

Rhetoric and the Manipulation of Language in George Orwell's *Animal Farm*

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Abstract-This article examines the rhetorical skills and the manipulation of language in George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. The role of language is a considerable political strategy in *Animal Farm*. Orwell is recognized by both the writers and the common people because his novel, *Animal Farm*, is an allegorical story at two levels. On the surface level, it's a story which attracts the attention of the common people to be amused by the animals talking about their difficulties on a farm, and on the other hand, it is a political story with some profound concepts about the human nature and the strategies politicians use to manipulate people. It is well realized that the leader of the animals in Orwell's *Animal Farm*, Napoleon, tricks people into believing that he is the best leader by giving them some statistical lies. The leaders, including Napoleon and Snowball, give the animals some false documents that their situation is not that bad. After examining both the rhetorical skills and language as a means for manipulation, one realizes that Orwell intended to mention a fact about the human nature that they are more likely to be ambivalent and also the totalitarian governments in general having an exploitative purpose in using different strategies of which media and propaganda are some means to manipulate the people in order to keep them docile and quiet just to promote their own purposes without paying attention to the miseries of others.

Keywords- Rhetorical skills; Manipulation; Strategies; Totalitarian; Propaganda.

1. Introduction

One of the most influential types of the novel is the historical novel. Orwell's *Animal Farm* is contemplated a historical novel since it refers to the events and characters and historical personages in a certain time in the history. Such novels include both fictional and real characters. The action has happened during a certain specific period before the novel was written. According to Moran, One of Orwell's goals in writing *Animal Farm* was to portray the Russian (or Bolshevik) Revolution of 1917 as one which led to a government more oppressive, totalitarian, and deadly than the one it overthrew. Many of the characters and events of Orwell's novel parallel those of the Russian Revolution: In short, Manor Farm is a model of Russia, and Old Major, Snowball, and Napoleon represent the dominant figures of the Russian Revolution. In addition, Mr. Jones is modeled on Tsar Nicholas II (1868–1918), who was the last Russian emperor. His rule (1894–1917) was marked by his

insisting that he could not be defeated in any war. As he was ruling Russia, people were living in absolute poverty and they were also experiencing sudden changes. In 1905, some social protesters demanded social reform, and they were shot down by the army near Nickolas's palace which is called the Bloody Sunday massacre. In the same way the animals suffer hunger and in need of help under Jones, millions of Russians were living in wretched conditions under Nickolas's reign. Then Russia entered World War I, many people lost their lives in the war and they struck for better changes and mutinies which resulted in the end of the Tsarist movement. Subsequently, Nickolas's generals did not support him anymore. He abdicated his throne to abstain from the probable civil wars, but Bolshevik revolution at last happened when Nickolas, like Jones, was removed from his place of rule and then died shortly thereafter. Old Major also represents V. I. Lenin (1870–1924) who controlled the 1917 revolution. Lenin was inspired by Karl Marx who was against the oppressors. Old

Major dies shortly after he delivers a lecture for the animals to free themselves from the bondage under Jones. Similarly, Lenin died before he could witness the ways his disciples could reform ([8], P. 57).

Animal Farm begins with Old Major as one of the oldest pigs on the farm of Mr. Jones who asks the animals to gather in the barn of the farm delivering a heartfelt lecture on how Mr. Jones abuses and exploits other animals for his own benefits. He numbers many actions Jones does without paying attention to the sufferings the animals are enduring. Soon afterwards, Old major dies and the animals make up their minds to revolt against their human oppressor, Mr. Jones. They could defeat him and the pigs succeeded in being the leaders of the rest of the animals. Napoleon and Snowball take some central roles on the farm. From the very beginning Napoleon robs the wind fallen apples and the milk which was supposed to be mixed in the animals' mash. When animals get to know that, Squealer tells the animals that the pigs are really brainworkers consuming lots of energy to think about the animals' welfare, so they need more food. Napoleon trains some dogs to defend him in danger and he uses them as weapons to frighten any probable protests against him. The pigs oppress the animals and punish those who cause any riots. They change the slogans on behalf of themselves, and they use different strategies to deceive the animals they are right. Squealer takes the responsibility to paint all Napoleon's guiles. First, the animals were all equal according to the rules of animalism, but at the end the animals were all equal but some of them were more equal than others. That is to say, the new regime was much worse than the previous one with the animals having no choice but to obey the rules and regulations set by their new leader who even resembled Mr. Jones in walking on his hind legs, sleeping in bed and drinking alcohol.

Orwell's *Animal Farm* can be viewed from a variety of perspectives: It can be studied from the point of view of politics where a government, namely Russia cease to pay attention to the people's needs and disregarded the nation's interests. They happened to exploit and abuse people for their own benefits. In Bloom's viewpoint, some sixty years have passed debating over the ultimate political meaning of *Animal Farm*, but it owes partly to its use as propaganda ([1], P. 147). George Orwell can also be considered a socialist leader as well as a political leader. This can be seen in his major works. According to Ingle, in his early work Orwell expressed sympathy for and solidarity with the powerless and the oppressed. When war came to Britain but socialism did not, Orwell became increasingly pessimistic and showed the rise of the Soviet communism in the eyes of the Western intelligentsia evoked the brilliant anti-Soviet fable *Animal Farm*. Finally, Orwell wrote his dystopia, *Nineteen Eighty Four* which was apocalyptic based on a future British socialist state ([4], P. 146).

Orwell was inspired to write *Animal Farm* when he happened to see a village boy whipping a cart-horse. At that moment, he could formulate his ideas into *Animal Farm*. In Moran's view, George Orwell himself said that it struck him that if only such animals became aware of their strength they would have no power over them, and that men exploit could no longer exploit the animals as the government in a totalitarian state exploits the common people. Orwell himself mentioned that thought corrupts language, and language can corrupt thought ([8], P. 9). Orwell indirectly referred to the influential role of the language a totalitarian government can use to manipulate and brainwash the proletariat. The leaders of the Russian revolution, especially, Stalin used some means of propaganda to help him promote his cruel purposes and he proved himself even much more despotic than the previous one.

Rodden believes that because *Animal Farm* was written at the height of the wartime alliance with the Soviet Union in 1943 and 1944, the book was turned down by a number of British and American publishers, among them Orwell's own publisher, Victor Gollancz. It was also rejected by some editors, including T. S. Eliot. It was rejected for political reasons. Eliot distrusted Orwell's socialist politics but also thought it was a bad moment to attack the Russians. *Animal Farm* went on to become one of the most widely read books of the twentieth century, selling upwards of twenty million copies. Because it was cast as a fable – brief, effortless to read, and seemingly easy to interpret. It became a favourite text for secondary school, the one literary work that adolescents are almost certain to have studied. But the book's bright clarity and accessibility worked to undermine critical respect ([10], P. 134). Bloom also mentions when *Animal Farm* was put on stage in China, the long uncertainty about its ultimate meaning was removed. It dated back to 1945, when William Empson warned Orwell that, since allegory 'inherently means more than the author means', his book might mean 'very different things to different readers'. English communists also attacked *Animal Farm* as anti-Soviet ([1], P.146).

In this paper, the rhetorical skills and the means for manipulation of the language are practiced to show how the public can be influenced by the words, slogans and propaganda. The public in a totalitarian society will be deceived by the dominant ideology through the effective use of the language in a way that they cannot recognize their being and they forget themselves as real human beings. In this paper, we will witness a world dominated by a totalitarian regime where the reality is blurred and distorted.

2. Discussion

Several characters in Orwell's *Animal farm* play their roles as masters possessing great rhetorical skills: Old Major as the wisest and oldest pig among the animals tries

to persuade them that he has had a long experience throughout his long life dealing with the human beings. He tries to use several strategies to convince the animals that he is totally right! First, he asks a number of rhetorical questions to make his argument forceful. For example, he tells them that man is the only creature that consumes without producing! He asks the cows how many gallons of milk they have been giving during the last year. Then he asks the hen how many eggs they have hatched last year and how many of them have been hatched to chicken. In short, he tries to use many examples of man's tyranny, such as killing the weak, withholding food, and preventing them from owning their own bodies. Second, Old Major uses slogans as well. He tells the animals: "All men are enemies. All animals are comrades." He knows that some animals like Boxer who are very simpleminded will be persuaded easily, and it was considered a masterful persuasion and even it paved the way for Old Major to motivate the animals for a revolt against Mr. Jones, the human master of the Animal Farm. Third, he sings the song of "Beasts of England" to rouse the audience and according to Moran, the use of a song to stir the citizenry is an old political maneuvering and the lyrics of the above mentioned song summarizes Old Major's feelings about man ([8], P. 18).

