



“HOW SWINISH...! ... YET...” - A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF GEORGE ORWELL'S *ANIMAL FARM*

E.A. Gamini Fonseka, Department of Languages, Kotelawala Defence Academy

Although Eric Arthur Blaire who became famous in his pseudonym, George Orwell, published his *Animal Farm* somewhere in 1945, even at the end of the century it remains a source of great intellectual pleasure and political insight. Of course, it creates a pessimistic picture of politics, but Orwell's powerful use of humour and satire prevents it from being a *lamento*. Therefore I consider it a model text for a reader of literature of any standard and present the following critical analysis of some central issues in this very special fairy tale.

Orwell's Treatment of the Animal Revolution

The powerful political fable *Animal Farm* highlights the tragedy of a revolution that went wrong, but its plot has been constructed in an intrinsically witty manner. The Animal Utopia around which the story has been invented is preceded by a violent revolution carried out by the animals on a farm. Orwell's effort to depict the revolution from its embryo to its culmination has been successful because in developing his techniques he has made good use of what is commonsensical about human and animal potentials and limitations.

Orwell makes a dramatic opening to the plot with a grotesque image of Mr. Jones, the proprietor of Manor Farm, who is a caricature of a decadent dictatorship. “[T]oo drunk to remember to shut the pop holes,” his chaotic behaviour provides an ideal situation for a revolution. The historical fact that a revolution can take place when the governing order betrays big weaknesses is well exemplified in this situation. Orwell creates a very favourable setting for a secret discussion among the animals on the subject of the tyrannical master, Mr. Jones.

The gloomy situation and the master's indifference allow the animals to come together and make a collective effort for their emancipation. Major, the award-winning boar, wants them to listen to a dream that he has had regarding the future of the animals. In his suggestion that Major is a “majestic-looking pig with a wise and benevolent appearance in spite of the fact that his tushes had never been cut”, Orwell portrays him as a Machiavellian-type political philosopher. The image of violence camouflaged under kindness appearing in the antithesis made up of “a wise and benevolent appearance” and “tushes [that] had never been cut”. This gives an ironical portrait of the type of humans who initiate revolutions with global purposes and later resort to underhand treachery, in order to achieve private ambitions.

The swinish nature of this theorist is indicative of the situation that is to come in the latter part of the story. Unlike many animals on the farm, he has lived a long life, and though he is going to talk about heavy labour, his job has been more or less easier than that of other animals: mating with the sows on the farm until he has produced four hundred porklings. Major admits that he has been all his life a lucky one. But his failure to express his grief about the other animals in the prime of his life and to lead a revolution by himself suggests that he is a very selfish character to keep silent and enjoy life until his end has come. At this point, Orwell indirectly draws attention to Major's connection to the privileged minority.

The writer depicts naturalistically the animals assembling for Major's address. The pigeons flutter their wings; the sheep and the cows lie and chew the cud; Boxer, the horse, and Benjamin, the donkey, graze silently side by side; and Clover, the mare, lie with her front legs, forming a wall to protect the brood of ducklings. Thus, all of them wait for the speech to be delivered by Major while roaming in their own worlds. Here Orwell creates a realistic portrait of animal behaviour.



Major's diatribe of man brings about a turning point in the lives of the animals on the farm. In fact that is what leads to the animal revolution. In presenting Major's views, Orwell seems to have simply got inside the mentality of an animal with a critical attitude toward the humans who make animal lives miserable by exploiting them in every possible way. This shows Orwell's immense powers of imagination. According to Major, man is the only creature who consumes without producing.

He does not give milk, he does not lay eggs, he is too weak to pull the plough, he cannot run fast enough to catch rabbits. Yet he is the lord of all animals (p 9).

Major's criticism of man is utterly questionable because in his job description there is no mention about the laborious tasks that he has commented on. Therefore it is not his legacy to lament the worries of other animals caused by their duties. But what is necessary to take into consideration is how intelligently Orwell has selected an animal for the role of the hypocritical Major, a pig who clearly deserves to be charged for leading a cushy life without doing any work.

He talks to the animals in a menacing manner, rousing their blood heat. A real politician appears in the image of Major who manages to motivate the animals to get organised for an overthrow of their human master. The speaker's constant reference to the current political unrest, the destiny of the future generation, the necessity of a revolution, and the way in which it should be carried out shed light upon his strategies and advances in political acumen.

