

MIKHAIL PETROVICH ARTSYBASHEV (1878-1927):
A CENTENNIAL PRESENTATION AND ASSESSMENT

by

SALLY MARGARET O'DELL

M.A., University of British Columbia, 1972

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
Department of Slavonic Studies

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

April, 1980

© Sally Margaret O'Dell, 1980

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for an advanced degree at the University of British Columbia, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for reference and study.

I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the Head of my Department or by his representatives. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Department of Slavonic Studies

The University of British Columbia
2075 Wesbrook Place
Vancouver, Canada
V6T 1W5

Date March 25, 1980

ABSTRACT

MIKHAIL PETROVICH ARTSYBASHEV (1878-1927):

A CENTENNIAL PRESENTATION AND ASSESSMENT

As there has been no comprehensive literary study of the works of M. P. Artsybashev (1878-1927), it is the purpose of this dissertation to explore both the breadth and the depth of this author's most productive and significant prose period (1900-1912). Artsybashev's literary and journalistic career spans over twenty-five years, from the appearance of his first short story in 1900, to the period of his emigration in Warsaw at which time he co-edited the anti-Bolshevik newspaper, Za svobodu (1924-1927). During the prose period discussed herein, one may note a leading theme which was defined by the critics of Artsybashev's time as "Ultraindividualism" (L'vov-Rogachevskii). Artsybashev called this philosophy "anarchical individualism," thus aligning himself with a popular social philosophy that developed in late nineteenth, early twentieth century Russia.

Artsybashev's Collected Works comprise ten volumes, with additional works appearing in separate editions. Translations of his works appear in most major Western European languages as well as Danish and Japanese. His more popular works — stories, novels and plays — enjoyed success with American critics, who immediately accepted the author as one who wrote in the tradition of Russian literature. His

writing does indeed reflect the influence of the two great nineteenth-century Russian Realists — Tolstoy and Dostoevsky. His realistic technique is now and then overlaid with elements of impressionism and expressionism, placing him within the framework of the fin de siècle artistic sensibilities.

The organization of this study follows the chronological order of the works discussed, thus tracing themes, characterization, style, and narration. The views of Artsybashev's critics, which are noted throughout, illustrate to what extent the opinions concerning this writer were most often vastly divided. Chapter I focuses on the author's earliest stories, which depict the individual tormented and limited by society. The long story "Smert' Lande" is also presented here as a tie between these first stories and the novel Sanin. The special place of "Smert' Lande" among the author's other creations is discussed. Chapter II focuses on Sanin and the reception it was given by the critics. Chapter III views stories of contemporary Russian society, considering both personal and social problems. The theme of man's mortality dominates the stories discussed in Chapter IV. One of the manifestations of the existential dilemma, suicide, is the theme of Artsybashev's large novel U poslednei cherty, presented in Chapter V. The final chapter, VI, attempts to discuss this author more generally, and to place him as an important minor prose writer of early twentieth

century Russia.

Artsybashev's life-long search for the answers to the eternal questions aligns him with the mainstream of the Russian Realist literary tradition. The battles waged by his characters against crushing fate may also be seen to prefigure the existentialist writings of Albert Camus and his formulation of the doctrine of the Absurd Man. Indeed, the beginnings of the twentieth century, with its manifold anxieties and challenges, are mirrored in Artsybashev's work.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
ABSTRACT	ii
LIST OF FIGURES	vii
PREFACE	viii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	xi
TRANSLATION, TRANSLITERATION AND ABBREVIATIONS	xiii
INTRODUCTION AND BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH	1
I. EARLY STORIES (1901-1904)	17
Part 1: Society, the Individual and Nature	17
"Pasha Tumanov," "Kupriian," "Krov',"	
"Podpraporshchik Gololobov," "Smekh,"	
"Iz podvala."	
Part 2: "Smert' Lande" — The Life of a Twentieth-Century Saint	78
II. <u>SANIN</u> (1903, published 1907):	
THE INDIVIDUAL LIBERATED	101
Part 1: The Novel	101
Part 2: Notes from the Critics	125
III. THE EBB AND FLOW OF THE HUMAN WAVE:	
STORIES 1904-1907	154
Part 1: Man and Woman	154
"Zhena," "Bunt," "Schast'e," "Uzhas."	

CHAPTER	PAGE
Part 2: The Revolution of 1905	187
"Teni utra," "Krovavoe piatno,"	
"Chelovecheskaia volna."	
IV. THE ANARCHY OF DEATH: STORIES 1906-1910 . .	214
"Milliony," "Rabochii Shevyrev," "Palata	
neizlechimykh," "Bratiia Arimafeiskie,"	
"Silnee smerti," "Zlodei."	
V. <u>U POSLEDNEI CHERTY</u> (BREAKING POINT) — SUICIDE	
(1911-1912)	256
VI. THE PROSE OF M.P. ARTSYBASHEV	293
NOTES	310
BIBLIOGRAPHY	331

LIST OF FIGURES

	PAGE
Figure 1	
M.P. Artsybashev	xiv

PREFACE

The following pages represent the work of over four years. One would perhaps wish that there had been even more time to read and digest the ten volumes of the Collected Works of Artsybashev and the many and varied works of his critics. The purpose of this work is to acquaint the student of literature with the main stories and two major novels of Artsybashev which make up the core of his literary oeuvre. In choosing for a dissertation topic the works of this controversial author, I am not necessarily prepared to defend Artsybashev's thoughts and ideas as they exist in these works as fundamental truths. Nor do I wish to use Artsybashev's words and heroes as a mouthpiece for my own views. I endeavor to render only a sympathetic appreciation and presentation of Artsybashev's work — a task which has not been attempted before. My approach to these works can only be termed general. It seems to me that the most outstanding features of his work are the philosophies expressed and lived by his characters; his plots and action, creating dramatic tension which mounts throughout each story; his skill at nature description; and the totality of all of the above which amounts to a sensitive understanding and bold portrayal of life. It does not seem relevant to use a more formalistic approach to Artsybashev: that is, strictly stylistics, structuralism or semiotics. There are authors

such as Pil'niak or Belyi, of this early twentieth-century period, who do benefit from such approaches because of their elaborate styles. I leave this work (closer text studies) to other scholars, if indeed they feel it would be useful. This does not imply that stylistics will be disregarded, rather that I use a more eclectic and general approach to the criticism of these works. Because these works are not well known to either the specialist or the student of Russian literature, it is also necessary to give somewhat detailed accounts of the stories.

Now and then, during my years of study of the works of M. P. Artsybashev, I have met scholars (other than those immediately concerned with my dissertation) who have given me encouragement. Recently, Professor R. F. Christian mentioned one of Artsybashev's stories in the context of Tolstoy's interest in vegetarianism. The story was given a sympathetic appreciation by Professor Christian (and Tolstoy himself). The Soviet playwright, Samuel Aleshin, whom I met when he visited Canada, expressed the opinion that Artsybashev was a writer who was in many ways ahead of his time and deserved more attention. My correspondence with Nicholas Luker concerning Artsybashev and Kuprin has been most profitable and encouraging. Late last year, I spoke with Dr. Bernice Rosenthal (whose work on Merezhkovskii has been published in book form), who expressed interest in my work, indicating that she felt this work would be welcomed.

Above all, when reading and discussing the works of Artsybashev, I have tried to be faithful to the author's philosophy and vision. Many of the issues presented in the works of this author are still viable and indeed important today — the new morality, suicide, war protest, fear of death, man alone — all these are facets of modern life to be reckoned with by the people of the twentieth century and the authors who chronicle these times.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to extend my sincerest thanks to Dr. Michael Futrell, who supervised this thesis. The work and I both grew from his patience, prodding and dedication. I would also like to thank my readers for their various comments. Professors Turner, Petro, Merivale and Czaykowski each gave ideas and inspiration to this work. A special word of appreciation to Dr. Merivale, who read this thesis very closely and helped to give it shape. A final word of appreciation to Dr. Gleb Žekulin, my external examiner, for his assistance.

I am also grateful to the Department of Slavonic Studies as a whole for its moral and financial support. The University itself has been most helpful through its many scholarship programs, and especially through its Acadia Camp Family Housing, which gave me a real home.

The University Library aided me greatly. This thesis could not have been completed without the help of Jack McIntosh, Slavic Bibliographer, or Interlibrary Loans. The University of Helsinki Interlibrary Loans was especially cooperative in promptly sending the materials I requested.

Thank you to my friends who have not been mentioned above: Sandra, Barbara, Doreen, John, Meral, Milena, the Hickmans, the Burns, and a special thank you to an old friend, Sviatoslav, who started me on this journey. Without

the support and inspiration of my family this work would never been begun. My daughter Brigette has shown me great understanding and love, being responsible beyond her years.

I deeply appreciate the work of Mrs. Ruby Toren, who typed this thesis and patiently edited it while we were three thousand miles apart. This thesis is only one of many that she has been essential in producing.

Finally, I would like to express thanks to the Public Law Department of Squire, Sanders & Dempsey of Cleveland, Ohio for believing in the worth of the academic world.

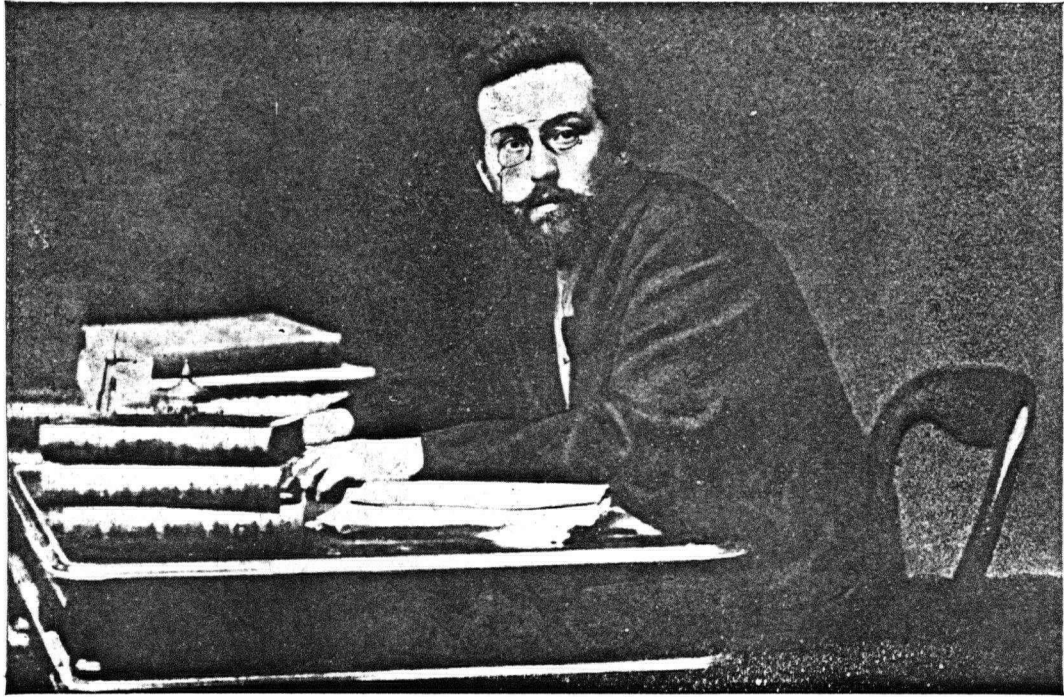
TRANSLATION, TRANSLITERATION AND ABBREVIATIONS

Proper names, titles and passages quoted will be transliterated according to the Library of Congress method, except for names or titles which have an accepted English transliteration; e.g., "Leo Tolstoy" instead of "Lev Tolstoi" (to be used in most places).

Titles of books, stories, journals and newspapers will be given first in their L. C. form, then in English translation; e.g., Russkoe bogatstvo (Russian Wealth).

All translations of the works of M. P. Artsybashev included in this thesis are mine unless otherwise specified. When quoting long passages from Russian, English translations will be used. If there are words or phrases whose meaning (or sound) in Russian is especially important for the understanding of the passage, they will be transliterated.

Abbreviations such as P.s.s. are used to indicate Polnoe sobranie sochinenii of authors other than Artsybashev. S.s. — Sobranie sochinenii.



М. П. Арцыбашевъ.

Figure 1

M.P. Artsybashev

INTRODUCTION AND BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

The literary works of Mikhail Petrovich Artsybashev (1878-1927) span approximately a quarter of a century — 1900 to 1927. These years overlap a most fascinating, diverse and rich period in the history of Russian culture which has been called "The Silver Age"¹ (circa 1890 to 1914 or 1917). It saw a rebirth of poetry and the advent of Modern art, music, dance and literature, and the beginning of the art of cinematography — an amalgamation of all art forms. Wladimir Weidle characterizes and describes the twenty years before the Revolution as a time of renewal: "It was not only a religious, artistic and intellectual renewal, but a renewal of the State itself, of the structure, social and economic, of the Russian Empire."² However, he explains, even the changes that were made were only a redecorating program on a building which was on shifting ground.

The turn-of-the-century period in Russian literature gave birth to a particular type of literature: the literature of the Apocalypse. "The world was on the border of a new age which many hoped would be the promised Millennium, whether social or religious."³ D. S. Merezhkovskii's Khristos i Antikhris (Christ and Antichrist, 1906), V. V. Rozanov's Apokalipsis nashego vremeni (The Apocalypse of Our Time, 1917), V. Briusov's "Kon' bled" (Pale Horse, 1905), and finally the masterpiece of A. Blok, which appeared after the Revolution: "Dvenadtsat'" (The Twelve, 1918), proclaim the

coming of the end — a time of reckoning for Russia. At the end of I. Bunin's Gospodin iz San Frantsisko (The Gentleman from San Francisco, 1916), the Devil appears on the Rock of Gibraltar during a fierce storm, to mock "the pride of the New Man with the old heart."⁴

Coexisting with the mysticism of apocalyptic fervor, the realist tradition of the previous century continued. M. Gorky's (1868-1936) Znanie (Knowledge) publishing house published works of realist writers who often described social ills and psychological problems in their controversial works. Two especially well-known writers of this group were Aleksandr Kuprin (1870-1938) and Leonid Andreev (1871-1919). Kuprin's Poedinok (The Duel, 1905) depicted the tortures of an over-sensitive soul subjected to the ugly reality of provincial military life. His large novel Iama (The Pit, Part I published in 1914) denounced the society of the time which both legally sanctioned prostitution and condemned the women who functioned within the institution.