The second character who acts a leading role to manipulate the animals' mentality and perception throughout the novel is Squealer who is a clever pig. As his name implies he is the mouthpiece of Napoleon, the potential despotic ruler of the Animal Farm. When he dramatizes some difficult point, he skips from side to side in a physical way and talks smoothly in a rhetorical sense: Every time he is faced with a question or objection, he skips around the topic using convoluted logic to prove his own point. In short, he serves as Napoleon's Minister of Propaganda or the present day media. Media, Bounds argues, is one of the main means by which the ruling class disseminates its ideology ([2], P. 63). After Napoleon eats the windfallen apples which were already mixed with the animals' mash, it is the Squealer who serves his role as the media to explain that to the animals that the pigs are the brainworkers and the apples are good for their well beings to serve the rest of the animals. He turns the black into white by telling the animals that the pigs are really sacrificing themselves and he portrays the pigs as near-martyrs who only think of others and never themselves. Squealer tries to persuade the murmuring animals with his pseudo-logic that the pigs are selfless. Squealer's rhetorical question, "Surely there is no one among you who wants to see Jones back?", is intended to show that animals' present situation is much preferable to their previous situation when Jones was their master. Squealer, Moran remarks, rewrites history when he changes the fourth commandment of animalism from "No animal shall sleep in bed." to "No animal shall sleep in bed with sheets." Clover is suspicious of the last two added words, but is so brainwashed by the new system that she thinks she has made a mistake. Squealer explains to the animals that a bed is only a place

for the animals to sleep in, and so a pile of straw can be a bed. He manipulates the language to deceive the animals once more ([8], P. 32). According to Kelso, this is one of the Marxist strategies to use some certain principal rhetorical weapons to seduce the minds of men [6].

Napoleon also uses a number of tactics to get his way: Napoleon spends some time every week training the sheep to bleat "Four legs good and two legs bad." something which is practiced in Snowball's speeches. It is Napoleon who tells Squealer to convince the animals that the windmill has been his project, not Snowball's. Another effective way through which Napoleon tries to use in order to strengthen his role is his politics of sacrifice. Some animals murmur against their being engaged in trade with their neighboring humans for selling the hens' eggs and the timber, but he tells them they need not be worried about the relation with the human beings. He tells them that he takes the responsibility himself to put the burden of that difficulty on his own shoulders, not the animals. He manipulates the language to trick the animals into believing that he is their defender. Concerning the bad effects of the language Orwell in his *Politics and the English Language* explains,

"Underneath this lies the half-conscious belief that language is a natural growth and not an instrument which we shape for our own purposes. Now, it is clear that the decline of a language must ultimately have political and economic causes: it is not due simply to the bad influence of this or that individual writer. But an effect can become a cause, reinforcing the original cause and producing the same effect in an intensified form, and so on indefinitely." [9].

Symbolism plays a paramount role in the novel's progress without which a part of Napoleon's ruling action might prove incomplete. Moran argues that symbols, such as rings in the noses, harnesses, bits, spurs and whips are used to convey liberty that Major hopes will be won one day by all of the animals equally. Once the animals rebel and drive Jones from the farm, they behave as a conquering army retaking its own land and freeing it from the yoke of oppression. All the symbols of Jones' reign, such as nose-rings, dog-chains, knives are tossed into a celebratory bonfire. An action symbolically done to manipulate the animals' beliefs that all about Jones's reign has come to an end. More important is that the animals attempt to create their own sense of history and tradition by preserving Jones' house as a museum. Presumably, future animals will visit the house to learn of the terrible luxury in which humans once lived. Similarly, the renaming of Manor Farm to *Animal Farm* suggests the animals have triumphed over their enemy. By renaming the farm, they assume that they will change the kind of place it has become, which is another example of their optimism and innocence. The windmill itself is a symbol of technological progress

Snowball wants it to be built because he thinks it will bring to the farm a degree of self-sufficiency something which is in accordance with the principles of Animalism. However, Napoleon is not concerned with the windmill; even he urinates on Snowball's plans for it because he is the only one concerned with establishing his totalitarian rule. The scene in which Boxer is taken to his death is notable for its depiction of a powerless and innocent figure caught in the gears of unforgiving tyranny. The important point is that the van's driver wears a bowler hat, a symbol throughout the novel which refers to the cruelty of man. Although Boxer tries to kick his way out of the van, he symbolizes an incredible character whose strength has been abused through days of mindless hard work in the service of his tormentors that he has been reduced to nothing and Squealer manipulates the language this time to tell the animals that he is being taken to the hospital where comrade Napoleon has paid a great amount of money to cure Boxer.

As Napoleon gains control deceiving the animals into believe that he is improving the animals' lives, Joseph Stalin (1879-1953), the Russian leader who succeeded Lenin as head of the communist party and created a totalitarian state by purging all opposition, used a great deal of propaganda, symbolized and allegorized by Squealer in the novel to present himself as an idealist working for change. His plan to build the windmill reflects and symbolizes Stalin's Five Year Plan for revitalizing the nation's industry and agriculture. Stalin's ordering Lenin's body to be placed in the shrine-like Lenin's Tomb parallels Napoleon's unearthing of old Major's skull, and his creation of the Order of the Green Banner parallels Stalin's creation of the Order of Lenin ([8], PP. 18-58). The names used in the *Animal Farm* are allegorical and symbolic used purposefully by the author. According to Rodden, a Marxist critic, Raymond Williams, who tried to show his interest in Orwell, argued that his very use of animals showed how symbols condescended to the common people in whose name the writer spoke ([10], P. 140). Ingle also asserts that in Orwell's *Animal Farm*, the carthorses Boxer and Clover which symbolize the working-class, and early in the story we find an example of their familial status when some orphaned ducklings come to one of the meetings addressed by Major. Clover made a sort of wall round them with her great foreleg, and the ducklings nestled down inside it, and promptly fell asleep. Thereafter, Boxer and Clover became the pigs' most faithful animals; they were considered Napoleon's victims ([4], P. 108).

Furthermore, *Animal Farm* intends to satirize the politicians, specifically their rhetorical ability to manipulate others, and to show their insatiable lust for power. Despite his seemingly altruistic motives, Napoleon is presented as the epitome of an individual hungry for power who masks all of his actions with the excuse telling the animals that they are done in order to better animal conditions on the Farm. He steals the milk and apples explaining by the lie

that these foods have some nutrients essential to pigs, who want to carry on their managerial work. Snowball is run off the farm by Napoleon who tells the animals that he has ever been a traitor, working for Jones; in fact the farm will be better without his presence. Each time Napoleon and the other pigs wish to break one of the Seven Commandments, they legitimize their transgressions by changing the Commandment's original language. Rodden also refers to this aspect of the language where the common people's mentality can be beguiled. Orwell says that these things usually happen in the case of the totalitarian governments. He argues that it *might* if the people were not alert to the way government can be corrupted by those who abused power ([10], P. 9). In addition, whenever the farm suffers a setback or any trivial problem, Napoleon blames Snowball's treachery, which the reader, of course, knows is untrue. He is using propaganda to put the burden of any wrongdoing upon Snowball's shoulder to deviate the animals' attention towards another subject making them unaware of who he really is. Napoleon's walking on two legs, wearing a derby hat, and toasting Pilkington reflect the degree to which he and the other pigs completely disregard the plights and difficulties of the other animals in favor of satisfying their own desire for power. Napoleon here stands for a real capitalist who in Habib's words reduces all human relationships to a cash nexus. The capitalists only pay attention to their own interests and have some egotistical calculation about what they do ([5], P. 528). In this respect we can also refer to Antonio Gramsci's idea on how the proletariat allow to the capitalists to be abused. Bressler asserts that there is a complex relationship between the base and superstructure in any community. He believes the bourgeois maintains its dominance over the proletariat by controlling the dominant ideology, and the shaping of the people's ideology is nothing but the common people's deception in which many people (the animals except for the pigs) forget about their own interests and desires. Instead, they accept the dominant values and privileges as their own ([3], P. 198).