Slogans such as "All men are enemies; all animals are comrades!" and songs such as "Beasts of England" are very effective in mimicking political campaigns. Orwell has employed the general characteristics of a political rally in order to depict the process of this revolution. The result of Major's address is clear in the animals' stimulated behaviour. Their voluntary effort to practise the song in their respective ways shows how cleverly politicians manage to establish collective feelings in their audiences, although they do not belong to the class of people they represent.

Orwell is very realistic in showing the sudden dispersal of the animals in reaction to Mr. Jones's gun. The animals' awareness of their condition and the gravity of the task they have to perform are clear in their quick reaction, at the same time it shows the conditioning they have been subjected to.

In the death of Major just three days after his menacing speech, Orwell carefully sums up the destiny of most political philosophers who have died without seeing their political visions materialise. His death is symbolic of what happens to political theories after their founders' deaths too.

Major's great speech, the sensitive reaction of the animals after listening to it, and the later developments after Major's death, all contribute effectively to a powerful time bomb ticking before exploding at a crucial moment so as to create hell for their human leadership. Orwell ironically captures the process in which the revolution is carried out through the characters of Napoleon, Snowball and Squealer that are its leaders. Napoleon has a reputation for getting his own way. Snowball is not considered to have the same depth of character but is a very talented organiser. Squealer the propagandist, another leading role, is very persuasive and can turn black into white.

The pigs' dominance is clear from the very beginning of the Animal Revolution. It is they who lead, and it is they who undertake to hand down the compendium of "Animalism" the new political philosophy for animals. Orwell's scepticism of political revolutions emerges through the controversies raised by the other animals. By showing the general and simple attitudes of the other animals to the new system, he makes a careful survey of the political intelligence of the common people. Some animals doubt whether they would get food after Jones's departure; some are worried about their gifts of sugar and ribbons; and some even ask naively what will be the difference after the revolution.



Orwell creates a dramatic situation for the time bomb to explode. Jones deteriorates both physically and mentally; he gets addicted to liquor and becomes very absent-minded; his employees neglect their duties and do not bother about feeding the animals until it is late evening; as a result all the animals become rebellious in a state of frustration and fury. Their rebellious anger culminates in a violent attack on the human beings on the farm.

The men on the farm retaliate by whipping the animals, but the situation goes out of control. The animals overpower the men and chase them all including Mr. Jones away from the farm. Mrs. Jones too vanishes through a back door. Now the farm becomes an animal-dominated farm. No more are the animals the slaves of humanity. Orwell has given a spectacular record of this dramatic event, using his experience as a reporter of battles, revolts, social upsurges and political cataclysms.

Distorting the spirit of the revolution, the animals turn to vandalism. In a state of euphoria they destroy most things owned by the Joneses. Then they start celebrating their victory by visiting each and every place of importance. Later they convert the farmhouse to a museum. Orwell presents the Animal Revolution in the light of a communist revolution. Once the situation calms down, the animals decide to draft the Animal Constitution. Orwell quite systematically shows the simplifications made by the crafty literate pigs who reduce the dogma of animalism into seven commandments, the adherence to which makes them into a group of beings sharing identical feelings about social, economic and political rights. The pigs' literacy and alacrity endow them with prominence and leadership. Here Orwell indicates the mundane personal aspects of revolutions in general. The Seven Commandments that function as the basis of Animalism will play an important part in the story. The infringement of these commandments exemplifies the moral deterioration of the pigs and the injustice, discrimination and numerous iniquities the other animals suffer from.

Orwell does not delay in hinting at the sad plight of the other animals caused by the dominance of the pigs. The cows start struggling, as their udders are about to burst and need to be milked soon. The pigs see to it immediately but the milk disappears. Later, it is found that the pigs have kept the milk for their own consumption. The implication of this act is that they have become corrupt. The story of the Animal Revolution ends in this anticlimax which is of great significance in terms of literary craftsmanship as well as political awareness of the author. It poses the old question *Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?* (Who shall watch the watchers?).

Orwell is very serious in pointing out that at the very inception of the new era corruption begins to dominate all good principles. He gestures at what all the poor souls on the farm will face after all these incidents. The revolution eats up her own children - Orwell's strong opinion about revolutions in general is cleverly emphasised here. Just because they do not think twice, the other animals tolerate the milk fraud but this incident makes them lose their gusto and confidence in the face of this new era soon after the revolution. Orwell makes use of this situation to express his disillusionment with all revolutions, which is a highly questionable matter. He uses the story of the milk fraud to subvert the hierarchy that emerges as a result of a revolution.

