
From Revolution to Tyranny: The Corruption of Socialist Ideals and the Power of Propaganda in George Orwell's Animal Farm

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Abstract: "Animal Farm," written by George Orwell in 1945, is a potent allegory that criticises the perversion of socialist principles and the use of propaganda to gain control. In keeping with the events leading up to and following the 1917 Russian Revolution, the story takes place on a farm where animals rebel against their human oppressors. Orwell, who was disillusioned by the Soviet regime's abandonment of revolutionary ideals, writes a story that demonstrates how propaganda can be used to keep control and how power can corrupt.

Introduction

After a revolution, the journey to power often goes from freedom to repression. George Orwell's "Animal Farm," published in 1945, is a satirical novella that examines the cycle of revolution, idealism, and betrayal through the eyes of farm animals who rise against their human oppressors in search of freedom and equality. Orwell's story is heavily influenced by the Russian Revolution of 1917 and the rise of Soviet totalitarianism. It shows how tyranny and propaganda can destroy socialist ideas.

Originally, the animals at Manor Farm had a similar dream of living in equality and freedom. Nevertheless, Napoleon and the other pigs gradually change the situation by manipulating words, fear, and ideology to keep authority. Orwell warns, through his skilled use of allegory and symbolism, that even a worthy revolution might turn into a repressive regime when power is given to only a select few and propaganda takes the place of truth. It will discuss how the ideas of socialism are lost in "Animal Farm" and why propaganda serves as the main reason for this shift, pointing to Orwell's strong opinion on totalitarianism and a continuous warning about the risk of losing freedom.

Discussion

The animals on Animal Farm rise up because they want justice and fairness. The animals suffer and are exploited while living under Mr. Jones's harsh rule, which is similar to how the Russian working class suffered under Tsar Nicholas II's oppressive rule. Orwell shows this feeling of being oppressed early on in the novella, when the animals get ready for a revolutionary movement based on the teachings of Old Major, the wise and respected boar who gives them an ideal vision based on equality and brotherhood. Old Major's passionate

speech paints a picture of a future where "all animals are equal" and the benefits of work are shared instead of kept by a small group. His idealistic vision resonates with the animals, planting the seeds of rebellion against the humans who treat them badly. Old Major's ideas were heavily influenced by Marxist and socialist ideas. These ideas were later written down and became Animalism.

Similar to this, Karl Marx's seminal work, "The Communist Manifesto," calls for a working-class uprising against the ruling class in order to establish a society without classes. The animals in Animal Farm first embrace this revolutionary ideology when they band together in the hopes of creating a society free from oppression and exploitation. The establishment of the Seven Commandments, particularly the tenet that "All animals are equal," serves as the foundation for a new, just system founded on equality, teamwork, and shared ownership. Orwell gives readers a brief glimpse into the hopeful beginnings of a society built on common principles.

Yet Orwell does not seek to idolise this moment of comradeship; rather, he signals its inevitable defeat. On the very first pages of Animalism, the signs of division become evident. The most intelligent of the animals, the pigs, quickly assume leadership positions by presenting themselves as the interpreters and protectors of the ideology. This first division is paralleled within revolutionary movements wherein the instigators of the revolt become the new oppressors. This sets the foundation of inequality, not through force, but through the pigs' seemingly innocuous assumption of authority and this is crucial to the destruction of the revolution.

The animals' commitment to the revolution is motivated by their common experiences of suffering under Mr. Jones, but it also turns into a tool for manipulation. The pigs later utilise the past as a psychological basis to justify their growing privileges, in addition to using it as a source of inspiration. The pigs argue that it is for the good of the farm when they begin to enjoy special treatment, such as the only access to milk and apples. Squealer, the pigs' chief propagandist, contends that they need to maintain their health to run the farm and prevent Mr. Jones from returning: "Do you know what would happen if we pigs failed in our duty? "Jones would return!" A larger propaganda campaign that eventually silences all opposition begins with this first strategy of using fear to quell dissent.

The optimistic goals of the revolution quickly changed into ways to control people, and the important ideas it stood for became less influential. Initially, the animals are full of energy from sharing a common goal, but not long after, they realise they are stuck in a system just like the one they were protesting against. Orwell illustrates this to reveal the key theme in Animal Farm: that when power is limitless and ideas are twisted for a favoured group, the collapse of socialist values is unavoidable.