George Orwell's repeatedly insists on a plain and firm language which reflects his confidence in ordinary truth. This can be seen in the language of the narrator in *Animal Farm*, which is characterized by syntactic tidiness and verbal manipulation of the novel. "Mr. Jones, of the Manor Farm, had locked the hen-houses for the night, but was too drunk to remember to shut the pop-holes"; this is how the narrator begins the fable. The circumlocutory language is the theme in the *Animal Farm*: the crassly elitist, manipulative, unintelligible, and circumlocutory discourse of the pigs through which the fictitious replaces factitious creating a new world for the animals. The magical ability of the pigs acts as a form of language distorting the reality watching a blurred picture, not being able to see a clear pane. In this respect, Bloom suggests, language is deranged deliberately by the author and its linguistic exclusiveness shows its usurpation of power which stand out as one of the novel's central thematic concerns. In a sense, the revolution

on the farm is a language-focused enterprise, a product of specifically aggressive linguistic energy, and language, which can effectively control reality, is at the root of the tragic experience rather than merely mirroring it. The animals are the negative other of the pigs. They are overpowered by the linguistic skill of the pigs with their underdeveloped language, a para-language. The beginning of the narrative quickly establishes the primacy of language. The character of old Major, who dominates the scene of this section, is reduced to a mouth. In a lengthy address to the animals, he engages in a verbal creation of what society might become. He is the man on the white horse who steps in with utopian discourse. Major was so highly regarded on the farm that everyone was quite ready to lose an hour's sleep in order to hear what he had to say. Major speaks from above (from a sort of raised platform, perhaps a symbol of the sacred locus of revelation, distance also marks separation from the public) and offers his text in the light of the received major prophecy. Attacks are heaped upon man. With his elocutionary style and the accent of exhortation, Major creates an atmosphere of paternalism ([1], pp. 35-6).

3. Conclusion

In short, what enticed Orwell to write the animal Farm was his meticulous look at the poor conditions and he found the material for his writing via living with the lower classes, including the tramps in the London and Paris. He was fascinated by the lives of the poor and by the fact that a nation as powerful as England could fail to address such shocking poverty, Orwell lived among the lower classes, although he could have stayed in his parents' comfortable home. Dressed in shoddy clothes, Eric would sit on street corners, converse with tramps, and spend time in the various spikes, men's shelters provided by factories around London. In Paris, he took a job as a dishwasher and learned more about the suffering of the poor in another European capital. While in Paris, he contracted pneumonia and spent three weeks in the public ward of the Hospital Cochin, a depressing but enlightening experience that he later recorded in the essay, "How the Poor Die".

Orwell spends the final years of his life securing a posthumous reputation, not through the fulfilled revolution, but through revolution betrayed. *Animal Farm* is a powerful fairy tale; the clarity of its language offers a devastating allegory of the Soviet Union from 1917 to 1941. However, it ends tragically because its heroes, too stupid, naive or stoic, must fail. Just before the *Animal Farm* was published Orwell had written of the semi-anaesthesia in which the British people contrive to live. His animals, having tasted freedom only to lose it to the new tyrants, return to that state. According to Lucas, Richard Rees, Orwell's friend and lifelong defender, confessed, 'What is pathetic in both *Animal Farm* and *1984* is the helpless, inert, and almost imbecile role which Orwell attributes to the common man ([7], P. 30). The political leaders of the totalitarian regime

of the Animal Farm, namely Napoleon, used the rhetoric aspect of the language (a semi-anaesthesia aspect) to keep the animals docile and quiet to get their way deceiving the animals by some convoluted logic to get their own advantage. Through the rhetorical skills and the means for manipulation of the language, such as the words, slogans and propaganda the animals and accordingly people in a totalitarian regime will be tricked into working hard and believing what is not logical and reasonable. The dominant ideology by means of its strong media and propaganda withholds people from noticing their interests, views and thoughts. Therefore, we found that reality will be blurred and distorted by means of the ruling class words and propaganda.

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Vitae



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Rhetorical structure analysis of George Orwell's *Animal Farm*

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the rhetorical survey structure analysis of George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. In this study, definition and historical survey are specified. This study also aims to highlight the consolidation of the gains of the revolution together with the reverses suffered in the execution of the various programmes initiated by the ruling oligarchy.

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Introduction

Animal Farm is not only a story about animals rebelling against the farmer and setting up their own farm, but also an attempt to use the political and social realities prevalent in Europe in the 1930's and the 1940's to produce a powerful political testament that would stand the test of time because of the universal nature of the message it conveys.

According to Valerie Meyers:

In his preface to the Ukrainian edition, published in 1947, Orwell said that he wanted to write the book in a simple language because he wanted to tell ordinary English people, who had enjoyed a tradition of justice and liberty for centuries, who totalitarian system was like. His experience in Spain has shown him how easily totalitarian propaganda can control the opinion of enlightened people in democratic countries and he wrote the book to destroy the 'Soviet Myth' that Russian was truly socialist society (102).

Many ordinary Soviet citizens suffered these years from the enforced labour on industrial projects and from food shortages, which were in part due to the harsh way collectivization was carried out. Such was the case in *Animal Farm* as revealed by George Orwell. The enforced labour and authoritarian government of Napoleon ushered in food shortages and reduction of food rations.

George Orwell's *Animal Farm* can also be said to have been influenced by Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. The satiric and travelers' tales techniques which were used to criticize the English society of his time is also found in Swift's depiction of Lilliput and Blefuscu, the fable technique in *Animal Farm* is an adaptation of book IV of *Gulliver's Travels* where Swift depicts a society using horse-like animal and yahoos ape-like human.

Orwell's *Animal Farm* attempts to satirize totalitarianism as a political concept and thereby highlight the defects inherent in it. On this premise, we desired to carry out a rhetorical structure analysis of the text *Animal Farm* by George Orwell. This study will be introduced by looking at the definition and historical survey of George Orwell's *Animal Farm*.

Definition and Historical Analysis

All notions of rhetoric imply manipulation of words, with its concept meaning basically to persuade an investigation of the etymology of the word "rhetoric" reveals that the term is solidly rooted in the notion of "words". Rhetoric originated from the Greek words "rhema" and rhetor (a teacher of oratory) both stem from the Greek verb *eiros* (I say). The English noun rhetoric derived from the Greek feminine adjective *rhetoriké* which is elliptical *rhetoriké* teacher (the art of the rhetor or oratory), Corbell (1971). From its origin, in the 5th century, Greece to its flourishing period in Rome and its reign in the medieval period, rhetoric was mainly associated with the art of oratory. It was during the Renaissance, after the invention of printing in the 15th century, that the doctrine of classified rhetoric began to be applied on a large scale on written discourse.

Cicero, a sophist, defines rhetoric as "Speech, designed to persuade", while Quintilian and Saint Augustine though differ on the goals of rhetoric, had a common consensus on its definition. Quintilian sees it as "the science of speaking well" and Saint Augustine defines it as "inducement to action". Aristotle and Plato's conception of rhetoric differs significantly from that of the sophists, whose idea was championed by Isocrates. Aristotle saw rhetoric as a means of energizing knowledge, the bringing of truth to bear upon men, while Isocrates conceived rhetoric as the art of giving effectiveness to truth; it is conceived by the Sophist as the art of giving effectiveness to the speakers. However, it should be noted that the two conceptions are not contradictory, though the second may be theoretically embedded in the first.

It is pertinent at this juncture, to look at yet another area of survey employed by George Orwell. These are the following:

Rhetoric and Prose

The word 'Rhetoric', according to Johnson (1948:483) first came from Greek word for oratory

The source upholds that it:

...is traditionally that art of producing
by means words, a desired impression
upon an audience or the art of persuasion
...as the study of effective stylistic devices
in prose or verse: in the twentieth century
usage, rhetoric deals with action (the effective
management of words) and is generally studied
in conjunction with literally composition.

The impression here is that, rhetoric concerns itself with eloquence of persuasion. It relies on effective and coherent use of stylistic devices to impress upon the audience.

The above impression on rhetoric by Johnson is a vivid demonstration in the following speech of Old Major as portrayed by George Orwell in the text Animal Farm.