The Characters of Napoleon and Snowball and the Conflict between Them

According to Orwell, Napoleon and Snowball are the two young boars pre-eminent among the pigs who are the cleverest among the animals and have the responsibility to teach and organise the animals against Man. Orwell has precisely portrayed these two animal heroes, using irony.

Napoleon was a large, rather fierce-looking Berkshire boar, the only Berkshire on the farm, not much of a talker but with a reputation for getting his own way. Snowball was a more vivacious pig than Napoleon, quicker in speech and more inventive, but was not considered to have the same depth of character (p. 15).



These two characters make the story dramatic with their ideological differences, controversies and frequent conflicts over almost every management and development issue on the farm. Their personalities are very much like two active politicians in human society. The name "Napoleon" obviously alludes to the character of the 19th century French dictator, and the name "Snowball" figuratively suggests "a quick growth in size and importance". While "Napoleon" represents sheer despotism that continues to exist as the practice of an upper-class clan, "Snowball" represents a milder but a subtler version of it developed by a clever somebody connected to a lower class.

Both these characters play very vital roles in the achievement of the Animal Revolution they have been planning since Major's menacing speech and in gathering importance for the pigs' clan at the dawn of the new era. They both preside over at every discussion that takes place among the animals, fight fearlessly against their human enemies during the actual revolt, jointly approve of the concealment of the milk for pigs' consumption, co-operate with each other in designing the Animal Constitution, and join in declaring the Seven Commandments. They even take equal pains in motivating the other animals to harvest the crops before the men have done it. Thus a great similarity is seen in the ideas and attitudes of these two at the dawn of the Animal Utopia.

But once the Animal Utopia has been proclaimed, both Napoleon and Snowball start disagreeing with each other on almost every matter they discuss. Orwell has described the abnormality in their tendency to disagree with each other in the following words:

Snowball and Napoleon were by far the most active in the debates. But it was noticed that these two were never in agreement: whatever suggestion either of them made, the other could be counted on to oppose it (p. 28).

The management strategies of the two differ to a large extent. Snowball goes on organising a variety of animal movements. The Egg Production Committee of the hens; the Clean Tail League of the cows; the Wild Comrades' Re-education Committee of the rats and rabbits; and the Whiter Wool Movement of the sheep are some of them. These movements function under the guidance of Snowball and shed light on his efficiency as a political strategist. Although these ventures are meant to make all the animals rally round him in separate groups, there is no doubt about his application of divide-et-impera while addressing them on various issues.

What Napoleon does in reaction to the Snowball concept of organising numerous social movements on the farm is significant of his maturity as a military dictator. As he understands that these movements are of some advantage to Snowball, he publicly expresses his repugnance to the waste they involve. Instead of organising anti-Snowball political movements, he forms a private army. In the revival of education and culture, he finds an opportunity to keep the nine sturdy puppies born to Jesse and Bluebell in such seclusion that the rest of the animals on the farm forget their existence. This is done in order to organise a special task force against Snowball that is a matter that he has always overlooked. Thus Napoleon emulates Snowball as a dictator cum political strategist because of the defence strength gathered in this way.

Quite understandably, whatever ideological differences exist between Napoleon and Snowball, they all vanish when decisions are to be taken in favour of the pigs' monopoly. They both approve of the reservation of the milk and the windfall apples for the pigs to eat. They even jointly contrive a plan to persuade the other animals that only pigs should necessarily consume such luxuries, as they are the brain folk. They both have an equally great instinctive concern for the pigs' welfare, but for popularity and power they fiercely compete with each other.

Of course, Napoleon follows certain methods of Snowball that he considers intelligent. In spite of his enmity and disagreement with the latter, he joins in sending pigeons to other farms to propagate the story of the rebellion, and to teach the animals there the tune of "Beasts of England". At the Battle of the Cowshed, Snowball demonstrates his talents in warfare. He successfully operates the animal army, according to the military tactics used by Julius Caesar he had learnt from an old book. Snowball's warlike nature is also vivid in his advice to Boxer - "War is war. No sentimentality, Comrade!" Napoleon confirms his respect for what he could adopt from Snowball by conferring on him the honour and title "Animal Hero First Class". Thus, as he finds the latter to be very useful to the farm, Napoleon tolerates Snowball for a considerably long time.



SILHOUETTE

However, the power struggle between the two causes violent disputes at the Sunday meetings. Orwell ironically relates how both of them use their discourse skills at these meetings:

Snowball often won over the majority by his brilliant speeches, but Napoleon was better at canvassing in between times. He was especially successful with the sheep. ... It was noticed that the sheep were liable to break into "Four legs good, two legs bad" at the crucial moments in Snowball's speeches (p. 43).

