

# Revisiting George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, Yaşar Kemal's *The Sultan of the Elephants and the Red-Bearded Lama Ant* within the Context of Socialist Realism<sup>1,2</sup>

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**Abstract** English author George Orwell (1903-1950)'s novella *Animal Farm* (1945) is an allegorical portrayal of the difficulty of creating classless societies because of power-hungry leaders. Likewise, Yaşar Kemal (1923-2015)'s children's novel entitled *The Sultan of the Elephants and the Red-Bearded Lama Ant* (1975) depicts elephants and ants in an anthropomorphic portrayal of totalitarianism. This study intends to disentangle two authors' socialist realist depiction through these works from distinct literatures. Therefore, the study aims at comparing and contrasting Orwell's and Kemal's selected works to indicate how socialist realism functions through the genre, characters and content in the works. The study applies for the tenets of socialist realist literature stated by Maxim Gorky (1868-1963), who is among the leading founders of socialist realist literary theory, to enrich the close reading of the selected works. The analysis indicates that although they appeared in different countries and years, they bear parallelism in terms of genre, characters and content within the context of socialist realism. However, while *Animal Farm* warns against the betrayal of the revolution through his suspicious approach to the realisation of a socialist society, *The Sultan of the Elephants and the Red-Bearded Lama Ant* creates hope out of despair for a socialist society.

**Key words** Yaşar Kemal; *The Sultan of the Elephants and the Red-Bearded Lama*

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2 Translations of Turkish quotations are by the author of this article unless otherwise stated in the reference list.

*Ant*; George Orwell; *Animal Farm*; socialist realism

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### Introduction

After its advent in Russia, socialist realism appeared in the literary works of different countries. Fedor Gladkov's *Cement* (1925), Maxim Gorky's *The Life of Klim Samgin* (1926-1936) and Iurii Krymov's *The Tanker Derbent* (1937-1938) are among Russian works of socialist realism which can be regarded as canon in the Russian literature (Clark, 2001, p. 176). The reflection of Marxism and socialism also came into sight through socialist realist works in Western literature. In the West, French Revolution (1789) and particularly Industrial Revolution, which characterised the nineteenth and twentieth century-Western life through a growing state economy, colonial and industrial enterprises and the deepening gap between the private property owners and workers paved the way for problematising the relationship between individual and society. While the nineteenth century was dominated by works of realism which depict the sufferings of the working-class and poor people, socialist realism appeared in different genres in the twentieth century. German playwright Bertolt Brecht based his play entitled *Mother Courage and Her Children* (1939) on Gorky's *Mother* by fusing the features of socialist realism and the ones of epic theater. While depicting the sociopolitical terrors of the Nazi Germany, the play connects the setting of the Thirty Years War in Europe to the contemporary capitalist society (Shookman 464-465). Furthermore, *Animal Farm* (1945) by Eric Arthur Blair (1903-50), better known by his pen name, George Orwell, represents a socialist realist approach to totalitarian capitalism through dystopian genre, as will be detailed later in the study.

In Turkey, socialism, which appeared in the 1920s, acted “both as an ideology and a technique of action designated to achieve rapid modernization through the rational organization of economic life” particularly between the 1930s and the 1960s (Karpat, 1967, p. 157). In the mid-twentieth century, most Turkish authors emphasised socio-economic issues including exploitation and the gap between the oppressor and the oppressed in society (Moran, *Eleştirel Bir Bakış* 7). Many Turkish young people opposed capitalism by adopting Marxist revolutionary and socialist ideas. Social realism, based on Marxist ideology, was adapted by many authors, including Nazım Hikmet (1902–1963), Suat Derviş (1903–1972), Sabahattin Ali (1907–1948), Kemal Tahir (1910–1973), Orhan Kemal (1914–1970), Aziz Nesin (1915–1995), Yusuf Atılgan (1921–1989), Yaşar Kemal (1923–2015), and Fakir Baykurt (1929–1999), who were concerned with the inequality between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie especially in village novels telling social issues in villages (Moran, *Eleştirel Bir Bakış* 17). As Kaya argues, as in most non-Western societies, modernising Turkey developed two contradictory approach to the West which was both admired and criticised (283). Thus, although industrialisation and Western notions represent societal development in these authors’ novels, they criticise these same forces for dehumanising people. Deriving their force from Marxist and communist ideologies, these authors urge readers to support the rights of the exploited or othered subjects against characters that represent the bourgeoisie within the context of socialist realism.

