

**تمثيل الماركسية في رواية روالد دال
"السيد الفوكس الرائع"**

**Representation of Marxism in Roald Dahl's
Novel *Fantastic Mr. fox***

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الكلمات المفتاحية: السيد فوكس الرائع، روالد دال، النظرية الماركسية، الصراع الطبقي، البروليتاريا، البرجوازية، المقاومة، العمال، الرأسمالية

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الملخص

غالبًا ما تُعتبر قصة "السيد فوكس الرائع" لروالد دال قصة أطفال ساحرة، إلا أنها تحمل في طياتها معانٍ قيّمة عند تحليلها من منظور النظرية الأدبية الماركسية. يركز هذا النهج على مواضيع الصراع الطبقي، والعمل، ومقاومة القمع الرأسمالي. يُصوّر النص ثنائية واضحة بين البرجوازية، ممثلةً بالمزارعين الأثرياء والمستغلين بوجيس وبانس وبين، والبروليتاريا، ممثلةً بالسيد فوكس وجمعيته السرية. تستكشف القصة آليات القمع التي تتبعها الطبقة الحاكمة، والمقاومة الجماعية للمظلومين، وإعادة توزيع الموارد كإطاحة بالهيمنة الرأسمالية. يتجلى نقد دال الأيديولوجي لجشع الطبقة الرأسمالية وتدميرها في الفساد الأخلاقي المبالغ فيه للمزارعين، بينما يُجسّد السيد فوكس شخصية بطل بروليتاري مُختلق، مُوجّه نحو المجتمع. يسلط هذا التحليل الضوء على إمكانات النص كموقع لاستكشاف الديناميكيات الاجتماعية والاقتصادية وانتصار المقاومة الجماعية.

Abstract

Roald Dahl's *Fantastic Mr. Fox* is often considered a charming children's story, but it also contains rich layers of meaning when analyzed through the lens of Marxist literary theory. This approach focuses on themes of class struggle, labor, and resistance to capitalist oppression. The text depicts a clear dichotomy between the bourgeoisie, represented by the wealthy and exploitative farmers Boggis, Bunce, and Bean, and the proletariat, embodied by Mr. Fox and his secret society. The story examines the oppressive mechanisms of the ruling class, the collective resistance of the oppressed, and the redistribution of resources as a means of overthrowing capitalist domination. Dahl's ideological critique of the greed and destruction of the capitalist class is evident in the exaggerated moral corruption of the farmers, while Mr. Fox serves as an invented, community-oriented proletarian hero. This analysis highlights the potential of the text as a site for exploring socio-economic dynamics and the triumph of collective resistance.



1.1 Roald Dahl as a Novelist

The British short story writer, screenwriter, novelist and poet Roald Dahl, whose works regarded to be very significant in the core of English literary works, a writer who has been appreciated since the mid of 19 century. Together, J. McRae and R. Carter consider Dahl as the writer of English children's literature in the last part of 20th century (Carter and McRae 14). The aspect of characters and themes treated, he rapidly known throughout the world remarkably so that a large number of They have been adapted for cinema and theatre. The British author Roald Dahl has written successfully for adults and children. His collections were remarkable at the very beginning for his of inspiring horror stories for adults for instance *Someone Like You* 1954 and *Kiss Kiss* 1959. Later he resumes to became a best-selling author and writes for children with titles like, *Matilda* 1988, *The Witches* 1983, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* 1964. Dahl's works inspired the general tendency in literary criticism to be studied in different divisions as if Dahl was a two headed writer who wrote for various audiences with no stylistic, thematic, or literary connection among the two. Therefore, Mark West has pointed out for his point of view as a critic that, " the major divisions in Dahl's writing career have led to similar divisions in the criticism of his works" (West ix).

