

PROSPECTING A COMMUNIST SOCIETY: AN ANALYSIS OF CHARACTERS' SELFLESSNESS IN GEORGE ORWELL'S ANIMAL FARM

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Abstract

This article explores the question of selflessness in George Orwell's Animal Farm via semiotic theory. In a society where humans are looking for solutions to face natural catastrophes and other great challenges, it is necessary to practice and promote selflessness. In his fictional book, Orwell pleads for individuals' sense of selflessness through characters' actions and behaviours. Thanks to the sacrifice, loyalty, humbleness of some animals, they succeed in their rebellion against human beings. Moreover, they have built an animalist community with its government similar to that of humans. However, due to the selfish thoughts of the others, peace, harmony and compassion have disappeared among them in Animal Farm. Threats, distrust and regret prevail. That is a lesson for human beings. It is useful to abandon selfish desires and work for the welfare of the community since everyone's wellbeing depends on it.

Key words: Selflessness, selfish, community, humans, sacrifice

Résumé

Cet article aborde la question de l'altruisme dans Animal Farm de George Orwell à la lumière de la théorie de la sémiotique. Dans une société où les humains cherchent des solutions aux catastrophes naturelles et autres grands défis, il est nécessaire de pratiquer et de promouvoir l'altruisme. Dans son livre de fiction, Orwell plaide pour le sens de l'altruisme des individus à travers les comportements et actions des personnages. Grâce au sacrifice, à la loyauté et à l'humilité de certains animaux, ils réussissent leur rébellion contre les hommes. De plus, ils ont construit une communauté animale avec son gouvernement à l'image de celle des hommes. Toutefois, à cause des pensées égoïstes des autres, la paix, l'harmonie et

la compassion ont disparu parmi eux dans *Animal Farm*. Les menaces, la méfiance et le regret surgissent. Cela est une leçon pour les êtres humains. Il est important d'abandonner les désirs égoïstes et de travailler pour le bien-être de la communauté puisque celui de chacun en dépend.

Mots clés : Altruisme, égoïste, communauté, hommes, sacrifice

Introduction

In the quest for a hopeful future, there are some values humans should have and promote. Among those values, there is selflessness. It is one of the themes developed in George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. Selflessness can be defined as a value consisting in acting for the well-being of other people or the community. For a better understanding of selflessness, one can refer to Seth Adam Smith who highlights:

Honest selflessness is much deeper than our actions—it's a condition of our heart. Being selfless is about opening yourself up to others and learning how to receive life from them and give life back to them. True selflessness is perhaps one of the most paradoxical things in nature: You don't lose yourself for being selfless—you find yourself. You don't lose everything xii Disclaimer for being selfless—you gain everything. Your life doesn't diminish as you live it for others—it expands. (S. A. Smith, 2014, pp.xii-xiii)

Selflessness is the essence of life. *Animal Farm* is a novel published in 1945. It tells a story taking place in a farm. It is about animals that decide to fight against Mr. Jones and his team for their freedom and welfare. They organise a rebellion after a wonderful dream of Old Major. Two leaders known as Snowball and Napoleon lead them after the death of Major. Snowball is chased away by Napoleon who becomes the mighty leader of *Animal Farm*.

However, his selfishness jeopardizes the community built thanks to some of his comrades' selflessness and sacrifices.

Critics agree on the fact that *Animal Farm* is a political novel. Dian Fajrina focuses on the metaphor used by Orwell through characters. His characters are the fictionalization of Soviet Union leaders to depict social and political hardships in USSR¹ at his time. In this regard, D. Fajrina (2016, p.86) argues, "The description of the characters of the Soviet Union leaders in the early of the 20th century is depicted lively by George Orwell by analogizing them with the characters of *Animal Farm*". The book displays the "The Russian Revolution" (R. Pelpuo et al., 2018, p.2) symbolized by the rebellion of animals. Its characters are connotative. They portray three categories of connotation which are "positive, neutral and negative" (A. MBon & G.I. Mabiala, 2022, p.124). Animals like Snowball and Boxer are part of those with positive connotation. Moses is neutral while Napoleon, Squealer and humans have negative connotation. The quest for power creates internal conflicts among both animals and humans. The story shows it as "a great issue every country in the whole world has been facing" (H. Seguedeme et al., 2022, p.49). But all the critics have not mentioned a plea for selflessness for a happy world in the future.

