such as the economy, science and family, these institutions get rid of the supremacy of religion and gain functionally increasing autonomy (Wilson, 1982). Explaining the societalization process as the transition from the local community to the large-scale society seen in social organization, Wilson stated that secularization and moral collapse would come with this process. Finally, rationalization is the pursuit of social goals intended for all institutions without recourse to supernatural values. If rational thought is valid for every part of the society and every institutional structure, then it is possible to talk about a secular society. Wilson emphasized that the rationalization process removes religious expression from having a transcendent importance for the lifestyle of the society (Wilson, 2016).

In *God is Dead: Secularization in the West*, Steve Bruce showed an approach to secularization in the light of quantitative data, arguing that the importance given to religion and religious values was greatly exaggerated in the past (Bruce, 2002). Bruce uses current data to show that traditional religious beliefs are also on the decline. He asserts that this is due to the fact that a smaller number of individuals are participating in the Church (which has an institutional significance) and attending its ceremonies than in the past. However, pointing out that it does not seem possible for a new belief system to replace traditional beliefs, Bruce emphasized that Great Britain is a country that is secularizing day by day. In the Orthodox model of secularization, Bruce argues that once a religion is weakened by modernization, it is doomed to disappear because widespread ideologies are very difficult to pass on to future generations.

Some people think of secularization as a change in culture brought about by the rise of reason. The success of science in the modern world, in contrast to superstitions that are common in traditional societies, is maximized in different ways. In simpler terms, secularization, which symbolizes the transition from societies in which religion, religious values, religious institutions and symbols are considered extremely important, to societies where religion, religious values, religious institutions and symbols are considered less important or completely unimportant, becomes widespread as a result of evaluating various events in personal and social life mostly from a utilitarian point of view, not from a religious point of view. Therefore, in order to be able to talk about a secular society, all personal and social events must be free from religious thoughts, norms and values. In fact, sociologists who have encountered such societies over time, and particularly literary writers, have begun to incorporate secularization indicators into their works, expressing their diverse perspectives on the concept, as it is fundamental to this study (Hammond, 1985).

Since the subject is interesting, the process is long and still ongoing, it has become inevitable to put forward different opinions. In this context, although the views on secularization differ within themselves, both antitheses have been produced against the secularization thesis and these new theses have different views within themselves. As a result, while the secularization thesis is referred to individual, organizational, institutional, social and internal ways, the anti-thesis produced also led to the secularization theory being called classical secularization theory, desecularization and eclectic paradigm. In this study, since literary works will be discussed in the context of secularization theory, it will be sufficient to mention classical secularization theory, which is considered as the core of secularization theory.

In general terms, secularization, which is defined as a tendency to move away from sacred values and supernatural powers, the world's beginning to lose its magic and the increase in the level of social rationality, refers to the situation where religion loses its importance in daily life by becoming ineffective over time, and the dominance of science and reason with technological developments (Kirman, 2011). With the modernization, religion has moved away from being a value and way of thinking that directs daily practices, especially in European countries and in countries such as Canada, the USA, Australia, and New Zealand, and has turned into another item that can be chosen and consumed. In summary, it is modernization that restricts religious control in non-religious areas and prevents any religious belief from being the dominant culture and expression tool in society (Ertit, 2014). Therefore, according to the classical secularization theory, modernization is responsible for entering the secularization process.

Classical secularization theory is based on the thesis that scientific and technological developments along with modernization have a negative effect on the importance and acceptance of religion in society. This thesis is also based on differentiation theory. The main premise of the classical secularization theory has been rational thought, which stands out with the comparison of science and religion, with

the claim that the importance of religion in modern societies weakens compared to previous periods, pre-modern cultures give more importance to religion, religious values, and the sacred than modern ones. Rationality, which emerged as the main reason for the observed decline in religious control over both individual and social behavior, led to the development of a tendency towards establishing cause-effect relationships. Along with empirical thought, rationality has prevented religion, religious values or the sacred from completely influencing or dominating social life (Durkheim, 2010). Scientific and rational thought, which has become widespread with the developments in the fields of transportation and communication in the globalizing world, has become the strongest 'branch' to which the secularists hold on, although it is said that "Science and religion do not conflict, on the contrary, one supports the other." As a matter of fact, scientific thought has taken the place of religious thought in institutional and administrative sense.