Andreev's name is often mentioned along with that of Artsybashev. Some critics simplistically see Andreev and Artsybashev as authors concerned mainly with sex and death, with no feeling for anything outside these two human immediacies. In reality, both continued the type of psychological and philosophical questionings begun by Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, and very much pre-figure the existentialist writings of Camus and Sartre. Andreev's work has been

explored by at least two critical evaluations in English: the first by Alexander Kaun, Leonid Andreev: A Critical Study (1924), and the second by James B. Woodward, Leonid Andreev: A Study (1969). Both authors believe in the worth of Andreev as an author and set themselves the task of critically presenting his life and works.

Well over one hundred articles and numerous pamphlets were devoted to criticisms of the stories and novels of Mikhail Artsybashev. But now his name is seldom mentioned and his popularity and importance in the beginning of the twentieth century is ignored. It is now one hundred years since the birth of this writer, and fully time for a serious appraisal of his major stories and novels and for an assessment of Artsybashev's place in Russian and world literature.

* * * * *

Mikhail Petrovich Artsybashev was born November 6 (Old Style, October 24) in Iziium, Kharkov province, into a petty gentry family. His father was a former Guards officer who became a district police official. Artsybashev's friend and companion, Boris Lazarevskii, relates that

[Artsybashev's father] died at close to one hundred years old. Artsybashev rarely spoke of him but spoke of his mother and how she was a descendant of the princely Sangushkos, not without a shadow of boastfulness.⁵

Information about Artsybashev's life is sparse and scattered, but it provides some insight into the author and his literary

creations.

Artsybashev attended the Aktyrsk gymnasium, which he left after the fifth form, not staying on to complete his formal education (which would have ended with the sixth form). He quips in a humorous autobiographical sketch: "They expelled me from school, notwithstanding the fact that I never studied there anyway";⁶ and, "I went as far as the fifth class not knowing exactly what it was that they were trying to teach me, so I decided to become an artist..."⁷ Lazarevskii adds that "the superiors of the gymnasium did not like him at all."⁸ This information makes one who is acquainted with the work of Artsybashev think of Pasha Tumanov, the hero of the author's first major published work of 1900. In this story a harassed fifth-form student, who is failing all his courses, shoots the director of the gymnasium after having been denied passing marks. The story juxtaposes society's ordered concept of knowledge with natural beauty and the real knowledge of life which can only be attained from the greatest teacher of all: the voice of nature. The story sets the tone and mood for most of the early works, where the individual is in harmony with nature but in disharmony with social forms and obligations.

After leaving the gymnasium, Artsybashev enrolled in the Kharkov school of art where he was, in Lazarevskii's opinion, "one of the best students."⁹ The institution no longer exists, and there are no examples of Artsybashev's

art work, but the following information has kindly been supplied in a letter by Professor Valerian Revutsky:

I can say quite positively that the artistic direction of this school was closely aligned with that of members of the Peredvizhniki¹⁰ [traveling art group]. I. Kramskoi and I. Repin of this group certainly participated in the pedagogical activities at the Kharkov school . . . the school was originally organized in 1869 by Maria Raevskaia-Ivanova.¹¹

An autobiographical sketch, which appears in English translation along with three of Artsybashev's stories, states that indeed his first love was painting:

I renounced my dream of becoming an artist and transferred my allegiance to literature. This was very hard; even today I cannot see paintings without emotion. I love colors more than words.¹²

This allegiance to visual art will be further discussed in the following chapter.

Despite a love for art, the young Artsybashev did not stay long enough to complete his course of study, and left for Petersburg before the graduating examinations.¹³ Already, simultaneously with the beginnings of a career as an artist, he had begun to write and publish a few sketches in provincial newspapers such as IUzhnyi Krai (The Southern Region). Besides these sketches, in 1894, at the age of sixteen, he began work on a novel ("IUrii Svarozhich") which later evolved into Sanin.¹⁴ Although the available biographical material is especially vague concerning the years 1894-1900, a few significant events may be reconstructed. As a very young man (twenty to twenty-one), Michail Petrovich became a

husband and father. He married a provincial girl, Anna Vasil'evna Kobushko, and soon after had a son, born May 25, 1899. This child (whose parents were separated a year after his birth) grew up to be the famous émigré, illustrator-artist Boris Artzybasheff who, living in New York, made for himself the career as an artist that his father had once dreamed of. The artist son of the writer commented that "he saw his father twice a year when passing through Moscow on his way to vacations in Southern Russia."¹⁵ He also adds that he went to Prince Tenishev's school "for the rich and powerful," for which, after three years, his father refused to pay the high tuition fees. "But the school officials were so impressed by the boy's talent that they allowed him to continue on a scholarship."¹⁶

One of Artsybashev's early stories, "Zhena" (A Wife, 1904) seems autobiographical, as it tells of a young couple who separate because the artist-hero of the story has been disillusioned by marriage. The young husband leaves his wife when she is pregnant with their child and sees her infrequently. The child is never mentioned and the father seems to have no paternal instinct, yet does send money for the support of the child. As with the story "Pasha Tumanov," we may conjecture that this story is part of Artsybashev's own story.

Artsybashev went to Petersburg in the late 1890s with the intention of enrolling in the Petersburg Art Academy.

He did not carry through this plan; instead he lived by drawing caricatures for humorous journals and was also employed as a clerk for a Zemstvo agent for two years. By 1900, Artsybashev had begun his literary work, at which he would labor until his death. In 1900 "Pasha Tumanov" was accepted for publication by Russkoe bogatstvo (Russian Wealth), then rejected at the request of the censor. It was finally published in Artsybashev's first collection of short stories. Another of his first stories, "Kupriian," about a fugitive horse-thief, was published in numbers 3 and 4 of Russkoe bogatstvo of 1902.

In these first years of his publishing career, Artsybashev also wrote for Mir bozhii (God's World), which was then edited by the writer Aleksandr Kuprin and the well-known critic Angel Bogdanovich. In 1903 the novel Sanin, which had emerged from the original "IUrii Svarozhich" manuscript, was accepted by Kuprin and Bogdanovich, who praised its high artistic merit,¹⁷ but it was not published at that time because of the censorship.

The widely-read Zhurnal dlia vsekh (Journal for Everyone) also published early stories by Artsybashev. The editor of this journal, Viktor Sergeevich Miroljubov (1860-1939) was a friend of most of the famous writers of the day, and often went to discuss journalistic matters with Lev Tolstoy at IAsnaia poliana, visited Gorkii at Nizhnii, and spoke with Andreev in Moscow; he also corresponded with these authors.¹⁸

The charm of the journal was, as its title suggests, that it appealed to people of all classes. Although it "was popular because it was cheap, . . . the quality of its literary contributions was high."¹⁹ Boris Lazarevskii comments on the relationship between Artsybashev and Miroljubov's journal:

When, in the beginning of the 1890s, V. S. Miroljubov acquired Zhurnal dlia vsekh and became its editor, in a comparatively short period of time he succeeded in attracting the young authors: L. Andreev, Bunin, Veresaev, Gorky, Kuprin, and the old: Anton Chekhov, F. Sologub, L. N. Tolstoy. Later the names Artsybashev, Surguchev, and Iushkevich appeared. To have one's work accepted by this journal was not easy: Miroljubov was not afraid to return the story "Vor" [The Thief] to L. Andreev, or even one manuscript to Tolstoy himself.

And suddenly we co-workers were surprised to discover that Miroljubov had assigned us to read through the writings of the twenty-four-year-old M. P. Artsybashev.²⁰

In 1904 "Smert' Lande" ("The Death of Lande") was published in Zhurnal dlia vsekh. This long story brought probably more recognition to Artsybashev as a writer than any other work before the publication of Sanin. In fact, soon after the story appeared, Merezhkovskii and Gippius invited Artsybashev to contribute to their Novyi put' (New Way). The saintly hero, Ivan Lande, is a descendant of Prince Myshkin, and the mystical aura around him was attractive to the sensibilities of those connected with Novyi put'.

In the same year, Artsybashev took over the literary editorship of Zhurnal dlia vsekh. Two more of his own stories were published here: "Teni utra" (The Shadows of Morning) and "Krovavoe piatno" (The Blood-stain), which

dealt with the revolutionary activities of 1905. In May of 1905 the first volume of stories appeared, published by Skirmunt.

Artsybashev contracted tuberculosis at a very early age.²¹ He spent a great deal of time during his literary career in the south of Russia where, away from the northern cold of Moscow and Petersburg, he could regain his strength and so return to his various writing and editing activities. In 1906 he spent some time in Yalta with a friend, the young poet Bashkin. Perhaps inspired by the southern locale, he wrote and published a novella based on the Potemkin incident: Chelovecheskaia volna (The Human Wave). The same year saw the publication of a second volume of stories which, like the first, was published by Skirmunt.

In 1907 Sanin was published, making Artsybashev one of the most popular writers in Russia.²² When Sanin appeared in issues 1 to 5 of Sovremennyi mir (The Contemporary World), many critical articles discussed the novel, its hero and the place of both in Russian literature. Sanin was truly a literary phenomenon arousing heated debates like those which ensued after the publication of Turgenev's Ottsy i deti (Fathers and Sons). Indeed, Artsybashev's reputation as an author rests mainly on this one work; his later works were treated more or less as continuations of Sanin. The publication of Sanin during the popularity of erotic literature after 1905 resulted in the novel being immediately added to

that category, even though Russian Realism had begun to deal with the psychology of sexuality certainly as early as Anna Karenina (begun 1873).

Soon after the publication of the novel, Zhurnal dlia vsekh was closed, and Artsybashev took over the editorship of the literary section of Obrazovanie (Education), where he encountered one of his first political opponents, Lunacharskii, who requested that Artsybashev be removed from his position as literary editor. The publisher, A. I. Ostrogorskii, did not accede to Lunacharskii's wishes. The dispute was resolved by Ostrogorskii's death, after which the publication closed. During this year, 1907, and the following one, Artsybashev lived half the time in St. Petersburg, half the time in Yalta at the dacha "Dzhalitta" with Boris Lazarevskii, who remarked that Mikhail Petrovich then looked "forty not thirty because of his illness."²³ During one return trip to Petersburg, the writer fell ill and was given up as dying by the doctors attending him. Despite his illness, he continued his activities, editing various journals and collections, and writing novels and stories.

The year 1908 was a very busy one in the career of Artsybashev. He edited the almanac Zhizn' (Life), worked on his second novel, U poslednei cherty (Breaking Point), and wrote and published a number of short stories. In 1911 he was asked to edit the literary collection Zemlia (Earth). Leonid Andreev and Ivan Bunin were among its contributors.

In the following year Artsybashev moved to Moscow and began to edit this collection more or less secretly ("Neglasno po nekotorym prichinam").²⁴ He continued to work there until 1917. Simultaneously, he also contributed to the Moscow newspaper Itogi nedeli (Weekly Review), edited by V. Krandevskii. This paper first published Artsybashev's Zapiski pisatel'ia (Notes of a Writer). During the years 1911-1912 U poslednei cherty was published. It was not the sensation that Sanin had been: the critics hastened to define this novel as merely a continuation of the former work.

During the years 1913-1917 Artsybashev's collected works were published in ten volumes by the Moscow Book Publishing House. The collection includes five volumes of stories (short stories and novellas Volumes I-V); two volumes containing Parts I and II of the second large novel (Volumes VI and VII); three plays comprise Volume VIII; Volume IX includes a novella and two stories; and Volume X contains the novel Sanin.

The years 1913-1916, the last period of Artsybashev's strictly literary activity (apart from politics, philosophy or journalistic writing), were devoted mainly to the genre of drama. The dramas are very much a continuation and repetition of the themes, characters and style found in the prose works. His first drama Revnost' (Jealousy), published in 1913, created a "literary storm."²⁵ His other plays, which followed soon after, were also sensations: Voina (War,

1914), Zakon dikaria (The Law of the Savage, 1915), and Vragi (Enemies, 1916). With the exception of Voina, which dealt with the Russian involvement in the First World War, the plays are concerned with the social roles of men and women. The psychological intensity and sexual explicitness of the dramas are very reminiscent of Ibsen, Strindberg and Wedekind. The pathological relationships between the sexes are acutely depicted by the author. It is likely that the works of Ibsen, Strindberg and Wedekind were indeed familiar to Artsybashev. As Weidle states: "Writers like Ibsen and Strindberg, when they were hardly known in France, were passionately admired in Russia."²⁶ Novels, stories and plays about adultery were nothing new to literature of the time; what was new was the series of insights that were presented in the plays of the Scandinavians and are also found in Artsybashev. The social phenomenon of adultery, as reflected in the dramas of Artsybashev, was really a statement about the disintegration of the social order, the changing roles of men and women, and the beginning of the existentialist dilemma of twentieth-century man.