Excerpt:

Now comrades, what is the nature of this of ours?
let us face it: our lives are miserable, laborious,
and short. We are born, we are given just so much
food as will keep the breath in our bodies, and those
of us who are capable of it are forced to work to the
last atom of our strength, and the very time that our
usefulness has come to an end we are slaughtered with
hideous cruelty. No animal in England knows the
meaning of happiness or leisure after he is a year old.
No animal in England is free. The life of an animal
is misery and slavery: that is the plain truth.

This speech of Old Major induced the entire animals into action. The speech was a kind of food-for-thought for the animals. Immediately after the speech, the animals started meditating on the message contained in the speech. The speech made them realize actually that their lives were miserable, laborious and short. Miserable, laborious and short, semantically means that they (animals) are not happy with the nature of lives they are experiencing under the leadership of man (Mr. Jones). Laborious in this sense means that they (animals) are over worked and to crown it all, their lives are short, meaning that they do not live long. Old Major concluded his speech with the following phrase using a demonstrative adjective: "that is the plain truth".

In this same vein Bentan (1980:548) sees rhetoric as
...the principle of communication either to inform
to inform or to persuade others. In literature
generally, generating of a message has shifter to
a concern for INTERPRETING OR ANALYSING
a message.

The beliefs Bentan here are a clear manifestation in the continuous speech of Old Major.

Excerpts:

Man is the only creature that 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 lord of all animals. He sets them to work, he
Gives back to them the bare minimum that will
Prevent them from starving, and the rest he keeps
For himself. Our labour tills the soil, our dung

Fertilizes it, and yet there is not one of us that
Owns more than his bare skin. You cows that
I see before me, how many thousands of gallons
Of milk have you given during this year? And
What has happened to that milk which should
Have been breeding up sturdy calves?

.... And you hens, how many of those eggs
Ever hatched into chickens? The rest have all
Gone to market to bring in money for Mr. Jones
And his men.

....Clover, where are those four fowls you
Bores, who should have been the support and
Pleasure of your old age?

....you will never see one of them again
In return for your four confinements and all
Your labour in the field, what have you ever
Had except your bare rations and a stall?

In this excerpts, it was so obvious that Old Major was communicating information on the activities of man to the animals. The information also let the animals ponder over what Old Major has told them about the activities of man who only consumes without producing, yet, there is no animal that owns more than his bare skin.

The information by Old Major is not only informative in conception, but also persuasive in nature. It affords the animals the opportunity to know the weaknesses of man and how he uses his ways to maltreat the animals that do the whole work in the farm.

The following sentences are structured as rhetoric questions from the above

Excerpts:

Sample 1: You cows that I see before me, how many thousands of gallons of milk have you given during this year?

Sample 2: And what have happened to that milk which should have been breeding up sturdy calves?

Sample 3: And you hens, how many eggs have you laid this year, and how many of those eggs ever hatched into chickens?

Sample 4: And you Clover, where are those four fowls you bore, who should have been the support and pleasure of your old age?

Sample 5: In return for your confinements and all your labour in the field what have you ever had except your bare rations and a stall?

In samples 1 and 2 above, the demonstrative pronoun "that" is enough to raise questions on the minds of the animals what actually happened to the many thousands of gallons of milk.

In sample 3, 4, the pronoun "you" is also enough to raise questions in the minds of the animals as to what has happened to the eggs laid by the hens and what has happened to the four fowls born by Clover.

In sample 5, the possessive pronoun "your" is more than enough to raise questions in the minds of the animals as to what they have actually gained apart from the bare rations and a stall. It is also a technique to create curiosity, anxiety, awareness and suspense to persuade the animals to act and discover what happened to the milk, the eggs and to plan a strategy on how to get rid of man and his activities.

Aristotle saw rhetoric as a means of energizing knowledge, the bringing of truth to bear upon men. He (Aristotle) conceived rhetoric as the art of giving effectiveness to truth. Going by the conception of rhetoric by Aristotle therefore, George Orwell in

his text *Animal Farm* featured this in the continuous speech of Old Major as follows:

But is this simply part of the order of nature?
 Rhetorical question, is it because this land of
 Ours is so poor that it cannot afford a decent
 Life to those who dwell upon it? (Rhetorical)
 No, comrades, a thousand times no!
 (Exclamatory) The soil of England is fertile,
 Its climate is good, it is capable of affording
 Food in abundance to an enormously greater
 number of animals than now inhabit it. This
 single farm of ours would support a dozen
 horses, twenty cows, hundreds of sheep – and
 all of them living in a comfort and a dignity
 that are now almost beyond our imagination.
 Why then do we continue in this miserable condition?
 (Rhetorical)
 Because nearly the whole of the produce of
 Our labour is stolen from us by human beings.
 There comrades, is the answer to all our
 Problems... man is only real enemy we have
 Remove man from the scene and the root cause
 Of hunger and over-work is abolished forever.

In the above speech, truth is brought to bear. Old Major tries to highlight the fact that the soil of England is fertile as well as its climate which is good and capable of affording abundance food to a great number of animals than those who now inhabit it. He added further that the single farm can even support a dozen horses, twenty cows, hundreds of sheep and all of them living in comfort and dignity beyond their imagination. Old Major goes further to let them know that the reason why they should not continue in the miserable condition. The truth according to Old Major is that the whole of the produce of their labour is stolen from them by human beings. According to him, “remove man from the scene, the root cause of hunger and over-work is abolished forever.”

Marie Marcus (1977) sees rhetoric as “the art of manipulating people through words.” She goes further to say that dishonest and exploitative elements do exist in society who would sink so low as to take pleasure in deceiving others and take time to perfect their deception into an art. According to her, such persons are usually in the minority in most societies.

It is not surprising therefore to see George Orwell using Squealer to buttress the opinion of Marie Marcus. Squealer in the text has the tactics and ability to manipulate and deceive the animals, but he was in the minority.

An example:

After the expulsion of Snowball from *Animal Farm*, Napoleon immediately assumed duty as the leader of the farm with the nine enormous dogs as his guards. No sooner had he assumed duty than he announced that From now on, the Sunday morning meetings would Come to an end. They were unnecessary, he said, and Waste time,

In the light of this therefore, Squealer who forms the habits of manipulating the other animals, was sent round the farm to explain the new arrangement to the others

An Excerpt:

Comrades, he said I trust that every animal here appreciates the sacrifice that comrade Napoleon has made in taking this extra labour upon himself. Do not imagine, comrades that leadership

is a pleasure! On the contrary, it is a deep and heavy responsibility. No one believes more firmly than comrade Napoleon that all animals are equal. He would be only too happy to let you make your decisions for yourselves. But sometimes you might make wrong decisions, comrades, and then where should we be? Suppose you had decided to follow Snowball, Who, as we know, was no better than a Criminal.

In the speech above, it is observed that he tried to convince the other animals into believing that Napoleon is the right and better leader than Snowball and that Napoleon believes more firmly that all animals are equal. Squealer tries to justify his stand by saying that if the animals are all allowed to make a choice of a leader themselves, they might choose a wrong one. Even when someone tried to make him realize that Snowball fought bravely at the battle of the cowshed, Squealer went further to say that:

Bravery is not enough, said Squealer ‘Loyalty and obedience are more important and so, to the battle of the cowshed, I believed the time will come when we shall find that Snowball’s part in it was much exaggerated. Discipline comrade; iron discipline! That is the watchword for today. One false step and our enemies would be upon us. Surely, comrades, you do not want Jones back?’

It is observed also in the continuous convincing speech of Squealer that he tried to tell the animals that though they believed that Snowball fought bravely at the Battle of cowshed, he was only being brave. According to him, bravery is not enough but obedience and loyalty are more important, so, Snowball has to be loyal and obedient to Napoleon. Squealer in his deceitful nature stresses that time will come when they shall find that Snowball’s part at the battle of the cowshed was much exaggerated meaning that he did not fight as bravely as the animals thought he did. Squealer capitalized on the fact that the animals would really not want Mr. Jones back to the farm hence he says the following:

‘surely, comrades, you do not want Jones back?’