The Relationship between Literature and Secularization: Secular Approach to Orwell's *1984* and *Animal Farm*

It is a well-known fact that there is a strong relationship between literature and religion because literature is a kind of international messenger which carries all cultural phenomena from generation to generation all over the world. Thanks to literary works from different cultures, we can read and learn a great many approaches to life, events, culture, and religion. In fact, religion is an important part of culture, and while studying a literary work, it cannot be thought to handle cultural issues without mentioning religion. As Harris highlights, "Because religion is such an integral part of cultures all over the world, it is no surprise that much of literature includes strong religious connotations. Whether or not a reader considers himself or herself religious, there is no denying the pervasive nature of human religion in all aspects of society." (Harris, 2018). This section of the paper will analyze religion in Orwell's two masterpieces, *Animal Farm* and *1984*, in the context of secularization.

Secularization, which once marked an age of belief, had its effects on all institutions, cultural values, and, naturally, literature throughout the process. Studying Orwell's works from secular point of view will enable us to take an interdisciplinary approach to Orwell and his works as this study requires not only information about Orwell's religious life, whether he reflected it on these works or not and how he did it, but also background knowledge about Orwell's time, society, social, political and cultural structures and his own experiences with all these.

As a modernist author, he was born in India, 1903 and died in UK, 1950. In spite of his short life, he succeeded to produce quite many works in different fields. George Orwell was a novelist, journalist, essayist and critic whose real name was Eric Arthur Blair. According to some sources, he preferred using his pseudonym George Orwell because he wanted "partly to avoid embarrassing his parents, partly as a hedge against failure, and partly because he disliked the name Eric, which reminded him of a prig in a Victorian boys' story". Although he was born in India and spent his early years there during the time of British colonial rule, he preferred to continue his life in England to be able to receive education. During his lifetime, George Orwell witnessed and participated in significant historical and political events, such as the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) and World War II. In the Spanish Civil War, he volunteered to fight as a member of a left-wing militia, where he was wounded. During World War II (1939-1945), Orwell worked for the BBC and also contributed to various publications. His experiences in these events influenced his later political and literary views.

Not surprisingly, Orwell did have some exposure to religion during his lifetime. He was baptized in the Church of England as a child, which was a common practice in Britain during his time. But he is not widely known for having a strong religious affiliation or a particularly religious life. In fact, he is often seen as a figure who was critical of organized religion and more inclined towards secular humanism and skepticism: "Orwell hated all 'isms' because each was inevitably dominated by intellectuals. For

Orwell the most important “ism” of his day was socialism. His form of democratic socialism, he said, was rooted in the values of ordinary working-class communities not in any top-down ideology.” (Ingle, 2017). Orwell's writings, especially his essays and novels, often contain themes that are critical of authoritarianism, totalitarianism, and the abuse of power. He was known for his strong belief in individual freedom and the importance of truth and honesty, often in opposition to oppressive regimes and institutions, including religious ones. In his works, Orwell occasionally touched on religious themes and references, but they were not central to his overall philosophy or writing. He was more concerned with political and social issues, as well as the power dynamics within societies.

In relation to all these facts about Orwell, his masterpieces *Animal Farm* and *1984* present unique opportunities for a secular perspective. A secular approach to these well-known dystopias centers on their political, social, and philosophical themes, examining the dangers of totalitarianism, the erosion of individual freedoms, the use of propaganda, and the importance of resistance and rebellion. These works serve as cautionary tales about the abuse of power and the consequences of a loss of personal autonomy and moral integrity in a secular context. In the following part of this paper, two novels will be handled from secular perspective separately according to the points they include about the absence, destruction and disappearance of religion because of different reasons.

***Animal Farm* in a Secular Context**

One of the best allegorical novels in the world classics list, *Animal Farm* portrays a community governed by pigs, representing the society who are under the dominance of Stalin's totalitarian regime following Russian Revolution. In this masterpiece, animals are chosen to represent some political and social figures. Just to give some short background information about the main characters in the novel, Napoleon, based on Joseph Stalin, is the pig leader of *Animal Farm* after the Rebellion and he uses military force to dominate the other animals and show his power. Snowball, the other pig who wants to take the control of the farm from Napoleon, is based on Leon Trotsky with his eloquent, passionate, intelligent and less subtle and devious manners. Squealer is another pig who supports Napoleon by using rhetoric and language to twist the truth and maintain social and political control, delivering speeches about fake success stories. Old Major, inspirational source and real leader of rebellion, is a boar whose vision of socialist utopia reminds Karl Marx and Lenin. Boxer is a strong, dedicated and loyal cart-horse and he works only for the ideals of *Animal Farm*. Moses is the tame raven who spreads stories of Sugarcandy Mountain, the paradise to which animals supposedly go when they die. Moses has a tiny role in the novel but it is the only character who is into a religious duty and the critics assume that Orwell uses him to explore how communism exploits religion as something with which to pacify the oppressed.