This article intends to plead for selflessness practice and promotion in our society for a hopeful future. It can be possible through individual and common selfless actions by banning selfish ones. The work is conducted using semiotics theory. T.A. Sebeok (2001, p.3) defines semiotics as "the instinctive capacity of all living organisms to produce and understand signs". From this definition, it can be understood that semiotics is "a technique for studying anything that produces signs" (T.A. Sebeok, 2001, p.5). It is simply the study of signs. Semiotics is used as a theory in so far as Orwell's novel is full of signs. *Animal Farm's* characters are

¹ USSR stands for Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

symbolic representations. They are analysed as symbols. Their living place symbolizes any country in the world. Thus, semiotics is concerned with how a message, a word, an image and a name are used to vehicle a message. This article is based on the analysis of characters. This analysis turns around three points. The first is common fight for individuals' liberty. The second is individual sacrifice for the well-being of the community. The last is about selfishness and internal divisions.

1. Common Fight for Individuals' Liberty

Selflessness calls for a common fight for the community's freedom. Individuals raise up together as a single person to fight against the common enemy. George Orwell fictionalizes this aspect of selflessness through animals' struggle for freedom under Mr. Jones and other human beings' control. They individually and collectively suffer under man's dominion. The narrator states, "All the animals were now present except Moses, the tame raven, who slept on a perch behind the back door. When Major saw that they had all made themselves comfortable and were waiting attentively" (*Animal Farm*², p.8). The narrator describes the meeting by Old Major to present himself to his mates and brother animals. The presence of all the animals demonstrates that each of them undergoes a sad and undesirable living condition.

Attending Old Major's meeting is the first step to unity and union for animals in the farm. The creation and learning of an anthem are a symbol of union and solidarity. These words best illustrate it, "Beasts of England, beasts of Ireland, Beasts of every land and clime, Harken to my joyful tidings Of the golden future time" (AF, p.14). It is obvious that union has led ancestors to make national anthems. This song has been taught by Old Major to others. They show their willingness to listen to their leader and

² Hereafter, any quotations from the novel will be shown by this acronym 'AF' followed by the page numbers.

elder. Obedience is a form of selflessness since it throws light on one's humility. In the story, animals' obedience to their mutual father is observable when Major has "raised his trotter for silence" (AF, p.12) and asked for a vote whether rats should be friends with them or not. In this context, they obey him. For instance, the narrator accounts, "The vote was taken at once, and it was agreed by an overwhelming majority that rats were comrades. There were only four dissentients, the three dogs and the cat, who was afterwards discovered to have voted on both sides" (AF, p.13).

Unless their disagreement, cats and dogs accept the decision for the interest of the community. The mutual interest prevails over the individuals' ones. In this regard, S. A. Smith (2014, p.xi) writes, "Your life isn't for you. Really. It's not. Your life isn't for you and my life isn't for me. The truth is that nature didn't design us to find fulfillment in living for ourselves. We can achieve the fullest measure of life only by living it for others". For Adam Smith, a selfless person is aware that his/her life is not his/hers. Selflessness gathers individuals around the same and single vision. In *Animal Farm*, animals have a common vision. And this project is to fight their enemies for their freedom and well-being:

This was early in March. During the next three months there was much secret activity. Major's speech had given to the more intelligent animals on the farm a completely new outlook on life. They did not know when the Rebellion predicted by Major would take place, they had no reason for thinking that it would be within their own lifetime, but they saw clearly that it was their duty to prepare for it. (AF, p.17)

Understanding reigns among animals as the common goal is anyone's objective. Since they are united, animals well-organise themselves

to reach their goal. Selflessness favours union and unicity. Determination characterizes selfless people for the community's independence. It helps them escape any type of slavery and dominion. Orwell presents it in his book through Animals' case. Actually, the narrator observes, "Meanwhile the animals had chased Jones and his men out on to the road and slammed the five-barred gate behind them. And so, almost before they knew what was happening, the Rebellion had been successfully carried through: Jones was expelled, and the Manor Farm was theirs" (AF, p.22). The union resulted from the selflessness of animals of the Manor Farm leads them to succeed their rebellion.

