**George Orwell "Animal Farm"**

It is the history of a revolution that went wrong — and of the excellent excuses that were forthcoming at every step for the perversion of the original doctrine’, wrote Orwell in the original blurb for the first edition of Animal Farm in 1945. His simple and tragic fable has become a world-famous classic of English prose.

George Orwell is the pseudonym of Eric Arthur Blair. The change of the name corresponded to a profound shift in Orwell’s life-style, in which he changed from a pillar of the British imperial establishment into a literary and political rebel.

Orwell is famous for his novels Animal Farm and Nineteen Eighty-four. In 1944 Orwell finished Animal Farm, a political fable based on the story of the Russian Revolution and its betrayal by Joseph Stalin. In this book the group of barnyard animals overthrow and chase off their exploitative human masters and set up an egalitarian society of their own. Eventually the animals intelligent and power-loving leaders, the pigs, subvert the revolution and form a dictatorship whose bondage is even more oppressive a heartless than that of their former masters.

Orwell derived his inspiration from the mood of Britain in the ‘40s. Animal Farm confronted the unpalatable truth that the victory over Fascism would in some respects unwittingly aid the advance of totalitarianism , while in Nineteen Eighty-four warns the dangers to the individual of enroaching collectivism. In these last, bleak fables Orwell attempted to make the art of political writing in the traditions of Swift and Defoe. The most world-known Gulliver’s Travels. This satire? First published in 1726, relates to the adventures of Lemuel Gulliver, a surgeon on a merchant ship, and it shows the vices and defects of man and human institutions. So far as satire has become the subject of our research-work, it is necessary we look at the nature and sources of comic.

What is comic? Similar considerations apply to the historically earlier forms and theories of the comic. In Aristotle’s view ‘laughter was intimately related to ugliness and debasement’. Cicero held that the province of the ridiculous lay in the certain baseness and deformity. In 19th century Alexander Bain, an early experimental psychologist, thought alone these lines ‘not in physical effects alone, but in everything where a man can achieve a stroke of superiority, in surpassing or discomforting a rival is the disposition of laughter apparent.’ Sidney notes that ‘while laughter comes from delight not all objects of delight cause laugh. We are ravished in delight to see a fair woman and yet are far from being moved to laughter. We laugh at deformed creatures, wherein certainly we can delight’. Immanuel Kant realized that what causes laughter is ‘the sudden transformation of a tense expectation into nothing’. This can be achieved by incongruity between form and content, it is when two contradictory statements have been telescoped into a line whose homely, admonitory sound conveys the impression of a popular adage. In a similar way nonsense verse achieves its effect by pretending to make sense. It is interesting to note that the most memorable feature of Animal Farm — the final revision of the animals revolutionary commandments: ‘All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others’, is based on that device.

Other sources of innocent laughter are situations in which the part and the home change roles and attention becomes focused on a detail torn out of the functional defect on which its meaning depends. ‘A bird’s wing, comrades, is an organ of propulsion not of manipulation’. Orwell displaces attention from meaning to spelling. One of the most popular comic devices is impersonation. The most aggressive form of impersonation is parody, designed to deflate hollow pretense, to destroy illusion and to undermine pathos by harping on the weaknesses of the victim. Orwell resorts to that device describing Squealer:’ The best known among them was a small fat pig named Squealer with very round cheeks, twinkling eyes, nimble movements and a shrill voice. He was a brilliant talker:’

A succession of writers from the ancient Greek dramatist Aristophanes through Swift to George Orwell, have used this technique to focus attention on deformities of society that, blunted by habit , are taken for granted. Satire assumes standards against which professions and practices vicious, the ironic perception darkens and deepens. The element of the incongruous point in the direction of the grotesque which implies an admixture of elements that do not march. The ironic gaze eventually penetrates to a vision of the grotesque quality of experience, marked by the discontinuity of word and deed and the total lack of coherence between the appearance and reality. This suggests one of the extreme limits of comedy, the satiric extreme in which the sense of the discrepancy between things as they are and things they might be or ought to be has reached to the borders of the tragedy.