Certainly the animals did not want Jones back, if the holding of debates on Sunday morning was liable to bring him back, then the debates must stop. Boxer, who had now had time to think things over, voiced the general feeling by saying:

‘if comrade Napoleon says, it must be right’

Hence he adopted the maximum; Napoleon is always right, in addition to his private motto of ‘I will work harder’

The opinion of Marie Marcus also manifested in the following activities of Napoleon

On the third Sunday after Snowball’s expulsion, Napoleon announced that the windmill was to be built after all. He however did not give any reasons for having changed his mind, but merely warned the animals that this extra task would mean very hard work, it might even be necessary to reduce their rations. He further made them realize that the plans had all been prepared, down to the last detail. According to him, a special committee of pigs had been at work upon them for the past three weeks. The building of the windmill with various other improvements was expected to take two years.

In his style of manipulation and deceit, Squealer explained privately to the other animals that Napoleon had never in reality

opposed the building of a windmill. He further explains as below:

On the contrary, it was he who had advocated it at the beginning, and the plan, which Snowball had drawn on the floor of the incubator shed had actually been stolen from among Napoleon's paper. The windmill was Napoleon's own creation.

Within the speech, someone asked why, then, had he spoken so strongly against it? Squealer at this time point looked very sly. His response as follows:

That was comrade Napoleon's cunning. He had seemed to oppose the windmill, simply as a manoeuvre to get rid of Snowball, who was a dangerous character and a bad influence. Now that Snowball was out of the way, the plan could go forward without his interference.

This, said Squealer, was something called Tactics.

Squealer revealed to the animals that Napoleon's objection to the building of the windmill was simply a manoeuvre to get rid of Snowball, who they saw as dangerous and a bad influence. Squealer described the action of Napoleon towards Snowball as cunning and tactful. Manipulation here and spoke persuasively to the animals. Orwell described the action of Squealer as thus:

He repeated a number of times, "Tactics, comrade tactics!" skipping round and whisking his tail with a merry laugh, but Squealer spoke so persuasively, and the three dogs who happened to be with him growled so threateningly, that they accepted his explanation without further questions

The speech of Squealer here is a clear case of good oratory, which is an indication that he was the character used against the other animals. He has the ability to turn black into white with his deceitful nature. In fact, he was a clear example of a sycophant. The whisk of his tail with a merry laugh, showed joy and happiness over the expulsion of Snowball from the farm. He spoke so persuasively using the three dogs to intimidate the other animals. This made the animals to accept his explanation without further questions. This action of Squealer was a common phenomenon during the military administration in Nigeria. Babangida/Abacha's administrations were characterized and full of intimidations and harassment. Special people like squealer were used to terrorize and mar those defenseless individuals who tried to speak the truth or criticize their government. Even with the present civilian administration where political rivalry is the order of the day, those who criticize or try to challenge are either kidnapped or assassinated. There are political tugs everywhere and those who can deceive the masses through persuasive way or manipulation. There are so many Squealer out there who are ready anytime to intimidate, manipulate, deceive, exploit and sink so low as to take pleasure in deceiving others and take the time to perfect their deception into an art.

Writing on English composition in 1969, Braddock described rhetoric as:

Comrade with the effective choice of synonymous expressions, but as the "effective" suggests, it is concerned not with utterances only, the mere forms, but with some of their relations to other

things...the speaker/writer, his utterances, his context/occasion or medium), his audience (listener or reader), his purpose (the effect That he intends his utterance to have upon his audience), and the effect of his utterance upon his audience.

Braddock's definition stresses the significance of choice in speaking that is based on relationship among the various components of rhetoric. There components from a network of interrelations in which the selection of one invariably affects or dictates the selection of another. Also inherent in this definition is the need to harmonize the expected effects and the actual effects of speech content on the audience, because the effect intended by the speaker may be achieved fully, or partially, or not at all.

The definition of Braddock is a manifestation in the following actions of Napoleon and the deceitful explanations rendered by Squealer.

Excerpt:

One Sunday morning, when the animals assembled to receive their orders, Napoleon announced that he had decided upon a new policy. From now onwards, Animal Farm would engage in trade with the neighbouring farms: not of course, for any commercial purpose, but simply in order to obtain certain materials, which were urgently necessary. The needs of the windmill must override everything else, he said he was therefore making arrangement to sell a stack of hay and part of the current year's wheat crop and later on, if more money were needed it would have to be made up by the sale of eggs for which there was always a market in Willingdon. A Mr. Whimper, a solicitor living in Willingdon, had agreed to act as Intermediary between Animal Farm and the outside world and would visit the farm every Monday morning to receive his instructions.

Squealer in his usual manner addressed the animals in the following excerpt:

After wards Squealer made around of the farm and set the animals mind at rest. He assured them that the resolution against engaging in trade and using money had never being passed or even suggested. It was pure imagination to lies circulated by Snowball. A few animals still felt faintly doubtfully, but Squealer asked them shrewdly, are you certain that this is not something that you have dreamed comrades? Have you record of such resolution? Is it written down anywhere?

It is observed in the excerpt above that Squealer was able to convince the animals that no resolution against engaging in trade and that using money had never been passed or even suggested. According to him, it was purely imagination and probably lies

circulated by Snowball. Snowball is once more accused because it is a known fact that he is in a political rival to Napoleon.

Yet, a few animals still felt faintly doubtful, but Squealer asked them if they were certain that was not something they had dreamed of. He further asked if there was any written record of such a resolution. Since it was certainly true that nothing of the kind existed in writing, the animals were satisfied that they had been mistaken. In fact, Squealer was able to manipulate the animals using diplomacy. In the event, he achieved fully his intended effect of the animals.

Another instance of rhetoric of manipulation and conviction is that much occurred when the pigs suddenly moved into the farm house and took up their residence there. This according to the animals is against the resolution, which had been passed in the early days. Again, Squealer was able to convince them that it was not the case. He made them see reasons that it was absolutely necessary that the pigs, who were the brains of the farm should have a quiet place to work in, and that it was also more suitable to the dignity of the leader, for Napoleon to live in a house than a mere sty.

The animals were however disturbed when they heard that the pigs not only took their meals in the kitchen and used the drawing room as a recreation room, but also slept in the beds. As the argument whether the animals should sleep in a bed with sheets went on, Squealer who happened to be passing by at that moment, attended by two or three dogs, was able to put the whole matter in his usual manner in its proper perspective.

An excerpt:

You have heard then, comrades, he said, that we pigs now sleep in the beds of the farmhouse? And why not? You did not suppose surely, that there was ever a ruling against beds? A bed merely means a place to sleep in, a pile of straw in a stall is a bed, properly regarded. The rule was against sheets which are human invention. We have removed the sheets from the farmhouse beds, and sleep between blankets. And very comfortable beds they are too! But not more comfortable than we need, I can tell you comrades, with all brainwork we have to do nowadays. You would not have us too tired to carry out our duties? Surely none of you wishes to see Jones back.

Squealer has at this point been able to manipulate and convinced the animals giving reasons why the pigs have to sleep in beds but without sheets, which according to him are human invention. Squealer said that they had to sleep in beds as a result of the brainwork they had to do. He concluded his speech by saying he was sure none of them would want Jones back. At this juncture, the animals reassured him on this point immediately, and no more was said about the pigs sleeping in the farmhouse beds. When it was announced that from now the pigs would get up an hour later in the morning than the other animals, no complaint was made about that either.

More recently in 1993, Thomas Farrell, in his book: *Norms of Rhetorical Culture* has described rhetoric as "the principal art responsible for the shape and colouration of public character" a

description that rings with overtones of the classic view of rhetoric.

We agree with Farrell that if rhetoric has the capacity to colour people's perceptions, attitudes, directions, beliefs, responses, choices habits, and all that make up "public characters" then it must be exercised with every amount of responsibility, and a high sense of morality. As an art, rhetoric entails skill that can be taught and learned, and expertise that can be developed. Farrell himself expresses these ideas more elaborately in another portion of the text when he calls rhetoric an "acquired competency", a manner of thinking that invents possibilities for persuasion, conviction, action and judgment. As an art, it may be developed, refined, sophisticated, critiqued and improved if it is to serve society well in influence of public thought.

Rhetoric has been described here as a process, an art, a finished work, a complex of relationships which depends on a skillful use of language in its oral or written form, in private and in public situations guided by high ethical standards, for the purpose of influencing the behaviour of an audience of listeners or readers in observable, discernible and perceptible ways for their own good. Here we see Squealer once again influencing the behaviour of the animals thus:

It was the most affecting sight I have ever seen! Said Squealer, lifting his trotter and wiping away a tear. 'I was at his bedside at the very last. And at the end, almost too weak to speak, he whispered in my ear that his sole sorrow was to have passed on before the windmill was finished. "Forward, comrades!" he whispered. "Forward in the name of the rebellion. Long live comrade Napoleon! Napoleon is always right" those were his last words, comrades.