Rather than the fantasy world of witches, fairies, or giants, the 1970s’ social realist phase in Turkish literature introduced child readers to the bitter realities of the capitalist system, which progressively worsens the life conditions of the proletariat, including villagers, industry workers, and animals (Konuk 111). In the 1970s and afterwards, Turkish children’s novels conveyed a sense of hope for equality to children, who were regarded as “the protector and saviour of the future” (Konuk 36). Thus, they drew attention to the proletariat, whose revolutionary voice would overturn every exploitative system. This led some Turkish authors to argue that individuals should confront the truth of their societies and construct attitudes to them in young readers, paving the way for a fairer system in the future. Yaşar Kemal was among the twentieth-century Turkish authors to have criticised capitalism, imperialism and totalitarianism through his works. His novel *The Sultan of the Elephants and the Red-Bearded Lame Ant* (1977), intended for children, is read by readers of all ages. That it can be compared to Orwell’s *Animal Farm* indicates that exploitation is not merely a national issue, entailing that socialism is the way to escape oppression through collaborative resistance.

The study intends to compare and contrast Orwell's novella *Animal Farm* and Kemal's novel *The Sultan of the Elephants and the Red-Bearded Lama Ant* technically and thematically within the context of socialist realism in order to exemplify how the approaches to the possibility of an ideal socialist society is reflected through works, produced in different cultures. The selected works are two representative twentieth-century works written in the fable tradition. *Animal Farm* was published in Great Britain in 1945, while *The Sultan of the Elephants and the Red-Bearded Lama Ant* was published in Turkey about three decades later. Both books portray the socio-political realities of a dystopian world in an anthropomorphic way. This study argues that despite their differing dates and places of publication, both of the works follow the same technical and thematic pattern while exposing how totalitarianism retains authority over subjects through a range of political methods. It also indicates that the works differ in their expectations of executing socialism for a better life because unlike Kemal's optimistic novel, *Animal Farm* is concerned with the conflict between individual desires and social issues which may lead to the violation of socialist purposes by individual's overwhelming hunger for power. However, *The Sultan of the Elephants and the Red-Bearded Lama Ant* is a critical dystopia, propagandising socialism as the way to escape oppression through collaborative resistance for a more inhabitable system in the future.

Considering Maxim Gorky's socialist realist theory, the tenets of which he states in *On Literature: Short Articles*, this study aims to explore the reflection of socialist realism in English and Turkish literatures with particular attention to the selected works. Deriving its force from Marxist philosophy and Soviet communism, the socialist realist theory is an appropriate tool to illuminate the Orwellian criticism of the Soviet's failure in creating an ideal socialist society and abusing the proletariat's labour force in *Animal Farm*. Moreover, it facilitates to comprehend how socialist realism strengthens Kemal's optimistic approach to socialism, exemplified through *The Sultan of the Elephants and the Red-Bearded Lama Ant*.

