

## THE IDEA OF EQUALITY IN ANIMAL FARM OF GEORGE

ORWELL

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### ABSTRACT

George Orwell's main objective is to reveal the real condition of society through the idea of equality. *Animal Farm* deals with the problem of equality. He wrote six novels and in all of them his main theme was the problem of society at different levels. According to Subhash Chandra Orwell decided to write novels because this genre enabled him to express his ideas about the current issues freely. Orwell himself says in *Why I Write* What I have wanted to do throughout the past ten years is to make political writing into an art. My starting Point is always a feeling of partisanship, a sense of injustice. (*Why I Write* 126).

*Animal Farm* presents itself as a simple fable but it raises profound questions about one of our most cherished political concepts namely equality. Initially viewed as a solution to the problem of injustice on *Animal Farm* equality soon presents itself as part of the problem. It is a radically open-ended ideal that lends itself to different and contradictory interpretations. This article shows how George Orwell's "fairy story" puts equality on trial and forces readers to re-examine some of their most fundamental moral and political commitments. In the story *Animal Farm* seven commandments were established soon after the fleeing of Mr. Jones with the seventh- all animals are equal being the most important. Later on bit by bit the seven commandments were soon deformed and the equality which the commandments promised and protected perished. Why doesn't animalism work? Why did the equality the seven commandments promised vanish? The key is the natural division between intellectual and physical labor. It is true that after the expulsion of Mr. Jones, the animals worked together happily as though equality was established. A leader who is selfish and craves for more power and privilege would do anything to fulfill his wants. Usually he who craves power would take advantage of the naivety of the labor force

contorting the commandments rather indistinctly until it becomes what he desired. By then there would be no more equality and he would of course become the next oppressor. The animals will never be equal nor will our world. Fortunate was we are we mustn't forget the inequality and the discriminations that still exist globally. By contributing some of our surpluses to the world it won't cure the imparity but it will certainly help.

**INTRODUCTION:** - George Orwell is the first novelist to introduce the idea of equality in society through the medium of animals. Equality is a relationship between man and man. It's one of mankind's ultimate ideal. In an equal society there is no division of classes' wealth or power. This was the predominant goal of the Russian Revolution as well as the animal revolution in the story *Animal Farm*. The thought of having an equal society is admirable though it is only a fantasy.

Orwell was passionate about human liberty and was an animal lover. This novel describes how Orwell infused his political message with emotional impact through his skillful depiction of the animals. In his seemingly simple story about animals Orwell has written a book that attacks the Soviet Union for its failure to live to its revolutionary ideals at the same time that it presents a universal message about human equality and freedom. George Orwell himself says "liberty is telling people what they do not want to hear." In explaining how he came to write *Animal Farm* Orwell says he once saw a little boy whipping a horse. At that moment Orwell received the inspiration he needed to formulate his ideas in *Animal Farm*. Orwell who wrote *Animal Farm* went to Spain to fight for the Spanish government in the Spanish civil war. While there he was in a Trotskyite outfit. He then witnessed Stalinists seizing, imprisoning and killing many of his fellow Trotskyites all under the pretence of insuring the success of the democratic Spanish government. This made Orwell determined to show the realities of life in Russia during and after the Russian revolution. He did this by writing *Animal Farm* in which animals are used to represent Russian politicians as well as different parts of the working class. In *Animal Farm* Orwell used allegory to show economic, political and social suppression in Russia. In the novel Orwell uses farm animals to portray people of power and the common people during the Russian revolution. The novel starts with Old Major explaining to all the animals in the farm how

