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**ORWELL'S *ANIMAL FARM*  
AS A POLITICAL SATIRE**

**B.A. THESIS**

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## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

- I. GEORGE ORWELL'S LIFE AND CAREER**
- II. ENGLISH SOCIETY IN THE BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY ( HISTORY, LITERATURE, ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL STATUS )**
- III. FACTORS THAT CAUSED GEORGE ORWELL TO WRITE *ANIMAL FARM***
- IV. SYNOPSIS**
- V. ALLEGORY**
- VI. ORWELL'S METHODS OF CHARACTERIZATION**
  - 1. ALLEGORICAL CHARACTERIZATION
  - 2. POINT OF VIEW
- VII. CONCLUSION**

## PREFACE

First of all, I think that I should mention the reasons urging me to prepare my thesis on 'George Orwell'. I had read both Orwell's greatest novels, *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* which had great impact on me, in the first years of my university education; i.e., four years ago, being affected by socialist ideas which were popular at the time. As a matter of fact, *Animal Farm* was the first English novel I had read and enjoyed. Another factor that caused me to study Orwell, is that besides being a great novelist of political intelligence, his political satire *Animal Farm* belongs to the 20th century which is still the contemporary age. Today, fifty years after its appearance, the book preserves its power and it can be read and re-read.

Secondly, I would like to express my appreciation of all the teachers who did their best to educate us during these five years of 'marathon'.

Finally, I would like to give my special thanks to Associate Professor Dr. Gül Celkan for teaching me everything I know related to English Language, and for guiding me through my five years of education both in Ege University and Near East University. I would also like to thank her for bearing with me as a sister and a friend, besides being an excellent teacher.

**Didem Baysoy,**  
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## INTRODUCTION

Instead of a conventional introduction, I would prefer to make quotations from *Animal Farm*. Here is the song inspiring the animals' Rebellion and foundation of 'Animal Farm':

*Beasts of England, beasts of Ireland,  
Beasts of every land and clime,  
Hearken to my joyful tidings  
Of the golden future time.*

*Soon or late the day is coming,  
Tyrant Man shall be o'erthrown  
And the fruitful fields of England  
Shall be trod by beasts alone.*

*Rings shall vanish from our noses,  
And the harness from our back,  
Bit and spur shall rust forever  
Cruel whips no more shall crack.*

*Riches more than mind can picture  
Wheat and barley, oats and hay,  
Clover, beans and mangel-wurzels  
Shall be ours upon that day.*

*Bright will shine the fields of England,  
Purer shall its waters be,  
Sweeter yet shall blow its breezes  
On the day that sets us free.*

*For that day we all must labour,  
Though we die before it break;  
Cows and horses, geese and turkeys,  
All must toil for freedom's sake.*

*Beasts of England, beasts of Ireland,  
Beasts of every land and clime,  
Hearken well and spread my tidings  
Of the golden future time.*

Here are the "Seven Commandments", the principles of 'Animalism' which were replaced by the slogan, "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others.":

1. *Whatever goes upon two legs is an enemy.*
2. *Whatever goes upon four legs, or has wings, is a friend.*
3. *No animal shall wear clothes.*
4. *No animal shall sleep in a bed.*
5. *No animal shall drink alcohol.*
6. *No animal shall kill any other animal.*
7. *All animals are equal.*

## I. ORWELL'S LIFE AND CAREER

(1903 - 1950)

George Orwell, whose real name was Eric Blair, was born in 1903, in Bengal, India, the son of a minor official in the Indian Civil Service. He was brought to England at an early age, and educated at St. Cyprian's, and then at Eton, on a scholarship. At Eton, he encountered, for the first time, popular liberal and socialist ideas, which were common subjects of discussion there, especially in the period immediately following the First World War. When he graduated, instead of going to a university, he joined the Indian Imperial Police. Orwell served in Burma from 1922 to 1927 until his dislike of imperialism induced him to resign.

For various reasons, he deliberately chose to live among working-class people in Paris and among tramps in England for more than a year. He had set out to be a writer, nearly starved, and wrote of his apprenticeship in *Down and Out in Paris and London* (1933), a little classic which shows the influence of Gissing, but which is already flavored with his own individuality, strong independent personality, and power of objective description. He chose the pseudonym 'George Orwell' as the author of this first major work.

Later on, he worked as a teacher, married, and kept a village pub and a general store. His income was small, and his first book brought him very little money. *Burmese Days* (1934), his first novel, based on his experiences in India, reflects his indignation over political injustice.



Then, he wrote two more Gissing-like novels; *A Clergyman's Daughter* (1934), about a middle-class woman's brief period of freedom among the tramps and hop-hickers, and *Keep the Aspidistra From Flying* (1936), the story of a young bookseller's assistant, whose aspirations and humiliations are closely paralleled the author's. He became a socialist during this period, and when his publisher encouraged him to visit a depressed industrial area and write about his personal reactions, he took the opportunity to put his political convictions into action, and wrote *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937), a milestone in modern journalism which has become a classic of its kind.

Meanwhile, the Spanish Civil War had broken out, and although Orwell went as an observer and reporter, he found himself enlisting on the Republican side. He was seriously wounded in the throat, and on his return he wrote *Homage to Catalonia* (1938), in which he describes how Stalin's tactics had succeeded in undermining the loyalist cause.