### **A Comparative Analysis of *Animal Farm*, *The Sultan of the Elephants and the Red-Bearded Lama Ant* within the Context of Socialist Realism**

In *On Literature*, Gorki states the role of socialist realist literature in depicting that the source of evil and conflict in the society lies in the class distinction among people (235). Thus, he asserts the Marxist viewpoint that the world has witnessed the war of the classes throughout human history (Marx and Engels, *Manifesto* 14) especially after the change from the feudal system to the capitalist system of power

which has resulted in an unbalanced economic and social relationship between the private holder and the worker. In this aspect, socialist realism feeds on the Marxist approach as it creates hope out of despair for the proletariat (Kew 18-19). As socialist realist works which are set in “the traditional village, the collective farm, the ruralized city, and the new settlements of blast furnaces, a country struggling to construct modernity and socialism at the same time” (Booker 665), Orwell’s and Kemal’s works portray animals’ rural life. The works benefit from defamiliarisation as a primary literary strategy on which to base their criticism of the prevailing or potential social and political system. In this context, the use of anthropomorphic representation, where human traits such as speaking and wearing clothes are attributed to animals or non-living beings, is an efficient literary device to defamiliarise the socio-political realities represented (Lea 104-105). In particular, animal characters in fables enable authors to present satirical comments on ongoing social realities. As Dilidüzgün argues, they enable children to confront realities, allowing them to defeat their fears rather than escape them (38). In this aspect, anthropomorphology is a more efficient way to convey a message to children than direct training. The selected works depict how, in Marx and Engels’s words, “[s]ociety as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other: Bourgeoisie and Proletariat” (*Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* 22). In Kemal’s novel, an elephant called the Sultan represents exploitative power holders, while ants stand in for exploited hardworking people, the colonised or the working class (Şahin 115-116). Like Orwell, who associates oppressive figures with pigs whom he describes as “disgusting brutes” (*My Country* 451), Kemal states that “[c]onsumerism...turns people into gluttonous beasts” (Tharaud 205). On the other hand, Kemal notes on the back cover of the novel his regret about his choice of elephants to represent exploitative people as it may lead children to hate elephants, adding that no animal can be as evil as an exploitative human in life. In this respect, Kemal also uses anthropomorphism to soften the harsh social reality of class struggle among people and achieves a fusion of his political and artistic purpose to appeal to his child readers, as Orwell does for *Animal Farm* (*Age Like This* 7).

Orwell’s and Kemal’s selected works also have some common aspects in both the content and the literary form of the novel in the socialist realist context: both works problematise class distinction and exploitation in a totalitarian world populated by subjugated animals. The works portray the era of capitalism, when, as Baysal argues, “the human hegemony is observed most clearly” (206). The protagonists represent totalitarian capitalist leaders who benefit from the labour of the other animals. In both works, capitalism and totalitarianism go hand in hand, separating

the rich and the proletariat into unbalanced categories and denying democracy for all. Some people “blinded by their capitalistic ambition overexploits and destroys” the non-human world for their benefits (Çetiner 33), as represented by the protagonists of the works. In *Animal Farm*, Napoleon forces hardworking animals to build a windmill to produce electricity and pull the plough, and for the chickens to hatch more eggs and the cows to give more milk. While the working animals become exhausted, poorer, and hungrier, the pigs become fuller, wealthier, and more comfortable, justifying their privileges because they are “brainworkers” and arguing that they bear the whole burden of the farm (Orwell, *Animal Farm* 51).<sup>1</sup> Moreover, they use science to explain why they consume all the apples and milk, arguing it is scientifically proven that such comestibles “contain substances absolutely necessary to the well-being of a pig” (51). Similarly, in *The Sultan of the Elephants*, the Sultan, who exercises sovereignty over the ants and their country, makes the ants build palaces for him, fill the storehouses with food from all over the world, and serve him by declaring his authority and superiority as he dreams of “leading a heavenly life by taking advantage of the ants” (Kemal 41).<sup>2</sup> That the working animals commodify themselves and become alienated from their environment and themselves while attempting to produce ever more goods asserts the Marxist point that “[t]he worker becomes all the poorer the more wealth he produces” (*Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* 71). The unjust exchange between the pigs and the other animals in *Animal Farm* and the elephants and the ants in *The Sultan and the Elephants* results in the commodification of labour.