During this time, as before, Artsybashev made trips to the south of Russia for his health. In 1914 he met with his friend Boris Lazarevskii for what was to be the last time. They visited Sviatye gory, in Kharkov province, "one of the most beautiful spots in all of Russia,"²⁷

When in Moscow, Artsybashev continued to edit and

write for Zemlia, and also wrote a story for a collection (Shchit, The Shield) aimed against anti-Semitism in Russia. The anti-Bolshevik tone of his second series of Zapiski pisateliã made him unpopular with the new order of 1917. His old Friend Boris Lazarevskii reflected that at that time he did not expect Artsybashev to get out of Russia alive.²⁸ In 1918 his only strictly philosophical work, Vechnyi mirazh (The Eternal Mirage) was written and sent secretly to Berlin, where it was published only in 1922. This work is a comment on the progress of the human race from its beginnings to modern times. The "eternal mirage" is man's quest for happiness and well-being, which he attempts to gain through religion — aligning himself with God; or through social systems like Communism or Socialism — aligning himself with other men. The fallacy of such hopes for a better future is obvious: the better future is the eternally receding mirage. If people must suffer and die, who benefits from the tomorrows? The author's concluding words may be valid for all men:

If we cannot live without religion then let our religion be love of man. Love for the small, vital, suffering man of our todays just as he exists with all his weaknesses and flaws.²⁹

This ringing affirmation of humanity is countered by one of Artsybashev's last literary works, the play in verse, D'iavol (The Devil), written in 1920-21. In this work the Spirit of Love and the Devil strike a bargain: they agree to give man a chance to prove which of the two forces is the

stronger and thus which rules man. Love is defeated in this play, which is a mixture of allegory, symbol, and real people of the early Soviet period. The Devil proclaims, as he banishes the Spirit of Love: "Know that in this world Evil — alone, eternal — is powerful!"³⁰

The transition years after the revolution of 1917 were difficult times for most writers. Weidle, reflecting upon these years, wrote:

. . . it was during this transition period — from 1921 to 1924 — that the majority of writers and artists who had any high degree of culture left their native land to become émigrés.³¹

In the autumn of 1923, Artsybashev left Russia never to return.³² He lived the last four years of his life as an active member of the Russian émigré community in Warsaw. One of his main activities was the co-editorship, with Dmitrii Filosofov, of the anti-Bolshevik newspaper Za svobodu (For Freedom). There was political discord among the writers for the paper, between those inclined to the "left" and those to the "right." These years were difficult for the ailing writer. He had financial problems, which were only slightly mitigated by the publication of D'iavol, a short-story collection Pod solntsem (Under the Sun), and his Zapiski pisatel'ia in book form. In 1925 he celebrated his twenty-fifth anniversary as a writer. The following year, when Lazarevskii wrote inviting him to Nice for "the southern sun which he loved so,"³³ Artsybashev declined, saying:

I'll make it to Nice assuredly in the next world.
How can I journey to Nice when I've forgotten what
it's like to ride in a carriage or even in a
streetcar?³⁴

Lazarevskii writes that his friend was always very philosophical when he spoke about death; he did not wish to appeal to any relief organization to make his life easier. Knowing that his companion of so many years was poor and ill, Lazarevskii wrote to Ivan Bunin in Paris on Artsybashev's behalf. Bunin sent the writer five hundred francs, which he accepted because he needed an immediate trepanning operation as a result of an ear infection. Lazarevskii also wrote to a friend in America asking help for Artsybashev, who wrote back in thanks:

I received the money from America. It was not much but it was from the heart and for that I thank you. In America dollars are so numerous, and that you who are suffering from poverty would ask for a friend, that is invaluable and will never be forgotten.³⁵

The winters in Warsaw proved deadly. One of his coworkers, A. Fedorov, has remarked how he found that the writer had suffered from tuberculosis all his life and then remembered that he had no heavy coat and went around all winter in his light coat with a wool scarf around his neck.³⁶ During the winter of 1926, his health was so bad that he had to be hospitalized; this time his kidneys were failing. He told Fedorov that he could afford to stay in the hospital only for a week even though the rooms were very reasonably priced. When at home again, he worried about the newspaper.

and his inability to devote any of his energy to it. He needed sun and peace of mind, and had instead the fierce Warsaw winter and the petty squabbling of the émigrés. At the end of December, Mikhail Petrovich began once again to visit the editorial office of the newspaper. His strength lasted until the end of January, at which time he again fell seriously ill. He was taken to a doctor and then to a specialist, who diagnosed his illness as meningitis. He was taken to a hospital, where he died early in March. The last lines of the final letter written to Lazarevskii, on February 26, 1927, show a definite resignation to his fate:

. . . I am ill again, but this time it is much worse. As a result of all that I have lived through and my disease of the kidneys they have discovered that I have myocarditis. My heart does not want to work any more. All of my best. Yours,
M. Artsybashev.³⁷

The writer died on March 3, 1927 and was buried in the Warsaw Vol'skii Orthodox Cemetery.

CHAPTER I

EARLY STORIES (1901-1904)

Part 1: Society, the Individual and Nature

Civilization is the disease produced by the practice of building societies with rotten material.

Bernard Shaw, "The Revolutionist's Handbook," Man and Superman, 1903.

'Was he born then, I ask, just to pick at the earth and to perish without having had time even to scratch a grave for himself with his own nails: What does he know of freedom? Does he understand the breadth of the steppe? Does the murmur of the sea waves gladden his heart? He's a slave — from the moment of his birth, all his life a slave and that's all! What can he do with himself? Only hang himself if he becomes any wiser.'

Maksim Gorky, "Makar Chudra," 1892.

The year 1901, the first year of the new century, when Mikhail Petrovich Artsybashev made his debut as a writer with the publication of "Pasha Tumanov," saw a variety of cultural events. In January the second edition of Volumes I-IV of Gorky's Rasskazy (Stories) was published by Znanie.¹ Ivan Bunin's book of verse, Listopad (Falling Leaves), appeared. V. Korolenko's "Sibirskie rasskazy" (Siberian Tales) were published in Russkoe bogatstvo (Russian Wealth). V. Veresaev published his story "K spekhu (Iz letnikh vstrech)"

(In Haste, From Summer Meetings). A. Kuprin's "Ubiitsy, Novogodnii rasskaz" (Murderers, A New Year's Tale) was published in Odesskie Novosti (The Odessa News). L. Andreev's story "Smekh" (Laughter) was first published. In mid-January the Petersburg Art Academy opened an exhibition of the group "Mir iskusstva" (World of Art), which was criticized for its attempt "to free art from the fetters of academism and naturalism."² On the last day of January the Moscow Art Theater staged the première of Anton Chekhov's Three Sisters.

In early February, at a meeting of the Philosophical Society of Petersburg University, Dmitri Merezhkovskii read a paper concerning Tolstoy and Christianity, which "offended many of the listeners because of the rude, disrespectful tone of the address."³ On February 14 a student, P. V. Karpovich, fatally wounded the Minister of Public Education. On February 24, Tserkovnye vedomosti (Church News) published the decision of the Holy Synod to excommunicate Leo Tolstoy for his attempt "to annihilate the true faith."⁴ A book of philosophical articles was published by V. Rozanov. Ibsen's play An Enemy of the People, performed at the Moscow Art Theater under the title Dr. Stockmann, was a great success. The year's events — cultural, literary, historical and sociological — are too numerous to cite; however, a few more will be mentioned for the weight of their implications.

In April, Gorky's symbolic invitation to revolution, "Pesnia o burevestnike" (Song of the Stormy Petrel), appeared

in Zhizn' (Life). Its concluding message, "Pust' sil'nee granit buria" (Let the storm begin with all its might), expressed the spirit of growing unrest among the intelligentsia. The realist school (mainly prose) exemplified by Gorky and his "Znanië" group (Kuprin, Bunin, Andreev, and Veresaev) had its counterpart in the modernist poets Z. Gippius, K. Bal'mont, V. Briusov, D. Merezhkovskii and F. Sologub, who published their almanac, Severnye tsvety (Northern Flowers), also in April. In May, V. I. Lenin published his article "S chego nachat'" (What to Begin with) in Iskra (The Spark) on a plan for the creation of a Marxist party in Russia. In November and December, three of Russia's greatest writers, Tolstoy, Chekhov and Gorky, met in the Crimea.

The above collage of events gives a glimpse of Russia at the turn of the century. Russian Realism, especially in the works of Gorky, Chekhov, and the later Tolstoy, was still flourishing. The term often used to express divergence from this well-accepted and famous school of writing is Modernism.⁵ George Gibian isolates some common features of Russian Modernism as it is defined by literary critics and cultural historians such as Wladimir Weidle, Rene Wellek, and George Ivask. He discusses three broad areas when defining Modernism: "attitude, artistic manner, and subject matter":⁶

The attitude is usually one of antagonism to authority and convention, and of nihilism in relation to established culture. The artistic manner is marked by the dissociation of objects from their contexts, displacement, the juxtaposition of events unconnected in time and space—without attention to logic

except for the 'logic' of association. The subjects frequently are urban or connected with the machine. The political views, at least among most of the Futurists, tended to be composed of dreams of a millennium or a utopia, which, as Rene Wellek states, 'might be a Socialist Utopia, hence justifying their adherence to the Revolution.'⁷

The above comments are more of a sketch or guideline than a definition. There is a sense of literature (and art in general) breaking away from or breaking down the established forms. If one views literary history as a series of waves, then it is only natural, and to be expected, that a time of realism and naturalism (nineteenth century) would be followed by a more experimental and expanded artistic consciousness. One may even generalize and say that indeed all writers, whether of the late realist school of Gorky or the Symbolists, Acmeists or Futurists, were to a greater or lesser extent Modernist in orientation. Even the late works of Leo Tolstoy display some modernist tendencies (according to the above outline of this movement).

Artsybashev is sometimes called a Modernist, a Decadent, or a Neo-naturalist. These terms are often more misleading and confusing than helpful. In view of the criteria afforded by Gibian and other critics in Russian Modernism, to what extent are Artsybashev's earliest literary attempts Modernist? The first criterion, that of the attitude of the writer, defined as "antagonistic to authority and convention," is applicable to Artsybashev's writing. As for his artistic manner, it is only vaguely and not

significantly touched by innovations of the type mentioned above. His attitude does not translate directly into his style and technique. Although urban or mechanical subject matter is not present to any degree, there is a general sense as well as specific reference to a coming time of great change in various works from the early stories to the latest. A revolution is prefigured.

Because, when one mentions Artsybashev, one usually meets with either the misconception that he is the author of Sanin and nothing else (with all the implications of that identification) or a complete lack of knowledge about the author, it is useful and necessary to keep in mind a few generalizations when considering Artsybashev's early stories. These generalizations are not meant to function as a scheme for discussion of the stories, rather as points of reference for a primary understanding of this author.

1) Theme: Man is often presented as struggling or suffering in society. The society itself, whether peasant, working class or gentry, is built on false values and does not allow for the growth of the individual. Man is basically alone and finds only brief moments of happiness and beauty in communion with nature. Nature is a mighty force to which man relates in diverse ways, depending on the character of the individual. The themes are presented so that they are both politically and socially topical and universal.

2) Plot: The stories are built almost exclusively on

crisis situations, that is, situations which alter the protagonist's life (and often other characters' too) irreversibly. Conflicts are extreme and dramatic.

3) Narrative technique: An omniscient (or almost omniscient) narrator is used for each work. The narrator is sometimes didactic and often subjective. He may intrude to express an opinion or make a judgment which may be specifically related to the story or may be a "universal truth." He is also employed for psychological eavesdropping on characters to further the plot or narrative by conveying their thoughts.

4) Characters and Characterization: Characters are mainly representatives of two groups — "individuals" and members of society. Those who are in the first grouping spend much of their time and energy asserting their right to individuality. The psychological studies of the characters are sensitive when the narrator is sympathetic to a character. Characterization may also be in the Gogolian grotesque vein when the narrator feels negatively about the character. The speech of a character may or may not be individualized.

5) Setting: Nature serves as the background for man's actions and thoughts. When there is a descriptive nature passage of any length, it is usually a signal that there is an important statement to be made. Nature serves to accentuate theme and characterization. The characters are usually placed within a particular social milieu. All the settings

used in the first stories belong to turn-of-the-century Russia. Insides of building are also contrasted to outside. "Inside" it may be dull and confining, or cozy and homelike. "Outside" it may be beautiful and free, or hostile and cold.

6) Imagery: It is obvious from the notes on setting that images may be highly symbolic. The time of day, season, and weather are also used symbolically in the stories. The appearance of the sun denotes life and splendor. Sunlight has the power to beautify objects and places that are ugly. Nature is often personified, and animals, especially birds, are often used as symbols. Nature is Artsybashev's main source of images.

7) Style: Key words or word clusters are often repeated for emphasis. Repetition is used chiefly in characterization, narrative comments and descriptive passages. Its function is shaping and didactic. Formulas are created for describing characters, places and moods. A single-sentence paragraph may be used to punctuate the narrative. These sentences either continue the narrative or make a generalized statement outside the bounds of the narration. The first five categories are shaped by images and style, which are both in the service of the final category —

8) Vision: In the early stories, Artsybashev's vision is Impressionistic, though tending also in some cases to Expressionistic and, over all, basically Realistic. The term Impressionism was borrowed initially from the nineteenth-

century French painters Manet, Monet, Degas, Renoir and others, and indicates that a writer is more interested in retaining the impression an object has made (on him) than in

. . . meticulously presenting the appearance of that object by precise detail and careful, realistic finish. . . . The object of the impressionist, then . . . is to present his material . . . as it is seen or felt to be by himself in a single passing moment. He employs highly selective details, the 'brush strokes' of sense-data that can suggest the impression made upon him or upon some character in the story.⁸

Expressionism retains the sketchiness of its forerunner but is more directed in its message. In art it manifested itself in "bitter and rebellious humanitarianism."⁹

This art, composed as it was of action and struggle could not divorce itself from social revolt. This art was not a decorative embellishment to life . . . it was rather an illustration of all that was contrary, gloomy, disagreeable and monstrously iniquitous in life.¹⁰

Realism, as it flourished in nineteenth-century Russia, underlies Artsybashev's early stories. This must be almost taken for granted, considering that in the prose works of Gorky, Kuprin, Bunin, Andreev and Chekhov¹¹ realism was still the leading trend. Among the salient features of Russian Realism are social conscience, portrayal of a vast gallery of characters in all social groups, insights into the psychology of the various characters, and usually an accompanying seriousness of purpose, either perceived or expressed openly in the text. This does not preclude the use of humor, irony or sarcasm.