Roald Dahl's children's works have always possessed a strange and fantastical quality that captivates young readers, drawing them into worlds full of imagination and wonder. His stories are often characterized by their vivid creativity, unusual heroes, and a lively storytelling style that appeals directly to a child's sense of curiosity and adventure. For example, "The BFG" introduces us to a big-hearted giant who collects dreams and whispers them softly into the ears of sleeping children, creating a world where even the greatest creatures have a gentle side. In "The Witches", Dahl tells a dark yet humorous tale of witches who plot to take over the world of children by turning them into mice, a plot so wild and exciting that it ignites a child's fascination with the extraordinary. Meanwhile, "Fantastic Mr. Fox" tells the escapist cunning of a sharp and agile fox who repeatedly outsmarts three greedy and ruthless farmers, serving as a celebration of ingenuity and resilience. Dahl's mastery lies in his ability to blend fantasy with a touch of darkness, creating stories that resonate with young readers while challenging their imaginations to explore new possibilities.

According to Riita Oittinen, these are linguistic expressions that create mental representations based on the receiver's assumptions or prior knowledge, as well as the mind's ability to create associations based on this information (Oittinen 92). As we can see, relevance theory relies heavily on the cognitive process of making connections to what is offered, and this knowledge and experience is also culturally relevant. While Dahl's stories



highlight the vulnerability of children to be shocked or may experience trauma, the main character exposes how childhood can be an ultimately triumphant, isolating, and hard experience. From those characters' point of view, life sometimes is not beautiful, and the child needs to learn so quickly.

1.2.Literature Review

A literature review on the representation of Marxism in Roald Dahl's "*Fantastic Mr. Fox*" would likely explore the novel's portrayal of class struggle, capitalism, and the exploitation of nature, arguing that while not explicitly Marxist, it uses elements of Marxist thought to critique the human system and its impact on nature. The review would analyze how the farmers represent the capitalist class, while Mr. Fox and his family represent the oppressed, highlighting the conflict between their interests and the farmers' exploitation of the land and animals.

1.3 Marxism theory

Marxism emphasizes the plight of the working class within capitalist societies and seeks to propose solutions while empowering communities (Chikwado 115). Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels argued that all aspects of life—cultural, social, educational, and religious—are influenced by economics. They categorized communities based on their economic status and ownership of material goods. Developed by the German philosopher Karl Marx, Marxism emerged as a response to the historical classification of society into social classes, which has led to ongoing struggles between them (Barbalet, 2015). Furthermore, Marxism aims not just to pinpoint issues but also to provide solutions that enable oppressed classes to improve their circumstances. Marx believed that the social and economic dynamics of a society shape all ideological systems, with the economy significantly influencing the surrounding social structure through imposed hegemony.

Roald Dahl's position regarding Soviet Russia was unequivocally belligerent, motivated more by his perception of the violent and brutal reality of his regime than by any ideological opposition to Marxism itself. Dahl, known for his sharp wit and intransigence on many issues, found the harshness and aggressiveness of Soviet policies deeply disturbing. His views reveal a pragmatic perspective, as he explained that it was not communism as a political theory that concerned him, but rather the destructive consequences of its implementation in the real world under Soviet rule. This nuanced distinction highlights his ability to distinguish between theoretical frameworks and their practical applications.

Dahl's concern for Soviet Russia was closely linked to his broader concerns about global conflicts. As he put it, "I am not afraid of communism. "We fear war" (Sturrock 305). This statement highlights an important aspect of Dahl's worldview: a profound aversion to the



destructive nature of war, which he saw as an inevitable consequence of escalating tensions between ideologically opposed superpowers. Although he refrained from characterizing his feelings as fear, describing them as "terrified" of war, the sentiment reveals a deep concern for the catastrophic consequences of armed conflict. This perspective was likely shaped by Dahl's experiences during World War II, which gave him direct exposure to the horrors of global warfare. His writings, both fiction and personal reflections, often dealt with themes of power, cruelty, and human suffering, also reflecting his disdain for the violent realities he associated with the Soviet regime. In this sense, Dahl's hostile attitude toward Soviet Russia can be understood not as a simple rejection of communism, but as a broader critique of the violence and systematic oppression that he saw as endemic to its order.