The egalitarian ideals that led to the rebellion begin to wane as the pigs solidify their power. The pigs quickly establish themselves as the intellectual elite, using their aptitude for

reading and persuasion to gain an advantage, despite the fact that the animals agree on the Seven Commandments.

Orwell intentionally depicts the pigs, especially Napoleon and Snowball, as political figures representing Joseph Stalin and Leon Trotsky, respectively. Their conflict reflects the struggle for power that occurred after Lenin's death, and the subsequent political manoeuvring illustrates Orwell's understanding of how revolutionary leaders often undermine the very ideals they initially supported.

Snowball, an idealistic and intellectual pig, truly believes in the revolutionary vision and actively strives to enlighten the other animals. He sets up committees, tries to teach them how to read and write, and creates plans for a windmill to enhance the animals' living conditions. However, Napoleon, who embodies the harsh and authoritarian aspect of revolution, gradually takes control through manipulation and force. Training dogs in secrecy to assist him as his personal task force reveals the emergence of a police force meant to suppress opposition and uphold his power.

When Snowball is forcibly removed from the farm in a dramatic and violent coup, the revolution appears to take a turn away from its foundational ideals. The group-based democratic way is discarded, as Napoleon centralises power and begins to make decisions on his own. He uses this scene to demonstrate how a revolution can end up as a dictatorship, something seen in many real-life examples. Though they were initially supposed to share power, the animals have ended up under one authority, this time a non-human ruler from their world.

Another problem that is one of the worst deceiving issues in this change is that the pigs can rationalise their growing privileges. Squealer, who is the embodiment of Orwell's theory on state propaganda, is central in the task of altering the animals' thoughts. As the pigs are seen sleeping in beds which is a breach of the commandments, Squealer adjusts the meaning of the rules: 'You did not imagine, perhaps, that there had ever been any commandment against beds?' Bed is nothing but a place where one sleeps. "A properly regarded bed is a pile of straw" (Orwell 45). Orwell uses this manipulation of language to critique totalitarian governments which use euphemisms and doublespeak to falsify reality and lie.

Over time, as the pigs develop expensive habits and become involved in trade and human homes, their master gently changes the initial principles. The original rule, "No animal should sleep in a bed," is now adjusted to "No animal should share a bed with its sheets" (Orwell 46). Sometimes, these animals do not see that the laws are being changed which shows how those in control can slowly change the fundamental ideas to benefit themselves. By showing the gradual drift in the system, Orwell points out that without proper checks and balances, revolutions can stray far from their original goals.

Despite deteriorating conditions on the farm, the animals remain devoted, holding onto the notion that their situation is still preferable to life under Jones. This unwavering faith stems from both intimidation and misinformation. The pigs often raise the possibility of humans returning as a reason for the animals to settle down, yet Squealer overwhelms them with false statistics and bright news. Similarly, state-run news agencies and censorship in authoritarian systems hide the country's problems and highlight achievements to suggest continual progress.

The story of Boxer, the faithful and hardworking cart horse, is perhaps the saddest case of someone caught by the wrong ideology. Boxer is meant to embody those who work and help build the state, the proletariat. The slogans "I will work harder" and "Napoleon is always right" reflect the commitment that authorities are usually after from their citizens. Boxer makes a lot of contributions to the farm, but when he is no longer considered valuable, he is eventually discarded. He is sold to a glue factory after collapsing, a horrifying act that the pigs cover up with yet another lie, rather than getting medical help. Orwell uses Boxer's fate to illustrate the working class's disposability under totalitarian governments and the cruelty that lies beneath the rhetoric of loyalty and solidarity.

George Orwell's stylistic decisions greatly increase *Animal Farm's* emotional impact. The story is both understandable and significant because of its simple language, structure, and storytelling technique. *Animal Farm* exemplifies Orwell's vision of using explicit language to convey significant political insights. Orwell was well-known for promoting clarity in writing. Orwell's fable style allows him to criticise Soviet communism without offending readers who might not be politically knowledgeable, unlike intricate theoretical texts about politics.