The success of this rebellion testifies that union and determination are roots of victory. Selflessness of a team members always leads them to overcome challenges and difficulties. They receive strength from one another. They work mutually. The strongest individuals support the weakest ones. They act as interconnected rings of a chain. Each ring is useful and necessary. They complete each other during assignments. Taking animals as a symbol, the narrator underscores, "So the animals trooped down to the hayfield to begin the harvest, and when they came back in the evening it was noticed that the milk had disappeared" (AF, p.29). The action of trooping highlights a work of team. A team is a union of individuals gathered by a single vision and goal. Generally, a work of team ends by a kind of success as it is demonstrated in Orwell's novel:

How they toiled and sweated to get the hay in! But their efforts were rewarded, for the harvest was an even bigger success than they had hoped... In the end they finished the harvest in two days' less time than it had usually taken Jones and his men. Moreover, it was the biggest harvest that the farm had ever seen. There was no wastage whatever; the hens and ducks with their sharp eyes had gathered

up the very last stalk. And not an animal on the farm had stolen so much as a mouthful... All through that summer the work of the farm went like clockwork. The animals were happy as they had never conceived it possible to be. (AF, pp.30-31)

Common efforts of animals bring them success. Their achievement has gone beyond their expectations. If individuals grasp their knowledge and strength together, success will become their daily habit.

The community's liberty is possible thanks to individuals' solidarity, which results from their selflessness. Selfless people are for the promotion and practice of solidarity. Orwell is not the only one to throw light on it. Ali Smith tackles it in her four seasonal novels. First, in *Autumn*, solidarity is portrayed by Daniel and Elisabeth. They bring help and affection to each other. Daniel gives a parental affection to Elisabeth while the lady makes him feel happiness of being a grandfather. Elisabeth's answer to the care assistant's question is the first evidence, "He wrote songs, she says. And helped out a lot with my childhood. When I was little" (A. Smith, 2016, p.170). The second proof is what the care assistant tells her about Daniel, "Wise man, your grandad. Clever man" (A. Smith, 2016, p.171). Another aspect is the mutual goal of both characters. Their mutual objective is Elisabeth's success. Daniel has always been available any time she needs help for her studies. For instance, when he decides to stay alone, he accepts to welcome Elisabeth. He asks her to "come in" (A. Smith, 2016, p.157) when knocks. Although they are not relatives, they manifest communal solidarity towards each other.

In *Spring*, aged characters including Paddy and Richard Lease portray mutual solidarity. Their solidarity is perceived through their conversations and actions at their office and at home. Indeed, Paddy reassures him of his capacity to succeed in his new job, "Yeah, you've a good eye. I'll give you that. And you're

very young. So, a lot's still possible. And you want me to work with you so much because I wrote something into it that meant they had to use your shots. Is that it?11" (A. Smith, 2018, p.20). As far as Richard is concerned, he supports her during her last moments. He encourages her to stay positive. He tells her, "You'll never die [. . .] Oh no you won't" (A. Smith, 2018, p.32). Richard does what doctors ask patients' parents and care assistants to do. They advise them to tell positive words, amazing stories to them so that they can strongly fight against the disease and death.

In *Summer*, Charlotte manifests her solidarity towards Grace and her family. To prove her solidarity to this family, she makes them watch a film. It tells the story of "two men who are friends and are both deaf mutes" (A. Smith, 2020, p.109). In doing so, she calms down the atmosphere between Grace and her ex-husband and Ashley. Moreover, Charlotte shows her solidarity for refugees and immigrants detained in cells. Iris and she visit "the detainees in the SA4A Immigration Removal Centre" (A. Smith, 2018, p.341). After they have had the information about the release of detainees, they have started preparing a house to welcome them. They prepare "empty bedrooms" and "enough food for everyone for a couple of months" (A. Smith, 2018, p.342). This action demonstrates the characters' selflessness towards marginalized or detainee people in their country. It makes us understand that people act individually for the welfare of the community.

2. Individual Sacrifice for the Well-being of the Community

Selflessness can be proved through individuals' actions in the progress of their village, town, region or country. A selfless person shares his/her vision with others. This can be a dream. Old Major is used to portray it. Indeed, in the narrative, he is the pioneer of the revolution in the farm. He decides to share his dream with the group of animals. He does not want to keep it for

himself only. As evidence, the narrator says, "Word had gone round during the day that old Major, the prize Middle White boar, had had a strange dream on the previous night and wished to communicate it to the other animals. It had been agreed that they should all meet in the big barn as soon as Mr. Jones was safely out of the way" (AF, pp.5-6). Communicating his dream to his comrades is a kind of sacrifice from Major.

