

James B. Woodward

Metaphysical Conflict

A Study of the Major Novels of Ivan Turgenev

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JAMES B. WOODWARD

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A Study of the Major Novels
of Ivan Turgenev



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PREFACE

Written between 1855 and 1862, the four novels *Rudin*, *A Nest of the Gentry*, *On the Eve* and *Fathers and Sons* are generally recognised as Turgenev's most notable contribution to Russian and world literature. Many books, of course, have been written about them, progressively enriching our understanding of their meaning and deepening our awareness of Turgenev's achievement. But the fact remains that these slender, elegant, graceful compositions still continue to provoke more fundamental disagreement than the famed 'baggy monsters' of Dostoyevsky and Tolstoy. His main reasons for writing them, their central issues and the vision of life which they reflect are still subjects on which no consensus exists. Are they primarily social chronicles, as Turgenev suggested, or are they rather to be seen as celebrations of life, of the beauty of love and youthful idealism? Are they paeans to the nobility of the human spirit or ironic comments on human folly? These and many other similarly basic questions continue to receive conflicting answers and to drive us remorselessly back to the texts.

The same questions are addressed in the present study, but the question with which it is principally concerned is that of the novels' essential character. It asserts, and attempts to substantiate, the view that they are, first and foremost, philosophical novels. This hardly constitutes, of course, a profound revelation. Seventy years ago the same term was applied to *On the Eve* in the well known study by Mikhail Gershenzon, and it is generally acknowledged that in each of the novels there is a significant substratum of philosophical ideas. But no attempt has yet been made to show how such ideas inform in each case all the elements of the fiction, investing each novel with its conceptual unity. Such an attempt is made in the present study, the main argument of which is that the disparate elements of the

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Turgenevan novel cohere to express a philosophical theme which is essentially the same in all four cases. It is the theme, the study argues, of metaphysical conflict, of the metaphysical tension between the individual and the universe which originates in the Romanticism of Turgenev's earliest works. The study offers a distinctive interpretation of this theme, and thus of Turgenev's philosophical ideas, and examines its development in the four novels individually. It aims to show how it conditioned the nature of his art and determined those features which make it unique.

Although the responsibility for the views expressed is entirely my own, I must acknowledge the immense debt of gratitude that I owe to the many *turgenevedy* from whose contributions and opinions I have benefited in recent years, particularly Nicholas Žekulin, Irene Masing-Delic, Peter Thiergen, David Lowe and Patrick Waddington. I would also like to thank the editors of *The Slavonic and East European Review*, *Russian Literature*, *Scando-Slavica* and *Die Welt der Slaven* for their permission to include in the book material from my articles published in their journals.

Swansea

J. B. WOODWARD

January 1990

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I

THE PHILOSOPHICAL THEME OF THE TURGENEVAN NOVEL

In chapter 25 of *A Nest of the Gentry* the hero Lavretsky is reproached by his friend Mikhalevich for 'elevating a personal fact, so to speak, into a general law, into an inflexible rule'.¹ It is a criticism that Mikhalevich could have levelled with equal justification against his creator, for 'the striving to seek out the general principles in particular phenomena', which the hero of *Rudin* describes as 'one of the basic attributes of the human mind and the essence of our entire civilization' (VI, 262), is continually in evidence in Turgenev's novels.² Its most obvious manifestations are the simple, often ironic generalisations with which he is prone as narrator to react to the conduct or experiences of his characters. Thus in *Rudin*, for example, the surprise of Dar'ya Mikhaylovna Lasunskaya at the conduct of her daughter Natal'ya prompts the author's terse comment: 'But it's a rare mother who understands her daughter' (VI, 280), and to Natal'ya's anguish after her suspicions of Rudin's limited capacity for love have been confirmed Turgenev responds with the observation: 'However grievous the blow that might strike a person, he will have a bite to eat the very same day - forgive the crudity of the expression - and the next day he will eat more, and that is already the first consolation' (VI, 342). Recurring in all the novels, such interpolations are indicative of the distance that Turgenev maintains between himself and his fictional creations, and they offer an insight into their fundamental character. For his novels in their entirety are similarly generalisations in the sense that they are primarily dramatised representations of the 'general laws' or 'inflexible rules' of life as he conceived them. Although the workings of these laws are translated into the experiences of characters whose lives and destinies engage

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the reader's attention, the novels, no less than his well known essay *Hamlet and Don Quixote* (1859), are testimony in the final reckoning to the lasting legacy of his philosophical education. They are the creations of a writer who is concerned less with the tragedies of individuals than with the tragedy of the human condition.

Turgenev's concern with broad philosophical issues, with the meaning of life and man's relation to the world in which he lives, can be traced to the beginnings of his literary career which coincided with the heyday of Russian Romanticism. It is already apparent in his first known literary work, the poetical drama *Steno* (1834), which was modelled on Byron's *Manfred*. The eponymous hero of this work is a typical product of the Romanticism of the period - an isolated intellectual who loses his faith in life and the capacity to love, but proudly asserts his human rights in the face of a hostile universe until he is finally driven to kill himself. As commentators have noted, *Steno* is 'the first of Turgenev's "superfluous men"',³ the precursor of the numerous representatives in his fiction of this Russian socio-psychological type characterised by the kind of crippling conflict between head and heart in which Turgenev and his contemporaries recognised the particular affliction of their generation. But the significance of *Steno* for the future development of Turgenev's art cannot be fully appreciated without reference to the deeper sense in which the term 'superfluous' is applicable to the heroes of his novels. For their most notable connection with this Byronic hero is ultimately to be seen in the fact that the social alienation which makes them 'superfluous' is merely a reflection of their similar metaphysical alienation. Their protests, of course, are directed against the prevailing social order which they aspire to change. But in the Turgenevan novel, as the later chapters of this study will show, social injustice is simply an expression of metaphysical injustice, of the immutable injustice of life itself. As a result, the social protests of the heroes of the novels acquire the significance of metaphysical protests.

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In rejecting social injustice they reject the reality of God's world as Turgenev conceived it and, like Steno, pay the penalty of isolation and death. For this reason, though differing notably from one another as personalities and reflecting as representative figures the outlooks and ideals of different generations, they essentially conform to a single type. Like Steno, they present themselves as metaphysical rebels.

The evidence indicates that by the late forties Turgenev had already developed the view of life that enabled him to establish this parallel between social evil and metaphysical evil. During the twenty-year period which separates *Steno* from his first novel *Rudin* he underwent many influences which left their mark on his thought. His conception of nature, for example, as 'a great harmonious whole' in which 'each point is linked with every other' (V, 415) shows clear signs of the influence of Schelling's teaching which he studied, together with Hegel's philosophy, during his student years at the University of Berlin (1838-1841). But his early letters and the poems that he wrote at the beginning of his career already testify to his independence as a thinker. By the age of thirty he had reached conclusions which conflicted sharply with the optimism of his German teachers and from which, in fact, he was never to veer thereafter. Thus in the poem entitled 'Filippo Strodzi' (1847) nature is already depicted as 'devouring with equal indifference the sweat, the tears and the blood' of her children 'shed for a righteous cause' (I, 435). And two years later he wrote to Pauline Viardot: 'Cette chose indifférente, impérieuse, vorace, égoïste, envahissante, c'est la vie, la nature, c'est Dieu.'⁴ This is the view of 'life, nature and God' which receives expression in his subsequent fiction and is ultimately reaffirmed in his *Poems in Prose* (1878-1882).⁵ From this time forth he turned to other thinkers - most notably Schopenhauer - only for corroboration of this unchanging vision.⁶ While envying those who found strength in religious faith, he was too much the rationalist to

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succumb to its lure. He saw God only in the image of His creation, as similarly 'indifferent', 'imperious' and 'voracious'.

What, then, we must now ask, are the implications of this vision for the view of man which his fiction reflects? He answers the question in the following comment: 'Man cannot but be interested in nature, for he is bound to it by a thousand indissoluble ties: he is nature's son' (V, 414). His understanding of human nature, therefore, is implicit in his comments on 'the great harmonious whole' to which man, he believed, is 'indissolubly tied'. Like nature herself man, in Turgenev's conception, is fundamentally 'indifferent, imperious, voracious, egotistic, aggressive'. Man too is driven by nature's law which in 1852 he defined as follows: 'The object of her striving is that every little dot, every separate entity in her should exist exclusively for itself, should consider itself the centre of the universe, turn everything around it to its own advantage, deny its independence and seize it as its own property' (V, 415). This is the conviction that his reading of Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Idea* served most notably to reinforce⁷ - the conviction that the ultimate, inalienable reality of life and human nature is the striving, amoral, egoistic will. In Schopenhauer's philosophical system Turgenev found the support that he needed for his own vision of life as a 'struggle for existence', as a battle of warring wills, as an uninterrupted spectacle of 'strife, conflict and alternation of victory'.⁸

The primacy of the egoistic will is the most important of the 'general laws' or 'inflexible rules' of life that Turgenev's fiction expresses. It explains the understanding of human relationships which is reflected in all his novels. It receives its most explicit expression in the following comment on the heroine of *On the Eve*: 'Yelena did not know that every man's happiness is based on the unhappiness of another, that even his advantage and comfort demand, just as a statue demands a pedestal, the disadvantage and discomfort of others' (VIII, 157). Either consciously or unwittingly, in Turgenev's conception,

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homo homini lupus. Every human relationship is ultimately a struggle for supremacy, a reflection of 'the struggle for existence' in the world of nature. And nowhere, paradoxically, is this truth more apparent, he believed, than in the relationship between lovers. Hence the comparison of this relationship in his story *The Backwater* (1854) to the relationship between the 'poor slave' and the 'invincible master' in Pushkin's poem *The Upas Tree* (VI, 126). 'In love,' writes the hero of his tale *A Correspondence* (1856), 'there is no equality, there is none of that so-called free union of souls and idealism thought up by German professors in their leisure time... No, in love one person is a slave and the other is a master. Not without cause do poets talk about the chains imposed by love. Yes, love is a chain and the heaviest of all' (VI, 190). This conception of love is reflected in all the major love-relationships in the novels, as it is in Turgenev's most celebrated love story *First Love* (1860), the heroine of which uniquely experiences both the roles to which this statement refers - the role of 'master' in her relationship with the young hero and that of 'slave' in her relationship with his father. 'Take what you can,' the latter advises his son, 'and do not place yourself in the hands of another. The whole object of life is to belong to yourself ... Do you know what can give a man freedom? His will, his own will, and it will give him power which is better than freedom. If you can desire something strongly enough, you will be free and you will be in command' (IX, 30-1).

Natural law is thus translated into a code of human conduct, and unswerving observance of this code produces one of the main character-types in the Turgenevan novel - the ruthless, amoral, unprincipled egoist. Dar'ya Mikhaylovna Lasunskaya in *Rudin*, Varvara and Panshin in *A Nest of the Gentry*, Nikolay Artem'yevich Stakhov in *On the Eve* - these are merely the most prominent representatives of this type which embodies Turgenev's conception of the fundamental impulse of human nature. Unlike the egoistic

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'superfluous men', they know nothing of doubt or inhibition. They are soulless, pagan creatures of instinct, aggressive devotees of the life of the 'body' (in a sense that anticipates Nietzsche's use of the term), and in Russian society they thrive and prosper. They triumph in society, as they triumph in life, as embodiments of the rapacious, unfettered will.

We may therefore infer Turgenev's view of the contrasting attributes of the heroes of the novels, of their altruism, their idealism and their resolute opposition to the social system in which the egoists flourish. We may now understand why in *On the Eve*, for example, he is so cruelly ironic at the expense of the altruist Bersenev who points to such attributes as evidence of a profound difference between man and nature (VIII, 11-12). Turgenev acknowledges, of course, that there is a difference, that man uniquely possesses the gifts of reason and conscience, but he insists that even the man of conscience is ultimately subject to his egoistic will, and Bersenev is made to prove the point with his jealousy when Yelena is attracted to Insarov. This irony reaffirms Turgenev's view of the altruistic impulse as peculiar to man, yet alien to man's fundamental nature, as it is to the reality which man's nature reflects.

This is the view of altruism which explains why the social idealism of Turgenev's heroes constitutes an act of metaphysical rebellion. In the form of a society composed of 'masters' and 'slaves' they unwittingly aspire to change reality itself, and for this hubris, as stated, they are invariably punished. For in the Turgenevan novel nature is active. It responds to the rebels who reject its authority by savagely expressing its rejection of them. Hence the deaths of Rudin, Insarov and Bazarov and the living death of Liza Kalitina. They are expelled from the life which they cannot accept, and their expulsion reflects the same belief in the futility of all dreams of radical change which made Turgenev such a consistent opponent of contemporary theories of social revolution.⁹ The disasters which befall the principal

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characters and the ineffectuality of their transformative zeal are fictional expressions of the philosophical belief that the essential nature of reality is ultimately immutable.

Thus Turgenev's subject in the novels is notably different from that which concerns him in *Hamlet and Don Quixote*. In the essay he defines as 'the tragic side of life' the widening of the gulf between the two types of mentality, the 'detachment' of thought, the element of Hamlet, from the strength of will displayed by Don Quixote (VIII, 183). This 'detachment' is implicitly adduced as explaining the tragedy of the failures of the Russian intelligentsia, its failures to convert its ideas into action. But in the novels thought and will are invariably united. The heroes are driven by specific ideas and are ready in their name to accept even death, yet the result of their struggles is similarly failure. And they fail for the reason indicated above - that Turgenev's subject in the novels is a different tragedy which results, in its turn, from a different kind of 'detachment', from the 'detachment' of the hero's thought and will from the reality identified with nature's will. The novels also pass judgement on the Russian intelligentsia, but it is a judgement that expresses a judgement on life which finds no reflection in *Hamlet and Don Quixote* and precludes the hope which the essay expresses. 'Our task,' states the essay, 'is to arm ourselves and fight' (VIII, 178). It suggests the possibility of ultimate triumph. But this hope in the novels is dismissed as delusion. Here the source of the tragedy is not man's weakness. It is not his failures to act on his thoughts. It is rather his misconceptions about the nature of the enemy which his thought and will engage in battle. Accordingly, the novels depict as futile the rebellion for which the essay explicitly calls.

But the battle that culminates in the rebel's death is not only a battle that is fought without. His rejection of nature is not only expressed by his rejection of the society that mirrors its law. It denotes also, of course, a rejection of the self, of the emotional,

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irrational, egoistic self which is the voice of nature that speaks within him. The authority of the body, of the instincts and senses, is replaced by that of conscience and reason, by the authority of the mind and the aspirations of the soul which express themselves in the form of 'systems' or creeds - of Rudin's Hegelianism, the Christianity of Liza, and the materialism so passionately embraced by Bazarov. In the novels, as distinct from in *Hamlet and Don Quixote*, it is the altruists, not the egoists, who are portrayed as intellectuals, as not only impelled by their bookish ideas to challenge the world of the Lasunskayas and Panshins but as estranged by these ideas from the 'truth' of life,¹⁰ from the life of the emotions, the senses, the heart. In the novels the contrast between reason and faith is replaced by a contrast in which reason and faith are united in opposition to instinctive demand, and the result is the battle between the 'natural' and the 'human' that is fought within the rebel's personality.¹¹ His commitment to his ideals is constantly threatened by the egoistic urge to subject others to his will, by his inability to control his emotional self. And nature again plays an active role by attempting to seduce him with its 'other face', by seeking to usurp the authority of reason by confronting him, chiefly in the form of the heroine, with the beguiling face of its 'amoral beauty'.¹² Hence Insarov's chance meeting with Yelena by the shrine (VIII, 91) and Lavretsky's chance meeting with Liza in the garden (VII, 235-6). Nature's will is seen at work in these similar coincidences. Itself irrational, the beauty of the heroine duly evokes an irrational response - the desire for love which in the Turgenevan novel is the most potent and disruptive of nature's interventions.¹³

In his fifth novel *Smoke* (1867) Turgenev writes: 'Nature takes no account of logic, of our human logic; it has its own logic which we do not understand and do not acknowledge until it runs over us like a wheel' (IX, 287). The reference is to the passion that engulfs the hero Litvinov when he meets again the heroine Irina, and similarly for the

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idealists in the earlier novels love is always a shock, an alien force, as the ineptitude of Rudin so vividly demonstrates in his tragicomic relationship with Natal'ya Lasunskaya. Both Insarov and Bazarov struggle to resist it. 'I don't need the love of a Russian girl,' cries the Bulgarian hero to Bersenev's astonishment, and he refuses to grant Yelena's request for a final meeting before his departure (VIII, 86-7). Bazarov likewise reacts with dismay and irritation to the feelings aroused by the imperious Odintsova (VIII, 270, 285). And Liza's response to Lavretsky's kiss is similarly anguish, even 'terror' (VII, 237). These reactions convey the sense of disorientation induced by the collisions between two kinds of love - between nature's 'logic' of sensual love and the 'human logic' of altruistic concern. 'She loved everyone,' we read of Liza, 'and no one in particular' (VII, 234), and Rudin and Insarov are similarly characterised by this sternly impersonal, self-denying love, by the same general concern for the common good that Bersenev defends at the beginning of *On the Eve* (VIII, 14). But all are seduced from this selfless concern by the irresistible temptations of 'someone in particular'. All succumb to the temptations of 'love-delight' which Bersenev contrasts with his ardent 'love-sacrifice'. Their altruistic idealism is momentarily subverted by the egoistic desire for personal happiness. But the seduction is either shortlived or ineffective. Nature fails to undermine their 'human logic', to 'reconcile' them in life to its insistent demands. Rudin is incapable of sustained emotional commitment; seeing her love as a sin, Liza recoils; and Insarov, though succumbing to Yelena's charms, nevertheless remains true to his Quixotic ideal. Hence the brutal sentences that are finally passed on them. They are punished not for aspiring to personal happiness, as Liza and Yelena mistakenly suppose, but on the contrary for their inability to commit themselves totally to it and thus to be 'reconciled' to nature's law.¹⁴ 'In nature and in life,' Turgenev wrote, 'everything is reconciled in one way or another: if life cannot do so, then death will reconcile.'¹⁵

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But if this was his belief, what was his attitude? What precisely is his own position in the novels? It may perhaps be most aptly characterised by referring once more to *Hamlet and Don Quixote*, for the figure in the novels who most resembles Hamlet is really the figure of Turgenev himself. His novels, as we have seen, are critical examinations. They subject to critical scrutiny the intelligentsia's ideals as reflected in the ideas which drive his heroes. It is Turgenev who strikes the sceptic's pose. Like Hamlet, he is concerned with the exposure of falsehood, however noble and well-intentioned the falsehood might be. The novelist himself wields 'the sword of analysis' and, like Hamlet's, the 'sword' is 'double-edged' (VIII, 176), as wounding to himself as to the objects of scrutiny. For the protests of his heroes are his personal protests. They express the revulsion with which he personally responded to the injustice of life and Russian society. He thus shares their despair at the futility of their efforts. But Turgenev differs from his resolute heroes in submitting to the temptations which they resist. Like Hamlet, he is saved by his 'love of life' (VIII, 176). He is 'reconciled' to its horror by its 'other face'. His senses accepted with humility and gratitude the life which his reason and conscience rejected - the beauty of nature and the beauty of love which coexist with the relentless brutality of the 'struggle'. The result is the characteristic ambivalence of the novels. Lamenting the disasters which befall the heroes, they are paradoxically celebrations of the life that inflicts them.

Turgenev's attitude to his heroes may accordingly be characterised as directly the reverse of his attitude to life, as expressing the approval of his reason and conscience but equally as reflecting his instinctive rejection.¹⁶ But we should guard against interpreting rejection as criticism, for to view it as such would be to suggest that, like the heroes of Dostoyevsky, they have control of their destinies. In reality, the world of Turgenev's novels is a world that precludes all freedom of action. Not only are the heroes' rebellions

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quashed; they are not even rebels of their own volition. They are propelled into their futile conflicts with nature by a force which they are equally powerless to control - by the 'inflexible' imperative of their genetic inheritance. Their rebellions may express a moral protest, but they are not the result of free moral choices. They are fundamentally expressions of inherited traits and, as such, explain why Turgenev never omits to provide information about at least one of his heroes' parents. 'Everyone remains as nature made him,' Lezhnyov remarks to the hero of *Rudin* (VI, 367), thus implicitly ascribing Rudin's challenge to nature less to the influence of Hegelian thought than to the inherited influence of his self-sacrificing mother. In the words of Nezhdanov, the hero of *Virgin Soil*, 'the whole crux of the matter is not one's convictions, but rather one's character' (XII, 229).¹⁷ Like the Slavophilism of Lavretsky and the materialism of Bazarov, as the portraits of their parents will be seen to confirm, Rudin's ideas are merely the particular form in which the genetic imperative expresses itself. His fatal disregard for the imperatives of nature is the result of his unconscious, instinctive obedience to the bequeathed imperative to work for others which, as he puts it to Lezhnyov, is the 'worm' that 'gnaws' him (VI, 357). And it is precisely the conflict between the two imperatives that the introduction of *both* parents in the novels implies, as in the stories of Lavretsky, Yelena and Bazarov. The two parents contrast as living embodiments of 'human logic' and the 'logic' of nature, as the sources of the conflict experienced by their children between conscience and will or between reason and the irrational.

This conception of man's destiny as implacably decreed has clear implications for Turgenev's technique, explaining those features of his character-portraits which distinguish him sharply from Dostoyevsky and Tolstoy. The emotions and moods of his characters are vividly described and the manner in which they react to events is clearly recorded, but their motives are rarely subjected to analysis, for

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there can be no analysis if there is no motive, if action is the result not of motive but of impulse or, as Bazarov puts it, merely of 'sensation', of the 'structure' of the 'brain' (VIII 325). The view of man as a pawn in the power of uncontrollable and unintelligible forces which preempt his freedom of choice gives birth to a radically different kind of art in which the most compelling motives for action (or inaction) are shrouded in a mystery which is appropriate to their dark, subliminal sources. In reference, for example, to the heroine of *On the Eve* Turgenev comments: 'Suddenly something strong and nameless which she could not control would boil up inside her and demand to break out' (VIII, 35), and this is the nearest that he comes to an explicit explanation of Yelena's subsequent actions. But this does not mean, of course, that the reader is left, like Yelena herself, to grapple unavailingly with the mystery posed by her personality. His questions are not left unanswered. Both the character and the origins of the 'strong and nameless something' that dictates her actions are duly revealed. But they are revealed by a writer who believed that 'the psychologist must disappear in the artist, just as a skeleton disappears from view beneath the warm, living body which it serves as a firm but invisible support' (V, 391). The required information, in other words, is supplied not from within, not by explicit analysis of Yelena's personality, but from without, by the allusions which comprise the greater part of the fiction. It is obtained from her physical portrait, from the multitude of unobtrusive symbolic images which pervade the novel and, above all, from the three external mirrors in which her inner conflict is reflected - her reaction to the experience of love, her attitude to nature and her relationships with the secondary characters, with the contrasting groups of egoists and altruists. By such means the nature and balance of the conflicting forces in her personality are obliquely illuminated, and by the portraits of her parents they are obliquely explained.

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The same view of personality as formed from birth¹⁸ explains also why the novels' characters do not develop. It is commonly argued in this connection that Turgenev presents only 'the final results of the psychological process' as distinct from its preparatory or formative stages,¹⁹ but the term 'process' is misleading for the reasons stated. For neither Rudin nor Bazarov can easily be imagined as subjecting their ideas to critical assessment, as engaging in a preliminary inner debate. Their ideas are embraced not as the fruits of intellectual enquiry but instinctively as expressions of their determined 'sensations'. It is true that development appears to take place as a result of the heroes' characteristic inconsistency prompted, as we have seen, by their exposure to temptation. Hence V. M. Markovich's contention that there is usually a contradiction between the portrait of the hero presented at the beginning and the image that emerges later from 'the dynamics of the plot'.²⁰ But the contradiction is not only itself determined by the conflict of forces within his personality; it is also invariably foreshadowed from the start - by the contradictions, for example, in Rudin's physical portrait (VI, 258) and by the portraits of Lavretsky's contrasting parents. And even in the absence of a detailed initial portrait the inconsistency of the hero is clearly predicted. Thus Bazarov's relationship with the aptly named Arkady alludes from the beginning to the acute inner conflict signalled later by his reaction to nature's charms in the form of the beauty of the cold Odintsova. In each case the plot is basically a dramatisation of the psychological conflict initially conveyed. In this sense the role of the static portraits is comparable to that of such episodes or omens as Insarov's dream of his death in chapter 24 of *On the Eve* (VIII, 117). Just as such omens 'are always fulfilled',²¹ so the portraits anticipate the conflicts that follow. Thus between thought and technique there is a clear correspondence. The characters are presented in a manner which reflects their creator's deterministic conception of life. To the forces which dictate their attitudes and

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actions corresponds the 'force' represented by their predictive portraits. Their freedom is as limited in the fiction as in life, and in this sense the form is a mirror of the content.

This correspondence is merely another reflection of the exceptional cohesion of the Turgenevan novel which derives, as we have seen, from the common role that Turgenev assigns to all the elements of the fiction - the role of illuminating the strong central conflict taking place in the mind of a single character which expresses in each case the philosophical theme. Every episode and every character is basically a projection of one or the other of his conflicting selves. The love story illuminates his 'natural' self; the politico-social debate shows us his 'human' face. He is flanked on the one side by the 'natural' egoists and on the other by such altruists as Bersenev and Liza. And the contrasts that recur in physical description refer similarly to the conflict between 'body' and 'soul' which is the conflict experienced by the central figure. The psychological conflict is thus continually externalised and ultimately embraces each novel as a whole. Even names, as the example of Arkady shows, often signal likewise a character's position in relation to the two conflicting forces. They form part of an essentially symbolic art which gives human form to philosophical ideas.²² In this respect the art of Turgenev the novelist, no less than the issues with which his novels are concerned, has its origins in his youthful creation *Steno* in which the symbolic figure of Byron's Manfred is similarly clothed in human flesh or, as Gershenzon has put it, 'brought down to earth'.²³ This process produces his social chronicles which express his thoughts on the human condition.

II

RUDIN

In the stories which preceded his first novel, written in 1855,¹ Turgenev had presented portraits of two contrasting types of Russian intellectual characteristic of the 1830s and 1840s whose only common feature was their disaffection with society: the 'superfluous man', whose response to an alien, inhibiting environment was to withdraw into himself, to nourish his ego, to become a sceptic, and the Romantic 'enthusiast', whose rejection of society took the form of self-commitment to supra-personal ideals, to ideals derived mainly from German literature and philosophy - first from Schelling, then from Hegel. In his portrait of Rudin he combined the two types,² thus creating a victim of psychological conflict,³ an egoist who is also a passionate altruist - at once a figure of historical significance, whom he modelled, in part, on the 'Hegelian' Bakunin with whom he had shared lodgings in 1840 in Berlin,⁴ and the progenitor of the heroes of the subsequent novels. In the form of a devotee of Schelling and Hegel⁵ Turgenev presents the first of his heroes to be torn by the tension between reality and delusion and to be rendered 'superfluous' by noble ideals. 'What benefit,' asks the hero of his tale *The Hamlet of the Shchigry District* (1849), 'can I derive from Hegel's encyclopaedia? What does this encyclopaedia have in common with Russian life?' (IV, 282). Turgenev's answer in the first of his novels is that it has nothing in common with life in general. The inner conflict of his hero is itself an expression of his rejection of the Hegelian notion of 'synthesis'. In the story of Rudin belief in the existence of an 'absolute spirit' progressively manifesting itself as goodness and truth is confronted with Turgenev's conception of truth, with the truth of nature as he perceived it.⁶

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Structurally *Rudin* is the least complex of Turgenev's novels and is characterised, as several commentators have observed, by a certain schematicism.⁷ This quality is perceptible in three different aspects of the work. It is most obviously apparent in the representation of the main action, for although the events of the work are scattered over a period of eight years (1840-1848), the main drama is concentrated in two forty-eight-hour periods separated by an interval of two months. Secondly, it may be observed in the appropriately 'Hegelian' manner in which the hero is portrayed. The depiction first of his strengths and then of his weaknesses is followed by a 'synthesis', a final judgement. And lastly it is apparent in the simplicity of the manner in which his inner conflict receives external expression. It is conveyed by his relations with two individuals and with the contrasting circles over which they preside: the philosophical circle of the deceased Pokorsky and the social circle of Dar'ya Mikhaylovna Lasunskaya. As a student Rudin was a member of the former; at the end of chapter 2 he enters the latter. The collision is thus effected between idealism and reality which mirrors the collision in the hero's personality.

Turgenev's portrait of Pokorsky is his fictional tribute to the memory of his friend Nikolay Stankevich.⁸ He is the source in the novel of Rudin's idealism, of the conception of life described as follows by Mikhaylo Lezhnyov, a fellow-member of the circle:

Harmonious order was introduced into everything we knew, all the scattered parts were suddenly united, were brought together, rose before us like a building, everything was bathed in light, everywhere the spirit could be felt in the air.... Nothing remained senseless or accidental: everything was an expression of rational necessity and beauty, everything acquired a meaning that was clear and at the same time mysterious, every individual phenomenon of life sounded a common chord (VI, 298).⁹

Associated with religion,¹⁰ the 'soul' and 'poetry', this vision of life as 'harmoniously ordered', as suffused with the 'spirit' and 'rational necessity', proclaims its rejection of the 'body',¹¹ and 'prose' and expresses the call, as Pokorsky's name perhaps implies,¹² for the sacrifice of the self for the common good.

The nature of the contrast presented by reality is accordingly implicit in Lezhnyov's recollections. Its dominant feature is the pursuit of self-interest, the egoism that receives its clearest expression in Turgenev's portrait of Dar'ya Lasunskaya. 'Whatever person Dar'ya Mikhaylovna began talking about,' we read in chapter 4, 'she nevertheless remained in the foreground, she alone, and the person in question somehow slipped from view and disappeared' (p. 271). She presides over a circle in which the harmony and equality created by Pokorsky are replaced by inflexible class distinctions. Like the elevated position of her magnificent house, which 'rising majestically on the summit of a hill' (p. 246) contrasts sharply with Pokorsky's 'low-ceilinged room' (p. 296), her position in her circle and in Russian society is an obvious expression of her self-assertion. Regarded in the province as 'a terrible tyrant' (p. 247), she rules her domain like an oriental potentate, flanked by her 'spy', the 'oriental' Pandalevsky (p. 241),¹³ and by Mlle. Boncourt, her daughter's governess, whose knowledge of antiquity is appropriately described as 'for some reason' limited to the Persian emperor Cambyses (p. 280).

With the portraits, therefore, of Lasunskaya and Pokorsky Turgenev establishes the contrast between the conflicting forces of human nature, the egoistic and the altruistic or, as he termed them in *Hamlet and Don Quixote*, the 'centripetal' and the 'centrifugal' (VIII, 184), which are identified with reality and idealism respectively and joined in the personality of his ambivalent hero. His ambivalence is conveyed from the moment of his appearance. For by presenting him as a substitute for the expected Baron Müffel, who had intended to seek Lasunskaya's advice on the language of an article on Russian

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commerce and industry, Turgenev contrives to allude at once to the 'poetry' and 'prose' that coexist in his nature - to the German sources of Rudin's idealism and to his tenuous contact with mundane affairs. And complementary allusions to this same central feature are the indeterminate nature of his social position and the contradictions that characterise his physical portrait. Though tall and imposing, he is 'slightly round-shouldered'; his 'lively' blue eyes have 'a watery gleam'; and his 'thin voice' is 'out of keeping with his height and broad chest' (p. 258). The contradictions reflect his divided allegiance to the life of the body and the life of the soul. They are the first of Turgenev's ironic indications of the fallacy of his faith in a 'harmonious synthesis'.

From the beginning his conduct is at one with his appearance. Thus his first notable act, after conveying to Lasunskaya the Baron's apologies, is to respond to a challenge, to be drawn into an argument with the provocative Pigasov, a cynic and sceptic directly descended from the 'superfluous Hamlet' of the Shchigry District. He displays at once a combative instinct that suggests an affinity with the society he has entered - a society depicted in the first two chapters as riven with discord, hostility and malice. But a quite different impression is conveyed by his words which are a vigorous statement of his 'Pokorskian' views and represent, in effect, a direct assault on this society's values and presuppositions. The argument raises the main question in the novel. Its subject significantly is the nature of truth. As spokesman for the values of Lasunskaya's world, Pigasov emerges as the defender of 'facts'. The only evidence that he accepts is that of the senses. 'Facts,' he argues, 'are a known quantity, everyone knows what facts are ... I can judge them from my own experience, from my own feelings' (p. 261). He sees nothing beyond the perceptions of the willing ego. 'Egoism,' he exclaims, 'that I can understand, and you, I hope, can understand, and everyone can understand; but truth - what is truth? Where is it, this truth?' (p. 266). It lies, responds Rudin,

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in the 'meaning' of facts, in the 'convictions', 'systems' and 'generalisations' which the intellect derives from its study of facts. Such study, he holds, confirms the existence of 'fundamental laws and principles' in life which transcend the demands of the solitary ego (p. 262). With a force that Pigasov is unable to counter he argues that 'a man without self-esteem is a nonentity', that 'self-esteem is the lever of Archimedes with which the earth can be moved', but 'the only person who deserves the name of man', he adds, is the man who acknowledges the higher 'laws', is able 'to control his self-esteem' and can 'sacrifice self-interest to the common good' (p. 267).

Thus even while stating his 'Pokorskian' view, Rudin offers a glimpse of the tension within him. Though insisting on the need for the sacrifice of self-interest, he stresses the importance of self-esteem, and throughout chapter 3 his self-esteem is apparent. On the one hand, he speaks as Pokorsky's disciple. His words, we read, 'flowed straight from his soul'; all his thoughts 'seemed directed towards the future'; and he 'rose to the heights of eloquence and poetry' (p. 269). 'Vous êtes un poète,' remarks Dar'ya Mikhaylovna (p. 270), and he notably professes not to have read her pamphlet by the anti-egalitarian De Tocqueville (p. 264). But, on the other, we observe his enjoyment of his triumph and of the power that he acquires over his spell-bound audience. We note that he unleashes the 'music' of his eloquence after asking Pandalevsky to play Schubert's *Erlkönig* (p. 268). While reminding him of his years in Germany as a student and thus alluding once more to his Germanic idealism, Goethe's ballad sings of the power of words. It expresses his personal delight in power, in the seductive power of his verbal 'music'.

Thus in Lasunskaya's world Rudin seems at once an alien and entirely at home. Like the 'tyrant' herself, the apostle of the alien gospel of 'harmony' is pictured relishing the role of 'despot'¹⁴ as he swiftly reduces Pigasov to silence and commands the attention of everyone present. And in chapter 6 Lezhnyov reveals that he was

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exactly the same in the Pokorsky circle. There too, he recalls, while preaching the gospel of 'harmonious order', he 'tried every way of dominating people' (p. 297). Hence the charge of 'dishonesty' that Lezhnyov levels against him (pp. 293, 297) - a charge that seems justified by Rudin's conduct in the novel. But, as Lezhnyov discovers in the course of the work and duly acknowledges in their final conversation, in making this accusation he is gravely mistaken. It is an example of the kind of profound misunderstanding to which the hero's ambivalence is repeatedly conducive. For the egoism of Rudin is not, in fact, conceit. It is precisely the kind of egoism which he described to Pigasov as 'the lever of Archimedes with which the earth can be moved'. It illuminates what he meant by 'controlled self-esteem'. His conduct reveals that this phrase refers not simply to the suppression of the pursuit of self-interest, but to the subordination of the capacity for purposeful action, which is the preserve of the egoist in Turgenev's fiction,¹⁵ to the task of extending his altruistic ideals. His combative instincts, his craving to 'dominate' and his tendency to meddle in people's personal affairs are simply expressions of this active idealism, as Lezhnyov himself seems to concede even while voicing his damning indictment. 'He dominated,' he recalls, 'in the name of general principles and ideas' (p. 297). Lezhnyov's statement, therefore, in chapter 6 that 'Pokorsky and Rudin bore no resemblance to each other' (p. 297) is similarly a reflection of his error of judgement. They differ as personalities but their aims are the same. They are distinguished simply as teacher and active apostle.

But if the hero's ambivalence does not result in 'dishonesty', it is nevertheless the source of a genuine flaw - a flaw which, like the ambivalence itself, is psychological rather than moral and condemns all his efforts in the end to futility. This flaw is the weakness that his altruism implies, the weakness of will that both explains and results from his 'sacrifice of self-interest to the common good'. With his combination of attributes he embodies the truth that Turgenev

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preaches in all his novels - that 'active idealism' is a contradiction in terms. His altruistic egoism is a limited egoism, the result of which is limited action, a limited contact with the reality of life. Hence the final judgement that Lezhnyov pronounces - that his major deficiency is a lack of 'character' (*natura*) (p. 367). This is the source of Rudin's failures in the novel, the answer to the 'riddle' by which he himself is tormented (p. 364). His experiences and conduct bear witness to the paradox that his activism is compromised by the ideals that inspire it.