Under the threat of World War II, Orwell wrote *Coming Up for Air* (1939), a novel which reflected in the person of George Bowling, an insurance clerk, many of the frustrations and political concern which preoccupied Orwell throughout his life.

In 1940 and 1941 two more books, collections of essays, appeared; *Inside the Whale* and *Other Essays*, and *The Lion and The Unicorn: Socialism and the English Genius*.

From 1943 to 1945 he was literary editor of 'Tribune' and contributed many articles to it and other papers, including 'The Observer', 'The Manchester Evening', and 'New Leader'. By this stage, Orwell saw himself as a political writer, a

democratic socialist who avoided party labels, hated totalitarianism, and was to become more and more disillusioned with the methods of communism: his plain, colloquial style made him highly effective as pamphleteer and journalist.

In 1945, Orwell published the first of the two books for which he is generally known, *Animal Farm*; like *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, an anti-utopian novel, in the form of a political satire. The obvious subject of the satire is Soviet Russia, but more generally it deals with totalitarianism of any kind. The American Professor, Malcolm Bradbury, in his introduction to *Animal Farm* states, "It's one of the great modern political allegories, and the story it tells, of innocent and necessary revolution turning into dictatorship and betrayal, is not just a striking piece of political intelligence but a fundamental modern myth.

In 1949, he published *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in which he represents a society of the new future which is a protection of certain aspects of life in the contemporary world.

In early 1950, he died in London, from tuberculosis which he had suffered for many years. Two other collection of essays appeared shortly after his death: *Shooting an Elephant, and Other Essays* (1950), and *Such, Such Were the Joys* (1953).

George Orwell, English novelist, critic, journalist, essayist, socialist critic of communism, was a master of lucidity, of saying what he meant, of exposing the falsity of what he called 'double-think'. Few writers have been able to go as far as he did beyond their limitations.



## II. ENGLISH SOCIETY IN THE BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY (HISTORY, LITERATURE, ECONOMICS, and POLITICAL STATUS)

In the last half of the 19th century, Britain had grown rich on free trade, its people were not yet convinced of the advantage of change, and the Conservative party was split. Balfour, the Prime Minister, had to resign, and at the election of 1906 the Liberals, as champions of free trade gained more seats than the Conservatives.

The last two decades of the 19th century had been a period of revolutionary scientific discovery, invention, and the new science and technology, as well as other movements of the period, were reflected in literature: Huxley's agnosticism in the novels, poetry of Thomas Hardy, socialism in Morris's *News From Nowhere* and the early plays of Bernard Shaw, Imperialism in the poetry of Kipling, while Oscar Wilde mocked middle-class standards and the young Wells wrote optimistically about *The First Men in the Moon*.

**After briefly mentioning the last decades of the 19th century, let us have a look at the English society after the return of the Liberals:**

Despite the reforms of the 19th century, there was little protection of the poor against the exploiter, of children, the old, the sick, disabled and unemployed. Under Campbell-Bannerman, and after his death in 1908, under Asquith, the

reforms came. From the start, the new liberal government, including radicals and liberal imperialists, embarked upon a program of social legislation. Between the years 1906 and 1909, free school meals were made available to poor children, a school medical service was founded, a Children's Act was passed, miners were given a statutory working day of eight hours, trade boards were set up to fix wages, and the labor exchanges were created to reduce unemployment.

Then, in 1909, Chancellor of the Exchequer, David Lloyd George's budget proposed the levying of a land tax and a super tax, and the Lords rejected it. At the general election of January 1910, the Liberal majority was greatly reduced, and the balance of power in Parliament was now held by Labor and Irish Nationalist members. After Edward VII's death in May 1910, his son George V wore the crown, and had to make a momentous decision. The Parliament Bill of August 1911 would deprive the Lords of their veto and control of finance, limiting their powers, and reducing the maximum life of a Parliament from seven to five. The Commons under Asquith passed the Bill, the Lords surrendered and signed away their authority. Now, the Commons became the only legislative body.

Further reforms followed, the old Chartist demand of payment of members was carried, and some working-class men could afford to sit in Parliament; it became legal for trade unions to use their funds to support Parliamentary candidates; a National Insurance Bill was passed, to give relief to the sick, and unemployed out of funds contributed by workers, employers and the state.

In spite of all these reforms, there were strikes of miners and railwaymen; the Suffragettes were fighting for women's rights;



Nonconformists were demanding the disestablishment of the Church in Wales; and the time to satisfy Irish Nationalists had come.

In April 1912, Asquith introduced a new Home Rule Bill for the Irish, resulting with the opposition of the Protestants in Ulster and the Conservatives. By 1914 the Southern Catholics, among whom the extremist Sinn Feiners were rapidly gaining ground, were on the brink of war with the Orangemen of Ulster.

