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Department of English



**POLITICAL ASPECTS IN ANIMALS FARM  
BY GEORGE ORWELL**

A Research

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**By:**

**Zainab Ahmed Ali &**

**Saja Majid Abboud**

**Supervised by :**

**Asist.Inst.prof.Wallada Abdu-Razzaq**

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## **Dedication**

*To...*

Our guide and spark of hope and light in our life- The prophet and messenger "the peace and prayers of God be upon him"

*To...*

The pearls of our life , our parents.

*To...*

The sweetest figures , our brother and sisters .

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## Abstract

It is generally known that politics is an important aspect of George Orwell's (1903-1950). His literary writing is influenced by different political and social changes of his time. As a political thinker, his novels reveal political and social problems that caused the social and political upheavals of his time. This research aims at showing Political aspects in *Animals Farm* by George Orwell. It is divided into introduction and three chapters. Chapter one attempts to explore the theme of Corruption in Orwell's *Animal farm* (1945). Chapter two illustrates The abuse power in Animal farm. Chapter three shows Animals Revolution . Finally a conclusion that sums up the findings of this research.

## Introduction

George Orwell whose real name was Eric Blair, was born on June 25, 1903 in Motihari, Bengal, in the then British colony of India. He was the second son of Richard Walmesley Blair. His home was conventional English Christian name Combines with the name of a river in Suffolk where his Parent lived for some time. When he was born his father was a sub vice procurator of Opium department in Indian civil services which supervised the Opium trade with China. His grandfather had served in the Indian Army and later become an Anglican Cleric and his maternal grandfather had been a teak trader in Burma and later a rice grower. His family was a part of that “Upper middle class which had its heyday in the eighties nineties” (Orwell, 106). At the age of four his family came back to England and settled at Henley, although the father worked in India until his retirement in 1912. ([www.kirjasto.sci.fi](http://www.kirjasto.sci.fi))

At the age of eight he was sent to private preparatory school. George Orwell states that:

Orwell was sent to a boarding school on south coast, a school whose students were largely sons of the wealthy. To attract such students, the school concentrated mainly on “cramming” boys for entrance to Harrow and Eton.(1)

He was splinted to pawn his overcoat and find occupancy as dishwasher. He had always suffered from lung troubles and when he was afflicted with pneumonia. He came back to his parent's house in south world where he finished the manuscript for *Down and Out in Paris and London* (1933).

Crick Bernard states that:

Sometime later Orwell earned a living as a teacher at several schools but by January 1934 he got discharged and returned to his parents' home. This would be the end of George Orwell's teaching career. later, he would move in with his aunt in London and find there a Job in a book. Seller's shop ..., by this Orwell's Career as.

He married Eileen Maud O'shaughnessy and when the Spanish Civil war, broke out, he and his wife traveled overseas to do for the antifascist movement, which he wrote about it in his book *Homage to Catalonia* (1937). Upon his arrival to Barcelona he reported to the headquarters of poum, the unified Marxist worker's party. After a while the poum was hunted down by Soviet Police and Orwell injured in throat and missing his carotid artery. Whereas he was recuperating, he and his wife were compelled to escape when they were indicted of betrayal(Meyer,1975).

He fought against the fascists in Spain in 1935-37, worked for the BBC for a time during the Second World War and for Tribune after the war. From about 1930 he tried to earn his living as a writer, finally achieving outstanding success with his last two novels *Animal Farm* (1945) and *Nineteen Eighty Four* (1949). His last years were dogged by tuberculosis and he died in London on 21 January 1950 (ibid).

### **Animal farm (1945)**

George Orwell has many works such as *A Clergyman's Daughter* (1935), *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* (1936), *Coming up for Air* (1939), *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949). Orwell's main work is *Animal farm* (1945). It is an allegorical and dystopian novel by George Orwell, first published in England on 17 August 1945. According to Orwell, the book deals with events related to the Russian Revolution of 1917 as well as to the Stalinist regime. Orwell, a democratic socialist, was a critic of Joseph Stalin and hostile to Moscow-directed Stalinism, an attitude that was critically shaped by his experiences during the Spanish Civil War. The Soviet Union, he believed, had become a brutal dictatorship, Orwell described *Animal Farm* as a satirical tale against Stalin "un conte satirique contre Staline", and in his essay "*Why I Write*" (1946), he wrote that *Animal Farm* was the first book in which he had tried, with full consciousness of what he was doing, "to combine political purpose and artistic purpose into one whole" (Woodcock, 76).