Religion as a Tool for Oppression

In the book *Animal Farm*, George Orwell makes a satire of the Russian Revolution as well as the rise of the Soviet Union that follows. The pigs, who stand in for the ruling class, use many methods in order to subdue the other animals. This manipulation is aided by many small factors, and the most notable is religion, or more accurately, absence of religion.

Moses the raven preaches about a perfect place called the Sugarcandy Mountain which serves to illustrate how religion can be used to pacify the oppressed. Initially, the pigs turn him away, as they know his tales could serve to sidetrack the other animals from their current suffering and lower their appetite for insurrection. However, when the pigs become powerful and the condition of the animals worsens, they allow Moses to come back as they know he will pacify the restless masses with his death-for-a-better-life teachings: “Their lives now, they reasoned, were hungry and laborious; was it not right and just that a better world should exist somewhere else?” (Orwell, 2021). That sublime burden of

religion for the shoulder of the oppressed will only work to those with power, the bourgeoisie, in Orwell's estimation of religion in that it is like opium.

Given that it suggests that religion takes people's minds away from the tangible realities of existence, it is understandable why Orwell's portrayal of Moses is devoid of religious undertones: "A new class system is born based on biological inequality, its commandments issued not by the sugar-candy religion of the preaching raven Moses, but by the intellectual religion of Science (Lenin's 'scientific socialism')" (Kirschner, 2004). At first, it is the ruling class pigs who tolerate Moses and his stories of Sugarcandy Mountain as they are profitable to them. Moses ensures that the animals remain complacent and not likely to revolt by providing them with the hope of a different and better world somewhere. In this case, it is in line with the reasons why Orwell denounces religion as something which seeks to maintain order instead of leading to anything like real enlightenment or even liberation.

The Danger of Ideological Dogma

In the allegorical novella *Animal Farm*, a group of farm animals rises in rebellion against their human farmer, ideologically based on the establishment of a just society for all animals. However, as the leadership assumes a higher status, the pigs become just as oppressive as the humans they have replaced. Though it was more secularly deeper in meaning, the novella is often regarded as a satire upon the Russian Revolution and the rise of Stalinism thereafter.

One of the key secular themes of *Animal Farm* is rejection of ideological dogma. Napoleon and the rest of the pigs utilize the concept of "animalism" to further hoodwink the other animals. Over time, animalism becomes a means of manipulation rather than staying true to its roots, which called for equality and the well-being of all living things. They justify their actions on the principles of Animalism-the Seven Commandments. This is a form of ideological manipulation, akin to the distortion of religious doctrine for the benefit of the powerful.

Orwell's ire extends beyond political ideologies to any system that demands blind faith. The farm animals-primarily the pigs, but most especially the industrious horse named Boxer-repeat the phrases with blind confidence, such as "Napoleon is always right." Similar to religious fanatics, blind confidence in leaders incorporates followers who accept beliefs without scrutiny. Unquestioning belief-whether in a political or religious system-can result in the decline of individual freedom and the emergence of dictatorship. "It had become usual to give Napoleon the credit for every successful achievement and every stroke of good fortune" (Orwell, 2021). This is Orwell's salient secular thesis.

As Harris states, it may seem irrelevant to read *Animal Farm* from a perspective related to religion but it contains quite many messages about the importance but the (almost) absence of religion in such a fictional setting: "At first read, *Animal Farm* might not seem to reference Christianity and religion in general. Religion was a huge part of life for the proletariat Orwell is referencing, though, and the animals of *Animal Farm* have a complicated relationship with religion despite the fact that it is not explicitly outlined." (Harris, 2018). The secular analysis emphasizes how the pigs' rise to power and the corruption of their ideals parallels the historical events of the Russian Revolution and the subsequent emergence of a totalitarian regime under Stalin. The novel serves as a critique of authoritarianism and the abuse of power, irrespective of religious beliefs.

