

"the critique of
mikhail bulgakov. in
the



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

"The Heart of a Dog" is one of the most audacious and imaginative attempts to satirize the Communist regime.

Mikhail A. Bulgakov was among the prominent figures in the literary circles of the twentieth century Russia. His works, though respected and appraised by many critics and audiences, were often criticized by the Communist authorities. Despite the fact that Joseph Stalin himself, supported the writer and was a great admirer of the "Days of Turbins", "The Heart of a Dog", written in 1925, went unpublished until 1987, only after the author's death, by virtue of the Soviet censorship. Surprisingly, the number of other works were banned from publication by Stalin personally. Bulgakov's complex relationship with Stalin were subject of close attention throughout the Soviet Union. Upon realizing that his work would be continuously censored and confiscated, Bulgakov even wrote a letter to the government requesting permission for migration, but instead received a personal phone call from Joseph Stalin, which resulted in his employment as the assistant producer with the Moscow Theater of Arts. Howell suggests that "Many of Russia's most prominent early twentieth century biologists, the real-life peers of Bulgakov's fictional protagonist had a great deal of belief in the power of biology to transform our understanding of human nature and, with it, our projection for social advance".

(Howell, p. 545) Arguments about human nature, with its dark and barbarous origins, as a whole, are some of the concepts of the critique of Mikhail Bulgakov. In the "Heart of the Dog", through satire and humor, he manages to build on contrasts and to reveal the deep philosophical standpoint of the work. The main theme of the history of Bulgakov's "Heart

of a Dog" is the author's desire to warn the society about the terrible consequences of the invasion of the human mind into the natural world. Representation of the new regime of the Bolsheviks in the pages of the novel by Mikhail Bulgakov is carried out in the traditions of the Russian satirical school. History combines the genre traditions of a fantastic work and elements of anti-utopia and satire. The hope of Professor Preobrazhensky and his operation's success would mean a step towards the discovery of human immortality. It is destroyed, however, when the operation produced terrible results: an innocent stray dog, Sharik, receives the power and support of Shvonder's home committee, and turned into an arrogant and cruel man, whose primitive ways of thinking defies all education and training of Professor Preobrazhensky.

Only the " lessons" of the representative of the proletariat of Shvonder are quickly assimilated by Polygraph Polygraphovich Sharikov. The events of the novel revolve around the idea that a transplantation operation that does not stand a chance of success, and gives unexpected results when Sharik begins to turn into a crude human being. Satire allows the writer to present the so-called " Sharikovich" as a phenomenon not only of social, but of morality plan and warns about the terrible consequences of scientific and historical experiments on artificial " improvement" of a man. What is the transformation of Sharikov, if not the transformation of a social system in which all those who had nothing, became everything in a blink of an eye? Mikhail Bulgakov reflected the general moods of the epoch of disaster, censorship and repression under the Communist Regime, and writes his novel to expose these people and the concentrations of power. Sharikhov is

the antihero of the novel, the personification of a society that does not have permanent moral and social values.

One of the main messages of "the Heart of a Dog" is that a person must recognize the existence of the limits of his abilities. The theme of change is extremely relevant considering the historical context of the novel. The political regime was unstable, and the majority of people were very uncertain about their future and the future of their country. Professor Preobrazhensky's ideas represent the struggle to break free from the constraints of society. He is however, quite happy with his current position and material wealth.

Nevertheless, the profit from his unconventional, private medical practices is not enough to satisfy his desire and need for constant medical innovations. Meanwhile, Sharik grows more "human" and begins to exhibit immature and unsophisticated behavior. The experience with Sharikov, maybe the most outrageous case in the entire career of the Professor, his biggest career mistake, but the mistake reversible. In the context of the society, then or today, social change could not happen so easily, without major consequences and so fast. This is one of the critics towards the novel, the main character made a crucial mistake, and was able to fix it way too easily. The readers of the novel are left Just in a few days after his metamorphosis, Sharikov manages to turn the life of others into a notorious chaos and nobody, let alone his creator, are able to control his bizarre behavior. Bulgakov balances political satire and humor with a touch of grotesque through a story about unruffled sincerity, which makes the novel fantastic

and fantastically real. He describes his hatred of totalitarianism with great skill.

The satire in the Heart of a Dog is built into a simple but effective portrayal of the time and place in which it is installed, without any episode or episodes. His point of view, however, is best illustrated by the words of Preobrazhensky himself, who at the outset believed in a humanitarian approach, but by the end he showed himself as a hypocrite. Fearing the existence of Sharikov, the professor reprimands him for allowing himself "unreasonable and utterly unbearable freedom" when he is just a being of "cosmic stupidity" at the "lowest stage of development". Here is a very simple morality, in fact there are several. With the support of satire, Mikhail Bulgakov was able effectively identify the fallacies of communist society than some other critical authors could not do with their work. "Bulgakov balances political satire and humor with a touch of grotesque through a story about unruffled sincerity, which makes the novel fantastic and fantastically real" (WordPress, 2011) James Meek states that: "The message of the Heart of the Dog is that man must recognize the existence of limits to his powers". Power, in the context on the the novel is a very prominent theme as well as science and religion.

(Meek, 2007) One of the main themes in "The Heart of a Dog" is that it is impossible to predict the outcome of an experiment involving the human being and consciousness. The idea of human transformation was anathema to the communists, whose entire programme was based on the notion that God did not exist, and that nature was infinitely plastic - and they were able to create a new and better man. In addition to the propaganda of atheism

(the " scientific-materialist worldview"), state organs in the ninety- twenties and ninety thirties carried out mass arrests and persecution of the clergy and religious preachers. The Communist Party, which ruled the USSR, openly proclaimed in ninety-nineteen as its task to promote " the withering away of religious prejudices". (Religion under communism) The brilliance of A Dog's Heart is embedded in the simple yet effective portraiture of the time and place in which it is set, without ever seeming too episodic or issue-driven.