Squealer made the above statements to disabuse the minds of the animals from believing that Boxer had been slaughtered because they saw Boxer being conveyed away in a van marked 'Horse slaughterer'. In the actual fact, Boxer was being led to the knacker for slaughtering. To deceive the animals Squealer made the above statements in a skillful manner to convince them that Boxer has been taken to the hospital that he was at his bedside at the very last. He reported also that he was too weak to speak; he whispered in his ears that his sole sorrow was to have passed on before the windmill was finished. He informed them that Boxer stressed rebellion which the animals must carry out. All these are ways set out by Squealer to manipulate and convince the animals that he actually saw Boxer receiving treatment in the hospital but not dead as widely spread and believed by the animals.

At this point, Squealer's demeanour suddenly changed. He fell silent for a moment, and his little eyes darted suspicious glances from side to side before he proceeded in the following manner:

It has comm. To his knowledge, he said that a foolish and wicked rumour had been circulated at the time of Boxer's removal. Some of the animals had noticed that the van which took Boxer away was marked 'Horse Slaughterer' and had actually jumped to the conclu-

sion that boxer was being sent to the Knacker's. It was almost unbelievable, Said, Squealer that any animal could be so stupid, surely, he cried indignantly whisking his tail and skipping from side to side, surely they knew their beloved leader, comrade Napoleon better than that? But the explanation was really very simple. The van had previously been the property of the Knacker, and had been bought by the veterinarian surgeon painted the old name out. That was how the mistake had arisen.

The animals were enormously relieved to hear this, as Squealer went on to give further graphic details of Boxer's death bed, the admirable care he had received, and the expensive medicines for which Napoleon had paid without a thought as to the cost, their last doubts disappeared and the sorrow that they felt for their comrade's death was tempered by the thought that at least he had died happy.

The activities of Squealer at this point were quite in line with the opinion of Farrell about rhetoric. Squealer easily convinced the animals that the veterinary surgeon in Willingdon could treat Boxer's case more satisfactorily than could be done on the farm. He seems to have solutions to every situation in the farm. He knew how to manipulate and convince the animals as well. He is a swindler, a schemer and a trickster as well as a big time politician who could change 'black on to white'. In fact, he was Napoleon's spokesman and mouth piece.

For instance, it was after the address of Squealer to the animals concerning Boxer being in the hospital for treatment that Napoleon had the courage and guts to address the animals the following Sunday morning and pronounced a short oration in Boxer's honour excerpt:

It had not been possible, he said to bring back their lamented comrade's remains for interment on the farm, but he had ordered a large wreath to be made from the laurels in the farmhouse garden and sent down to be placed on Boxer's grave. And in few days' time the pigs intended to hold a memorial banquet in Boxer's honour. Napoleon ended his speech with a reminder of Boxer's two favourite maxims, 'I will work harder' and comrade Napoleon is always right maxims, he said, which every animal would do well to adopt as his own.

The worse deceit came when eventually on the appointed day for the banquet; a grocer's van drove up from Willingdon and delivered a large wooden crate at the farmhouse. That night there was the sound of uproarious singing, which was followed by what sounded like a violent quarrel and ended at about eleven o' clock with a tremendous crash of glass. No one stirred in the

farmhouse before noon on the following day, and the word went round that from somewhere or other, the pigs had acquired the money to buy themselves another case of whisky. At the end, the animals were put under suspense as to what actually happened to Boxer. But it was a registered fact that he was actually sold to the Knacker since her corpse was not brought to the farm for burial neither was there a memorial banquet as earlier proposed.

Conclusion

Finally, it is fact that rhetoric according to the various schools of thought mentioned in the above is "The art of manipulating people through words" (Aristotle), as speech designed to persuade (sophist), as "the science of speaking well" (Quintilian) and as "inducement to action" (Saint Augustine) etc. it was not surprising therefore to see that one of the most active pigs in the farm was a small fat pig name squealer who was brilliant and a very persuasive orator. He was in charge of propaganda and he was always saddled with the responsibility of convincing the animals about the positive nature of every decision taken by Napoleon. He usually concluded by saying that:

....none of you wishes Jones back. It is pertinent to say that this attitude of Squealer in this study as portrayed by George Orwell in *Animal Farm* is a common phenomena among the present day leaders, who picks people like Squealer in their administration to convince the ruled that they (leaders) are doing well even when the people they are leading or ruling are not satisfied with their administrative style. This is common amongst African leaders who forcefully perpetuate themselves in office.

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Animal Farm Shows How Human Frailty Makes Successful Revolutions Unlikely

Roberta Kalechofsky

When Joseph Stalin, leader of the Soviet Union after the death of Vladimir Lenin, systematically eliminated people and groups that did not agree with his views and in effect turned the once-promising Russian "Socialist Paradise" into one more dictatorship, George Orwell and many other liberal supporters of the Russian Revolution were deeply disillusioned. How could this movement, which had promised to put all people on equal footing, have become twisted into the hellish totalitarian state it was by the late 1930s? *Animal Farm*, says Roberta Kalechofsky, is Orwell's response. Its characters—the greedy, power-hungry pigs and the passive or simple other animals—reflect society as Orwell saw it. A social revolution might be bound to fail, not because the ideology is wrong, but because people are flawed.

Orwell suggests that revolution is achieved in good measure through the power of slogans. His characters, divided into two basic types—the leaders (the pigs) and the followers (all the other animals)—create their revolution by following inspiring slogans such as "all animals are equal." But the greedy leaders gradually mutate the slogans and the simple followers do not notice as the changes are made. Soon, "some animals are more equal than others." The followers vaguely nod and continue following, while their equality erodes and the leaders become despots. Orwell's implication, says Kalechofsky, is that all revolutions may be doomed to failure. Orwell himself wrote in one of his essays, "In each great revolutionary struggle, the

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masses are led on by vague dreams of human brotherhood, and then, when the new ruling class is well established in power, they are thrust back into servitude."

Kalechofsky's books include *Autobiography of a Revolutionary: Essays on Animal and Human Rights* and *Jewish Writing from Down Under*.

Two questions dominate political thinking in this century. Why did a phenomenon like Hitler happen? Why did the Russian revolution fail? *Animal Farm* is concerned with the second question. From 1917 through the 1940s, Russia had been the lodestar for politically minded individuals who placed their hopes for social justice in radicalism and revolution. *Animal Farm* asks, allegorically, why the Russian revolution failed. The philosophical question behind the allegorical one is whether a morally successful revolution is ever possible.

Animal Farm will be Orwell's lasting achievement; it is the fable for twentieth-century political activists. The book is written so simply that it can be read in two hours by an adult and in four hours by a child. Like a Charlie Chaplin film, the inferences are complex and saturated with the history, the movements, and the thinking of this century; yet young and old, the sophisticated and the unsophisticated, can appreciate its plain and humanly appealing esthetic unity. *Animal Farm* has a pathos about the gullibility and insufficiency of human nature that speaks directly to its readers. . . .

The comedy—as well as the tragedy—in the book derives from the fact that the tale is about animals in revolt against man; therefore all the classical slogans of revolution take on wider significance. The cosmology broadens if one says, "down with man," rather than "off with the king's head," or "down with the tories." Major says that the answer to all their problems "is summed up in a single word—Man. Man is the only real enemy we have."

The main tenet of the revolutionary creed is that the animals are never to become like man. Major says to the animals, "And remember also that in fighting against Man, we must not come to resemble him. Even when you have conquered him, do not adopt his vices. . . . All the habits of Man are evil." The essential problem of revolution, as Orwell saw it, is how to combine power with ideals—how not to become like your oppressors were.

But failure of the social revolution is incipient in the nature of the animals and is apparent at this first meeting. Just as Major proclaims that "all animals are comrades," the dogs catch sight of four large rats and almost succeed in devouring them. Major calls for a vote on the issue. The majority agree that the rats too are comrades. There are four dissenting votes—the three dogs and the cat. Animal nature is already at work, destroying the possibility of social justice.