The thematic similarity between Kemal’s novel and Orwell’s novella is constituted by the common strategies that the dictators in both works follow to facilitate the other animals’ subjugation. First, in both works people are declared the common enemy of animals, and both works depict, in Gorky’s words, “partisan war waged by individuals [/the proletariat] against bourgeois property” (317). In *The Sultan of the Elephants*, humans are regarded as “the only creature that consumes without producing” in the world (28). In *Animal Farm*, the respected pig Old Major warns in his inspiring speech before his death that “[a]ll the habits of Man are evil” (31). Old Major accuses humans of betraying animals, encouraging the farm animals to rebel against the injustices inflicted upon them by Mr. Jones, end the master–slave relationship they labour under, and start a fresh order in which all will live together peacefully (31-32) because “[a]ll animals are equal” (31). However, Old Major’s

1 Henceforward, the quotations from *Animal Farm* are cited merely with page numbers.

2 Henceforward, the quotations from *The Sultan of the Elephants* are cited merely with page numbers.

speech satirises Karl Marx's *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), which argued that communism is the sole way out for the working class, as what has been promised is later negated (Joshi 76). Under Napoleon's leadership and Snowball's mentorship, the pigs gain control of the political system. The "animalism" they demand supposedly promotes equality and freedom among the proletariat farm animals; however, Napoleon's totalitarian authority enslaves the other animals, creating a new class system that merely replaces the old system under Mr. Jones. Thus, as Meyers states, Orwell indicates that the pure illusion of Soviet communism is doomed to fail in creating a classless society because of its power-hungry leaders (32). Thus, the pigs become indistinguishable from the humans against whom they originally rebelled. They wear clothes, do business with traders, and sell the other animals' produce without consent in return for alcohol or other material riches. The pigs become the "lord of all the animals" (28) like men. Moving away from Old Major's Leninist communist approach, also followed by Snowball, Napoleon brings in totalitarianism for his own and the other pigs' benefit. The taste for power results in the corruption and disappearance of the revolutionary utopian socialist ideals, replaced by a capitalist system in which the pig rulers get to the point where they cannot be distinguished from their former enemy, the bourgeoisie humans.

In *The Sultan of the Elephants*, too, humans are depicted as the source of all evils which range from capitalism and imperialism to every other exploitative system. As Uğurlu notes, the Sultan uses fear of humans to gain authority over the ants (501). Nevertheless, like Napoleon in *Animal Farm*, the Sultan ends up replicating human behaviour in the ants' country by making the ants the elephants' servants. Just as Napoleon antagonises Snowball, who struggles to realise Old Major's utopian communist life in which all animals would be equal, the Sultan declares the rebellious red-bearded lame ant an enemy in addition to human beings. He then associates hatred against red ants with that against humans, who are negatively portrayed (Uğurlu 501). As in *Animal Farm*, the novel satirises the exploitation of animals. In the context of socialist realist, both works present, in Gorky's words, "[s]elf-criticism" which is essential for the comprehension of reality (341) and the adaptation of a revolutionary attitude for an ideal socialist society.

Another common point that makes the Sultan resemble Napoleon as a dictator is the use of constructed truths that distinguish the oppressor from the oppressed and justify oppression. Both leaders create chaos and fear among the animals they exploit. They make them the enemy of each other and prevent any potential resistance to their authority through divide and rule policies by creating abstract beliefs. As Orwell argues, "[t]he more abstract the idea and the language expressed in it, the

more ideological the work, and vice versa” (Colls 10-11). The dictators feed animosity and murder over love and compassion because as Orwell states, totalitarian regimes discipline not only subjects’ actions but also their thoughts and emotions (*My Country* 135). In this regard, the Sultan calls elephants to collaborate to sustain their lineage and future against the so-called invasive ants, thereby justifying their future exploitation of the ants. Addressing the elephants as “*My brothers, soldiers*” (12), the Sultan encourages the elephant army to want revenge against the ants, who are supposedly thirsty for the elephants’ blood (12). Blinded by this abstract idea, the elephants are compelled to realise their ideological mission. Likewise, in *Animal Farm*, animals become volunteer “slaves” (57), working to realise their utopian farm for their own prosperity not for Mr. Jones’s. The hardworking animal Boxer keeps repeating “Napoleon is always right” (34) while working for the sake of collective purpose.