Early theories of humor, including even those of Bergson and Freud, treated it as an isolated phenomenon, without attempting to throw light on the intimate connections between the comic and tragic, between laughter and crying. Yet these two domains of creative activity form a continuum with no sharp boundaries between wit and ingenuity. The confrontation between diverse codes of behavior may yield comedy, tragedy or new psychological insights. Humor arouses malice and provides a harmless outlet for it. Comedy and tragedy, laughter and weeping yields further clues of this challenging problem. The detached malice of the comic impersonator that turns pathos into bathos, tragedy into travesty. Comedy is an imitation of common errors of our life, which representeth in the most ridiculous and scornful sorts that may be.

Surely satire reflects changes in political and cultural climate and it had it’s ups and downs. George Orwell’s satire of the 20th century is much more savage than that of Jonathan Swift in 18th century. It is only in the mid 20th century that the savage and the irrational have come to be viewed as part of the normative condition of the humanity rather than as tragic aberration from it. The savage and irrational amount to grotesque parodies of human possibility, ideally conceived. Thus it is the 20th century novelists have recognized the tragicomic nature of the contemporary human image and predicament, and the principal mode of representing both is the grotesque. This may take various forms. In Animal Farm it takes a form of apocalyptic nightmare of tyranny and terror.

The satire in Animal Farm has two important aims — both based on the related norms of limitation and moderation. First, Animal Farm exposes and criticizes extremist political attitudes as dangerous. On the one hand, it satirizes the mentality of the utopian revolutionary — the belief at through the conscious effort of a ruling elite a society can be suddenly severed from its past and fashioned into a new, rational system. Implicit in Snowball’s vision of high technology modernization is the extirpation of the animals’ resent agricultural identity as domesticated creatures and — if Boxer’s goal of improving his mind is any indication , their eventual transformation into Houyhnhnms. Instead, Snowball’s futuristic incantations conjure up the power-hungry and pleasure-loving Napoleon.

An allegorical view of reality – the thing said or displayed really meaning something else—suited the Marxist-oriented social criticism of the 1930s,which was indefatigable in pointing out an economically self-serving motives underlying the surface features of modern bourgeois society. One form of allegory is the masque, a spectacle with masked participants.

Analyzing the novel we can hardly determine comedy from tragedy. We can’t find those sharp boundaries which divide these two. Orwell can be called the true expert of man’s psychology. Cause only a man who studied psychology of the crowd could create such a vivid image of characters, which we see in Animal Farm. Describing the characters Orwell attaches great significance to the direct remarks which help the reader to determine who is the victim and who is hunter in the novel. The features of the animals are : ‘A white stripe down his nose gave him somewhat stupid appearance’, ‘Mollie , foolish, pretty white mare’. Stupidity becomes a kind of leitmotif in the description of the animals. Pigs on the contrary are represented as very clever animals: ‘the pigs were so clever that they could think of the way round every difficulty’, ‘with their superior knowledge...’

The author creates the image of the crowd which plays a very important role in the novel. What is a crowd? This is not only mass of individuals if to look deeper from the psychological point of view we shall find out that crowd is a gathering of people under the definite conditions which has its traits, which differ from that of single individual. The conscious person disappears , besides feelings and ideas of everyone who forms that gathering which is called crowd, receive united , indivisible direction. Orwell ridiculed that vice of the society. In this respect it takes the form of innocent laughter. Old Major found an answer to all problems of the animals and opened the thing on which ‘the support and pleasure’ of their days depend on. ‘It is summed up in a single word— Man. Man is the only real enemy we have’. That episode makes the reader laugh but at the same time this very moment can be considered the tragic one, as the victim of the crowd has been chosen and pointed out and now nothing can stop the proces. 'It is not crystal clear, then, comrades, that all the ivels of the life of ours spring ffrom the tyrany of human beings? Only get rid of Man, and the produce of our labour would be our own.Almost overnight we can become rich and free.’