Although Napoleon's techniques do not satisfy the ethical conditions of argumentation, they help him to maintain his position as a politico. He gets all the beings on the farm to boycott Snowball's addresses by vociferating slogans.

It is the windmill project that draws the climax of their conflicts. Snowball designs the windmill and with his marvellous technical drawings wins everybody's support except Napoleon's who expresses his antagonism in the most swinish manner possible - by urinating over the drawings. The debate over the windmill aggravates the enmity between the two. It further leads the animals to get divided into two factions under them. This is clear in the most dramatic way in which the final session of their debate ends. At the most crucial moment, Napoleon orders his special task force to operate:

At this there was a terrible baying sound outside, and nine enormous dogs wearing brass-studded collars came bounding into the barn. They dashed straight for Snowball, who only sprang from his place just in time to escape their snapping jaws. In a moment he was out of the door and they were after him (pp. 47-48).

To everybody's excitement, the dogs chase Snowball to an unseen distance, and no more is Snowball a member of the Animal Farm.

Once Snowball is out, it is Napoleon's government. It is noticed that Napoleon gives no more opportunity for discussion and debate. No more are the so-called democratic proceedings followed on the farm. The farm is entirely under the dictatorship of Napoleon. Only the pigs' clan that forms a special social class with enormous privileges in enjoying the material benefits from the farm has the right to vote resolutions. Whatever goes wrong is obviously attributed to Snowball, although Napoleon borrows his ideas in the implementation of the windmill project and many other matters related to administration and development.

Napoleon's Dictatorship

In Orwell's words, "Napoleon was a large, rather fierce-looking Berkshire boar, the only Berkshire on the farm, not much of a talker, but with a reputation for getting his own way." (See p. 15.) This precise introduction is enough to identify Napoleon as a creature born to be a powerful dictator. In fact what Orwell indicates in this portrait of Napoleon becomes evident when he appears as a politician.

First he tactfully makes use of his mortal enemy Snowball, a clever organiser and orator with tremendous skill, in order to achieve the Animal Revolution that paves way for an animal utopia. Then he gets the latter's support to win the Battle of the Cowshed that causes the slightest human influence on the farm to disappear. But, when Napoleon gets established, he develops clashes with Snowball on baseless grounds, and with the help of his special task force he ousts the latter from the farm. By and by the crafty, powerful, cruel and ambitious Napoleon becomes the absolute dictator of the Animal Utopia.

His totalitarian leadership serves the pigs' junta but leaves the other animals in abject poverty. While Napoleon makes all decisions, the pigs enjoy all benefits of the farm. Day by day the lives of the other animals are being jeopardised by the ruthless decisions he makes. There is no more room for debate and discussion, and all those so-called democratic proceedings vanish. Orwell has exemplified these facts in the grievances of the other animals whose situation goes daily from bad to worse. Astute propaganda, terrorising rumours, subtle manipulation, hideous intimidation and brutalised capital punishment for those who contradict are the major features of Napoleonism. Napoleon is a Machiavellian on the one hand and a Chauvinist on the other.



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Napoleon employs Squealer for all kinds of propaganda and media control on the farm. Each time he breaks the Seven Commandments, Squealer changes the relevant statements by making additions and subtractions to the original text in favour of Napoleon and his swinish clan. The windmill breaks down owing to bad weather, and, later, is blasted by Mr. Frederick. He cheats Napoleon with forgeries and gets his men to attack the animals. On such occasions when the other animals notice Napoleon's inefficiency, Squealer charges for all that Snowball who has been absent from the farm since his exile. His sole intention is to protect his master, Napoleon.

The fear of Jones that Squealer has inculcated in the other animals also functions in favour of Napoleon. The mere mention of Jones's name is enough to frighten the animals and to give up their curiosity about corruption. Thus propaganda epitomised by Squealer becomes Napoleon's most powerful political organ.

Napoleon seems to have forgotten his true nature as an animal on the occasions when he imposes capital punishment on his disloyal subjects. The pigs arguing for the Sunday meetings, the ring leaders of the hens leading a rebellion in protest against the Egg Contract, and the two sheep killing a ram are ruthlessly put to death. Thus he uses death sentence to intimidate his subjects. For this purpose he even passes in absentia death sentence on Snowball.