* * * * *

"Pasha Tumanov"

"Pasha Tumanov" was accepted for publication in 1901; then, because of its obvious topicality, it was rejected at the request of the censor. Later critical opinions (which appeared after the 1905 publication of Rasskazy, Volume I, in which the story was included) saw the work as a condemnation of a "pseudo-classical school system which taught Greek and Latin and ruled with iron authority."¹² I. I. Baranov states that Pasha is a very commonplace boy who does not at all understand the complexities of life. One of these complexities is a major theme in Artsybashev's works: the role of the individual in society. Boris Lazarevskii quotes Artsybashev: "'I am an anarchist-individualist but I am not prepared to kill anyone and I do not endorse violence.'"¹³ One of the most important issues of the day, causing debate among the intelligentsia, was socialism versus individualism. The germinal work on this topic — more particularly, the individual and society — was Der Einzige und sein Eigentum (The Ego and His Own, 1844), written by the German, Max Stirner (pseudonym of Johann Kaspar Schmidt). In the year that Stirner's book was published, Friedrich Nietzsche was born. Both these authors were influential in the early 1900s in Russia. In a short autobiographical note, Artsybashev states that he has not read Nietzsche, but that Stirner is to his liking.¹⁴ To define further what is meant by Artsybashev's "anarchical individualism" as it manifests itself

in his literary works, one may reflect on the ideas of a recent interpreter of Stirner:

Stirner's psychological approach takes the individual psyche as the only coherent and meaningful unit of analysis; economic and social action is significant only in terms of its interchange with this psyche, how it confirms or threatens it. Thus the external world is differentiated according to whether it generates ego-enhancing or ego-degrading forces.¹⁵

This passage tells us much about the psyches of many of Artsybashev's heroes, from a beginning realization of the "truth" of individualism by Pasha Tumanov to the prophet of individualism — Vladimir Sanin.

Pasha feels pressure not only from the school system but also from his own family. The boy wishes to pass his examinations and thus conform, but lacks the initiative to study, which would be the practical way to avoid failure. He decides to go to the headmaster to plead for a pass despite his lack of knowledge. As a second thought, he buys a gun to use as a threat, should the headmaster refuse to comply. The outcome is that the pedagogue is murdered and the young man gives himself up to the police.

The chronological order of the narrative is interrupted: the first three chapters and the last paragraph occur after Pasha murders the headmaster. This inversion shifts the emphasis of the story from the deed — murder — to the circumstances leading up to it. The issue is not that a murder has been committed by this particular secondary school student, Pavel Tumanov, but why it has been committed.

The theme of the story is that life, knowledge and happiness lie outside the boundaries of the socially-sanctioned school system. This system is seen as hampering the growth of the individual (Pasha). The narrative is very much colored by this attitude. This can be demonstrated by examining the relationship of the omniscient narrator to theme, characterization and setting. By choosing the vantage point of omniscient narrator, the author is free to express shifting, multiple points of view by relating and juxtaposing the thoughts of the characters. These functions of the narrator help to create an impressionistic style. An example of the omniscient narrator as he presents character by "a few brush strokes" occurs at the beginning of the story. Pasha's only physical description is:

. . . a youth in a thin schoolboy's overcoat and schoolboy's cap. He was of medium height, large-headed, with an unhandsome, but all the same rather nice face; on his cheeks and upper lip clearly appeared the uneven down of mustaches and a beard. He was flushed and obviously excited.

He entered very quickly, just as if someone were pursuing him, and having entered, immediately removed his cap.¹⁶

In the presentation of certain details of the boy's appearance, much information is conveyed without lengthy description. The well-chosen adjective "large-headed" (bol'shegolovyi) makes one think of a child, as a small child's head is larger in proportion to its body than than of an adult. Pasha has a trace of facial hair, in contrast to his childishly large head. His emotional state is sketched with

extreme economy. He is red or flushed (krasen), and it is observed that it seems as if he were being pursued, as he is — by circumstances. That he removes his cap is a sign of his automatic response to a place or figure of authority. The last sentence of the above quotation, standing alone as a paragraph, is emphatic and sums up the situation. The one-sentence paragraph is regularly used by the author for physically setting apart and thereby visually and graphically emphasizing a statement. In this story it seems ironic that Pasha, a murderer, removes his cap as he enters to give himself up. Thus, in the description of Pasha the author is "more interested in atmosphere than in perspective and outline."

The preceding description of Pasha may be contrasted with that of the four officials at the police station, who are representatives of the social order:

In the large, well-lit room, adorned with portraits of the tsar's family, were at that time four people: the chief of police himself, a dignified [vidnyi], impressive man with large mustaches, and rings on his fingers; his assistant, a fat man with a big stomach and purple face, which turned with difficulty upon his short neck with no adam's apple; and a police officer, tall, thin and tubercular, on whose narrow shoulders a soldier's coat and sabre hung as if on a coatstand. The fourth was a gentleman, in a soldier's coat with uniform buttons, having a large red beard and with blue glasses on the end of his large pimply nose. [p. 3]

An atmosphere of officialdom is created by the portraits of the tsar's family. Here serious business is undertaken, symbolically overseen by the tsar himself. Not only is the

tsar's picture present, but also those of his family — thus the social unit of the family is represented. The characters in the room, and the scene which takes place, are in ironic juxtaposition to the solemnity suggested by the tsar's portrait.

As in the sketch of Pasha, certain details are supplied by the narrator as he draws the four characters. Very much unlike the description of Pasha, these characters emerge as mere grotesque caricatures of men. They are not stock characters, and yet one feels that the author does expect most readers to react to the characterizations in a similar manner. This reaction may be generalized as a combination of humor and mild aversion. The fact that the author takes these four caricatures and breathes life into them, or makes them marginally human by describing their mental states, attests to his ability as a psychologist as well as a writer. The narrator relates how each character feels during the time when the police chief is telling a story about the daughter of a Jewish watchmaker who was arrested for prostitution, despite her father's insistence that she was but a child; he tells with special relish how the girl was then found to be pregnant. While he is telling this story, the fat assistant, who "in general felt nothing except his obesity and suffered from the heat and boredom" (p. 4), smiles when he sees the police chief is laughing. The sick officer is bitter because he is obliged to stand, and finds this extremely difficult

as he is so weak; he looks at the healthy, strong police chief and hates him. The secretary in the blue glasses, "who hates the police chief for his crudity and churlishness" (Ibid.), listens to the story gaily, as he has heard that the police chief's career will soon be ended. At this point the reader's initial impression of the four has been softened by the added information provided by the omniscient narrator as he eavesdrops on the thoughts of the officials.

Pasha's mother is the only female character in the story who is presented in any detail. Her description is in the same mode as that of Pasha:

Pasha's mother, Anna Ivanovna, a colonel's widow, came in[to the room]. She lived on a pension and on relief assistance somehow obtained for the education of the children. She was an emaciated, weak woman, with a soft voice and a large supply of characterless goodness and a dull, prematurely aged face. [p. 12]

It is really for the sake of this helpless, pitiful woman that Pasha is so desperate to pass his examination. On the day of his exams, his sisters tell him that she has gone to church. This fact makes him feel more guilty and further widens the gulf between mother and son.

The first scene between Pasha and his mother is depicted (as is the scene with the officials) by showing the outward reality juxtaposed to the individual realities of the characters. Pasha's mother thinks how cruel-hearted children are, while Pasha thinks how unfair his mother is and what lack of understanding she displays:

It seemed to her that if Pasha could only understand how she suffered and feared for him, he would immediately begin to study well and make a place for himself.

And Pasha looked at her askance and thought almost the same thing: that his mother was cruel and not able to understand how difficult and boring it was to study, and that he, Pasha, was nevertheless a fine, kind boy, even if he couldn't pass his exams. [p. 13]

This juxtaposition of ideas gives the reader profound insight into the characters and their relationship. There is the sad irony of total misunderstanding. Their great emotional demands on each other are antithetical, thus not realizable. The motif of man alone and alienated, even from his closest fellow-men, is underlined by their thoughts.

When Pasha bursts in on the four officials he produces a pistol from his pocket; as he does so, some cake-crumbs fall on the floor. The crumbs suggest his youth and ties with home (his mother), and are another example of ironic juxtaposition. While Pasha remains alone with the secretary, he has an obsessive desire to clean up these crumbs from the floor. This detail functions in another manner: it helps to show his mental state. The description of his mind's wanderings is psychologically realistic:

He did not even realize in what manner began, continued, or ended 'this' ['eto'], and how he got here and for what reason he was sitting in a big empty room in the presence of a big, bearded man in blue glasses who was rustling papers. At times it seemed that he should get up and leave and then all this would simply end and seem as if it were nothing, even gay and humorous . . . but then he fell into a confusing mass of senseless scenes, parts of words and red splotches, which began to

blur and swell and finally flooded everything with a reddish haze in which bobbed some sort of familiar, yet terrible faces. [p. 8]

The narrator comments that Pasha's state of mind is "near delirium" ("blizkoe k bredu"). This direct statement seems superfluous after the above description. It may be noted that the description is very visual as the reader "sees" into Pasha's mind. Pasha's estrangement from what has happened, and is happening, is acutely observed in this passage.

On the night before the examination, as Pasha looks miserably at his books with "a blind, dull despair bordering on apathy" and "hates and blames his teachers" (p. 11), the narrator intrudes directly to explain what the trouble is. The teachers are not to blame, "but the unnatural state of affairs by which a twenty-year-old youth, thirsting for meaning and interest in life, was made to learn by rote uninteresting, meaningless, lifeless texts" (Ibid.). The narrator adds that Pasha's negative, oppressive feelings are "hard to bear for his kind soft heart" ("tiāzhelo dlia ego dobrogo i miagkogo serdtsa," Ibid.). Here the reader may feel manipulated, as the omniscient narrator interrupts to whisper "the truth" and other relevant facts in his ear. In Seymour Chapman's article, "The Structure of Narrative Transmission," he states:

A true narrative assertion is always integral to the story, and cannot be questioned by the reader, since to do so is to prevent the narrative from proceeding, to deny its very fabric. The author must be granted, by convention, the right to posit

all those entities and actions necessary to his narrative. But assertions which are opinions do not have this warranty: they refer to the narrator's view of the world at large, not to the infraworld of the story, and the reader can immediately recognize the departure from the necessities of that infraworld.¹⁷

Thus, the narrator is over-stepping the boundaries of simple narration. The subjectivity of the narrator may be explained by the author's personal involvement in the story. Artsybashev writes:

An actual occurrence and my own hatred for the superannuated schools suggested the subject. People have no idea of what a Russian grammar school is like. The innumerable suicides of the pupils, which still continue, are a testimony to its educational value for Russian youth.¹⁸

If it is unnatural and objectionable for a twenty-year-old youth to study dry texts, what then does the author offer as an alternative style of life? Pasha does come in contact with "other worlds": for one, that of the old fisherman Kostrov, who is content to live on the river bank in a hut, to fish, and to admire his natural surroundings. His son Vasilii and his friend Dakhnevskii represent yet another life-style: they are students along with Pasha, but spend most of their time playing billiards. They are not upset about failing examinations, as they have their game, by which, presumably, they can earn a livelihood. On his way to and from his examination, Pasha meets old Kostrov. At the exam Vasilii and Dakhnevskii treat Pasha kindly and tell him not to worry. Before the exams begin, the narrator gives his

opinion of the system of examination. He believes that examinations are useless, as the teacher already knows each student's ability in a given subject. The examination itself is painful for most of the students. For Pasha it is particularly terrible because he knows so little. Before he meets Kostrov for the second time, there is a contrast of outside/inside. Leaving the school, Pasha is met by the outside world of bright sunlight, voices and the chirping of swallows. At first, these signs of life buoy his spirits. Then, with the realization that he has indeed failed his exams, he feels "as if he were not alive, small and worthless . . . It seemed to him that everyone could tell by his face that he had failed" (p. 23). Five and one-half pages are devoted to the scene of Pasha and Kostrov at the river. The narrator lingers here, and the impression one gets from him is that this is "the good life." Here Artsybashev portrays an alternative course through life: one in which people do not worry about careers or social position. Kostrov tells Pasha how a friend once told him that "the very greatest blockheads are the people who study the best" (p. 26). Pasha is overwhelmed that he has met an adult who is not concerned with the usual societal goals.

The scene at the river's edge is one of beauty and tranquility. The old fisherman revels in all around him: the sparkling river, dipping birds, and the small shining fish that splash in his pail. Here is a glimpse of life

that appears free in comparison to Pasha's own. The river scene is presented idyllically; the river may also be a symbol of the river of life. It is more exact to say that the river is bound to life and to the beauty of life. There are obvious signs that it gives life and livelihood: steamboats ply the water, Kostrov catches fish, and so on. In Kostrov's eyes, the river is "an earthly paradise" ("blagodat'," p. 25):

. . . he screwed up his eyes and gazed with delight upstream, sometimes shading his eyes with his hand, following the passage of the steamboats. He kicked pebbles into the water and, blissfully smiling, watched the diamond-rolling wavelets break on the shoal. He sighed lightly and freely, and finally said: 'An earthly paradise.' [pp. 24-25]

For Pasha he has simple words of wisdom:

'Vaska has his billiards, I have the river and fish, you . . . will have something. We cannot all learn by rote, but all the same we are people no worse than others, and all the children of our creator.' [p. 27]

The old fisherman cannot be bothered with such problems as Pasha's. He breaks off his goodbye to Pasha with "'Ah, the swallows, the swallows'." The character Kostrov is both colorful and dramatic. As a spokesman for the "river life," he adds another dimension to the story.