In both works, the exploitive leaders take the advantage of language to create and exert the constructed “truth” of the dominant power, about which Gorky warns the proletariat (90) because as Orwell argues, political language is produced to “make lies sound truthful and murder respectable” (*Collection of Essays* 931). In *Animal Farm*, titles such as “our Leader,” “Father of all Animals,” and “Protector of the Sheepfold” (93) are used to justify Napoleon’s superior status and his authority over all other animals. Because Old Major addresses the animals as “comrades” (p. 14, 15) and calls for them to revolt, Joshi regards him as a representation of Lenin whose utopian communist ideals paved the way for a totalitarian system (78). It is the Stalin’s communist discourse, which Gorky also uses in his speech in the Congress many times (29, 35, 46, 315, 341). Likewise, the Sultan disseminates knowledge via schools and media tools, including newspapers, television, and radio, which Orwell regards as “a crucial component of any strategy for cultural reform” (Bounds 129). The novella also exemplifies the role of books through which Napoleon gains puppies unquestioning support by shaping their minds in pigs’ ideology. It indicates that he knows how to have a human-like life through Jones’s children’s “old spelling book” (19-20). Similarly, in Kemal’s novel, as a result of an assimilative propaganda, the alienated ants begin to insult their families, ant friends, and fellow citizens and accept that “it is the elephants’ age” (43). In this respect, the insidious amendments of language, history, and law corrupt perceptions of reality, serving totalitarian ideology, which turns out to be “the most blatantly untruthful of all forms of discourse” (Bounds 148), concealing the truth rather than indicating it.

Considering the totalitarians’ taking advantage of language, it stands as one of the main points in socialist realism. Gorky reminds that language is human-made,

thus, it requires attention to ensure “the wholeness of the collective mentality” among the proletariat, who may also be victimised through the corruption of language, as it refers to the history of culture for a nation (89-92). In this respect, the Sultan deems language “the main problem” (57) because as the fundamental part of culture that enables the exchange of values and ideas it is needed to ideologically condition the ants. He forbids the ants from speaking their own language; indeed, he requires them to relinquish their own cultural and historical background, thereby erasing their past, because, he argues, suppressing the ants’ language is more effective than cutting off their heads (89). This emphasises how losing one’s language—and thus one’s culture, past, history, and ability to express oneself independently—facilitates exploiting a nation because such a “[l]oss of choice in language leads to the loss of particularization, and this leads to unconsciousness” in distinguishing the Self from the Other (Lea 137). The ants are convinced that obedient “noble” (83) ants who speak the elephants’ language will be rewarded by allowing them to reattain an ancestry—an elephant ancestry—because the elephant language, “elephish,” rather than the ant language, “antish,” is associated with civilisation. Believing this, the ants claim: “We should not fall behind in civilization while all creatures speak elephant language” (52). Language is used to uphold “a distorted, untruthful version of reality” (Lea 113). Ants who never speak their native language internalise the elephants’ justification for colonising their land and this prevents them from collaborating to thwart the elephants’ authority. The Sultan forbids the use of such words as “equality,” “freedom,” and “peace” (110) to prevent the ants attempting to rebel. Moreover, he bans the ants from using the word “imperialism” to hinder them thinking or talking about their exploitation. Indeed, the exclusion of some words from speech shows how exploitation is hidden from the consciousness of those who are exploited so they cannot resist even its implications. Thus, as Orwell argues, “to *preserve* [certain words] is always to *extend* them” (*My Country* 108, original emphasis) through perverted language. Similarly, Kemal also puts emphasis on the language through which he creates a bind to the reader and states that “the structure of the language has a great impact on the form and content of a novel” (Tharaud 204) to create a bind to the reader.