In solving political problems, Napoleon greatly depends on his battalion of dogs. They protect him wherever he goes and immediately act at his command. Even Squealer is provided with this facility in case he has to announce something or appease the other animals when they start asking questions about the injustices happening to them. So the animals are all forced to listen to him, repress their feelings and abstain from questioning.

To a large extent manipulation is used to cover up the reality behind the farm. The sheep are manipulated to talk as if they were contented during the famine; the rebellious hens are manipulated to confess that they were obsessed by Snowball in their sleep; and Squealer, a willing tool of Napoleon, is himself manipulated to conduct all relevant propaganda campaigns. He even gets caught with a paint vessel trying to alter the Commandments written on the farm wall. Except by manipulation there is no other way to establish in the other animals such slogans as "Napoleon is always right." and "We pigs are brain-workers. The whole management and organisation of this farm depend on us."

Moreover, Napoleon holds commemoration ceremonies, birthday parties, orgies, the Napoleon felicitation recitals, the Animal Hero award ceremonies, banquets at the farm house and processions composed of his trumpeter, his special canine task force, his retinue of pigs, and the other animals who form the proletariat on the farm. All these activities show how a dictator camouflages his corrupt oppressive self by means of tamashas and displays of spectacular grandeur.

Apart from the pigs, under Napoleon's reign, the animals on this particular farm become the most miserable in the world. Their master is a tyrant who has no regard for their wellbeing. Boxer's sad destiny to be sent to the knacker's is an outstanding example of this precarious situation. One clause effective on the farm reads as follows: "Sunday afternoon ... work was absolutely voluntary but if any animal absented himself he would have his ration reduced by half." (See p. 53.) Thus the rules and regulations which are introduced into the farm are very illogical, incomprehensible and misleading. Therefore exploitation through confusion takes place on a dreadful scale. All these help to establish that Napoleon governs the farm by using wickedly illogical administrative policies.

The pigs' junta is shown to develop in every respect, and power gets accumulated and concentrated in their hands while all the other animals undergo a period of abysmal servitude. This is the most precarious feature of Napoleon's government. He becomes more oppressive, more corrupt, and more perverse than Jones. On the other farms men work with animals on a relatively equal scale, but here the pigs do not do any work at all. The pigs have simply become parasites in the disguise of brain folks. The way in which the pigs' population increases is also a threat to the other animals, as the number of rulers would then be larger than the number of subjects. This will further intensify the pressure of Napoleon's dictatorship. As Napoleon corrects the others at the card game, under his dictatorship, Animal Farm again turns to be Manor Farm with enhanced practices of exploitation and suppression.



Napoleon's attraction to a sophisticated secular pattern of life

The historical speech made by Major who is considered by all the animals on the farm to be a prophet lays the foundation for Animalism which later takes the form of a religion to be followed by all of them for gaining salvation from servitude under humans. The two Messiahs of swinish blood - Napoleon and Snowball - strive to get the prediction made by Major actualised. After the Animal Revolution they articulate the concept of Animalism in terms of Seven Commandments. Since then they have appeared as the chief priests of Animalism. Notwithstanding the sympathy and support they have received from the other species of animals and birds on the Animal Revolution, they centre all their concern upon the welfare of the pigs and forget about the other animals. As soon as Napoleon manages to oust Snowball from the farm, he starts deteriorating from Animalism. Orwell cuts a new dimension in his caricature of Napoleon by depicting his gradual deterioration exemplified in his violation of the Seven Commandments. In the course of his deterioration his image matures as an egocentric, hypocritical and corrupt tyrant. His total abandonment of Animalism and his eternal attempt to imitate humans in whatever way possible sheds light on his attraction to a sophisticated secular pattern of life.

At the dawn of Animal Utopia Napoleon gives prominence to tamashas, in order to keep the other animals unconcerned and oblivious of their own wellbeing. Thus he buys time to get established as a dictator. The Sunday programme accommodates rituals described as the hoisting of the flag; the gun salute; paying homage to Major's skull; eulogies recited in honour of Napoleon; and reading of statistical records and announcements carried out by Squealer. They are meant to distract the animals from their natural ways of life and from their basic concerns of life. At the same time the Animal Hero awards, banquets, various signboards, memorial plaques and memorial portraits on this animal-governed farm serve to alienate these animals from the rest of the world. Napoleon rejoices in all these proceedings as they signify his personality as a powerful dictator.