The recurrent expression of his 'controlled self-esteem' is his curious inability to sustain his successes, to complete any action on which he embarks.¹⁶ Hence the contrast that recurs in his personal relationships. First he attracts, then he repels.¹⁷ 'Domination' is followed by embitterment and rupture, and like 'the Wandering Jew' (p. 367) he is obliged to move on. His fate is conveyed by the 'Scandinavian legend' which he relates to his audience in chapter 3:

A king is sitting with his warriors round a fire in a long, dark hall. The episode occurs on a winter's night. Suddenly a small bird flies in through one open door and out through another. The king remarks that this little bird is like man in the world: it flew in from the darkness and back into the darkness and did not stay long in the warmth and light (p. 269).

The 'legend' is a metaphor of the main action of the novel, of Rudin's arrival from the 'darkness' at Lasunskaya's court and abrupt departure two months later.¹⁸ More generally, it alludes to the detachment from reality that explains the brevity of all his relationships.

The additional reflection of his 'limited egoism' is the fact that his actions are predominantly verbal. In his capacity as apostle, as Pokorsky's knight errant, he enters Lasunskaya's 'long, dark hall' equipped only with the weapon of spell-binding words - a weapon which suffices to defeat her 'warrior' Pigasov but proves powerless to

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influence the 'tyrant' herself. For Lasunskaya the joust is merely a diversion, an entertaining reflection of the 'war of wills' which is the immutable reality of life in her world. As the blows are exchanged, her wishes are voiced by Pandalevsky, by his impatient whisper 'Bite, bite, bite!' (p. 261), and as Pigasov retreats before Rudin's attack, she vigorously prods him into renewing his efforts. 'Come now,' she cries, 'try grappling with him again' (p. 265). Again Rudin prevails and Pigasov withdraws, but this triumph is the limit of the hero's achievements. From this time forth he battles in vain. Though Lasunskaya installs him as the 'grand vizier' of her realm (p. 285) and allows him to propose 'changes and new ideas', she 'purported to admire them and that is all' (p. 289). His ideas, like his words, are simply diverting. As the egoist supreme and embodiment of reality, she confronts the idealist with an impenetrable wall before which he is obliged to yield in his turn. Not without cause does she recall in chapter 4 the influence that she has wielded, particularly on 'poets' (p. 271). 'She is an exceptional woman,' Rudin says to Natal'ya. 'I can understand why all our poets have valued her friendship' (p. 281).

Lamenting his failures towards the end of the novel, Rudin says to Lezhnyov in their final conversation: 'It's words, all words! There were no actions!' Attempting to console him, Lezhnyov replies: 'But a word in the right place is also an action' (pp. 364-5), and it is commonly argued that Rudin himself supplies the evidence with the impact of his words on Natal'ya and Basistov, with his success in exciting their youthful idealism. But it is surely significant that their positions at the end are totally unaffected by Rudin's intervention. Basistov remains Lasunskaya's 'slave', and Natal'ya marries Volyntsev, as her mother intended. The truth of the comment is borne out, in reality, not by the hero but by Lasunskaya herself who is shown in chapter 4, in her conversation with Rudin, to be the genuine 'expert' not simply on matters of language as such, as Pandalevsky claims on her behalf (p. 243), but more precisely on language as a

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form of action, as a means of achieving complete 'domination'. Here Rudin is hoisted by his own petard by a woman who uses words not for the purpose of expressing beliefs¹⁹ but solely as a means of asserting her will. We read:

To judge from Dar'ya Mikhaylovna's tales, one might have thought that all the remarkable men of the last quarter of a century had dreamed only of meeting her and earning her favour ... She spoke of them and, like a sumptuous setting for a precious stone, their names lay like a glittering border round the principal name, round Dar'ya Mikhaylovna (p. 271).

But the character of her speech is as significant as its content. Turgenev comments in this connection: 'She flaunted her knowledge of her native tongue, though her speech was peppered with gallicisms and French words. She deliberately made use of simple folk turns of phrase, but not always successfully.' And he adds: 'Rudin's ear was not offended by the strange variety of speech on Dar'ya Mikhaylovna's lips, and in any event he hardly had an ear for such things' (p. 272). The implication is clear. His insensitivity to this 'strange variety' is an additional indication of his detachment from life, of the 'poet's' insensitivity to the variety of 'prose' which his own speech reflects from the moment of his appearance. Like his 'self-esteem', his language is 'limited'. It reflects his discomfort with simple 'facts' - the discomfort exhibited when he describes as 'Scandinavian' the 'legend' taken, in fact, from the Venerable Bede.²⁰ Turgenev observes: 'He was not entirely successful as a raconteur. His descriptions lacked colour. He was unable to make people laugh' (p. 268). His 'music' flows only when 'facts' are transcended, when the 'strange variety' of ordinary life is transformed by similes into harmonious 'systems'.²¹ And the higher he soars the less lucid he becomes. 'A profusion of ideas,' we read, 'prevented Rudin from

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expressing himself clearly and precisely' (p. 269), and Volyntsev is moved to remark to his sister that he 'sometimes expressed himself a little obscurely' (p. 270). Hence the brevity of his triumph in chapter 3. His language reflects the idealist's estrangement from the world of 'facts' in which the will is active, from normal experience, emotions and modes of behaviour.

Herein, of course, lies the reason for Rudin's ineptitude as a lover, for the failure of his relationship with Natal'ya Lasunskaya. This relationship offers the principal insights into the psychological implications of his altruistic idealism. It illuminates at once his weakness of will, his 'limited' capacity for achieving 'domination', and his 'limited' familiarity with normal emotions. It shows how his idealism, his love for 'humanity', has deprived him of the ability to form a genuine attachment. In this respect too the 'particular' is obscured by his concern for the 'general'. The emotions of the altruist are paradoxically dead.²² The detachment from reality that his idealism implies is the source of that 'coldness', that 'coldness in his blood', to which Lezhnyov refers in his final judgement (p. 348) - the 'coldness' reflected in Rudin's treatment of his mother (p. 286) and in his scant regard for his admirer Basistov (pp. 288, 319, 336).

Already in chapter 3 Rudin's eyes are described as 'occasionally' resting' on Natal'ya during the performance by Pandalevsky of Schubert's composition (p. 269). The music alludes, as noted, to his seductive eloquence. More particularly, it alludes to his seduction of Natal'ya, and in chapters 5 and 6, like the seductive Erlking, he strengthens his hold on Natal'ya's emotions, eloquently expounding the 'Pokorskian' vision which answers her need for ideals and self-sacrifice. We read:

Rudin was steeped in German poetry, in the world of German Romanticism and German philosophy, and he drew her with him into those forbidden lands. Mysterious and beautiful, they

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opened up before her attentive gaze ... and in her heart, shaken by the noble joy of great feelings, a sacred spark of exultation flared up and burst into flame (p. 290).

But Natal'ya is not alone in being drawn into 'forbidden lands', for the hero himself is also seduced. As the relationship develops, he is seduced by the belief that he is capable of love. He is portrayed, like Natal'ya, as a victim of his eloquence. He literally talks himself into believing that his emotions are alive. He is at once 'seducer and seducee', not only the Erlking but his youthful prey.²³ And the result is the striking inconsistencies of conduct which have caused once more his 'honesty' to be questioned.²⁴ To Natal'ya's surprise, the defender of 'convictions' now professes to lack a 'firm conviction', a clear conception of how he might 'be useful' (p. 282). 'Love,' he says to her in chapter 7, 'is not for me; I ... am not worthy of it; a woman who loves has the right to demand everything of a man, but I am no longer capable of giving myself completely' (p. 306). Yet immediately afterwards, to Natal'ya's dismay, he plies her with questions about her feelings for Volyntsev and, on receiving the assurance that he is clearly seeking, arranges the meeting in the lilac arbour where he promptly proceeds to declare his love.

The declaration is plainly a complete aberration. It is not 'dishonest'; it is rather the result of a delusion induced by the idealist's exposure to Lasunskaya's world, by the momentary appeal to the egoist within him of the prospect of achieving personal happiness. Displaying once more the latent tension within him, he submits briefly to the world that he aspires to change. In the 'real', egoistic world he yields to 'real', egoistic love. But the submission, as stated, is essentially verbal. The reality is conveyed in chapter 9 by his failure to fight in defence of his love when confronted by Lasunskaya's objection to the marriage. It is also conveyed by the

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symbolism of the setting in which the relationship is abruptly extinguished. The scene is described in unusual detail:

Avdyukha's pond, which Natal'ya had proposed as the place for her meeting with Rudin, had long since ceased to be a pond. Some thirty years ago its dam had been breached, and since then it had been neglected. A mansion had once stood there. It had vanished long ago. Two enormous pines were the only reminders of it; the wind rustled incessantly and howled mournfully in their high, sparse foliage. Among the local peasants it was mysteriously rumoured that some terrible crime had been committed beneath them; it was also said that neither would fall without causing someone's death; that there had once been a third pine which had fallen in a storm and crushed a girl beneath it. The entire area around the old pond was considered unclean; empty and bare but wild and gloomy even on a sunny day, it seemed even gloomier and wilder because of the barren oak forest nearby which had long since died and dried up. The grey skeletons of huge trees towered here and there, like doleful spectres above the low undergrowth of the bushes. They were a frightening sight, like evil old men who had gathered to plan some wicked deed (p. 320).

The barrenness of the scene and the aura of death allusively confirm the 'death' of the hero. They allude to the 'coldness in the blood' of the altruist who in chapter 3 compares egoists to 'barren trees' (p. 267). The reference to the pine that 'had fallen in storm' recalls the remark in chapter 6 in which he compares himself - or, more precisely, 'genius' - to an apple tree that has 'broken under the weight and abundance of its own fruit' (p. 290). His cerebral ideals are the 'fruit' that 'breaks' him, the 'weight' that explains his 'round-shouldered' body. And now Natal'ya is the girl who is fated to be

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'crushed'. The collapse of the 'third pine' and the death of the girl anticipate the outcome of the secret meeting - the collapse of the two that as yet remain in the storm-struck form of the hero and heroine.

But the setting in chapter 9 is not only symbolic; it is also a significant literal comment, a comment on the hero's relation to life. Not without cause is the 'collapse' of his emotions conveyed by means of 'natural' imagery. His estrangement from reality is an estrangement from nature, and the 'howling' of the wind is nature's response. In Turgenev's first novel nature already assumes the active role that it is to retain. Here too it is attentive to the hero's actions, to the extent to which they conform to its 'inflexible rules'. When they do, when the egoist is in the ascendant, it is depicted as a calmly attentive observer. Thus in chapter 3 it is calm while Rudin battles with Pigasov, while the hero is cast in the role of the Erlking. 'A fragrant mist,' we read, 'lay like a soft shroud over the garden; the nearby trees breathed a drowsy freshness. The stars glimmered calmly. The summer night both basked and caressed' (p. 268). And in chapter 7 it waits expectantly for his declaration in the arbour: 'Not a leaf stirred; the upper branches of the lilacs and acacias seemed to be listening to something and stretching themselves taut in the warm air' (p. 311). But in chapter 9 its barrenness and the 'howling' wind, which recalls the death-dealing wind of Goethe's ballad, convey its antipathy towards the 'unnatural' lover who is poised to flout its 'general laws'. 'Look at these trees, at the sky,' Rudin says to Natal'ya in chapter 5, 'everywhere there is beauty and vitality in the air' (p. 282). But this is nature as seen by the 'poet', not as it is 'enjoyed' by the snake-like Pandalevsky whose response to its beauty in chapter 1 is to obey its 'laws' and attempt a genuine seduction (p. 245).²⁵ The idealist who argues that 'every system is based on a knowledge of the fundamental laws and principles of life' (p. 262) is blind to the most fundamental 'law' of all - to nature's demand for

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perpetual 'war', for unswerving commitment to the pursuit of self-interest. 'I'm sure that you must have a profound feeling for the beauties of nature,' Rudin remarks to Lasunskaya. 'Nature,' she replies, 'yes ... yes, of course ... I'm terribly fond of it. But you know, Dmitry Nikolaich, even in the country it's impossible to get along without people' (p. 272). Thus speaks the most obedient of nature's servants, the egoist who needs people to fight and conquer.

In the description, therefore, of Avdyukha's pond the metaphysical theme becomes wholly explicit. It expresses the conception of altruism as 'unnatural', and consequently the conception of the altruist as a rebel, that Turgenev dramatises in all his novels. To the notion of a 'synthesis' of the ideal and nature Turgenev responds by proclaiming the existence of an unbridgeable gulf between the 'laws' which the idealist perceives in nature and those which actually govern man's life. His hero's failures express his belief that the 'laws' of nature are the only reality, that Rudin's ideals are beautiful delusions, the cerebral inventions of 'poets' and dreamers whose grasp of 'facts' is fatally weak. And these disclosures are clearly to be taken as exposing the hollowness of his triumph in chapter 3. With his scorn for 'convictions' and 'harmonious systems' the egoist Pigasov, the defender of 'facts', is ultimately vindicated as the spokesman for truth. It accordingly seems fitting that he should triumphantly reappear in the scene that precedes the meeting in the arbour. 'Pigasov,' we read, 'was the hero of the evening. Rudin abandoned the field of battle to him' (p. 310).

The falsity of Rudin's posture as 'warrior' and lover is conveyed equally by the scene that precedes this statement, by his surprising failure to respond to Volyntsev when the latter rebukes him for his superior manner. 'Everyone,' we read, 'was astonished by Volyntsev's outburst and fell silent. Rudin was on the point of looking at him but could not withstand his gaze, turned away, smiled, and did not open his mouth' (p. 310). Here the impostor yields to the

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genuine lover whose triumph anticipates his final victory, his success in securing the hand of Natal'ya. Volyntsev is consistently contrasted with Rudin as the man of action and strong, brooding passions with the man of words and intellectual brilliance. 'Quel dommage,' sighs Mlle. Boncourt, 'que ce charmant garçon ait si peu de ressources dans la conversation' (p. 257). More concerned with the running of his sister's estate he 'felt no attraction to literature,' we are told, 'and was simply terrified of poetry' (p. 313). And when Rudin visits him in chapter 8 to inform him 'as one honourable man to another' of the stage that his relationship with Natal'ya has reached, his response to this 'poetry' is full-blooded 'prose':

Forgive me, my dear sir, I am prepared to grant full justice to your intentions - they are all very fine, perhaps even exalted, but we are simple people, we are used to plain fare, we are unable to follow the flight of such great minds as yours ... What to you seems sincere, to us seems impertinent and immodest ... What for you is simple and clear is confused and obscure to us ... You boast of things that we conceal: how can we possibly understand you! Forgive me, I can neither consider you a friend, nor will I give you my hand ... Perhaps that's petty, but then I am petty (p. 316).

Thus the 'natural' and the 'unnatural' conflict again. Here Volyntsev speaks as 'natural' man, as the ordinary man of flesh and blood who finds it beyond him to treat as a friend the man who has stolen the woman he loves, while the 'cold-blooded' idealist retains the 'conviction' that 'harmony' is possible even between rivals. The 'real' and the ideal abruptly collide and are shown once more to be resistant to 'synthesis'.²⁶ 'I'll challenge this clever Dick to a duel,' Volyntsev exclaims in chapter 10. 'I'll shoot him, this confounded philosopher, just as I would a partridge ... I want to fight him, fight

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him!' (pp. 327-8). Not for the 'real' lover a verbal joust; the duel that he craves is likewise real and would doubtless have followed but for Rudin's withdrawal which leaves Volyntsev, like Pigasov, in control of the field.

Lasunskaya's preference, the novel informs us, would have been to marry Natal'ya to a Mr. Korchagin, a young Muscovite 'lion' and clearly an embodiment of the 'tyrant's' own virtues.²⁷ 'Extraordinarily haughty and pompous,' we read, 'he was given to striking majestic poses, as if he were not a living person but his own statue erected by public subscription' (p. 345). But Natal'ya 'couldn't bear to hear his name' and turns instead to the expectant Volyntsev whom she has regarded hitherto with marked indifference. He thus appears to be selected as the lesser of two evils. But Lezhnyov suggests a rather different reason with his remark that in the marriage Natal'ya would be 'in charge' (p. 351). Although Natal'ya's portrait is palely drawn, it is clear from this comment and Lezhnyov's earlier remarks about the strength of her passions and 'formidable character' (p. 303) that her personality is complex, like that of the hero. On the one hand, like Rudin, she is symbolically 'round-shouldered' (p. 279) and is appropriately fired by his fervent idealism; on the other, she is plainly her mother's daughter. 'What strength of will,' Rudin is moved to remark (p. 326), and even Lasunskaya is disconcerted - as much by her self-control at the end as by the earlier evidence of her passionate nature. 'Natal'ya's firm answers,' we read, 'the resoluteness of her gaze and movements disturbed Dar'ya Mikhaylovna and even frightened her' (p. 340). Thus Natal'ya, like Rudin, is a divided character. As her reading of 'a history of the crusades' suggests (p. 256), she combines a 'warrior's' will with a thirst for ideals.²⁸ But the similarity is minor compared with the difference. For if altruism is synonymous with the weakness of will which is the explanation, as stated, of Rudin's failures, the repeated indications of Natal'ya's 'strength of will' raise obvious questions

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about her commitment, about her ability to transcend her maternal inheritance and 'sacrifice self-interest to the common good'. And her love confirms her inability to do so, for it is itself represented as an expression of self-interest. It is offered on the condition that her demands are met. We observe her hesitation in declaring it in the arbour, her reluctance to submit to Rudin's embrace, and her implausible pretext of being concerned about Volyntsev (p. 312). Possessing the ability to control her emotions,²⁹ she is clearly unwilling to commit herself totally without the assurance that her demands are fulfilled. And she demands, quite simply, that she be genuinely loved. She needs less to love than to be the object of love, and this need is an expression of her need for power, of the need inherited from her 'tyrannical' mother which conflicts with the appeal of the hero's ideals and proves in the end to be the stronger. 'Remember,' she says to Rudin at Avdyukha's pond, 'you told me that there can be no love without complete equality ... You're too sublime for me, you can be no partner of mine' (p. 325). Thus for Natal'ya 'equality' is 'too sublime'. It is alien to love as she understands it, to the 'natural' love which her 'strong passions' demand and the mark of which is 'complete inequality'. Rudin's words served initially to instil in her mind the doubts about his ability to offer such love which are duly confirmed at Avdyukha's pond. And so she rejects him as a deceiver and 'coward' (p. 326). Proving stronger than the attraction of altruistic ideals, her need for the power conferred by 'mastery' in love explains her rejection both of the eloquent hero who is incapable of love and of the 'pompous' Korchagin who would have made her his 'slave'. By her marriage to Volyntsev she gratifies this need.

The marriage denotes the death of Natal'ya the idealist, the concluding triumph of her 'maternal' self. After her rejection of Rudin the author comments: 'Life now stood darkly before her, and her back was turned towards the light.' The 'light' of idealism is

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abruptly extinguished by the 'dark waves' of reality that 'closed silently over her' (p. 339). And the same point is expressed by her burning of Rudin's letter, which enables us to appreciate the justice of his claim that she, not he, is really the coward (p. 326). Her rejection of the hero because of his weakness denotes also her rejection of his altruistic ideals. She is unable to accept his call for self-sacrifice, and the split in her personality disappears from view. After surrendering briefly to tears of disillusion, she 'looked at herself in the mirror,' we read, 'with a cold smile, and with a brief nod to herself she went down into the drawing-room' (p. 340). And aptly her mother intervenes to enjoin her: 'Never forget that you are a Lasunskaya and my daughter' (p. 341). It is as such that she accepts Volyntsev's proposal.

The question, however, that we must finally consider is that of Turgenev's own view of his hero. In what final judgement are the contradictions resolved? For the answer we must turn to the figure of Lezhnyov who is given, as we have seen, the significant role of pronouncing judgements on the hero at various stages in the work. These judgements are contained in four different chapters and, as indicated also, they change in character. In chapters 5 and 6 they are consistently critical; in chapter 12 and the Epilogue they are distinctly more favourable. Attempting to explain this change of attitude, commentators have referred to two extraneous events - to the death in October 1855 of Professor T. N. Granovsky, one of the most revered representatives of Rudin's generation, and to Turgenev's acquaintance three months earlier, while he was working on the first draft of the novel, with Chernyshevsky's dissertation *The Aesthetic Relations of Art to Reality*. Turgenev, it is argued, felt the need to revise his portrait of the hero both out of deference to the memory of the esteemed Granovsky and to counter the materialism and utilitarianism of Chernyshevsky's views.³⁰ But although these hypotheses may well be true,³¹ the change of attitude is explicable without their assistance.

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The explanation is provided *within* the novel where it expresses a point of crucial importance.

The first question posed by Lezhnyov's comments on the hero is: what is the cause of his initial hostility? The answer is clearly given - his personal experience of Rudin's influence during the period of their friendship as students in Moscow. Having fallen in love with a pretty young girl, he had unwisely confided his passion to Rudin who had promptly assumed 'despotic' control, imposed his idealistic conception of love and the corresponding 'unnatural' code of behaviour and ended by driving them both to distraction (pp. 301-2). Hence Lezhnyov's accusations in chapters 5 and 6 that he is 'a despot in his soul' and 'as cold as ice' (p. 293). And the positioning of these charges is itself significant, for in both cases they follow conversations with Natal'ya in which Rudin is pictured exerting the influence that will result likewise for the heroine in confusion and pain.

What subsequently transpires, therefore, to change Lezhnyov's view? It might well be thought, as Victor Ripp has argued, that the answer lies simply in the 'surge of sympathy' that he feels when he beholds in the Epilogue Rudin's changed appearance (pp. 355-6).³² But this view is untenable for the simple reason that although he certainly feels such a 'surge', by this time he has already revised his opinion, as his remarks in chapter 12 make abundantly clear. The answer must accordingly be sought in the developments that take place in the two-year interval preceding these remarks and following Rudin's departure from the estate in chapter 11 - most plausibly in the major change that takes place during this period in Lezhnyov's personal life: his marriage to Aleksandra Lipina. This event marks the culmination not simply of his developing relationship with Lipina but, more significantly, of the process of change in his personality which is reflected in the development of that relationship.

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In the course of his life Lezhnyov undergoes not one, but two major changes of attitude which indicate that he is yet another character in the novel whose portrait hinges on contrast. Like Rudin, he is initially characterised by reference to his relations with the contrasting circles of Pokorsky and Lasunskaya. His recollections in chapter 6 of his membership of the former not only reveal that he fervently embraced Pokorsky's idealism but confirm that its spark has not yet been extinguished. 'Oh, it was a glorious time then,' he cries, 'and I don't want to believe that it's all gone to waste!' (p. 299). Recalling his Romantic infatuation with nature, he confides that then he was even a 'poet' and composed 'a whole drama in imitation of *Manfred*' containing 'a ghost with blood on its breast', covered in 'the blood of humanity in general' (p. 300). But he adds: 'We have grown a little wiser since then, of course. All this can seem childish to us now' (p. 298), and although his remarks make it clear that Rudin's attentions were partly responsible for bringing about this change of view, he notably acknowledges: 'To tell the truth, even then a seed of doubt had taken root in my soul. And when I met him later abroad ... well, by then I had already matured ... I then saw Rudin in his true colours' (p. 303). Thus characteristically Turgenev deters us from ascribing a significant change of mind to external causes alone. The real cause, he implies, lay in Lezhnyov's personality, in the difference of personality between the two former friends.

The Lezhnyov, therefore, whom the reader encounters in chapter 1 is the 'mature' Lezhnyov, the former idealist who has descended to earth and is thus appropriately presented as Lasunskaya's neighbour. His state of mind is conveyed by his 'proximity' to her and by the success that he has similarly achieved 'on earth'³³ by efficiently running his own affairs.³⁴ But, like the Rudinesque shabbiness of his limited wardrobe (pp. 239-41, 277), Lasunskaya's remark that they are '*almost* related' (p. 276) suggests that his 'descent' is by no means complete. And this inference is

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supported by their dispute in chapter 4 about the boundary that lies between their extensive domains. Here Lezhnyov observes: 'The redrawing of the boundary is much more to your advantage than it is to mine' (p. 278). His cession of land is a symbolic indication that psychologically too he has given ground, that the gulf between them is progressively narrowing. But the boundary still remains despite Lasunskaya's encroachment. 'Vous êtes des nôtres,' she insists with feeling. 'I don't belong to your circle,' he defiantly replies (p. 277), and as a result of his experience in the following chapters the narrowing of the gulf is gradually reversed.

This experience is the deepening of his relationship with Lipina which is indicated at once in chapters 5 and 6 - in the sections of these chapters which follow the sections devoted to the development of the central relationship. Thus the contrast intended is clearly expressed. But in order to understand the significance of this contrast we must attempt to determine what Lipina represents. The answer is supplied at the beginning of the novel by her altruistic concern for the well-being of her serfs and thereafter by the sympathy that she voices for Rudin. Associated by her name with the 'lime-tree' (*lipa*) that Lezhnyov once embraced as a disciple of Pokorsky (p. 300),³⁵ she is a symbol of the 'fire' that 'went out' in his youth.³⁶ As such, she contests as 'a kind of slander' his 'mature' judgement of Rudin in chapter 5 and urges him at once to renew their acquaintance and to let her know later his 'final opinion' (p. 287). His revised judgement in chapter 12 is the fulfilment of his promise, and his increasing attraction in the interim to Lipina, which culminates in chapter 10 in his proposal of marriage, is Turgenev's oblique method of motivating the change. His love for her signals the rebirth of the altruist which explains his more favourable view of the hero.

But the situation is plainly more complex than this, for Lipina is not to be identified with Rudin. It is clearly significant that she is Volyntsev's sister, that she enjoys excellent relations with Dar'ya

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Mikhaylovna (while refusing to believe 'every word that she says' (p. 240)), and that when first introduced she is linked with nature - with a landscape suggestive of nature's approval.³⁷ We may accordingly infer that her name alludes to nature in both its contrasting aspects - not only the 'poetic', but also the 'prosaic'. 'She admired Rudin,' we read in chapter 6, 'but she also had faith in Lezhnyov' (p. 289), and in chapter 12 she even chides him for overdoing his praise. 'How wisely and nobly you spoke!' she exclaims. 'But you must admit that you were a little carried away in your praise of Rudin, just as before you were carried away against him.' She now discloses that, for all the admiration that she feels for Rudin, he had 'always seemed too learned' to her and that, in truth, she had never known 'what to say in his presence' (p. 350). These remarks confirm that Lipina is not simply a symbol of youthful 'fire', that she equally embodies the attributes of 'maturity'. She combines the attributes of Rudin with those of her brother. Such, it seems, is the implication of the scene in chapter 8 in which Volyntsev insists that she withdraw from the room before he rejects Rudin's offer of reconciliation and friendship (p. 313). And Lezhnyov's own achievement of this balance or 'synthesis' is the precise implication of their love and marriage. Lipina is the symbol of the third phase in his life, of the period in which 'thesis' and 'antithesis' are combined to produce a 'synthesis' impossible for the Hegelian idealist.

What this 'synthesis' means is conveyed in chapter 12 by Turgenev's descriptions of the married couple. The impression evoked is one of bland contentment, of a life undisturbed by either worry or passion. 'We love one another,' Lezhnyov says to his wife, 'and we are happy, aren't we?' (p. 351). He seems to need the assurance that she promptly gives. And in terms of the main contrasting issues in the fiction the 'synthesis' is equated with practical altruism. Lezhnyov and Lipina are portrayed as altruists whose feet are firmly planted on the ground. Both feel the appeal of

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Rudin's gospel and are eloquent at the end in defending his name, but both are deterred by an innate sense of realism from embracing his conception of a 'harmonious' world. As realists who stand on the 'firm ground' that he lacks,³⁸ they sense that his ideals are simply 'too learned', too divorced from the essential reality of life to lead ever to significant change and improvement. Hence the term 'cosmopolitan' that Lezhnyov now applies to him. Divorced from reality, he is divorced from Russia,³⁹ just as he is estranged from his doting mother, and he is consequently doomed to be a tragic 'nonentity' (p. 349), as he unwittingly predicted in chapter 4 when describing as such his *alter ego* the Baron.⁴⁰ Thus while admiring the hero for his unyielding commitment, they accordingly limit their own endeavours to such humble and mundane, yet practical measures as those which they take in the interests of their serfs.⁴¹ As a result they may appear to emerge unfavourably from the comparison, and indeed in the Epilogue Lezhnyov concedes as much (p. 366). But their realism is the realism of Turgenev himself. While sharing their esteem for such idealists as Rudin, he gives their 'limited' altruism the seal of his approval as acknowledging the limits of man's capabilities. This presumably explains why Lipina is the first character that he introduces to the reader and why Lezhnyov at the end is granted the privilege of expressing his 'final judgement' on the hero - a judgement that combines profound admiration with a sad recognition of the futility of his efforts.

In his farewell letter to Natal'ya, which is reproduced in chapter 11, Rudin quotes the line from Pushkin's *Yevgeny Onegin*: 'Blessed is he who was young in his youth' (p. 337). It is as a 'youth' or 'child' that Lezhnyov now depicts him, disclosing once more his own nostalgia for 'youth' despite the contentment that he has discovered with Lipina. 'He is not an actor,' he states, 'as I called him before, not a cheat, not a swindler; he lives at someone else's expense not like a sponger, but like a child' (p. 348). And his toast to Rudin at the end

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of his speech is appropriately combined with a toast to youth - to 'its hopes, its aspirations, its trustfulness, its honesty, to everything that made our hearts beat at the age of twenty and which was better than anything else that we've known and are likely to know in our lives ... I drink to you, the golden time of our lives. I drink Rudin's health' (p. 350). Thus, as confirmed by the contrast in Lezhnyov's own portrait, the motif of 'youth' alludes not only to the helplessness of the innocent child adrift in a world of self-interested adults, to his inability to maintain himself in the 'war of wills', but to the ability to be enthused by altruistic ideals which offer the vision of a better, more 'harmonious' world. Hence the association of the motif not only with Rudin but also with Pokorsky (p. 296), Basistov (p. 245) and Lipina (pp. 243, 274). 'The whole aim of learning,' Rudin says to Natal'ya, 'is to reach consciously what is given to youth for nothing' (p. 281), and we may now appreciate the psychological implications of the comment by Lezhnyov that Natal'ya is 'no child' (p. 303).

But Rudin's quotation from Pushkin's 'novel in verse' significantly omits the following line: 'But blessed is he who has matured at the proper time.' The omission denotes the hero's ignorance of the 'antithesis' represented by Lezhnyov's 'second phase', and the Epilogue reiterates the familiar results. With his accounts to Lezhnyov of his most recent adventures, which appropriately culminated in lecturing to children, he confirms that despite the experience of hardship reflected in his appearance and 'broken speech' (p. 356), he remains to the end essentially unchanged, a victim, as he puts it, of the 'worm' that 'gnaws' him (p. 357), impelling him to continue his vain quest for 'domination.' It shoves me up against people,' he states, 'and at first they submit to my influence, but afterwards ...' (p. 357). Afterwards follows the usual failure, the abrupt return to the point of departure symbolised by the journey in chapter 12 in which instead of reaching his destination

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'-sk' he is obliged to return to the town of '-ov' (p. 353).⁴² And again he unwittingly discloses the reason. 'I wanted,' he says, 'to make radical changes' (p. 363). Once more he is presented with his altruistic ideals as a challenge incarnate to nature's 'laws'. Herein lies the symbolic significance of the project in which he attempts with a friend to make a river navigable (p. 360), to make nature subservient to the needs of man. And when Rudin finally takes his leave of Lezhnyov, nature responds as she did at Avdyukha's pond. Once more he assumes the role of the 'child' who is subjected to the force of the Erlking's displeasure: 'Outside the wind rose and began to howl ominously, striking heavily and maliciously against the ringing panes.' And Turgenev adds: 'Happy is he who sits under a roof on such a night, who has a warm nook to go to ... And may the Lord help all homeless wanderers!' (p. 367). But driven by his 'worm', Rudin returns to the fray. Rejecting the 'nest' that Lezhnyov kindly offers, he sallies forth to continue his struggle to the end. The 'bird' returns to the 'darkness' from which it emerged to bear out his prediction in chapter 3: 'In death itself man will find his life, his nest' (p. 270).⁴³

But it is not only nature that Rudin offends. His ideals are equally a challenge to its 'laws' as expressed in the structures of human society which are reflected in the structure of Lasunskaya's circle. The concluding section of the Epilogue reinforces the link. His attempts to 'dominate' the river and Dar'ya Mikhaylovna, whose house overlooks 'one of the chief rivers of central Russia' (p. 246), are inseparably related aspects of the challenge that he poses. Hence the hostility of governments that his gospel provokes and the penalties that he pays at the end of the novel - first the exile to his estate to which he is condemned for his teaching and which parallels his 'exile' from Lasunskaya's estate, then his death as a rebel on the Parisian barricade which reminds us of Lasunskaya's liking for French, for the language of her assistant Mlle. Boncourt whose heroes are Cambyses and 'Louis XIV' (p. 280).⁴⁴ And his props at the end are entirely in

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keeping: instead of impotent words 'a blunt, crooked sabre' and again a lack of 'firm ground' beneath his feet - merely 'the broken body of an overturned omnibus' (p. 368). But though standing alone, abandoned by his colleagues, he remains steadfast to the end in his selfless defiance. The novel begins with the depiction of Lipina's practical altruism and of the 'natural' death of a Russian peasant projected against the background of nature's beauty; it ends with the futile, 'unnatural' death of a 'cosmopolitan' idealist amid chaos and destruction.

III

A NEST OF THE GENTRY

In the Foreword to the edition of his collected works that was published in 1880 Turgenev took the opportunity to counter the charge levelled against him by some critics that in his last novel *Virgin Soil* he had 'changed direction'. He responded: 'On the contrary, it seems to me that I could be reproached rather for an excessive constancy and straightness of line, as it were. The author of *Rudin*, written in 1855, and the author of *Virgin Soil*, written in 1876, are one and the same person' (XII, 303). The statement must be taken, of course, as referring, at least in the first instance, to the constancy of attitude or viewpoint reflected in the novels. But with equal justification he could have commented in similar terms on their basic pattern, for in *Rudin* the pattern of the Turgenevan novel was established once and for all. The novels that followed it were all to hinge on the same kind of psychological conflict that he had presented in the portrait of his first novelistic hero. In each of them he was to express his general understanding of life by similarly representing the conflict between egoistic and altruistic impulses in the personality of a single figure, and in each case the conflict was likewise to be related to a particular development in Russian society and to the particular form of supra-personal idealism associated with it.

The social development to which the conflict is related in his second novel, *A Nest of the Gentry*, completed in 1859, is the debate that was conducted in the forties between Slavophiles and Westernists on Russia's future course of development. It is most directly reflected in chapter 33 in the argument between the hero Lavretsky and the young government official Vladimir Panshin. Here Lavretsky presents himself as a man of broadly Slavophile views strongly opposed to the wholesale Westernisation of his native land. Nevertheless, it is in his

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personality that the social debate is transmuted into the psychological conflict which expresses the novel's philosophical theme, for Slavophilism marks only a phase, albeit the concluding and most important phase, in Lavretsky's complex personal and intellectual development, and to the end he remains incapable of embracing its tenets in full. In particular, the scepticism induced by his formative experiences makes it impossible for him to accept the Orthodox faith which formed an organic part of Slavophile doctrine. It remains for him a mystery to which he is attracted but which, as Turgenev puts it, 'he could not penetrate' (VII, 230).¹ The significant result of this is that in the second novel the role played by Rudin in the first is transferred, in part, to the heroine Liza. It is Liza who, as a devout Christian, embodies the particular form of transcendently motivated altruism that is subjected in *A Nest of the Gentry* to the same kind of critical examination as Rudin's German idealism in the earlier work. It is consequently in the story of Liza that the theme of metaphysical rebellion is most fully developed, and we may perhaps assume that it was for this reason that Turgenev initially took her name as the novel's title. But he wisely abandoned it, for in the final reckoning the personal drama of Liza, like every other element of the work, acquires its significance primarily, as will be seen, from its relevance to the inner drama of the hero.

Lavretsky's portrait is perhaps the most complete that Turgenev ever attempted - thanks mainly to the well known digression, extending over nine chapters (chapters 8 to 16 inclusive), on his ancestry, his education and the events that precede and follow his marriage to Varvara Pavlovna. As a result of this abundance of information it has been argued by some commentators that his personality 'is revealed from beginning to end'² and therefore 'poses no problems' for the reader.³ But this is not a unanimous view. Indeed, Victor Ripp is struck rather by Lavretsky's 'elusiveness', by his inability 'to think himself into a coherent personality',⁴ and most

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readers, one feels, would share this view, for the picture of the hero that emerges from the digression is both complex and contradictory. Turgenev's intentions, therefore, in this important section of the work merit close examination.

