

About the Book

Heart of a Dog tells the story of a stray dog named Sharik, who is found by a surgeon, and undergoes extensive surgery for experimental purposes to create a New Soviet man, someone committed to the ideals of communism in the Soviet Union. In Heart of a Dog, Bulgakov satirizes the communist revolution in the Soviet Union and the concept of a New Soviet man and criticizes the science and practice of eugenics.

In the early 1900s, the people of Russia experienced a political shift towards communism, an ideology that absolved people of social class and standing and promoted the ideas of common ownership. The Communist Party in the Soviet Union heavily promoted ideals and values of communism that were to be reflected through the people, thus the New Soviet Man. During that time, Soviet physicians and medical researchers promoted eugenics, the belief that selective reproduction which increases positive genetic traits and decreases negative traits in humans will improve the quality of later generations. They advocated that communistic values and ideals were hereditary traits that could be passed down to future generations and encouraged those who had traits considered desirable to reproduce to improve the Soviet people.