**These were the problems English society was facing before World War I; however, it would be quite wise to give some information about the international crisis which had sown the seeds of the war:**

Two intricate systems of agreements and alliances - the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy, and the Triple Entente of France, Russia and Britain faced each other in June 1914, when a Serb murdered the heir to the Austrian Empire. Austria declared war on Serbia, Germany on Russia and France, and on August 4, 1914, when German troops had invaded Belgium, Britain declared war to prevent the occupation of this territory. At least Britain was not alone, but supported by Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and even by India where nationalist feeling was rising, and Ireland where Home Rule was postponed.

The war lasted four years and more nations were drawn into it; Turkey on the German side, Italy and Rumania on that of the Allies. In 1917, the course of the war and the world history was changed by the Russian Revolution, and the United States entered into the European conflict. The end came on November 11, 1918, when the Germans signed an armistice.



During the four years of carnage, Asquith was weakened and the dissatisfaction with the government mounted, until him and most of the senior liberal ministers were forced to resign, and Lloyd George became Prime Minister with a cabinet consisting largely of Conservatives. In the summer of 1918, George began to plan what he expected to be a wartime general election to be entered into coalition with the Conservatives. However, the sudden armistice of November 11, 1918 intervened, and the wartime election became a victory election.

The general election of December 14, 1918, was a landmark in 20th century British history, and may have helped to set the course of politics through the interwar period. People Act of 1918 gave the votes to women in recognition of their invaluable war work, and to all men over twenty-one. Although the coalition was returned to office, the real winners of the election were the Conservatives, Lloyd George, the liberal Prime Minister, remained dependent on them. To sum up, the election had focused not upon the reconstruction of Britain, but on the punishment of Germany after the war, a matter that the government had hoped to defer. The election had committed the government to a harsh peace.

**The first World War has been a catalyst for social and economic change of Britain.** It blurred the frontiers between the classes and sexes, and finally, the old deferential Britain was nearly gone. Furthermore, the war changed the position of women, bringing political, and to some extent economic and social emancipation. Meanwhile, the country had been hurt economically; the balances of credit in foreign currencies providing the capital for the city of London's financial operations for a century were spent. At last, the Treaty of Versailles, punishing Germany for financial reparations insured that foreign markets would remain depressed. The Peace treaty

was drawn up in 1919. Members of the government began to realize that the punitive treaty was a mistake, Germany being Britain's largest foreign customer.

On the other hand, one of the pre-war problems, notably Ireland, which had been promised Home Rule, remained. The attitude of Sinn Feiners had hardened, there had been a rebellion in Dublin in 1916, and now they demanded an independent republic. A ferocious civil war broke out, the government employed ex-soldiers; however, repression failed, Lloyd George had to yield, and on December 6, 1921, arrived at a compromise whereby Southern Ireland became the Irish Free State, with dominion status.

In the 1920's the world's economy as well as Britain's had been disrupted, and the defeated powers were too impoverished to buy. Unemployment rose, the period was one of depression, with hunger marches and strikes, as T.S. Eliot expressed in "The Waste Land" and "The Hollow Men". These were also years of political instability, due to the emergence of Labor as the third greatest party. In 1922, the Conservatives withdrew their support of Lloyd George and the coalition, and gained a majority at the election. Bonar Law formed a Conservative ministry, but in 1923 resigned, and Stanley Baldwin became the Prime Minister, prescribing protection as a remedy for economic ills. However, in February 1924, the combined Labor and Liberal members outnumbered the Conservatives, and he had to resign. Then, Ramsay Macdonald, leader of the next biggest party, formed the first Labor government. He remained in office only nine months, and by the end of the year Baldwin was again in office with a huge majority. In future, the struggle was going to be one primarily between Conservative and Labor.



Baldwin's Chancellor of the Exchequer, Winston Churchill imposed import duties to protect home industries, raised the value of the pound, made British goods more expensive for foreign countries to buy, and the depression deepened. The conditions in the coalfields were bad, because the owners were demanding longer hours and lower wages, though the General Council of the Trades Union Congress promised to support the miners. As a result, on May 3, 1926, a General Strike began, the miners were defeated in November.

At the election of 1929, Labor, supported by the Liberals, had a majority and Macdonald formed his second ministry. Within months, British economy, like that of the rest of the world, was devastated by the Great Depression. The postwar world of reconstruction became a prewar world of depression, radicalism, racism, and violence.

**Thus began the 1930's, one of the most disastrous decades in Britain's history, and the prelude to a Second World War.** While the unemployed resumed their hunger marches, Japan invaded Manchuria, and resigned from the League of Nations, and institution that would foster cooperation among the nations established after the First World War, as did Germany after Hitler's rise to power in 1933. In 1935, Baldwin again succeeded Macdonald as the leader of the National Government, and agreed in Italy's invasion of Abyssinia. In 1936, Hitler occupied the Rhineland and the Spanish Civil War, in which the author of *Animal Farm*, George Orwell fought with the POUM militia, broke out. Even in England there were clashes between Communists and Fascists, and the poets of the period like Auden, Day, Lewis, and Macneice protested against the drift to disaster.