The seemingly inordinate length of the digression is itself a reflection of the complexity of Lavretsky's personality. In the portrait of this scion of an ancient, though undistinguished gentry family who is subjected by his anglophile father to a bizarre Western education Turgenev examines the nature and origins of the predicament of an entire generation, of the divided cultural inheritance of the post-1825 generation of Russian intellectuals.⁵ Not only, therefore, does the digression embrace the three preceding generations of the Lavretsky family, but in order to render the cultural conflict maximally acute and to emphasise its social dimension, Turgenev gives his hero a mother from the peasantry and thus a divided birthright. As stated, the psychological implications and consequences of this conflict are his central concern in the novel, and they are represented as reflecting a more fundamental conflict which lies at the basis of the novel as a whole.

The reader is informed that Lavretsky's ancestors had traditionally been accustomed to 'serving under princes and distinguished men in remote provinces' and that 'none of them had risen above the rank of *stol'nik* or acquired significant property' (p. 149). The digression begins, therefore, by ascribing to the family a certain congenital weakness. A more complex impression, however, is conveyed by the portraits of the hero's great-grandfather, grandfather and father and, more particularly, by their relationships with their wives. In the portrayal of these characters two distinct developments may be observed. The first involves the progressively diminishing strength of personality displayed by the successive generations. Thus the 'cruel, bold, intelligent and cunning' Andrey, who is remembered for 'his arbitrariness, his violent temperament, his

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wild generosity and his insatiable greed', is replaced by 'the simple steppe landowner' Pyotr, characterised as 'a rather eccentric babbler and dawdler' and as 'coarse but not malicious' (p. 149), and he in his turn gives way to the Westernised, pampered, but stubborn Ivan. The second development involves paradoxically the increased authority achieved by each successive ancestor in his marital relationship. Thus the position of the violent Andrey is one of resentful and contested equality. He 'took as his wife,' we read, 'a woman to match him. A gipsy by birth with protruding eyes, a hawk's nose and a round yellow face, she was hot-tempered and vindictive and never yielded in anything to her husband who was almost the death of her and whom she did not outlive even though she fought with him incessantly' (p. 149). In contrast, the wife of the relatively genial Pyotr, Anna Pavlovna, we are told, was 'a humble person' (*smirennitsa*) (p. 149). Addicted to 'driving with fast horses' and 'ready to play cards from morning to night', she was clearly not without spirit and 'would always cover with her hand,' it is noted, 'the meagre winnings that she had jotted down on it when her husband approached the card table. But all her dowry, all her money she placed meekly at his disposal' (p. 150). And the progression culminates in the complete submission to Ivan of Lavretsky's mother, the peasant-girl and servant Malan'ya. The difference of class, of course, is a partial explanation, but it is again the difference of personality that Turgenev stresses. Like Anna Pavlovna, he comments, Malan'ya was 'a modest person' (*skromnitsa*), and it was precisely her 'modesty', he adds - 'her shy walk, her bashful answers, her quiet little voice and gentle smile' - that first attracted Ivan to her. 'And she became attached to Ivan Petrovich,' he continues, 'with all the strength of her soul, as only Russian girls know how to become attached - and she gave herself to him' (p. 152). His response after their elopement and marriage, was to abandon her for six years, to withdraw their son from her charge, and then promptly to return to foreign parts, leaving her humiliated and

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heart-broken and driving her to the grave. 'So ended,' Turgenev states, 'the earthly existence of this kind and gentle soul who had been snatched, God knows why, from her native soil and abandoned at once like an uprooted sapling with its roots in the sun; it had withered and disappeared without trace, and no one grieved for it' (p. 158).

The family as a whole, therefore, its successive members and their marital relationships are all characterised in terms of the same recurrent contrast - the contrast between strength and weakness; and the detailed account of the three relationships, and thus the length of the early sections of the digression, are explained in large measure by the crucial relevance of this contrast both to the relationship to which the rest of the digression is chiefly devoted (the relationship between Lavretsky and Varvara Pavlovna) and to every other relationship in the novel. All reflect the conception of love described in his story *A Correspondence* which was published, it may be noted, in the year (1856) in which he conceived the idea of the novel.⁶

In addition to the marital relationships of Lavretsky's three forbears, there are three others in the work, and in each case the emphasis is again on the inequality of the partners. It is conveyed in three different ways: in the case of Liza's parents explicitly - by the disclosure that her mother Mar'ya Dmitriyevna, whose heart 'was captured in only a few days' (p. 125), 'did not contradict her husband in anything and stood in awe of his intellect and knowledge of the world' (p. 126); in the portrayal of Varvara Pavlovna's parents by implication, by the portraits themselves, by the contrast between the urbane, unprincipled general and his tearful, self-effacing German wife about whom, it is noted, 'there was almost nothing to be said', who 'was constantly afraid of something' and who 'quickly retired into the background' (pp. 168-9); and in the depiction of Lavretsky's marital relationship by the events described, by Varvara's betrayal and ruthless pursuit of her own self-interest. Despite their differences, therefore, all six relationships reflect the same view of marriage as a

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'war of wills' leading either to the 'incessant fighting' of Andrey and his wife or, more commonly, to the domination of one partner by the other; and we may accordingly understand why two of the strongest and most independent characters in the novel, Lavretsky's aunts Glafira and Marfa Timofeyevna, find its attractions so easily resistible. In reference to Glafira, who is described as 'recalling her grandmother, the gipsy, the wife of Andrey, in her looks, her voice and her quick awkward movements', the author comments: 'Insisting on having things her own way and loving power, she would not hear of marriage' (p. 151), and she promptly expels her only suitor as soon as he broaches the subject of her wealth (p. 191). And for the spinster Marfa Timofeyevna it is similarly an article of faith that 'nothing worthwhile ever comes of love matches' (p. 130). Hence her rebuke of Liza in chapter 38 for responding in the garden to Lavretsky's ardour.

The contrast, however, between 'master' and 'slave' is by no means confined in the novel to the depiction of marital relationships. The first page of the work already illustrates its more general relevance with the disclosure that Marfa Timofeyevna and Mar'ya Dmitriyevna 'were kept in virtual bondage' by the latter's brother after the death of their parents (p. 125). And it is appropriately to Marfa Timofeyevna that the task of explicitly relating the particular to the general is entrusted. Her understanding of marriage is duly matched by her understanding of life. Attempting to reconcile Lavretsky to the tragic outcome of his love for Liza, she says to him. 'There was a time when I used to envy flies: they are the ones, I used to think, who live well in this world; but one night I heard a fly whining in a spider's clutches, and I thought: no, they too live in the shadow of disaster' (p. 275). In the form of Lavretsky's pain the human condition is thus equated with the 'struggle for existence' in the world of nature. The contrast between spider and fly is the form assumed in the novel by the familiar distinction between the egoistic

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and altruistic forces of human nature, and it determines the division of the characters into two main groups. Usually characterised as simply 'positive' and 'negative', they are more aptly described as 'predators' and 'victims'.

Noteworthy in this connection (and perhaps in relation to the novel's title) are the numerous instances in the work in which the characters are compared to birds of prey. Thus both Lavretsky's great-grandmother and his grandfather Pyotr are likened to 'hawks' (pp. 149, 152), Lemm to 'an owl' (p. 138) and later to 'an eagle' (p. 237), and Lavretsky to 'a raven waiting for blood' as he waits for confirmation of Varvara's death (p. 228). And in the portrayal of Varvara, the 'predator' supreme, Turgenev employs the imagery of beasts. Thus reporting to Mar'ya Dmitriyevna on her activities in Paris, the gossip Gedeonovsky reveals: 'They say, you know, that she has become acquainted with artists and with pianists and with lions, as they call them over there, and with all kinds of wild beasts' (p. 131),⁷ and on three occasions in chapter 40 she is characterised as a 'lioness' (pp. 265, 267) - a term which signals her obvious affinities with Dar'ya Lasunskaya in *Rudin*.⁸ 'A la guerre comme à la guerre,' cries her maid Justine (p. 247). Disclosing the conception of life as war that dictates the actions of her predatory mistress and alluding to the reasons for her sudden return, the cry explains why five chapters later Lavretsky is compared to 'a wounded soldier'. 'Varvara Pavlovna,' he exclaims, 'has evidently decided to prevent me from living' (p. 269), thus echoing the cry of the 'whining fly' as it struggles in the clutches of the implacable 'spider'. And Lavretsky is by no means her only victim. 'Varvara Pavlovna,' we read, 'attracted guests like moths to a flame' (p. 172), and the searing effects of surrender to her are conveyed by the description of Panshin in the Epilogue. His face that 'has turned yellow' and his hair that 'has thinned' (p. 287) are the visual evidence of the 'spider's' attentions described at the end of the preceding chapter. 'Varvara,' it is reported, 'had enslaved him,

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literally enslaved him: no other word can express the limitless, irrevocable, irresistible power that she gained over him' (p. 281). Thus Lavretsky and Panshin, the ideological antagonists, share a common fate at the hands of the woman who is perhaps the main embodiment in Turgenev's fiction of that 'natural' craving for domination and power which he transplants to the world of his warring characters.

In addition to the triumphs enjoyed by the 'predators' there are also their conflicts with other 'predators' foreshadowed by the battle between Andrey and his wife. Thus on arriving at Lavriki after her marriage to Lavretsky Varvara launches without delay into a battle with Glafira for control of the estate, 'conducting her attack with consummate skill' and ultimately inducing her vanquished rival to surrender the keys, the symbol of power (p. 171). And the same hostility to potential rivals is consistently displayed by Marfa Timofeyevna for the reasons disclosed by the following comments: 'She addressed Nastas'ya Karpovna with the familiar "thou" even though she lived with her on an equal footing. She wasn't a Pestov for nothing: three Pestovs had appeared in the death-list of Ivan Vasil'yevich Grozny; Marfa Timofeyevna was aware of that' (p. 181). The fate of her forbears at the hands of the predatory Tsar is the lesson that dictates her attitude to life, the instinctive apprehension of strong personalities which explains her hostility to Glafira (p. 157) and Varvara (p. 171) and impels her to leave for the most humble of dwellings when Mar'ya Dmitriyevna's husband alights on the scene (p. 126). It explains the importance that she attaches to independence which explains, in its turn, her attitude to love.

The question, however, that must now be considered concerns the connection that exists in the novel between the fundamental contrast between 'predators' and 'victims' and the two additional contrasts which are similarly woven into the hero's biography. How does it relate, in other words, to the contrasts implied in his divided

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birthright and divided cultural inheritance? The answer, quite simply, is that it is in terms of the fundamental contrast that these social and cultural contrasts are examined, and it is precisely as reflections of the fundamental contrast that both are extended from the biographical digression to encompass the novel from beginning to end. Thus the difference of class between Lavretsky's parents is inseparably related, as noted, to the difference of personality. It is a social expression of the 'predator-victim' relationship which defines the relationship presented in the novel between the two major classes of the Russian nation. Hence the impression conveyed by the work that Turgenev is attacking the evils of serfdom. The humility of Malan'ya and her sufferings at the hands of Ivan and Glafira⁹ anticipate the emphasis that is subsequently placed on the humility and sufferings of the peasantry in general. 'My great-grandfather,' cries Lavretsky, 'used to hang his peasants by their ribs' (p. 176), and in chapter 44 he gazes with pity at the 'toothless, yellow, wrinkled face' of a decrepit old peasant as she prays on her knees (p. 280). 'What,' he is moved to ask, 'can replace for them the consolations of the church?' (p. 281). It seems not coincidental that the praying old woman is endowed, like Panshin, with a face that 'has turned yellow'. The repeated detail expresses the essential identity of the brutal relationship between the gentry and peasantry and the relationship of lovers as the novel depicts them.

The relationship, however, between the two social classes is clearly more complex than these comments suggest, for the parallel with the marital relationships and 'love matches' does not explain the contradictions that characterise the gentry's behaviour. It does not explain, for example, why Ivan is initially drawn so powerfully to Malan'ya that he is ready to sacrifice his inheritance for her, or why Turgenev records his abrupt transformation from a 'European free-thinker' and self-confident despot into a regular church-goer and whimpering invalid. And the portrait of Glafira poses much the same

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question: why is this tyrant transformed in her declining years, like her brother, into a lover of prayer and thus similarly likened to the old peasant woman? Why does Turgenev draw our attention to the 'worn piece of carpet spotted with wax' where 'she used to make her bows to the ground' and to the icon to which on the verge of death she 'pressed her already cold lips for the last time' (n. 186)? The reason is plainly that he is no less concerned with the affinities between the two social classes than with the differences between them. He is concerned with the affinities which betray in the 'masters' the habits of 'flies' displayed by their 'slaves'. He is intent on showing, in other words, that the 'predators' who prey on the submissive peasantry become similarly submissive when confronted themselves with predatory action. Thus Glafira turns to 'the consolations of the church' in the wake of the defeat at the hands of Varvara which impels her to move from Lavriki to Vasil'yevskoye. And Ivan's transformation reflects his similar reaction to the government's violent response to the Decembrist revolt. We read:

Ivan Petrovich beat a hasty retreat to the country and locked himself in his house ... The free-thinker began to go to church and order prayers to be said; the European began taking steam baths, dining at two o'clock, going to bed at nine and falling asleep to the old butler's chatter; the statesman burned all his plans and correspondence, trembled before the governor and fawned before the head of the local constabulary; the man with the hardened will whined and complained when a boil came up on his skin and when he was served a bowl of cold soup (p. 163).

Thus the 'predator' himself becomes a 'whining fly' when faced with a power that demands submission, displaying the affinities with the humble Malan'ya which explain retrospectively his attraction to her.

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And the significant point is that these affinities - timidity, self-effacement, the turning to the church and prayer - are presented as denoting an abandonment of Western ways, a reborn respect for national customs. Not only, in other words, are the gentry portrayed as themselves susceptible to the habits of their victims, but these 'slavish' habits are directly associated with the national customs of the Russian people and may thus be taken as expressing a judgement on a basic trait of the national character. They are 'the habits of slavery' which, as Turgenev's spokesman Potugin was to put it nine years later in *Smoke*, 'have become too deeply ingrained in us' (IX, 168).

From these comments, therefore, the implications of Westernisation in *A Nest of the Gentry* may clearly be inferred. The association of Russia with 'the habits of slavery' (self-effacement, submissiveness, religious faith) implies the association of the West with 'the habits of mastery' (self-assertion, the urge to 'dominate', 'paganism'), with the force of nature that drives the 'predator'. The confirmation is the portraits of Panshin and Varvara. Here Westernisation (or, more precisely, gallicisation) is clearly identified as a mark of the 'predator'. 'I've acquired a reputation,' Panshin says to Liza, 'for being an egoist,' the justness of which he naturally denies but is immediately confirmed by the author's remark which recalls his comment on Dar'ya Lasunskaya (VI, 271): 'However he began a conversation, he usually ended by talking about himself' (p. 141). His 'beautiful French' (p. 133) is thus implicitly explained, as are the principal props that Turgenev gives him - the whip with which, on entering the novel, he asserts his authority over his rebellious horse (p. 132) and the stick that he uses after Liza rejects him to poke in the neck of his sleeping driver (p. 235).¹⁰ The reader is informed in chapter 33 that 'he did not let slip the opportunity to state how he would change everything if he had the power in his hands' (p. 231). The whip and the stick, we may assume, would have been his weapons. Between his desire to complete the Europeanisation of

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Russia and the 'habits of mastery' to which these symbols allude there is the same correlation as that which exists between the sufferings inflicted by Varvara on her victims and her passion for Paris and all things French.¹¹ The only difference between them is one of degree, for in the figure of Varvara the Panshin who laments that he is only 'half-European' (p. 231) encounters the embodiment of his stated ideal - a Russian who is totally Europeanised. 'All her thoughts and feelings,' we read, 'revolved around Paris' (p. 264). And the difference is decisive for Panshin's fate, explaining his submission to the 'limitless, irrevocable, irresistible power' of the 'lioness' who consorts with Parisian 'wild beasts'. Ironically and appropriately, the personification of his dream, the most comprehensively Westernised of the novel's characters, turns out in the end to be the 'predator' that 'enslaves' him.

The experience of Panshin at the hands of Varvara shows that even within the group of Westernised characters the 'general law' reflected in the 'predator-victim' relationship continues to operate. In this respect it is directly comparable to the reactions of Ivan and Glafira to their confrontations with more powerful forces which illustrate its operation in the gentry group. In both cases the 'general' nature of the 'law' is confirmed by the evidence that the 'predators' themselves are not immune to it. The main conclusion to be drawn, however, is that the contrast between the West and Russia, like the contrast between the Russian gentry and peasantry, is itself presented as an expression of this 'law', as an extension of the same psychological contrast that recurs in the depiction of love and marriage. As a result, two contrasting sets of associations are established in the novel. While the notion of the 'predator' or 'master' is associated with the gentry and the West, the notion of the 'victim' or 'slave' is associated with the peasantry and Russia.

Returning, therefore, to the portrait of the novel's central figure, we are now in a position to understand the implications of the

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contrasts that characterise his parentage and education. Clearly the allusion in both cases is to psychological ambivalence, which explains why his friend Mikhalevich in chapter 25 struggles in vain to find a word that aptly describes him. In the figure of Lavretsky Turgenev created a character - half-nobleman, half-peasant, half-Russian, half-European - in whom the attributes of the 'predator' and the 'victim' are joined: egoism, self-assertion, physical power and 'paganism' with altruism, self-effacement, submissiveness and spirituality. His name itself seems to express the contradiction between pagan power and Christian humility. His Christian name 'Fyodor', we are told, was taken from a fourth-century Roman general who was crucified for his faith (p. 155), while the surname 'Lavretsky' combines the notions of 'monastery' (*lavra*) and imperial 'laurel' (*lavr*). He is an embodiment of the conflict in human nature which is seen by Turgenev to be reflected in the social and cultural conflicts of Russia, and the novel records his own crucifixion on the cross of the contradictions of his own personality. Viewed in these terms, his portrait embraces the work as a whole, for it is now apparent that the two groups of characters - above all, their main representatives, Varvara and Liza - are essentially extensions of his conflicting selves, that while his 'paternal' self is mirrored in Varvara, his 'maternal' self is mirrored in Liza. We must now consider his journeys between them and the consequent forms which his conflict assumes.

Perhaps the first and most obvious inference to be drawn from the connections that have been established is that the attraction and marriage of Lavretsky to Varvara Pavlovna are directly related to his Western education. Before he is subjected to his father's 'system' his 'maternal' self is clearly in the ascendant. The emphasis is primarily on the development of the emotional and spiritual aspects of his personality, on his devotion to the memory of his mother's Madonna-like figure¹² and on the pleasure that he derives from feeding his imagination on a 'mysterious book' entitled *Symbols and Emblems*

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(p. 161). The implication of this emphasis is a neglect of the body which his physical portrait duly confirms. 'He was fairly pale,' we read, 'but fat, awkward and of an ungainly build - a veritable peasant, in Glafira Petrovna's words' (p. 162).¹³ This comment of his aunt is an apt allusion to the predominant influence of his peasant mother and to the 'slavish' attributes inherited from her. But not without cause, it seems, is *Symbols and Emblems* the only book that Glafira permits him. Significantly he is allowed to read it only 'on Sundays after mass' (p. 161). The reason, we may infer, is its mythological images which are cognate with the various other 'pagan' allusions that Turgenev weaves into the biographical digression - with the image of the 'Parcae', for example, to whom Glafira and her two companions are compared as they knit (p. 162), with the 'Phryne and Lais' pursued by Ivan on his travels abroad (p. 155)¹⁴ and with the name 'Calliope' given to Varvara's mother (p. 169). Intended to counteract the influence of the mass, they foreshadow the effect of Ivan's 'pagan system', his transformation of his son into 'a young Alcides' (p. 171). 'Above all,' Ivan states, 'I want to make a man of him, *un homme*, and not only a man, but a Spartan' (p. 162). The lapse into French and the additional 'pagan' allusion disclose the purpose of the education imposed. Its aim is to convert the 'slave' into a 'master' by strengthening his body, his mind and his will. His mind is now honed on the natural sciences and mathematics; his body is toughened with cold water and gymnastics; and the strength of his will is remorselessly tested. Both his pride in his class and his combative instincts are also nourished by appropriate disciplines - by the study of heraldry and use of the crossbow. Such are the means employed by Ivan to bring to life his son's 'paternal' inheritance. The dreamer is replaced by 'a son of nature' (p. 163), and his attraction to Varvara is thus explained. It is the instinctive response of 'a son of nature' to a creature who is driven by the same 'natural' force. Entranced by the power of her physical beauty,¹⁵ his 'entire soul,' we read, 'blended

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into a single feeling, a single desire - a desire for happiness, possession, love' (p. 170). Thus the Western 'system' gives birth to the egoist consumed with a desire for personal happiness, for the happiness of 'possession' with which love is equated.

The nature of love as thus understood would seem to explain why Ivan is so intent on instilling in his son an instinctive 'contempt for the female sex' (p. 163) - the contempt of the 'master' for potential 'slaves'. But although the young Lavretsky, we are informed, 'tried to appear indifferent, cold and rude' (p. 163), it is clear that this precept is alien to him, that it has failed to take root in his split personality, and his experience in marriage is thus predetermined. For the 'contempt' that he lacks is duly displayed by the wife who is immune to his inner contradictions. Like Ivan's abandonment of Malan'ya for 'some Phryne or Lais', her betrayal of Lavretsky for the Parisian Ernest is an expression of the contrast between the West and Russia which reflects the 'predator's' scorn for a vanquished 'victim'. It marks the fulfilment of the intention of which she had 'contemptuously' given notice by singing in his presence, accompanied by her lover, the ominous song of Pushkin's *Zemfira* (p. 176).

Lavretsky's experience in marriage, therefore, exposes the limited effects of his father's 'system'. Like his impatience in Paris to return to Russia and his altruistic concern to prepare himself for the socially useful tasks that await him there (p. 174), his 'defeat' confirms the failure of the 'system' to eradicate the influence of his 'maternal' inheritance. It is true that his immediate reaction to the blow is to strike himself a 'predatory' posture, to ape the reaction of Pushkin's Aleko. 'He rose from the chair,' we read, 'and wanted to go and say to them: "It was a mistake for you to make fun of me! My great-grandfather used to hang his peasants by their ribs ..." - and then kill them both' (p. 176).¹⁶ But characteristically he fails to convert resolve into action, and as the novel resumes its forward momentum,

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the main effect of the blow becomes progressively clearer. Indeed, it is indicated by this unrealised wish, for the desire to kill his 'contemptuous' wife denotes a desire to kill his own 'paternal' self, of which Varvara, as stated, is the external symbol. The main result, in short, is to reverse the 'system's' effects, to bring increasingly to the fore those 'maternal' characteristics which in the experience of love had ensured his 'defeat'. Hence the comments on his appearance which precede and follow the nine-chapter digression. In chapter 7 Marfa Timofeyevna remarks to him: 'You've begun to look like your mother, the dear child, only your nose was your father's and your father's it's remained' (p. 147). And in chapter 17 Glafira's earlier remark on the young Lavretsky is 'contemptuously' echoed by Mar'ya Dmitriyevna: 'What a seal he is, a genuine peasant!' (p. 179). Certainly we cannot ignore the significant allusion to his continuing ambivalence contained in Marfa Timofeyevna's reference to his 'paternal' nose, but in the chapters that follow his actions and attitudes reflect the restored preeminence of his 'maternal' self. It is accordingly fitting that instead of returning to his ancestral domain, with which the memory of Varvara is inseparably linked, he should prefer to withdraw to Vasil'yevskoye, the 'humble' retreat of the 'defeated' Glafira. And the psychological reversal is similarly reflected in the instinctive hostility to Westernisation that dictates his reactions to Mar'ya Dmitriyevna and Panshin. As he contemplates the scene at Vasil'yevskoye, he thinks: 'Here I am, as if I had sunk to the very bottom of a river,'¹⁷ but on the following page the chapter ends with the words: 'Never before had his feeling for his country been so deep and strong' (pp. 189-90). Thus again we see evidence of the connections that have been noted between the contrasts which lie at the basis of the work. The despair of the 'slave' leads naturally and logically to an attachment to Russia, to the 'feeling' implied by his break with Varvara and later displayed in his debate with Panshin. But the most significant reflections of the swing of the pendulum are

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clearly the report of Varvara's death and his increasing attraction to the 'humble' Liza, in whose devotion to God and concern for others his own 'maternal' characteristics are most powerfully reflected.

In the opening paragraph of chapter 24 the author remarks: 'It sometimes happens that two people who are already acquainted but not intimate suddenly and rapidly draw closer to each other in the course of a few moments - and an awareness of this intimacy is immediately expressed in their looks, in their friendly, gentle smiles and even in their movements' (p. 198). The statement refers to the instinctive recognition by Lavretsky and Liza of their mutual affinities which are explained by the indicated developments, and it marks the beginning of their complex relationship which is the external expression of Lavretsky's second transformation. It is appropriate, therefore, that at this second turning-point in his life his state of mind should again be subjected to a searching examination and that Turgenev should reintroduce in the following chapter the intriguing figure of Mikhalevich. For the effect of the role that Mikhalevich performs in the novel is precisely to impel Lavretsky to peer into himself and take cognizance of the changes taking place within him. It is for this reason, we may assume, that his two appearances coincide with the two transformations of Lavretsky which are reflected in his contrasting infatuations. In this connection it is important to appreciate that in chapter 25 Mikhalevich is no longer the same person as the student who befriended Lavretsky in chapter 12. He is still an enthusiast, idealist and poet, but he too has undergone in the interim a significant transformation, as he frankly acknowledges.¹⁸ Moreover, his own transformation is shown not only to have duplicated that of the hero but to have had its source in a similar experience, for it is suggested that he has likewise been the 'victim' of an act of betrayal - by a 'mysterious, black-curled Polish lady' whose praises he had sung in passionate verse but who had preferred the advances of 'cavalry officers' (p. 205). The consequent effect is that Mikhalevich presents

himself on his two appearances, like Varvara and Liza successively, as a personification of that aspect of Lavretsky's personality which has gained ascendancy at the time in question, and his role in the plot is thus explained: his role as the intermediary who propels him towards them. Thus in chapter 12, before his own transformation, he not only instructs the 'Spartan' Lavretsky in the 'pagan' language Latin (p. 166) but is responsible for introducing him to the 'pagan' Varvara with whom he evidently enjoys a most friendly relationship.¹⁹ But in chapter 25, though totally unaware of Liza's existence, he confides to Lavretsky as he takes his leave: 'I can see that what you need now is some pure, heavenly creature who would wrench you out of your apathy' (p. 206). The ideal of the 'pagan master' is thus replaced by that of the 'heavenly slave'. Hence the allusion contained in the last lines of his poem which he insists on reading for Lavretsky's benefit:

I have burnt all that to which I once bowed down,
I have bowed down to all that which once I burnt (p. 201).

As an almost literal translation of the Latin command that was addressed at his baptism to Clovis I, the fifth-century founder of the Frankish empire,²⁰ the lines allude to the conversion of a pagan 'master'.

Dictated, therefore, by his personal experience, Mikhalevich's purpose in chapter 25 is to convert Lavretsky to his new ideal, to reinforce and complete the psychological transition that results from Varvara's act of betrayal. And his method of achieving it is first to confront him with the repugnant reality of his 'paternal' self and then to appeal to his 'honest plebeian blood' (p. 260). 'Egoist', 'sceptic', 'old-fashioned Voltairian', 'self-indulgent nobleman', 'malicious layabout' - such is the stream of derogatory terms that he hurls at his friend in their long conversation. 'You wanted self-indulgence,' he

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cries, 'you wanted happiness in life, you wanted to live only for yourself ... Yes, you're just like your father and don't even suspect it' (p. 203). And he continues 'in a voice already grown hoarse': 'When and where have people taken it into their heads to become layabouts? Here! In Russia! when each individual has a duty, a great responsibility before God, before the people and before himself!' (p. 204). Thus Lavretsky the 'victim' is appropriately exhorted to replace the 'pagan' attributes of the 'predatory master' - egoism, Voltairian intellectualism and the 'habits' of the gentry - with the 'heavenly' attributes of the 'humble slave', with patriotism, faith and selfless concern for the needs of the people. 'Religion, progress, humanity' - with these 'last three words', which remind us of the 'Pokorskian' words of Rudin, Mikhalevich bids his friend farewell (p. 206).

Lavretsky's responses to these exhortations make it abundantly clear that his friend's critique is not misdirected. They confirm that just as his 'maternal' self was not eradicated by his father's 'system', so the effects of the 'system' have not been entirely subverted by his psychological reaction to Varvara's betrayal. His ambivalence, in short, remains continually in evidence, explaining the 'irritation', the 'spirit of contradiction', that 'stirred within him' (p. 202) as he listens to the tirades of the 'Poltavan Demosthenes' (p. 204). 'Thank you, my friend,' he replies, 'I've had enough of these heavenly creatures' (p. 206). But the chapter confirms with its concluding words that his friend's intervention is not ineffectual. 'Many of Mikhalevich's words 'we read, 'had irresistibly entered his soul, even though he had argued and disagreed with him' (p. 206). The evidence is his love for the 'heavenly' Liza.

Turgenev's portrait of Liza has frequently been cited as perhaps the principal illustration in his fiction of his reluctance to engage in psychological analysis. She is consequently regarded as something of an enigma, and the result is a conflict of critical judgements. For some commentators she is nothing less than an embodiment of 'ideal,

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spiritualised femininity',²¹ and even critics who have expressed reservations about her religious convictions, about her asceticism and insistence on the need for self-renunciation, have often been impelled to acclaim her 'spiritual grandeur',²² her moral fortitude, her unflinching commitment to her concept of duty.²³ Other commentators, however, have adopted a sharply critical stance, arguing, like Pisarev, that her faith is a form of blindness, a destructive, inhuman force which inhibits the development and useful employment of her considerable gifts.²⁴ For the critics of this persuasion her self-inflicted martyrdom is an act of sublime futility which allegedly reflects her creator's condemnation of 'the cruelty of Christianity which never ceased to arouse his indignation'.²⁵ We must consider, therefore, whether this dispute may be resolved in the light of the role that has been ascribed to her.

The definition of Liza's role that has been suggested is that she is the principal embodiment in the work of the attributes of the 'victim' or 'humble slave',²⁶ of that pole of the novel's fundamental contrast that is objectivised in Lavretsky's 'maternal' self. The supporting evidence is not only her unquestioning faith, her 'humble' submission to the will of God, but also her position in relation to the social and cultural contrasts in the work. Thus although she is a member of the gentry, the dominant influence on her in her formative years was the peasant Agaf'ya (pp. 240-3), whose role may accordingly be compared to that of Malan'ya in the early development of Lavretsky. In consequence, the 'habits' of the gentry are entirely alien to her. 'For hours on end,' we read, 'she would talk without ceremony to the village elder from her mother's estate whenever he visited the town, and she would talk to him as an equal, without any lordly condescension' (p. 234). And her response to Lavretsky's insistence on Russia's uniqueness in his argument with Panshin in chapter 33 confirms that she occupies a corresponding position in relation to the contrast between Russia and the West. The author comments: 'It had

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never entered Liza's head that she was a patriot; but she liked being with Russian people; the Russian cast of mind delighted her' (p. 234). In all significant respects, therefore, Liza is the complete opposite of Varvara Pavlovna and thus ostensibly an unequivocally 'positive' figure. But it is already apparent that to use the term 'positive' in this context is to convey only one aspect of Turgenev's ambivalent purpose. It is to assume that moral judgements are the only judgements pronounced in the novel. In reality, although it is true that no character is exempted from moral judgement, the moral distinction between good and evil is invariably accompanied by the distinction of a quite different order that has been encountered in *Rudin* - a distinction which involves a judgement on morality itself. For Turgenev's central purpose, as we have seen, is with a 'general law' of life, with reality as he conceived it, with life viewed as an expression of the intrinsically amoral law of nature which grants victory to those who, like Varvara Pavlovna, are least inhibited by moral scruples. Once more the crucial distinction is not between virtue and iniquity but between amorality as realism and a source of energy or dynamism, albeit destructive, and morality as delusion and a source of weakness, and in the light of *this* distinction Liza and the other 'victims' in the novel paradoxically emerge as the 'negative', albeit admirable, characters whose altruism, religious convictions and democratic impulses are indicative of the same tragic blindness to the essential reality of life that characterises, as we have noted, the ineffectual Rudin.

An immediate indication of Liza's similar detachment from reality is the blindness to the reality of Panshin that she displays when praising his gifts to Lemm (p. 143) and his character to Lavretsky (pp. 209, 220). But it is most clearly apparent, of course, in her similar ignorance of the reality of love. In chapter 35 we read: 'Imbued with a sense of duty, with a fear of offending people, with a kind, gentle heart, she loved everyone and no one in particular' (pp. 243-4). Thus

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for Liza love is synonymous with her conception of her God-given duty, with an altruistic concern for the well-being of all which is a negation of the reality of love as defined in *A Correspondence* and illustrated by the marital relationships in the novel. It is a love that is dependent on loving 'no one in particular',²⁷ that can be sustained only by the kind of self-detachment from reality in which Liza ultimately seeks refuge by withdrawing to the convent. It follows, therefore, that this act is to be understood as signalling not only her repugnance at the thought of an adulterous love but, more significantly, her restored commitment to her unrealistic ideal of love, her rejection of the reality of love that she has encountered in the interim in her relationship with Lavretsky - 'the first person,' in the author's words, 'to disturb her calm inner life' (p. 244). And the reason for this rejection, of course, is the inner conflict generated by the egoism, the preoccupation with the demands of the self, which the experience of 'real' love inevitably implies. Representing a betrayal of her God-given duty as she conceives it, of her duty to 'love everyone and no one in particular', such self-assertion is seen by her as a crime that incurs God's punishment. Hence the guilt that she feels for her attraction to Lavretsky even before the report of Varvara's death is revealed in chapter 36 as false. Even in chapter 30 we read: 'She felt ashamed, as if a stranger had entered her pure, virginal room' (p. 224), and in chapter 34, after their kiss in the garden, she says to him: 'I am terrified: what is this that we are doing?' (p. 237).

It is important to appreciate, however, that for Lavretsky also the relationship is the source of an acute inner conflict, for if his attraction to Liza denotes, as stated, the reassertion of his altruistic 'maternal' self, his love for her can only be taken to signify the continuing power of the egoistic 'paternal' aspect of his personality symbolised by Varvara. Herein lies the significance of the *false* report of Varvara's death and of her return on the day directly following Lavretsky's declaration of love to Liza in the scene in the garden (pp. 236, 244-5).

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Her return is symbolic of his second surrender to the egoistic desire for personal happiness, for the happiness afforded by the 'possession' of a loved one. The effect of the relationship, therefore, is to exacerbate dramatically the ambivalence reflected in his conversation with Mikhalevich and to render his conduct still more strikingly inconsistent. Thus at times he too recognises it as a betrayal of duty, of the duty in this case to which Mikhalevich beckons him to work for the improvement of the lot of his serfs. 'Can it be,' he asks, 'that at thirty-five years of age I have nothing better to do than once again place my soul in the hands of a woman?' (p. 226). But such moments of doubt are gradually banished as he yields to the power of his developing passion. 'Obey your heart,' he implores Liza. 'It alone will tell you the truth ... Do not deprive yourself of the best, the only happiness on earth' (p. 221). It is true that occasionally he sees no conflict between his contrasting aspirations, for he persuades himself that Liza would inspire him to 'honest, disciplined toil' and that they would 'go forward together towards the beautiful objective' (p. 226). But this belief is exposed by the rest of the novel as yet another example of self-delusion. 'She loves me and will be mine,' he says to himself in chapter 34 (p. 237), thereby confirming that, as the artist Shubin puts it in *On the Eve*, 'there just aren't different kinds of love' (VIII, 12).