Orwell wrote the book from November 1943 to February 1944, when the wartime alliance with the Soviet Union was at its height and Stalin was regarded highly by the British people and intelligentsia, a circumstance that Orwell hated. (Borges, 1996). It was initially rejected by a number of British and American publishers, including one of George Orwell, Victor Gollancz. Its publication was thus delayed, though it became a great commercial success when it did finally appear partly because the Cold War so quickly followed World War II (Ibid).

### **The Marxist Literary Theory**

*“The Marxist analysis has got nothing to do with what happened in Stalin's Russia: it's like blaming Jesus Christ for the Inquisition in Spain”.* (Tony Benn, British Labor politician)

The Marxist approach to literature is based on the philosophy of Karl Marx, a German philosopher and economist. His major argument was that whoever controlled the means of production (the factories) in a society controlled the society. Marx noted a disparity in the economic and political power enjoyed by the factory owners and not allowed to the factory laborers.

He believed that the means of production (i.e., the basis of power in society) should be placed in the hands of those who actually operated them. He wrote that economic and political

revolutions around the world would eventually place power in the hands of the masses, the laborers. To read a work from a Marxist perspective, one must understand that Marxism asserts that literature is a reflection of culture, and that culture can be influenced by literature. Marxists believe literature can instigate revolution(Eagleton, 1976).

Meanwhile, the political economist *Friedrich Engels* (1820 - 1895) found out that he had been at similar perspectives of Marx. That's why they both decided to the contribution to explain the principles of communism (later called Marxism) and to manage an international movement(Eagleton, 1976).

Marxist theory also, considered a sociological approach to literature that viewed works of literature or art as the products of historical forces that can be analyzed by looking at the material conditions in which they were formed. In Marxist ideology, what it often classify as a world view (such as Victorian age) is actually the articulations of the dominant class(Culler, 1997) harsh, iron-fist government Marxism approach generally focuses on the clash between the dominant and repressed classes in any given age and also may encourage art to imitate what is often termed "objective" reality. The Frankfurt School is also associated with Marxism and rejected realism (Cuddon, 1998)

Marxism developed primarily as a way of examining historical, economic, and social issues, Marxist tendency does

not deal explicitly with theories of literature; consequently, there is no one orthodox Marxist school (as there is an orthodox Freudianism)<sup>9</sup> , but rather a diversity of Marxist readings. Thus, in the preface of the book of Terry Eagleton *Marxism and Literary Criticism*, Eagleton writes ironically :“No doubt we shall soon see Marxist criticism comfortably wedged Between Freudian and mythological approaches to literature, as yet one More stimulating academic 'approach,' one more well-tilled field of inquire students to tramp.”( Eagleton, 1976).

### **Historical background of the text**

George Orwell’s *Animal Farm*, published in England on August 17, 1945, it is arguably the author’s biggest and most influential work. Orwell’s effort had always been influenced by his deep awareness of social injustices and *Animal Farm* was no Different (<http://www.en.wikipedia.org>). Another notable work by Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty- Four*, follows a very similar theme of severe injustice and a manipulating government. What made this novel so eye-popping and revolutionary for its time was its illumination of how a totalitarian regime progresses through its various phases (Ibid).

The satirical nature of *Animal Farm* came as no surprise given Orwell’s intense opposition of totalitarianism and firm belief in democratic socialism era during the Soviet Union (Borges, 1996).

Orwell had been a member of the Independent Labor Party and was a severe critic of Joseph Stalin and his signature Stalinism. *Animal Farm* records the tale of a group of farm animals as they revolt against their human master, Mr. Jones, attempt to create an intangible perfect society first presented by the vision of Old Major, the prized 12-year-old boar who dies the day after giving his astounding speech to the animals. Going deeper than its juvenile disguise, *Animal Farm* is an allegory of both the Russian Revolution and the rise of Stalin's(Menard, 2003).