In the meantime, George V died, and Edward VIII announced his abdication on December 11, 1936, and in 1937 Neville Chamberlaine succeeded Baldwin. By the way, Japan launched war against China, and Italy left the League of Nations. In 1938, Hitler incorporated Austria in Germany, and in September demanded part of Czechoslovakia. Upon this, Chamberlaine went to Munich and returned with the decision of not defending Czechoslovakia, which Hitler seized in 1939. Mussolini occupied Albania while Britain guaranteed to defend Poland. British economy was recovering, and unemployment rate was reducing when a few months later Hitler attempted to attack Poland. on September 3, 1939, Britain and France were at war with Germany.

**If we were to examine World War II from the British perspective, it had three distinct phases:**The first, the phony war and the period of German victories in the West ending with the decision of France in June 1940, to ask for an armistice with Germany; the second, when Britain stood alone to defend British Isles, ending in December 1941, with the successful Soviet defense of Moscow after Hitler's attack and the Japanese declaration of war on the United States and the British Empire; and, finally, the third, the period of the Grand Alliance lasting from December 1941 until Germany's capitulation in May 1945.

Churchill, who had replaced Chamberlaine in May 1940, was not the one who signed the Postdam Agreement with Stalin and President Truman. Clement Attlee signed the Agreement, whereby Germany was divided into four zones occupied by the victorious powers. In 1941; however, Germany attacked Russia which fought bravely against it, and in 1943 Western Allies sat down with the communists at the 'Teheran Conference'.

At the general election on July 26, 1945, the labor party had gained a two to one majority over the Conservatives, because the electorate had not forgotten the grim decade of the 30's. Therefore, Attlee became the Prime Minister with a majority in the Commons, and the work of reconstruction began.

Right after the 1945 elections, on August 17, 1945, George Orwell published *Animal Farm*, surely the most important work of fictional political satire and allegory, criticising totalitarianism of any kind.

In the postwar years, most of the hospitals, the Bank of England, railways, road-haulage, civil aviation, gas, electricity, and the basic industries of coal and steel were nationalized. An attempt to implement the Education Act of 1944 was made by raising the school-leaving age to fifteen, and providing grammar, technical and modern schools, and grants for students. Then, a series of acts provided insurance for forms of need, special care for children and old people, and a free health service for everybody.

On the other hand, Britain was impoverished and exhausted, and the period of the Labor government was one of austerity. There was a financial crisis in 1947, and another in 1949, when the value of the pound was reduced a whole lot against dollar. As a result, this discouraged imports and encouraged exports, and a trade revival began.

The last years of Attlee's administration were troubled by economic stingency and inflation. In October 1951, a general election returned the Conservatives under Churchill, and they remained in power from 1951 until 1964. They accepted the social revolution, the Welfare State, and most of the actions of the Labor government.

Briefly, in the 18th century, Britain had achieved her first empire, when she controlled the whole of North America. A century later she had a second, and even greater empire, and in the middle of the 19th century, had been the leading power of the world for half a century. However, all that has changed in the beginning of the 20th century, and Britain lost her material supremacy against the gigantic powers of U.S.A. and U.S.S.R., being a small, crowded island with few natural advantages, dependent on imported food and raw materials, which were, in fact, the consequences of the two World Wars, especially the recent one.



### III. FACTORS THAT CAUSED GEORGE ORWELL TO WRITE ANIMAL FARM

As elaborately mentioned in his biography, throughout the course of his life, George Orwell had joined the Indian Civil Service, lived among the tramps, worked as a teacher, and experienced both disastrous World Wars. In Malcolm Bradbury's words, "He had been down and out in Paris and London, followed the road to Wigan Pier, fought in Spain, and made his homage to Catalonia." Briefly, various factors and his experiences caused Orwell to write this striking political satire which basically criticises the times in which he lived.

*Animal Farm* was first published on August 17, 1945, right after the Labor victory in the British general election, and in the same month, when U.S. atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, causing the Japanese surrender, and ending the abominable World War II.

Orwell had conceived the central idea for the novel in 1937, when he fought during the Spanish Civil War, with the POUM (Partido Obrero de Unificacion Marxista) militia, and witnessed the communist purges of the Spanish leftists.

When he began to write *Animal Farm* at the end of 1943, he was in an uncomfortable position. Until then, he had always believed that the Marxist Revolution of 1917 had been betrayed by Stalin, and according to Orwell Stalin's character as an assassin had been made obvious. His lack of respect for truth, consistency, and moral principles had been clarified by his rapid propoganda shift in 1939 towards Germany, and the return shift in 1941 when Germany attacked Russia. However,

then, no one was courageous enough to blame Russia, because she was fighting bravely with Germany, and delaying the possible attack on England.

Orwell's fears about Russia were justified after the war when Russia took over many Eastern European countries, refused to cooperate with the Allies, alienated the West, and retired behind the 'Iron Curtain'. It was ironical that the time he started writing the novel coincided with the Teheran Conference where the Western Allies sat down with the communists to plan the overthrow of Germany. A similar meeting is held through the end of the novel, when pigs and men sit down for a compromise, and the revolution of 'Animal Farm' loses all its value.

With *Animal Farm* Orwell reflected the betrayal of the Russian Revolution by Stalin: the treacherous treatment towards Trotsky, the fudges of the Nazi-Soviet pact, and the abuses for their own advantage and survival.