Major provides animals with scapegoat. In the nature of individual the image of an enemy excites aggressiveness but in the dimensions of the crowd the hostility increases thousands times. S.Moskovichy wrote in his book ‘The machine that creates Gods’, that ‘society is ruled by passions on which one should play and even stimulate them in order to have an opportunity to rule them and to subordinate to intellect’. Having read that episode we don’t pay attention to it’s deep psychological sense, but simply enjoy the humor with which the author speaks of it.

Orwell uses very popular device he gives the description of the character and at the end he gives a short remark which completely destroy the created image: ‘Old Major was so highly regarded on the farm that everyone was quite ready to lose an hours sleep in order to hear what he had to say... they nestled down inside it and promptly fell asleep’,’she purred contentedly throughout Majors speech without listerning to a word of what he was saying’. He uses the same device in the situation when Old Major is telling the animals about the song : ‘Many years ago when I was a little pig, my mother and other sows used to sing an old song of which they knew only the tune and the first three words I had known that tune in infancy , but it had long since past out of my mind, last night however it came back to me in my dream’. The reader is carefully prepared to hear some kind of patriotic march but instead of that the author in one sentence breaks down the created image: ‘It was a stirring tune something between ‘Clementine’ and ‘La Cucaracha’.Through those short remarks we learn the attitude the author towards what is going on in his novel. He laughs at his heroes pretending that the things he speaks about to be very important while making the reader understand the contrary thing.We can see hear again an integral part of any kind of humour-incongruity between the reality and the situation as it is said to be. The lack of coherance between things in it’s turn lead to the very invisible boundary between comedy and tragedy.

Orwell’s novel is always balancing between tragedy and comedy. In Animal Farm Orwell is exposing the selfish power-hunger of the few behind a collectivist rhetoric used to gull the many . And in at least two Orwell’s allegorical exposure is also an exposure of allegory. Because the surface fiction tends to be considered of lesser importance than the implied meaning , allegory is inherently hierarchical , and the insistence on the dominant meaning makes it an authoritarian mode.

If allegory tends to subordinate narrative to thesis, the structure of allegory, it’s dualistic form, can be emphasized to restore a balance between fictional events and conceptual massage. In Animal Farm there are signs of a balance struck between satiric devices allegorically martialed to expose and assault a dangerous political myth and collateral apolitical elements — the latter akin to the ‘solid objects and useless scraps of information’.

Orwell allows the reader to fix disgust at cruelty, torture and violence on one leading character—Napoleon. The way Orwell presents the figure is structural, in that the figure of the Napoleon clarifies his political intent for the reader. There is no doubt about the way the reader feels toward Napoleon, but Orwell’s handling of him is all the more effective for combining ‘humor with the disgust’.’Napoleon was a large, rather fierce looking Berkshire boar, the only Berkshire on the farm, not much of a talker but with the reputation for going his own way’.

Orwell presents Napoleon to us in ways they are, at first amusing as, for example, in the scene where he shows his pretended disdain at Snowball’s plans for the windmill, by lifting his leg and urinating on the chalked floor. ‘One day ,however, he arrived unexpectedly to examine the plans. He walked heavily round the shed, looked closely at every detail of the plans and snuffed at them once or twice, then stood for a little while contemplating them out of the corner of his eye; then suddenly he lifted his leg, urinated over the plans and walked out without uttering a word.’ The increasing tension of description is broken down immediately this makes the reader smile. Besides the author speaks of Napoleon’s ridiculous deeds in such a natural way, as that is the normal kind of behavior that we just can’t stand laughing. ‘Napoleon produced no schemes of his own, but said quietly that Snowball’s would come to nothing’. Napoleon is seen to have no respect for Snowball who creates the plans. This is most apparent in his urinating on them which emphasises his brutal and uncivilised character. Animals urinate on objects to mark their territory. This is symbolic as Napoleon later takes the idea for the windmill as his own.