His point, however, is illustrated best in the words of Preobrazhensky himself, who at the very beginning believed in the humanitarian approach but toward the end shows himself to be a hypocrite. " Among the most significant features of Bulgakov's satire, such as a skillful blend of fantastic and realistic elements, grotesque situations and concern for important ethical issues, have already taken shape." (Biography of Mikhail Bulgakov) The attempt of Professor Preobrazhensky to turn the animal into a person, with consciousness and morale, was inevitably doomed to end in failure.

The revolutionary (surgical) method cannot change consciousness. The satire of the novel The Dog Heart is not directed against specific scientific experiments, as the story was sometimes interpreted, but against the huge historical experiment, the entire ideology, that predominated in Russia. Another theme in " The Heart of a Dog" is that it is impossible to predict the outcome of an experiment involving the human psyche and consciousness. The main difference between the novel and Russian post-revolutionary regime was the doctor's ability to revert his experiment, the long history of oppressive governments and social prohibitions, however,

<https://assignbuster.com/the-critique-of-mikhail-bulgakov-in-the/>

could not be erased as effortlessly as this medical mistake. This also crucial to indicate that the novel focuses on a struggle between emotion and rationality. The novel is called "Heart of the Dog", and a heart is often associated with irrational feelings, emotionally driven behavior. The Professor, however, is a person confident in his rationality and intellect, and it was a part of a brain that was transplanted from a dog, not the heart.

Sharikh, or Poligraf Poligrafovich Sharikhov, is very easily manipulated by people around him. His entire worldview is narrowed down and limited. This limitation restricts him from even the slightest attempt of becoming a person the Professor tried to teach him to be. At the core of many political regimes is an unquestionable loyalty, obedience and discipline. These terms are also commonly used in relation to dogs. Sharikhov, however, is a complete opposite: he is a crude with unacceptable social behavior.

When Professor Preobrazhensky states: "With kindness, sir. The only method that is possible when communicating with a living being. You cannot do anything with the animal in horror, no matter at what stage of development it stands. I claimed that I am asserting this." At this moment Bulgakov began to pursue and challenge the honesty of the Soviet government, saying: "They are mistaken, thinking that terror will help them.

" (Bulgakov, 1987) But the terror did help them since Bulgakov's accusation against Bolshevism continues to be demonstrated. His works are a collection of critical notes, gathered to highlight certain moments about "perestroika" of Russian life under the Bolshevik framework and ideologies. For example, Preobrazhensky represents everything that once was in Russia, and his work,

especially his pending experiment, which includes transplantation of male testicles and the pituitary gland in Sharik, will become a model of the victory of Russia's rudeness and the evolution of the militant state.

The body of the novel revolves around the idea that the transplantation operation is deprived of any chance of success. Sharikov is not a single victim of the experiment. We see that he represents and fits very successfully into the socialist reality. He is the one who does not resemble the " affectionate" Sharik the dog, but rather the personification of a modest proletariat personifying the " man of the future" of Josef Stalin.

Polygraph Polygraphovich Sharikov, formerly known as Sharik, looks like a joke, pursues cats, plays balalaika and drinks vodka from an aluminum cup. But what's more, he throws a sarcastic " vulgar violence" against the professor and his assistant, calls them " bourgeois giants" Many noted the foresight, which Mikhail Bulgakov shows in " The Heart of a Dog" in relation to the current Russian state. It seems that Bulgakov expects a bloody, fratricidal war, which was to begin in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, a war that would end with Stalin's victory. " Heart of a Dog" is an undeniability powerful piece of critical literature and has by no means lost its relevance for the modern society. The fact that the novel is called " Heart of a Dog" gives it quite an ambiguous meaning. A Heart is often associated with irrational feelings, emotions, and with dogs there are loyalty and discipline above others.

And, consequently, the core of many political regimes is blind loyalty, obedience and discipline as well. Sharikov, however, is not the only target of

Bulgakov's satire. He also portrays Professor Preobrazhensky with a certain satirical tinge. On the one hand, he is the character who is certainly in favor of the author.

Bulgakov even wrote the Doctor's character inspired by his own father. The scientist, on the other hand, is always responsible for his experiment - this is the conclusion of Bulgakov. Professor Preobrazhensky had no choice but to stop his experiment and try everything possible to correct the negative consequences of that mistake that was committed.

Since both him and Doctor Bormental scientists were carried away by the scientific side of the matter and could not foresee the consequences, similar to the Soviet authorities, too preoccupied with building communism and values and ignored the needs and interest of the people. Nevertheless, there was a part of the human brain, and not the heart, taken for the experiment. Bulgakov often contraposes feeling as though, rational with emotion, and religion with science throughout the novel. The idea of cooperation between the two seems quite unwelcomed. According to James Meek: "The reason a Heart of a Dog was embraced when censorship was relaxed was that Soviet culture had barely changed. The society Bulgakov mocked was bitter-sweetly familiar to Russians".

(2007) Bulgakov also conveyed the belief that once the reversion was complete, people would suddenly realize that they were, in fact, happier before that transformation. There was no other way but to eliminate Sharikov, despite the efforts and perseverance spent on his moral education. Drawing a parallel between the events of the novel and the real Soviet

history, Sharikov was never able to become a decent human being, and history confirms the impossibility of the domination of the working class that accelerated the collapse of the “ communist” system, and proved incompetent the ideology and moral system on which it was built on.