Obviously, the main factor that caused, a socialist, George Orwell to write the novel was the Second World War, and the Fascist totalitarianism of the 1930's and 40's. After the disastrous war, most parts of Europe lay in waste, full of nazi extermination camps, in which many millions of innocent had died. The postwar years were an era of crisis for the liberal conscience, which had leaned leftwards in 1930's, and now realized many of its radical allegiances, and corrupted by the harsh realities of war, power and terror. During the war years Britain had undergone a quiet social revolution and now, had a new, weaker place in the world. Orwell, himself, resembled his country to a family with the wrong members in control.



In a way, Orwell wanted to be a recorder of the economic, social, and political problems of his age. In his essay, "*Inside the Whale*", he said, "The literature of liberalism is coming to an end, and the literature of totalitarianism has not yet appeared and is barely imaginable. As for the writer, he's sitting on a melting iceberg; he's merely an anachronism, a hangover from the bourgeois age, as surely doomed as the hippopotamus".

According to Orwell, an age of totalitarianism was now inevitable and the end has come not only for the aesthetic tradition of modern writing but for all moral independence as well. Orwell's book is a direct encounter with the processes of totalitarianism exploring the powers of terror, propaganda, and the process of revolutionary self-betrayal, and it emphasizes that freedom of thought and speech can be claimed as a transcendent Western heritage. In other words, the book totally reflects the author's thoughts and despair about the age he lives in.

Another reason why Orwell wrote *Animal Farm* is that he wanted to point out that the failure often lay within the revolutionary process since its leaders ignore those whom the revolution was meant to serve. Orwell, also shared the 20th century hope of a socialist revolution which would transform and reconstruct the society. With his novel, he emphasized the fact that those for whom such revolutions were intended, were often the victims rather than the beneficiaries.

One of the important factors causing Orwell to create this political satire was his greatest fear that people easily forget what had happened in the immediate past. Thus, in a way, he rewrote the history and moral principles disguised in 'a fairy



story', and reminded people, and especially leaders of Western democracy, of the facts.

After discussing the factors that caused Orwell to write *Animal Farm*, let us have a look at the author's own words which would undoubtedly enlighten us about his intentions and expectations:

Being in despair, fighting a battle against the left from within the left - as he stated -, in an introduction to a foreign language edition of *Animal Farm*, Orwell says that his main intention was to show how false the popular idea that Soviet Russia was a socialist state: he wanted to save socialism from communism. *Animal Farm* also possesses the qualities of a traditional work of art. Orwell said, "*Animal Farm* was the first book in which I tried, with full consciousness what I was doing, to fuse political purpose and artistic purpose into one whole."

Some critics read *Animal Farm* only as an allegory of the Russian Revolution of 1917, such as an American critic, Dwight Macdonald. In a letter to him, Orwell stated, "I meant the moral to be that revolutions only reflect a radical improvement when the masses are alert and know how to chuck out their leaders as soon as the latter have done their job."

To sum up, the economic, social, and especially political problems of his age were the main factors leading Orwell, a man of great political and moral intelligence, to write the novel, a story touching at the heart of contemporary world affairs and anxieties.

## IV. SYNOPSIS

In the first chapter of the book, all characters are quickly drawn for the reader. So, it would be quite wise to give some information about the major characters before proceeding with the summarized story of *Animal Farm*.

Old Major is a venerable old boar whose vision of a better life and his call for rebellion are the inspiration for the founding of 'Animal Farm'. Snowball is a young boar whose persuasive powers and theoretical intelligence make him a contender for the leadership of 'Animal Farm'. Napoleon is another young boar whose ambition and direct approach to gaining power cause him to win the struggle for leadership of the farm. Boxer is a cart horse of great strength, loyalty, and small intelligence who is foremost in the projects requiring physical labor. Clover is a mare whose motherly concern for all the animals makes her a source of personal strength for all, especially during difficult times. Benjamin is a donkey whose skepticism about any kind of society and human nature remains unchanged. Moses is a raven regaling the animals with stories about the better life on Sugarcandy Mountain. Mollie is a mare with frivolous attitude and personal vanity. Squealer is a porker used by Napoleon to explain the actions of the pigs. Finally Mr. Jones, is the human owner of 'Manor Farm'.

The story of *Animal Farm* begins with the meeting called by Old Major, twelve year-old boar, an elder statesman, and a visionary. After all the animals of the Manor Farm ran by Mr. Jones gather in the barn, Old Major starts his speech. He talks about the unhappy lot of animals in England, gives many instances about Man's cruelty to them, and tells them that he



envision a future happy time in which Man has been removed. He even lists the vices of Man and warns the animals that they should avoid if this future free state is to be achieved. All the animals listen to him attentively, and at last, share Old Major's simple view: Man is bad, animals are good, and enthusiastically sing the song 'Beasts of England', expressing his vision for the animals' future.

The location of Manor Farm is an ideal setting, isolated from outside interferences, and is available for establishing the pastoral life which Old Major dreams of. The Rebellion comes quite unexpectedly; the animals break into a storage shed and begin to eat their fill after Mr. Jones has left them unfed for a day. When Jones and his men try to beat the animals with their whips, all of them become very angry and attack the humans, and drive them off the farm. Thus, the transformation of the Manor Farm into Animal Farm realizes. After the Rebellion and their tour of the house, they decide to preserve it as a museum, and paint the Seven Commandments of Animalism on the barn. As the pigs make these changes, Snowball and Napoleon are to be the leaders of the farm. Then, the dream of Old Major, who is dead now, quickly becomes a philosophy called 'Animalism', and is worked out exclusively by Snowball, Napoleon, and Squealer.