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they are being treated wrongly and how they can overthrow their owner Mr. Jones. The problem of this novel firstly served by the vision of Old Major, the oldest boar and can be considered the leader among the animals who sees the equality between the animal and the human. He questions “what is the nature of this life of our?” [Orwell, 1945, P.3.] Old Major, an aging boar gives a rousing speech in the barn urging his fellow animals to get rid of Jones and rely on their own efforts to keep the farm running and profitable. After the awareness comes in to being the animals realise their fate which is forced to work hard but at the end they are slaughtered. Because of that the animals particularly Old Major blamed Mr. Jones, the human character and their farmer for the behaviour towards the animals. Thus, the animal named the human as their enemy. In this occasion the animals creates a distinction of classes which are the animal and the human. The animals feel that they are the working class because they work hard to serve human needs. This consciousness becomes the fuel of the rebellion of the animals. Old Major arouses equality in other animals by telling their works as: “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.” (The Sunday Times, 2 March 1986, P.5.) Man refers to the leisure class which produces less and consumes more. There life actually depends on the work result of the working class. According to old major dream all the animals can do is to rebel to the human to gain the equality. However, the rebellion is just planned by the more intelligent animals of the farm which are the pigs and dogs. The pigs specifically become the animal’s think tank to create the strategy to blow down the domination of human because they think that they are more intelligent than other animals. Man serves the interest of himself and not thinks about animals. All men are enemies and their ways are wrong. Old Major explains thus:” whatever goes upon two legs is an enemy. Whatever goes upon four legs or has wings is a friend.”[P.23]. Old Major makes a song to create awareness or consciousness in animals and it was titled Beasts of England. He clears his throat and began to sing as:” Soon or late the day is coming, tyrant man shall be overthrown, and the fruitful fields of England shall be trod by beasts alone.” (George Orwell, *Animal Farm*, P.13). The whole farm burst in to the Beasts of England. Only to create awareness in other animals Old Major dies before the revolution but the speech given by Old Major was still present in their mind. Identified as the smartest animals in the

group the pigs led by the idealistic Snowball and the ruthless napoleon successfully plan to lead the revolution. All animals chased Jones and kick Mr. Jones and his men and become successful in their revolution. After the successful uprising the Manor Farm is owned by the animal and the animal can get their liberty. The animals also change the name of Manor farm in to Animal Farm. After Jones and his wife are forced from the farm the animals look forward to a society where all animals are equal and live without the threat of oppression. Therefore although they prevail to be equal because they are all same as animal but the different intellectual level creates another social class gap. The pigs become their manager while the other animals such as horse, sheep and cow become the pig's workers. The seven commandments would inscribe on the wall and became the unalterable law by which all the animals on Animal Farm must live with equality. Animal Farm satirizes politicians specifically their rhetoric ability to manipulate others and insatiable lust for power. Despite his seemingly altruistic motives, Napoleon is presented as the epitome of a power- hungry individual who masks all of his actions with the excuse that they are done for the betterment of the farm. For example his stealing the milk and apples is explained by the lie that these foods have nutrients essential to pigs that need these nutrients to carry on their managerial work. His running Snowball off the farm is explained by the lie that Snowball was actually a traitor working for Jones and his men. Napoleon said that the farm will fare better without him. Each time Napoleon and other pigs wish to break one of the seven commandments, they legitimize their transgressions by changing the commandment's original language. Whenever the farm suffers a set back Napoleon blames Snowball's treachery but all animals know that this is untrue. Some of the animals 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. They had changed the rule in to no animal shall sleep in a bed with sheets but the rule was no animal shall sleep in a bed. Next they appointed the dogs as their personal protectors and law enforces. Napoleon took the puppies, isolated them from the rest of the farm, and trained them to be his guards. Finally when the piglets weren't allowed to play with the other young animals this made the class division between the animals. After that animals started to harm other animals. They had changed the rule that other no animal shall kill other animal without cause. They become frightened to speak of what they had seen in the reality. The existence