Major dies before the revolution. Napoleon, Snowball and Squealer busy themselves with elaborating Major's teachings into a system which they call Animalism. When the revolution does come, it comes unexpectedly and abruptly; it springs from the concrete experience of hunger, not from theories. Jones comes home drunk one night and forgets to feed the animals. He falls asleep with the *News of the World*



ANIMAL FARM—PESSIMISM IN ACTION?

Many have interpreted the conclusion of Animal Farm to suggest that all revolutions are doomed to failure. Here Orwell's colleague Laurence Brander comments on that idea in his 1954 book, George Orwell.

The question one poses at the end of this fairy story is whether Orwell had given up hope that mankind would ever find decent government. It is very difficult here, as in *1984*, to decide. He had said in his essay on Swift that: "Of course, no honest person claims that happiness is *now* a normal condition among adult human beings; but perhaps it *could* be made normal, and it is upon this question that all serious political controversy really turns."

Essentially, *Animal Farm* is an anatomy of the development of the totalitarian State: "In each great revolutionary struggle the masses are led on by vague dreams of human brotherhood, and then, when the new ruling class is well established in power, they are thrust back into servitude."

It is a comment on all revolution: "History consists of a series of swindles, in which the masses are first lured into revolt by the promise of Utopia, and then, when they have done their job, enslaved over again by new masters."

Nothing is more obvious than where Orwell's sympathies lay. But whether he hoped that the common man could learn to find rulers is not clear. In *Animal Farm* he is an artist, posing great questions imaginatively; not a preacher, proclaiming a revelation.

over his face. Irresponsibility is his downfall. The starved animals panic and revolt. They attack the farm buildings and wipe out the reminders of Jones's tyranny—the nose rings, the dog chains, the halters, the blinkers, the nose bags, the whips. They change the name of Manor Farm to Animal Farm and set up seven commandments on the end wall of the big barn. Each of these commandments distinguishes animal nature from human nature.

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.

In time each maxim is corrupted. It is reworded to suit the needs of the pigs. Reality cannot be controlled by prophecies and proclamations. The corruptibility of language is indicated in the action of the cat who joins the Re-education Committee after the revolution and learns quickly that it is possible to use words for her own profit.

She was seen one day sitting on a roof and talking to some sparrows who were just out of her reach. She was telling them that all animals were now comrades and that any sparrow who chose could come and perch on her paw; but the sparrows kept their distance.

SEEDS OF DESTRUCTION

After the revolution most of the animals work very hard. Indeed, they work harder than they did under Jones's rule. Production is said to have improved, but the milk has been disappearing instead of being equally apportioned. Very early after the rebellion it is also discovered that the windfalls in the apple orchard are not being shared out. Squealer, the pig, pacifies the doubts of the animals: "Comrades!" he cried. "You do not imagine, I hope, that we pigs are doing this in a spirit of selfishness? . . . Our sole object in taking these things is to preserve our health." Gradually, the pigs move into Jones's house. It becomes known that they are eating in the kitchen and sleeping in beds. Remembering injunctions against such behavior, the animals rush to read the commandments. Number 4, contrary to memory, reads: "No animal shall sleep in a bed *with sheets*."

Later, after celebrating a successful battle against the hu-

mans, Napoleon and the pigs get drunk. Again the animals rush to read the commandments, to check their memory. Now they discover that commandment number 5, contrary to what they thought, reads: "No animal shall drink alcohol *to excess.*" So it goes with each commandment.

The theme of the book is expressed not only by the corruption of the maxims, but by the fact that the degeneration of the revolution is measured by the progress the pigs make toward becoming more like man. The darkest aspect of the tragedy of social injustice is that the conquerors become what their oppressors were. Though Farmer Jones stages a counterrevolution that fails, the seeds for the destruction of the revolution are *within* the society itself. It is the "human nature" of the animals that defeats them.

RICHARD I. SMYER

Animal Farm: The Burden of Consciousness

At one point in George Orwell's *Animal Farm* we are given a curious piece of misinformation. Ben the mule and the mare Clover are standing before the barn, on the wall of which is written the terrible truth about the revolution: ALL ANIMALS ARE EQUAL BUT SOME ANIMALS ARE MORE EQUAL THAN OTHERS. Because Clover's eyesight is failing, "for once," the narrator states, Ben consents "to break his rule" against reading. But this is not true. Once before he has broken his "rule" when reading aloud the sign on the side of the van which reveals Boxer's approaching death at the slaughterhouse (101).

An examination of Orwell's attitude toward contemporary affairs may help us appreciate the significance of this discrepancy. Pessimism, if not despair, is Orwell's dominant reaction to modern political events. Early in World War II he states: "I have known since about 1931 . . . that the future must be catastrophic." After the defeat of Germany, he foresees no likely alternative to either increasingly destructive wars or the rise of vast and enduring slave empires. Revolutionary activity has been not simply ineffective but positively harmful. "We are living in a nightmare," Orwell writes during the War, "precisely *because* we have tried to set up an earthly paradise." The Russian Revolution was inherently fated to degenerate into tyranny, with or without Stalin, for the idealism of all successful revolutions is "fatally mixed up" with

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the selfish longing to wield power. Attempts to reorganize society by force have only directed the course of history along a downward spiral—so that “once [a revolutionary] struggle is well over, there is always the [defeated] conservative who is more progressive than the radicals who have triumphed.”

Characteristic of Orwell is the fact that his socio-political judgments constantly appear within the context of strong moral feelings. This is particularly evident in his assessments of the common people, the lower classes in general, whom he regards as the preservers of decency and humaneness. This reverence for the goodness of the lower orders, coupled with an equally strong conviction that twentieth-century politics is “a mass of lies, evasions, folly, hatred and schizophrenia,” raises serious fears concerning the workers’ involvement with revolutionary activity. Conditioned by his experience as an imperial policeman in Burma to regard even modest self-advancement as “spiritually ugly,” Orwell, contrasting the “innate decency” of the working classes to the immoral opportunism of their leaders, is “almost driven” to the conclusion that “men are only decent when they are powerless.”

As several critics have noted, the message of *Animal Farm* is that revolutions are bound to fail, merely replacing one group of oppressors with another. The ideals of equality and justice cannot be actualized because the existence of the liberated Farm demands a continuous interaction with the surrounding world of humanity which, in terms of the allegory, stands for oppression and exploitation. Paradoxically, the need to maintain an economically and politically viable society—a need which can be met only by reinstating a hierarchical order and by trafficking with human beings—inevitably leads to the subversion of the beasts’ utopian aims.

In Orwell’s view (at least prior to 1984), there is a great split between the outer world of political experience, of history, and the inner world of the spirit: “The vision of a world of free and equal human beings, living together in a state of brotherhood . . . never materializes, but the belief in it never seems to die out.” It is not in the fallen world of historical reality but rather within the hearts of men that the purifying ideals of justice and equality can exist inviolate. Insulated from political reality, innocence is preserved; exposed to such an environment, innocence, perverted by power-hunger, is transformed into political villainy.

In *Animal Farm* the key factor in this transformation is intellectual superiority. “Generally recognised as being the cleverest of the animals,” the pigs “naturally” become the teachers and organizers within the Farm community (13). It is important to note that because the pigs are the only animals able to substitute long-range planning for mere impulse, they are destined by nature to be the leaders of the revolution—a role which unavoidably exposes them to moral corruption.

Their loss of innocence starts during the second revolutionary stage (after the ouster of Farmer Jones) when, as a result of their expanded awareness, they begin developing an historical consciousness. As leaders, they must articulate goals and implement them by means of specific programs entailing institutionalized duties and restraints. In so doing, they are led to embrace the world of men, with its brutality and double-dealing. In effect, the development of political cunning—the end result of the pigs' intellectual capacity—involves an exodus from the innocence and stasis of the old Farm and a wandering in the spiritual wilderness of political activism, the unregenerate world of history. The Circe of awareness turns pigs into men.

For the humbler beasts, the failure of the revolution is closely linked to the fact that the Garden has not been lost. If they are still oppressed, they are also still untainted, still the communal embodiment of spontaneous brotherhood. Because their violent revolt against Jones springs from impulse and not from ideological formulations—"nothing of the kind had been planned beforehand" (16)—the beasts' animal innocence is not imperiled by power-hunger and the moral ambiguities associated with the assumption of a politico-historical identity.