When the harvest time comes, the animals realize that they must take over day-to-day operation of the farm. Under the pigs' directions, they finish the harvest in fewer days than Jones ever had. As a result, their food is abundant, and life is better. Thanks to Snowball's leadership, the animals very quickly take on the characteristics of 'civilised' human society. On Sundays, they hold meetings to plan the next week's work and to discuss any decisions. However, Snowball and Napoleon disagree most of the times, and a real struggle



for power begins between them. While the animals learn to read and write, the pigs' privileges as rulers increase and Napoleon deliberately takes puppies under his personal care. Snowball simplifies the Seven Commandments into one slogan "Four legs good, two legs bad", while Squealer, the propagandist for the pigs tries to justify the pigs' actions.

By the way, there appear rumours on other farms to join Animal Farm and rebel against the tyranny of their masters, and their masters try to discredit this new society by circulating rumours of immoral excesses in the animals' behavior and their failure to govern themselves. Thus, the Battle of the Cowshed is fought with humans. With Snowball in the forefront, animals lure the humans into a trap and quickly defeat them. After the victory, they decide to commemorate the battle and the Rebellion, by having two ceremonies each year.

After the victorious battle, the building of the windmill and the defense of the farm are the main two subjects to be dealt. As Snowball explains the necessity of a windmill which will provide many benefits for all the animals, they decide to build it. Upon this, Napoleon calls his dogs -which he has kept hidden-, they attack Snowball, and he barely escapes death, and runs away. Then, Napoleon claims that Snowball was an enemy, and that the plans for the windmill were his, and eventually takes over the charge of Animal Farm, establishing a kind of dictatorship. He abolishes the open meetings of Sundays, and instead, establishes an assembly during which the animals are given orders for the week to come.

Now, the animals' life is hard. They work a lot, the work on the windmill proceeds slowly, as a result, the second year is not as successful as the first was, but still, they believe that their life is better than it was under Jones. Napoleon starts

establishing trade with humans, the pigs move into the house, sleep in beds, and encourage the use of titles when addressed to Napoleon. When the windmill is blown down in a severe storm, Napoleon makes the animals work harder for rebuilding it, and proclaims that Snowball is responsible for the disaster.

Like any dictator, Napoleon makes it appear as though everything is going well under his rule. So, although the winter has been hard, and the supplies are running low, he makes it appear that there are more supplies than needed, and arranges to sell eggs in order to buy necessary supplies to survive until spring. In addition, to prove his power, under the pretext of a rebellious attitude, he executes four pigs, threatens the animals by reducing their rations, makes himself inaccessible, and bans 'Beasts of England', the song that gave rise to the creation of Animal Farm.

Eventhough the animals are working long hours and harder than ever before, Squealer presents long lists of figures to prove that things are better than they ever have been before. Whenever there are outrages or questions of the hungry animals, Squealer pacifies them. When one of the farmers intends to take over Animal farm, 'The Battle of the Windmill' takes place, and the humans destroy the windmill which enrages the animals and disregarding their guns drive them away.

Thus, life continues to be hard, and rations are again reduced for the working animals. However, Squealer, once again, convinces them to go on with the life they lead. Meanwhile, a school is to be built for the pigs who begin wearing ribbons, brewing their own beer, appropriating all the barley grown on the farm for themselves. Upon the events, animals grumble a little, but finally accept them all. As time goes by, Napoleon is

becoming more and more like Jones, and he makes Animal Farm into a class society with two groups: the ruling and the working class.

Finally, Napoleon becomes indistinguishable from Jones, and animals discover the truth when they watch the pigs and human beings together in the farmhouse. Pigs have taken on more characteristics of humans: they have begun walking upright, carrying whips, subscribing to newspapers, having a telephone, and wearing human clothes. The Commandments have been changed and eventually replaced by "All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others".



## V. ALLEGORY

Allegory is a form of imaginative literature or spoken utterance constructed in such a way that their readers or listeners are encouraged to look for meanings hidden beneath the literal surface of the fiction. Allegoric works use symbolic fictional figures and actions to convey truths or generalizations about human conduct or experience. Like metaphor, an allegory expresses spiritual, psychological, or abstract intellectual concepts in terms of material or concrete objects. The abiding impression left by the allegorical mode is one of indirect, ambiguous, even enigmatic symbolism, which inevitably calls for interpretation.

The range of allegorical literature is so wide that to consider allegory as a fixed literary genre is less useful than to regard it as a dimension or mode of controlled indirectness and double meaning. Critics usually prefer to use the term 'allegory' for works of considerable length, complexity, or unique shape. Thus, the following works might be called allegories: John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, William Wordsworth's *Ode: Intimations of Immortality*, Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*.