The wisdom of a selfless person is profitable for the whole team. Major is a wise character. He has acquired this wisdom since his longevity. For instance, he states, "before I die, I feel it my duty to pass on to you such wisdom as I have acquired. I have had a long I life, I have had much time for thought as I lay alone in my stall, and I think I may say that I understand the nature of life on this earth as well as any animal now living. It is about this that I wish to speak to you" (AF, pp.8-9). He uses his wisdom for the welfare of his community. His speech in front of others is full of wisdom. He sheds light on his desire to see animals free of any slavery from human beings. Humans are considered as their oppressors. His words serve as a strong stimulation to fight for their freedom. This is an extract of his famous speech:

Now, comrades, what is the nature of this life of ours? Let us face it: our lives are miserable, laborious, and short. We are born, we are given just so much food as will keep the breath in our bodies, and those of us who are capable of it are forced to work to the last atom of our strength; and the very instant that our usefulness has come to an end we are slaughtered with hideous cruelty. 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: that is the plain truth. (AF, p.9)

Major makes a recall of animals' sufferings. It is an expression of his anger faced to undesirable living conditions set up by humans against animals. That is why he suggests to "Remove Man from the scene, and the root cause of hunger and overwork is abolished for ever" (AF, p.10). For him, only rebellion against 'Man' can solve their problems and make their hardships disappear forever.

The elder of the animals succeeds in motivating his companions for the fight. Powerful words in his song sound as a leitmotiv for them. An expression like "the golden future time" (AF, p.15) motivates conscious people to struggle for their future. That is what animals from the Manor Farm do. They begin to sing together with Major the song of the revolution:

The singing of this song threw the animals into the wildest excitement. Almost before Major had reached the end, they had begun singing it for themselves. Even the stupidest of them had already picked up the tune and a few of the words, and as for the clever ones, such as the pigs and dogs, they had the entire song by heart within a few minutes. And then, after a few preliminary tries, the whole farm burst out into 'Beasts of England' in tremendous unison. The cows lowed it, the dogs whined it, the sheep bleated it, the horses whinnied it, the ducks quacked it. They were so delighted with the song that they sang it right through five times in succession, and might have continued singing it all night if they had not been interrupted. (AF, pp. 15-16)

The song is a call for union and unity among animals. It is summarized by "unison" (AF, p.15). Major's words create excitement inside his mates. They are now ready to take their future in their hands. From Major's features, it comes out that

revolutionary ideas come from an individual who communicates them to others. That can be seen as a promotion of communism over capitalism. An idea shared by D. Fajrina (2016, p.85) when he states, "Old Major and his speech are a resemblance to Karl Marx with his communist manifesto which said that capitalism would be vanished and be substituted by communism". Thus, like a single person, everybody works secretly for the final victory. For a bright future, the current world needs a wise man as portrayed by Manor Farm animals' elder. Major's actions resulted from his selflessness are perpetrated by Snowball.

Snowball is one of the leaders after the death of Major. He is characterized by love, friendship and communion. In this sense, the narrator underscores, "Snowball was a more vivacious pig than Napoleon, quicker in speech and more inventive" (AF, p. 18). Thanks to his creativity, he finds out a way to help all animals mastering the seven commandments:

None of the other animals on the farm could get further than the letter A. It was also found that the stupider animals, such as the sheep, hens, and ducks, were unable to learn the Seven Commandments by heart. After much thought Snowball declared that the Seven Commandments could in effect be reduced to a single maxim, namely: "Four legs good, two legs bad." This, he said, contained the essential principle of Animalism. Whoever had thoroughly grasped it would be safe from human influences. (AF, p.37)

Snowball wants everybody to feel at ease being a member of a single family. That is why he devotes all his time for their welfare. This statement highlights it "Snowball also busied himself with organising the other animals into what he called Animal

Committees. He was indefatigable at this" (AF, p. 35). He is a promotor of animalism as T. Xie (2020, p.219) pinpoints:

Snowball [. . .] was intelligent, brave, and all above, he acted as a staunch animalist seeker. He contributed greatly to the birth of Animal Farm [. . .] Snowball also devoted his time and energy to improving the lives of his fellow animals by teaching them to read and write and envisioning windmill plans so that it could generate electricity for the farm and earned income to feed them. Everything Snowball did is aimed at making Animal Farm like what Old Major fantasized it would be equal for each animal.