## Chapter One

### Theme of Corruption in the Novel

The corrupting effect of power is one of the central themes of *Animal Farm*. At the beginning of the book, (Stephen, M., 1949: 315). Old Major describes the oppression that the animals experience, and predicts that the day will come when they overthrow their human masters and build an equitable society (Ibid).

When the animals of Manor Farm drive off Jones, it appears that day has come (Fitzpatrick, 1982). But we quickly see that the pigs, by virtue of their leadership of the revolution, quickly become corrupted by power. Napoleon continues to pay lip service to the principles of the revolution through most of the book, but his actions are far removed from the principles of Animalism. He and the other pigs begin to claim privileges for themselves, and eventually he uses the dogs to purge those who question his authority. Snowball is driven from the farm for dissent, and gradually, the pigs become more like the humans they fought to overthrow (Ibid).

The corruption of the principles of the revolution is illustrated by the changing Seven Commandments, which are misused over the course of the book to the point where, at the end, they read only "*All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others.*" (Animal Farm, 16).

The book's final passage, when some of the animals view the pigs arguing and playing cards with Pilkington and the other humans in the farmhouse, makes the corruption of power most clear : *“Twelve voices were shouting in anger, and they were all alike. No question, now, what had happened to the faces of the pigs? The creatures outside looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again; but already it was impossible to say which was which.”* (AnimalFarm,17).

This quote depicts that the pigs attain power initially. They are delighted. This is a very common idea that every powerful man gets corrupted at some Lord Acton quotes *“Power corrupts and absolute power absolutely.”* *Animal Farm* is a true point in his journey to attain power. Corruption is inevitable in power. This ultimatum is depicted in animal farm.

The pigs revel the power they are bestowed with. Although the start is filled with sincerity to confer freedom to animals from the brutal humans but soon their motive gets tainted with private lust for power(www.google.dz).When the pigs are granted a little power, they see its effect is good. Everyone respects them, they start leading all and this leadership, the ability to dictate a huge group arouses thirst to attain more power (Ibid).

To gain more power they get corrupted. And soon they are mere doppelgangers of what they previously stood against-the

humans(<http://www.google.dz>). Power goes hand in hand with corruption. Power is not just a word but a force, a very moving force which compels man to enact many actions. It makes him corrupt and dangerous and the sole reason is lust for power. This last is also evident when the trio of pigs later competes in the race for power. The once united house is now divided all due to power (Ibid).

## Chapter Two

### The abuse power in George Orwell

*“Beasts of England, beasts of Irland*

*Beasts of every land and*

*Hearken to my joyful tiding*

*Of the golden future time” (Animal Farm: 1)*

These lines from *Animal farm* that Old Major hears in his dream and which he teaches to the rest of the animals during the fateful meeting in the barn. Like the communist anthem “International,” on which it is based, “Beasts of England” stirs the emotions of the animals and fires their revolutionary idealism [www.google.dz](http://www.google.dz). As it spreads rapidly across the region, the song gives the beasts both courage and solace on many occasions. The lofty optimism of the words “golden future time,” which appear in the last verse as well, serves to keep the animals focused on the Rebellion’s goals so that they will ignore the suffering along the way (Ibid).

Later, however, once Napoleon has cemented his control over the farm, the song’s revolutionary nature becomes a liability. Squealer chastises the animals for singing it, noting that the song was the song of the Rebellion. Now that the Rebellion is over and a new regime has gained power, Squealer fears the power of such idealistic, future- directed lyrics. Wanting to

discourage the animals' capacities for hope and vision, he orders Minimus to write a replacement for "*Beasts of England*" that praises Napoleon and emphasizes loyalty to the state over the purity of Animalist ideology (ibid) "*Four legs good, two legs bad*" (*AnimalFarm:3*)

This statement occurs to, constitutes Snowball's condensation of the Seven Commandments of Animalism, which themselves serve as abridgments of Old major's stirring speech on the need for to control the lower classes.