2.1 Marxism in *Fantastic Mr. Fox*

Fantastic Mr. Fox plays a significant role as literary work in different stages of time, presenting the reality of society of the person about whom the novel is written. Therefore, the novel can expose the reality of the author or the personal experiences. It can also refer to general issues related to social problems and the hated classism that categorizes people based on their social and economic status. The novel considered to be one of the most prominent literary genres that embodies the truth of man in his many problems and therefore the book and novels after the event emerged and explain the reason that came after the Second World War, which justifies that emphasis established by the post-event authors on the rights of the novel as a more formal literary genre than other literary genres (Brantley, 2017, p. 13). Roald Dahl's *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them is a novel* that, although primarily intended for children, offers several levels of interpretation when analyzed through the prism of Marxist literary theory. This theory, based on the writings of Karl Marx, criticizes the socio-economic structures of a text, especially the dynamics of class struggle, labor, and capital.

Dahl's novel focuses on the conflict between Mr. Fox and three wealthy farmers. The three farmers were "as mean and wicked as any man you could meet, their names were Farmer Boggis, Farmer Bunce, and Farmer Bean" (Dahl 2). Boggis, Bunce, and Bean lend themselves to an exploration of class antagonisms, modes of production, and resistance to capitalist oppression. Class struggle and oppression. At the heart of *Fantastic Mr. Fox* is a clear division between the oppressed and the oppressors. The farmers represent the bourgeoisie, a class characterized by wealth, land ownership, and control over production since "the beginning of time." Boggis, Bunce, and Bean accumulate their resources, enjoying the surplus while exploiting nature and labor to maintain their wealth. Greed and its monopolization resonate. Marxist critics of capitalist



accumulation and the unequal distribution of resources, Mr. Fox and his family embody the proletariat. They depend on the farmers' resources for survival, but are still subject to their control and hostility. The farmers' attempt to destroy Mr. Fox's pit symbolizes the repressive measures used by the bourgeoisie to maintain their dominance and suppress resistance

In the sense of labor and resistance, the novel also illustrates the proletariat's ability to resist and overthrow capitalist oppression through collective action and ingenuity. Mr. Fox's digging to gain access to the farmers' food can be interpreted as a way of reclaiming the fruits of labor unjustly withheld by the ruling class.

‘And now,’ said Mr Fox, ‘we shall have to borrow from our friend Bunce two of those useful push-carts over in the corner.’ He and Badger fetched the push-carts, and the ducks and geese and hams and bacon were loaded on to them. Quickly the push-carts were lowered through the hole in the floor. The animals slid down after them. Back in the tunnel, Mr Fox again pulled the floorboards very carefully into place so that no one could see they had been moved. (Dahl 36)

This act of "redistribution" reflects Marxist ideals of questioning the ownership of resources by the few in order to serve the needs of the many.

Furthermore, the solidarity shown by illegal animals (e.g. badgers and rabbits) reflects the Marxist principle of collective struggle. Together, they break the farmers' monopolies and ensure the survival of their community, illustrating the potential power of a united proletariat. Ideological criticism Dahl's depiction of the farmers as grotesque and morally corrupt highlights the author's implicit criticism of the capitalist class. His relentless pursuit of Mr. Fox, despite its futility, highlights the destructive nature of capitalist greed and the lengths to which the ruling class will go to protect its wealth.

They were still singing as they rounded the final corner and burst in upon the most wonderful and amazing sight any of them had ever seen. The feast was just beginning. A large dining-room had been hollowed out of the earth, and in the middle of it,



seated around a huge table, were no less than
twenty-nine animals. (Dahl 40)

Meanwhile, Mr. Fox, portrayed as intelligent, resourceful, and community-oriented, embodies an idealized proletarian hero who triumphs over oppression through his ingenuity and solidarity.

Conclusion

Roald Dahl's *Fantastic Mr. Fox* offers a compelling narrative for examining class dynamics and resistance through a Marxist perspective. The novel criticizes capitalist accumulation and the greed of the bourgeoisie, embodied by the grotesque farmers, while celebrating the ingenuity, solidarity, and resistance of the proletariat, represented by Mr. Fox and his clandestine allies. The resolution of the story, where collective action triumphs over capitalist oppression, reflects Marxist ideals of resource redistribution and community survival. This analysis highlights the novel's multi-layered narrative

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