A selfless person is for equality and equity among countrymen/women. This is one of the qualities of Snowball. For him, everything is for the community. The seven commandments well-illustrate it:

Whatever goes upon two legs is an enemy.
Whatever goes upon four legs, or has wings, is a friend.
No animal shall wear clothes.
No animal shall sleep in a bed.
No animal shall drink alcohol.
No animal shall kill any other animal.
All animals are equal. (AF, p.27)

The last law establishes equality among animals of the *Animal Farm*. It is obvious that the idea comes from Snowball. Another aspect is that a selfless citizen is a loyal individual. S/he is characterized by her/his loyalty towards the leader. S/he devotes his/her efforts for the welfare of the community. Whatever s/he

does, it is with love and determination without tiredness. Boxer is a character that portrays these values:

Boxer was the admiration of everybody. He had been a hard worker even in Jones's time, but now he seemed more like three horses than one; there were days when the entire work of the farm seemed to rest on his mighty shoulders. From morning to night he was pushing and pulling, always at the spot where the work was hardest. He had made an arrangement with one of the cockerels to call him in the mornings half an hour earlier than anyone else, and would put in some volunteer labour at whatever seemed to be most needed, before the regular day's work began. His answer to every problem, every setback, was "I will work harder!"- which he had adopted as his personal motto. (AF, p.32)

This citizen is faithful to the authorities as displayed by Boxer and Clover. For instance, the narrator explains, "Their most faithful disciples were the two cart-horses, Boxer and Clover" (AF, p.20). Both horses represent the most faithful disciples for animals' leaders Napoleon and Snowball. They do it since they are attached to animalist ideology praised during the rebellion. Thus, they give respect to them so that they can easily think about a good future of their society. They respect everybody. They are humble. For a bright future, it is necessary to have selfless people whose common goal is the well-being of the world. Nonetheless, the equation of selfishness remains unsolved. The novel presents selfish individuals and their actions which can jeopardize human society.

3) Selfishness and Internal divisions

Selfishness is one of the causes of internal divisions and conflicts. Selfish citizens always work for their personal interest. They do not give priority to mutual welfare. They want to be at the top and center of everything. Napoleon is described as selfish character. Indeed, "Napoleon was a large, rather fierce-looking Berkshire boar, the only Berkshire on the farm, not much of a talker, but with a reputation for getting his own way" (AF, p.18). What interests the second leader of animals after the death of Major is making his own reputation. That develops a big pride in him. Thus, he refuses to attend his colleague Snowball's meetings and training sessions. As evidence, the narrator argues, "Napoleon took no interest in Snowball's committees" (AF, p. 38). His selfishness makes him very different from Snowball.

Due to Napoleon's selfishness, animals are divided. Snowball is chased away by dogs under the instructions of Napoleon. That action intends to set up Napoleon's dictatorship. A dictator controls everything in the country. H.A Seguedeme et al. (2022, p.52) pinpoint, "Dictators always oppress and suppress people. Or even promote their own favourites and interests. This causes inequality, but no one really objects because it would mean putting oneself in danger at the hands of the ruling government". Under Napoleon's leadership, no one can go against his decisions. Everybody fears dogs, his guardians. As a matter of fact, "Napoleon's dictatorship also manifested itself in his control of the sheep" (T. Xie, 2020, p. 220). Animals are under the leader's dominion. So, they undergo changes of the seven commandments and their motto. The motto has changed and become "Four legs good, two legs better! Four legs good, two legs better! Four legs good, two legs better!" (AF, p.141). Napoleon has changed it for his personal interest.

A selfish being is animated by a huge envy of glory. S/he puts her/himself at the level of a god. It is someone who is more

superior than the others. In the story, Napoleon represents such an individual. At a certain time, he is called through famous titles:

Napoleon was now never spoken of simply as "Napoleon." He was always referred to in formal style as "our Leader, Comrade Napoleon," and this pigs liked to invent for him such titles as Father of All Animals, Terror of Mankind, Protector of the Sheep-fold, Ducklings' Friend, and the like... It had become usual to give Napoleon the credit for every successful achievement and every stroke of good fortune. (AF, p.99)