Although, therefore, the relationship has similar implications for the two lovers, it serves also to highlight the difference that coexists with the similarities between them - the difference explained by Lavretsky's ambivalence. Its effect is to refute the 'pagan's' claim to have 'burnt' the idol to which he once 'bowed down'.²⁸ Once more the egoist assumes control, becoming increasingly immune to the sense of guilt from which Liza seeks refuge in constant prayer. As she sits, possessed by 'a kind of cold, solemn exaltation', during the evensong held at her request in her house, he felt, we read, 'a constant urge to smile and say something amusing' (p. 230). For Lavretsky the altar of

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God is replaced by the 'pagan' altar of nature. From the beginning his 'natural' love is nurtured by nature's caress. Thus in chapter 27, after his parting with Liza on her return journey from Vasil'yevskoye, the author remarks: 'The freshness of the air brought a slight moisture to the eyes, tenderly enveloped the limbs and flowed freely into the lungs. Lavretsky delighted in it and rejoiced in his delight' (p. 213). And nature again intervenes in chapter 33, during Panshin's speech about Russia and the West, as if summoning Lavretsky to do battle with him. We read: 'In the Kalitins' garden, in a large lilac bush, lived a nightingale; the first sounds of its evening song could be heard during pauses in the eloquent speech' (p. 232). The song seems to contribute to the conversion of the debate into a joust between rivals for a woman's affections. Lavretsky, we are told, 'would not have spoken simply to express his objections to Panshin's arguments; he spoke only for Liza' (p. 234). And after his victory which brings them closer, the approval of nature is immediately signalled:

The powerful, audaciously resonant song of the nightingale poured in through the window in a broad wave together with the dewy coolness ... For them the nightingale sang, the stars burned and the trees whispered softly, lulled by sleep, by the languor of summer and by the warmth. Lavretsky gave himself wholly to the wave that carried him along - and rejoiced (pp. 233-4).

Once more, therefore, the impression created is that of an active nature working vigorously as a real force in the fiction to secure its will,²⁹ to counteract the effects of the evensong with its insidious assault on the lovers' senses. As early as chapter 20, as Lavretsky contemplates the scene at Vasil'yevskoye, he is moved by a sense of nature's irresistible power. 'Whoever enters its charmed circle,' he reflects, 'must submit to it' (p. 190), and the chapters that follow record his submission, the process that culminates in chapter 34 in the

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shortlived triumph of nature's will. The interior setting of the evensong is here appropriately replaced by the luxuriant garden to which Lavretsky is led, as if by fate. 'This was intended,' he says to himself (p. 235). 'Something has brought me here,' he remarks to Liza (p. 236). And the gate that admits him 'as if it had been waiting for the touch of his hand' (p. 235) is found to be locked when he finally leaves (p. 237).

But chapter 34 does not end at this point. Having begun with the song of the nightingale, it ends with the music of Lemm, the effect of which on Lavretsky is described as follows:

It was a long time since Lavretsky had heard anything like it: from its first note the sweet, passionate melody gripped his heart; it was filled with light; it throbbed with inspiration, happiness and beauty; it continually grew and melted away ... These sounds bit into his soul which had so recently been shaken by the happiness of love; they themselves blazed with love (p. 238).

The significance of this 'melody' is disclosed by the context. Anticipating the similarly captivating 'passionate melody' of the mysterious Mutsy in Turgenev's story *The Song of Triumphant Love* (1881) (XIII, 59), it is not only likewise a 'song of triumphant love'; it also marks the triumphant culmination of the nightingale's song. It is nature's celebration of the triumph of 'natural' love. Here, as in the later story, the role assigned to music reflects the influence on Turgenev of Schopenhauer's aesthetics.³⁰ The 'passionate melodies', in Schopenhauer's phrase, are 'a direct copy of the will itself',³¹ of the 'predatory' will that conquers in love. And two obvious questions are immediately posed: how does this role of music in chapter 34 relate to the roles that it performs in the novel as a whole? And why is it given to Lemm to express it?

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In *A Nest of the Gentry* music plays a more prominent part than in any other of Turgenev's novels and is usually regarded as a means of reinforcing the judgements pronounced on the characters. The 'positive' group, it is held, 'all have respect and feeling for music and can tell the good from the bad', whereas the 'negative' group 'demonstrates shallow, careless and unfeeling attitudes towards music'.³² The evidence undoubtedly supports this view, for in their tastes and attitudes Lavretsky, Liza, Marfa Timofeyevna and Lemm are indeed distinguished in this manner from Panshin, Gedeonovsky, Mar'ya Dmitriyevna and Varvara. Thus Panshin's 'light' romance and the Strauss waltzes and operatic arias favoured by Varvara (pp. 259-60, 263) are clearly contrasted with Lemm's religious cantata, with his devotion to Bach and Handel (p. 139), with Lavretsky's love of 'real, classical music' (p. 193) and with the Beethoven sonata which Panshin feels obliged to play with Liza (p. 142).³³ As important, however, as this difference of tastes, which is plainly an extension of the physical-spiritual and 'pagan'-Christian contrasts, is the portrayal of the 'negative' characters as the more competent performers which may similarly be related to a more basic contrast - to the distinction in this case between the active and passive principles associated with the 'predators' and 'victims' respectively. Accordingly, while Lemm is described as 'a rather poor performer' (*dovol'no plokhoy ispolnitel'*) (p. 138) and Lavretsky as 'unable to play a single instrument through the kindness of his father' (p. 193), Varvara, in contrast, excels (pp. 258-9). It is true that the 'executive type' (*ispolnitel'*) (p. 135) Panshin is branded 'a dilettante' by Lemm (p. 143) and finds the Beethoven sonata beyond his powers (p. 142), but here, of course, he has trespassed into a sphere that is as alien to him as it is to Liza's francophile mother.³⁴ Within his own sphere of 'light' music, in contrast, he is sufficiently competent to merit the plaudits even of Liza (p. 136). And so far as Liza herself is concerned, although, we are told, she 'played the piano well', the author adds:

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'But Lemm alone knew how much it cost her' (p. 243). In neither case, therefore, is the impression contradicted that for the 'negative' characters music is the more 'natural' form of self-expression. The most fluent musicians are precisely those who, like Pandalevsky in *Rudin*,³⁵ are least inhibited by 'beautiful ideals', who reflect in their conduct the amorality of nature, the unprincipled striving of the predatory will. Hence the difference of tastes, the 'lightness' of their music, which is the 'lightness', the amorality of the will itself. We may accordingly understand not only why music is employed by Varvara as a means of 'enslaving' her Parisian lover and Panshin³⁶ and of expressing her 'contempt' for her 'slavish' husband, but also why Ivan Petrovich may be deemed to have erred in excluding music from his son's education as an 'occupation' allegedly 'unworthy of a man' (p. 162). Again, therefore, two questions arise: why is the music of Lemm in chapter 34, which is likewise the music of the triumphant will, described by the author as 'a wonderful composition' (p. 238)? And how are we to explain Lemm's transformation on this occasion from 'a rather poor performer' into 'a great musician' (p. 238)?

Lemm, as indicated, is normally included in the novel's 'positive' group of characters and is indeed endowed with all the trappings of a typical 'victim'. Not only is he poor and a victim of repeated misfortunes, but he is also, like Rudin, hopelessly impractical,³⁷ and his three Christian names (Christopher Theodore Gottlieb), his cantata and his habit of reading 'the Bible and a collection of Protestant psalms' (p. 139) point to a deeply religious sensibility. In addition, he has made the significant move from the West to Russia, thus reversing the direction in which Varvara moves, and he has shared the fate of a Russian serf of having suffered at the hands of 'an eminent member of the gentry' (p. 138). It seems fitting, therefore, that he should be the first person to cross the path of the demoralised Lavretsky on the latter's return from the West to the town of O... (p. 144), that he should likewise be drawn to his pupil Liza,

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and that he should be Lavretsky's first guest at Vasil'yevskoye. Their common Christian name (Theodore, Fyodor) itself alludes to their significant affinities, and at this early stage of the narrative they are appropriately characterised in similar terms. Thus Lavretsky's comparison of his position in chapter 20 to 'the very bottom of a river' (p. 189) is strongly reminiscent both of the earlier comparison of Lemm to 'a fish struggling against the ice' (p. 138) and of the reference to his two published sonatas as having 'vanished without sound or trace, as if someone had thrown them into a river at night' (p. 139).

From the beginning, however, the portrait of Lemm, again like that of Lavretsky, is liberally sprinkled with inconsistencies. A hint of egoism and pride, for example, is detectable in the ambition to make his fortune that initially brought him to Russia and in his refusal to return to Germany 'a beggar'. His appearance, we are told, 'produced an almost sinister impression'. And in his reading he combines the piety of the Bible and the Protestant psalms with the passions of 'Shakespeare in Schlegel's translation' (pp. 138-9). Moreover, like Glafira and Marfa Timofeyevna, he 'never married' and, though described as 'kindly and honourable', he displays a 'contempt' for the human race from which only Liza, it seems, is wholly exempted.³⁸ His affinities with Lavretsky, therefore, extend beyond the features which they share as 'victims'. He too is characterised by a striking ambivalence. As noteworthy as his switch from the West to Russia is his resolute resistance to russification. He is a Westerner to whom Russia has become 'hateful' and who is sustained 'amid all the misfortunes to which he was subject' only by 'the thought of returning to his homeland' (pp. 138-9). After twenty-eight years in Russia he can still hardly express himself in Russian and has retained, we are told, 'that boldness of thought which is uniquely characteristic of the German race' (p. 139). Compared to 'an owl' (p. 139) and later to a spider 'silently stirring' (p.194), the 'victim', like Lavretsky, is thus

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paradoxically endowed with the conflicting attributes of a 'predator' or 'master'. Like the hero, he is exposed as a divided personality, as an inhibited 'predator', as 'an owl in a cage' which 'can hardly see out of its huge, yellow, fearful and sleepily blinking eyes' (p. 139). And these extensive affinities with the novel's central figure illuminate the role that he plays in the work - a role which explains both his ambivalence and the transformation that he undergoes. His role is to reflect with the aid of his music the development of the relationship between Lavretsky and Liza, to provide a musical commentary or 'direct copy' of their gradual conversion from the status of 'victim' into obedient servants of omnipotent nature.

The music that Lemm plays in chapter 34 is the fourth and last of his compositions that are mentioned in the novel, and it differs profoundly from its three predecessors. His cantata, his adaptation of Schiller's ballad *Der Gang nach dem Eisenhammer* and his romance, which are described in chapters 5, 21 and 22 (and 26) respectively, reflect the attitudes, hopes and beliefs of the idealist - his belief in the ultimate reconciliation of 'the fortunate' and 'the unfortunate' and his sublime, 'exalted' conception of love (p. 195). They are a musical projection of the protagonists' attitudes in the early stages of their developing relationship. By the time, however, that Lemm comes to contemplate the content of the romance his mind is already in a state of turmoil. Not only does he struggle to express his meaning, but he also betrays distinct signs of scepticism. Thus after confiding to Lavretsky his intentions for the work he promptly describes them as 'empty dreams' (p. 195). The remark reveals the incipient collapse of his elevated, 'unnatural' conception of love which can again be explained only by reference to his role as commentator on the central relationship, for his confession coincides with the incipient inner conflicts experienced by the protagonists as a result of their mutual attraction. And it is noteworthy that Lavretsky responds to his difficulties by explicitly challenging his notion of love. Is it not likely,

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he asks him, that the hero of Schiller's ballad, after his reconciliation with the count, became his wife's lover? Lemm, we read, 'suddenly fell silent and turned away in confusion' (p. 196), and his confusion is reflected in his completed romance. When it is played by Liza in chapter 26, the author comments: 'Alas! the music turned out to be confused and unpleasantly strained; it was evident that the composer had striven to express something passionate and profound, but nothing had come of it: the striving remained striving and nothing more' (p. 207). Thus the 'passionate' and the 'profound' are 'unpleasantly' combined. The romance records Lemm's inevitable failure to resolve in his music the conflict that racks Lavretsky and Liza - the conflict between the two kinds of love, the sublime ideal and the enticing reality. Already the reality is acknowledged by Lemm, but the sceptic has yet to renounce the ideal which remains as the 'cage' that restricts his muse.

But in chapter 34 the triumph of 'real' love in the Kalitins' garden is mirrored in Lemm's complete liberation. His telepathic relationship with Lavretsky and Liza is reflected now in the 'wonderful composition' which celebrates *their* momentary liberation from *their* inhibitions. Hence his remark when Lavretsky appears. 'It is astonishing that you should have come at precisely this moment' (p. 238). Here all signs of 'confusion' have significantly disappeared. Lemm now presents himself to Lavretsky as a totally self-confident, uninhibited musician who has acquired the ability to play with complete fluency. Now the 'owl' is transformed into an imperious 'eagle'. We read: 'The old man cast an eagle-like glance at him, struck his breast with his hand and, after remarking slowly in his native language: "I have done this, for I am a great musician," he played his wonderful composition again' (p. 238). Thus Lemm achieves 'greatness' when his music sings not of sublime, ethereal love but of the 'natural' love now experienced by Lavretsky whose state of mind it 'directly copies'.

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But the most important feature of the composition has yet to be noted. It is the indictment of religious faith that it expresses by implicitly confirming that the reality which it celebrates is the only reality. Lavretsky first hears it, the author remarks, 'in the air above his head'. The sounds emerge from 'the two upper windows' of Lemm's 'little house' (p. 237). And the music is then described as follows: 'It touched on everything on earth that is dear, secret and sacred; it breathed of immortal sadness and it departed to die in the heavens' (p. 238). Thus the music which 'copies' the striving will, the passion and anguish of the experience of 'real' love, embraces the heavens as well as the earth. The reality of nature expressed in its sounds is the universal reality, the essential reality, with which God in His heaven is implicitly identified. Hence the godlike features of Lemm as he plays, the comparison of his room to 'a holy shrine' and the replacement of candles by 'natural' light. 'There were no candles in the room,' we read; 'the light of the risen moon fell obliquely through the windows' (p. 238). In effect, the passage indirectly explains why it is that religion, morality and idealism are consistently represented in the novel as delusions. If God exists, the novel asserts, He does so not as the embodiment of a higher, spiritual reality, not as the source of moral law, but as the creator and embodiment of amoral nature which demands only the responses of man's senses and will.

The conclusion, therefore, to be drawn from this reading of the passage is that of the two contrasting views of Liza expressed by commentators the critical view is the more justified. It is true that no explicit criticism can be found in Turgenev's portrait of his heroine. On the contrary, she is portrayed, like Rudin in Lezhnyov's final judgement, with warmth, sympathy and even admiration as the victim of a tragic misconception. But from beginning to end her portrait is filled with a cruel irony. The God whom she worships turns out to be one with the reality that she rejects in the name of that God, while her concept of duty is exposed as conflicting with the will of the God in

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whose name she proclaims it. Her obedience is paradoxically an unconscious rebellion. By refusing to assert her personal demands and to build her happiness on the unhappiness of another, she unconsciously breaks the law of God's world. And the irony extends even to the reason that she gives for her decision to follow the example of her teacher Agaf'ya (p. 243) and withdraw to the seclusion of the distant convent. She says in this connection to Marfa Timofeyevna: 'I know everything, both my own sins and those of others, and how papa made all our money; I know everything. All this has to be redeemed by prayer' (p. 286). Thus she is driven by the compulsion to atone to God for the sins of the 'predators' who, like her father, have simply obeyed God's 'natural' law.

But the ultimate irony that now becomes apparent is that the character whose actions conform most completely to God's law is paradoxically the ruthless, unscrupulous Varvara, who duly reappears in chapter 36. The timing of the return, of course, is highly significant. Like Lemm's 'passionate melody', it must be taken, as indicated, as a comment on Lavretsky's state of mind, as denoting likewise the resurgence of the 'pagan' Lavretsky who surrenders once more to the lure of love. Accordingly, it may also be taken as explaining why Lavretsky, despite his attraction to Liza, is unable to embrace her religious faith and accept fully her understanding of the purpose of life. It thus signals, in short, his continuing inner conflict, his inability, while continuing to despise his wife, to commit himself wholly to the path of Liza, and the triumph of Varvara with which the novel concludes is the evidence that the conflict remains unresolved.

To the accompaniment of her maid's cry 'A la guerre comme à la guerre', Varvara launches her campaign to secure her interests with characteristic skill and singleness of purpose. Appropriately her return is first announced by a sensory image, by 'the smell of patchouli' that fills Lavretsky's apartment (p. 244), and although she discovers that both the smell and her person have now become repugnant to him (pp.

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244, 249), she perceives at once that she will triumph once more, that for all his claims that he is no longer the same, he remains, in reality, the 'slave' of her will. In order to achieve her rehabilitation and the financial security that she seeks above all, she proceeds to deploy with complete success the skills as an actress which serve to remind us that Lavretsky first succumbed to the power of her spell while admiring her beauty during a theatrical performance (p. 166).³⁹ For her tactic in chapters 36-39 is to regain favour by aping herself the gestures and attitudes of a 'humble slave'. Accordingly her first actions when she presents herself to Lavretsky are to 'bend her carefully coiffured and perfumed head' and 'fall at his feet' (p. 245). 'Like a slave,' she says to him, 'I will carry out your command, whatever it may be' (p. 246). 'I will learn how to be submissive,' she declares (p. 250). And in chapter 39 the performance is repeated for Liza's mother. Varvara, we read, 'almost kneeled before her'. Expressing herself 'in Russian' (p. 254), she affirms: 'My heart has always been Russian and I have not forgotten my native land! ... Deal with me as with your own property!' (p. 256).⁴⁰ In neither case is her audience deceived, yet the tactic, as stated, is wholly successful. She not only succeeds in appropriating Lavretsky's apartment and, ultimately, in regaining control over Lavriki, but so captivates Mar'ya Dmitriyevna that she is tempted momentarily to relax her self-discipline and offer a brief, appropriately 'musical', glimpse of the reality behind the mask. We read:

Varvara Pavlovna suddenly started to play a noisy Strauss waltz which began with such a strong and rapid trill that Gedeonovsky even shuddered; in the middle of the waltz she suddenly switched to a melancholy tune and ended with the aria from *Lucia: Fra poco* ... She realised that cheerful music did not suit her position (p. 259).

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But by chapter 40 the need for restraint is no longer felt, and with the aid of her music and her fluent French she begins the task of 'enslaving' Panshin.

For Liza, of course, the return of Varvara means the end of the dream to which she briefly succumbed - the dream of combining her love for God with the happiness offered by the love of Lavretsky. It is a punishment, as she states (p. 272), inflicted by God, but not by the God in whom she believes and not for the sin that she thinks she has committed. It is inflicted by the same God who drives Rudin to his death, by the God who inspires Lavretsky's passion and propelled them in the garden into their 'terrifying' embrace and who now responds to the failure of the temptation to undermine her devotion to her illusory God. In the form of Varvara Liza is confronted with the unsuspected reality of the God that she worships, and Turgenev describes her reaction as follows:

The expression on Varvara Pavlovna's face ..., her cunning smile, her cold and, at the same time, soft glance, the movement of her hands and shoulders, her dress and her whole being aroused such a feeling of repugnance in Liza that she could not answer, and it was with an effort that she stretched out her hand Liza's heart began to beat violently and sickeningly: she could hardly restrain her feelings; she could hardly remain sitting where she was. It seemed to her that Varvara Pavlovna knew everything and, secretly triumphant, was teasing her (pp. 257-8).

Once more the irony is clearly apparent, and from this point on its presence is pervasive. Ironically the effect of the confrontation is merely to exacerbate Liza's sense of guilt. Insisting that marriages are made by God, she urges Lavretsky to return to Varvara (p. 272), thus ironically contriving, by serving *her* God, to ensure that Varvara, in serving her God, achieves the success with which the novel concludes.

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The revelation of the repugnant reality of God is followed by her complete self-dedication to God, by her self-withdrawal from the reality of life which is both a fitting comment on the nature of her God and a fitting conclusion to her tragic story.

Liza's response, therefore, to Varvara's campaign is predictably to vacate the field, to offer no-contest, to submit. It is the response of a 'slave' dictated by the God of 'slaves'. And although Lavretsky does not share her faith and even offers some token resistance, he nevertheless concludes by following her example,⁴¹ for Varvara's return has the similarly predictable effect of triggering the resurgence of his 'maternal' self and thus of prompting his final transformation. Herein lies the significance of the recollection of his mother (and of his thoughts on the lot of the ordinary Russian peasant) as he reflects in chapter 41 on the collapse of his dream. 'Remember your mother,' he muses, 'and how triflingly small were her demands' (p. 268). With the feeling, therefore, that his great-grandfather, the ferocious Andrey, is gazing down on him 'with contempt' from his portrait, he yields once more to the 'slavish' view of happiness as 'a luxury, an undeserved favour' (pp. 268-9). It is at this point that Turgenev compares him to 'a wounded soldier' and that Marfa Timofeyevna introduces the image of the fly 'whining in a spider's clutches' which so aptly conveys his position in the concluding chapters. Though he struggles to resist the 'spider's' advances, his reactions confirm Marfa Timofeyevna's judgement that he is 'a good man' who 'does not bite' (p. 284), and he is finally obliged to concede defeat. 'I see now,' he says to Varvara, 'that one must submit ... I repeat ... I will live with you ... or no, I cannot promise that ... I will renew our relationship and will again regard you as my wife' (p. 279). And four pages later, after he sadly remarks: 'Yes, you have achieved all your aims,' the author adds: 'Lavretsky bowed low to her' (p. 283). The 'maternal' Lavretsky thus reluctantly acknowledges the ineradicable presence of his 'paternal' self which makes his union with Liza an impossible

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dream. It is true that he acts on Liza's concept of duty, that while Liza prays for the salvation of sinners, he devotes himself wholly to the well-being of his serfs, thus finally assuming at the end of the novel the role commended by Mikhalevich after Varvara's betrayal. But his portrait in the Epilogue provides eloquent testimony to the continuation of the conflict that racks him throughout. 'He had become tranquil,' we read, 'and - why hide the truth? - he had become old not only in face and body, but in his soul as well,' and it is clear that despite his 'right to be satisfied', his achievements have brought him little contentment. 'Greetings, lonely old age!' he cries. 'Burn out, useless life!' (pp. 293-4). The cry expresses the pain of resignation to his failure to reconcile his conflicting selves, the pain of the martyr on his inherited cross.

Thus ends Turgenev's second dramatisation of the conflict between 'human logic' and the 'logic' of nature. In a work which bears witness to the 'prolonged thought' devoted its plot and structure⁴² the social and cultural problems of contemporary Russia are again treated *sub specie aeternitatis*. The inner conflict of Lavretsky, as we have seen, is a product of the social and cultural divisions which plagued his country in the mid-nineteenth century, but it also mirrors the conflict experienced, in Turgenev's phrase, by every 'decent man': the conflict between will and conscience, between the demands of the self and one's duty to others. The reader is informed that during the eight years that intervene between the end of the narrative and the events recorded in the Epilogue the 'crisis' had finally occurred in Lavretsky's life - 'that crisis which many do not experience but without which it is impossible to remain a decent man to the end: he had actually ceased to think about his own happiness, about selfish aims' (p. 293). The remark confirms what the novel implies - that 'decency' and happiness are incompatible.

But this does not exhaust the novel's message, for again, as in *Rudin*, Turgenev contrives to suggest the possibility of a 'middle way'

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which may bring, if not happiness, then at least peace of mind. The concluding anguish of Lavretsky, the novel tells us, is not the inevitable fate of the 'decent man'. The embodiment of this alternative is Marfa Timofeyevna, whose portrait, it seems, is intended to show that to curb one's self-will is not necessarily to become a 'victim' and submit to delusion and that altruism is not necessarily synonymous with self-denial. In this respect the role of Marfa Timofeyevna is directly comparable to that of Lezhnyov and Lipina. Her fierce independence has already been noted, as has her pride in her noble lineage. It expresses itself both in her refusal to marry and in her uncompromising hostility to all potentially threatening personalities, to such 'predators' as Glafira, Panshin and Varvara whom she instinctively recognises as such. Even her close confidante, the deeply religious Nastas'ya Karpovna, she addresses 'with the familiar "thou"'. Yet 'she lived with her,' we read, 'on an equal footing' and, in general, 'would not stand for any kind of servility' (pp. 180-1).⁴³ Her pride, therefore, is in no sense 'predatory'. It does not feed on the weakness of others. On the contrary, as her care and solicitude for Lavretsky (p. 148), his mother (pp. 154, 156) and Liza (pp. 228, 261, 268, 284-6) demonstrate, it gives her the strength to protect the 'victims' of life. Unlike, therefore, the pride of the other self-willed characters in the novel, it is compatible both with a deep sense of patriotism⁴⁴ and with religious faith, as the 'ancient tarnished icons' in her room testify (p. 148). Indeed, it is mentioned that she first 'took a liking' to Nastas'ya Karpovna because 'she prayed with such relish' (p. 180). Yet, as her 'tarnished' icons suggest, her faith, like her pride, is restrained, for excessive zeal is rejected as merely a form of servility.⁴⁵ Thus in chapter 17, we observe, she feels no compulsion to attend the late mass even though she has missed the early service (p. 181), and it is significant that she is as much at odds with Liza's teacher Agaf'ya as with Varvara and Panshin.⁴⁶ It is consequently not surprising that she should make every effort to

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dissuade Liza from entering the convent. 'This is all the result,' she cries, 'of Agaf'ya's influence; she's the one who muddled you' (p. 286).

Once more, therefore, Turgenev offers the vision of a possible 'synthesis'. In the figure of Marfa Timofeyevna a balance unknown to Lavretsky is achieved between egoistic and altruistic impulses.⁴⁷ 'I can not only be affectionate,' she says to Liza, 'I can bite as well' (p. 254), and by this combination of attributes she is uniquely qualified to challenge the imperatives of 'natural' law. Her strength of will, her ability to 'bite', enables her not only to assert herself in defence of the afflicted, but even to reconcile 'predator' and 'victim'. Hence the composition of her private 'establishment' (*shtat*): a dog, a cat, a bird, a nine-year-old girl and an 'elderly lady' (p. 180). By the will of Marfa Timofeyevna these 'natural' antagonists are fused into a family which stands as a symbol of 'unnatural' harmony and as a reproach to God and His 'natural' world.⁴⁸ But in the final reckoning, although the importance of the idea expressed by Marfa Timofeyevna's portrait must certainly be acknowledged, it must equally be regarded as significant that by comparison with Lezhnyov and Lipina in *Rudin* she plays a distinctly peripheral role in the novel. Introduced in chapter 17, her 'establishment' is scarcely glimpsed again and is wholly eclipsed by the protagonists' experience which she is powerless to influence. As a result, the idea of the 'middle way' is notably muted in *A Nest of the Gentry*, and in this sense the novel anticipates *On the Eve* from which uniquely it is totally absent.

IV

ON THE EVE

Although *On the Eve* (1859-60) was written in a period of only six months, its birth was plainly difficult. Having remarked in a letter to Pauline Viardot of 31 March 1859 on 'the child's' continuing refusal 'to appear',¹ Turgenev was still expressing uncertainty about the precise nature of his new creation within a month of completing the first draft. He wrote to the poet Fet on 9 October 1859: 'I am working, but the Lord knows what I am creating. I have entered a quarry and am striking out to the right and to the left, but for the present I can see nothing but dust!'² The question posed by the completed novel is whether the 'dust' ever settled.

This question is prompted by the impression of indecision created by the apparent tension in the novel between its social and philosophical themes. Describing events which take place in the year 1853, *On the Eve* is generally regarded as foreshadowing 'the appearance of the political activist in Russian life',³ as anticipating the transition in the late fifties from vague ideals to the notion of revolutionary action marked by the increasing prominence on the social scene of intellectuals of lower- or mixed-class origins (*raznochintsy*) distinguished by their more radical approach to Russia's problems. Since in 1853 they had yet to make their impact, Turgenev presents as a harbinger of the type his Bulgarian hero Dmitry Insarov who, together with the heroine Yelena Stakhova, was conceived to express, in his well known words, 'the idea of the need for *consciously* heroic natures ... so that the cause might be advanced.'⁴ As a result, the work has often been credited with a more optimistic tone than the two earlier novels. But it is accepted that this is not an easy view to sustain in the light of the novel's conclusion, for here Turgenev presents a view of man's destiny which appears to

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invalidate every conceivable cause for optimism and to suggest the futility of heroism of whatever kind. Critics have responded to this paradox in different ways. Thus while N. L. Brodsky found it simply unacceptable and declared the novel fundamentally flawed,⁵ Richard Freeborn has argued that the social and personal issues in the fiction are 'intentionally divorced' and that the optimism and pessimism which they respectively generate are therefore not incompatible but are rather balanced the one against the other.⁶ More recent commentators, however, have rejected both these views. They have argued that the philosophical theme must be taken as a comment on the social theme, either as expressing 'cynicism about the ultimate validity of national or social concerns as a propelling force for heroism'⁷ or as indicating 'the inadequacy of the ideals advanced by the new historical period',⁸ and the premise on which these views are based is fully endorsed in the present study. For it will be argued in this chapter that in *On the Eve* the two themes are no more separable than they are in *Rudin* and *A Nest of the Gentry* and that once more the social theme, far from being at variance with the philosophical theme, is partly the means by which it is expressed.

The most immediate indications of the primacy of the philosophical theme in Turgenev's third novel are the central role that he assigns in it to the heroine and the resultant, notably increased significance of the love theme. In this novel the theme of love as seduction, as nature's temptation of the idealist, receives its most complete development and is ultimately transformed into the more sinister theme of love as destruction. By her love for Insarov Yelena becomes paradoxically his executioner, the unconscious agent of nature's revenge. In the portraits of both hero and heroine we encounter the familiar psychological conflict between egoistic desire and altruistic idealism, but now it is the conflict in the mind of the heroine that dominates the fiction. Her relationships with the hero and the secondary characters reflect her developing experience of a

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conflict which fills the entire novel, and in this respect her position in the work is directly comparable to that of Lavretsky in *A Nest of the Gentry*.

The nature of this conflict is conveyed explicitly by two of the secondary characters in the novel's opening chapter. It has long been recognised, of course, that the conversation here between Shubin and Bersenev serves as a kind of philosophical overture to the work and that it essentially reiterates the distinction between the 'centripetal' and 'centrifugal' forces of human nature that Turgenev formulated in *Hamlet and Don Quixote*. It has not been so clearly recognised, however, that in *On the Eve* this distinction is again expressed in notably different terms and that in this different form it underpins the entire fictional edifice.

Shubin's observations to Bersenev in the course of this conversation on the characteristics of insect behaviour serve not only to illustrate the distinctive features of the 'centripetal' or egoistic force of human nature but also, and more significantly, to identify this force with the fundamental law of nature as Turgenev conceived it, according to which, as we have noted, everything sees itself as the centre of creation and fights incessantly to secure its interests. As Shubin indicates, therefore, with his example of the impertinent mosquito calmly sucking the blood of man, described as 'the tsar of creation'⁹ (VIII, 8),¹⁰ the forms in which the 'centripetal force' most notably manifests itself are self-assertion, predatory action and a primary commitment to the demands of the flesh. But Shubin, of course, is not only an interpreter of its manifestations; he also displays them in his own conduct and attitudes. To be precise, he displays the first and last of them. Declaring the aim of life to be personal happiness, he perceives its only source in sensual love. His passionate devotion to the life of the body is suggested at once, on the novel's first page, by the sensuous details of his physical portrait - by his 'fresh, round face', his 'soft brown eyes', his 'beautiful prominent

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lips' and his 'small white hands' (p. 7) - and it implicitly explains his choice of profession, his similar devotion to his art as a sculptor, in reference to which he exclaims to Bersenev: 'I am a butcher, sir. My business is flesh, the modelling of flesh - shoulders, legs and arms ...' (p. 9). His art, in short, is an expression of his distinctly 'pagan' attitude to life which is additionally conveyed by his admiration for the sculptors of antiquity and by such details as the 'plaster bust of Homer' that he receives as a gift from his patron (p. 20) and his toast in chapter 11 to the pagan Bulgarian ruler Krum (p. 57); and throughout the novel it continues to exhibit, as the reference in the Epilogue to his 'Bacchante' confirms (p. 167), the sensuality reflected in his early comment: 'I love beauty only in women' (p. 10).

The art of Shubin, however, also discloses the flaw in his 'pagan' personality to which his uncertainty about the precise form of Krum's name¹¹ conceivably alludes. It does so most revealingly in the caricature of himself and the peasant girl Annushka that he shows to Bersenev in chapter 20. It is described as follows:

Annushka was portrayed as a handsome, plump wench with a low forehead, bloated eyes and a pertly up-turned nose. Her coarse lips grinned insolently, and the whole face expressed sensuality and a careless audacity, though it was not ill-natured. Shubin had represented himself as a gaunt, emaciated playboy with sunken cheeks; thin strands of hair hung impotently down, there was a vacant expression in his lifeless eyes, and his nose was sharply pointed like that of a corpse (p. 100).

The caricature is a representation of the truth proclaimed by Shubin in the first chapter: 'In love there is life and death' (p. 13). It presents the experience of love as an expression of Shubin's Schopenhauerian conception of life - not simply as a pursuit of sensual gratification, but as a manifestation of the 'strife' of nature, as a conflict between the

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strong and the weak in which the blood of the latter is 'sucked' by the former, like that of the 'tsar' by the hungry mosquito. Hence the 'insolent grin' of the 'bloated' Annushka and the 'sunken cheeks' of the corpse-like Shubin. And the artist's self-portrait is an eloquent comment on his own personality which provides the real explanation of his choice of profession, for his portrayal of himself as the 'emaciated' victim is an oblique acknowledgement of his lack of the strength and the predatory instincts which are required for success in the world as he sees it. Complementing the reference in chapter 3 to his 'delicate constitution' which prevented him from joining his brothers in the 'corps of cadets' (p. 20), it explains, in effect, his incapacity for action, his inability to realise his declared intention of making himself 'number one' (p. 14). Instead of acting, he can only reflect in his art the qualities which equip others to act. Hence the particular appeal for him as an artist of precisely those attributes, those manifestations of the 'centripetal force', that he lacks - the determination and strength reflected in the head of Insarov (p. 56) and in the 'phenomenal' muscles of the German officer whom Insarov tosses into the lake at Tsaritsyno in chapter 15 (p. 75). Having replaced the study of medicine (the science of the body) with the study of art (p. 20), Shubin makes his art a substitute for the kind of purposeful, predatory action of which he is incapable. And this explains not only his ineffectual intervention at Tsaritsyno, where his defence of the ladies is entirely verbal and lapses briefly into a paean to the menacing German's physique (p. 75), but also the compensation that he finds in dedication to his art for the failure of his pursuit of the captivating Yelena. The more clearly his hopes are shown to be futile, the more frantically he toils in the privacy of his studio, applying his energies to his busts of Insarov which he sees as a vengeance on his triumphant rival. 'Like a Corsican,' he says to Bersenev, 'I'm more concerned with my vendetta than with pure art' (p. 98). But the distinction ironically confirms Shubin's weakness. It is exposed by the

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novel as a false distinction, for in the later chapters, as will be seen, it is 'pure art' that is acclaimed as the artist's 'vendetta', as a triumph of the will and form of conquest which demand of the artist not only those 'pagan' attributes that Shubin possesses but also those which he lacks. Above all, the novel suggests, it demands that strength and total self-assurance that strike Shubin so forcibly in the art of the pagan 'ancients', who had no need, he observes, to 'pursue beauty', as he himself pursues the beautiful Yelena. 'It just came into their works,' he declares, 'God knows from where - perhaps from heaven. The whole world belonged to them' (p. 9). His false distinction between 'pure art' and 'vendetta' is a reflection in the artist of the flaw in the man - a flaw that condemns him to perpetual failure. His failure to win the hand of Yelena is explained at the end by the comment on his art - that he had 'not sufficiently studied the ancients' (p. 166).

The portrait of Shubin, therefore, illuminates at once the fundamental difference between Turgenev's concerns in *On the Eve* and *Hamlet and Don Quixote*. His critical stance towards the artist is explained, as we have seen, not by his egoism but, on the contrary, by its limitations, by the inability to translate his egoistic desires into purposeful action which distinguishes him from the predatory mosquito. The clear implication is that man's capacity for such action is contingent on his subservience to the egoistic force of nature that drives the mosquito and that activism and altruism are mutually exclusive. The reason for Shubin's weakness may thus be inferred, and his friendship with Bersenev implicitly confirms it.

The portrait of Bersenev gives sustained expression to the conviction that the 'centrifugal force' of human nature is alien to the natural order. His attitude to life is disclosed at once by his posture in the opening scene. While Shubin lies on his stomach, facing the earth, Bersenev lies on his back, peering into the distance (p. 7). In response to Shubin's observations and the surrounding scene he makes a clear distinction in chapter 1 between the 'satisfaction' with which nature is

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content and that 'needed' by man (p. 12) and insists that the latter is to be obtained not from the life of the body, which Shubin commends to him,¹² but from the life of the mind, thus demonstrating his loyalty to the memory of his father - the author, we are told, of 'an unpublished work on "The Manifestations of the Spirit on Earth"' (p. 49). Hence his choice of an academic career, his inherited addiction to the thought of Schelling (pp. 23-4), and the physical contrast between himself and Shubin. We read:

Compared with Shubin his companion seemed an old man, and no one looking at his angular figure would have thought that he was enjoying himself and at his ease. He lay in an awkward posture; his large head, broad at the top and narrowing at the base, sat awkwardly on his long neck. Awkwardness was apparent even in the position of his arms, of his body in its short, tightly fitting black coat and of his long legs with their knees raised like the hind legs of a dragon-fly (pp. 7-8).

