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Uncovering Militaristic Themes in George Orwell's Animal farm

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Abstract: Literature is an art form that allows us to explore the complexities of human experience through the written word. One classic example of literature is George Orwell's. Animal Farm George Orwell's Animal Farm is a tale that encompasses various themes. Different angles provide for an interesting take on the kind of subliminal messages that George Orwell was trying to convey. A literary analysis was used to uncover messages in the short story. It was observed that the short story draws heavily from a militaristic theme. This can be seen from the lines from the characters and even in critical parts in the story. These elements highlight how the George Orwell layered a militaristic theme. Such themes bring about insights in which readers can learn. Animal Farm is a timeless and powerful work that continues to captivate readers with its vivid characters, incisive commentary on political power, and timeless themes of oppression, corruption, and revolution.

Keyword: Animal Farm, Military Themes, Literary Analysis.

1. INTRODUCTION

Animal Farm is a tale that encompasses various themes. Different angles provide for an interesting take on the kind of subliminal messages that George Orwell was trying to convey. Perhaps this is made possible by what the reader brings into the abstraction of the plethora of concepts that can be extracted within the story. It is as if the reader plays a pivotal role in bringing life to the text. It was even argued that the professional readers would have no special knowledge that would distinguish them from common readers. Thus, perpetuating the subjectivity of a Literary Analysis [1].

It was proposed that literary analysis is subjective [2]. Readers bring their own experiences to the reading experience. Some will find a text interesting; others will have a contradictory opinion. Some will see things one way; others another. That is the joy and beauty

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of reading. The key is to teach the reader how to best defend his opinion, and then respect that opinion. Like what can be drawn from the Reader Response Theory [3].

Based on the arguments above, Animal farm can be digested and then interpreted in different ways. In the context of this paper, the paper will be analysed components of the Animal through specific elements that perpetuate the militaristic theme that evident in the novel. Elements like the character Old Major, lines uttered by the Old Major, military cadence and plot points.

2. METHODOLOGY

This qualitative study employs a literary analysis as an approach. A literary analysis involves examining all the parts of a novel, play, short story, or poem—elements such as character, setting, tone, and imagery—and thinking about how the author uses those elements to create certain effects. In the case of this study, the source text is the novel written by George Orwell entitled "Animal Farm". Other literary studies also employed a similar approach [4-5].

3. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Let me start the analysis in the beginning of the story. The Old Major addresses the animals, calling them, "Comrades." The statement as well as the name of the character suggests a military theme. From the start of the story, the author does not shy away from a militaristic tone. The name of the character "Major" is derived from an army officer of high rank. Further, the manner of how the Major addresses the other animals in the farm as "Comrades" can also be attributed to the militaristic tone the story sets. The term Comrade means a fellow soldier or member of the armed services. This presents that the Major identifies the animals present within the farm as a military unit. The initial part of the story focuses on the Major and he articulates his wisdom to the animals. It is as if a military leader is addressing his compatriots in arms. This can be observed when the Major shares his wisdom to the animals. The Major explains that over his lifetime, he has come to the conclusions that "No animal in England is free" and "The life of an animal is misery and slavery" He further adds that animals' domination by Man is the sole reason they cannot be free, happy, and fulfilled. Man, overworks animals only to rob them of the fruits of their labor and treats them only well enough to survive and provide more labor. When Man is done with an animal, he slaughters it cruelly. The words which were shared by Major implicitly incites rebellion to the minds of the animals present in the meeting.

Let us carefully look at some of the words which were mentioned by the Major. "The life of an animal is misery and slavery" The line suggests that life of an animal is not worth living. The adjectives used by the Major are sharp in describing the plight of animals. It was described by Major that it is the animals the keep the farm afloat. This is evident when the major highlights the labor that only the animals can do. In addition, the major has also pointed out the resources produced by the animals which only go to humans. The Major further antagonizes the humans in the statement "All men are enemies". The Major then mentions a

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series of actions which were deemed atrocious, but the most important tidbit is on equality. No Animal must never be tyrants over their own kind. All the animals are brothers regardless of strength or cleverness. The entire discourse of the Major ultimately culminates with the song Beasts of England. The said song through the animals into excitement of the thought of freedom. The kind of freedom that can only be attained through a revolution. Though the Major met his end prior to the revolution the seeds that he had planted have grown.

If we go back to the Beasts of England, this can be treated as a close parallel to a military cadence. Cadences are call and response marching songs sung by military personnel during drill and ceremony. This music originated in the United States in 1943 and has spread to militaries across the world. It is typically heard at basic training installations where it is used to help re-socialize trainees into soldiers and during unit physical training. The subject matter of these songs was quite varied. Some of the songs focused on the mundane such as the general lack of food, or the unseemliness of the officers. Others discussed wartime leaders, slavery, pride and victory, and the shock of defeat. A very popular Civil War song is the "Battle Hymn of the Republic" by Julia Ward Howe, which helped shift public perception of the Civil War from a secular struggle to a more sacred "crusade against slavery [6-7]. It is evident that the Beasts of England can be attributed as the military cadence of the animals in the farm. The animals have become united as a military unit not only because the Major have provided glaring realities but also introducing a song that banded all the animals together.

To further establish the militaristic theme of the story, a revolution ensued on the part of the animals. The revolution was a success and thus Manor farm was renamed Animal farm. Months after the humans tried to take back the farm of Mr. Jones. To defend animal farm, a military strategy was concocted by Snowball in order to strategize the defensive operations. The story even references the campaigns of Julius Caesar as the basis for Snowball's military intelligence. Armed with such wisdom Snowball together with the other animals were successful in driving off the human invasion. The animals even awarded the forerunners of the military defense which were Boxer and Snowball. The award can be liked to that of medal of valor. An award that is conferred to a soldier who has demonstrated great deal of bravery and sacrifice that makes the recipient distinguished from his fellow comrades. The said bravery was clearly demonstrated by both Boxer and Snowball when they fought for the animal farm.

To sum up the militaristic themes is evident in how certain characters are named as well as specific plot points scattered in the story. These plot points are as follows; Major imparting his wisdom to the animals, the Revolution, the invasion of humans and the awards given to Boxer and Snowball.

4. CONCLUSION

This study was able to uncover the militaristic themes in the George Orwell's Animal Farm. These are evident in the components the make up the story. From the characters, lines uttered and even references that turn out to have a militaristic theme. Stories have concepts

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that extend to real scenarios. This can be observed in the characters, certain plot points and lines uttered by characters Such was the case of Animal with the militaristic themes observed.

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