Although the slogan seems to help the animals achieve their goal at animal unity in the face of human oppression. The phrase instances one of the novel's many moments of propagandizing, which Orwell portrays as one example of how the elite class abuses language first, enabling them to clarify in their minds the principles that they support, it soon becomes a meaningless sound bleated by the sheep ("*legs baa-d*"), two serving no purpose other than to drown out dissenting opinion. By the end of the novel, as the propagandistic needs of the leadership change, the pigs alter the chant to the similar-sounding but completely antithetical "*Four legs good, two legs better.*" "*At this there was a terrible baying sound outside, and nine enormous dogs wearing brass-studded collars came bounding into the barn. They dashed straight for Snowball, who only sprang from his place just in time to escape their snapping jaws.*" (*Animal farm: 5*)

These lines describe Napoleon's violent expulsion of Snowball from *Animal Farm*, which parallels the falling-out between Joseph Stalin and Leon Trotsky. Napoleon, who is clearly losing the contest for the hearts and minds of the lower animals to his rival Snowball, turns to his private police force of dogs to enforce his supremacy.

As Stalin did, Napoleon prefers to work behind the scenes to build his power by secrecy and deception, while Snowball, as Trotsky did, devotes himself to winning popular support through his ideas and his eloquence. Napoleon's use of the attack dogs in this passage provides a blatant example of his differences with Snowball and points beyond the story to criticize real leaders for their use of such authoritarian tactics (<http://www.google.dz/?gws-rd>). More generally, this episode is the first of many in which the political positioning of the Rebellion's early days gives way to overt violence, openly subverting the democratic principles of *Animal Farm* (Ibid).

It signals the deterioration of Animal Farm from a society based on equal rights to a society in which those who are powerful determine who gets what rights (Opcit). "*All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others*". The ultimate example of the pigs' systematic abuse of logic and language to control their underlings, this final reduction of the Seven Commandments, which describe clothes utterly senseless content in a seemingly plausible linguistic form.

Although the first clause implies that all animals are equal to one another, it does not state this claim overtly. Thus, it is possible to misread the word “*equal*” as a relative term rather than an absolute one, meaning that there can be different degrees of “*equal*”-ness, just as there can be different degrees of colorfulness, for example (more colorful, less colorful). Once such a misreading has taken place, it becomes no more absurd to say “more equal” than to say “more colorful.” By small, almost imperceptible steps like these, the core ideals of *Animal Farm* and any human nation gradually become corrupted.

The revision of the original phrase also points to the specific form of corruption on *Animal Farm*. The initial, unmodified phrase makes reference to all animals, its message extending to the entire world of animals without distinction. Similarly, Old Major expresses ideals that posit the dignity of all, the comradeship of all, the inclusion of all in voting and decision-making, so that no one group or individual will oppress another.

The revised phrase, however, mentions an “all,” but only in order to differentiate a “some” from that “all,” to specify the uniqueness, the elite nature, and the chosen status of that “some.” The pigs clearly envision themselves as this privileged “some”; under their totalitarian regime, the working animals exist only to serve the larger glory of the leadership, to provide the rulers with food and comfort, and to support their luxurious and exclusive lifestyle . “*If you have your lower animals to*

*contend with,*” he said, “*we have our lower classes!*”(AnimalFarm,25);This quote, delivered by Mr. Pilkington to Napoleon and his cabinet during their well-catered retreat inside the farmhouse that makes fully explicit the process of ideological corruption that has been taking place throughout the novella. Old Major’s notion of the absolute division of interests between animals and humans here gives way to a division between two classes, even cutting across species lines. Pigs and farmers share a need to keep down their laboring classes. Mr. Pilkington’s witticism lays bare the ugly but common equation of laborers with animals.

Moreover, the quote serves to emphasize directly the significance of Animal Farm as a social commentary, cementing the conceptual link between the downtrodden animals and the working classes of the world. Orwell explodes his “fairy story,” as he termed it, by bringing it into the realm of human consequence, thereby making its terrors all the more frightening to his readership.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Animals Revolution**

Orwell wrote *Animal Farm* during the Second World War, when Stalin, the Soviet leader, was an ally of Britain and the United States. Stalin was highly praised for he was seen to embody the Russian's heroic resistance to German Nazism, besides glossing over aspects of his leadership which was the objects of criticism. Orwell as an honest man believed that it was morally and politically wrong to see Stalin as admirable. He explains briefly through *Animal Farm*, the general attitude of the rulers after any revolution, and also the historical facts of Stalin's era (Letemendia, 1992).