of the dogs around the pigs also creates fear. When someone protests about Napoleon's decisions "they were promptly silenced by a tremendous growling from the dogs." [P.40]. Although they realize that they see the injustice done by the pigs but they lacked the words to express them. It can be the reason that the animals feel that there are two classes among them which are human and animal. Actually the two classes are still existed in another form which now are the pigs and the other working animals. The working class animals do not want to be a subordinate class anymore so they always think that there is no class distinction among them. The class issue become taboo to be spoken because they believe that the life is getting better without humans. We see that the horse was the most exploited of all the workers. Yet he remained true to the cause and his master Napoleon. How are these true people today who are exploited yet believe in the political party to whom they have given their allegiance? Some former patriots such as Snowball were vilified by the current leaders in the novel *Animal Farm*. Another issue which Orwell raises is that of exploitation which has become so high that in the end of the novel Napoleon was not in favour of singing of Beasts of England and so he abolished it and forbidden to sing. The song is banned because the pigs worry whether the animals will do the same rebellion towards the pigs. So the pigs need to prevent any kind of action that can unite other rebellions. In the book *Animal Farm* the animals' ignorance helped fuel the suppression. This was because they couldn't see how they were treated over all. They couldn't remember life before Napoleon became their leader and they couldn't remember what *Animal Farm* was supposed to represent. As a result Napoleon was able to take advantage of them. This way he was able to suppress them economically because they couldn't remember how much food they had previously been given. These loyal and hardworking animals give Orwell a chance to sketch how situations of oppression arise not only for the motives and tactics of the oppressors but also from the simplicity of oppressed who are not necessarily in a position to be better educated or informed. Napoleon states in one of the most important quotes from *Animal Farm* that "all animals are equal but some are more equal than others." [101]. Being 'more equal' means excelling in certain ways and being superior to others just as the pigs in *Animal Farm* claim to be more equal and superior to the other animals. Before this only the smaller commandments were being violated such as drinking and alcohol. By the point when this statement about equality is made however the

lower class or working class animals have proved themselves to be so pliable that they will accept this twisting of the meaning of the word equality. When the ending lines “the creatures outside looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and fro pig to man again: but already it was impossible to say which was which,” [106] it is culmination of all the inequalities as the animals finally realize that they have fallen in to the same system that was in the time when Mr. Jones owned the farm. Animal farm at the beginning and the end of the novel as the Manor Farm symbolises Russia and the Soviet Union under communist party rule. But more generally Animal Farm stands for any human society be it a capitalist, socialist, fascist or communist. It possesses the internal structure of a nation with a government which the pigs and a police force or army which are the dogs. The working class is other animals of the farm. It is generally accepted that Orwell constructed his story to reflect his main purpose and to create social consciousness in the readers. He expresses his purpose symbolically as- Manor Farm represents Russia; Mr. Jones who was the former owner of Manor Farm represents the last tsar of Russia. Mrs. Jones who was the wife of Jones represents the Tsar’s wife Alexandra. The pigs represent the Bolsheviks; Snowball represents Leo Trotsky who was one of the original revolutionaries. Snowball was exiled from the farm just as Trotsky had been in 1929.

Napoleon is Joseph Stalin and his dogs represent the military police. The dogs in Animal Farm are a metaphor for the terror state which Stalin created in Russia as a means of keeping his political opponents in order. They are a tool of oppression for both Jones and Napoleon. Their lack of loyalty to Animalism right from the start puts the whole principles of Animalism in to question. If all the animals are comrade then why do the dogs attack the rats at the first meeting in the barn? Old Major the father of Animalism represents Karl Marx. Squealer represents the Russian media which spread Stalin’s version of the truth to the masses. Boxer represents the working class. He is portrayed as being a dedicated worker but as possessing a less than average intelligence. His personal motto was ‘I must work harder’ becomes the cause of his downfall. He is sent to the knackers’ yard by Napoleon not realising his fate. The example of Boxer is used by Orwell to show the reader that even the most loyal and honest people suffer under such circumstances and brutal regime. The social class issue is represented by the differentiation of human and

animal. The animals work hard to abolish the social class between human and animal by conditioning the rebellion. However after the rebellion prevails the social class is never abolished because it creates another social class among the animals. Orwell remarks in this connection:

The one thing that never arrives is equality. The mass

Of the people never get the chance to bring their

Innate decency in to the control of affairs, so that one

Is almost driven to the cynical thought that men are the

Only decent when they are powerless. (Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus, The

Collected Essays Journalism and Letters of Orwell. [Harmondsworth, 1971], Vol.1, P.372.)

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