The river scene lends itself well to an impressionistic rendering. The birds flit, diamond waves sparkle, and fish splash in the old fisherman's pail. Everywhere is light and movement. After Kostrov leaves, Pasha also observes the beauty of his surroundings: "the swallows twittered, gliding

in a sea of air, light and sky-blue space" ("lastochki zashivali, plavaia v more vozdukha, sveta i golubogo prostora," p. 25). The birds in flight are perhaps symbolic of Pasha's, however short-lived, sense of freedom.

When Kostrov leaves, a short, one-sentence paragraph states: "Pasha was left alone" (Ibid.). He is alone physically and also in the world, as he has no one to support him or aid him in his crisis. His mother does not understand his problem, nor do his teachers. Kostrov can not help; as the youth's enchantment with the river scene wanes, he even wonders how he could have listened to such a man. Pasha's mind and opinions have been shaped since birth by the family structure, school, and the society of the town in which he lives. The progress of his state of agitation is noted in a following small paragraph; he realizes what his failure means to his mother: "And from this arose the idea that it was impossible to live" (p. 31). The narrator comments that if Pasha had been stronger in character, he would have committed suicide, thus echoing Artsybashev's statement about the numerous suicides in Russian schools.

In the scene in which Pasha buys the gun to threaten the headmaster, another of Artsybashev's concerns appears. In the window of the firearms store, stuffed animals and birds are displayed. The story "Krov'" ("Blood") makes clear the author's distaste for killing animals. In "Pasha Tumanov," the animals in the window stand

. . . in lifeless and unnatural positions. They bared their fangs at the passers-by, who stopped to look at their dull glass eyes and praise the art of those who had killed these creatures and then tried to make them life-like, curving their spines and displaying their yellow lifeless jaws. [pp. 37-38]

The display of animals and guns attracts the schoolboys, who are taken by the adventure and exotic nature of the hunt.

Pasha approaches the store apprehensively: he does not know if they sell guns to "schoolboys" (p. 39). He looks with "childish curiosity" at the guns shown him (p. 40). The gun dealer is completely detached from his act of selling a gun to the youth. His mind is on his child, who is ill. In this scene, as with the one at the police headquarters, the narrator gives added information which makes a character more understandable. The young woman cashier reads the distress in Pasha's face and says people like that should not be sold guns. The shop proprietor retorts that there is no law that stipulates to whom he can sell. These details seem to show the author's concern for society's blasé attitude toward weapons. Life is rendered very cheap — the cost of a small pistol — ten rubles, twelve kopeks.

The headmaster Voznesenskii, whom Pasha kills, is described as "a very kind man with kind eyes, but most of all he was a great formalist, and his eyes were hidden behind blue glasses" (p. 35). When Pasha comes to plead with him to be passed, he tries to explain that the masters have their duty above all else. He himself is touched by Pasha's

plight, but acts as a puppet of the educational system. The narrator makes a judgment on the school system as well as on the way in which the master relates to the youth:

If the headmaster, sympathetically relating to his trouble, had advised him in any way, Pasha Tumanov most likely would have gone home. But the headmaster believed that it was most important that he fulfill his official duties, not make children happy . . . and that was not at all because he was a hardened man, but because the ideals of modern education were not concerned with whether children became happy or good people, but with preparing them for the struggle for the best position in society . . . and also because the headmaster, by his position, was devoid of any independence and was obliged to act according to plans drawn up by people who were not in direct contact with children and did not care about them; their plans were based on statistical data which did not take live children into consideration. [pp. 45-46]

A passage such as this suggests why the story was censored. Such a direct assault on the school system, its creators and perpetuators, could not be tolerated. Intrusions of this kind, in which the author's opinions are expressed, show the writer's concern for his material.

However, Artsybashev is not always so overt in expressing his opinions. The story "Kupriian" is handled more objectively. Although the mode of narration, that of omniscient narrator, is the same in both stories, there are no didactic intrusions in the second. More emphasis is placed on the plot and the interrelationship of characters. The narrator acts as observer, not commentator. He still has the ability to note a character's thoughts, and switches from the mind of one character to another.

"Kupriian"

The story "Kupriian" first appeared in 1902 in Russkoe bogatstvo, Issues 3 and 4. It is a long story, about one hundred pages, as are also "Smert' Lande" (The Death of Lande) and "Bunt" (The Rebellion), 1903; "Chelovecheskaia volna" ("The Human Wave"), 1906; "Milliony" ("Millions"), 1908; and "Rabochii Shevyrev" ("The Worker Shevyrev"), 1909. The longer form of story allows for more development of plot and character. Briefly, it is distinguished from the novel

. . . in that it tends to reveal character through a series of actions or under stress, the purpose of the story being accomplished when the reader comes to know what the true nature of the character is . . . whereas the novel tends to show the character developing as a result of actions and under the impact of events.¹⁹

"Kupriian" is the story of a horse-thief who, while making a business of stealing and re-selling horses with his friend Vaska, has been living with the wife of a village peasant. The peasant had left the village five years before the beginning of the story, to become a soldier. Kupriian and the peasant Egor's wife, Matrena, have a child in Egor's absence. With his return, the lives of all the characters are affected adversely. There is a second complication: the new governor has decided to round up the horse thieves. The setting of the story is the countryside and the small village of Dernovoe. There is enough description of rural life for the story to be defined as local-color writing; it could not easily be transferred to another social class or location.

This story establishes a mood rather than a theme. There is the recurrent impression of lives and scenes that are grey, harsh, joyless and crushingly oppressive, in which it is all a man can do to survive. The mores of the society of this rural area are strict, merciless and dull. The statement made by the old religious peasant Fedor Guniavyi echoes the mood of the story: "'They are beasts, not people'" ("Zveri, ne liudi" — p. 152). The life portrayed is indeed primitive. It has been impossible for the beauty of life to be preserved in any of the characters.

Concerning "Kupriian," one of the more insightful, albeit effusive, Artsybashev critics, Baranov, has written that there is something triumphant and heroic in Kupriian's life. He also notes that "there is something tortured and sensitive in this man living like a wolf."²⁰ These opinions cannot be accepted without reservation. Kupriian is not a Gorkyan "proud hobo" who is a master of his own life. He is not a Chelkash reveling in his deeds — a swaggering, free, strong man. To state that there is "something tortured and sensitive" in Kupriian is sentimentalizing. The story presents simply a realistic picture of the life and death of a horse-thief.

It begins with a description of Kupriian during a typical day in his life:

Kupriian was weary and soaking wet.

His feet stumbled weakly along the slippery wet hillocks; his boots were soaked through, coated with

mud and leaves, and had become very heavy. Kupriian, with difficulty, pulled them out of the thick, sticky mud.

Kupriian was hungry and had not slept the previous night; there was a roaring in his ears; an unpleasant kind of weight hung over his eyes. To these sensations was added another: a vague awareness of danger — just over his shoulder.

Kupriian felt miserable, as an emaciated wolf feels miserable, when hunters are closing in on all sides. [p. 49]

It is a cold, rainy, autumn day, and Kupriian's only thoughts are of his discomfort and his feeling of impending danger. As if his lot were not hard enough, he meets the peasant Moziavyi from the village, who reports that Egor has returned. Moziavyi himself steals wood from the forest in order to survive.

Dialogue is used extensively in the story to reveal character and advance the action. The speech is that of peasants: colloquial, often humorous, and sometimes repetitious as, for instance, in Moziavyi's speech. He tells Kupriian of the homecoming of Egor and of his discovery of Matrena's child:

'Na smert' bil! Chei parnishka? sprashivaet... eto Fed'ka-to! Kakoi, govorit, parnishka? Kakaiia prichina parnishke byt'... Fed'ke, to est'... ezheli tvoi zakonnyi muzh, to est', piat' let v otsutstvii? — Bil babu ochenno.' [p. 55]

('He almost beat her to death! Whose kid is this? he asks... this Fed'ka! What kid is this? he says. What's the kid's reason for being... Fed'ka's, that is... with your lawful husband absent for five years? — He really beat the woman.')

Kupriian is not a hardened man, even though he is a thief. He pities Matrena and thinks of Egor: "'He's a beast, just a beast!'" (p. 56).

Information about Kupriian and Vaska is supplied by their conversation as they spend the night in an old barn. To ward off the cold and assuage their hunger, they drink vodka. Vaska tells how he used to sing well and wished to write. His sensitivity is evident when he tells how he used to listen to the cry of the cranes until he wanted to weep. To make a living, Vaska had no choice but to find work in a factory. There he began to drink and became hardened to life. The land worked by Kupriian's family was poor, and at the age of twelve he began to steal horses with his grandfather and his brother. When they were killed, Kupriian was not harmed because he was so young. These flashbacks show how the two have arrived at their present place in life. Kupriian's concern for Matrena and Fed'ka is again noted as he talks to Vaska. The narrator describes Vaska's reaction to this:

His soul, horribly and incomprehensibly destroyed by factories and plants, where a person becomes only a part of a huge machine, could not have feelings of sympathy. He did not even consider a child to be a person. [p. 64]

The author chooses to describe their physical appearance as they sleep, bathed by the dim light of morning:

The grey morning shone through a large crack and, with its dusty, milky light, illuminated the two sleeping figures of the most formidable horse-thieves of the area.

Kupriian slept stretched out on his back, and his dark-bearded, high cheek-boned, strong masculine face was serious and still; he breathed deeply and evenly, his chest rising and falling. Vaska slept

with his long thin legs curled up . . . and his arm under his head. His clean-shaven face was deathly still and, in the weak morning light, seemed ashen; he breathed irregularly with whistles and wheezes; his slender neck was stretched out and his eyelids fluttered lightly like those of a man ready at any moment to jump up and run. [p. 65]

The two "formidable horse-thieves" seem innocent and pitiable. Again the description, as in "Pasha Tumanov," is one of mood, accomplished by a few brush strokes.

There is a large group of minor characters, village inhabitants, who add to the picture of rural life. Many of them are only names, and function in "walk-on" parts. There is a triumvirate of officials at the railroad station when Egor arrives: the senior officer Golovchenko, the clerk Isaev, and a local policeman, Shchpurn. They are only briefly described; like the four police officers in "Pasha Tumanov," these characters are representatives of the established order. When they speak with Egor, they do not mention what they know about his wife and Kupriian; instead they send greetings to Egor's wife. Like the police chief in "Pasha Tumanov," they thoroughly enjoy petty gossip and intrigue.

Fedor Guniavyi is the most developed of the peasant characters, after Egor. He is described as he sits by the icon in his hut: "In his trousers, barefooted, with his open shirt exposing his dark hairy chest, he seemed even taller and more gaunt" (p. 109). The dialogue between the rascally Vaska and the religious old man is quite humorous, and serves to characterize both. Kupriian and Vaska are spending the

night at Fedor's, when the talk turns to Matrena and Kupriian. Vaska says:

'What did he do, force her, drag her away? She was willing...'

Guniavyi frowned.

'Also the clever fellow did not have to tempt her... she herself knows where it is sweet!' laughed Vaska.

Guniavyi sighed.

'All the same, it's a sin on Kupriian's head... What's a woman? She's but a fool — he led her into sin... and the sin is on his head!'

'You're harping: a sin!' Vaska said scornfully. 'We know —'

'You do not know...'

Vaska laughed spitefully.

'If a horse is stolen, and one harbors the horse thieves, is that a sin also?'

Guniavyi fell silent for a moment.

'That's different [Osob' delo], he said calmly — 'a horse is an animal, while a woman...'

'Well, it's also a special case [osob' delo] with women,' chuckled Vaska. 'They are both created for the same thing... You know I took care of marketing the girls at our factory...'

'Ekh... your factory soul, a lost soul!' with sharp reproach Guniavyi whistled through his mustaches... [pp. 110-111]

Vaska is a swaggering, happy-go-lucky thief compared to Kupriian, who is always rather grim and somber.