Let us give some more instances of allegorical works throughout centuries:

In the 13th century French didactic poem "Roman de la Rose", most of the details of the garden have a fixed connotation in

terms of courtly love; however, what may seem the mechanical contrivance of the extended metaphor is redeemed by its imaginative power.

In allegorical fictions -especially medieval morality plays- many of the characters are personifications. Personification is allegorical since it endows a thing or abstraction with human attributes, but it is different from allegory as the identity of the thing personified is always clearly proclaimed, such as 'Good Deeds', 'Riches', 'Gluttony'.

While concealing, allegory reveals too. When an author ventures in political allegory, he may protect himself by the element of disguise, and simultaneously make satirical relevations through the implied comparison. In a way, allegory is a means of freedom under conditions of strong restraints, and that is why it generally occurs under authoritarian conditions. Thus, in the prologue of 14th century poem "Piers Plowman", the author, using the story of the mice who were afraid to bell the cat, states his political views. In the 17th century, in "Absalom and Achitophel", John Dryden reveals, under scriptural disguise, the characters of politicians attempting to alter the succession to the English throne.

George Orwell combined several of these methods in *Animal Farm*, which, under the guise of a fable, and expressed his disillusionment with the outcome of the Bolshevik Revolution and showed how one tyrannical system of government was replaced by another one.

Since Orwell's 'disguise' was a 'fable', it would be rather relevant to give some information about fables which are short, simple forms of naive allegory.

The fable is usually a tale about animals who are personified and behave as though they were human beings. The device of personification may be extended to trees, stones, winds, and other natural objects. The early tales included humans and Gods as characters; however, fables tend to concentrate on animating the inanimate, which is the feature that isolates them from the ordinary folk tale like Orwell's *Animal Farm*, fables tend towards detailed, sharply observed social realism which finally leads to satire.

Orwell's allegory *Animal Farm*, in the form of a beast fable has been successful since it allows us to view the rise and fall of a change in society. If the characters had been human beings, a greater emphasis would have been placed on the characters, and the reader's reactions would have focused on the human emotions rather than on the forces and activities involved in the failure of the society.



## VI. ORWELL'S METHODS OF CHARACTERIZATION

### 1. ALLEGORICAL CHARACTERIZATION

*Animal Farm* by George Orwell is obviously a political allegory, providing him a disguise, and giving him the opportunity to make satirical relevations. Orwell's disguise is the form of a 'beast fable', and he developed characterization using it.

In order to be successful, a fable must capture the right balance between human and animal characteristics in its portrait of the animals. The animals must be human enough so that we can see that the situation applies to human beings, and that we can recognize the animals as at least representatives of different types of human beings. If the animals are not sufficiently animal-like in their characteristics, there would be no need to use animals as characters. Orwell could find this balance; his animals have enough human characteristics to serve his purpose and to make them recognizable as human types, but most of their characteristics are those of a particular type of animal.

If we were to illustrate Orwell's allegorical characterization, Boxer who is a loyal, hardworking, and unintelligent horse would be a good example. With his great size, these are the characteristics which one might well imagine a horse to have. In other words, the character traits which he is given are

human traits, but they are also consistent with the kind of animal he is.

In order to understand the way Orwell used allegorical characterization, it would be quite wise to study the major characters which are Old Major, Snowball, Napoleon, and Squealer:

\* **Old Major** is a twelve year-old boar and a show pig who has won prizes for Mr. Jones. He has a wise and benevolent appearance. If we were to compare him with the leading figures in the Russian Revolution, Old Major is most like Karl Marx, the major theoretician behind the communistic ideals. He is a visionary, a dreamer, who suggests that there could be a better society than the one in which the animals now live. This vision, his oratical powers, and the song 'Beasts of England' combine to capture the attention and the imagination of the animals of Manor Farm.

Old Major has lived a life of ease as a show pig. However, this kind of life has allowed him sufficient time to think and to observe other animals, while the others spent their time concentrating on hard work and survival.

\* **Snowball.** After Old Major's death, Snowball and Napoleon become the leaders in planning for the Rebellion. Snowball is obviously the one more in sympathy with the spirit of the vision since he organizes committees so that all the animals can take part in them, and classes in reading and writing for them. He plans the construction of the windmill as well. In fact, all of the examples of the ideas he supports, the things he says, and the activities he undertakes all indicate that he had grasped the spirit and the substance of Old Major's vision.



Snowball, complementing Old Major, plays a role, in many ways, similar to the role that Trotsky played in the Russian Revolution. Like Trotsky, he is a planner: he is always looking for ways in which Old Major's vision can be made reality. Furthermore, he is an excellent orator, able to persuade the animals. His characteristics also make Snowball a great tactician whose battle plans bring victory during the Battle of the Cowshed.

However, he shares some of Old Major's weaknesses. For instance, he agrees with Napoleon that the pigs should have all the apples and the milk. As a leader, he never considers plotting against Napoleon, and consequently is chased away from Animal Farm.

\* **Napoleon** is a huge boar, quite fierce-looking and often getting his way although he does not talk much. Even before the Rebellion, these traits lead the other animals to think that he has a great depth of character compared to Snowball.