The Sultan produces specific combinations of words which differ from the oppressed ants’ native language to encode the prevailing oppressive ideology. He also introduces new terms to the language such as “eleph-ant” (*filkar*) to refer to ants. He suggests that they come from the elephant lineage, benefiting from the fact that the word “ant” (*karınca* in Turkish) is included in the word “elephant” (*fil* in Turkish). He also constructs the word “ant-eleph” (*karıncafil*) to refer to ants who

have graduated from elephant schools and can speak the elephant language fluently but “cannot see, hear, think and realize the realities” (175) about themselves. Furthermore, “elephantland” (*filistan*) refers to the elephant’s country, whereas “humanland” (*insanistan*) refers to the country inhabited by people. As Rai observes about Orwell’s novels, language functions as “the necessary and insidious means of the ‘totalitarian’ control of reality” (122) in subjugating people to the prevailing ideology without permitting questioning.

In *Animal Farm*, the utopian socialist notion that “[a]nimal must ever tyrannise over his own kind. Weak or strong, clever or simple, we are all brothers” (31) is revised later through some simple alterations on the words in the “Seven Commandments” for animals in the farm to render the pigs’ superiority sound plausible. “Four legs good, two legs bad!” is transformed into “Four legs good, two legs better!” (114) which has almost an opposite meaning by changing a single word. In time, the class distinction among animals, particularly between pigs and the others are intensified through the maxim “ALL ANIMALS ARE EQUAL BUT SOME ARE MORE EQUAL THAN OTHERS” (126). As Fowler argues, this statement stands as “a self-contradictory ‘justification’ for the superiority of the pigs” (76), problematising the meaning of “equality.” A similar contradiction also occurs in *The Sultan of the Elephants* in an imperialist context when the Sultan wants every ant to “die for becoming an elephant” (57). The brainwashed ants take on the ways of elephants: they eat like elephants, rub their hips against trees like elephants, and even suppose they are elephants. They are mocked by their provisional identity. That they imitate elephants suggests neither that their identities are entirely changed nor that coloniser and colonised enjoy equal rights. It exemplifies Yılmaz’s point that Westernisation turns out to be a handicap for the colonised who imitates the coloniser in all aspects (73). When the Sultan cannot cope with the ants, who become lazy because they imitate the elephants closely, he revises his strategy and exalts the ants, upholding the superiority of their race. He now suggests that the elephants are descended from the lineage of “noble” and “spectacular” ants and calls for unity and solidarity with all animals through the notion of “One for all, all for one” (68). He urges the ants to work in order to become as noble as the elephants. The ants become merely “machines, devoting themselves to elephantland” (175), as allowing the colonised to think would threaten the sustainability of their exploitation. Both Napoleon and the Sultan make the exploited animals work constantly so that they cannot even contemplate a way to fight against injustice.

Like Marx and Engels, Orwell argues that a classless and egalitarian society is possible through the struggle of the working class. However, opposed to commu-

nism being upheld through the “conquest of political power by the proletariats” (27), Orwell relies on socialism<sup>1</sup> as a way out of “all kinds of tyranny” (Armstrong 54-55). He expresses his distrust of communism, explicitly claiming that it could turn out to be fascism in time as in the Soviet Union (45). He states that the backbone of the struggle against tyranny was working-class people in the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) against the fascist totalitarian leader Francisco Franco (210). Despite Orwell’s pessimism, he ponders that “a concerted action of libertarian socialists” could change the totalitarian system one day (Bounds 27). His mere suspect is related to the proletariat’s interference with his individual desires, which threatens the wholeness of the society. Gorky resembles people who are blinded with the lust of “supreme power” with Doctor Faustus negotiating with the Devil preparing his own tragic end (61). In this respect, the resemblance of Napoleon and his followers to the capitalist men at the end of *Animal Farm* asserts Gorky’s point as they deviate from the collective consciousness of socialism and become alike capitalist bourgeoisie benefitting from the proletariat’s labour.