As soon as he gains power, Napoleon takes heed to strengthen the defence strategies on the farm. His defence policies further confirm his sophistication and secularity. He builds up a special task force out of nine sturdy dogs. Although his defence expenditure is somewhat extravagant, he seems to be using his investments in a manner profitable to him. His army is ever ready for a *coup de main*.

Napoleon's interest in commercial ventures is also very much indicative of his materialistic bent. He conforms to the methods of his human predecessor by seeking for artificial materials such as paraffin oil, dog's biscuits, nails, pins and iron for horseshoes. For this purpose he keeps in touch with Mr. Whymper who often visits him to bridge the gap between the farm and the humans. He talks about business with Napoleon who tends to cut a figure not better than that of a cruel businessman. This is vivid in his attitude to the egg contract.

His initiative in brewing and distilling alcoholic beverages is another factor that contributes to his resort to a sophisticated secular lifestyle. He uses the wines made by him to entertain Mr. Whymper, Mr. Pilkington and all the businessmen and farmers around and strengthens his ties with them. Thus his alcoholic products help to maintain a bourgeoisie on the farm operating in collaboration with different kinds of capitalists in human society.

With Napoleon's blessings the pigs' junta thrives in every way. They start like a privileged minority but quite paradoxically their number increases at such a galloping speed that they later become the privileged majority. Their membership of the pigs' co-operative farm allows them to enjoy milk and apples that are luxuries prohibited for others. Their blood relationship with Napoleon alone is sufficient for them to win his goodwill and to take part in the banquets, cocktails and orgies that often take place in the farmhouse.



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Orwell wittily illustrates the pigs trying to walk on their hind legs to the recitation of "Four legs good: two legs better!" made by the sheep. This situation is symbolic of Napoleon's attempt to transcend his identity as an animal. His desire to resemble a human leads him not only to follow certain norms and concepts of humanity but also to adapt himself physically to typical human behaviour.

A dip into Napoleon's personal life gives more clues to this speculation. His inclination to polygamy demonstrated by keeping four wives seems to be related to his sending of Snowball into exile. Maybe he has felt a kind of sexual jealousy of the latter.

His concern about what is considered sartorial elegance sheds light on another aspect of his mentality. He distinguishes his most favourite sow from the others by draping her with Mrs. Jones's gowns while getting himself dressed in Mr. Jones's outfits.

His dining room etiquette that involves the employment of a butler cum food taster exemplifies another dimension of his imitation of the bourgeoisie. Pinkeye tastes his food before Napoleon eats in order to prove that it is safe. This shows that Napoleon imitates the traditional aristocrat and autocrat particular about his health and suspicious about getting poisoned. The Crown Derby dinner service and the Crown Derby tureen from which Napoleon takes his food add to the meaningful absurdity of his ideology.

As Napoleon considers literacy an advantage to a ruler, he makes efforts to educate his offspring with the books that had belonged to the children of the Joneses. He keeps his own kids away from the other porklings in the hope of building up a ruling class among the pigs themselves. Maybe he is interested in founding a Napoleon dynasty.

At the climax of the story Napoleon tries to eradicate the last signs of Animalism by getting the Seven Commandments erased from the farm wall, by getting Major's skull re-interred, and by renaming the farm "Manor Farm". The pigs' junta adopts the lifestyle of the Joneses and lives like a sophisticated company, while Major's philosophy is getting buried with his skull.

After all, there is no principle that one animal should be governed by another animal. The animals on the farm support the Animal Utopia in the hope of eliminating all kinds of ruling over their natural ways of living. They all want freedom. However, in order to exploit the other animals, Napoleon starts conforming to the standards of the Joneses. As a result the Animal Utopia disintegrates into an oppressive despotic regime manipulated by the pigs' accomplished propaganda. This is ironically implied at the end of the story where men and pigs drink together and play cards that is sometimes a class game in human society. There a mistake committed by Napoleon in the card game leads to a dispute between the men and pigs, and the angry faces of both the pigs and men look identical and leave a shocking impression in the other animals. Nevertheless, Napoleon's mistake in the card game symbolically implies his inability to become human however much he tries.

All these facts stand for Napoleon's crude conformism that muddles up his self-consciousness as an animal. His adherence to the rationale of a sophisticated human society makes him even more of an oppressive ruler, ambitious to lead a life puffed up with paraphernalian values and secular interests.