On the allegorical level the differing views of socialism held by Trotsky and Stalin are apparent. In contrast with Snowball’s speeches, Napoleon merely makes the minimum response and when he does speak it is usually to criticise Snowball. Speech becomes less and less important to Napoleon. The sheep with their mindless bleating effectively silence the opposing opinions as no-one else can be heard. ‘ It was noticed that they were specially liable to break ‘Four legs good, two legs bad’ in the crucial moments of Snowball’s speeches. Snowball’s reduction of Animalism for the benefit of stupider animals and the way the sheep mindlessly take it up , parodies the way socialist ideology reduces itself to simply formulas that everyone can understand, but which stop any kind of thought. In the Communist Manifesto, for example, there is the following sentence : ‘The theory of the communists may be summed up in the single sentence: ‘Abolition of private property’’. Set this beside the basic principle of Animalism: ‘Four legs good, two legs bad’. Orwell’s feelings about dangers of over simplification are clear. ‘The more short the statement is the more it is deprived from any kind of provement, the more it influences the crowd. The statement exert influence only if it is repeated very often, in the same words’. Napoleon said that ‘there is only one figure of the theory of orators art,which deserves attention —repetition. By the means of repetition an idea installs in the minds so deeply, that at last it is considered to be the proved truth.

What the truth is? The Russian dictionary gives the difinition of truth as:the truth is ,what corresponds to the reality. But is it always so? Very often it happens so that we exept as the true the false things which we want to be true, or the things that someone whant us to exept. That is one of the most intresting perculiarities of man’s psychology, that Orwell ridicules.There is one univerce truth , but the man has a strange habit to purvert truth.

Napoleon appears to have gained the support of dogs and sheep and is helped by the fickle nature of the crowd.

From the start it seems, Napoleon turns events to his own advantage. When the farm is attacked in the ‘Battle of Cowshed’, Napoleon is nowhere to be seen. Cowardice is hinted ft and his readiness to rewrite history later in the novel shows the ways in which Napoleon is prepared to twist the truth for his own ends. The Seven Commandments in which are condified the ethnical absolutes of the new order, are perverted throughout the book to suit his aims.

There is an interesting thing to notice about Seven Commandments. That is an important device to use the ‘lucky number’ to deepen the impression of animals misfortune. Every time the changing of the commandment takes place, we see an example of how the political power , as Orwell sees it, is prepared to alter the past in peoples minds, if the past prevents it from doing what he wishes to do. Firstly the fourth commandment is altered in order that pigs could sleep comfortably in warm beds. A simple addition of two words does it. ‘read me the fourth commandment. Does it not say something about sleeping in beds? With some difficulty Muriel spelt it out. ‘It says that ‘ no animal shall sleep in the bed with sheets’’. Whenever the pigs infringe one of Major’s commandments, Squealer is sent to convince the other animals that that is the correct interpretation . ‘you didn’t suppose , surely, that there was ever a ruling against beds? A bed merely means the place to sleep in. A pile of straw in a stall is a bed, properly regarded. The rule was against sheets, which are a human invention’.

Napoleon secures his rule through an unpleasant mix of lies distortion and hypocrisy / there are two scenes where Napoleon’s cruelty and cold violence are shown in all their horror : the scene of the trials and the episode where Boxer is brought to the knacker’s. The veil of mockery is drown aside. In these episodes humour is absent, the stark reality of Napoleons hunger for power, and the cruelty< and death it involves are presented. Orwell reminds of the ‘heavy’ stink of blood, and associates that smell with Napoleon.

‘And so the tale of confessions and executions went on, until there was a pile of corpses lying before the Napoleon’s feet and the air was heavy with the smell of blood, which had been unknown there since the expulsion of Jones’.

Napoleon in the novel stands for Joseph Stalin, and of course we can’t omit the way the author skillfully creates this character. Everything from purvation of communist ideology to the cult of personality of Stalin, found it’s reflection in the novel.

Orwell in the cruelest kind of parody gives to Napoleon such titles as: ‘Our ,leader, Comrade Napoleon’, ‘The Farther of all animals, Terror of Mankind, Protector of the Sheepfold, Ducklin’s Friend.’

The novel mainly is based on the historical facts, and even the relationships of Soviet Union and Germany are shown in that fairy tale. For the all cleverness of the Napoleon, though, he is fooled by Frederic of Pinchfield ( he stands for Hitler’s Germany) who gets the timber out of him, pays him false money, then attacks the farm, and blows up the windmill.