1984 in a Secular Context

In *1984* George Orwell portrays a dystopian world in which the Party strives for total loyalty and devotion from individuals as a matter of state. In sustaining the Party's dominance, besides the use of physical force, there is also psychological control and distortion of any ideology that threatens its rule, including religion.

In *1984*, the omnibenevolent, omnipresent Party's philosophy replaces God with the Party in what is clearly an extreme example of secularism. History and language are a few of the domains totalitarian power exercises control over. Concepts such as 'Newspeak' and 'doublethink' are even employed to bombard and control people's minds. The leader who abides by a little image and wishes and enforces love and loyalty is Big Brother, who is in this case treated as a god. Instead of the institutions championing spiritual beliefs and practices, such as religion, which seeks worship of the people in a god, the Party seeks allegiance through lies, terror, and a complete absence of Truth.

In line with the author's mindset, Big Brother, Godlike, is the only creator in *1984*: "Oceanic society rests ultimately on the belief that Big Brother is omnipotent and that the Party is infallible" (Orwell, 2000). Considering the characters in Oceania reside in a secluded society, they are not under the impression that there is a deity answering the problems of how harmony, independence, and happiness do emerge or what makes it so systematic since they were living in a life that was like living in a cage, and could not see any indications of such remarkable harmony.

Orwell incorporates his own thoughts into this literature; hence within its pages one finds the author's image of the totalitarian regime. The organization that rules the society in *1984* is called the Party and it does not practice any religion. However, it makes one believe in its ideologies without any questions. Religious institutions have been outlawed. In their place, instead of a more civilized approach to people, actual ideology took upon itself the function of coercion more than any controlled religion ever had.

The Secular Struggle against Totalitarianism in *1984*

The critique of Orwell on authoritarianism is extended in *1984* into a nightmarish future when the supremacy was established, not by religion, but by the State. Big Brother's Party purges all individual ideas and beliefs that could undermine his authority, expecting from its people complete allegiance and obedience. In this universe, Orwell explores secularism as the negation of every form of political, religious, or ideological order that gives birth to rigid beliefs and stifles free thought, rather than a denial of religion altogether.

In this regard, the protagonist of the novel, Winston Smith, personifies the resistance of the human spirit to any kind of oppression in the name of freedom and truth. His is a secular struggle because it is anchored on a carnal yearning for personal freedom and pursuit of the truth, bereft of conviction in faith either in religion or spirit. "What most afflicted him with the fence of nightmare was that he had never clearly understood *why* the huge imposture was undertaken. [...] He took up his pen again and wrote: I understand HOW: I do not understand WHY." (Orwell, 2000). Central to secular humanism is the concept of objective reality, which the Party directly and through institutions like the Ministry of Truth-which rewrites continuous history-challenges.

How Orwell exposes the dangers of utter domination and the centrality of intellectual freedom in *1984* serves as a perfect example of his secularism. Instead of being anti-religious, the Party is eliminating religious institutions because it cannot accept any other authority or conviction. As Orwell sees it, the totalitarian state is a god unto itself in that it demands the same unflinching loyalty and faith that more conventional religions often do. This might be best said by the character Big Brother-the central figure of the Party's cult-like adoration-is omnipresent and omnipotent, much as is a god.

The Secularization of Power and Truth

The post-apocalyptic novel *1984* explores the more detailed functioning of totalitarian rule. In this world, every single aspect of daily life is dictated by the Party, headed by the shadowy figure of Big Brother. If the Party had the power to distort truth and delete any historical fact that does not fit into the particular reality they want to create-a reality in which the idea of objective truth would simply have no meaning-then the Party held absolute totalitarian control over their population.

Orwell explores the secularization of power in his masterpiece. The Party is in power, but its authority does not rest on religious authority or divinity. It is the Party's power to distort and alter language, history, and concepts that sustains them. This is perhaps encapsulated best by the concept of "doublethink," or the ability to maintain two contradictory points of view simultaneously. Nor does the Party lean on religious fundamentalism to enforce absolute loyalty.

It also criticizes how secular ideologies that demand equal measures of loyalty could replace religious authority in totalitarian states. In a totalitarian state, the Big Brother character is an all-knowing, omnipresent secular god. Slogans like "War is Peace" and "Freedom is Slavery" resemble theological paradoxes, meant to destroy free thinking. Or, at least, Orwell's secular argument in the novel is that one can have no hold on any objective reality whatsoever in a state-controlled society. Resistance to the powers that be is all but impossible.