As different from Orwell, Kemal is more optimistic in his expectation for socialist society. Therefore, unlike Orwell who makes the story of the novella revolve around a “negative” hero like Napoleon, initiating his struggle with collective consciousness but ending up with individual desires, Kemal creates a protagonist who fits well to Gorky’s portrayal of “positive” hero. He adopts a socialist attitude against all forces that exploit and oppress the countrymen and threaten their happiness and peace (İpekçi). He asserts this when he associates the independence of the ants with the collaboration of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie elephants in the novel. As Moran argues, a social realist work not only represents the conflicts in the real world but also indicates where it goes by emphasising the “ideal” way out of it (*Edebiyat Kuramları* 54). Thus, it assigns the reader with both individual and societal responsibilities. The novelist conveys these duties through the “positive hero”.

From Gorky’s approach, “positive hero” is the literary character who is so “purposeful and conscious of his purposefulness [that] he can enter the privileged caste which is universally respected and called ‘positive heroes’ ” (Dennis 49). Such a “positive hero”, the red-bearded lame ant represents the working class as he is a blacksmith from a lineage of blacksmiths. According to Çiftlikçi, Kemal portrays blacksmiths in some of his novels as sophisticated and outspoken people who sustain their work as a family job and have a religious bond with fire (327). Kemal ap-

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1 Socialism differs from communism by opposing the communist notion of gathering all social and economic production under the control of the state, disallowing private property (Bottomore 501-502).

pears to rely on the conscious acts of the socialist working class, putting forward the socialist realist notion that they are capable of facing the hard realities of capitalism (Lea 117). To this end, the red-bearded ant is literate, reading widely for hours and contemplating a way out for all ants. His literateness also indicates his being positive hero, who is characterised by education and reading books (Gorky 341).

In Gorky's socialist realist view, socialist realist literary work concerned the struggle between the capitalist bourgeoisie and proletariat stands as a protest against the capitalist system and creates a fighting spirit for a better future (234-237). In this aspect, besides his job and literateness, his red colour also represents socialist identity striving against capitalism. Both Ulukepez and the chief call him "the red ant," referring to his communist identity against the Sultan's exploitation. In this respect, the ant provides working-class people with a rebellious voice in the novel. The red ant is the only one who disrespects and rebels against the totalitarian leader who constricts his freedom and attempts to exploit him and his nation. He represents Dennis's definition of "positive hero" who "has either no faults at all or else but a few of them—for example, he sometimes loses his temper a little" (49). In this aspect, he is so much like real men. However, he focuses on the purpose and strives for it. Therefore, the Sultan believes he is a potential danger as an unconformist for his authority because his rebellious thoughts could quickly be propagated among the animals, threatening the elephants' superiority. The red ant sparks a kind of resistance among the ants against the notion that they are obliged to serve the elephants and hoopoes to survive, declaring, "Ant countries belong to ants and we are free and independent" (190). His discourse of resistance represents an influential weapon, which he indeed points at the Sultan's exploitative totalitarian authority, reappropriating the Sultan's discourse, in Orwellian fashion, judging it to be lying propaganda (Bounds 151). This exemplifies Baccolini and Maylon's notion of the dystopian protagonist's resistance, which, according to them, "often begins with a verbal confrontation and the reappropriation of language . . ." (26). Thus, educating the proletariat through realist representation of life to transform them into warriors for an ideal socialist society is also another basic feature of socialist realism in literature (Gorky 262-266). Gorky underlines social education both for peasants and children who are required to learn that freedom of thought is possible only through the socialist system rather than the capitalist one (281-282). To this end, in literature, the socialist realist author creates an inspiring "positive" hero who affects the reader through his courage, action and creativity against class distinction (Gorky 238-239).