Sheer mental incapacity preserves the animals from the consciousness of evil. Because their memories are short, the humbler animals cannot be sure whether or not they had earlier passed a resolution against trade; consequently, Napoleon's proposal to begin commercial relations with the outside world gives them only a "vague" discomfort (54). For the same reason, the animals need feel no anxiety about the breakdown of their social experiment after the pigs selfishly alter the wording of the commandment against sleeping in Jones's bed (57-58); and a slight rewording of the commandment against killing sets the naive beasts' minds at ease over the execution of supposedly disloyal comrades (76). It is a sign of the animals' relatively untainted consciousness—their ignorance of even the existence of political evil—that, as we learn toward the end, "Jones and all he stood for had almost faded out of their memories" (93).

Somewhere between the porcine world of cunning, immorality, and historical awareness, and the ahistorical animal world of impulse, innocence, and ignorance, stands Ben. Ben has a vague class identity: lacking the hominoid cunning of the pigs, he is not a leader; yet his mental capacity—he can "read as well as any pig" (28)—keeps him from being wholly within the animal realm. The circumstance that Ben, being a mule, is unique among domesticated animals in his inability to reproduce himself, identifies him with the educated middle class, which Orwell sometimes attacked for its lack of vitality. More specifically, Ben is representative of the intelligentsia. He is the modern intellectual who, unlike his mental inferiors, is cursed with the

dispiriting awareness of the inevitable degeneration of revolutionary idealism. Figuratively as well as literally he can read the handwriting on the wall.

As already mentioned, twice—not once, as Orwell erroneously states—Ben has read, broken his rule. That is, more than once he has revealed his affinity with the porcine condition of intelligence and evil. To add to the ominous significance of the second transgression, the exercise of this hominoid faculty involves the pronunciation of words which themselves represent the breaking of a rule—the subversion of the Seven Commandments established to keep the animals free from the corrupting effects of humanization. It seems, then, that Orwell, an intellectual acutely aware of his own threatened innocence in a world of political treachery, is too close to Ben to treat this figure with artistic objectivity. (It may not be too fanciful to identify the mule with Orwell, who never produced a child and who once expressed the fear that he was biologically sterile.) It is perhaps indicative of Orwell's helplessness regarding the dilemma of the intellectual that, after reading the proclamation, Ben, one of the two surviving worker-animals who emerge as more or less distinct individuals, suddenly drops from the narrative. Unable to leave Ben within the thoughtlessly innocent realm of the humbler beasts yet morally repelled by the other alternative, Orwell can do no more than allow the mule to disappear into a limbo apart from either condition.

V. C. LETEMENDIA

*Revolution on Animal Farm:
Orwell's Neglected Commentary*

In the last scene of George Orwell's "fairy tale," *Animal Farm*, the humbler animals peer through a window of the farmhouse to observe a horrible sight: the pigs who rule over them have grown indistinguishable from their temporary allies, the human farmers, whom they originally fought to overthrow. The animals' fate seems to mirror rather closely that of the common people as Orwell envisaged it some six years before commencing *Animal Farm*: "what you get over and over again is a movement of the proletariat which is promptly canalized and betrayed by astute people at the top, and then the growth of a new governing class. The one thing that never arrives is equality. The mass of the people never get the chance to bring their innate decency into the control of affairs, so that one is almost driven to the cynical thought that men are only decent when they are powerless." Obviously *Animal Farm* was designed to parody the betrayal of Socialist ideals by the Soviet regime. Yet it has also been interpreted by various readers as expressing Orwell's own disillusion with any form of revolutionary political change and, by others, as unfolding such a meaning even without its author's conscious intention. It is time now to challenge both of these views.

Orwell himself commented of *Animal Farm* that "if it does not speak for itself, it is a failure." The text does indeed stand alone to reveal Orwell's consistent belief not only in democratic Socialism, but in the possibility of a

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democratic Socialist revolution, but there is also a considerable body of evidence outside *Animal Farm* that can be shown to corroborate this interpretation. The series of events surrounding its publication, and Orwell's own consistent attitude towards his book provide evidence of its political meaning. Meanwhile, of the two extant prefaces written by Orwell, the one designed for the Ukrainian edition, composed in 1947, is of particular political interest. Orwell's correspondence with his friends and acquaintances on the subject of *Animal Farm* provides a further source of information. Some of these letters are well known to Orwell scholars, but his correspondence with Dwight Macdonald, with whom he became friends when he was writing for the American journal, *Partisan Review*, does not appear to have been fully investigated. Macdonald himself raised a direct question about the political intent of *Animal Farm* and was given a specific answer by Orwell, yet this fascinating evidence has apparently been neglected, in spite of the generous access now available to his correspondence in the Orwell Archive.

Commentators on Orwell find it easy to conclude from *Animal Farm* the utter despair and pessimism either of its author, or of the tale itself. It must be remembered, however, that through his allegory Orwell plays a two-sided game with his reader. In some ways, he clearly emphasizes the similarities between the beasts on *Animal Farm* and the humans whom they are designed to represent; at other times, he demonstrates with both humor and pathos the profound differences separating animal from man—differences which in the end serve to limit the former. In doing so, he forces his reader to draw a distinction between the personalities and conduct of the beasts and those of the human world. Of course, the animals are designed to represent working people in their initial social, economic, and political position in the society not just of *Animal Farm* but of England in general. The basic antagonism between working class and capitalist is also strongly emphasized by the metaphor: pig and man quarrel fiercely at the end of the story. The diversity of the animal class, like the working class, is equally stressed by the differing personalities of the creatures. Just because all have been subjected to human rule, this does not mean that they will act as a united body once they take over the farm. The qualities which, for Orwell, clearly unite the majority of the animals with their human counterparts, the common working people, are a concern for freedom and equality in society and a form of "innate decency" which prevents them from desiring power for any personal gain. While this decency hinders the worker animals from discovering the true nature of the pigs until the final scene, it also provides them with an instinctive feeling for what a fair society might actually look like. Yet Orwell was obviously aware, in using this metaphor, that the animals differ fundamentally from their human counterparts. Unlike men, the

majority of the beasts are limited naturally by their brief lifespan and the consequent shortness of their memory. Moreover, their differentiated physical types deny them the versatility of humans. Their class structure is fixed by their immutable functions on the farm: a horse can never fill the role of a hen. The class structure of human society, in contrast, is free from such biological demarcations. These two profoundly limiting aspects of the animal condition, in which men share no part, finally contribute to the creatures' passivity in the face of the pig dictatorship. The metaphor, then, cannot be reduced to a simple equivalence, in the way that the pigs reduce the seven Commandments of *Animal Farm* to one.

Evidently the animals lack education and self-confidence in spite of the active role which most of them played in the first rebellion and, in the case of some, are naturally stupid. Orwell is not implying by this the hopelessness of a proletarian revolution: he rather points to the need for education and self-confidence in any working class movement if it is to remain democratic in character. Both of these attributes, he appears further to suggest, must come from within the movement itself. The crude proletarian spirit of the common animals necessarily provides the essential ingredient for a revolution towards a free and equal society, but it needs careful honing and polishing if it is not to fall victim to its own inherent decency and modesty. If this simple, instinctive decency is to be preserved in the transition from revolution—which is all too easy—to the construction of a new society—which is not—other kinds of virtue are also necessary and must at all costs be developed by the working class if it is not to be betrayed again. The text itself, however, hints at disaster for the rule of the pigs. Their single tenet asserting that some animals are more equal than others is in the end a meaningless absurdity. In spite of their great intellectual gifts, the pigs are ultimately the most absurd of all the farm animals, for they are attempting to assume a human identity which cannot belong to them. It is left to the reader to ponder the potential for political change, given the evident weakness and vanity at the core of the pig dictatorship. The final scene of the book, moreover, reveals the disillusionment of the working beasts with their porcine leaders, an essential step in the process of creating a new revolution.

Evidence external to the text of *Animal Farm* is not required to establish the political meaning within its pages. Yet an examination of Orwell's attitude towards the book during the difficult period in which he tried to have it published only strengthens the conclusions drawn here. Even before *Animal Farm* was finished, Orwell was quite aware that it would cause controversy because of its untimely anti-Stalinist message, and he predicted difficulties in publishing it. He was, of course, correct: the manuscript was refused by Gollancz, Andre Deutsch, and Jonathan Cape—in the latter case