Nature is used throughout the story to highlight various scenes and moods of the characters. The rain is like a musical refrain in the first two chapters. It underlines Kupriian's discomfort and echoes his loneliness:

1) . . . through the roar of the rain [shum dozh-dia], it seemed as if someone were beating a stick

sharply against a birch trunk. [This is the sound of Moziavyi's cart approaching.] [p. 50]

2) The rain rustled, rustled drearily [Dozhd' vse shurshal, shurshal tosklivo]. Now and then the wind rose up in the forest, and then a mysterious long drawn-out roaring drowned out the rustling of the rain, but then again it began its persistent whispering. [p. 54]

3) [The sound of Moziavyi's cart leaving] mingled with and then disappeared into the roar of the rain [shum dozhdia]. [p. 56]

4) The roar of the rain, drumming on the thatched roof, was stronger and sharper [Shum doshdia, barabanivshogo po solomennoi kryshe, byl sil'nee i rezche]. [p. 58]

5) The rain beat down monotonously as before. [p. 59]

6) They [Kupriian and Vaska] fell silent, and once again could be heard the roar of the rain and the creaking of the birches. [p. 61]

7) [By morning] the oily curtain of rain had frozen. [p. 65]

Besides the use of nature as a backdrop, there is the direct comparison of Kupriian to a wolf — an animal who is alone in the cold, hungry and hunted. There are three places in the story where Kupriian is compared to a wolf: "Kupriian felt miserable, as an emaciated wolf feels miserable, when hunters are closing in on all sides" (p. 49). Kupriian says he lives ". . . like a wolf, worse than a dog" (p. 61). As he and Vaska come up from the river bank, "they crawled up and hid like two hungry wolves, scrutinizing the road" (p. 134). A wolf is mentioned for the fourth time, but this time it is a real wolf that Kupriian sees. He is spending a day alone in the forest — the day that is to be his last:

Around midday a wolf appeared at the marsh and, sensitively pricking up his ears, stood on the other side of the glade. Kupriian could see his protruding ribs and mangy haunches, on which hung clumps of fur. The wolf stood, sniffed and, drawing up his thin legs, leaped off into a thicket. 'Our brother' — laughed Kupriian wryly. 'They try to catch you too — give you no rest... and all because you must eat.' [p. 142]

Kupriian's life is contrasted with that of Egor and Matrena, who are land-holding peasants. Kupriian envies this life as he remarks that he would love to plough the earth and see green vegetation all around (p. 61). He is jealous and envious of Egor as he waits one evening outside their hut for Matrena. He visualizes the cozy scene within, and remembers with a pang that the time when he lived such a life is over. Sharing Matrena's hunt, he was like a dog who was temporarily allowed to warm himself at the hearth. With Egor's return, he is reminded that he is not a dog, but a wolf — alone and outside the warmth of society. The insides of buildings in this story (huts, barns) are places of momentary refuge from the elements. They are still oppressive, though, as is Fedor's crowded, stuffy hut:

In the hut it was dark, dirty and stuffy. On plank beds, and on the floor under mats and skins, slept the children of Guniavyi, snoring in unison. Cockroaches ran along the walls and their shadows ran after them. Behind the stove a cricket chirped monotonously and the wind could be heard, tearing at the wet thatch of the roof. [p. 109]

The "outside" is cold and lonely. There are only brief glimpses of beauty in nature. During Egor's trip home, the sun breaks through the clouds, gilding whatever it touches:

. . . along the plain darted dim and momentary rays of sunshine and, as they crept along the mangy back of the puff-bellied little horse and Moziavyi's torn army coat, they gilded them. [p. 74]

And —

The sun looked out for a minute and bathed the village with a bright glitter, gilding the dirty, wet, thatched roofs and sparkling on the far-off new decorative signboard outside the local government building. [pp. 77-78]

Matrena also witnesses a scene of rare calm and beauty. She goes outside in the evening, after Egor's return and his brutal beating of her. All in the yard is peaceful. "It was a pleasant, clear, warm evening. The sky was transparent and in it the little stars had just begun to sparkle" (p. 85). The quiet and serenity of this scene is in contrast to her own bleak, painful life.

When Kupriian spends his last day in the forest, all around him is warm and golden. The spider-webs are gilded by the sun. He sees a flock of cranes overhead and muses: ". . . they fly... what a good thing it is! To fly where you wish... not to plough the earth, or steal horses, or pay taxes... how good it is!" (pp. 141-142). The cranes were mentioned earlier by Vaska, and now Kupriian watches them in flight. They signify the longing in the men for that which is unfettered and beautiful. The cranes are a symbol of freedom, as are the birds at the river scene in "Pasha Tumanov." Nature invests the birds with a life seemingly apart from the lives and cares of men. Thus the author depicts some of the denizens of nature's realm.

Man's realm, his society, is exemplified by the attitudes and actions of Egor Shibaev. He is totally within the social structure: a soldier and land-holding peasant. On the train home he thinks of his wife, his home and the "fame" which awaits him. He will be asked questions about the capital (St. Petersburg), will drink and tell stories. While away from home, he has had various relationships with women, but the thought that his wife could be unfaithful to him does not enter his mind. Upon seeing his wife,

Egor Shibaev smiled happily and confusedly. He immediately liked the way she looked, although he had remembered her differently. He liked the way she was dressed, after the fashion of the city, because he, as an officer ["unter-ofitser": non-commissioned officer] did not think it fitting for his wife to dress in the peasant style. [p. 80]

When Egor realizes what Matrena's bows and meekness signify, and sees the small child Fed'ka, he is enraged. He beats her because this practice is just as much part of the peasant way of life as working the land, stealing wood or drinking vodka. The beating is described matter-of-factly with no comments or judgments offered by the narrator. Egor's position within the society, as contrasted with the anti-social activities of the horse-thief, already marks him as the one who is part of the diseased body of civilization.

Matrena is characterized as a meek woman, tall and thin; her thinness makes her look older. She acknowledges her guilt before her husband because her values are totally shaped by the peasant culture in which she lives. She does

not try to defend herself, but fears ". . . that Egor would lead her out into the street naked, leashed to a cart, and would whip her in front of the people, as was customarily done with unfaithful wives" (p. 84). The probability that Egor will kill Fed'ka seems to her inescapable, and somehow "lawful" ("zakonnym," p. 87). There is no interruption by the narrator to comment on this situation. The narrator functions only as observer. Matrena's passive sadness resembles that of Pasha Tumanov's mother. Both women are thin, older-looking and, in their present situations, joyless. Both are oppressed by the circumstances of their lives.

Kupriian's and Matrena's relationship, as it is sketched in the story, is a personal love relationship and a generalized statement about love in the lowest class. Kupriian once mentions the possibility of divorce to Vaska, who laughingly says that divorce is only for gentlefolk who have enough money to pay the priests.

When Matrena comes to meet Kupriian, after her husband's return, the time omission — or "fade-out" — in the narrative implies that they make love, but no details are given: "They . . . sank down in the musty grass. The wind rustled and rustled [shumel]. 'I have to go, Kupriian' — whispered Matrena after half an hour" (p. 104). Kupriian is frustrated by the fact that Egor is the "lawful" husband, and he, Kupriian, has no rights. Almost against his will, he strikes Matrena, an action which manifests all his

desperation, love and jealousy. Finally, it is Kupriian's guilt before Matrena, and his love for her, which make it impossible for him to escape from the district without coming to bid her farewell. This sense of obligation to the woman he loves leads to his murder.

Surveying the plot, one sees that certain events ensnare Kupriian. In these confrontations with circumstances or characters, the horse-thief displays a kind of animal cunning. The plot throws him into two overlapping situations — Egor's return and its implications for the love between Kupriian and Matrena, and the search for the horse-thieves which is initiated by the new governor. In both cases Kupriian is an outlaw: as an adulterer and as a horse-thief. Unconsciously, he accepts the challenge of both situations: he goes to see Matrena, and he steals the priest's horse and the village commandant's new troika. In both cases the conflicts are between forces of equal strength, so long as he has the advantage of the wolf — stealth. Kupriian indeed has a moment of personal triumph as he rides away driving the commandant's troika:

. . . not knowing why, only experiencing a light and unbridled feeling flowing through his breast, he cried out at the top of his voice:

'Catch Kupriian!..'

[p. 140]

If the author had wished Kupriian to be a romantic figure he could have ended the story with such a scene: Kupriian riding away freely, leaving his pursuers far behind. But instead

he dies at the hands of his enemies. The final glimpse of Kupriian is fleeting: "Kupriian lay prone, his head bent forward, and did not move. His hair was matted with blood and dirt" (p. 152). Thus, he dies after being beaten by a group of peasants led by Egor. He dies as he has lived — fighting. The peasants will continue to live their dull lives as "beasts, not people" (Ibid).

"Krov'"

The beastly nature of man is not confined to the peasant class, as the story "Krov'" (Blood) shows. One sees that, obviously, by his frequent use of nature symbolism, Artsybashev does not imply that "beast" is synonymous with animal or wild beast. The animals he portrays are indeed seldom beasts in this sense. Man, in his gross cruelty to his fellow man, in his jealousy and premeditated crimes, is "the beast." The story "Krov'" makes clear this man-beast/animal differentiation. "Krov'," written in 1903, appearing in the first edition of Rassказы (Stories) in 1905, is a problem story. It is as much concerned with burning issues as is "Pasha Tumanov." Boris Lazarevskii mentions that Tolstoy was quite interested in this story as a prime example of the need for a moral relationship of man to his fellow animals. The story is an argument for vegetarianism. In "Krov'" the author juxtaposes two realms — that of man and that of animals. How does man relate to the animal, natural

world? In this story he kills, eats, studies members of it; he writes about it, philosophizes on it, wishes to subjugate it, but does not love it or learn from it.

The setting of the story is a country estate owned by young Vinogradov, who has recently been married. Two brothers and a writer come from the city to visit and share enjoyable social pursuits: drinking, eating, conversing and hunting. Besides the two "worlds," of man and of animals, there are two sides to the characters. As one of the visitors, Borisov, declares: "'In every man there is always a beast'" ("V cheloveke vseгда zver' sidit," p. 200). The narrator often eavesdrops on the characters' thoughts, showing the outer man to be different from the inner.

The characters — Vinogradov, his wife and his guests — presumably all gentry, are sketched in the first pages of the story. The elder Borisov is a lecturer at the university, "thin, short-sighted and very kind" (p. 190). His brother, Sergei, is "loved by all for his healthy, handsome appearance and for his gay, even nature" (Ibid.). The third, Gvozdev, is a writer whose "works are highly valued by that portion of the public who most of all demand sympathetic, sincere and kind ideas" (Ibid.). The friends bring with them their hunting dogs, Ajax and Marx, who sit beside their masters at the table and are praised and petted. Vinogradov's wife, Klavdiia, is described as small in stature, blonde and large-eyed. She has an angelic look, as she well knows, and

tries always to be kind and gentle in keeping with her looks (p. 193). The tone of these first character descriptions is ironic and suggests that these people, while outwardly kind, sociable and humane, possibly are not really as they appear. Gvozdev's remark about the "other" side of man's nature underlines the impression that all is not as it appears. The conversation turns to

. . . a recent bloody encounter between two political groups. [But] . . . as they were all of the same political persuasion, the discussion was gay and pleasant, despite the sad theme. [p. 197]

This detail shows that the host and his guests are somewhat callous, but that this detached way of relating to tragedy is socially sanctioned and usual behavior.

The Vinogradovs' servants are the physical link between the animal (barnyard) world and the human. While the guests talk and enjoy each other's company, the cook Akulina kills chickens and prepares them for dinner. The scene she encounters at the chicken-coop is described in detail. The narrator depicts the life and feelings of the barnyard fowl as he discusses their day. The chickens "ran around in the sun and happily pecked in the warm manure. They were contented, warm and sated" (p. 197). Akulina binds the feet of two birds which are to be used for dinner and carries them away to be killed. The narrator chronicles the last minutes of these bound creatures:

Most of all, it was unnatural and torturous for any living creature to be in the position head

downward. And the evening, which they never saw because they went to sleep as soon as the sun set, made an indescribable impression on them — one of deathly, animal terror. [p. 198]

Akulina's twelve-year-old son, Pashka, is a good, quiet boy who very much enjoys killing animals (p. 199). This ironically contradictory statement is illustrated by the description of how Pashka kills one of the chickens: "The thick, almost black blood poured onto the ground; Pashka held the rooster up by the feet and watched the blood flow" (Ibid.). The narrator then abruptly, and most effectively, switches back to the scene at the dining-table, where Sergei is talking about a student scandal, and interjects his comment: "In every man there is a beast." Because the topic of conversation has become unpleasant, the host offers more vodka:

Gvozdev only bowed his head, as his mouth was full of the meat of the chicken, and his strong white teeth, of which he was so proud, gnawed on the bones of the red rooster. [p. 201]

Whether or not one is sympathetic to the cause of vegetarianism, the above passage is nonetheless effective and powerful.

A scene takes place later that evening which is constructed to contrast the animal/human worlds and the inner/outer man. Klavdiia rests her feet on a wolf-skin:

As she was very beautiful, and her feet were beautiful, all involuntarily looked at her feet but, thinking that this was crude, they pretended to be looking at the wolf-skin. [p. 201]

Talk focuses on the skin, which is that of a she-wolf which, Vinogradov boasts, was a big, beautiful animal. He tells proudly how he shot her himself. The further conversations

that evening and the next morning underscore the thoughts and beliefs of the characters. When they speak of whether animal spirits go to heaven or hell, Klavdiia becomes serious because such "thoughts about the soul of an animal seemed degrading for what she considered a great process going on inside her" (p. 206). The narrator adds that Klavdiia had often seen pregnant animals around her home but did not feel that she had anything in common with them.

Outright hypocrisy is displayed once more when the narrator juxtaposes thoughts to words. When Sergei sings, accompanied by Vinogradov, they discuss modern music: "they argued hotly and seriously, although they could have lived their entire lives without music" (p. 208). While arguing, "they found it pleasant to discuss intelligent and humanistic points of view, as they considered themselves to be intelligent and humanistic people" (Ibid.). Later, they discuss the future:

Although they talked about the most diverse things, the essence of their conversation was a discussion of the good, kind and honorable ideas of that future time which would be Utopian, in which they did not really believe, when everything — people and order of life — would be different from the present and much better, when the difference between good and evil would be clear to all. [pp. 209-210]

Chapter Five is devoted to the description of the slaughter of a lamb. Throughout the story, the narrator describes the gentlefolk and the animals alternately. After the lofty thoughts of Vinogradov and his guests, the stark, graphic brutality of the slaughter of the lamb vividly

confronts the reader. The animal's horror when he realizes that he is struggling for life is carefully drawn. The author must personify the animals to some extent, because one does not really know in what way a chicken, or a lamb, feels "horror." What one can tell is that the animal does display a sense of its impending death. The critic Polonskii states that the contrast between the beauty and freshness of the early morning and the purple, bloody, lamb carcass is one of the most striking in the story:

All the sounds of the morning seemed especially resonant and strong. And the roofs, earth, trees washed by the dew, and even people and animals seemed bright, clean and joyful. Everything shone and sparkled, bathed in a thousand hues. All bustled and rang, filled with powerful, beautiful life... even the shadows seemed especially light and transparent. It was only at the barn, on a steel hook pounded into the wall, that something hung, bluish-purple, greasy, ugly, formless and still. From it dripped cold, lifeless blood.