Orwell’s satire will be no iconoclastic wrecking job on the Stalinist Russia whose people had been suffering so cruelly from the war and whose soldiers , under Stalin’s leadership, were locked in desperate combat with the German invader even as Animal Farm was being written. That Orwell’s assault is primarily on an idea, the extremists fantasy of technological utopianism devoid of hard work, and less a living creature, the commander is chief, is demonstrating during the most dramatic moment of Farmer Frederick’s attack on the farm—the juxtaposition of dynamited windmill and the figure of Napoleon alone standing unbowed. And despite Orwell’s fascination with Gulliver’s Travels, it is a sign of his attempt to draw back from the Swiftian revulsion at the flash — a disgust that , as Orwell later noted could extend to political behavior — toward the more balanced and positive view of life that Animal Farm, despite it’s violence, has few references to distasteful physical realities, and those two are appropriate to the events of the narrative.

Napoleon is a simple figure. Orwell makes no attempt as to give reasons as to why he comes to act the way he does. If Napoleon was a human character in the novel, if this where a historical novel about a historical figure Orwell would have had to make Napoleon convincing in human terms. But isn’t human and this is not a novel. It is an animal fable and Orwell presents the figure of Napoleon in ways that make us see clearly and despise what he stands for. He is simplified for the sake of clarity. He lends force of Orwell’s political massage, that power tends to corrupt, by allowing the reader to fix his disgust at cruelty torture and violence.

The primary objective of the tale is that we should loathe Napoleon for what he stands for. The other animals are used to intensify our disgust or else to add color and life to the tale by the addition of the farmyard detail. The most significant of the other animals is undoubtedly the cart-horse Boxer, and in his handling of him Orwell shows great expertise in controlling the readers reactions and sympathies and in turning them against what is hates.

Throughout the novel boxer is the very sympathetic figure. Honest and hardworking, he is devoted to the cause in a simple-minded way, although his understanding of the principles of Animalism is very limited. He is strong and stands nearly eighteen feet high, and is much respected by the other animals. He has two phrases which for him solve all problems, one, ‘I shall work harder’, and later on, despite the fact that Napoleon’s rule is becoming tyrannical, ‘Napoleon is always right’. At one point he does question Squealer, when he, in his persuasive way, is convincing the animals that Snowball was trying to betray them in the Battle of Cowshed. Boxer at first can not take this, he remembers the wound Snowball received along his back from Jones’s gun. Squealer explains this by saying that ‘it had been arranged for Snowball to be wounded, it had all been part of Jones’s plan’. Boxer’s confused memory of what actually happened makes him ‘a little uneasy’ but when Squealer announces , very slowly that Napoleon ‘categorically’ states that Snowball was Jones’s agent from the start then the honest cart-horse accepts the absurdity without question.

Orwell through the figure of Boxer is presenting a simple good-nature , which wishes to do good, and which believes in the Rebellion. So loyal is Boxer that he is prepared to sacrifice his memory of facts, blurred as it is. Nevertheless, so little is he respected, and so fierce is the hatred the pigs hatred the pigs have for even the slightest questioning of their law that, when Napoleon’s confessions and trials begin, Boxer is among the first the dogs attack. Wish his great strength he has no difficulty in controlling them: He just simply, almost carelessly ‘put out his great hoof , caught a dog in mid-air, and pinned him to the ground’. At a word from Nahjleon he lets the dog go , but still he doesn’t realize he is a target. Boxer’s blind faith in the pigs is seeming disastrous. Confronted with the horrifying massacre of the animals on the farm, Boxer blames himself and buries himself in his work. This show of power pleases us as a reader, in what we like to think of physical strength being allied to good nature, simple though a good nature may be. Boxer has our sympathy because he gives his strength selflessly for what he believes, whereas Napoleon gives nothing , believes in nothing and never actually works. Boxer exhausts himself for the cause. Every time the animals have to start rebuilding of the windmill he throws himself into the task without a word of complaint, getting up first half an hour, then three quarters of an hour before everybody else.