Recalling the description of the similarly unappealing appearance of the youthful idealist Basistov in *Rudin* (VI, 245), the portrait reflects the low priority that Bersenev assigns to the physical life and, in so doing, it expresses a judgement, the negative character of which can hardly be doubted and which serves to substantiate the inferences drawn from the portrait of Shubin. The unattractive physical image of Bersenev, which is matched by the awkward manner in which he expresses himself,¹³ is an additional indication that in *On the Eve*, as in *Rudin*¹⁴ and *A Nest of the Gentry*, the altruistic type of personality is not accorded the unequivocal preeminence that Turgenev gives it in *Hamlet and Don Quixote*, and the point is confirmed by his portrait in general. For Bersenev's altruism - his advocacy of 'love-sacrifice' as distinct from 'love-delight' and his ardent belief in the unifying power of such words as 'art', 'fatherland', 'learning', 'freedom' and 'justice'

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(p. 14) - is represented less as an expression of nobility of spirit than as a mark of naivety; and the source of this naivety, as in the case of Rudin, is again the detachment from the essential reality which Turgenev identifies with the life of the body, with the law that demands the assertion of the self. It is this that explains his similar ineffectuality and his deficiencies as a communicator, bequeathed by his father,¹⁵ which show the fallacy of his claims on behalf of 'learning'. And we may now understand the implications for Shubin both of his friendship with Bersenev and of the author's remark on the opening page that, though lying on his stomach, he was also, like his friend, 'peering somewhere into the distance' (p. 7). Conveying the presence in this egoist of a 'centrifugal' inclination, the posture, like the friendship, reflects the inner contradiction which deprives Shubin of the ability to fulfil his desires.

But the friendship is equally informative about Bersenev, for it alludes to the presence of a contradiction in him too which is similarly brought to light by the experience of love. While trumpeting the virtues of sublime 'love-sacrifice', the altruist is seduced by 'love-delight'. Attracted, like Shubin, to the beauty of Yelena, he begins to experience unfamiliar sensations which are allusively and aptly linked with nature. 'A faint rustling,' we read in chapter 5, 'like the rustle of a woman's dress started up intermittently in the tops of the near-by trees and aroused in Bersenev a sensation of sweetness and awe, almost of fear' (p. 26). And while he is singing to Yelena the praises of Insarov, the author interpolates the comment: 'When we wish to please another person, we often praise our friends in conversation with him, rarely suspecting that in this way we are praising ourselves' (p. 62). The statement encapsulates the contradiction that develops in Bersenev between his instinctive dedication to the service of others and the egoism inseparable from the experience of love. This contradiction is the source of his subsequent pain. As Yelena responds to his praise of Insarov, a 'dark and mysterious feeling,' we read,

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'lodged in his heart; he succumbed to an unpleasant sadness' (p. 53). And by chapter 25 this 'sadness' has grown into the anguish inflicted by the invidious role in which he finds himself cast of obedient messenger between the two lovers. 'It is strange,' he remarks bitterly, 'how fate always makes me their go-between' (p. 119). The pain that consumes him is Turgenev's comment on the falsity of his distinction between nature and man. It is the penalty he pays for disregarding the truth proclaimed by Shubin: 'There just aren't different kinds of love' (p. 12).¹⁶

The portraits of Shubin and Bersenev establish the philosophical and psychological boundaries within which the action of the novel takes place. While contrasting the egoist with the altruistic idealist, they present two variations of a common dilemma resulting from the conflict implied by their friendship. At the same time this conflict in both cases is brought into focus by their love of the same woman, whose experience of the same conflict is thus suggested. It is appropriate, therefore, that Yelena's relationships with Shubin and Bersenev should be the means by which she is initially characterised. Her impatience with the former and benevolence towards the latter convey her state of mind in the early chapters.

A further indication at this stage of Yelena's position in relation to the two poles of the psychological contrast is her relationship with her German companion Zoya. In Turgenev's preliminary list of characters Zoya was cast as Yelena's sister (p. 497) and was evidently intended to play the role, comparable to that of Ol'ga in Pushkin's *Yevgeny Onegin*, of a contrasting personification of egoistic, physical beauty. Although her position and nationality were later changed (for reasons that will later become apparent), she retains this role in the completed novel and the affinity with Shubin that it clearly implies. But Zoya, unlike Shubin, is all of a piece, knowing nothing of the contradictions which incapacitate the artist, and this difference may presumably be taken to explain both his frustrating inability to

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reproduce her likeness (p. 22) and their failure to develop a significant relationship. Unable to take her seriously, he affects with her a bantering tone¹⁷ and is even given to making unflattering remarks about her for which in chapter 4 Yelena reproaches him. Noteworthy, however, is his interrupted response to the reproach. 'But if I wanted,' he replies, 'to pay you back in your own coin, I might remind you ...' (p. 25). The reference is evidently to similar remarks which Yelena had had occasion to make about Zoya and, more generally, to her distinctly scornful and neglectful attitude to her companion which impels Zoya, we learn, to spend most of her time as a companion to the heroine's mother.¹⁸ The implication is clear. Complementing her treatment of Shubin, Yelena's attitude to Zoya is a further allusion to her suppression of the physical life which explains both her interest in Bersenev and her refusal in chapter 2 to accompany Zoya to the river. 'The heat frightened her,' says Zoya, 'but I have no fear of it' (p. 17).

Such, then, are the more obvious oblique indications of Yelena's gravitation at the beginning of the novel towards the 'centrifugal' or altruistic pole of the central contrast. Its more direct reflection is her aspiration to 'active goodness', the concern for the welfare of all oppressed creatures, 'even insects and reptiles', which is most spectacularly demonstrated in chapter 6 by her attempts to liberate a fly, to the accompaniment of her father's taunts, from the spider that is 'sucking' it (p. 33). This illustration, which reminds us of Marfa Timofeyevna's comment on life in *A Nest of the Gentry*, was clearly not chosen at random, for it graphically reaffirms the conception of altruism as alien to the natural order that emerges from the portraits of Bersenev and Shubin. As a symbolic act, Yelena's intrusion between predator and victim is cognate with her self-concealment from the sun. It implies her self-exclusion from the natural process, a denial of her 'natural' self which can only lead, according to the logic of the ideas developed in the novel, to the wretchedness and frustration of a Bersenev.

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The portraits of Bersenev and Shubin, however, enable us at once to identify Yelena's ideal of 'active goodness', like that of Rudin, as a contradiction in terms, as a potent allusion to inner conflict. And other reflections of this conflict are clearly apparent. Thus the protectress of the afflicted, for example, is described as intolerant of weakness (p. 32), and she complains in her diary: 'There is no one to whom I want to stretch out a hand.' 'I am alone,' she writes, 'always alone with my goodness and my wickedness' (p. 80). Her physical portrait supplies additional evidence. We read:

In everything about her, in the thoughtful and rather nervous expression of her face, in her clear but changeable eyes, in her strained-looking smile and quiet, uneven voice there was something tense and electric, something impulsive and hasty, something, in a word, that was not to everyone's liking and which to some people was even repellent (p. 32).

And three pages later the author comments: 'In solitude her soul would flare up and subside; she struggled like a bird in a cage,¹⁹ though there was no cage; no one restricted or restrained her, yet she struggled and languished' (p. 35).

These are merely a few of the many allusions in the early chapters of the novel to the incipient rebellion of Yelena's 'natural' personality, of her egoism or 'wickedness', against the invisible 'cage' of dogmatic altruism (or 'goodness') that inhibits its free expression. It is this rebellion that explains the 'secret respect and awe' with which she listens to the 'new, unfamiliar words' of the peasant-girl Katya who dreams of escaping from her 'malevolent aunt' (pp. 33-4). By the details woven into her brief portrait - the garden setting of their meetings, her 'garland of cornflowers', her 'sharp, quick, almost animal-like eyes' and the 'wild soldier's song' that she sings²⁰ - Katya is identified as a child of nature. It is nature's

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freedom to which she aspires, and the same aspiration is thus attributed to Yelena, explaining her habit of looking out through the window. 'Suddenly,' we read, 'something strong and nameless which she could not control would boil up inside her and demand to break out' (p. 35). The 'natural' image of the 'bird' is thus again evoked, foreshadowing the release into nature's world that she later discovers in the experience of love. Hence the embrace in chapter 23 in which Insarov breaks her 'little chain' (p. 114).

The liberation, however, of Yelena's 'natural' self from the 'chains' of constricting altruism is not only demonstrated in the novel; it is also explained. It is in this connection that the portraits of her parents acquire a particular importance. Through her mother, we learn, Yelena is related to the egoist Shubin, and she is significantly credited by the artist with a facial resemblance to both her parents (p. 10). Shubin himself, it may be noted, finds this resemblance totally incomprehensible, but his astonishment may be taken as complementing his inability to capture her likeness in clay (p. 10) as evidence of the complexity of her personality which his own deficiencies prevent him from understanding. His difficulties with his bust of Yelena parallel the problems posed by the face of Zoya, hinting at the existence of an unsuspected similarity.

Yelena's affinity with her 'affectionate and tender-hearted' mother (p. 20) is first suggested in chapter 2 by the reference to the 'embroidered cambric scarf' that serves Anna Vasil'yevna as 'a defence against the sun' (p. 18). Both mother and daughter are thus portrayed on their first appearance in the novel as 'frightened' by the heat, as fugitives from the life of the senses. Turgenev makes it clear, however, that their common reaction to the sun is, in fact, a symptom of quite different afflictions, for although we are evidently meant to see the kindly Anna Vasil'yevna as the genetic source of her daughter's altruistic fervour, her fear of the sun is ultimately revealed as denoting something very different from rejection of the physical

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life. 'Anna Vasil'yevna,' we are told in chapter 3, 'did not like going out' (p. 20), but in chapter 15 we learn that 'sometimes, quite unexpectedly, she displayed an irresistible longing for something unusual, for some surprising *partie de plaisir*' (p. 68). The visit to Tsaritsyno, described in chapter 15, is the result of such a 'longing', and its effect on her is highly revealing. 'She seemed another person,' we read, 'and twenty years younger. Bersenev told her so. "Yes, yes," she said, "I had my day too, you know. I would have held my own in any company"' (p. 73). The expedition, therefore, offers a brief glimpse of a notably different Anna Vasil'yevna from the submissive, bed-ridden victim of headaches and gum-boils whose groans and complaints litter the pages of the novel. Her metamorphosis reflects a momentary rekindling of her Shubin blood, a shortlived reassertion of her 'irresistible longing' to be the sensually alert, extrovert, sun-loving woman of her distant youth. And the reason for the change is clearly disclosed: the absence at Tsaritsyno of the man who brought her youth to an end, her temporary release from the clutches of the predator who had 'seized hold' of her and 'conquered' her at her uncle's ball (pp. 18-19). The two contrasting faces of Anna Vasil'yevna illuminate the role in the novel of Nikolay Artem'yevich, the former Junker and guardsman who became her husband. They reveal the implications of his mocking response when Yelena intervenes to save the captive fly, for the allusion is to his affinities with the blood-sucking spider which explain Anna Vasil'yevna's usual sickly condition and her reaction to the expiry of her interval of freedom: 'She went completely to pieces and announced as she bade her companions good night that she felt scarcely alive' (pp. 78-9). In the figure of Nikolay Artem'yevich the destructive, predatory, self-assertive force of nature takes the form of an insatiable sensuality which, having sapped the vitality of his 'conquered' wife, seeks to inflict the same fate on his German mistress. And the submission of his wife is also explained - by the same Shubin blood from which her

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vitality derived, by the weakness reflected in her nephew's caricature. With his artistic prediction of the fate that awaits him Shubin implicitly explains the fate of his aunt.

In chapter 6 the reader is informed that Yelena 'had grown up in a very strange way; at first she had adored her father, then she had become passionately attached to her mother, and then she had cooled towards both of them, especially towards her father' (p. 32). The importance of these disclosures, which in relation to the social theme are usually taken as denoting her incipient rejection of her class and its values, is that they confirm, and explain in genetic terms, her noted ambivalence, for they effectively represent her state of mind in terms of oscillations between the two poles of the central contrast. Her instinctive inclination initially, we note, was significantly towards her father, the embodiment of 'wickedness', of the assertive, egoistic personality. Then followed, we may infer, a conscious reaction against this inclination which expressed itself in the replacement of her father by her mother in her affections and which is reflected in the indicated affinities with her mother that she displays at the beginning of the novel. Her subsequent 'cooling', however, towards her mother too may be taken to allude to the 'struggling' of the 'bird' within her, to the resurgence of the force of her paternal inheritance which dictates her conduct in the following chapters, paradoxically explaining, as will be seen, the increasing antipathy that her father provokes. For it is precisely in the form of destructive sensuality, of 'love' as it is depicted in Shubin's caricature, that Yelena's liberated personality is ultimately to express itself. Her subconscious aspiration to the freedom of nature results in the experience of 'natural' love, of love experienced as the kind of triumph which her father achieved over her unfortunate mother.

Once more, therefore, the relationship between parents and their offspring receives emphasis in *On the Eve* primarily as an expression of the idea of genetically determined psychological attributes.²¹ Not

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only is the freedom to which Yelena aspires ultimately exposed as a cruel illusion, but her lack of freedom is ironically reflected in the aspiration itself. Her apparently free or conscious acts are merely responses to subconscious promptings. Hence the comment that 'sometimes she did not understand herself and even feared herself' (p. 35). And it is not only from her parents that these promptings derive, for we need also to consider in this connection the mysterious figure of her father's uncle.

Uvar Ivanovich Stakhov, a retired cavalry officer, is described as 'a man corpulent to the point of immobility with small, sleepy, yellow eyes and thick colourless lips in a bloated yellow face', and the author adds: 'He did nothing and hardly even thought, but if he did think he kept his thoughts to himself' (p. 40). He is usually captured, therefore, in a state of complete stillness and apparent mental paralysis intent solely on feeding his voracious appetite.²² Occasionally, however, he emerges from this state to utter curious sounds and uncoordinated words with which he usually contrives to make a negligible impact but which are notably credited by the egoist Shubin with the sublime profundity of oracular pronouncements. He is acclaimed, in fact, by Shubin as the repository and embodiment of 'natural' wisdom and truth, as 'the force of the black earth' (p. 44). Once more, therefore, the notion of a distinctly 'pagan' force is evoked, and the details of the portrait and Shubin's remarks suggest that in the figure of this retired, 'sleepy' warrior, who is peculiarly adept, we are told, at reproducing the calls of birds (p. 73), Turgenev presents us with a symbol of the vital force of nature in its latent, dormant state. Hence, perhaps, the combination of the notions of 'Samson' and 'sleep' (*son*) in the name *Samoson* conferred on the divan on which he rests (p. 49).²³ He is a living embodiment of those qualities of nature to which Turgenev refers in his tale *A Journey into the Forest Zone* (1857): 'A calm and slow animation, unhurried and restrained feelings and power, an equilibrium of health in every

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individual creature - this is its basis, its invariable law, this is the foundation on which it stands and maintains itself' (VII. 69-70). And this interpretation suggests in its turn that Turgenev's intention in the novel is to show the 'awakening' of this 'sleeping Samson', the progressive activation of this dormant force, in the succeeding generations of the Stakhov family. In the person of Nikolay Artem'yevich, who 'was generally cold and patronising with his uncle,' we read, 'though he recognised in him "traces of the genuine Stakhov blood"' (p. 103), it first expresses itself in the form of insatiable sensuality and a desperate craving for authority and status.²⁴ But to gratify this craving he has nothing but words, the power of his voice and the high-sounding phrases which are merely a development of his uncle's 'sounds'.²⁵ Hence his failure to impose his will both on his German mistress and on his restless daughter to whom he despairingly refers as 'an enthusiastic republican' (p. 32).²⁶ In chapter 6 it is reported that while Yelena 'had the reputation of being an unusual child', he 'was proud of her', but 'when she grew up, he began to fear her' (p. 32). His fear reflects his growing awareness of the more powerful will that she duly displays. For in the figure of Yelena the dormant force which merely echoes bird-calls becomes, as we have noted, a liberated 'bird'.²⁷ It acquires the ability to achieve a genuine authority, to conquer not only weaklings like Anna Vasil'yevna but genuine heroes like the Bulgarian stranger.

When Yelena first hears about Insarov in chapter 10, her response is dictated, of course, by her state of mind as it is characterised at the beginning of the novel. Her interest is aroused by his idealism, by his selfless dedication to the cause of his people. This example of altruism revealed to her by the altruist Bersenev inflames her own altruistic fervour. But it soon becomes evident that the particular fascination of Insarov lies for her not only in his ideal as such but in his active commitment to its realisation, to her own ideal of 'active goodness'. In the figure of Insarov, in short, she encounters

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for the first time in her life a powerful reflection of her own duality, and this explains both her reaction to him and Turgenev's methods of introducing him to her. The introduction first takes the form, as stated, of a verbal portrait presented by the altruist Bersenev. It is accordingly the altruism of Insarov that receives the emphasis. But when Yelena first meets him in chapter 12, she is taken aback by the indications of qualities which this portrait omitted. We read:

Insarov made less of an impression on Yelena than she herself had expected, or, more accurately, he made a different impression on her from that which she had expected. She liked his directness and lack of constraint, and she liked his face; but Insarov as a person with his quiet firmness and unaffected simplicity did not fit in somehow with the image which had formed in her mind under the influence of Bersenev's stories (p. 59).

This reaction is explained by Insarov's physical portrait as Turgenev presents it five chapters earlier:

He was a young man of about twenty-five, lean and sinewy, with a hollow chest and bony hands. He had sharp features, an aquiline nose, straight blue-black hair, a narrow forehead, small, steady, deep-set eyes and thick eyebrows; when he smiled, his fine white teeth showed momentarily from behind his thin, hard, over-precise lips (p. 37).

Bersenev's omissions are thus disclosed - by the 'sharp features', the 'aquiline nose', the 'fine white teeth' and the 'thin, hard lips' of the 'natural' predator. The two portraits combine to reflect Insarov's ambivalence, and we may now understand why a second, wholly personal, motive is suggested for his hostility to the Turkish

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oppressors of his native land: the desire to avenge his murdered parents. The two motives - personal revenge and altruistic duty - are another reflection of his split personality.

The ambivalent heroine, therefore, is confronted with an ambivalent hero, and the rest of the novel records her response - the response dictated by those forces in her personality which she herself is powerless to control. From this point onwards their relationship is divisible into two distinct phases, the first of which ends and the second begins with their declarations of love in chapter 18, the central chapter of the novel. In both phases they are portrayed in a contrasting light. Although their ambivalence is repeatedly in evidence, the contrast before chapter 18 is produced by the continuing reflections of Yelena's altruistic zeal and the emphasis placed on Insarov's 'natural' attributes - on the resolve, the inner strength and the physical power of the 'man of action'. He is associated by Shubin with the pagan emperor Krum (p. 57); he is compared to Themistocles on the eve of Salamis (p. 64); and he is implicitly likened to Belisarius (p. 98). And in chapter 15 the heirs of Belisarius's Gothic foes²⁸ retreat at Tsaritsyno before his 'menacing' figure, cowed, we read, by his 'sinister, dangerous' expression (p. 77). Reacting to his feat by the Tsaritsyno lake, Yelena even dreams that he will kill her (p. 80). But the heroine of chapters 15 and 16 is no longer the Yelena who hides from the sun. Her increasing attraction to the powerful Bulgarian reflects the changes taking place in her own personality. It signals the impending liberation of the 'struggling bird', the subconscious response of the egoist within her, of her resurgent paternal or 'natural' self, to the challenge represented by this 'natural' force. Her participation in the Tsaritsyno outing is itself a reflection of Insarov's effect on her. Like her mother, she now immerses herself in the sunlit beauty of nature. 'The sun,' we read, 'already stood high in a cloudless azure sky when the carriages drove up to the ruined castle of Tsaritsyno The weather was marvellous. Everything around was

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blossoming, buzzing and singing' (p. 70). Such is the setting, the world of nature, in which she yields to the call of 'natural' love. As she recalls Insarov's feat on the return journey, her thoughts are described as follows: 'Initially she had been very frightened; then she had been struck by the expression on his face; then she had begun to reflect on it all' (p. 78). From these reflections which her diary records emerges six pages later her startled cry: 'I am in love' (p. 84). Her love is her response to the challenge that he poses, to his triumphant display of power and 'menace'.

The first phase of the relationship, therefore, may be characterised as reflecting on one level the decisive, albeit unwitting, contribution of Insarov to Yelena's self-assertion, to the 'awakening' of her 'natural' self. It reflects the death of the heroine of the early chapters to which her dream of him killing her is perhaps meant to allude. But it also reflects a concomitant development - a corresponding weakening of Insarov himself. An early indication, of course, of the hero's underlying weakness or fallibility is the reference in chapter 7 to his 'hollow chest'.²⁹ But significantly, and paradoxically, the psychological implications of this physical defect emerge most prominently in the two chapters (13 and 14) which directly precede the description of his triumph at Tsaritsyno. Thus when Bersenev refers in conversation with Yelena to a meal taken by Insarov with two of his Bulgarian associates and remarks: 'Themistocles also took food on the eve of the battle of Salamis,' she replies: 'Yes, but then there was a battle the next day' (p. 64). The reply seems to raise doubts even at this stage in the novel about Insarov's ability to fight a battle, to realise his dream of liberating his people. And three pages later this allusion to the weakness of the idealist is complemented by the similar doubts that are raised about his ability to act on his personal motive. Asked by Yelena whether he had met the murderer of his mother during his travels in Bulgaria in the years 1848-1849, he replies: 'I didn't look for him; not because I

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didn't feel that I had the right to kill him - I would have killed him quite calmly - but because there's no place for private vengeance when it's a question of a whole nation's vengeance - no, that's not the right word - when it's a question of a nation's liberation' (p. 67). The suspicion is thus prompted that Insarov is no more capable than Shubin of exacting 'vengeance'. Regarded in the light of the indicated implications of the central contrast, his subordination of egoistic demands to altruistic considerations and substitution for 'vengeance' of the word 'liberation' must clearly be seen as additional indications of his questionable capacity for purposeful action.

At first sight, of course, it seems strange that these revelations of Insarov's weakness should be inserted before the description of his victory over the German at Tsaritsyno. The recorded reactions, however, to his feat show that the paradox is more apparent than real. While Insarov himself reacts with 'shame' (p. 78), his spell-bound audience reacts with laughter. And significantly the first to be convulsed is the egoist Shubin, while 'the loudest, longest and most frenzied laughter,' we are told, 'came from Uvar Ivanovich' (p. 77), the symbol incarnate of dormant nature. Ostensibly the cause of the mirth, to which Yelena also soon succumbs, is the spectacle of the German floundering in the lake, but Shubin intervenes to confirm with his irony that it is also intended as a comment on the victor. 'Well now,' he remarks to Bersenev, 'there's a real hero for you: he throws drunken Germans into the water' (p. 79). Such, it is suggested, is the limit of Insarov's capabilities.

The impression produced, therefore, by these telling insights into Insarov's limitations is that before chapter 18 his psychological experience is directly the reverse of that of Yelena, that the reassertion of the heroine's 'natural', egoistic self is accompanied by the weakening of that of the hero. As Yelena increasingly asserts her ego, so Insarov displays the signs of weakness which gradually dispel his 'imperial' aura and foreshadow the sickness that ultimately fells him.

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The effect of these developments is that by chapter 24 the contrast in the first phase of the relationship has been replaced by its opposite: the initial positions of hero and heroine have been dramatically reversed. And perhaps the retention of Tsaritsyno as the luxuriant setting of the *partie de plaisir*³⁰ may be seen as alluding to this impending reversal, for renovated and completed by the regicide Catherine II, it initially belonged to, and was named after, Irina Godunova, the wife of the weak Tsar Fyodor Ivanovich. Commenting on Insarov's future in chapter 25, the doctor who tends him quotes the motto of Cesare Borgia. He remarks: 'There are two possible outcomes: aut Caesar aut nihil' (p. 120). The question is thus posed: which of the two contrasting aspects of Insarov's personality so vividly reflected in Shubin's two busts of him (p. 99) will ultimately prevail: the egoistic 'Caesar' or the altruistic 'slave'. Five chapters later the predictable answer is given by Shubin's remarks to Uvar Ivanovich: 'They say that Insarov's coughing blood; that's bad. I saw him the other day: you could have modelled Brutus from his face there and then' (p. 141). The death of 'Caesar' is thus confirmed. The egoist succumbs to the altruist within him, the autocrat Caesar to the republican Brutus.³¹

From the sequence of events it emerges clearly that these contrasting developments in the personalities of the two central figures, that of Yelena's self-assertion and that of Insarov's progressive decline, are meant to be seen as interdependent. In both cases the decisive stage is marked by the declarations of love in chapter 18. It is precisely this act of mutual self-commitment which creates the need for Yelena's passport, for this formal recognition of her achievement of selfhood, and thus propels Insarov into the pouring rain which causes the collapse of his physical health. And the lovers themselves, of course, suspect the connection, for Insarov's illness is seen by them both as a punishment inflicted by a merciless God for their sin of compromising their dedication to duty by aspiring

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to personal happiness, to a happiness understood as forbidden to man. But both are prey to the misconception that produces the tragedy of Liza Kalitina in *A Nest of the Gentry*, for again the punishment derives not from a God who presides on high but from a God who is one with nature's law which condemns even lovers to kill and be killed. Again it is fitting to recall in this connection Turgenev's remark to Pauline Viardot: 'Cette chose indifférente, impérieuse, vorace, égoïste, envahissante, c'est la vie, la nature, c'est Dieu.' This is the God to whose non-existent freedom the 'natural' Katya aspires (p. 34), to whom Yelena ironically appeals to 'subdue' in her 'these impulses' (p. 81) and to 'have mercy' on her when she announces her love (p. 84), and who witnesses her obedience to His implacable will from His wayside shrine in chapter 18. Her love is an expression of the will of this God who dictates the triumph of her 'natural' self and impels her into battle with the Bulgarian idealist. It is the 'one kind' of love to which Shubin refers - love as an expression of self-assertion, of the 'struggle for existence' as reflected in his caricature and in the grotesque relationship of Yelena's parents. It is a 'voracious, egoistic, aggressive' love - a love which expresses the need to conquer. Hence her determined pursuit of the evasive Insarov. As late as chapter 17, we note, he is still at pains to point out to Bersenev: 'I am a Bulgarian, and I don't need the love of a Russian' (p. 86), and to Yelena's request for a final meeting he responds with silence (p. 87). But even in chapter 6 it is observed that 'nothing would make her give way in her demands' (p. 32). Undeterred by his failure to grant her wish, she sets out 'with her gaze fixed straight ahead of her' (p. 90) and is appropriately drawn to the symbolic shrine where, taking the lead in declaring her love (p. 93), she ensures that God's will is finally done. 'The calm ... of the goal achieved,' we read, 'filled her entire being like a heavenly wave' (p. 94).

The two principal episodes in the following ten chapters are Yelena's two visits, in defiance of convention, to Insarov's apartment

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in chapters 23 and 28. The events of the other eight chapters serve almost without exception merely to highlight the implications of these two episodes to which Turgenev was doubtless referring when he wrote to P. V. Annenkov in connection with the novel: 'There is a great deal, it seems, of the erotic in it.'³² It seems not coincidental that reference is made in the chapter preceding the description of the first visit to 'traces of the genuine Stakhov blood' (p. 103), for in these two scenes, which respectively precede and follow Insarov's illness, he is confronted with a Yelena whose personality has been totally usurped by the urge to dominate and the consuming sensuality inherited from her father.³³ The two visits represent the successive stages of a planned campaign of sexual conquest, the first of which is the real cause of the illness that destroys his resistance to the final assault.

As soon as Yelena enters the apartment in chapter 23, she sees that her power over Insarov has not been weakened by separation. Immediately, we read, 'Insarov began to tremble, rushed towards her and fell on his knees' (p. 110) and shortly afterwards 'sat down, not on the sofa, but on the floor at her feet' (p. 111). Her response to this evidence of her undiminished authority is to issue at once the succession of commands ('Get up!', 'Bolt the door!', 'Sit down!', 'Here, take off my gloves!' (pp. 110-11))³⁴ which mark the beginning of Insarov's seduction. The passage continues:

He began first to unbutton one glove and then to pull it off. When he had half pulled it off, he pressed his lips eagerly to the white, soft, slender hand beneath it. Yelena trembled and tried to prevent him with the other hand; he began to kiss the other hand. Yelena pulled it away; he threw back his head; she looked into his face and bent down - their lips met ... (p. 111).

Significant here are Yelena's gestures of resistance. Like her immediate impulse to 'tear herself away', they reflect the limited

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purpose of this first attack, which is simply to inflame Insarov's desire and thus to ensure her continuing power. Having obtained this assurance, she can now declare: 'I am the lady of the house here. You must have no secrets from me' (p. 111). And two pages later she recalls: 'I remember that when I was still a child ... we had a maid who ran away. She was caught and forgiven and she lived with us for a long time afterwards ...' (p. 113). The reference is to the obstacles to their elopement, but more notably it alludes to the possessiveness of the Stakhovs which is now so apparent in Yelena herself. 'And to think,' she cries, 'that you wanted to run away from me! You didn't need the love of a Russian, Bulgarian! Let us see now how you will get rid of me!' (p. 113). Again she plays with his fired emotions, offering first to stay, then hastening to depart, and the chapter ends with the final proof of her successful assault on the Bulgarian's senses. We read: 'The faint scent of mignonette which remained in his poor, dark room after Yelena's departure reminded him of her visit. With it there still seemed to linger in the air the sound of a young voice and light, youthful footsteps and the warmth and freshness of a young, virginal body' (p. 114).³⁵

The following chapter consists largely of symbols which disclose the implications of his experience and convey its effects on the weakening hero. In his quest for the passport that he needs for Yelena, he sets forth in the rain on his painful visit to the 'retired or discharged public prosecutor' who takes snuff from a snuff-box 'embellished with a picture of a full-bosomed nymph' and insists before offering his assistance on knowing the most intimate details of their personal relationship (p. 115). The authentication of Yelena's newly discovered identity is thus appropriately sought from a personification of the same 'prosecuting' sensuality in the form of which it expresses itself. 'A feeling of revulsion,' we read, 'stirred in Insarov' (p. 115). Consciously, of course, he sees no connection between this loathsome 'authority on all kinds of secret affairs' and

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the seductive siren who visited his room. But the connection is made at the subconscious level. Lying down, it is noted, on 'the sofa on which Yelena had been sitting so recently', he succumbs to the nightmare which begins with a vision of the prosecutor 'laughing and whispering' and ends with that of Yelena and 'chaos' (p. 117). Expanding into a tree from which Insarov falls, the prosecutor is identified with the same force of nature which in the beguiling form of the imperious Yelena commands the hero irresistibly to 'fall on his knees'.

The presence of Bersenev throughout Insarov's ensuing ordeal makes it clear that the illness is to be seen as a symbol of the last, despairing resistance of the hero's altruistic self to the force that has overwhelmed him. As he lies in his fever Insarov is heard exclaiming: 'I don't want to, I don't want to, you must not (*ty ne dolzhna*) ...' (p. 119), and Bersenev is obliged to restrain Yelena from flinging herself on him. 'What are you doing?' he whispers. 'You could kill him' (p. 120). Reluctantly she leaves, but again Insarov becomes dimly aware of the lingering scent of mignonette (p. 123) which heralds the completion of Yelena's conquest. She 'did not write to Insarov', we read; 'she had something else in mind' (p. 125), and on receiving the news of the patient's recovery, she promptly extracts from the anguished Bersenev a promise not to intervene on the following day (p. 126). The scene is thus set for Insarov's final surrender. 'You are mine,' Yelena declares on entering his room in chapter 28, and 'faint and breathless from her closeness to him, from the touch of her hands', he again feels the urge 'to throw himself at her feet' (p. 127). 'O Yelena,' he cries, 'what indestructible chains your every word places on me!' (p. 128), and three times he begs her to leave him. He says to her. 'Why have you come to me now when I am weak and not in control of myself, when my blood is on fire? Yelena, have pity on me - go away, I feel that I might die ... I can't bear these feelings'

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'Then take me,' she replies, heedless of his pleas (p. 131), and five chapters later the result is revealed.

As they glide in a gondola over the Venetian lagoon in chapter 33, the author informs us:

Yelena's features had changed little since the day of their departure from Moscow, but her expression was different: it was more thoughtful and stern, and there was a greater boldness in her eyes. Her whole body had blossomed, and her hair seemed to lie more exuberantly and thickly around her pale forehead and cheeks. In contrast, Insarov's expression remained the same, but his features were cruelly altered. He had grown thinner and paler; he seemed much older and had developed a stoop; he coughed almost incessantly with a short, dry cough, and his sunken eyes shone with a strange gleam (p. 149).

Shubin's caricature in chapter 20 is thus again evoked. In the 'blossoming' body of Yelena the 'plumpness' of the sensual Annushka becomes a reality,³⁶ and the 'sunken eyes' of the doomed Insarov recall the 'sunken cheeks' of the corpse-like Shubin. It can be seen, therefore, that there is a significant logic both in the positioning of chapter 20 between the scene at the shrine and Insarov's illness and in the sequence in which Shubin unveils his three busts for Bersenev's benefit. First he reveals the image of the noble, altruistic Insarov (which he proposes to offer to Yelena as her name-day present, alerting Bersenev to the 'allegory' implied (p. 97)); then follows the image of the strong, ram-like Insarov (which, implicitly acknowledging his own deficiencies, he intends to reserve for his own name-day present); and finally he unveils the sinister caricature. While the transition to the caricature from the two busts of Insarov leaves little doubt about the intended allusion, the allusion itself is

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clearly explained by the positioning of the altruist before the 'Caesar'. In addition to explaining the fate of his aunt, the self-portrait of Shubin predicts the fate of the hero. And the allusion once more is to the spider and the fly, the images of which are aptly resurrected in the dramatic scene of Insarov's final surrender. Yelena says to him: 'There's something else that I noticed - the absurd attention with which a person follows everything that is happening around him when he is very unhappy. Truly, I would sometimes stare and stare at a fly, even though there was a chill and terror in my heart' (p. 127). This is the 'stare', we may now infer, that she is described as 'fixing' on Insarov on the return journey from Tsaritsyno in chapter 15 (p. 78) - the stare of the spider assessing its victim.³⁷ Her 'blossoming' body and the hero's 'thinness' and 'pallor' are the physical evidence of her 'sucking' of his blood which explains more clearly the interdependence of her gradual 'rise' and his gradual 'fall'. 'Is nature not bound to devour us?' Bersenev asks Shubin in chapter 1. 'Is she not perpetually devouring us?' (p. 13). Yelena's absorption of Insarov's vitality is nature's affirmative reply. Just as the 'vampire' Ellis in Turgenev's *Phantoms* (1863) becomes progressively more visible as the hero's strength wanes, so Yelena 'blossoms' at Insarov's expense, converting the former 'tsar of creation' into the double of Annushka's corpse-like victim.

The line drawn in Yelena's diary in chapter 21 (p. 102) may be assumed to denote the ominous completion of her psychological development, the transformation of the heroine of chapter 6, who, though already described as 'repellent to some people', was intent on saving the fly from the spider, into the unconscious assassin of the stricken Insarov. It signals the triumph of her paternal inheritance which condemns Insarov to the fate of her mother. It seems appropriate, therefore, that in chapter 32 Nikolay Artem'yevich should alight on the scene to celebrate with champagne the lovers' departure for Venice and to make his peace with his wilful daughter.

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Their reconciliation marks the conclusion of their long-standing battle - a battle for supremacy between will and will, between two incarnations of the same 'natural' force, and Nikolay, we must suppose, becomes reconciled to the marriage because he now sees that it will achieve his aim, that Yelena's love will paradoxically fulfil his wish to be rid of the upstart *raznochinets*. Only thus can we explain his abrupt change of attitude and his acquiescence in Yelena's rejection of his wish that she should marry the civil servant Yegor Kurnatovsky.

Nikolay's attempt to arrange this marriage is his last attempt to impose his will and prevent Yelena from abandoning her class. But Kurnatovsky is more than an eligible suitor. The clearest indication of his role in the novel is the simple judgement pronounced on him by Zoya: 'Das ist ein Mann' (p. 109). The significance of the remark lies in the resemblance and difference between it and Antony's comment on Brutus in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* ('That was a man') which Shubin quotes later in reference to Insarov (p. 141). The echo combined with the difference of tense identifies Kurnatovsky with the former 'Caesar', the victim of the 'republican Brutus'. He embodies those attributes of the ram-like Insarov represented in Shubin's second bust. He is an Insarov stripped of his ideals. Hence Shubin's comment on them: 'They are both practical men, but you see what a difference there is: in one case there is a genuine, living ideal inspired by life itself, but here there's not even a sense of duty; there's simply official honesty and efficiency without content' (pp. 108). And this judgement is essentially reiterated by Yelena in the letter that she sends to Insarov shortly before her first visit to his apartment: 'His eyes are small (like yours) ... There is something iron-like about him - and dull and empty at the same time - and honest too; they say that he is indeed very honest. You are also iron-like, but in a different way from him' (p. 107). Again similarities are combined with differences to remind

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us of the Insarov who is about to die and to explain the fate that now awaits him. And Yelena continues:

He was very polite with me, but all the time I felt as if a very condescending superior was talking to me ... I think he's confident, industrious and capable of self-sacrifice (you see how impartial I am) - that is, of sacrificing his own interests - but he's a great despot. It would be a terrible fate to fall into his hands (pp. 107-8).