A selfish person wants to be recognized as the saviour, the most powerful and intelligent being of the community. That is what Napoleon does. He becomes the master of any animal in *Animal Farm*. The narrator does not fail to mention that Napoleon occupies "the seat of honour at the table" (AF, p.144) during ceremonies. He succeeds in it thanks to his spokesperson Squealer. Napoleon and his team establish discrimination on the farm. Pigs and dogs receive privileges while others do not. They make the former seven commandments disappear and create a single one. It stipulates that "ALL ANIMALS ARE EQUAL BUT SOME ANIMALS ARE MORE EQUAL THAN OTHERS" (AF, p.142). There are animals that can behave and live like human beings and there are others who remain just animals because they are stupid and ignorant. Their ignorance is highlighted when Boxer is taken out of the farm by humans under the pigs' order. Thus, it is written, "But the stupid brutes, too ignorant to realise what was happening, merely set back their ears and quickened their pace" (AF, p.130).

In front of a leader's selfish actions, it is a bit difficult to react against it in the beginning. That is what happens to Clover, Benjamin and their fellows. The narrator underlines that "There was a deadly silence. Amazed, terrified, huddling together, the

animals watched the long line of pigs march slowly round the yard" (AF, p.141). The other animals sadly observe Napoleon's team acting in violation of the seven commandments. Though they are wicked, they are unable to do something. Squealer always finds explanation for any action which seems strange to the principles established during Major's meeting and just after the rebellion. Such an ideology cannot lead the community to success.

Discrimination usually creates frustration inside individuals. Frustration then leads to revolution. Napoleon's selfish actions and decisions deeply touch Clover. Clover notices a significant change of their commandments even if she is unable to read full words. To be sure of that, she asks Benjamin to read the ancient laws and the current ones so that they can compare and contrast them. The scripture below is an illustration:

Benjamin felt a nose nuzzling at his shoulder. He looked round. It was Clover. Her old eyes looked dimmer than ever. Without saying anything, she tugged gently at his mane and led him round to the end of the big barn, where the Seven Commandments were written. For a minute or two they stood gazing at the tatted wall with its white lettering.

'My sight is failing,' she said finally. 'Even when I was young I could not have read what was written there. But it appears to me that that wall looks different. Are the Seven Commandments the same as they used to be, Benjamin?' (pp.141-142).

Clover is strongly chocked by the attitudes of pigs. She is certain that what is done is the contrary of what they have set up in the beginning. As a matter of fact, she asks Benjamin whether the seven commandments are the same or not testifies it. Napoleon's abuse of power is clearly noticed by Clover in spite of her old eyes.

Clover, Benjamin and their comrades are aware that the situation has changed from the best to the worst in *Animal Farm*. Distrust starts growing up among animals.

Human beings' selfishness puts them in competition with one another. Being in competition is not bad as such. But using whatever one has to win it, is not good. Napoleon symbolises some world political leaders today. Their selfishness creates a strong thirst for power. They use any means to maintain power. H.A. Seguedeme et al. (2022, p.53) uphold:

Our Society is a place of competition. Humans use their powers in different contexts and through various modes. The choice is either to fight for power, to be the leader of the community, or to accept power from other sources. Most of the time people fight for power because they don't want to serve under someone else's dictatorship.

Selfish citizens refuse to be ruled by other people. That is why they are able to do all their best to hold power. Orwell throws light on it through the refusal of Napoleon to have Snowball as a leader. He tries to persuade his comrades to be the one who loves them by bad testimonies from his brother. He accuses Snowball to have destroyed their windmill:

'Comrades,' he said quietly, 'do you know who is responsible for this? Do you know the enemy who has come in the night and overthrown our windmill? SNOW BALL!' he suddenly roared in a voice of thunder. 'Snow ball has done this thing! In sheer malignity, thinking to set back our plans and avenge himself for his ignominious expulsion, this traitor has crept here under cover of night and destroyed our work of nearly a year. Comrades, here and now

I pronounce the death sentence upon Snowball. 'Animal Hero, Second Class,' and half a bushel of apples to any animal who brings him to justice. A full bushel to anyone who captures him alive!

The animals were shocked beyond measure to learn that even Snowball could be guilty of such an action. There was a cry of indignation, and everyone began thinking out ways of catching Snowball if he should ever come back. (AF, pp.76-77)

Napoleon's persuasion succeeds since almost everybody starts hating Snowball. Napoleon's action is called propaganda. His selfishness destroys harmony that prevails in *Animal Farm*. Anthropomorphic characters are also selfish beings in the story.