Animal Farm as a Political Satire

In *Animal Farm* George Orwell tells the story of a revolution led by the pigs on a farm that went wrong owing to internal power struggles and descent into dictatorship. In dealing with this theme Orwell has to call upon not only his technical skills as a novelist but also his political awareness and sympathy towards those who suffer from all the iniquities of bureaucratic machination, corruption, mismanagement, exploitation and tyranny. However tragic the story is, its exposition is full of wit and humour. Orwell has presented all the events chronologically, and therefore the narrative has unity and coherence throughout.

The dark night that accommodates Major's rally is symbolic of the tragic nature of the period that is going to dawn. Mr. Jones's absentminded behaviour resulted by his addiction to liquor is illustrative of an already decadent political leadership. Then comes Major's speech, full of fallacies, contradictions and reckless emotive expressions, that mirrors Major's character as a Machiavellian philosopher. He has the tone of a real rabble-rouser in the political arena. Ironically enough, Major represents a group in which he is a non-entity. He does none of the tasks that he refers to, nor faces the hardships that the other animals face. Yet they respond to his speech with enthusiasm and gusto for they are made to dream of a Utopian alternative to the present situation. In their behaviour Orwell vividly portrays the nature of public opinion that is liable to oscillate according to various political views germinated in society from time to time. Thoroughly stimulated by Major's speech, the animals start longing for a revolution.

Orwell establishes a harmonious chronology between all the circumstances that contribute to the Animals Revolution. Mr. Jones's lethargic and eccentric attitude, his employees' careless negligence of their duties, the animals' frustration and fury caused by starvation and heavy labour - all echo the reasons for great upheavals in human societies such as the French Revolution and the Russian Revolution.

The rebellion achieved by the animals in *Animal Farm* is spectacularly comparable to the Trotskyan Revolt in Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia*. What happens in the farm alludes to all that might happen in a political revolt: leaders' exploitation of a mass movement, police interference, gunfire, bloodshed, vandalism and so on.

Even the post-revolutionary condition could lead to an anarchic situation in human society. Destroying all traces of the former leadership, seizure of property with only a change of hands, celebrating the take-over with patriotic recitals, political rallies, memorial speeches and propaganda shows - these all feature the dawn of a new phase. Orwell has used plenty of irony in this situation.

The conversion of Manor Farm into Animal Farm is another event suggestive of nominal changes in a new state. Ceylon became Sri Lanka; Rhodesia became Zimbabwe; and Birma became Mianmar after various political changes. As the constitution is the backbone of a political state the animals need a new constitution. The Seven Commandments that represent Animalism seem to answer this need. The designation of the Animal Farm as a Republic and Napoleon's promotion as the president with absolute legislative and executive powers give a clue to the way in which political leaders get established in their positions.

The power struggle between Napoleon and Snowball opens up another dimension of human politics. Their tactics, strategies, policies and plans represent the pernicious nature of the politicians who are saturated with ambition and hunger for power and material gains. Napoleon's special task force is suggestive of paramilitary forces employed by political leaders, whose function is to exterminate anti-government tendencies and to punish their enemies. Snowball's formation of numerous committees suggests the application of the divide-and-rule principle and the well-known habit of procrastination. The ideological conflicts between the two leaders that upset all Sunday morning meetings are effective in depicting state assemblies where the parliamentarians fight. Thus all kind of human frailties are reflected in these two creatures.



The formation of the pigs' monopoly that has the power to take decisions, make resolutions, superintend the work and manage the farm is also of great symbolic value. The main weaknesses the pigs expose are tyranny, corruption and exploitation. Orwell vividly exemplifies this in several post-revolutionary developments. The pigs set aside all windfall apples and milk for their own use, drive the other animal to labour for the construction of the windmill, appoint Mr. Whimper to carry out all secretarial duties, occupy the farm house that is prohibited for other animals, initiate brewing and distilling, and maintain commercial transactions with Mr. Frederick and Mr. Pilkington. These developments focus attention on what is known as corrupt junta activities.

Propaganda that is powerfully used on the Animal Farm is an inevitable instrument of politics in society. Squealer does a great service for Napoleon by carrying out propaganda at every juncture, for reconciling the animals, for safeguarding the position of the pigs and for winning privileges for the pigs' clan. The farm as a whole is devoured by propaganda. There is also the manipulation of the sheep to utter, "Four legs good: two legs better," when the pigs trot on their hind legs and to talk as if satisfied even when there is a famine on the farm. It is symbolic of the function of mass media under a smug dictatorship benefiting the privileged few.

Napoleon's desire for a sophisticated, materialistic pattern of life ties him up with our own politicians. All that has been prohibited for other animals is welcome in Napoleon's personal life. His egoism clarifies the reality behind the lives of most of our political leaders. The Crown Derby dinner service from which Napoleon takes his food and drink shows the lifestyle of a corrupt politician blind with class-consciousness.