Thus the capacity for self-sacrifice is another connection between hero and rival, but the dominant feature of this formidable suitor is the intimidating strength of the egoistic 'despot' which Yelena has subdued in her Bulgarian lover. Hence her rejection of this threat incarnate - an act which is cognate with Natal'ya's rejection of the 'haughty and pompous' Korchagin in *Rudin*. And by this act and her marriage to Insarov she achieves the 'conquest' of her father's will which paradoxically turns out to accord with his wishes.

The concluding 'Venetian' chapters of the novel mark the completion of the triumph that nature achieves over Insarov through the agency of Yelena. His death in Venice, which is foretold by Shubin's farewell on their departure from Russia (by his words 'Farewell with God on our distant journey' (p. 147) which are taken from a 'funeral song' in Pushkin's *Songs of the Western Slavs*), denotes her total absorption of his personality in accordance with the law which this God imposes. The question that obviously arises in this connection is: why was the Venetian setting selected for this concluding stage of the drama? Ostensibly, of course, the explanation is simply geographical - the convenience of Venice as a point of departure for the voyage to Bulgaria. The more significant reason, however, is a distinctive combination of features which equipped the city to perform the role of a complex symbol in which some of the

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more elusive threads which wind their way through the novel could be finally knit together. In this symbolic role its function, quite simply, is to symbolise Yelena. More precisely, it is to confront Insarov on the eve of his death with mocking reflections of the various guises in which the force that destroys him presents itself.

The connection between the city and Yelena is indicated at once by the famous description of its beauty in chapter 33:

Like spring, the beauty of Venice affects us and awakens desires; it torments and tantalises the inexperienced heart, like the promise of a happiness that is imminent and simple and yet mysterious ... Everything about it is feminine, beginning with the name: not for nothing is it called *The Beautiful One* ... 'Venice is dying, Venice is deserted,' its inhabitants will tell you. But perhaps in the past it lacked this ultimate charm, the charm of a city fading in the very blossoming and triumph of its beauty ... It is pointless for a man who has outlived his time and been broken by life to visit Venice. It will be as bitter for him as the memory of unfulfilled dreams of earlier days. But it will be sweet for the person in whom strength still seethes and who feels himself fortunate (p. 151).

The passage is a complex allusion. It alludes to the development of the central relationship - to Yelena's success in 'awakening' Insarov's 'desires', in 'tormenting' and 'tantalising' his 'inexperienced heart'; to the 'fading' and 'dying' of the 'feminine' Yelena as the inherited force assumes control of her personality; and to the 'bitter' experience of the 'broken' hero left only with the memories of his 'unfulfilled dreams'. The 'beauty' which offers 'the promise of a happiness that is imminent and simple and yet mysterious' recalls the Yelena of the early chapters; but the description of the city as 'fading in the very blossoming and triumph of its beauty' is a strikingly apt comment on

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the transformed Yelena who now 'blossoms' in the enjoyment of her 'triumph' and strength.

The link thus forged between Venice and Yelena prepares the way for the subsequent mockery of Insarov's 'unfulfilled dreams' in which the city's artistic heritage plays a major role. Thus in the Accademia di Belle Arti he sees the striking figure of 'Tintoretto's St. Mark leaping from heaven, like a frog into water, to save a tormented slave'. At the sight of this picture Yelena, we read, 'laughed herself to tears' (p. 152), doubtless recalling the lost vigour and 'menace' of the aspiring saviour of the 'tormented' Bulgarian people and responding again with the convulsive laughter with which she reacted to his triumph by the Tsaritsyno lake. And possibly absorbed in the same recollection, Insarov is filled with a sense of elation at the sight of the back and magnificent calves of the 'energetic man' in Titian's 'Assumption' who stands 'with arms upraised towards the Madonna' - a Madonna described as 'beautiful and strong' (p. 152). Again the allusion needs little comment.

From the visual arts the scene switches to the opera, to the performance of Verdi's *La Traviata*, in which the lovers are confronted with a climactic reflection of their contrasting experiences. They are both reflected in a single mirror represented by the performer of the role of Violetta. For as Violetta succumbs, like Insarov, to death, the singer who plays the part experiences in the course of the opera a change that reflects Yelena's transformation. Like Yelena in chapter 6 (p. 32), she is initially credited with an 'uneven' voice, and the remark cited earlier that Yelena 'was not to everyone's liking' is echoed in the statement that the young singer 'was not much liked' (p. 153). But as the opera progresses, the defects of her voice, appearance and acting are gradually forgotten and ultimately transcended. Her performance, we read, 'gained progressively in strength and freedom. She discarded everything irrelevant, everything unnecessary, and - what is the rarest, highest joy

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for an artist - she *found herself* (p. 154). Artistic achievement - or, in Shubin's phrase, 'pure art' - is thus again identified with self-discovery and self-assertion. Through the discovery of her true, 'natural' self the singer achieves the total control over the dying Violetta that Yelena achieves over the dying Insarov. And she also achieves the kind of personal 'vendetta' from which Insarov shrank and of which Shubin was incapable, for her performance is her revenge on the audience that 'disliked' her. As the curtain descends, the whole theatre, we read, 'echoed with frantic applause and ecstatic cries' (p. 155). Thus the effect of 'pure art' is not unification, as Bersenev believes, but the artist's achievement of domination. Hence, perhaps, Yelena's remark in chapter 9 that she could never bring herself to love an artist (p. 47).³⁸ And we may now understand why in chapter 24 Yelena 'glanced at the door, as if to tell Insarov to go home' when Zoya 'sat down at the piano' (p. 116). In the 'art' of Zoya, which in chapter 15 had filled the Germans at Tsaritsyno with the desire to kiss her, she sees a threat to her domination.

Given this view of art, therefore, it may be assumed that the artistic wealth of Venice was one of the indicated features that explains Turgenev's choice of the city as the setting for the death of his hero. As a museum of art, the city encircles Insarov with manifestations of the force that destroys him. But the choice of Venice - as distinct, say, from Florence - was ultimately determined, we may infer, by the opportunity provided by the city's most celebrated feature to represent this encirclement in a different form - in the form of the water on which the city is built.

As several commentators have indicated, the image of water is one that recurs in Turgenev's fiction, as in that of many other writers, as a symbol of nature's menace and power.³⁹ Its more precise function, however, is indicated in *On the Eve* by his description of death: 'Death is like a fisherman who has caught a fish in his net and leaves it for a time in the water; the fish continues to swim about, but

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the net is round it and the fisherman will snatch it out in his own good time' (p. 166). It seems to symbolise, in short, the life-force itself as Turgenev conceived it and is frequently employed as such to signal the positions of his characters in relation to the fundamental contrast between the wilful and the weak, the 'natural' and the 'unnatural', the egoist and the altruist. Thus at the foot of the hill on which the 'enormous house' of the egoistic Lasunskaya 'rises majestically' in *Rudin* one of 'the main rivers of central Russia' flows mightily and freely (VI, 246). But for the 'unnatural' Rudin a fast-flowing river, as we have seen, in an alien force - a force that he struggles unsuccessfully to 'tame', to make subservient to man's needs (VI, 360) - and the 'unnatural' character of his love for Natal'ya is mirrored in the aridity of Avdyukha's pond. And related imagery is similarly employed to convey the submissions of Turgenev's 'victims'. Thus in *A Nest of the Gentry* Lavretsky feels after the experience of betrayal that he is wallowing abjectly 'at the very bottom of a river' (VII, 189), while Mikhalevich reacts to a similar experience with the feeling that 'the waves of life' have fallen on his breast (VII, 201).

This role of the image is repeatedly in evidence in *On the Eve*, perhaps most notably in the cited eulogy of Venice. For if the 'dying' of Venice reflects, as suggested, the 'dying' of the Yelena of the early chapters, then the water which threatens the city with extinction must be seen as a symbol of the source of her 'death', of the force which extinguishes her altruistic fervour. The omnipresence, therefore, of water in the final five chapters may be seen as a fitting expression of nature's concluding celebration of her total triumph. Not only does the 'Venetian' section of the novel begin with a scene of the two lovers gliding in a gondola over the 'broad lagoon' (p. 148), but they spend their last days together surrounded by, suspended upon, and even deriving their nourishment from⁴⁰ this insidious element which may be seen in retrospect to have decisively intervened, as if to accelerate and

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proclaim its triumphs, at each of the stages of their developing relationship.

Again the episode at Tsaritsyno comes obviously to mind - the episode that corresponds in the life of Insarov to the episode in Venice in the life of Yelena. Just as the Venetian waters witness the final triumph of the 'natural' Yelena, so the lake at Tsaritsyno provides an appropriate setting for the final appearance of the 'menacing' Insarov, for his defeat of the German whom he deftly hurls into its enveloping waters. The transition from the lake to the waters of Venice reflects the reversal of the roles of the hero and heroine, and Insarov's death in chapter 34 is aptly preceded by Yelena's dream in which this connection is made explicit. Here the lake expands into a restless sea which disgorges from its depths 'something menacing and roaring', and among the people in the rocking boat Yelena sees the figure of her father, the absentee from the Tsaritsyno outing (p. 161). Thus the symbol of the source of Insarov's strength, the waters of the lake, is replaced in the form of the roaring sea by a symbol of the same 'menacing force' which Turgenev now links with the source incarnate of Yelena's sensuality and urge to dominate, with the force that inflicts on the former 'Caesar' the defeat that he inflicted on the belligerent German. Just as the German sinks in the lake, so Insarov's corpse sinks at the end in the roaring sea of Yelena's dream (p. 165).

This conclusion is foreshadowed in the preceding chapters by the numerous details which link Yelena with water, creating the illusion that it is her natural element⁴¹ and the implacable foe of the weakening hero. Thus in chapter 18 in the form of the rain it steers her to the shrine over a 'ruined well' where she duly intercepts Insarov on his walk (pp. 90-1) and where the 'calm' that she feels on achieving her goal 'surges' blissfully over her 'like a heavenly wave' (p. 94).⁴² In chapter 24 the heavens open again, as we have noted, to undermine the resistance of Insarov's body (p. 115) and in chapter 33, as he shivers on the Lido, he casts a baleful glance at the 'hissing' waves

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which detach him to the end from his distant goal (p. 149). Thus the impression is conveyed that Insarov is pursued and continually frustrated by this natural element which ultimately claims his lifeless body, and we may now appreciate more fully the pertinence of the simile in which Tintoretto's St. Mark is compared to a frog 'leaping from heaven into water'. But for a clearer understanding of the role of the image we need to refer to the beginning of the novel, to the episode in chapter 2 in which Shubin invites Bersenev to 'look at the river'. 'It seems to be luring us,' he observes. 'The ancient Greeks would have identified a nymph in it. But we are not Greeks, O nymph! We are thick-skinned Scythians.' And Bersenev adds: 'We have mermaids (*rusalki*)' (p. 16). These early remarks may be taken as explaining the interventions of water in the subsequent chapters and the association of the image with the figure of the heroine. They prepare the way for Yelena's conversion into a 'Scythian *rusalka*' which is duly revealed in chapter 24 by the striking symbol of her triumphant sensuality - the 'full-bosomed nymph' on the 'prosecutor's' snuff-box. The image of the spider is combined in her portrait with that of the 'mermaid' skilled, according to Russian folklore, in the art of luring the male into her natural element. With the aid of the storm that wrecks Rendich's boat and propels Insarov's coffin to the bottom of the sea she gains in this guise her final victory.

There is evidence to suggest, therefore, that the ubiquitous presence of water in Venice was one of the major factors that prompted Turgenev's choice of the city. But there is yet another reason why it was particularly suited to serve as the setting of Insarov's demise: like his native land it was subject to foreign control. The effect produced, in consequence, is that the 'Caesar' who fails to liberate his people dies aptly in the enslaved land of Caesar himself. The more important point, however, is the correlation to which this parallel alludes between the position of the individual and that of the nation - between, on the one hand, Insarov, Bulgaria and Venice as the

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victims of authoritarian control and between, on the other, Yelena, the Turks and the Austrians as the embodiments of such control. The activities of individuals and nations alike, it is implied, are dictated by the same natural law,⁴³ bearing witness to the perpetual 'war' between strong and weak which is the reality of life as the novel portrays it. Insarov's love for Yelena is thus paradoxically equated with the struggles of the Bulgarian and Italian peoples against their oppressors. And the same broadening of the theme would seem to explain Turgenev's repeated practice of defining the egoistic and altruistic attitudes of his characters in political terms and of associating them with historical figures or events which are emblematic of authoritarian and anti-authoritarian attitudes respectively. Thus Insarov, as noted, is associated with both Caesar and Brutus, Yelena (as a rebel against her authoritarian father) with 'enthusiastic republicanism' (p. 32) and Bersenev *père* with the rebel George Washington (p. 50). In addition, the elder Bersenev is 'shaken to the foundations of his being' by the events of 1848 (p. 50), with which Insarov's ill-fated return to Bulgaria notably coincides (p. 51), and the inner conflict of Bersenev *fils* is similarly illuminated by allusions to contrasting political traditions. From Friedrich Raumer's *Geschichte der Hohenstaufen und ihrer Zeit*, which he reads while still aspiring to 'conquer' Yelena (p. 32), he turns, while serving as Insarov's nurse-maid, to the historical sources of European democracy as described in George Grote's *History of Greece* (p. 120).

As significant, however, as the enslavement of Venice is the nationality of its masters, for there is another obvious irony in the fact that the victor at Tsaritsyno should meet his end in a city ruled by German-speakers. That this is not coincidental is confirmed by the general role which German-speakers (Germans, Austrians and Russians of German stock) appear to perform in the novel - a role which explains, *inter alia*, why the position and nationality of Zoya were changed. Their role, we note, is never neutral; it is always

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confrontational. They are embodiments of the aggressive, self-assertive will and are accordingly associated with the image of water. While the Austrians control the city that is built on water, the Germans at Tsaritsyno materialise in response to Zoya's singing on the lake of Niedermeyer's romance *Le lac* based on the poem by Lamartine which bears the same title (pp. 72-3). We may therefore understand why the strong Insarov of the first half of the novel is credited with 'a more than German meticulousness' (p. 54), why the strong Yelena is so much more favourably disposed towards Zoya than the altruistic Yelena of the early chapters,⁴⁴ and why Bersenev immerses himself in Raumer's history before the collapse of his hopes of winning Yelena (p. 32).⁴⁵

The confrontations between Insarov and German-speakers may therefore be seen to provide the most illuminating insights into the development of his personality in the course of the work. On the one hand, there is the triumph of the strong Insarov at Tsaritsyno; on the other, there are the reflections in the second half of the novel of the German 'vendetta' against the fallen 'Caesar' which may be viewed as marking the fulfilment of his victim's threat at Tsaritsyno to report his actions to the German 'Caesar', to 'his Excellency Count von Kieseritz himself' (p. 77). Thus Zoya, having failed in her attempts to deter him from confronting the German officer at Tsaritsyno,⁴⁶ refers to him afterwards with contempt (p. 143). And in Venice he is almost run down by an Austrian horseman (p. 150) and is portrayed cowering at the sight of the Austrian guns 'peering out' from the arches of the Doge's palace (pp. 155-6). As a result, by chapter 33 the victor of chapter 15 has assumed the likeness of a fugitive or quarry, having relinquished his role as 'conqueror' of the Germans to the 'despotic' embodiment of his former strength. Hence Kurnatovsky's 'conquest' of the German Zoya who willingly becomes his 'obedient' bride.⁴⁷

The Austrian control of Venice, therefore, provided Turgenev with the opportunity to bring yet another symbolic expression of his

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theme to a fitting conclusion. Like the surrounding waters, the Austrians preside over Insarov's defeat, over the reversal of his triumph by the Tsaritsyno lake. And since Yelena is the cause of this reversal, her own association with the image of water is appropriately paralleled by her similar association with the Austrians and Germans. Not only does she intervene, we note, to excuse the arrogance and violence of the Austrian horseman who almost runs Insarov down (p. 150), but she is even endowed obliquely with a German identity. She acquires it, significantly, in chapter 24 in the interval between Insarov's exposure to the rain and the onset of his illness, and it is aptly bestowed on her by the symbol incarnate of her aggressive sensuality. Having failed to extract from Insarov the identity of the lady for whom the passport is needed, the 'prosecutor' remarks to him: 'As for the passport, it's not beyond the wit of man to arrange it. If you are travelling, for example, who is to know whether you are Mar'ya Bredikhina or Karolina Vogelmeier?' (p. 115). The two names may be taken as alluding to the two contrasting aspects of Yelena that Insarov encounters - to the Russian idealist of the early chapters whose ideals are dismissed as 'delirious ravings' (*bred*) by the force that 'conquers' her personality,⁴⁸ and to the aggressive, demanding 'Karolina' or 'empress',⁴⁹ who is compared, as noted, to a 'struggling bird' (*Vogel*)⁵⁰ and whose drive to 'conquer' the victor of Tsaritsyno makes her the natural ally of the German avengers. In the 'masculine' figure of this German 'empress',⁵¹ who is linked more directly with Yelena in Insarov's nightmare before his illness (p. 117), the German 'Caesar' von Kieseritz comes to life intent on reversing the fortunes of war.

There are indications, moreover, that Yelena's alliance with the Germans extends beyond her relationship with Insarov to her relationship with the other male who finally bows to the power of her will - her father. The connection in this case is with the shadowy figure of her father's domineering German mistress Avgustina

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Khristianovna, who is given to referring to him as 'mein Pinselchen' (p. 19),⁵² and it is conveyed in a similarly oblique manner. Thus it is significant, for example, that Insarov's submission to Yelena at the end of chapter 28 is followed immediately, at the beginning of chapter 29, by Nikolay Artem'yevich's confession to Shubin that he is 'finally bound' to his mistress (p. 131). We observe also that Avgustina Khristianovna, like Yelena, is associated with the image of water (and thus, by implication, with that of the *rusalka*), for it is reported that 'in the summer of 1853' Nikolay Artem'yevich 'did not move to Kuntsevo but stayed in Moscow - ostensibly to take the waters, but in reality because he did not wish to be parted from his widow' (p. 19). And finally it may be noted that in chapter 30 Avgustina Khristianovna returns to Moscow and demands to see Nikolay Artem'yevich at precisely the moment when Yelena is being subjected to the full force of his wrath after defiantly announcing her secret marriage (p. 140). The intervention suggests that in relation to the 'empress's' battle with her father the 'august' Avgustina Khristianovna plays a directly comparable role to that of 'his Excellency' Count von Kieseritz in her relationship with Insarov - the role of a symbolic extension of her conquering will.

As we have seen, however, Yelena's 'conquest' of Insarov gives her an affinity not only with the Austrian masters of Venice but also with the Turkish masters of Bulgaria. It is conceivable, therefore, that an additional parallel was intended - in this case between the destruction that her love inflicts on Insarov and the destruction of his parents by the Turkish official (p. 51). Hence perhaps the 'flowing of blood' and 'flashing of swords' that follow the vision of Karolina Vogelmeier in Insarov's nightmare before his illness (p. 117). And in her specifically Russian guise too Yelena emerges as the Bulgarian's 'natural' foe, as Insarov himself appears to imply when he insists before the collapse of his body that he does not 'need the love of a Russian' (p. 87). Herein perhaps lies the key to the second part of

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Yelena's dream which directly precedes Insarov's death. In chapter 30 Nikolay Artem'yevich, on learning of their marriage, threatens her with confinement in a monastery (p. 139). In Yelena's dream, however, the threat is converted into Insarov's fate. He is seen as a prisoner in the Solovetsky monastery, the most daunting and impregnable of Russian fortresses, the cells of which are likened to those of a beehive (p. 162). Here insect imagery is reintroduced to associate this symbol of Russian power with the omnipotent force by which the Bulgarian is vanquished.⁵³ And it is this association that perhaps explains why Uvar Ivanovich is apostrophised by Shubin as 'great philosopher of the Russian land' (p. 142). The dormant force that comes to life in the threatening form of the Russian *rusalka* is thus linked again with her native land, with the land to which Insarov came, as Bersenev puts it in chapter 10, 'with the intention of completing his education' (p. 52).

It seems fitting, therefore, that yet another Russian embodiment of this force should intervene on the verge of his death to complete the education to which the novel subjects him. The Russian in question is the loquacious Lupoyarov who appears from nowhere in chapter 34 to confront Insarov with concluding evidence of the 'lupine' reality of human nature and of the fallacy on which his idealism is based. Significantly Lupoyarov's knock on the door is expected by Insarov to herald the delayed appearance of his compatriot Rendich (p. 159). In addition, his name recalls the comment in chapter 13 on the eating habits of Insarov's Bulgarian visitors: 'They seemed to be racing to swallow it down like wolves' (p. 63). It seems thus to be implied that this typical representative of the Russian young generation, as Insarov describes him afterwards to Yelena (p. 160), is meant equally to be taken as a personified comment on the idealism ascribed to the Bulgarian rebels.⁵⁴ Although he professes to feel his 'Slavonic blood tingling' (p. 159), Lupoyarov prefers to observe the struggle from a distance. He fabricates news of Slavonic victories, poses as a Dane

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when asked if he is Russian and reveals his intention of making for Spain to enjoy the beauty of the Spanish women. He epitomises the discord between word and deed, the spurious commitment to altruistic service, which is implicitly adduced as the real explanation both of Rendich's arrival at the precise moment when Insarov expires (p. 162) and of the bickering of the Bulgarians in chapter 14 over the 'trivial matter' of 'small sums of money' (pp. 65-6).⁵⁵ His sole concern is with personal survival, with avoidance of the 'punishment' in the 'struggle for existence' that is about to be inflicted on the idealist Insarov. Hence the prominence of 'punishment' as a theme in his monologue, in which he refers to the 'power' of Victor Hugo's *Les Châtiments*, to the prisons reached by the Bridge of Sighs and to the violent end of Marino Falieri, the Doge beheaded in the fourteenth century for challenging the power of the Venetian aristocracy. Linking Falieri and Insarov by misrepresenting their names,⁵⁶ he contrives to suggest that the space left on the wall for Falieri's portrait is about to be filled by Insarov himself (p. 159), by a portrait of the hero who in chapter 11 placed his head 'at the service' of the artist Shubin (p. 56).

Lupoyarov presents himself, therefore, as a personified indictment of Insarov's faith in the nobility of human nature, in the commitment to the 'cause' of his fellow countrymen. He is proof incarnate that 'fatherland' is yet another of Bersenev's 'unifying words' which fail utterly to unify. In fact, the only Bulgarian who finally succeeds in the novel in translating word into effective deed is Yelena herself in her last metamorphosis, for on the death of Insarov she renounces Russia and becomes herself a Bulgarian patriot. In her last letter to her parents she writes: 'I no longer have any other country than that of Dmitry,' (p. 165). And this conclusion seems entirely logical. It reflects her observance of the advice that she received from the beggar-woman by the shrine in chapter 18: 'If you find a good and steady man, stick to him alone; stick to him stronger than death' (p. 91). Having appropriated the strength of Insarov's

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body and mind, she duly appropriates all that is left - his nationality and his cause which, she is fully aware, condemn her too to a premature death. She writes in her letter: 'Who knows, perhaps I killed him; now it is his turn to entice me after him' (p. 165). Like her remark to Bersenev in chapter 25 ('If he dies, I shall die too' (p. 121)), the statement suggests that her pursuit will continue even beyond the grave, that her death must follow to ensure her continuing control.⁵⁷

The conclusion, therefore, implicit in this reading of the novel is that it contains little evidence of any optimism with which Turgenev may have regarded the appearance on the Russian social scene of such 'consciously heroic natures' as his hero and heroine. While marking the fact of the appearance of such new social types, it presents them as the protagonists of a new variant of the drama played out in the stories of Rudin and Liza. Again the theme is that of the 'punishment' of an idealist, and again the treatment is profoundly ironic. For here love is the weapon that strikes him down, the love initially and ironically inspired by his idealism which is gradually transformed by uncontrollable forces into the deadly embrace of a 'Scythian *rusalka*'. Insarov's commitment, as we have seen, is not diminished by the seductive power of Yelena's charms. Though surrendering to her, he remains loyal to the 'cause'. Thereby he incurs the wrath of the God who presides over the world of the Turgenevan novel, and Yelena's love is this God's revenge. Ironically the heroine who genuinely loves him becomes one with the forces aligned against him, including, paradoxically, the prejudices of her class, as expressed by her father's contempt for him, from which ostensibly she frees herself. Her social rebellion against her family and class takes the form of submission to her father's influence, to the genetically transmitted destructive force which duly destroys the presumptuous *raznochinets*. Thus Yelena's aspiration to personal freedom proves just as futile as Insarov's aspiration to liberate his people. The 'freedom of God' proclaimed by Katya is discovered by

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the heroine to be a naive illusion, to be the 'yawning abyss' into which she sees herself plunging in her frightening dream before Insarov's death (p. 162). 'On the eve' of the emancipation of the Russian people Turgenev, in effect, repeats Goethe's dictum: 'Der Mensch is nicht geboren frei zu sein.'⁵⁸

V

FATHERS AND SONS

'In order to produce an artistic result,' Turgenev wrote in his essay *Apropos of 'Fathers and Sons'* (1868-69), 'the combined action of many *factors* - to use modern terminology - is necessary' (XIV, 107). It is the 'combined action', of course, of 'many factors' in his most famous novel, completed in 1862, that has produced an 'artistic result' of such absorbing complexity. The continuing debate on the novel's meaning and on the significance of its hero Bazarov has centred on four 'factors' in particular, on the nature, interaction and relative importance of the four major sources of conflict between the characters: the differences of generation, class, ideology and personality; and two contrasting views of the work have emerged from this debate. Some commentators, citing in support the statement of Turgenev's personal views in his letter to K. K. Sluchevsky of 14 April 1862,¹ have attached an overriding importance to the first three sources of conflict and have acclaimed Bazarov as an unequivocally heroic figure, as an uncompromising rebel against the existing order tragically born before his time and as a personified exposé of the limitations of the other characters. Others have placed the emphasis on the fourth source of conflict, arguing that 'the grouping of characters illustrating the conflict of generations gives way to one of personality and experience that cuts across differences of age or ideology'.² According to this reading, it is the limitations of Bazarov that are exposed, and Nikolay Petrovich Kirsanov and his son Arkady are 'the true heroes of the novel'.³

Various attempts have been made to reconcile these views, among which the recent monograph of the American commentator David Lowe deserves special mention,⁴ and it is now commonly argued that the two views are not, in fact, mutually exclusive, that

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there is an ambivalence at the heart of the work that justifies them both. In their different ways, it is held, both Bazarov on the one side and Nikolay and Arkady on the other are worthy of acclaim and at the same time limited. Support for this view also can be found in Turgenev's statements about the work,⁵ and most readers now would probably subscribe to it. It is also endorsed in the following pages where it is taken as reflecting the continuity of thought which links the work with the three earlier novels.

In this connection we must consider Lowe's statement that although the novel 'displays formal and thematic similarities with other Turgenev works, it is in a variety of ways the grand exception within the context of Turgenev's *oeuvre*'.⁶ The argument rests mainly, of course, on the undeniably distinctive position that Bazarov occupies in the gallery of Turgenev's heroes, for in the figure of this *raznochinets* intellectual and nihilist he created a hero endowed with a strength, a stature and a sense of tragic grandeur that set him clearly apart from the central figures of the preceding novels. Yet it cannot be accepted that either Bazarov or the novel that he dominates is a 'grand exception'. 'Formerly,' remarks Arkady's uncle Pavel Petrovich Kirsanov, 'there were Hegelians, and now there are nihilists' (VIII, 216).⁷ The remark is a pointer to the affinities between Bazarov and Rudin that coexist with the more obvious differences between them. Certainly there are significant changes of emphasis in *Fathers and Sons*, but the dramas experienced by the nihilist and the Hegelian are essentially the same in their nature and implications.

The features of Bazarov which make him so distinctive among Turgenev's heroes are explained chiefly, of course, by the distinctive character of his philosophical understanding of life, by the materialism based on study of the natural sciences which forms the basis of his aggressively critical attitude to 'all authorities'. He is the first of Turgenev's heroes to reject totally the notion of a transcendental design in human affairs and thus the conception of man

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as the agent of some higher, suprapersonal purpose. Acknowledging only the reality of nature apprehended exclusively as physical matter, he sees no power higher than man himself. Insisting that men are 'like trees in a forest', that they are 'similar to each other in both body and soul', and that 'moral diseases', like physical diseases, derive solely from biological or environmental causes (p. 277), he sees nothing to prevent man from creating paradise on earth except ignorance, stupidity and weakness of will. Thus Bazarov, like the radicals whose views he reflects, sees man himself as the maker of his destiny. He proclaims his rejection of 'all authorities' not in the name of some higher truth, but in the belief that the 'authority' of nature is challengeable, that nature's mysteries can be understood, and that this understanding will confer on man the power to eliminate its grotesque imperfections - to establish a society free from 'diseases' and even to banish the 'imperfection' of death. His activities with his scalpel are thus explained. Rejecting nature as it is, he aspires to recreate it. Such is the 'cause' of this genuine 'revolutionary',⁸ of this 'titan who rebels against his mother-earth',⁹ which justifies the reference to his 'satanic pride' (p. 247). With the materialist's faith in the powers of human reason, he pits his intellect and will against the will of nature.

The result is a rebel who is a formidable egoist, who refers to himself as a 'god' (p. 304) and 'giant' (p. 396) and exults in his intellectual and physical power. But this is clearly not the egoism of a Lasunskaya or Panshin. It is not a 'natural' expression of amoral self-interest. It is simply a reflection of the nature of the god in whose name the 'authority' of nature is challenged. Bazarov merely replaces with his own personality the transcendental gods of Rudin and Liza, and his purpose, in effect, is the same as theirs. Accordingly, Turgenev pronounces the same judgement. For the ideas which prompt his noble rebellion are similarly represented as crippling delusions which likewise distort his perception of reality and his capacity to live a normal life. With his limited, simplified view of

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reality the materialist is portrayed, like his Hegelian predecessor who is similarly a ceaseless, rootless traveller, as lacking 'firm ground' beneath his feet and is shown in the end to be equally 'superfluous'. His challenge is taken up by the life that he rejects. The rationalist who declares that 'two and two make four' and insists that 'everything else is trivial' (p. 236) is confronted with 'trivialities' that he cannot reject, with irrational mysteries that elude his scalpel, with the power of beauty and the power of death, and in the end he is ironically made to capitulate to the main 'imperfection' that he sought to eliminate.

The events take place in the spring and summer of 1859. They accordingly coincide with nature's rebirth, and as Arkady and Bazarov drive in chapter 3 to Mar'ino, the run-down estate of Nikolay Petrovich, their senses are assailed by nature's freshness and beauty. But Arkady's delight in the 'wondrous smell' (p. 202) is interrupted by Bazarov's request for a match, and the 'smell' is dispelled by that of 'cheap tobacco' (p. 207). Thus the hero's challenge is immediately signalled by an insensitivity to nature's charms which anticipates his celebrated description of nature as 'no temple but a workshop' in which 'the worker' is 'man' (p. 236). And with his remark that 'Raphael's not worth a brass farthing' (p. 247), his insistence that 'a decent chemist is twenty times more useful than any poet' (p. 219) and his amusement on learning that Nikolay plays the cello (p. 236) he at the same time announces the insensitivity to art which likewise reflects his utilitarian creed. It is true that he delights in 'feminine beauty' (p. 286), but the attraction that it holds is exclusively physical, as he confirms when agreeing to the meeting with Odintsova on the grounds that she sports incomparable shoulders (p. 268). His attitude otherwise to the female of the species is succinctly conveyed by his remark to Arkady: 'It's a good sign if a woman can keep up a conversation for half an hour' (p. 331).

But his first conversation with Odintsova in the hotel lasts 'more than three hours' (p. 272) and, to Arkady's astonishment, his friend

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'seemed embarrassed' (p. 269) and 'blushes' on receiving the invitation to Nikol'skoye (p. 272). Bazarov senses at once that 'something is wrong' (p. 269). He is astonished himself by his reaction to this woman from whose hair at the ball 'sprays of fuchsia' had 'trailed prettily' (p. 265), whose 'poorly furnished room' is 'filled with flowers' (p. 269) and who tries vainly to engage him in a conversation about music (p. 272). Irritated by the discomfort induced by her beauty which is linked in this manner with that of nature and art, he says to Arkady: 'What a magnificent body! If only I could get it on to the dissecting-table!' (p. 272). But already he is conscious that there is something here which ominously threatens his most basic convictions. Disconcerted, above all, by her imperturbable calm, he comes rapidly to see her as a test of his powers, as a challenge truly worthy of a 'man-god' and 'giant' - as 'a regular duchess', as he puts it to Arkady, lacking merely 'a train and a crown on her head' (p. 272). And having scoffed in chapter 10 at the superstitions of the Russian people (p. 245), he now remarks to Arkady as they drive to Nikol'skoye: 'Congratulate me. Today is the twenty-second of June, my name day. We will see how my angel will look after me' (p. 273).

In the following chapter (chapter 16) the personality of the 'duchess' is described as follows:

Anna Sergeyevna was a rather strange creature. Having no prejudices or even strong beliefs, she backed down before nothing and followed no particular course. She saw many things clearly and had many interests, but nothing satisfied her completely; indeed, she scarcely desired complete satisfaction. Her mind was at once probing and indifferent; her doubts were never so stilled as to be completely forgotten nor did they ever develop into alarm. If she had not been rich and independent, she would perhaps have thrown herself into the fray and experienced passion ... But she lived in comfort, though sometimes she

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became bored, and she continued to take each day as it came without haste, only occasionally showing signs of unrest ... Like all women who have not succeeded in falling in love, she wanted something without knowing what it was. In reality, she wanted nothing, though it seemed to her that she wanted everything (pp. 282-3).

Thus the main features of the portrait are contradiction and paradox. In the person of Odintsova beauty is combined with attributes which magnify its illogical nature. Turgenev confronts his materialist and rationalist with a woman who stands as a challenge incarnate to the naive proposition that 'two and two make four'. And he gives her a will as strong as his hero's. Like Bazarov himself, she is self-sufficient, as her name itself is presumably meant to suggest.¹⁰ Hence her disturbing remark to him in chapter 17: 'You are just like me' (p. 292) which she repeats to his chagrin in chapter 26 (p. 376). Above all, she is endowed with the quality of 'indifference' - the quality which Turgenev at the end of the novel ascribes explicitly to nature herself (p. 402). These attributes, therefore, combine to suggest that in the beautiful figure of this 'rather strange creature' Turgenev is intent on confronting his hero with an embodiment of the 'authority' which hitherto he has rejected in the belief that it is subject to man's control - with an embodiment, that is, of nature herself. Odintsova confronts him as he confronts her - with curiosity and concern to test her powers. At the ball, we observe, she at once marks him out - not because of his 'fine face', as Arkady supposes (p. 267), but because, we read, 'she detected in him something new, something that she had never encountered before, and her curiosity was roused' (p. 282). She accordingly requests Arkady to introduce her to this man 'who has the audacity not to believe in anything' (p. 268) and to whose conduct she reacts as if to 'a bad smell' (p. 271), and at the hotel she 'fixes' him with the same ominous 'stare' that Yelena 'fixes' on the doomed

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Insarov.¹¹ And when they meet at Nikol'skoye, the tables are turned. Now the scalpel is wielded by Odintsova as she bombards him with questions about his background and aims (pp. 291, 295), extracts the 'secrets' of the botanist and chemist and subjects him to the discipline of her alien 'regime'.¹² 'It seemed,' we read, 'as if she wished both to test him and to explore her own depths' (p. 287), and an appropriate image of insidious pressure¹³ is introduced by the 'hiss' that accompanies her movements¹³ and by the reference to her hair 'uncoiling itself like some dark snake' (p. 295).