Anthropomorphic characters are all the characters who do have human characteristics in a work of fiction. Those characters have real names. In *Animal Farm*, there are Mrs. Jones, Frederick and Mr. Pilkington just to quote a few. All of them perform selfish acts. According to A. MBon and G. Mabiala (2022, p.120), "there is no human that can be cited as a character with positive values". On the one hand, Mr. Jones mistreats animals for his own interest. Due to his actions, animals have a negative image of human beings. For animals, humans do not have hearts since they are so hard without sympathy towards other creatures. Major expresses it through this excerpt, "Is it not crystal clear, then, comrades, that all the evils of this life of ours spring from the tyranny of human beings? Only get rid of Man, and the produce of our labour would be our own. Almost overnight we could become rich and free" (AF, pp.11-12). Mr. Jones's behaviour shows that human's existence is a danger for other beings. He is able to destroy anything provided he takes profit from it. The narrator exemplifies that "Man serves the interests of no creature except himself" (AF, p.12). Mr. Jones's attitude allows animals to accept Napoleon's actions

regardless of whether they are good or not. What they do not want is the return of Man.

On the other hand, Frederick and other farms owners show no real compassion to Mr. Jones when he undergoes a rebellion from animals in his Manor Farm. They do not really share his pain and bring support to him. Surprisingly, each one would like to take advantage of the situation to become rich. The passage below is evidence:

Most of this time Mr. Jones had spent sitting in the tap room of the Red Lion at Willingdon, complaining to anyone who would listen of the monstrous injustice he had suffered in being turned out of his property by a pack of good-for-nothing animals. The other farmers sympathised in principle, but they did not at first give him much help. At heart, each of them was secretly wondering whether he could not somehow turn Jones's misfortune to his own advantage. (AF, pp.41-42)

The other farmers show a semblant sympathy to Mr. Jones. It is an irony. They react like selfish people react. Selfish individuals do not care about a person's pain. Only their profit and interest prevail. Selfishness hinders humans to get united and defeat Napoleon and his team so that Mr. Jones can get his farm back. In the same way, it is an obstacle to unity. In a selfish society, each citizen wants to be at the top. S/he wants to dominate and control the others. A withdrawal of someone is welcome by her/his countryman/woman because they are involved in a competition of fortune and power. All are thirsty for fame. As H. A. Seguedeme et al. (2022, p.53) posit, "All desire power, and everyone desires a different kind of power. Power makes people feel different because it gives them what they want. Human desires never end,

so power can never satisfy all human desires". Selfishness puts everybody in a conflict as underscored by Thomas Hobbes. It does not help build a prosperous future but it favours a doubtful future.

Conclusion

Throughout this article, it comes out that selflessness is promoted in George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. Selflessness is manifested through collective and individuals' actions. Like in the story, it is a strong root of success and victory. Thanks to Old Major, Snowball, Boxer and Clover's selflessness, animals from the Manor Farm have succeeded in defeating Mr. Jones and his team via a rebellion. They have built Animal Farm as a substitution of the former one. Selflessness can allow human beings to overcome difficulties. It can help overcome natural catastrophes and other significant challenges. Selflessness should be promoted and taught as Major does it so that human society can be a wonderful one in the next decades and centuries. Selfless people are advertisers of equity, equality, compassion and love between countrymen/women. Nonetheless, its opposite selfishness shall not be forgotten.

Selfishness represents one of the pains of humanity. It creates internal divisions in the community. That has been proved in the book under study. Internal divisions weaken harmony within the group. In this regard, competition of power starts. But it does not help the community since "the fact of being too thirsty for power can push the nation into a total fear thus prohibiting them from being free in their expression and actions" (H. A. Seguedeme et al., 2022, p.53). If we want our society to prosper in the future, selflessness must be our mutual motto. Selfishness should be banned from everybody's mind. Strength comes from union and sacrifice, which are features of selflessness. Selflessness is a powerful solution to wars, conflicts and internal divisions. Conflicts and wars can be avoided when everyone is able to

practice selflessness. Therefore, peaceful, strong and rich communist human societies can be built for the next generation. The semiotic approach helped identify in Orwell's novel several characters, which function as symbols of prosperity, selflessness and selfishness in a society.

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