Stalin influenced the common masses of Russia with his hypocritical tyranny. He was a dictator who seldom paid any attention to the problems of common men of Russia. As a political thinker, Orwell attacks the dictatorship of Stalin through *Animal Farm*. He believes that equality at the economic level among people was not possible under communism(ibid).

Orwell believed that the Russian revolution was based on high ideals. He opposed totalitarianism. Totalitarianism stands for that society which is ruled by a dictator or a group of dictators. All human liberties and rights are taken away. Fascism, communism, and socialism in its worst form are the

examples of totalitarianism. Thus, totalitarian state owes no-justice to the society. He hated the society which is dominated by totalitarianism. He was preoccupied with the evils of imperialism, progeny, poverty, and social injustice (Brander, 19).

After the revolution, the leaders could not put the theories of communism into practice. They did not pay attention to the development of common man. Orwell laments the death of those ideals which were the supporting base of Russian revolution through *Animal Farm*. He shows many incidents that symbolize the tyranny of Stalin for example, the windmill project, the killing of the ducks, hens, and also the death of Boxer. He also shows three battles that take place on animal farm, the first battle between Jones and the animals. The second is the Battle of Cowshed, when Jones attacks the animal farm. Finally, the battle between Fredrick and the animals, that ruins the windmill (Brander, 22).

Marx, a socialist thinkers of the nineteenth century, believed that "the exploitation of man by man" must be ended and a classless society should be established so that all people would be equal. He insisted on a revolution of the exploited (the proletariat) against exploiters (the bourgeoisie), in order to enable the farmers to own the means of production, like factories and machinery. Meanwhile "this revolution would set up a "dictatorship of the proletariat" to do away with the old

bourgeois order (the capitalist system) and eventually replace it with a classes society" (Salami, 1999).

Orwell portrays the happenings of the Russian revolution on a farm based during the beginnings of the Industrial revolution. The animals, unhappy with their day to day living conditions, rise and revolt against the tyrant Jones, the cruel and drunkard owner of the Manor farm.

The characters of *Animal Farm* represent important characters or types of people in the Russian revolution, for the animals "are used to illustrate aspects of human behaviour" (Karl, 1972). Orwell's chief characters exist only as social animals and he is "less interested in man than he is in the society that has infected him" (ibid).

Napoleon represents Joseph Stalin, a cruel leader during and after the revolution, who exiled other political leaders and forced mass-executions upon the people, which is the same way Napoleon does in *Animal Farm*. Napoleon is "a large, rather fierce-looking Berkshire boar, ..., not much of a talker, but with a reputation for getting his own way" (*Animal Farm*, 15). He always ends his speech with: "Long Live Animal Farm!" (Ibid, 57).

Snowball, the opposing pig and leader of the farm to Napoleon. He studies military history, leads the Battle of Cowshed (the Civil war), he organizes the army commands to win the battle. He is "a more vivacious pig than Napoleon, quicker in speech and more inventive, but was not considered to have the same depth of character" (Ibid, 15).

He seemed a strong and just leader, till; Napoleon expelled him from the farm and set-off rumors about Napoleons false attempt to destroy the civilization they had worked to build after the revolution. There is a close link between Snowball and the Soviet expatriate Leon Trotsky, who was expelled from Russia under the leadership of Stalin (Hollis, 1956).

Major, represents Marx-Lenin of the Russian revolution. He is a wise pig that passed away three days after he unveiled his plan for a new and better life on the farm. He created the idea of communism, or animalism in *animal farm*. He tells the animals that: "our lives are miserable, laborious, and short" (Animal Farm, 8).

Pilkington and Frederick, the human owners in the neighbouring farms, they represent various world leaders during the time of the revolution, and the occurrences that happened between them and Russia, or between *animal farm* and the other farms.

Boxer, a strong dedicated horse of *animal farm*. He represents all the people of Russia, the poverty stricken, the homeless, who still work hard in order to make the system of communism or animalism work. He is also a representation of the workers who are pushed around, who are taken for all they are worth, and who are left for death. He is later sold to the knackers because he can no longer work hard. He always repeats that "I will work harder", and "Napoleon is always right" (Ibid,55).

There are also other characters like Mollie, who stands for the white Russians meaning folly, "and her retrogressive defection for vanity and luxury is a paradigm of the entire revolution" (Meyers, 139). There is also Moses, Clover, Squealer, Whymper, Benjamin,... etc.