Above the entrance to the church on Odintsova's estate a fresco depicts 'the Resurrection of Christ' and 'a swarthy warrior in a helmet lying prostrate in the foreground' (p. 273). The defeat of the 'satanic' hero is thus graphically predicted. The fresco foreshadows nature's triumph - initially in the form of the 'icy duchess' and finally in the form of the lethal microbe. And a second prediction is his defeat in the card-game which is also described in chapter 16. Inviting him to join her neighbour and herself, Odintsova issues the ominous warning: 'Take care, Porphyry Platonych and I will rout you' (p. 280). Undaunted Bazarov accepts the challenge and is thus drawn more deeply into the sphere of the irrational where the control of his destiny is no longer his own, and the predicted 'rout' is duly inflicted. 'Bazarov,' it is noted, 'lost one game after another. Anna Sergejevna was an expert card-player' (p. 281).

This defeat at the hands of irrational chance, the 'most capricious and wilful' of nature's 'children',¹⁴ prepares the way for the defeat that Odintsova inflicts by awakening the irrational in his own personality, by inciting a rebellion against the rationalist's 'authority' of emotions which hitherto he had sternly suppressed and thus imposing on him the same kind of control that he aspires himself to impose on her. 'His blood,' we read, 'caught fire as soon as he thought of her; he could easily have mastered his blood, but something else had taken possession of him, something which he had never tolerated, which he

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had always mocked and which had stirred his pride' (p. 287). Thus from without and from within Bazarov's position is undermined by the 'authorities' invoked by the perplexing Odintsova, by the 'authority' of chance and by that of emotion, and the result is the irony of the final confrontation. The rationalist's attempt to assert his 'mastery'¹⁵ takes the form in the end of a declaration of love, the outcome of which is logically consistent with the clear implications of his state of mind. Unable to 'master' his irrational self, he is unable to 'master' irrational nature in the form of this irrational and beautiful 'strange creature'. His rejection by Odintsova denotes his rejection by the 'authority' which he had presumed to reject.

'Des mouches qui se heurtent sans relâche contre une vitre - c'est, je crois, notre plus parfait symbole.' In these words Turgenev expressed his view of the human condition three years later in a letter to the writer Valentina Delessert,¹⁶ and the 'symbol' is anticipated in the scene that depicts Bazarov's defeat: he 'leaned with his forehead against the window-pane. He was gasping for breath; his whole body was visibly trembling' (p. 299). The hero is thus reduced to the common human condition - from the status of 'god' to that of 'plebeian'.¹⁷ His whole purpose in life is abruptly undermined by the revelation of the delusion on which it was based, by the shattering discovery of his limited powers. 'The machine has fallen apart,' he declares to Arkady as they set out on the journey to his parents' estate, and he discards his cigar which 'has lost its taste' (p. 306). But the gesture does not mark the end of his challenge, for the blow to his intellect is survived by his will. Despite the crushing evidence of the futility of his efforts, he still refuses to acknowledge the higher 'authority' - no longer on rationally justified grounds but instinctively or, as he puts it, 'as a result of sensation' (p. 325). A rebellion based on rational argument and evidently conducted in the interests of man is replaced by a posture of proud defiance which leaves no room for thoughts of others¹⁸ and consigns him to the fate of increasing

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isolation. His will is now his only weapon, and irrationally he wields it to the bitter end.

In conversation with Arkady in chapter 21 he points to an aspen growing by a pit which as a child he had seen as a 'special talisman'. 'Well, now I'm grown up,' he states, 'and the talisman no longer works' (p. 322). He thus confirms that his attitude to nature is still the same, that defeat has not changed the attitude of the 'adult' for whom the marsh at Mar'ino 'by an aspen grove' had been merely a source of frogs for his scalpel (p. 218). 'Memories of childhood,' we read, 'had no power over him' (p. 316). Though now acknowledging the limits of space and time imposed on his own 'infinitesimal' existence, he proudly announces his continuing defiance. 'I've not broken myself,' he cries, 'and no female will break me,' and he expresses his admiration at the sight of an ant that is dragging along a 'half-dead fly' (p. 323). But this spectacle of the working of natural law is yet another prediction of the fate that awaits him. The victory of the ant anticipates that of the microbe which will ultimately convert him into a 'half-dead fly', like the 'spider' that consumes the 'half-dead' Insarov. It foreshadows the reference to Father Aleksey, the local priest in his parents' village, who, like Odintsova, defeats him in a card-game and is given, we are told, to 'squashing' flies on his face (p. 330). The laws of God and nature are thus again revealed as one.

His inability to become reconciled to the truth that he has learnt explains his visit to Odintsova in chapter 22. It testifies at once to her continuing hold on his irrational self and to his irrational hope that he may yet prevail. And despite the chill of Odintsova's response, he 'set to work on his frogs' on returning to Mar'ino (p. 337), toiling 'obstinately and grimly', the author informs us (p. 340). But the work is more parody than purposeful action, and the same is true of his flirtation with Fenechka, the peasant-girl and mistress of Nikolay Petrovich, in which he attempts once more to impose his 'authority'. And the result is itself a notable parody - his submission once more to

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irrational 'laws', to the 'crass stupidity' (p. 351) of the 'romantic' conventions which propel him into the duel with Pavel Petrovich. The episode marks the crumbling of his last illusions. He now releases 'all his frogs, his insects and birds' (p. 357) and embarks on his final visit to Nikol'skoye for the purpose of bidding Odintsova farewell and beholding for the last time the beauty that bewitched him. Declaring that they 'felt no compelling need of one another' (p. 376), she confirms the futility of his still lingering hopes. 'It's like a wreath of flowers at the head of a corpse' (p. 377) - with this simile he expresses the effect of her words and conveys the implications of this third rejection. It foreshadows the hero's final rejection by the 'authority' which he still insists on defying. In the form of Odintsova dressed in black (p. 396) the 'wreath of flowers' is soon to appear at the head of his corpse. Hence her parting remark: 'I am sure that this is not our last meeting' (p. 380).

Having parted with Odintsova, he now parts with Arkady. He no longer has patience with those who lack 'audacity', who devoid of 'venom' refuse to 'fight' (p. 380). The rebel's isolation is thus completed, and to fight his last battle he is appropriately drawn to the home of his 'fathers' where his life began, to the 'talismán' of the aspen and the ominous pit. Restlessly he awaits the response to his defiance, and when the blow is finally struck, it is ironically his scalpel that exposes him to it.¹⁹ Having cut open nature to discover its 'secrets', he opens his own body to nature's assault. Even now his defiance continues to express itself in his refusal to cauterize the wound inflicted, but as the 'authority' of death is slowly imposed, the nihilist who rejected it acknowledges his error. 'Just try rejecting death,' he says to his father. 'It rejects you, and that's all there is to it!' (p. 391). And to witness this final act of 'rejection', nature's triumphant extinction of his defiant will, the 'imperial' Odintsova²⁰ joins the priest at his bedside. Again he confesses his love for her and expresses once more his admiration of her beauty, but to the end he

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remains resolute in refusing 'to change', and 'a shudder' passes over his 'death-stricken face' at the sight of the priest and his 'smoking censer' (pp. 396-7). He dies still insisting that what Russia needs are not 'Rafaels' but 'cobblers' and 'tailors' and 'butchers'. But his final vision is that of a 'forest', the symbol of his simplified view of life, of the materialist's reluctance to distinguish the 'trees' and of the barrier to truth which this view represents. And finally submitting to the power of this truth, he calls on its symbol to extinguish his 'flame' (p. 396). The kiss that Odintsova withheld in life is now bestowed as he sinks into death to signify his reunion with 'indifferent nature'. In the last words of the novel Turgenev comments:

However passionate, sinful and rebellious the heart hidden in the grave, the flowers that grow on it gaze at us serenely with their innocent eyes: not only of eternal peace do they speak to us, of that great peace of 'indifferent' nature; they speak also of eternal reconciliation and of life without end ... (p. 402).

Like the fresco that adorns the church at Nikol'skoye, the flowers proclaim the 'resurrection' of the fallen 'warrior'.

Thus ends the story of the 'satanic' rebel which gives consummate expression to Turgenev's ambivalence. Well known in this connection is his statement to Sluchevsky: 'If the reader does not like Bazarov with all his crudity, callousness, pitiless coldness and harshness - I repeat, if he does not like him - then I am to blame and I have not achieved my goal.'²¹ Thus despite his hero's less appealing features he clearly admired his stubborn defiance. Fifteen years earlier he had written to Pauline Viardot: 'Je préfère Satan, le type de la révolte et de la individualité.'²² This 'preference' is manifest in his portrait of Bazarov. Turgenev pays tribute to his strength and audacity, as he had done to Rudin's unflinching dedication, and in this case the tribute is notably more generous for the reason that Bazarov,

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for all the obvious differences, is much closer to his creator than the earlier idealists with their visions of a higher moral principle in life. This shared sense of realism may perhaps be taken as explaining Turgenev's disconcerting remark: 'With the exception of Bazarov's views on art I share almost all his convictions' (XIV, 100-1). But plainly he did not share the nihilistic materialism which constitutes the basis on which he rebels. It is presented, as we have seen, not simply as a delusion but as inflicting, above all, an impoverishment of the spirit which the aesthete Turgenev quite clearly rejects. The familiar paradox is therefore repeated: he rejects the rebellion that wins his acclaim. For all his admiration for his hero's strength, the novel provides no justification for the inference, drawn most notably by Pisarev, that he saw it as a basis for optimistic predictions.²³ Whatever optimism there is derives not from Bazarov, and we must now consider how his attitude is conveyed by his hero's relationships with the other characters.

In *Fathers and Sons* the personality of the central figure more obviously dominates the fiction than in any of the earlier novels. The work marks the culmination of the development of the Turgenevan novel as an art-form designed to represent the conflict taking place in the mind of a single character. Thus again the other characters are divisible into two groups which mirror the hero's psychological duality. The illuminators in one group are those who reflect different aspects of his defiant, rebellious self, while those in the other embody those 'trivialities' which he struggles to the end to suppress in himself and which are chiefly embodied in the figure of Odintsova. The latter group consists of the female characters plus Nikolay Petrovich and Arkady Kirsanov, the former of Sitnikov, his 'parodic double',²⁴ his dotting father Vasily Ivanovich, and Arkady's uncle Pavel Petrovich. Bazarov's relationships with the members of the two groups reflect the tension within him between his conflicting selves at each successive stage of the novel's development, and since neither of the

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two selves is ever extinguished, it follows that hostility in varying proportions is combined in each relationship with the affinities involved. The hostility, of course, is sharpened by the other 'factors' which give the novel its social significance, by the differences of class, generation and ideology, but its sources lie ultimately in the hero's inner conflict on which the relationships are essentially externalised comments.

Before examining the roles of the three Kirsanovs, we should first consider in this connection Bazarov's relationship with his parents and, in particular, the relationship with Vasily Ivanovich to which our attention is directed by the novel's title. As J. Blair has observed, 'the lives of the fathers' in *Fathers and Sons* 'become patterns for understanding the lives of the children'.²⁵ Hitherto, however, the supporting evidence has been drawn almost exclusively from the obvious similarities between Arkady and his father. The comparable similarities between the two Bazarovs have been almost totally ignored. Yet they are equally significant as a further illustration of Turgenev's concern with genetic determinism. They are by no means confined to their common professional interests. Thus we are told in chapter 20 that they resemble each other facially (p. 312); both are distinguished by a strong sense of pride; and both sing the praises of self-sufficiency.²⁶ But the crucial link is Vasily's familiarity with the conflict experienced in the novel by his son, with the conflict, that is, between the aspiration to dominate and the complex, uncontrollable reality of life. He reveals it obliquely when characterising himself first as 'a plebeian, a *homo novus*' and then as resembling Cincinnatus (p. 318), the Roman dictator and enemy of the plebeians who voluntarily surrendered power in order to work his small farm. The two statements disclose the nagging tension that lies at the basis of Vasily's portrait between the 'dictator' that he would have liked to be and the reality of his position as a humble 'plebeian'. Like his son, the 'giant' described by Pavel Petrovich as a 'plebeian'

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(p. 237) whose only task in the end is 'to die a decent death' (p. 396) and who returns for this purpose to his father's farm, Vasily is thus exposed as a frustrated 'dictator', as a 'dictator' similarly obliged to renounce his aspirations and likewise to follow Cincinnatus's example. Yet the tension, the sense of restriction, is still in evidence and is even apparent in Vasily's physical portrait - in the reference, for example, to his perpetual restlessness and his habit of 'continually shrugging his shoulders as if his clothes were too tight under the armpits' (p. 312).²⁷ And the would-be 'dictator' is still occasionally glimpsed - in the flogging, for example, of a peasant that he orders (p. 322) and in the envy that he betrays for Arkady's grandfather, the commander of the brigade in which he served as a doctor. 'My job,' he says to Arkady, 'was of little consequence: to be proficient with the lancet and nothing more! But your grandfather was a very honourable man, a real soldier!' (p. 313). For Vasily Ivanovich, the would-be 'Caesar', whose drawing-room wall is adorned with a portrait of Suvorov (p. 322), there could plainly be no higher praise.

Vasily's attitude to his son is dictated precisely by this conflict in his portrait between ambition and reality. Comparing Bazarov to Napoleon I (p. 331), he seems to see him as a kind of substitute for himself, as the means of fulfilling his own failed ambition. We note his confession to Arkady that he 'deifies' his son (p. 320), his impatience to ascertain Arkady's opinion of him (p. 319), and the subservient manner in which he 'curled himself up on the sofa at his son's feet' (p. 316). And this attitude may be taken as explaining why Turgenev conveys the effect on Bazarov's parents of his illness and death more through the reactions of the panic-stricken Vasily than through those of his equally doting mother. Vasily's panic is the response not simply of a father but of a man who is himself faced with death, with the second death of his own ambition. Hence the comment as he sits beside his son: 'It seemed as if the old man was being tormented by a particular anguish' (p. 392).²⁸

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But the irony is that Vasily himself is revealed as the cause of his son's failure. For the information is obliquely conveyed to the reader that the reason for the failure of Vasily himself was not, as he suggests, his lack of status, his keenly felt sense of social inferiority. The cause lay ultimately, Turgenev discloses, in the hidden depths of his own personality - in the romantic strain that his son inherits. Not for nothing, we may assume, does Turgenev insert among the weapons, maps and anatomical drawings which hang on the walls of Vasily's study 'a monogram woven from hair in a black frame' (p. 310). It seems no coincidence that the main subject of conversation between Bazarov and Arkady on their journey to the village is the pertinent subject of how women should be treated. Bazarov declares:

In my opinion it's better to break paving-stones than to allow a woman to possess as much as the tip of your finger ... You won't believe me now, but I tell you: we have been drawn into a feminine society and have found it agreeable; but to give up such a society is like pouring cold water over yourself on a hot day. A man has no time to engage in such trifles. As the excellent Spanish proverb says: 'A man must be ferocious' (pp. 306-7).

These sentiments, of course, express his reaction to his experiences at Nikolskoye, the domain of Odintsova, from which the two heroes are making their way, but they are equally relevant to the new domain which a few miles later they are due to enter. Indeed, their relevance is signalled at once, at the very entrance to his parents' village, by an exchange of abuse between two peasants in which the charge is levelled by the one against the other: 'Your wife's a witch' (p. 307). Its significance becomes apparent nine pages later where it is seen to herald the appearance of Bazarov's mother.

Arina Vlas'yevna, we learn, is not only her husband's social superior and the actual owner of the estate; by her striking

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idiosyncrasies and numerous superstitions, by her belief in 'all kinds of omens, fortune-telling, spells and dreams' (pp. 316-17), she is herself identified as a 'witch'. Ostensibly she would appear to have little in common with the woman who 'bewitches' her prodigal son, but it is clearly significant that she assumes Odintsova's form in Bazarov's dream on the eve of the duel (p. 350). The connection points to her cognate role as an embodiment of the 'authority' which her son rejects, of nature in this case in her 'maternal' guise, as the source of life and the great provider and again as the realm of irrationality and mystery. In this capacity Arina's primary role is to highlight the difference between her husband and son that coexists with the noted affinities between them. 'She has no wiles,' Bazarov remarks (p. 311), and his words are confirmed by the later disclosure that she married her husband 'against her will' (p. 317). Thus the marriage took place at Vasily's insistence, and she accepted him, we may infer, precisely for this reason, because of his surrender to the power of her 'spell'. She accepted the rebel, the aspiring 'dictator', because of the evidence that he finally presented of his readiness to forsake his 'imperial' ambitions and, like Cincinnatus, retire to the farm, submitting to the 'authority' that she personifies. Hence his industry as a gardener, as a planter of trees, and his fervent adherence to her religious beliefs. And it is notably Vasily who intervenes in chapter 21 to check Bazarov's assault on the nature-lover Arkady (p. 327). Thus in the father, unlike in his 'Napoleonic' son, the 'plebeian' proves stronger in the end than the 'emperor'. Herein perhaps lies the significance of Vasily's earlier reference to 'the grave fears roused in him by Napoleon's policy' (p. 315),²⁹ and the difference may be taken as partly explaining both Bazarov's brusqueness towards him and his three-year absence. Vasily, as we have seen, still betrays signs of tension. The 'monogram' is surrounded by 'anatomical drawings'; his pride in his son's expertise with the scalpel conflicts with Arina's dislike of 'frogs' (p. 317); and when Arina remarks on Bazarov's

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handsome appearance, he says: 'Handsome or not, he is a man - an *homme fait*' (p. 309). He sees his son as the 'man' that he failed to be himself, as the embodiment of the 'ferocity' that he himself lacked. But again the irony becomes apparent, for his son has already undergone his own experience; he has himself felt the power of a similar 'spell'; and likewise 'bewitched' by a woman of a higher class, he is similarly fated to return to the farm. He does so, of course, not to plant trees, but rather to play his final 'game' with nature. To the end, as we have seen, he behaves like an 'emperor'. Hence his mother's inability to 'help' him in the game in which he succumbs to the guile of Father Aleksey (p. 330) and the statement that she 'loved her son and feared him inexpressibly' (p. 317).³⁰ Yet he too is finally 'broken' by a woman, by death in the form of the 'imperial' Odintsova whom Arina welcomes as 'an angel from heaven' (p. 393). His death denotes the same as his father's submission - the reduction of the 'emperor' to the status of 'plebeian', his surrender to the 'authority' that he tried to defy.

Thus the obliquely conveyed story and personality of Vasily explain, in effect, the story of his son. They explain psychologically Bazarov's rebellion and the dramatic effect of Odintsova's 'spell'. But from this explanation incarnate of the hero's conduct we must turn now to the embodiments of his inherited duality, to his relationships, that is, with the three Kirsanovs - on the one side with the 'imperial' Pavel Petrovich, on the other with the 'plebeian' Nikolay and Arkady.

Despite their instinctive dislike of each other, the 'self-confident' Pavel (p. 221) and the 'self-confident' Bazarov (p. 200) are linked by similarities which are now generally recognised as far outweighing the differences between them.³¹ Indeed, even the differences may ultimately be seen to be rather matters of style than of substance or conviction reflecting simply the differences of generation and class. Thus in their clash in chapter 10 Pavel feels obliged to rise to the

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defence of the 'principle' of 'aristocratism'. Insisting that this 'principle' is wholly compatible with liberal views and a commitment to progress, he cites the example of the English aristocracy which 'gave England her freedom and upholds that freedom'. And he continues:

What I'm trying to prove, my dear sir, is that without a sense of one's own worth, without self-respect - and these feelings are highly developed in the aristocrat - there can be no firm foundation for the social ... *bien public*, for the social structure. The individual, my dear sir - that's the main thing; the individual must be as strong as a rock, for he is the foundation on which everything is built (pp. 241-2).

Bazarov scoffs at the 'foreign words' which typify Pavel as a man of the forties, but it is nevertheless clear that they essentially express the 'principle' that dictates his own activity. They express the 'giant's' own belief that the individual must be 'as strong as a rock', that his strength alone can secure man's freedom and provide the 'social structure' with a 'firm foundation'. Only a difference of style divides the disputants. And for this reason they are equally at one in their mistaken claims to understand the peasantry. 'My grandfather ploughed the land,' Bazarov exclaims. 'Ask any of your peasants which of us, you or me, he would more readily recognise as his fellow-countryman' (p. 244). But in chapter 27 Turgenev comments: 'The Bazarov who knew how to talk to the peasants (as he had boasted in his argument with Pavel Petrovich), this self-confident Bazarov did not suspect that despite everything he was a kind of buffoon in their eyes' (p. 384). For all his 'crudity' and down-to-earth manner, Bazarov, no less than Pavel Petrovich, is a prisoner of the 'principle' of 'aristocratism', immured within the walls of his 'rock-like' personality which condemn him equally to social isolation. And as is

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usually the case in the Turgenevan novel, the hero's social position has metaphysical implications. As the peasant-girl Fenechka is later to confirm, the peasantry here is itself to be viewed as embodying those 'mysteries' which the rebel rejects.

Thus even in chapter 10 it is already apparent that the major function of Bazarov's main antagonist is paradoxically to illuminate his own position. Pavel's 'stiff collars' which 'cut into his chin' (p. 215) and the 'grey-papered walls' of his gloomy study (p. 233) are metaphors of the restrictive psychological 'aristocratism' which detaches them both from the 'mysteries' of life.³² It is true that he responds to the hero's nihilism with a defence of 'the fruits of civilisation' (p. 246), but personally, it seems, he rarely tastes them. 'He had read in all,' we read, 'some five or six French books' (p. 221). And to the beauty of nature he is equally indifferent. His 'fine dark eyes', on being raised to the sky, 'reflected only,' it is noted, 'the light of the stars'.³³ 'He was not born a romantic,' Turgenev comments, 'and his fastidiously dry and passionate soul, with its tinge of French misanthropy, was incapable of dreaming' (p. 252). In all these respects he plainly mirrors the hero, as he does with his 'weakness' for feminine beauty. He 'was accustomed,' we are told, 'to easy conquests' (p. 222). But then, like Bazarov, he meets a woman, in the mystifying person of Princess R., who defies his attempts at total 'mastery' and exerts a similarly fatal fascination.

The connection that relates the Princess to the 'duchess', like that which links their perplexed pursuers, is partly obscured by differences of temperament which have caused some commentators to question whether a parallel was intended. But there can surely be no doubt about their comparable roles. Turgenev again creates a 'rather strange creature' whose behaviour presents 'a succession of incongruities' (p. 222) and who, like Odintsova, professes to be 'flattered' by the discomfiting effect of the 'mystery' that she poses (p. 223).³⁴ And it is precisely, of course, this common element of 'mystery', radiating

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powerfully from their 'beautiful eyes' (pp. 222, 271), that constitutes the crucial connection between them. In the Princess, we are told, 'even at moments of complete surrender, something secret and inaccessible still seemed to remain, something which no one could ever reach' (p. 222). Hence the ring 'with a sphinx engraved on the stone' with which Pavel presents her, remarking as he does so: 'This sphinx is you' (p. 223). Unable, like Bazarov, to accept the thought that life contains 'secrets' which he cannot 'master', he embarks on a four-year pursuit of the 'sphinx' that corresponds to the hero's three visits to Nikol'skoye. 'He wandered,' we read, 'from place to place, like a man who had been poisoned' (p. 223). And Bazarov's experience is paralleled exactly: again the pursuer pursues in vain; the 'secret' remains beyond his reach; and he withdraws to the country to live out his days, still locked in the prison of his own creation. Hence the author's comment on the following ten years: 'Nowhere does time fly as quickly as it does in Russia; in prison, they say, it flies still more quickly' (p. 224).

In response to Arkady's tale about his uncle Bazarov remarks: 'I nevertheless maintain that a man who has staked his whole life on the card of a woman's love and then, when he has lost it, has turned sour and sunk to such a level that he is incapable of anything - such a person is not a man, not a male' (p. 226). The irony is clear. The comment foreshadows his own experience. Pavel Petrovich, we read, 'played a masterly game of whist and always lost' (p. 225). Bazarov, as we have seen, proves equally unsuccessful in his 'games' with Odintsova and Father Aleksey. Both 'stake' their 'whole lives' on an identical 'card' and, on losing, are deprived of their purpose in life. What remains is merely an empty shell, in each case a 'machine' that has 'fallen apart', and the irony is sustained in their reactions to their failures: though refusing to yield, the two rationalists are irrationally impelled to return to the bosom of nature and to that of their families. And it is here that the lines of their stories intersect in their common

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infatuation with the peasant-girl Fenechka which propels them once more into conflict with each other, as did the subject of the peasantry in chapter 10, and explains, in effect, their mutual hostility. For each of them Fenechka is reminiscent of the woman who contrived to defeat him with her elusive 'secret'. 'C'est de la même famille,' says Pavel Petrovich, referring to her similarity to Princess R. (p. 357), and in Bazarov's dream on the eve of the duel she appears with Odintsova in the form of 'a kitten' (p. 350). But he also sees Pavel Petrovich in the dream in the form of 'a forest' which 'he had to fight' (p. 350). The personification of his own inflexible 'aristocratism' becomes the barrier which stands between himself and the 'secret' and accordingly appears in the same symbolic form as the barrier that he encounters in his death-bed vision. Herein lies the significance of their mutual antipathy. Each symbolises for the other the barrier represented by the delusion on which their lives are based. Thus their duel, like their argument in chapter 10, appears in a notably different light from that in which it is usually presented as a battle for supremacy between classes and generations. It is essentially a battle within each of them between the 'principle' of 'aristocratism' to which they both subscribe and their instinctive attraction to the truth which they reject, to the truth now embodied in the beautiful peasant-girl. And the result of the duel is the same for them both. Their defiant 'aristocratism' survives their inner conflicts. Bazarov emerges physically unscathed, and Pavel suffers only the indignity of a flesh wound which appropriately Bazarov promptly tends.³⁵ Hence the abrupt termination of their relationships with Fenechka. Pavel acquiesces in her marriage to his brother (p. 360), and from the conquering hero she 'recoiled in horror' (p. 356). As Bazarov puts it to his wounded opponent: 'The Russian peasant is that same mysterious unknown that formerly Mrs. Radcliffe used to talk about so much. Who can understand him? He doesn't even understand himself' (p. 355). Now Pavel significantly does not dissent. The barrier remains impenetrable to them both, and only in

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death are they fated to breach it, as Princess R. had announced when returning her ring, having inscribed a cross on top of the sphinx. The cross, she had said, was 'the answer to the riddle (p. 224).

Thus in the form of the duel triggered by Fenechka Turgenev externalises Bazarov's inner conflict - the conflict triggered by Odintsova. His surrender on both occasions to his own irrationality denotes an inner rebellion against his dominant self now externalised in the form of the 'self-confident' Pavel, and Pavel's survival reflects the failure of the rebellion and his defiant rejection of the truth that seduced him. But we must also consider in this connection the symbolic roles of the other two Kirsanovs, for like the self of the hero that triumphs in the duel, his rejected self is also externalised.

In relation to the hero and Pavel Petrovich Arkady and Nikolay play comparable roles in the sense that they similarly parallel each other. For Nikolay's position in relation to Pavel essentially duplicates Arkady's in relation to Bazarov. They embody those selves which the two rebels suppress - their emotional selves, those irrational feelings which express themselves chiefly in a love of nature and art. Hence their 'suppressed' positions for much of the novel. While Nikolay is deterred by Pavel's objections from sealing his relationship with Fenechka by marriage, even though he already has a child by her, Arkady is deterred by Bazarov's influence from similarly fulfilling his deepest wishes and giving full expression to his true personality. The parallel offers another indication that the differences between the two generations, which constitute the novel's social theme, are undercut by the deeper similarities between them.

Arkady's symbolic role as Bazarov's 'other self', of the romantic, 'plebeian' self suppressed by the 'dictator',³⁶ explains why they are inseparable for the first twenty-one chapters. It also explains Arkady's subsequent actions which dramatise, like the duel, Bazarov's final rejection of the truth that he acknowledges but cannot accept. The second symbol of this rejection is Arkady's liberation,

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Bazarov's loss of his disciple to Odintsova's sister Katya which contrasts with Odintsova's rejection of the hero. Before the blow inflicted on Bazarov's 'self-confidence', he retains the control of his 'other self' which is reflected in Arkady's complete subservience. But from chapter 19 onwards the gulf opens between them. Bazarov's defiance of the irrationality of life, reflected in the irrationality of his own personality, is first expressed in chapter 21 in the attack on Arkady that Vasily Ivanovich interrupts, and in chapter 22, for the first time in the novel, Arkady detaches himself from his former mentor when he sets out alone to visit Katya. And Katya herself changes correspondingly. Initially wary of the nihilist's disciple, she tends to look at him, we are told, 'from under her eyelids' (pp. 276, 278), as if withholding that 'mystery' reflected in a woman's eyes to which Bazarov refers as 'sheer romanticism' (p. 226),³⁷ and the same caution is apparent in chapter 16 in the 'severity and dryness' with which she plays the Mozart sonata (p. 281). Even in chapter 25, when Bazarov visits Nikol'skoye for the third and last time, Arkady is prompted to remark to her: 'You are so timid and distrustful, you stand aloof from everyone' (p. 366). But in chapter 26, as Arkady launches into his proposal of marriage, they overhear the conversation between Odintsova and Bazarov in which she finally 'lays the wreath' at the hero's head, and with this confirmation of the removal of the threat Katya immediately accepts the completed proposal. Bazarov's power over Arkady is thus finally broken. Katya's toast at the end 'to the memory of Bazarov' (p. 398) denotes the triumph of Arkady's inherited personality over the alien ideas which briefly suppress it. From the hero's 'bitter, harsh and lonely existence' (p. 380), which recalls the 'existence' of the rebel Rudin, he turns, like Lezhnyov, to the delights of marriage and to the landowner's life in communion with nature in which he is fittingly rejoined with his remarried father.

Corresponding to the affinities between Arkady and his father are those which exist between Katya and Fenechka,³⁸ for their

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positions clearly have much in common. Fenechka too has the task of seducing a Kirsanov from the obstructive influence of a defiant rebel, from the influence, as stated, of the hero's 'double'. Her attitude to the two brothers consequently resembles the attitude of Katya to Arkady and Bazarov. When she first meets Nikolay she flees into a field of rye 'to avoid meeting him face to face' (p. 233),³⁹ and Pavel remarks in chapter 24: 'You never look at me. It's as if your conscience is not clear' (p. 359). Thus her eyes are screened, like those of Katya, not only from the rebel but also from the man who yields to his will.⁴⁰ But Fenechka is obliged to open her eyes when one of them is struck by a spark from the stove and she is brought to Nikolay for medical treatment. The episode marks the beginning of their mutual attraction. Nikolay tends the injury with characteristic solicitude and, instead of offering his hand for the customary kiss, kisses himself the top of her head (p. 232). The birth of their child and Fenechka's move to the house are the results of the rapprochement that begins in this way. But Nikolay, like Arkady, is for a long time deterred from capitulating totally to the new influence in his life. He is deterred, as noted, by the attitude of his brother and by his loyalty to the memory of his first wife Masha. Hence the symbolic allusion to Fenechka's position in the form of the 'caged goldfinch' which hangs in her room (p. 229) - a symbol reminiscent of the similes employed to convey the inhibiting restrictions on Yelena Stakhova and Lemm. And the restrictions on Nikolay are similarly symbolised - by the problems that he experiences with his uncooperative peasants, by the failure of the trees that he plants to 'take' (p. 211), and by the run-down condition of his potentially fruitful estate. All are related as symbolic expressions of his continuing reluctance to shed the influences which stubbornly stand in the peasant-girl's way. To the task of removing them she directs her energies.

Fenechka's concern to erase the memory of Masha is reflected in the episode in chapter 11 in which she intervenes to disrupt Nikolay's

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reverie about her at the very moment when he senses her presence so intensely that he even feels 'her warmth and breath' (p. 251). It is also reflected in her attitude to Arkady, explaining most plausibly her absence from breakfast on the morning after his arrival at Mar'ino (p. 212) and also the hostility to Masha's son displayed by her own son, the infant Mitya (p. 235). Once more the son is a mirror of the parent. But her main campaign is conducted against Pavel, and ironically and appropriately her weapon is Bazarov, the embodiment of the same obstructive 'principle'. Regarded by them both as intriguingly connected with the women who undermined their conceptions of themselves, she sets out to expedite their elimination from the scene by propelling them into an act of mutual destruction.

Allusions to Fenechka's hidden 'ferocity' are woven into her portrait from the earliest stages. Thus in the episode in which she flees from Nikolay into the field she is portrayed peering at him 'like a wild animal' from 'her ambush'.⁴¹ 'Hello, Fenechka,' he calls to her, 'I do not bite' (p. 233). But Fenechka, we learn later, does 'bite', and the reference in chapter 8 to 'the moist glitter of her pearl-like teeth in the sun' (p. 232) heralds the proof provided in chapter 24. Not for nothing, it seems, is a copy of K. P. Masal'sky's historical novel *The Musketeers* noted among her personal possessions (p. 230). For the bullet from Bazarov's pistol which fells Pavel in the duel is indeed the 'bite' that Fenechka inflicts.⁴² Bazarov becomes, in effect, her teeth, as our earlier interpretation of the duel implies. By reawakening, like Odintsova, his suppressed emotions, she contrives to pit him against his 'double'. In the figure of Pavel's conqueror in the argument in chapter 10 she recognises at once a weapon to be used, and Bazarov's unconscious acceptance of this role is anticipated as early as their first meeting in the novel. Doffing his cap and bowing to her, he announces himself as 'a humble person' (*chelovek smirnyy*).⁴³ 'Fenechka,' we read, 'half-rose from the bench and stared at him in silence' (p. 234),⁴⁴ and from this time forth she smiles upon him,⁴⁵

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preparing him for the part that he is to play. Recalling his argument with Pavel, she says to him: 'I had no idea what your argument was about, but I saw that you were twisting him round your little finger ... No one could get the better of you' (p. 345). It is this belief that dictates her actions in the scene in the garden that precipitates the duel. Seduced once more by a beautiful woman, Bazarov says to her: 'I know a hand that could knock me over with a finger if it wished to' (p. 345), not realising that this is precisely what Fenechka's hand is doing. Fully aware that Pavel is near, she lures him on to the decisive act which, we read, 'she resisted feebly, and he was able to renew and prolong his kiss' (p. 345). Shortly before she had offered him the choice between a red rose and a white one (p. 344), and he had chosen the former. The episode serves to remind us that the colour 'red' is particularly prominent in Fenechka's portrait and is associated from the beginning with the notion of 'blood'. Thus in chapter 5 she is described as 'a young woman of about twenty-three, all white and soft, with dark hair and dark eyes, red, childishly pouting lips and delicate hands ... The hot blood spread in a crimson wave beneath the fine skin of her pretty face' (p. 216).⁴⁶ Bazarov's choice of the red rose may be interpreted as signalling his momentary submission to the power of her will, as foreshadowing the blood, the mark of her 'bite', which eight pages later begins to flow down the immaculate white breeches of her vanquished opponent. And the effects of the 'bite' are immediately reflected: in Pavel's renunciation of his 'aristocratic airs' (p. 363), in Fenechka's unprecedentedly public display of her feelings for Nikolay in Pavel's presence,⁴⁷ and in Pavel's withdrawal of his objections to the marriage.⁴⁸ The obstacle of the rebel is thus effectively removed. The comparison of Pavel in the same chapter to 'a corpse' (p. 363) anticipates the death three chapters later of the rebel who was used to undermine his power. Having been linked by them both with their *femmes fatales*, Fenechka effects their complete isolation and thus, like Katya, achieves her aim. And the concluding

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indications of their similar triumphs are the names under which they last appear - no longer Fenechka and Katya, but Fedos'ya Nikolayevna and Katerina Sergeevna.

The novel thus ends in the customary manner with the triumph of life over 'human logic'. While Odintsova and Princess R. reject the two rebels and thus destroy the foundations on which their rebellions are based, Katya and Fenechka destroy their influence, thus enabling the two embodiments of their 'other selves' to achieve in life what they themselves are unable to achieve except in death - the 'reconciliation' which their marriages denote.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

It has long been accepted that a distinct pattern is observable in the construction of Turgenev's novels,¹ and the studies of the four major novels in the present book have emphatically endorsed this view. Attention has repeatedly been drawn to the similarities between their plots and character-types, to parallel situations, to similar patterns of relationships, and even to recurrent imagery. The book's principal aim, however, has been to relate these various external manifestations of Turgenev's 'constancy' (to use again his own term) to a 'constant' theme which has been viewed as reflecting the 'constancy' of the ideas that lie at the basis of the novels. Transcending the social issues which the novels address, these ideas have been interpreted as expressing a philosophical conception of life and human nature which receives fictional expression in the form of the 'constant' theme of metaphysical conflict. The four novels have been viewed as philosophical responses to politico-social questions, as presenting the conflict between the individual and society as a conflict between the individual and the universe. They have been seen as denying man's ability to build a just society by denying his status as 'the tsar of creation'. The study has argued that the questions posed by the Russian intelligentsia's ideals are answered by the assertion that moral protest is futile in a universe to which moral criteria are alien.