Boxer’s sacrificial break down in the service of what he and the other worker animals believed to be technological progress might be interpreted as allegorically portending the future deterioration of the animal community.

At last his strength gives out and when it does his goodness is unprotected. The pigs are going to send him to the knacker’s to be killed and boiled out into glue. Warned by Benjamin the donkey (his close, silent friend throughout the book), and by Clover he tries to kick his way out of the van, but he has given all his energy to the pigs and now has none left to save himself. The final condition of Boxer, inside the van about to carry him to the knacker’s in exchange for money needed to continue work on the windmill, emblematically conveys a message close to the spirit of Orwell’s earlier warnings : ‘The time had been when a few kicks of Boxers hoofs would have smashed the van to mach wood. But alas! His strength had left him; and in the few moments the sound of drumming hoofs grew fainter and died away’. This is the most moving scene in a book Indeed our feelings here as reader’s are so simple, deep and uninhibited that as Edward Thomas has said movingly, ‘we weep for the terrible pity of it like children who meet injustice for the first time.

Boxer can be attributed to the tragic heroes cause he doesn’t struggle with the injustice as the tragic hero should do. And surely we can consider him a comical hero as all through the story the reader has compassion on him. Orwell managed to unite tragedy and comedy in one character. Boxer arouses mixed contradictory feelings. His story is no longer comic, but pathetic and evokes not laughter but pity. It is an aggressive element, that detached malice of the comic impersonator, which turns pathos into bathos and tragedy into travesty.

Not only Boxer’s story reminds us more of a tragedy. The destiny of all animals makes us weep. If at the beginning of the novel they are ‘happy and excited’ in the middle ‘they work like slaves but still happy’, at the end ‘they are shaken and miserable’. After Napoleon’s dictatorship has showed it’s disregard for the facts and it’s merciless brutality, after the animals witnessed the forced confessions and the execution, they all go to the grassy knoll where the windmill is being built Clover thinks back on Major’s speech before he died, and thinks how far they had gone from what he would have intended: ‘as Clover looked down the hillside her eyes filled with tears. If she could have spoken her thoughts, it would have been to say that this was not what they had aimed at when they had set themselves years ago to work for the overthrow of the human race. This scenes of terror and slaughter where not what they had looked forward to on that night when old Major first stirred them to rebellion. If she herself had had any picture of the future, it had been of a society of animals set free from hunger and whip, all equal, each working according to his capacity, the strong protecting the week. Instead — she did not know why — they had come to a time when no one dared speak his mind, when fierce, growling dogs roamed everywhere, and when you had to watch your comrades torn to pieces after confessing to shocking crimes’.

From the sketch of the political background to Animal Farm it will be quite clear that the main purpose of that episode is to expose the lie which Stalinist Russia had become. It was supposed to be a Socialist Union of States, but it had become the dictatorship. The Soviet Union in fact damaged the cause of the true socialism. In a preface Orwell wrote to Animal Farm he says that ‘for the past ten years I have been convinced that the distruction of Soviet myth was essential if we wanted a revival of socialist movement’. Animal Farm attempts, through a simplification of Soviet history, to clarify in the minds of readers what Orwell felt Russia had become. The clarification is to get people to face the facts of injustice, of brutality, and hopefully to get them to think out for themselves some way in which a true and ‘democratic socialism’ will be brought about. In that episode Orwell shows his own attitude to what is happening on his fairy farm. And he looks at it more as at the tragedy than a comedy, but still he returns to his genre of satire and writes: ‘there was no thought of rebellion or disobedience in her mind. She knew that even as things were they were far better than they had been in the days of Jones, and that before all else it was needful to prevent the return of the humanbeings’.

Finally, the moderateness of Orwell’s satire is reinforced by a treatment of time that encourages the reader’s sympathetic understanding of the whole revolutionary experiment from it’s spontaneous and joyous beginnings to it’s ambiguous condition on the final page. A basic strategy of scathing social satire is to dehistoricize the society of the specific sociopolitical phenomena being exposed to ridicule and condemnation.

In Animal Farm the past that jolts the creatures from the timeless present of the animal condition into manic state of historical consciousness is a quick, magically transformative moment .