While Snowball envisions plans for the benefit of all the animals, Napoleon plans the ways in which he can use Old Major's ideas for his own benefit and the day he will eliminate Snowball, his rival. He is a secretive plotter; training the guard dogs in secret, brainwashing the puppies.

After eliminating Snowball, he displays all the characteristics of a despotic ruler like Stalin. His main aim is to take privileges for himself and those around him: the best food, best produce of the farm, and luxuries. In order to distract the animals from what he is actually doing, he introduces the purge, kills those who have opposed him, cuts off the supplies, threatens the animals to reduce their rations, keeps them



working at laborious projects, and puts great emphasis on ceremonies and parades.

During the course of the novel, Napoleon does not change. His major characteristic is getting what he wants. As the novel progresses, he wants more and more, and with Squealer's help, becomes increasingly sophisticated in justifying his greed. At the end of the novel, he is still getting exactly what he wants when he wants it.

\* **Squealer.** Even before the Rebellion, Squealer is thought to be a fine talker, an argumentative sort who can turn an idea inside out. After the Rebellion, he becomes the official spokesman for Napoleon, and the official propagandist for the pigs.

In Napoleon's service, he revises history and the Seven Commandments to accommodate whatever Napoleon wants to do.

Squealer has no direct counterpart in the Russian Revolution, but every dictatorship and most governments have such people who play the same role. It is Squealer's duty to interpret the actions of the leader in the best way.

## 2. POINT OF VIEW

The point of view Orwell uses is omniscient, i.e., the narrator stands above the action and is able to see everything that happens on and around the farm. He is able to 'read the minds' of characters; however, the narrator of *Animal Farm* does not use all the capabilities.

Although the narrator takes an objective point of view, he tells the story from the general perspective of common animals. For instance, we never see how the leaders, i.e., Snowball or Napoleon feels about anything; what the pigs do or say is only reported, the narrator does not enter into their minds. We are only informed about the general attitudes of the other animals, and especially in the early parts of the novel, the narrator makes some judgements. In other words, instead of using all of the capabilities of the omniscient narrator, Orwell prefers to leave the judgement to the reader.

The most common source of information about the animals is the description of what they do. Another source of information is through the reports of what they say. Both of these means of characterization are objective, and they lead to different interpretations on the part of the reader. As a result of the general perspective that Orwell uses, is that the reader is biased for the common animals and against the pigs. Orwell also uses another technique, which is the direct description of the physical characteristics of the animals. As the others, this method also helps build sympathy for the common animals, and antipathy against the pigs.

We should also mention that the characterization in *Animal Farm* is flat and static. Thus, the characters are given only the characteristics that fit them for a particular role. For instance, Boxer possesses all the characteristics of a loyal worker while Napoleon is a very clever leader, and they do not change at the end of the novel.

Though the novel is set in an allegory of the Revolution of 1917, as far as I know, all the characters are anthropomorphic and represent the different classes of the society. Orwell also pointed out that the revolution is often betrayed by those who are supposed to be the leaders of the revolution. This is the case with Napoleon and the other pigs in the novel.

The novel is a satire on the Soviet Union and its communist system. By using animals, Orwell was able to show the people and expose the hypocrisy and the consequences of the revolution.

The song "Beasts of England" and the windmill are the symbols of the revolution. However, the windmill is destroyed and the revolution is betrayed.

Orwell's *Animal Farm* is a political satire that is based on the author's knowledge of the situation of English society in the beginning of the 20th century, regarding its history, literature, economics, and political status; and the factors that led Orwell to write the novel; and finally, after defining



## CONCLUSION

To sum up, George Orwell's *Animal Farm* is one of the greatest modern political allegories, telling the story of an innocent revolution turning into dictatorship and betrayal. Though the novel seems like an allegory of the Russian Revolution of 1917, in fact it deals with any kind of revolution, its consequences, and criticises totalitarianism of any kind. Orwell also pointed out that the failure of such revolutions often lay within the revolutionary process since its leaders ignore those whom the revolutions was meant to serve. In the end, those for whom the revolution was intended are often the victims rather than the beneficiaries.

As Orwell says, his main intention was to show how false the popular idea that Soviet Russia was a socialist state. Thus, being a socialist, he wanted to save socialism from communism. By writing the novel, Orwell also wanted to remind people and especially leaders of the immediate past its consequences, and the facts.

The song 'Beasts of England' and the 'Seven Commandments' which I quoted in the introduction were the essence of the animals' revolution. However, in the end, we see that the song is banned, and the commandments are turned into an illogical and unjust slogan.

My thesis was a brief study of Orwell's *Animal Farm* as a political satire. I gave some information about the author's life and career; mentioned the situation of English society in the beginning of the 20th century, regarding its history, literature, economics, and political status; stated the factors that caused Orwell to write the novel; and finally, after defining allegory, I

tried to examine Orwell's methods of characterization, focusing especially on the allegorical characterization. I used nine different sources which are indicated in the bibliography.

To conclude, I would like to quote the last paragraph of the novel, when the human beings and pigs are together:

*Twelve voices were shouting in anger, they were all alike. No question, now, what had happened to the faces of the pigs. The creatures outside looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again: but already it was impossible to say which was which.*

\* ENCYCLOPEDIA OF BRITANNICA 1992  
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