[p. 214]

Moreover, this particular lamb was chosen by Vinogradov himself, because it was especially healthy, fat and lively ("zhizneradostnyi," p. 210).

Chapter Six contrasts Klavdiia's pregnancy with that of the household cat. The mother cat brings her new-born kittens to the bed of the cook. Akulina is out of sorts because of the inconvenience caused her. It is decided that Pashka will dispose of the kittens, even though Klavdiia does love all baby animals and tries to save one from being drowned. Her "sensitivity" is evident as she turns away

when Pashka puts the kittens into his coat. The mother cat tries to follow Pashka, but Klavdiia shuts the door quickly, barring her way. As the mother cat "pitifully meows . . . Pashka drowns the kittens in a ditch behind the animal yard and for a long time watches the bubbles rising in the dirty, shallow water" (p. 219).

The scenes following this one describe the hunters en route to the marsh. Gvozdev, admiring the beauty and stillness of the countryside, remarks that he envies Vinogradov. Vinogradov replies that it is not always so idyllic, but is secretly pleased that he is envied:

When Vinogradov was alone he did not pay much attention to nature, that is, to what we call by that name: fields, forests, animals, grass, water, sky and sun. He noticed the grandeur of all these much more in paintings and written descriptions in books. He said he worshipped nature. But in his country life the bounty of nature bored him and seemed monotonous. And this was not because he was a dry, prosaic person, but simply because he was used to viewing nature as a creation exclusively for his own solace and use. But now, when Gvozdev, reveling in his own descriptions of nature, envied him, . . . this life among the riches of nature became unusually poetic, interesting and unattainable to other people who did not possess his poetic soul...
[p. 220]

The nature passages of the final two parts (Chapters Seven and Eight) are especially vivid and detailed. One description of the puddles along the road is an especially good example of Artsybashev's impressionistic style: ". . . here and there small puddles sparkled, like bits of broken blue and rose colored glass" (p. 221). Looking around them, the party discusses living as Tolstoyans in accord with

nature, or even being hermits. Sergei confides that he could not seriously think of living such a life:

'Because nature is alien to me. We are raised from childhood to look at nature as a place for strolls and educational excursions. We are shown three types of grass and one reed, and told their order, class and species . . . yes, we are too far from the realm of nature and we can only platonically worship her.' [pp. 221-222]

Gvozdev, the writer, is thinking about a story he will write in which he will show the distance between man and his culture and nature. The narrator's ironic voice interrupts once again, to add that Gvozdev is so overwhelmed by his impressions that he does not realize that the theme of the story he plans to write is not original but very old and trite.

A striking description paints the scene of life at the pond and on the marsh where the men hunt. Again the animals are personified to show better their relationship to man's world. As in previous passages, descriptions of their "feelings" and "emotions" by the use of adjectives and adverbs implying "human" states of mind are a major device. The following paragraph describes the life of the marsh creatures in this manner:

And it seemed as if the whole marsh were alive: in every little place life existed and living creatures stirred. The ducks quacked calmly and accusingly... here and there a handsome drake unexpectedly broke away in flight and, having inscribed a wide half-circle, landed loudly ploughing the blue water, which for a time could not calm itself and rippled, as if smiling at the sky which was reflected in it. Long-legged snipes . . . with joyful chirping sped

away to the distant shadowy grove . . . in a shallow place the herons stood ceremoniously on one leg, resting their heads on their shoulders; they held up their long legs importantly as if they were admiring nature. White seagulls . . . circling above . . . looked vigilantly around... And all was a hubbub, cries and chirps. And all these mighty sounds were gathered together by the great wave of life into one exultant din, which resounded all over the lake. [pp. 224-225]

The men make war on the inhabitants of the marshland. One duck, retrieved by Marx, is not yet dead: "Marx held it down by putting his paw on the wing that had been broken by the shot... then the excited dog grabbed it by the head and dragged it along, treading on its wings" (p. 227). As the hunters go deeper into the marsh, "more and more spots of blood were left on the young green grass" (p. 228). The massacre continues when Gvozdev must kill a captive bird:

One big old duck was only slightly wounded and Gvozdev's yellow Ajax could not handle it. He took the duck by the wings and the tail, but it kept tearing itself away, leaving traces of down and blood in the dog's mouth. It shrieked hoarsely and hopelessly. Finally, Gvozdev caught it himself...

The duck's desire to live was so apparent that Gvozdev almost let it go, but, mastering his hesitation, he took it by the wings and quickly and forcefully struck it on the head with the butt of his gun. Drops of blood sprayed from the beak and the duck fell silent so suddenly that it seemed . . . as if everything around him had fallen silent.

'Here is the nasty side of hunting,' he thought. [pp. 228-229]

Borisov enjoys the poetic mood which overtakes him as he walks with gun in hand yet does not perceive the life teeming around him. He mistakes the silence of the glade for "lifelessness":

. . . this quietude was not that of lifelessness. In this motionlessness was mighty, hidden work: roots with all their strength drew moisture from the earth, and on the branches downy, sticky leaf-buds burst out; the young tender grass tunneled through the dry leaves and pushed upwards . . . somewhere around the roots, the majestic eyes of the first flowers looked around . . . life was everywhere, quiet, unnoticed, but mighty.

[pp. 230-231]

He wishes to have a stuffed bird made and shoots at a woodpecker, which he then cannot find. When he does come across the dead bird, its beak has been shot off and its body is too damaged by the shot to be used. In disgust, he throws it on a pile of dead leaves. As if all this has not been enough for the hunters, on the way home a flock of cranes is sighted and Sergei jumps out of the wagon to take a shot at them:

The shot rang out; in the endless steppe it seemed amazingly unnoticeable.

A minute passed. The cranes, evenly flapping their wide wings, ploughed on as before in the unreachable heights. Only one, the very last, seemed to bend his head slightly downward and then again fixed his eyes ahead, as if to comment with silent hatred on this thoughtless attempt to take his life.

[p. 233]

"Krov'" presents the author's view that, although nature may yield to the depredations of man, her might transcends his assaults. Artsybashev's involvement in his subject matter through his omniscient narrator is evident in this story, as it is in "Pasha Tumanov."

"Smekh" and "Podpraporshchik Gololobov"

The contemplation of eternal nature leads to the insanity of two men in the story "Smekh" (Laughter), 1903. Man's mortality becomes an obsession in this story, and in an earlier one (1902), "Podpraporshchik Gololobov" (Ensign-bearer Gololobov). When faced by the inevitability of death, Gololobov commits suicide in defiance of the natural order of life. "Podpraporshchik Gololobov" and "Smekh" were published in the 1905 volume of stories. They will be discussed here together because they have a common theme — man's confrontation with the idea of death. "Smekh" is almost totally constructed from the dialogue between an inmate of a lunatic asylum and his doctor. "Gololobov" contains a long scene in dialogue, but the plot is also advanced through the events of the narrative and the thoughts of the central character, Dr. Solodovnikov. "Smekh," a comparatively short work,²¹ has no divisions into parts or chapters as do the other stories discussed in this chapter. Being almost exclusively narrated by the doctor, it has no intrusive, didactic narrator.

The visual and psychological vividness of the first paragraph of "Smekh" sets the mood for the story. It may be noted that this passage tends more to expressionism as it directly relates the landscape to the diseased states of mind depicted in the story:

Beyond the window stretched the field. Red, green and black stripes stretched one beside another into

the distance and merged there in a thin, curving mirage. There was so much light, air and endless free space, that it became oppressive in one's own narrow, small and weary body. [p. 234]

As the doctor stands at the window looking out on the field, he watches birds in flight. He thinks that even if they do have the freedom of flight, they still must come to the inevitable end. The thought that nature is eternal reminds him of a verse that then goes through his mind: ". . . over the grave, with eternal beauty sparkles . . . indifferent nature" ("ravnodushnaia priroda").²² Having reached the age of sixty-five, he feels the nearness of death. He is haunted by an idea expressed in a book he once read; that as nature is finite, sooner or later the exact series of events that produced him as an entity would recur and produce a like being to himself again. This thought, that he is but a "combination" which will reappear with the right circumstances, makes him feel that nature has denied his individuality. He is obsessed with the physical process of death and decay, and has begun to suffer insomnia because of these thoughts. At night in the hospital his mind dwells on death, while the inmates shriek and laugh.

As he is the senior doctor at the hospital, he happens one day to visit a new patient who proves to be fairly well adjusted to his new surroundings. He calls his room "a gay little room" ("veselen'kaia komnatka"). He explains to the doctor why it is that he has been put into the ward. As he stands by the window looking out at the sun ("priamo navstrechu

solntsa"), his dirty yellow gown is gilded by the sun's rays (p. 242). This is again the use of sunlight to make ugly things beautiful, as was noted in "Kupriian." The inmate laughs his dry, wooden laugh, at which the doctor remarks that laughter does not become him. The patient says that, as a thinking man, he could not help becoming caught up in thoughts of death; that as he thought more and more about death he began to cry at night like a child. He finds the extinction of his "I" a most fearful thing. In reading a book, he discovered the idea that nature is completely indifferent to man and his life:

"Nature is irresistible, no one can hurry her, and sooner or later she claims her own. She knows nothing, neither good nor evil, and does not tolerate anything absolute, eternal or unchanging. Man is her child... but she is the mother not only of man, and she has no preferences: all that she creates, she creates at the expense of another; she destroys one in order to create another and it's all the same to her..." [p. 244]

The patient cries out against this seemingly blind power of nature that will calmly destroy what she has created. He wonders how people who know what he knows can simply go on about the business of life. He then relates how he studied astronomy and came upon a theory of sun spots. This manifestation of solar energy would eventually cause the sun to burn out and the earth to die of cold. He says that by the accepted calculations, the sun should "go out" in "no less than four million years" (p. 250). He concludes that this is a mockery, because that length of time might as well be

eternity. He had then made the discovery that the previous calculations had been incorrect as they did not take into account the rapidity with which the sun spots would cool the sun. According to his calculations, the earth would cease to support life in five to six thousand years, not millions. Nature herself was not eternal and was also condemned to death. As the patient explains his theory, the sunlight leaves the room, as if to illustrate his words. As this happens, it is noted that "it was as if all the objects in the room grew heavy and stuck to the floor" (p. 249). This is an arresting image which conveys mood as well as visual effect. In the absence of direct light, the madman appears "more primitive and coarse" (Ibid.). The patient tells the doctor that as soon as he calculated that the demise of the earth was imminent he wished to convey this to everyone, and he begins to laugh unrestrainedly. The doctor, who has ceased to think of anything but death, is also greatly pleased by the news that nature with her hateful "combinations" will cease to exist. They both become gleeful and laugh until they are put into restraining jackets. Perhaps the story could be called "the last laugh"; if so, does nature have it — or the madman?

The characters in Chekhov's "Palata No. 6" ("Ward No. 6," 1892) and Andreev's "Krasnyi smekh" ("The Red Laugh," 1904) are also confronted by the horror of mortality. Superficially, "Smekh" resembles Chekhov's story: there are

doctors in both who attend "madmen," and both doctors recognize in the end that the madmen are the real bearers of truth. All the characters (Artsybashev's and Chekhov's) finally realize that they are helpless. The fate of the madmen and of the doctors is the same. Andreev's "Krasnyi smekh" deals more specifically with death encountered in war. War and the untimely and terrible death which it brings is symbolized by the crazed, bloody "red laugh." Both "Palata no. 6" and "Krasnyi smekh" contain more social comment than Artsybashev's story, which deals with an abstract conceptualization of death, man and nature. Chekhov's story can be viewed as an indictment of the system of mental hospitals in Russia with their filth, mismanagement and inhuman living conditions. The story by Andreev carries the timely message "that if war is senseless and criminal in general, the present war [Russo-Japanese War, 1904-05] is even more senseless and criminal than usual."²³

The second story concerned with the contemplation of death, "Podpraporshchik Gololobov," also appeared in the first volume of stories. The young Gololobov's only accomplishment is that he carries out his own death sentence. The story as a whole is nonetheless an affirmation of life because the young man's suicide teaches the smug and self-satisfied hero, Dr. Solodovnikov, an important lesson. He learns that he need only look around to see the beauty of life. He awakens from his apathy and boredom and really

begins to live.

"Gololobov" is the only story in this group that has an epigraph. The epigraph is the theme or, one could say, the message of the story: "'For a living dog is better than a dead lion.' (Ecc. 9:4)" The entire verse is: "For to him that is joined to the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion." Verse 5 continues: "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they more reward; for the memory of them is forgotten."

The story is based on the chance meeting of two acquaintances, Solodovnikov and Gololobov, their discussion later that night, and how it affects them. The doctor is introduced first, but no physical description of him is given; only his moods and feelings towards others are presented. He meets Gololobov in the street and greets him condescendingly as he considers him "stupid and undeveloped" (p. 154). After this meeting, Solodovnikov spends an evening at his club. He plays billiards, drinks beer and vodka, talks with acquaintances and reads newspapers — one conservative and one liberal (p. 155). The text is simply an enumeration of activities with no personalization of the action performed by the doctor. The actions are mechanical and unremarkable.