Napoleon distinguishes his offspring from the rest of the pigs on the farm by tying ribbons on their tails. He marries four wives and drapes his most favourite sow with Mrs. Jones's clothes. He keeps company with the affluent farmers around. The complete reversal of the Manor Farm ideals and its retrogression to its original state in an even worse form are powerful ironies suggestive of the deterioration of a politician. The card game and the drinking party where Napoleon corrects Mr. Pilkington by declaring that Animal Farm is once again Manor Farm vividly show his thoughtless betrayal of his political dependants. While the other animals suffer, the pigs have all the facilities to enjoy life. This is the reality behind the politics of many countries.

The destiny of Boxer who falls sick as a result of overwork symbolises the destiny of the common masses under a despotic regime. "Sunday afternoon ... work was absolutely voluntary but, if anyone absented himself, he was liable to get his ration deducted by half." Contradictory regulations which develop from this kind of illogical practices; the Egg Contract that demands the hens to act against their nature; and capital punishment on those who rise against the government are also features of a cruel dictatorship. The animals' condition goes from bad to worse, and their position is similar to that of the Filipinos under Marcos or the Ugandans under Idi Amin.

Orwell has proved his understanding of animal nature in the selection of his characters. There are no better animals than pigs for the roles of Major, Napoleon, Snowball and Squealer. A horse, an animal generally considered a creature of elegance, dignity, love, faith and endurance, is an excellent choice to play the role of Boxer. Molly, Muriel and Clover, with their genuine feminine qualities, appear well as mares. The dogs have been wisely recruited for Napoleon's Army as dogs are faithful watchers and warlike fighters. A donkey for the role of Benjamin is also an apt selection with his naive and monotonous views about life. The funny character of Moses in a raven figure, with his stories of Sugarcandy Mountains, also constitutes a healthy device in depicting religion. Orwell makes a grand exposition through these characters highly packed with symbolic value. There is no surprise about the human roles echoing the subhuman condition of corruption and tyranny in the jungle of politics. Thus a variety of human frailties are exemplified through these exciting personifications.

Orwell ends his story again with a juxtaposition of some people and the pigs. The other animals find no difference between their angry faces at the card game. Here the story reaches its climax, and Orwell makes his greatest attack on politics. The humans and the pigs in the scene are both treated alike, considering that their swinish nature is the very element that drives them into corruption, the root of all evils.



SILHOUETTE

The story as a whole is a forceful political critique. Orwell has summed up various political rackets in human society through the wide range of incidents that manifest the power struggle, usurpation, intimidation, manipulation, exploitation and victimisation that indicate a deterioration to dictatorship and the eradication of the peace, liberty and security of the common people. However grotesque the theme is, Orwell has made his work amusing and interesting through his excellent literary devices of wit and humour and a sense of variety and detail. There is a refreshing quality in every incident. Orwell's rhetoric is well chosen. He has satirised the world of politics sharply and richly and made through his work an invaluable contribution to the world's political awareness.

Conclusion

However, the danger in a political critique that takes the form of allegory, farce or caricature - and *Animal Farm* basically is that - is simplification, sometimes gross simplification. The methods of animal allegory and farcical caricature cannot be carried far, wide or deep. Yet Orwell's intention is highly didactic. The picture given in the story is not only simplified but also over-emphatically one-sided and over-generalised. Orwell, in fact, betrays something like contempt in the very selection of animals as rebels, as politicians, and as the opposition of Jones, the human ruler of a set of animals who are the oppressed. Jones, though corrupt and failing, is human to begin with. There is no such consolation for the mass of the ruled. Even though Orwell rightly exposes the hypocrisy and corruption of the ruling classes in whatever form they may appear (human and animal) and illustrates well the principle that power per se could be corruptible. He has not bothered to fully get down to the nature of the ruling establishment that precedes the revolution in the first place. His analysis of the rebellion and the developments thereafter, takes rather a predictable form and this when tied to a rather rigidly structured animal allegory can cheek and even distort one's understanding of a human experience of great historical value.

Yet, however tragic and disillusioning the developments in the story are, they all support the statement in the introduction that *Animal Farm* remains a source of great intellectual pleasure and political insight. To the present reader this gives significant motivation to read the original text that is written in a very clear, simple and readable type of language. It may prove to be a text to begin one's reading of literature with.

