

Comparative literary essay

Animal Farm **&** ***An Ideal Husband***

Comradship / Friendship

ANIMAL FARM

- Animals address each other with „comrade“
- points out the **allegorical (the Soviet Union)** nature of the story.
- implies equality
- Not all animals act in a comradely way
- the cat is never around when there is work to be done; she emerges for meals
- Mollie is not interested in the common good
- Boxer - Clover
- Boxer - Benjamin

AN IDEAL HUSBAND

- Lord Goring □ Sir Robert Chiltern
- Lord Goring □ Lady Gertrude Chiltern
- Lord Goring a confidant of Mr and Mrs Chiltern when problems in their marriage occur. He is not judgemental, takes both of his friends seriously in their troubles.
- Lord Goring is a mediator, who takes their friends' problems seriously
- LG is very truthful and gives the same advice to Mr Chiltern „But no man should have a secret from his own wife“
- Lord Goring is a dandy with no obligations (wakes up late), in his father's eyes he is a good for nothing □ but a loyal and reliable friend.

Education

ANIMAL FARM

- The pigs are the smartest of all the animals
- The pigs study Mr Jones' books to learn how to manage the farm.
- Pigs' intelligence:
 - makes the farm survive (GOOD)
 - enables pigs to exploit other animals (EVIL)
 - Snowball tries to teach other animals how to read and write □ at first it seems like a great success BUT animals fail to use the skills they've been taught
 - Muriel reads from rubbish dump
 - Benjamin says „there is nothing worth reading.“
 - Boxer + Clover want to learn but don't have the ability
 - Pigs are smart, other animals can be more easily manipulated □ EDUCATION as a means for power and privileged position of pigs.

AN IDEAL HUSBAND

- We don't know about the formal education of the main characters. Mrs Chiltern and Mrs Cheveley went to the same school.
- The characters are cultured, they attend events (Lord Goring), they are in possession of paintings (Mr Chiltern has some Corots)
- Mrs Chiltern is interested in politics, she is one of the modern women □ her husband supports this.

Freedom / Imprisonment

ANIMAL FARM

- Rebellion is going to free the animals from Jones' cruelty
- Old Major „Only get rid of Man ... Almost over night we could become rich and free.“
- BUT this freedom can be gained only UNDER THE CONDITION that „we (animals) must not come to resemble him (Man).“
- The day after rebellion □ very special (p. 15) the language is more poetic and symbolic (the dawn standing for a new start) to emphasise the significance of the situation
- BUT soon we encounter HEGEMONY (you give the illusion of freedom as a means of controlling someone)

AN IDEAL HUSBAND

- RC by selling a cabinet secret, he becomes rich □ gains a high position in English society □ dishonesty hangs over him so he constantly donates money to charities.
- Illegally obtained money is given (to certain extent) back to the society.
- RC proves to be split between what is moral and what is immoral, to avoid problems with his wife he wants to give in Mrs Cheveley's deal but finally decides not to.
- Money makes RC develop from a weakling to a decisive and moral man
- Money imprisons RC but at the same time it is precisely because of the immoral thing he did in his youth that he becomes free at the end.

Freedom / Imprisonment

ANIMAL FARM

- HEGEMONIOUS ACTIONS:
 - Comrades □ implies equality
 - Letting the animals elect the president but Napoleon is the only candidate
 - All animals are equal but some are more equal

AN IDEAL HUSBAND

Power

ANIMAL FARM

- Obtaining power through their smartness.
- When Old Major gives his speech the pigs sit down in front of the platform (from the start, assuming a head position).
- They are able to keep the power with METHODS OF CONTROL:
 - Scare tactics □ Squealer in his rhetoric: „You don't want Mr Jones to come back.“ □ the pigs scare other animals by killing some of them □ if the hens don't eggs to the pigs the pigs won't give them food □ Napoleon educates Jessie and Bluebell's 9, puppies turning them into fierce dogs (they chase away Snowball) □ chasing the opponent away
 - Hegemony

AN IDEAL HUSBAND

- Sir Robert's political power based on money (ill-gotten gains);
- Robert's power to do good (charity), but conscious money.
- Robert's powerlessness in face of truth (Mrs Cheveley)
- Mrs Cheveley's power over Sir Robert (=the secret); Mrs Cheveley strives after money, not necessarily after power;
- Goring's power over Mrs Cheveley (bracelet)
- Sir Robert's philosophy (money = power = freedom (?))
- Arnheim's philosophy → 'and that power, power over other men, power over the world, was the one thing worth having, one supreme pleasure worth knowing, the one joy one never tired of...'

Honesty & Truth & Lies

ANIMAL FARM

- deception is used to gain power → the pigs deceive the other animals about the past (the Battle of the Cowshed) → they deceive them as to the present (they pretend that their situation is better than it really is) → they deceive the farm animals as far as plans for the future (they ensure them their dreams will come true)
- the role of Squealer
- superior intelligence is often used not to lead justly, but to deceive the others
- Do animals believe the pigs?

AN IDEAL HUSBAND

- Sir Robert builds his career on a lie
- He lies to his wife
- Mrs Cheveley wants Sir Robert to lie for her in the Parliament
- How is Sir Robert's secret revealed?
- Does he admit his sin to the general public?

Attitudes towards possession

ANIMAL FARM

- Mollie and her ribbons
- the pigs get hold of the milk, the house, other luxuries – enjoy more and more privileges
- Boxer flings his straw hat onto the fire

AN IDEAL HUSBAND

- Baron Arnheim's philosophy – only the rich have the power over other people
- the beautiful house that the Chilterns own
- the brooch (Why did Mrs Chevelly steal it?)
- Why is Mrs Chevelly so interested in the Argentine canal scheme?
- Why does she want Lord Goring to propose to her?

Naivety

ANIMAL FARM

- When the milk disappears, what do the animals do?
- the animals are naive, gullible → Is their fault that it is so easy for the pigs to take over the farm and to distort the reality?
- when the animals are being executed, what do the other animals say? → What does Boxer say afterwards?
- Is Benjamin naive?
- Do other animals learn anything?
- Is Clover aware of what is happening when she observes the pigs and the farmers through the window? → we are given no answer

AN IDEAL HUSBAND

- Lady Chiltern is very naive – Why? (her understanding of the world, she thinks she is married to an ideal man)
- Robert Chiltern was naive when he was young and was easily persuaded by Baron Arnheim to sell him the cabinet secret
- Does Robert Chiltern regret selling the cabinet secret?
- Does Lady Chiltern change her attitude to the world? (things are not just black or white) What/Who helps her see the world in a new perspective?