

# George orwell 's animal farm

Business



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Orwell's *Animal Farm* is a fable that parallels the succession of different forms of government in human history. The text is an obvious allegory of the proletarian revolution and its ultimate consequences. Significantly, the novel points to a vicious repetition of the same pattern in government, despite the apparent differences in principles that the governments are based on. The fable can be divided in three different parts which mark the change in regime at Manor Farm. However the change of the government is only artificial.

Each time, the good principles that had been acclaimed in the beginning by everyone degenerate into an identical situation: the political leaders abuse their power to gain a number of privileges over the rest of the population while the working class grows more and more discontent. In his novel, Orwell parodies the humanity and its inability to maintain a democratic and egalitarian regime. The book captures therefore the paradox of political relations between people: while changes are usually made with a view to improve the welfare of a state, they ultimately fail because individuals are prone to pursue their own interests and disregard the needs of the community as a whole. This is thoroughly exemplified in *Animal Farm*. The book begins with the animal's revolt against their master, Mr. Jones.

The Old Major, the pig that encourages the animals to revolt and overthrow the human race is a typical political leader that believes in an ideal and attempts to change the future. At first, the situation at Manor Farm resembles a monarchy. Mr. Jones has all the privileges of an absolute master, administering the lives of the animals according to his own needs and interests. The Old Major emphasizes the long list of abuses that the

animals are submitted to, endeavoring to make the others aware of the striking inequality between the governor and the people.

The animals are productive while the master is idle and negligent. Moreover, he either uses what they produce for himself or trades the products. The house itself represents the monarchical residence, where the man enjoys special comforts and privileges. The man is also entitled to kill the animals either to have food or because he no longer finds them useful. The way in which the animals prepare the revolution also mirrors the proletarian revolutions. While many animals seem to agree unanimously to the necessity of overthrowing man, it is obvious some of them only join in the revolt instinctively.

Their revolution is similar to a mass movement, in which people are driven by the general enthusiasm rather by their own convictions. It is significant that some of the animals are afraid of the change, being too well accustomed to their dependence on man. One of these, the mare Mollie, will eventually leave Animal Farm to live among men again in order to get her usual share of sugar and to be adorned with ribbons. Orwell shows therefore that no community can be entirely homogenous and that there will always be dissenters who follow their own particular interests. The principles or commandments that found the new state seem to be very solid. They are a reminiscence of both communism and republicanism.

Old Major's summary of these seems to recall the American Declaration of Independence as well as the Communist manifesto: " Even when you have conquered him, do not adopt his vices. No animal must ever live in a house,

or sleep in a bed, or wear clothes, or drink alcohol, or smoke tobacco, or touch money, or engage in trade. All the habits of Man are evil. And, above all, no animal must ever tyrannize over his own kind" (Orwell 18). The commandments advocate thus that all animals are free and that, in the new state, no one will imitate human behavior in any of its significant aspects, including tyranny, crime, vices or trade.

For a while, these principles painted on the wall for everyone to see, are respected and the farm seems to prosper in harmony. From the beginning, however, the inequality between the animals is easily perceived. The pigs, which obviously represent the new aristocracy that will take the place of man, are the leaders. They do not do any physical work and, because, they are the intellectual force in the state, they plan the entire life on the farm. The other animals that are less intelligent have to be content with understanding only one single principle of the new state: " Four legs good, two legs bad!" (Orwell 31) Orwell point here to the obvious distortion of the governing principles when they are applied to the entire community. Some of the animals are already disadvantaged because they are illiterate and they only dimly understand the democratic principles.

The first stage of the government is obviously short lived. The political game started between Snowball, the leader with initiative and Napoleon, the leader that is secretly thirsty for power, is again a typical situation. Eventually Napoleon conquers his adversary and assumes power. From this point on, the equality prophesized by the Old Major in the beginning is completely destroyed. Under the appearance of benevolence, Napoleon and his followers claim more and more power and privileges for themselves. They

<https://assignbuster.com/george-orwell-s-animal-farm/>

symbolically move in the house and gradually adopt human behavior completely.

The basic principle that had founded the new state is reversed, yet the other animals submit to the power of their governors without perceiving the change. Orwell shows how each of the noble and egalitarian principles which constituted the basis of the animal utopia disintegrates under Napoleon's government. The way in which the commandments are amended to suit the pigs' interests is extremely suggestive for the way in which an ideal of government degenerates when it is actually applied. By turns, the animals discover that the past is gradually altered by the rulers, in order to blind the common animals to the truth: " Again the animals seemed to remember that a resolution against this had been passed in the early days, and again Squealer was able to convince them that this was not the case" (Orwell 33). The resolution that forbade the animals to sleep in beds is now altered to mean that the animals cannot sleep in blanket with beds: " Curiously enough, Clover had not remembered that the Fourth Commandment mentioned sheets; but as it was there on the wall, it must have done so" (Orwell 34). The absurdity of the most important amendment is obvious: " All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others" (Orwell 68).

Without replacing the word " equal" with another that would raise suspicions, Napoleon eventually destroys the egalitarian principles altogether. This is the perfect parallel for the communist dictatorship, where the semblance of harmony, happiness and equality was created in order to masque the tyranny of the leaders. Ultimately, the common animals realize

<https://assignbuster.com/george-orwell-s-animal-farm/>

that the pigs and the men are identical and that the revolution was a vain endeavor: “ The creatures outside looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again; but already it was impossible to say which was which” (Orwell 70). Orwell’s fable summarizes the paradigm of the communist regime. The proletariat devises a revolution in order to abolish tyranny and achieve freedom and self - government. This is the communist as well as the democratic utopia, where all the people have equal rights and privileges are distributed evenly.

Orwell shows however that any utopia degenerates into a dystopia, where, the governing forces assume absolute power and abuse the rest of the population. Works Cited: Orwell, George. *Animal Farm*. New York: First World Library, 2004.