The barn

The barn at Animal Farm, on whose outside walls the pigs paint the Seven Commandments and, later, their revisions, represents the collective memory of a modern nation. The many scenes in which the ruling-class pigs alter the principles of Animalism and in which the working-class animals puzzle over but accept these changes represent the way an institution in power can revise a community’s concept of history to bolster its control. If the working class believes history to lie on the side of their oppressors, they are less likely to question oppressive practices. Moreover, the oppressors, by revising their nation’s conception of its origins and development, gain control of the nation’s very identity, and the oppressed soon come to depend upon the authorities for their communal sense of self.