It has also been observed, however, that in each novel Turgenev develops his philosophical theme on two levels, presenting the external conflict as a projection of the central figure's inner conflict, of the conflict between will and conscience, emotion and intellect, body and soul. Although, therefore, overt psychological analysis is generally eschewed, the Turgenevan novel has been seen to be a profoundly psychological novel. It is essentially a dramatised psychological conflict which expresses a philosophical conception of life. While the social theme is raised to the metaphysical level, the

metaphysical theme is presented as a psychological drama which embraces in each novel every aspect of the fiction. The result, on the one hand, is a degree of cohesion which ostensibly the novels would seem to lack; on the other, it is a distinctive kind of realism which evokes from the 'real' world depicted in the novels a sense of the *realiora* which govern man's life.

The concluding comment which this view invites is that the affinities of the novels with the Dostoyevskian novel are notably closer than is generally thought. For Dostoyevsky pronounced his social judgements by invoking, in effect, the same Romantic tradition. He likewise presents his social rebels as rebels against a metaphysical law which expresses itself in human nature and follows his heroes along the road which leads similarly to death or to 'reconciliation'. Metaphysical conflict is Dostoyevsky's theme too, and his novels are constructed in much the same way as dramatised or externalised psychological conflicts. But the similarities, of course, are ultimately subverted by the differences deriving from the difference of belief, from their different conceptions of life and human nature. With his Christian faith in a moral universe and thus in the moral nature of man, Dostoyevsky places at the centre of his novels the challenges of the will to the 'authority' of conscience, and with his Christian belief in man's freedom to choose, he makes the outcome of the conflict unpredictable to the end. In the Turgenevan novel this situation is reversed. Here conscience challenges the 'authority' of the will in a universe conceived as fundamentally amoral, and man is the pawn of unconscious forces which invariably usurp his freedom of choice. For this reason, as noted, the novels are lacking in Dostoyevsky's uniquely intensive analysis. Behaviour resulting from conscious moral struggle is replaced by genetically determined behaviour, the results of which are always predictable.

Thus from similar approaches to similar problems two different kinds of novel were born - the one expressing through the rebel's

defeat a faith in the moral regeneration of man, the other employing the same conclusion to argue vigorously the futility of such faith. Yet Turgenev, as we have seen, does not yield to Dostoyevsky in declaring his love and acceptance of life. The world which Dostoyevsky accepts as transfigured is accepted as it by his elder contemporary, and this difference reflects the essential difference between the conflicts which lie at the centre of their works. For the aesthetic conflict, which in the Dostoyevskian novel is merely a dimension of the moral conflict, in the Turgenevan novel is at variance with it and must be judged, in the end, to obscure and transcend it. Confronting the reader with two kinds of beauty, the moral beauty of selfless commitment and the amoral beauty of a brutal world, Turgenev asserts the higher value of the latter. With the beauty of his art he celebrates the beauty of nature, love and ordinary human emotions from which his idealists are fatally estranged.

NOTES

Chapter I

1. I. S. Turgenev, *Polnoye sobraniye sochineniy i pisem: Sochineniya*, VII (Moscow-Leningrad, 1966), p. 202. References to Turgenev's works in this book are to the fifteen volumes of works in this edition (1961-68) and are included hereafter in the text. In footnotes the edition is cited as *Sochineniya*. References to Turgenev's correspondence are to the thirteen volumes of letters in the edition, cited as *Pis'ma* and by volume and page numbers. Unless otherwise stated, dates of letters are given in 'Old Style'.
2. See in this connection E. Kagan-Kans, *Hamlet and Don Quixote: Turgenev's Ambivalent Vision* (The Hague-Paris, 1975), p. 8.
3. R. Freeborn, *Turgenev: the Novelist's Novelist* (Oxford, 1960), p. 23.
4. Letter of 16-19 July 1849 (*Pis'ma*, I, p. 350).
5. See particularly, for example, the 'poem' entitled 'Nature' (XIII, 188-9).
6. See the comment: 'He adopted only such aspects of "Schopenhauerism" as fitted easily into the general structure of his own *Weltanschauung*, already formed, independently of Schopenhauer, in the forties' (A. Walicki, 'Turgenev and Schopenhauer', *Oxford Slavonic Papers*, X, 1962, pp. 7-8).
7. Although Turgenev's first reference to Schopenhauer is encountered in a letter to Herzen of 23 October 1862 (*Pis'ma*, V, p. 65), it has been argued that his acquaintance with the German philosopher's *magnum opus* dates from several years earlier, perhaps from as early as 1855, the year in which *Rudin* was written (See A. Batyuto, *Turgenev-romanist* (Leningrad, 1967), p. 116).
8. A. Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Idea*, translated by R. B. Haldane and J. Kemp, 7th edn., I (London, 1907-09), p. 191.

9. See his description of himself in a letter to N. N. Stasyulevich of 2 January 1880 (N.S.) as 'an old style liberal in the English dynastic sense, a man who expects reforms *only from above* and hostile in principle to all revolutions' (XV, 185).
10. See Turgenev's comment on 'systems of thought' in a letter of 3 January 1857 to L. N. Tolstoy: 'A system is like the tail of truth, but truth is like a lizard: it will leave its tail in your hand and run away. It knows that it will soon grow another one' (*Pis'ma*, III, p. 75).
11. See the remark of Nezhdanov, the hero of *Virgin Soil* (1877): 'There are two men in me, and the one does not allow the other to live' (XII, 279).
12. See Turgenev's remark in a letter to Pauline Viardot of 17-20 April 1848: 'Le sens moral et le sens du beau sont deux bosses qui n'ont rien à faire l'une avec l'autre' (*Pis'ma*, I, 298-9).
13. Noteworthy in this connection are the open-air settings in which love is declared in each of the first three novels (VI, 311; VII, 237; VIII, 93-4).
14. See the more detailed discussion of this point in J. B. Woodward, 'Determinism in the Novels of Turgenev', *Scando-Slavica*, XXXIV, 1988, pp. 18-21.
15. Letter of 21 April 1853 to P. V. Annenkov (*Pis'ma*, II, p. 144).
16. See the expression of this ambivalent attitude towards idealists in his 'poem in prose' 'The Threshold' (1878) (XIII, 168-9).
17. See the comment: 'The vital aim of Turgenev's heroes and heroines has no positive basis outside their own personalities. The aim is set for the hero by his inner aspirations and needs; all the bases that come from without are plainly "secondary"' (V. M. Markovich, *Chelovek v romanakh Turgeneva* (Leningrad, 1975), p. 102).
18. See Potugin's comment in *Smoke*: 'A man enters the grave as he entered the cradle' (IX, 238).

19. See, for example, G. B. Kurlyandskaya, *Khudozhestvennyy metod Turgeneva-romanista* (Tula, 1972), p. 228.
20. Markovich, p. 69.
21. M. A. Petrovsky, 'Tainstvennoye u Turgeneva', in *Tvorchestvo Turgeneva*, edited by I. N. Rozanov and Yu. N. Sokolov (Moscow, 1920), p. 96.
22. See the comment: 'The thought, essentially philosophical, is mainly expounded in a consciously applied form, as it applies to Russian man' (M. Gershenzon, *Mechta i mysl' I. S. Turgeneva* (Moscow, 1919), p. 83).
23. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

Chapter II

1. The concluding section of the Epilogue, which describes the hero's death in Paris, was added in 1860.
2. See in this connection V. M. Markovich, *I. S. Turgenev i russkiy realisticheskiy roman XIX veka (30-50-ye gody)* (Leningrad, 1982), pp. 128-9.
3. See Turgenev's description of the novel as an '*étude psychologique*' in a letter of 11 June 1878 to an unknown addressee (*Pis'ma*, XII, p. 330).
4. See Turgenev's comments on this subject in his letters of 27 February 1856 and 16 September 1862 to S. T. Aksakov and M. A. Markovich respectively (*Pis'ma*, I, p. 340, and V, p. 47).
5. On the question of the Schellingian and Hegelian elements in Rudin's thought, see R. Dessaix, *Turgenev: the Quest for Faith* (Canberra, 1980), pp. 6-8.
6. See his statement in a letter to M. A. Milyutina of 22 February 1875: 'My attitude to everything supernatural is one of complete indifference' (*Pis'ma*, XI, p. 31).

7. See, for example, M. K. Kieman, *Ivan Sergeevich Turgenev. Ocherk zhizni i tvorchestva* (Leningrad, 1936), p. 83, and G. A. Byalyy, *Turgenev i russskiy realizm* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1962), pp. 73-4.
8. See his reminiscences of Stankevich (VI, 394-5).
9. All references to *Rudin* are to volume VI of *Sochineniya*, and hereafter in this chapter only page numbers are indicated. Lezhnyov is describing here the impact of Rudin's eloquence, but he is careful to add that what he said 'was not his own' (p. 298), that 'the ideas weren't born in his head: he took them from others, particularly Pokorsky' (p. 297).
10. See Lezhnyov's recollection that to enter the circle was 'like entering a church' (p. 299).
11. See in this connection Lezhnyov's reference to Pokorsky's 'poor health' (p. 296).
12. The name is conceivably derived from *pokornyy* ('submissive').
13. See Natal'ya's remark about him to Rudin: 'He was always spying for my mother' (p. 321).
14. The term is applied to him later by both Lezhnyov (p. 293) and Volyntsev (p. 309).
15. See Lasunskaya's remark to Rudin: 'No doubt you know that I manage my estate personally' (p. 275).
16. See in this connection his failure to complete his article on 'the tragic in life and art' (p. 291).
17. See Pigasov's remark in chapter 12: 'It's remarkable how all Rudin's friends and followers eventually become his enemies' (p. 346).
18. See the two ornithological images applied later to Rudin by Lezhnyov - the verb *operit'sya* (literally 'to be fledged') (p. 286) and his comparison of the hero to 'a swallow skimming over a pond' (p. 302).

19. See Lezhnyov's comment on her: 'She herself hardly believes her own words' (p. 240).
20. See his remark to Lezhnyov in the Epilogue when describing his experiences as a teacher: 'I had a poor knowledge of the facts' (p. 363).
21. See the reference to his 'unexpectedly bold similes' in chapter 3 (p. 269) and the similes that he uses in his descriptions in the Epilogue (p. 358).
22. See in this connection his remark to Natal'ya in chapter 6 that he has not yet 'sufficiently clarified' for himself 'the tragic significance of love' and his insistence that 'unhappy love' is merely 'the comic side of love' (p. 291).
23. See in this connection J. D. Clayton, 'Night and Wind: Images and Allusions as a Source of the Poetic in Turgenev's *Rudin*', *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, XXVI, No. 1, 1984, p. 14.
24. See, for example, V. S. Pritchett, *The Gentle Barbarian: the Life and Work of Turgenev* (London, 1977), p. 94.
25. See his remark to Basistov: 'It is a passion of mine to enjoy nature' (p. 245). His 'snake-like' conduct in chapter 6, where he eavesdrops in the bushes on the lovers' meeting in the arbour, is anticipated by the references in chapter 1 to his sleek appearance, to his tendency to pronounce the letter 's' 'clearly, even with a slight hiss' when addressing inferiors (p. 246) and to 'his habit, when talking to someone, of fixing his eyes upon him' (p. 242).
26. See Rudin's words in his parting letter to Volyntsev: 'I assumed that you would be able to rise above the environment in which you grew up .. I was mistaken' (p. 329).
27. Cf. the reference to Lasunskaya in chapter 2 as 'a metropolitan lioness' (p. 247).
28. See in this connection Rudin's reference in conversation with her in chapter 7 to the figure of Joan of Arc (p. 306).

29. See the comment: 'She felt deeply and strongly, but in secret; even as a child she had rarely cried, and now she seldom even sighed and only paled a little when something saddened her' (pp. 279-80).
30. See, for example, G. V. Prokhorov, 'Torcheskaya istoriya romana "Rudin"', in *I. S. Turgenev. Materialy i issledovaniya* (Oryol, 1940), pp. 126-7.
31. For a critical view of this argument see M. O. Gabel', 'Tvorcheskaya istoriya romana "Rudin"', *Literaturnoye nasledstvo*, LXXII (Moscow 1967), pp. 13-19.
32. V. Ripp, *Turgenev's Russia* (Ithaca and London, 1980), p. 135.
33. See Rudin's interest in this point. The first question that he addresses to Lasunskaya about Lezhnyov concerns his wealth (p. 274).
34. See the compliment that he receives for this from Lasunskaya (p. 276).
35. Cf. the description of her house as 'looking out welcomingly with its wide bright windows from the thick foliage of ancient limes (*lip*) and maples' (p. 244).
36. See his remark to her in chapter 1: 'You keep wanting fire; but fire is no good for anything. It blazes, smokes and goes out.' 'And warms,' she adds (p. 240).
37. See Lezhnyov's remark to her: 'Today you're as fresh and delightful as this beautiful morning' (p. 240).
38. See Rudin's repeated acknowledgement of this deficiency in the Epilogue (p. 357).
39. See Lezhnyov's earlier comment that Rudin's eloquence 'is not Russian' (p. 293) and the hero's insensitivity to Lasunskaya's 'simple folk turns of phrase' (p. 272).
40. The 'prediction' reads in full: 'All his life he will remain part scholar, part man-of-the-world, that is, a dilettante, that is, to put it bluntly - a nothing' (p. 273).

41. See in this connection Lezhnyov's disclosure in chapter 4 that his peasants pay 'quit rent' (*obrok*) (as distinct from the more burdensome *corvée* (*barshchina*)) (p. 276).
42. See Rudin's prediction to Natal'ya in chapter 7: 'It remains for me now to drag myself along a hot and dusty road, from post-station to post-station, in a shaky cart ... When I shall reach my destination, or whether I shall reach it, God alone knows' (p. 306).
43. Cf. Rudin's words to Lezhnyov in the Epilogue: 'Death, my friend, must bring peace in the end' (p. 365).
44. See her dislike of the 'rebel' Napoleon (p. 280).

Chapter III

1. All references to *A Nest of the Gentry* are to volume VII of *Sochineniya*, and hereafter in this chapter only page numbers are indicated.
2. V. M. Markovich, 'Mezhdru eposom i tragediyey. (O khudozhestvennoy strukture romana I. S. Turgeneva "Dvoryanskoye gnezdo")', in *Problemy poetiki russkogo realizma XIX veka*, edited by G. P. Makogonenko *et al.* (Leningrad, 1984), p. 55.
3. D. N. Ovsyaniko-Kulikovskiy, *Sobraniye sochineniy*, 5th edn., II (Moscow-Petrograd, 1923), p. 196.
4. Ripp, pp. 153-4.
5. See Freeborn, p. 85.
6. See Turgenev's letters of 3 and 25 October 1856 to I. I. Panayev and V. P. Botkin respectively (*Pis'ma*, III, pp. 18, 23).
7. See the reference in chapter 15 to the 'white teeth' of her Parisian guests 'flashing behind their rosy lips' (p. 173).
8. Cf. the description of Lasunskaya as 'a metropolitan lioness' (VI, 247).

9. See the comment on Glafira: 'From the very beginning Malan'ya became her slave (p. 157).

10. Cf. the similar ability of the hero's 'dominating' father in Turgenev's *First Love* to 'tame the wildest horses' and the whip with which he strikes the heroine Zinaida (IX, 31, 70).

11. Cf. the Greek root of the name Varvara signifying 'foreigner'. The thought is suggested by the personality of Varvara that Turgenev, when selecting her name, may also have had in mind his tyrannical mother Varvara Petrovna who, according to P. V. Annenkov, 'spoke and wrote her diary mainly in French' (*I. S. Turgenev v vospominaniyakh sovremennikov*, edited by V. V. Grigorenko *et al.*, I (Moscow, 1969), p. 104).

12. See the references to her 'calm white face' and 'downcast eyes' (p. 161).

13. Cf. Pandalevsky's description of Basistov in *Rudin*: 'A peasant!... A veritable peasant!' (VI, 246).

14. On this occasion Turgenev highlights the allusion with his comment in parenthesis: 'Classical names were still very popular at that time' (p. 155).

15. See the emphasis on Varvara's physical charms in the description of her in the scene at the theatre in chapter 12 (pp. 166-7).

16. Cf. the young hero's similar self-identification with Aleko in Turgenev's *First Love* (IX, 59).

17. Cf. in this connection Mar'ya Dmitriyevna's reference to him as 'a seal'.

18. See his remark to Lavretsky: 'So far as I am concerned, I have changed a great deal, my friend' (p. 201).

19. See the sight witnessed by Lavretsky when Mikhalevich enters the Korob'ins' box at the theatre: 'As he continued to look at the box, he noticed that all the people in it treated Mikhalevich as an old friend' (p. 167).

20. See *Sochineniya*, VII, p. 510.

21. Ovsyaniko-Kulikovsky, p. 169.
22. Byalyy, p. 109.
23. See, for example, G. B. Kurlyandskaya, *Struktura povesti i romana I. S. Turgeneva 1850-kh godov* (Tula, 1977), p. 195.
24. See D. I. Pisarev, "'Dvoryanskoye gnezdo". Roman I. S. Turgeneva', *Sochineniya v chetyryokh tomakh*, I (Moscow, 1955), pp. 30-1.
25. G. Vinnikova, *Turgenev i Rossiya*, 2nd revised and supplemented edn. (Moscow, 1977), p. 157. Cf. the comments of T. P. Golovanova in *Sochineniya*, VII, pp. 472-3.
26. It may be noted in this connection that she makes her first appearance in the novel at the end of the short chapter (chapter 3) which describes Panshin's success in subduing his horse with the aid of his whip (p. 132).
27. Cf. the description of Rudin as 'looking at no one in particular' as he expounds his view of life (VI, 269).
28. See his repetition of the last two lines of Mikhalevich's poem in chapter 27 (p. 213) and his reply to Liza when she asks him whether he wept on receiving the news of Varvara's death: 'There was no point in crying over the past when it had all been burnt out of me' (p. 219).
29. Cf. the similar intervention of nature in chapter 11 on the eve of Lavretsky's submission to Varvara's charms. After witnessing the death of his father, he 'said nothing,' we read, 'but leaned on the railings of the balcony and gazed for a long time into the garden which was green, filled with fragrance and glistening in the rays of the golden spring sun ... Life was opening its arms before him' (p. 165).
30. For a detailed study of this subject see I. Masing-Delic, 'Schopenhauer's Metaphysic of Music and Turgenev's *Dvorjanskoe gnezdo*', *Die Welt der Slaven*, XXXI, No. 1, 1986, pp. 183-95.
31. Schopenhauer, pp. 339-40

32. E. L. Frost, 'The Function of Music in *Dvorjanskoe gnezdo*', *Russian Language Journal*, XXVIII, No. 1, 1974, p. 11.
33. Cf. Rudin's liking for Beethoven (VI, 284).
34. See the sonata's effect on her: 'Mar'ya Dmitriyevna at first laughed ... and then went to bed. In her own words, Beethoven agitated her nerves too much' (p. 193).
35. See the statement in *Rudin* that Pandalevsky 'played the piano competently' (VI, 242).
36. Cf. Lasunskaya's enlistment of Pandalevsky's playing in *Rudin* to 'tame' the misogynist Pigasov (VI, 252).
37. See the author's remark: 'He was incapable of setting about things in the right way' (p. 139).
38. It may be noted in this connection that after accepting Lavretsky's invitation to stay with him at Vasil'yevskoye he immediately regrets the decision (p. 194).
39. It may also be noted that her portrait ends with a reference to her 'assiduous visits to the theatre' in Paris and to her belief that 'to be Madame Doche' is 'the height of human bliss' (p. 288).
40. Cf. the pose that she adopts in chapter 43 on emerging from the screen behind which Mar'ya Dmitriyevna had hidden her while attempting to persuade Lavretsky to forgive her: 'Pale, half-alive, with lowered eyes, she seemed to have abdicated all thoughts of her own, all will-power - to have given herself wholly into Mar'ya Dmitriyevna's hands' (p. 277).
41. See his remark to Liza in chapter 44: 'I am ready to obey you in all things' (p. 282).
42. See Turgenev's letter to Pauline Viardot of 30 July 1858 (*Pis'ma*, III, p. 231).

43. See the comment that her room could be reached by a back staircase from 'the servants' entrance' (p. 270).
44. See her approval of Lavretsky's response to Panshin in chapter 33 (p. 233) and her remark in the opening chapter: 'I am not very strong in the French "dialect"' (p. 128).
45. See the statement that 'although she did not inhibit Liza in any way, she tried to moderate her zeal and would not allow her to make too many bows while praying: that, she said, was not the way of the gentry' (p. 243).
46. See the comment: 'Agaf'ya did not get on with Marfa Timofeyevna when the latter moved into the Kalitin house. The stern solemnity of the former "peasant" was not to the liking of the impatient and self-willed old lady' (p. 243).
47. Perhaps significant in this connection is the combination of the colours black and white in her portrait (p. 126).
48. Cf. Panshin's contrasting treatment of his horse in chapter 3 (p. 132).

Chapter IV

1. *Pis'ma*, III, p. 287.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 349. Cf. Turgenev's letter to P. V. Annenkov of 23 October 1859, *ibid.*, p. 359.
3. L. V. Pumpyansky, 'Romany Turgeneva i roman "Nakanune"', in I. S. Turgenev, *Sochineniya*, VI (Moscow-Leningrad 1930), p. 22. Cf. N. A. Dobrolyubov, 'Kogda zhe pridyot nastoyashchiy den'', *Sobraniye sochineniy*, VI (Moscow-Leningrad, 1963), pp. 138-9.
4. Letter to I. S. Aksakov of 13 November 1859 (*Pis'ma*, III, p. 368).
5. N. L. Brodsky, 'I. S. Turgenev v rabote nad romanom "Nakanune"', *Svitok*, II, 1922, pp. 96-8.
6. Freeborn, p. 115.

7. Dessaix, p. 64.
8. Markovich, *I. S. Turgenev i russkiy realisticheskiy roman*, p. 185.
9. Cf. the similar illustration in *Hamlet and Don Quixote* in which 'the tsar of creation' is replaced by Alexander of Macedon (VIII, 184).
10. All references to *On the Eve* are to volume VIII of *Sochineniya*, and hereafter in this chapter only page numbers are indicated.
11. We read in chapter 11: 'He drank the health of the Bulgarian King Krum, Chrum or Chrom who lived almost in the time of Adam' (p. 57).
12. See Shubin's appeal: 'Take your place in space as a body, my friend' (p. 12).
13. See the reference in the Epilogue to 'the rather heavy style' of his academic articles (p. 166).
14. Noteworthy in this connection is Turgenev's later indication that the 'task' which he attempted to 'perform' in *On the Eve* 'occasionally rose' before him while he was preparing to write *Rudin* (XII, 306).
15. See the reference to the episode in which his father addressed a class of schoolboys and had time merely to utter his opening words before his audience took to its heels (p. 50).
16. Cf. the remark of the hero of Turgenev's tale *Faust* (1856): 'Despite everything love is egoism' (VII, 39).
17. See, for example, his response to her first appearance in the novel: 'But what do I see? Here beauty is walking towards us! Greetings from a humble artist to the enchanting Zoya!' (p. 16).
18. See the comment: 'Yelena did not complain about this, for she had no idea what to talk to Zoya about when she happened to be left alone with her' (p. 21).

19. Cf. the comparison of Lemm in *A Nest of the Gentry* to 'an owl in a cage' (VII, 139).
20. Cf. the reference noted earlier to the military careers of Shubin's brothers which is the first of the numerous examples in the novel of military symbolism being used to denote the egoistic, self-assertive type of personality.
21. Cf. the similarities noted earlier between Bersenev and his father.
22. See Shubin's advice to Bersenev: 'Give your stomach food, and everything will immediately fall into place' (p. 12).
23. Turgenev took the name from that which he had conferred on his own divan at his estate Spasskoye (see A. A. Fet, 'Iz "Moikh vospominaniy"', in *I. S. Turgenev v vospominaniyakh sovremennikov*, I, p. 176).
24. See in this connection his acute sensitivity to class distinctions which is reflected in his concern that his wife should not discuss family matters 'devant les domestiques' (p. 41), in his contemptuous treatment of the servant who reports to him Yelena's visit to Insarov's apartment (p. 135), and in his violent reaction to the discovery that his daughter has married 'a tramp, a *raznochinets*' (p. 139).
25. See the reference to his demeanour as 'vaguely reminiscent' of that of 'a parliamentary orator' (p. 136) and Shubin's question: 'Do you fancy yourself as a statesman, Nikolen'ka?' (p. 134). Shortly afterwards Shubin declares: 'There's no strength in him ... He will ride his high horse, but he will climb down' (p. 140).
26. See his remarks in chapter 30: 'There was a time when daughters did not permit themselves to disdain their parents, when parental authority made rebellious children tremble. That time has regrettably passed' (p. 137).
27. Another noteworthy allusion to the connection between Yelena and Uvar Ivanovich is her unconscious mimicry in chapter 23 (p. 114) of one of his most characteristic mannerisms - that of 'wagging' his fingers (see pp. 40, 44, 69, 95, 102, 140, 142, 167).
28. See in this connection Shubin's reference to the German soldiers as belonging to 'the Saxon branch of the Caucasian race' (p. 75).

29. Cf. the 'weak chest' of the heroine of Turgenev's story *First Love*, in whom strength and weakness are similarly combined and who likewise succumbs to a premature death (IX, 40).
30. The setting was 'retained' in the sense that it was taken from the story of V. Karateyev, Turgenev's neighbour at Spasskoye, which, as is well known, provided him with an outline of the main characters and events of the novel.
31. Cf. the use of the term 'republican' by the autocratic Nikolay Artem'yevich to characterise his rebellious daughter (p. 75).
32. Letter of 23 October 1859 (*Pis'ma*, III, p. 359).
33. See in this connection her later remark to Insarov: 'I love you ... I don't know any other duty' (p. 126).
34. Noteworthy in each case is the peremptory nature of the commands conveyed by the formation of the imperative from the perfective aspect of the verb.
35. Cf. 'the smell of patchouli' left by Varvara in Lavretsky's apartment in *A Nest of the Gentry* and the comparable role of the heliotropes received by Litvinov from the heroine Irina in *Smoke* (IX, 176).
36. Cf. the portrait of the heroine's Italian grandmother in Turgenev's *Faust* which not only resembles the description of Annushka in its general character and details but likewise anticipates the heroine's submission to her inherited sensuality (VII, 38).
37. Cf. the earlier reference to her habit of listening to him 'with absorbed attention' (p. 68).
38. Cf. the similar allusion to the dominating will of the artist in the reference in *A Nest of the Gentry* to the refusal by the autocratic Glafira to 'allow a portrait to be made of herself' (VII, 192).
39. See, for example, Kagan-Kans, pp. 80-1, 94, 104, and K. Brostrom, 'The Heritage of Romantic Depictions of Nature in Turgenev', in *American*

Contributions to the Ninth International Congress of Slavists, II, edited by P. Debreczeny (Columbus, 1983), pp. 85-6.

40. See their request in the hotel for 'frutti di mare' (p. 153).
41. See Shubin's remark before her departure for Venice that 'she has slipped from our hands like a fish into water' (p. 142).
42. Noteworthy is the reinforcement by the simile of the connection between the image of water and the God who presides over the scene. Cf. the 'wave' of emotion which 'rises' in the opera singer in the climactic scene of *La Traviata* (p. 154).
43. See in this connection Turgenev's letter of 13 February 1867 to M. Hartmann in which the laws of politics are referred to as one of the variants of the laws of nature (*Pis'ma*, VI, p. 152). See also Markovich, *Chelovek v romanakh I. S. Turgeneva*, p. 136.
44. See, for example, the comment that on seeing Zoya shortly after returning in chapter 19 from her meeting with Insarov at the shrine 'Yelena decided that she had never seen a prettier face' (p. 96).
45. Cf. the comment on his state of mind when he is given by Yelena the task of watching over the stricken Insarov: 'Andrey Petrovich felt bitter, and Raumer was far from his thoughts' (p. 87).
46. See the comment: 'Zoya gripped Insarov's arm, but he broke away from her and stood right in front of the huge, insolent fellow' (p. 75).
47. See the statement in the Epilogue: 'She is very obedient to him and has even stopped thinking in German' (p. 166).
48. Cf. the implied comment on Insarov's ideals in the description of his illness: 'The patient was very delirious' (*Bol'noy mnogo bredil*) (p. 119).

49. The name 'Karolina' is derived from 'Karl' which is the source of the Russian words for 'king' (*korol'*) and 'queen' (*koroleva*).
50. See Yelena's note in her diary: 'Why do I gaze with envy at the birds flying past? I think I would happily fly away with them ...' (p. 79).
51. See in this connection the comments of Countess Lambert on the lack of 'femininity' in Yelena in her reply to Turgenev's letter to her of 16 February 1860 (*Pis'ma*, III, p. 637). Cf. the reference in chapter 4 to Yelena's negligible interest in such 'feminine' subjects as 'fashion and roses' (p. 24).
52. Cf. the 'passionate German lady' who refers to Pigasov in *Rudin* as 'my tasty little squawker Afrikan' (VI, 310).
53. See Yelena's entry in her diary: 'Why isn't he a Russian? No, he couldn't be a Russian' (p. 82).
54. See Insarov's remark in chapter 14: 'We are all firmly devoted to the common cause' (p. 65).
55. It is noteworthy in this connection that the two Bulgarians who visit Insarov in chapter 13 are most unflatteringly portrayed by the altruist Bersenev. He describes them as having 'dark, stupid faces', as 'neither workmen nor gentle folk - God knows what kind of people they are' (p. 63).
56. He refers to Falieri as 'Marino Faliero' and addresses Insarov as 'Dmitry Vasil'yevich' and 'Nikanor Vasil'yevich' (instead of Dmitry Nikanorovich) (pp. 158-9).
57. See the variations of this theme in Turgenev's stories *Faust* and *Klara Milich* (1882).
58. See his letter to Pauline Viardot of 7-9 July 1849 (*Pis'ma*, I, p. 343).

Chapter V

1. *Pis'ma*, IV, pp. 379-82.
2. J. Blair, 'The Architecture of Turgenev's *Fathers And Sons*', *Modern Fiction Studies*, XIX, No. 4, 1973-74, p. 556.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 563.
4. D. Lowe, *Turgenev's 'Fathers and Sons'* (Ann Arbor, 1983).
5. See, for example, his comment on Bazarov in a letter of 6 April 1862 to the poet Fet: 'Was it my wish to curse Bazarov or to extol him? *I don't know myself* because I don't know whether I love him or hate him' (*Pis'ma*, IV, p. 371).
6. Lowe, p. 12.
7. All references to *Fathers and Sons* are to volume VIII of *Sochineniya*, and hereafter in this chapter only page numbers are indicated.
8. See Turgenev's reference to him as such in his indicated letter to Sluchevsky (*Pis'ma*, IV, p. 380).
9. N. N. Strakhov, 'I. S. Turgenev. "Ottsy i deti"', in *Roman I. S. Turgenyeva 'Ottsy i deti' v russkoy kritike*, edited by I. N. Sukhikh (Leningrad, 1986), p. 253.
10. The name is derived from the numeral *odin* ('one').
11. See the author's remark: 'Odintsova kept her clear eyes fixed on him' (p. 270).
12. See the comment: 'She kept to it strictly and made others submit to it' (p. 284). 'Bazarov,' we read, 'did not like this measured, rather solemn formality in daily life. "It's like gliding on rails," he said' (p. 285).

13. See Bazarov's captivation by 'the gentle hiss and rustle of the silk dress that glided before him' (*tonkiy svist i shelest skol'zivshego pered nim sholkovogo plat'ya*) (p. 296).
14. Schopenhauer, III, p. 416.
15. See Odintsova's recollection of 'the almost bestial expression on his face when he hurled himself at her' (p. 300).
16. Letter of 16 July 1864 (*Pis'ma*, V, p. 276).
17. Cf. Pavel Petrovich's view of him as such (p. 237).
18. See the 'hatred' that he now expresses for the Russian peasant (p. 325).
19. For an excellent commentary on this irony and on the significance of Bazarov's death generally see I. Masing-Delic, 'Bazarov pered sfinksom. Nauchnoye anatomirovaniye i esteticheskaya forma v romane Turgeneva *Ottsy i deti*', *Revue des Etudes Slaves*, LVII, No. 3, 1985, pp. 373-4.
20. See Bazarov's comment on her visit: 'This is in the imperial manner (*po-tsarski*). They say that emperors also visit the dying' (p. 395).
21. *Pis'ma*, IV, p. 381.
22. *Ibid.*, I, p. 279.
23. D. I. Pisarev, *Sochineniya v chetyryokh tomakh*, II (Moscow, 1955), p. 49.
24. Lowe, pp. 52-3.
25. Blair, p. 556.
26. See, for example, Vasily Ivanovich's remark to Arkady: 'Such times have come to pass - and thank God for it! - that every man must provide for his nourishment with his own hands; it's no use relying on others - one must toil oneself' (p. 258).

27. Cf. the description of Rudin's clothes as 'tight, as if he had grown out of them' (VI, 258).
28. See in this connection his threat to 'rebel' when Bazarov dies (p. 397).
29. Here the reference, of course, is to Napoleon III.
30. Cf. Odintsova's remark in chapter 19: 'I am afraid of this man' (p. 301) and her confession to him in chapter 26: 'I am afraid of you, you know' (p. 377).
31. See particularly F. F. Seeley, 'Theme and Structure in *Fathers and Sons*', *Istituto Orientale di Napoli: Annali, Sezione Slava*, XII, 1970, pp. 93-4; V. M. Burns, 'The Structure of the Plot in *Otcy i deti*', *Russian Literature*, VI, 1974, p. 48; and Lowe, pp. 38-43. The first commentator to note the affinities was Pisarev who observed that 'in the depths of his soul Pavel Petrovich is just as much a sceptic and empiricist as Bazarov himself' (Pisarev, p. 23).
32. See the statement in chapter 4 that Pavel Petrovich 'still retained ... that air of striving upwards, away from the earth, which usually disappears when a man turns thirty' (p. 208).
33. Cf. Bazarov's remark to Arkady: 'I look at the sky only when I want to sneeze' (p. 327).
34. Cf. Odintsova's reaction to Bazarov's discomfort during the meeting in the hotel in chapter 16 (p. 271).
35. See in this connection Bazarov's refusal to take the second shot to which he is entitled by the rules of the duel (p. 353).
36. See Bazarov's remark to him in chapter 21: 'You're a timid soul, a wishy-washy person, you couldn't hate anybody!' (p. 324).
37. Cf. the reference to her habit of 'hiding herself', of 'withdrawing into herself' (p. 281).
38. See the author's comment: 'Next to her husband and Mitya Fenechka adored no one so much as her daughter-in-law' (p. 399).

39. See the parallel with 'the rooks' described in chapter 3 as 'disappearing in the rye' as Bazarov and Arkady drive past and 'only occasionally showing their heads in its smoky waves' (p. 206).
40. See the reference to her similar habit of looking 'from under her eyelids' (p. 231) and also the photograph of her in her 'very clean and tidy room' - a photograph, we read, of 'a kind of eyeless face straining to smile in a dark frame' (p. 229).
41. Cf. the indicated allusions to the image of the snake in Odintsova's portrait.
42. It may be noted that in chapter 8 Pavel actually picks up the copy of Masal'sky's novel and 'turned over a few pages' while waiting for Fenechka to make her son presentable (p. 230).
43. Cf. the feeling of 'exquisite humility' (*izyashchnoye smireniye*) that Arkady experiences in the presence of Odintsova (p. 268) and Bazarov's private thought while Arkady and Odintsova are talking in chapter 16: 'What a humble little person (*smirnen'kiy*) I have become' (p. 275).
44. Cf. Odintsova's 'stare' at the hero in chapter 17: 'Her eyes rested on Bazarov; she seemed to be thoughtfully examining him' (p. 294).
45. Noteworthy here, as another reflection of the parent-son relationship, is the similarly, indeed uniquely, friendly attitude to Bazarov of Fenechka's son Mitya (p. 235) which contrasts so sharply with his attitude to his step-brother Arkady.
46. Accordingly, the 'red shirt' in which Fenechka dresses her son (p. 230) may perhaps be viewed as another indication of Mitya's role as an extension of his mother's personality.
47. See the author's comment: 'Nikolay Petrovich was surprised: the shy and modest Fenechka never showed her affection for him in the presence of a third person' (p. 361).
48. See in this connection the kiss that Pavel bestows on Fenechka's hand at the farewell dinner in chapter 28 (p. 398) - a kiss that marks, in effect, the completion of the kiss which he had not been able to bring himself to complete in chapter 24.

On this earlier occasion the author comments: 'Pavel Petrovich pressed her hand to his lips and kept it there without kissing it ...' (p. 361).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

1. See most notably in this connection V. V. Gippius, 'O kompozitsii turgenevskikh romanov', in *Venok Turgenevu. 1818-1918. Sbornik statey*, edited by A. A. Ivasenko (Odessa, 1919), pp. 25-55.

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