

Fifth Lecture

What is the setting of the novel?

Time (the 20th century, the modern age)

place: a farm somewhere in England. This means that we expect the writer to talk about the conditions of people in England. But of course the events of the novel talk originally about Russia.

So there is a change of setting to escape from any accusation that the writer is directly with or against a certain government.

Question

Does the novel have animal characters only? Don't we have human beings as characters?

Mr Jones is the owner of the farm.

He is described as a tyrant who takes control of the animals and does not feed them well.

What is the attitude of the animals? Do they just sit silent without resisting? They start to notice all these forms of injustice and inequality they suffer from, but they cannot do anything to it simply because they have been used to not thinking, not protesting.

What they need is a leader to push them forward, to lead them into action.

The Novel

Remember the leaders of the French Revolution? In exactly the same circumstances, people suffered a lot until Voltaire, Rousseau, and Montesquieu came over and led them into the French Revolution against the dictatorial monarch that ruled France at that time and which brought about lots of changes in France.

Almost every piece of information that you read in the novel has a basis in reality. In the second paragraph, we read about Old Major. In reality, Old Major represents Karl Marx, the communist thinker who called for **equality and fraternity and liberty**.

What is Communism?

A school of thought, a movement that meant:
All property and wealth is owned by all members of the society.
Famous thinker: Karl Marx

The Novel

Karl Marx offered a solution to the problems of people. According to him, the main problem was inequality X equality. Some people were richer, better, and more distinguished. The others were poorer, worse, and less distinguished. Solution: equality. There shouldn't be any differences between classes of people in terms of power, fame, money, even appearance. Communism

Romanovs

Old Russia had been ruled for 300 years by a family called the Romanovs. They were called czars (or tsars) and ruled as kings and queens.

They lived a fantastic life in their palace, surrounded by all kinds of luxuries. The Romanovs ruled without challenge for a long time. In 1914, Russia was involved in World War I and fought Germany. Czar Nicholas, the king, went with his troops to the battles in the frozen north.

Five months into the war, Russia had lost 400,000 men. They would eventually lose 2 million

Things at home weren't good either. It was bitter cold, and there wasn't enough food to go around. People who were already tired of the Czar's life of privilege began to talk of Revolution.

Vladimir Lenin was the man who was, in large part, responsible for leading the revolution against the Romanovs

Vladimir Lenin and Karl Marx were the two men who sparked the Russian Revolution and originated the idea of "Communism".

Communism is a political system where all members are supposedly equal, and all work for the good of the system. Lenin and Marx encouraged the overthrow of the Czar and his family in order to clear the way for equality for all, at least in theory.

George Orwell, a writer who was born in 1903, was intrigued by the Russian Revolution and decided to write an allegory about it. An

allegory is a story where symbols or symbolic characters are used to portray real people or things.

Orwell wanted to expose what he called the “myth” of the Soviet system. He felt that because of human behavior and greed, such a system could never function

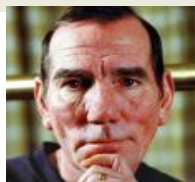
His book, *ANIMAL FARM*, could not be published until 1945, after war had ceased.

Man is the only real enemy we have. Remove Man from the scene, and the root cause of hunger and overwork is abolished for ever. Man is the only creature that consumes without producing. He does not give milk, he does not lay eggs, he is too weak to pull the plough, he cannot run fast enough to catch rabbits. Yet he is lord of all the animals. He sets them to work, he gives back to them the bare minimum that will prevent them from starving, and the rest he keeps for himself.”- George Orwell, *ANIMAL FARM*

Characters in *ANIMAL FARM* and who they represent

Mr. Jones

The owner of Manor Farm. He forces the animals to work and doesn't take good care of them. He has a good life but doesn't share his good fortune with the animals, and they feel mistreated.



Czar Nicholas

The king of Russia, from a dynasty 300 years in the making. He lived well while Russian peasants starved. Married to Alexandra, several children.



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Karl Marx/Vladmir Lenin

These two men came up with the theory of Communism and inspired others to pursue the Revolution.



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Old Major

The oldest pig on the farm, he has a dream and comes up with the idea of an animal revolution against man.



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Josef Stalin

Stalin had a power struggle with Leon Trotsky for the direction Russia (or the Soviet Union) would take after the Revolution



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Napoleon

A pig who fights with Snowball for control of the farm. He says he wants good conditions for all, but is really greedy.



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Leon Trotsky

One of the revolutionary leaders who favored Socialism over Communism. He wanted better conditions and education for the common man, and was exiled to Mexico by Stalin.



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Snowball

An intellectual pig who wants good conditions and education for all the animals. He is betrayed by Napoleon and exiled from the farm.



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Pravda

A state-run newspaper that was used by Stalin to control news, information and propaganda.



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Squealer

A pig who acts as Napoleon's "mouthpiece" and he lies to cover up the crimes Napoleon commits.



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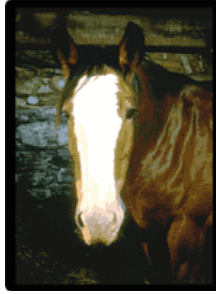
Russian workers

The “proletariat”, or common workers, made Stalin’s Soviet regime work. They did not benefit from their hard work.



Boxer

A horse whose motto was “I will work harder” and “Napoleon is always right.”



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Pigs: they represent the Communist party

Dogs (puppies): they represent the KGB secret police

Moses the Raven: represents Orwell’s idea that religion is used to keep people confused

Sheep: they represent people who are blind followers and who don’t think for themselves.

Other humans: represent different countries that had dealings with the Soviet Union (Hitler’s Germany, Churchill’s England, etc.)

Czarist supporters

Some Russians remained loyal to the Czar. They are called ‘czarists’ and they had usually benefited from the Czar’s lavish lifestyle.

Mollie

A white horse who loves the ribbons and sugar the humans gave her. She misses the old days.