Multiple meanings can be found in the story because it is told in an allegorical style. On the surface, the story is simple, about farm animals, but it actually offers a deep examination of many important ideological and historical ideas. It boosts the novella's impact as a means to make political points. People can learn about the moral and ethical issues in the story, regardless of their familiarity with the actual people and events. According to Orwell, he aimed to bring the art of literature into political writing. That pursuit is demonstrated firmly through *Animal Farm*.

Orwell uses repetition and rhythmic phrasing to display that the farm is fully saturated with slogans and propaganda themes. The reader's mind is just as filled with expressions such as 'Four legs good, two legs bad' and 'Napoleon is always right' as it is the animals' minds. It has the same effect as propaganda slogans used in actual totalitarian regimes. The lack of nuance and logic seen in these slogans shows one of Orwell's concerns about how language can be used as a tool of thought control and conformity.

Additionally, Orwell tells his story in a neutral, disengaged narrative style and eschews direct commentary. This stylistic moderation thus allows the events of the story to

have their significance and makes the eventual treachery of the animals all the more poignant and heartbreaking. It prompts readers to decide for themselves, making the message more convincing. The failure of the revolution doesn't require explanation, either. Yet, Orwell doesn't bother to bother: all we needed to see was pigs walking on two legs, indistinguishable from the humans the once reviled as.

Animal Farm is nearly eight decades old but remains extremely relevant. Orwell is more concerned with totalitarian regimes, the slippage in ideology, and the rot in socialist ideas than the unique circumstances of Soviet Russia. In our modern age of political divide, disinformation, authoritarian tendencies and populist speech, Animal Farm serves to caution. The lasting quality of Orwell's writing is its versatility. Initially written ironically as a mockery of Stalinism, the themes covered in Animal Farm are applicable to any form of politics or any time period. This is not limited to any particular regime: how power consolidates through fear, propaganda, revisionism, and repression.

Orwell's warnings are for any society that functions without the checks on power and the distortion of truth. Moreover, the novella's short form makes it approachable to younger readers and, in its complexity, encompasses a critique that works as well for an older readership than that found in some of Porter's longer works of fiction. One of the reasons why Animal Farm is so often one of the first, if not the first, serious political works that students read is this duality. Its aim is to serve as an introduction to the ethics, governance and accountability discussions in history.

Animal Farm by George Orwell is more than an allegorical fable; it is a trenchant political commentary and a timeless examination of how power unchecked by any checks or balances inevitably corrupts even the noblest ideals. Orwell depicts the vulnerability of utopian fantasies and the simplicity with which revolutionary language might be weaponised by those in want of personal power, via the rise and fall of the Animalist revolution.

Conclusion

The novella focuses on how authoritarian, cunning, and honourable leaders can subvert socialist ideals. Animal Farm went from being a hopeful society to a brutal dictatorship run by pigs, which is like what happened in the Soviet Union in the past. It also warns that oppressive cycles can happen in any community. Hope, unity, and justice start the revolution, but betrayal, oppression, and despair end it.

Orwell's book uses symbolism and allegory a lot, which makes it easier to see how propaganda, rewriting history, overworking workers, and forgetting about the community all help to keep people from being free. Squealer is the person who spreads propaganda, Napoleon is the violent leader, and Boxer tells the story of the working class's struggles. Every character has a role in the failure of the revolution's early goals.

Even though Orwell wrote it a long time ago, his advice is still useful today. The book makes its readers think twice about the information they get and watch out for people

who use ideology to get what they want. It also warns against letting apathy let tyranny win. Orwell shows that freedom and equality need to be protected because they aren't stable and can be taken away from people by abuse of power and interference.

Animal Farm is more relevant than ever in a world where politics are divided, false information is everywhere, and democratic values are fading. Orwell's smart view on how revolutions may contribute to oppressive governments is a strong reminder of the necessity for honesty, responsibility, and critical thinking in public life and the responsibilities that come with becoming politically active. Animal Farm is a great example of how literature can show the truth and make people think. This makes everyone think more about political movements as well as ask, "Who really benefits from the revolution, and what does it price?"

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