In *Animal Farm* which was called Manor Farm at the beginning, Old Major tells the animals how they are exploited at the hands of Jones. He tells the animals that: "All men are enemies. All animals are comrades" and that "we are all brothers. No animal must ever kill any other animal. All animals are equal" ([http://:www.helpme.com](http://www.helpme.com)). After his death, the revolution starts when the animals expel Jones from the farm. Napoleon and Snowball become leaders of the farm and the farm is called *Animal Farm*. The place where the meetings take place is the barn, it is also a place of shelter for all the animals, except for the pigs, in which the schoolhouse is their place. The

schoolhouse is also a place where the pigs learn to read and write in order to grow in social power over the less-intelligent animals that spent their days working in order to bring enough food to keep the revolution alive. The seven commandments are written on the wall in great white letters. They are:

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. ([http://:www.helpme.com](http://www.helpme.com)).

Snowball is expelled by the dogs of Napoleon and Napoleon becomes the leader who seldom cares for the other animals. He tries to prove that Snowball has been a secret agent of Jones. Orwell wants to show that there "always will be pigs in every society, ..., and they will always grab power" (Greenblatt, in Williams, 111). The cruel fact is that everyone in society, willingly, or unwillingly contributes to the pigs' tyranny.

The animals later built a windmill which proved to be an important icon and struggle, because it was destroyed twice, and "all the year the animals worked like slaves" (Animal Farm, 53). The pigs who are in charge of the farm do less work than the

other animals and they receive more food. "Once again all the rations were reduced, except those of the pigs and the dogs" (Ibid,95). This shows how the farm is full of inequality. Finally, Napoleon becomes a corrupt leader whose chief aim is to become a dictator. "The remainder of *Animal Farm* is a chronicle of the consolidation of Napoleon's power through clever politics, propaganda, and terror" (Greenblatt, in Williams, 109). Napoleon is referred to as "our leader, Comrade Napoleon" (Animal Farm, 79), and they sing him a poem entitled "Comrade Napoleon" (ibid, 80).

## Conclusion:

During the modern era, the British society has experienced many challenges and effects as a consequence of the First World War and the Second one which the most substantial reasons that imposed change on many different aspects of life.

Moreover, a number of writers and critics were influenced by the social problems at that time which was the starting point to deal with in their works; George Orwell is among those writers who often exposed in his books the events and the circumstances of his time and the leading figures behind that. The author satirizes humans' endless desire for power and dominance through the leading of the pigs. After fighting, animals would rather return back to their normal life.

In this story, it demonstrates that humans are chasing after fame and wealth, the political sarcasm is greatly seen in the story. The writer once said: "*The crowd is unreliable but we still have to count on them in the end.*" The condition of nowadays society is the same, such as good men aren't identified easily, elites would rather go to other nations to make their aspirations come true, or against it passively.

The novel *Animal Farm* by George Orwell is a very interesting, complex, and informing novel. George Orwell uses *Animal farm* to portray people of power and the common people during the Russian Revolution. The novel starts off with Major Explaining to all the animals in the farm how they are being

treated wrongly and how they Conover throw their owner, Mr. Jones. They finally gang up on their owner and he leaves the farm. Then, they start their own farm with their own rules and commandments.

Originally the two people in charge of the *Animal Farm* are Napoleon and Snowball. Napoleon is really greedy and wants all the power to be his, so he gets the animals to turn on Snowball and make him leave the farm. After Napoleon took over the pigs started disobeying the commandments that the pigs, as well as all the other animals, organized and wrote down at the beginning of their take over. Soon the pigs have disobeyed, and changed every law there was from the beginning, and the pigs start acting and looking like humans. After that *Animal Farm* slowly starts to lose power and Mr. Jones takes back over.

Although the animals cannot speak, write, plan, read or drink alcohol, they act like human and that what make the novel more interesting and vivid and Critics note that the writer is underlining a basic tenet of human nature: some will always exist who are more ambitious, ruthless, and willing to grab power than the rest of society and some within society will be willing to give up power for security and structure. In that sense *Animal Farm* is regarded as a cautionary tale, warning readers of the revolution.

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