In *1984*, the churches are either unavailable or too inappropriate for their purpose. Only two references to the church are made in the setting of the dystopian novel, once in the rhyme which Mr. Charrington partly remembered and O'Brien completed, and secondly, when Julia prepares the meeting place for the second time after the trip. It is only a vague memory in each of these references, and literally removed from the daily lives of society, where churches are referred to in rhymes, having names such as bells:

‘Oranges and lemons,’ say the bells of St Clement’s,
‘You owe me three farthings,’ say the bells of St Martin’s,
‘When will you pay me?’ say the bells of Old Bailey,
‘When I grow rich,’ say the bells of Shoreditch (Orwell, 2000).

A crucial topic to cover when examining the work from a secular perspective is why the government wants to eradicate the religious issue from Oceania. The government should be the only authority in order to control society, and this authority should make people feel powerless. People feel strong spiritually and may rebel against the government's persecution if they continue to believe in a creator and a religion. People become more emotionally and spiritually robust when they believe in a creator and a religion. The government destroys religious components like churches and shrines because it is aware of this dangerous circumstance. In reference to the churches, it would not be incorrect to say that the atomic bombs and battles demolished the churches and, consequently, their religion, depriving the people of Oceania of any form of religious belief. The dominance of the government causes Oceania's culture to lose faith in religion, as Julia and Winston show by having sex in the church. After all of these terrible occurrences in Oceania, the scene and the physical state of the churches now clearly demonstrate the rejection of institutionalized religion:

During the month of May there was only one further occasion on which they actually succeeded in making love. That was in another hiding-place known to Julia, the belfry of a ruinous church in an almost-deserted stretch of country where an atomic bomb had fallen thirty years earlier. It was a good hiding-place [...] (p. 117).

Animal Farm and *1984* are examples of Orwell's secular critique of dogma and authority. Those in power within these worlds are comprehensively corrupted as there is no ethical or divine check on their power. Orwell's portrayal of how values may be so easily corrupted in the pursuit of power depicts his pessimism regarding human nature.

Secular themes in these narratives highlight the risks of living a life in a society where the political expedient takes precedence over moral and ethical motivations. In *Animal Farm*, the pigs behave selfishly, while the foundational ideals of the revolution—equality, justice, and freedom—are

systematically destroyed. In *1984*, the struggle for power by the Party has left individuals disarrayed and bereft, repressing even the truth itself.

Conclusion

In conclusion, George Orwell's *Animal Farm* and *1984* are incredibly deep analyses of the process of secularization and how - through the decline in the habit of religion and the growth of the habit of secularist ideologies - that could take hold and bend society to their will. First, in *Animal Farm*, Orwell examines how the use of religion-Moses and his fables about Sugarcandy Mountain-appropriates the rule of the higher class to tranquilize the oppressed. The lack of firm religious values enables the pigs to take advantage of the animals in a similar way that totalitarian regimes use ideological dogma, replacing religious belief as a means of subduing the masses. The novel illustrates how ideological systems, like religious doctrines, can be twisted and distorted to serve the ends of those in power and develop a form of servitude as manipulative as religious exploitation.

Similarly, *1984* dives deeper into what happens as a result of a completely secular state, where the Party takes the place of religion and morality with an omnipresent, god-like figure known as Big Brother. Orwell depicts a world in which religious structures have been eliminated, and the Party has a certain level of control over truth, language, and thought paralleling the function of religion in a theocratic society. Yet, this secular dominance leads not to freedom or enlightenment but to oppression and the erasure of individuality. In Orwell's emphasis, through the rebellion of the protagonist Winston against this totalitarian regime, the importance of intellectual freedom and truth in resisting oppressive forces-both religious and secular dogmas-is brought to the fore.

Both novels reveal Orwell's critique of totalitarianism from a secular viewpoint. The political and ideological structures hereinafter come to replace the traditional religious structures but retain similar mechanisms of control. It would appear that Orwell's works suggest that while religion can indeed function as a manipulative tool of oppression, it is equally possible for secularist ideologies to ossify into dogma, corrupt, and thus repressive. Ultimately, Orwell emphasizes how any system, religious or secular, that relies on blind faith and obedience will pose a risk, while sharpness of mind and individual liberty function as a check on totalitarianism. Orwell took a secularist stance in the sense that in his critique of power, control, and freedom's fragility in the modern world; he provided an enduringly perspicacious critique.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

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