Another point in relation to "positive hero" is his/her capability of distinguishing between individualism and collectivism by foregrounding collective ac-

tion (Gorky 92-95). From this point of view, Gorky emphasises the socialist realist author's significant role as an ideology teacher organising proletariat for the struggle against capitalist forces. He regards the artist as the "ear, eye and heart" of his country and "the voice of his time" (58). For Gorky, thanks to the socialist realist author, art can serve as "a mighty weapon of socialist culture" (342) and it is "positive hero" that acts out socialist realist authors' role in text. More precisely, socialist realism enables the individual to comprehend that "life is action, creativity" necessitating people to live in conformity with both the nature and their requirements (Gorky 343), and the socialist realist author acts as "an engineer of human souls" by focusing on the social issue of the society s/he lives in (Clark 176). In both works, folk song strengthens collectivity consciousness for a socialist society. Gorky notes that the history of culture is comprised of songs, proverbs and sayings providing the proletariat with spiritual strength which is essential for fight capitalist forces (298-300). In both works, the use of song works as an agent of propaganda to reflect the rebellious spirit of the animals who struggle to free themselves from tyrannous forces. Songs represent the rebellious voice of the proletariat in both works.

In *Animal Farm*, Old Major introduces the song "Beasts of England," which expresses the free spirit necessary to live in "the golden future time" free from oppression (32); however, Napoleon replaces it with the song entitled "Comrade Napoleon" (81) including many praises about himself, thus, serving as a propaganda production of his totalitarianism. In the same vein, in *The Sultan of the Elephants*, the red-bearded lame ant musters all the ants against these subverted and manipulative notions through the ants' folk song, reminding the ants of their cultural identity and their past in which they were free, independent, equal, and happy. The song represents the revival of their freedom, motivating them to take back their own identity and fight against such villainy. The folk song, heard and felt only by the ants, who are true to their society, may be associated with the blood of the Turkish youth. The novel closes with an open-ended socialist statement: "When all ants of the world come together ..." (208). Thus, as in Orwell's novella, Kemal also presents a socialist way of creating a utopian world out of a dystopian one for all oppressed people, suggesting the whole through the words "the world." Kemal does this through a tiny lame animal who inspires the oppressed people to challenge the established authority as a socialist reconstruction of Marx's call in his manifesto: "WORKINGMEN OF ALL COUNTRIES UNITE!" (*Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* 243). In this regard, both socialist authors "evoke a future in which the people have been released from meaningless labour, freed from poverty and delivered into a world of substantive liberty" (Bounds 170).

## Conclusion

The study has performed a socialist realist reading on the basis of two works produced in different countries and years. George Orwell's *Animal Farm* and Yaşar Kemal's *The Sultan of the Elephants and the Red-Bearded Lame Ant*. Orwell's and Kemal's selected works exemplify how socialist realism functions through genre, character and content to criticise the growing gap between the bourgeoisie and the working class. Thus, they present the reader as an influential guide to see the light at the end of the struggle against the capitalist system. Both works are products of socialist realism, embedded in the dystopian genre drawing the portrayal of the bitter realities behind exploitation which is executed by spreading terror among the oppressed. On the other hand, anthropomorphic representation in the works smooths the bitter social reality that occurs because of oppression and exploitation in capitalist societies. The comparative analysis of the two works indicates that despite their similarities in techniques employed to depict the totalitarian regime of capitalist forces and to present socialism as a way out for the proletariat, they differ in the protagonist they focus on. In the context of socialist realism, *Animal Farm* revolves around a "negative hero" who betrays the revolutionary ideals of socialism as a victim of his individual desires, whereas *The Sultan of the Elephants and the Red-Bearded Lame Ant* presents the model of a "positive hero" striving through collective consciousness in the spirit of socialism. Unlike Orwell who underlines the interference of individual desires with collective purposes as a threat to obtaining a real socialist society, Kemal argues that total independence is realisable through a socialist revolution depending on solidarity and unity. As a classic dystopian work *Animal Farm* is pessimistic about such a result due to power-hungry leaders; however, the Turkish children's novel reveals a critical dystopia illuminating the end of the tunnel for the proletariat.

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