The only fairly long description of Gololobov while alive employs light. As the doctor passes by the young man's window, he observes him from the vantage point of the

darkness outside. The doctor taps on the window with his cane, causing the young man to raise his head:

The bright lamplight shone directly in his face . . . obviously he was still very young, only a boy: he had no mustaches or beard. His face was puffy and blemished. He had small light-colored eyes, yellow brows and closely-cut ash-colored hair. His face was completely colorless and somehow insignificant. [p. 156]

Gololobov is rendered as a lifeless, colorless being. The strong odor of bread and yeast which strikes the doctor as he enters Gololobov's room (the young man lives by a bakery) contrasts sharply with the description of the young man. Inside the room there are icons and a painted Easter egg, at the sight of which the doctor remarks to himself that Gololobov must be quite religious ("'Vish' ty, bogomol'nyi kakoi'," Ibid.) When the two begin to talk, the doctor asks condescendingly why the young man had been so lost in thought. This question elicits Gololobov's explanation of his own revelations concerning life and death.

He says: "'The position of every man is that of one who is condemned to death'" (p. 163). The difference is that he who is sentenced by earthly powers can still hope for something to save him, whereas he who is sentenced by nature must go to his end knowing it is real and final. He has come to the conclusion that it is his body that is eternal, but his soul or essence dies ("dukh umret," p. 169). This self, essence or "I", Gololobov defines as "my vices, habits, funny and beautiful specialness, my doubts, my

intelligence, my stupidity, my experience and my ignorance" (Ibid.) The young man's reasoning leads him to the belief that, as man is helpless and must die, he can only avoid an external force taking his life by taking it himself. By suicide he triumphs over "the death sentence": ". . . this will be the overpowering of nature by my soul..." (p. 168). This reasoning brings to mind Dostoevsky's Kirilov in Besy (The Devils). However, in the philosophical statement made by Gololobov there is no mention of God in any form (as man-God or God-man); there is merely the realization of the inevitability of the natural progression from life to death. The only hint that perhaps Gololobov may believe in God or pray is given by the presence of the icons. Perhaps he does seek refuge in Christian dogma. Kirilov states that he is killing himself to "'show my defiance and my new terrible freedom":²⁴ defiance, in this case, of God. Gololobov kills himself to escape the natural order. His "I" will triumph in the act, however briefly. It has also been suggested that Gololobov may resemble another of Dostoevsky's suicidal characters: Ippolit of Idiot (The Idiot). Edward Wasiolek discusses the motivation for Ippolit's suicide attempt as revealed in Dostoevsky's Notebook:²⁵

Commenting on Ippolit's attempted suicide Dostoevskii says: 'There is pride in helplessness,' and the Prince himself says in the notes: 'No, he won't kill himself now, having missed out on it, for it would make no impression on those people, so now he won't kill himself.'²⁶

.

The notes make stark and clear the unpleasant, indeed vicious side of Ippolit's character. . . . The petty, intriguing and cruel side of his character at the end of the novel is already implicit in his falsely heroic gestures when he reads his last confession. The notes confirm this: 'Ippolit — the vanity of a weak character.'²⁷

Gololobov, however, is not portrayed as cruel or vain. He is simply young, and in the solitude in which he lives has been obsessed with thought of death.

As the evening progresses, the doctor finds that he is impressed by the young man's words. Yet he cannot decide whether Gololobov's theory is very clever or very stupid. His mood changes gradually as he becomes more agitated and uncomfortable. As he finally leaves, he is seized by the fear that Gololobov may commit suicide after his departure. Once outside, Solodovnikov rushed back to the window, where he "imagines" that he sees smoke from a gun. But his practical nature prevails and he goes home worrying that perhaps he had been observed by the young man and appeared foolish. Because of his agitated state of mind, his own home looks especially dark and foreboding. Here the absence of light underscores all his fears and uncertainties. The weather is also hostile:

The rain roared unceasingly . . . in the big house at the owner's window the flame of the blue icon lamp burned weakly, and in his own wing the windows were dark. These dark windows seemed especially sinister. Now for the first time he paid attention to his wing: it was an old, crumbling house, which was entirely closed in by a dark motionless mass of trees. Among these huge silent trees the house seemed small and mysterious, and it suddenly seemed

terrible to Vladimir Ivanovich that he lived and would spend the night in such a house. [p. 173]

The gloom is dispelled momentarily when he is greeted at the door by his servant. In his own room, however, the doctor is once more engulfed by thoughts of death. He tries to read but cannot, and after he turns out the light he watches the glow of his cigarette in the darkness:

The glowing end of the cigarette quietly glimmered in his hand and, now and then flaring up, illuminated a part of the wall, the design of the wallpaper, the fingers, blanket and mustaches of Vladimir Ivanovich. [p. 175]

Light is again used here in an especially vivid image. As the doctor watches the cigarette die out, he muses on the finality of death. He remembers that Turgenev's Bazarov says a burdock will grow where we die, — but what if not even that happens, if all is gone? He thinks of all those who have come before him and gone to dust. As though to underline these thoughts of extinction, his cigarette goes out. The spark of the cigarette has gone — the spark of life in man will also cease to burn. As the night passes, he comes to the same conclusion as Gololobov: that it is better to take one's own life. He also wonders why he has not thought of this before, and why he did not realize what a unique person was Gololobov. The doctor is almost in a delirium when his servant comes to fetch him: Gololobov has committed suicide. As the servant enters the room his face looms up out of the darkness. At first the doctor does not even recognize the servant or know what is happening:

'And what kind of an idiot thinks about how one should live better or more honestly, when all one should think about is how terrible it is to die?' he thought with anger and rising, as if in a delirium, looked at the bright red flame before him and someone's terribly pale face.

But this was the face of Pashka, who stood with a candle in his hand. [pp. 180-181]

After the thoughts of the night, the doctor is confronted with the reality of death. In the place of Gololobov's face there is "nothing but a red splotch" (p. 183). One of the corpse's eyes is open and seems to be a separate entity: "But this eye no longer resembled a beautiful human eye; it was a repulsive, dull, huge, dead entity, dumbly and terribly looking at life" (Ibid.). This eye is that of death as it looks out on the living. What the doctor sees, Gololobov's corpse, does not remind him of the live man. When he thinks of all the young man's traits and mannerisms, his physical being in life, it strikes him just how unique a creation he was. The doctor breaks down and sobs, showing his transformation during the night, from a man who thought Gololobov to be an insignificant creature, to a man who realized the beauty and rarity of each single human life. Leaving the house, Solodovnikov is greeted by the beauty of dawn. The rising sun attests to the triumph once again of light over darkness, of life over death:

Right in front of Vladimir Ivanovich the still hidden sun was rising, and this place in the sky was blindingly bright: it shone, burned and sparkled. The air quivered and flowed in one's chest in free, mighty, clean and tender waves. [p. 187]

The doctor looks around him as if for the first time. The police officer in attendance at the suicide cannot help smiling at the feelings of life and strength embodied in the morning. He suggests that he and the doctor go fishing some time. The doctor's attitude toward people has been modified, and this offer seems to him a pleasant one. He marvels at his own legs, as he "watches them" walking. He greets a white dog and he realizes that "he and the dog were looking at each other, not lying indifferent and unmoving [dead] in the midst of this lively, moving world" (p. 189). This dog is perhaps an incarnation of the "live dog" mentioned in the epigraph. He and the doctor are, indeed, "better than a dead lion." The doctor is overpowered by the beauty of the morning and the sensations it produces. The fact that he must eventually die no longer seems important. The affirmation of life in this story is certainly the most positive statement made about life in the early stories. This joy of life comes to full bloom in the novel Sanin.

"Iz podvala"

The critic Baranov declares that "Iz podvala" (From the Basement) is "one of Artsybashev's finest artistic moments."²⁸ This story of 1903, published in the second volume of stories (1906), again revolves around the theme of man oppressed by society. Its protagonist, Anton the shoemaker, works in a dimly-lit basement. He is abused by his

clients and thinks that it is the natural order of things that he be thus treated. He even thinks that if there were any lower socially than himself he in turn would abuse them also. The harsh words and blows he receives from others he accepts as the function of a human safety valve which goes off "so that the petty, beastly rage living in the cowardly depths of people's souls would not suffocate them" (p. 3). Anton's joyless life is compared to that of a plant which was left behind by a previous tenant of the basement. "Anton often looked attentively at this pitiful plant, which was dying a slow death from the lack of air and sunshine, and for some reason he was loath to put it outside in the courtyard" (p. 2). The interior of his basement room is contrasted with the bright courtyard. The walls of the house rising up on all sides to surround him make his position like that of being at the bottom of a well (p. 3). When in the evening he goes out to look at the clear blue sky, he is so used to bending over his work that his head is drawn downward to the dark earth. His work gives him no joy; he makes boots "no better or worse than anyone else" (Ibid.). When he tries to play his accordion in the evenings he is chased away by the janitor. His wish is to go to the country some Sunday and play his music and rest.

Anton's past is related in a brief flashback. There was a time when it seemed that he could have a happy life. He began to court a seamstress, made her a pair of boots and

was about to propose to her, when by a case of mistaken identity he was sent to prison for six months. There he realized that something irreversible had occurred in his life. When he was released, he did not go to visit his seamstress, but learned that she had taken up with "a fine gentleman" (p. 7). From then on Anton worked, slept and drank. His state of dull sadness is contrasted with a lively scene at a house he passes. Through a window he sees light and activity and hears voices and music. His longing to hear or play music is his soul's yearning for beauty and something to lighten the burdens of life. Someone closes the window, cutting off the sounds of the life within. His day ends with a dream of being run over by the heavy wheels of a carriage driven by a drunken cabman.

Anton's social life consists of visits to taverns. He tries to watch a game of billiards, and admires the skill of one of the players, but is driven away. He has no one to talk to, is not even allowed to watch others enjoying themselves in a game. By "the usual roar in his ears and the way in which sounds seemed muffled and far away, Anton understood very well that he was drunk" (p. 10). He is ashamed and feels offended, as if someone were to blame for his drunken state. He says to himself "'I am a working man'" (Ibid.) This would imply that he has some right to happiness and to the respect and friendship of other men. When he tries to ease his tortured soul by singing, he is told it is

"not allowed." He then gets into a fight and is thrown out into the street.

And then he understood clearly that his life was without joy — a bitter life — that he was continually wronged and insulted... Anton began to weep and shook his fist at the locked door. [p. 14]

Seeing the men with whom he fought leave the tavern, he pursues them, clutching his shoemaker's knife. He catches up with them as they stop to talk with a woman "in a huge red hat, which swayed like a phantom in the dim light of the street lamp" (p. 15). This image evokes a naghtmarish feeling. Finally overtaking the men, he stabs one. His flight from the murder scene is rendered by vivid verbs: "Anton flew, leaping, crawling, wheezing, panting, growling like a wild animal being pursued" (p. 16). He out-distances his pursuers and spends the night in a small hollow. Disjointed images of the past hours flash through his mind as he realizes that his former life is over and that he will never return to his basement. "The feeling of freedom was greater than his fear and bewilderment" (p. 17). He spends the day wandering in an unfamiliar part of the city and resting in a field:

He tried to imagine something fearful, but he simply felt free, calm and happy. He was not afraid of the police because he already knew prison life and even that was better than the hungry, cold, joyless and slavish life he lived as a free man. . . . He felt no repentance or sorrow; on the contrary, he felt terribly triumphant, unusually brave but desperate. [p. 19]

As night falls, he approaches the town bearing the

look of one waiting for someone "to grab by the throat" (Ibid.). The story ends with a nature image: "a free, steady, strong wind blew mournfully across the broad field" (Ibid.).

The story is the account of the making of a criminal. Anton is oppressed, desperate for human warmth, and when he is cruelly rejected and pushed too far he strikes out blindly. The incident in the tavern releases his suppressed hostility. He is no longer willing to exist on the lowest rung of the social ladder. The murder he commits places him outside society. In the final lines of the story, the "free, strong wind" symbolizes the force of life and the will to be free from any fetters. This wind of freedom blows "mournfully," for Anton has paid a high price to free himself from society.

* * * * *

The six stories discussed in this chapter are unified by the author's keen observation and description of the drama of life. Although there are aspects of the works which may be defined as modernistic, the stories are more in keeping with the Russian realist tradition. Perhaps the most obvious overlapping of these two literary movements to be found in Artsybashev's early works is the modernist antagonism to authority, which can be likened to the realist's social consciousness. Both usually imply the need for or desirability

of social change. "Pasha Tumanov," "Kupriian," "Krov'" and "Iz podvala" make very strong statements about the ugliness and inhumanity of society. The only noble man is the one who exists outside the social order. The only man who lives honestly is the one who realizes that the essence of life can only be discerned by the individual, in many cases by confronting death ("Podpraporshchik Gololobov") or by communing with nature (Kostrov in "Pasha Tumanov"). The dictum that death and nature are man's only realities echoes throughout Artsybashev's works.

Ideas and techniques typical of the early stories continue in later works. Artsybashev's concern with social and political immediacies is expressed in "Rabochii Shevyrev" (The Worker Shevyrev, 1907), "Bunt" (The Rebellion, 1905), "Teni utra" (Morning Shadows, 1905), "Krovavoe piatno" (The Blood-stain, 1906) and "Chelovecheskaia volna" (The Human Wave, 1907). The individualist characters — Kostrov, Kupriian and Vaska, and Anton the shoemaker — share some traits with Artsybashev's famous individualist Sanin. Life, as portrayed by this author, is both a beautiful experience and a brief light in the void. The early stories depict both the love of life found in Sanin and the negation of life exemplified by Artsybashev's other novel, U poslednei cherty (The Breaking Point). Man as beast or as social beast reappears also in many of the later works. Artsybashev's depiction of the relationships between men and women as exemplified in

"Kupriian" is comparable in many ways to that in later works. Kupriian and Matrena share a true and real but illicit love. The society which sanctions the marriage of Matrena and Egor may, in the extreme, also allow the husband to beat his wife to death. The truth expressed by the epigraph to Sanin, which is taken from Ecclesiastes: "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions" (7:29) — is also basic to the early stories.

Part 2: "Smert' Lande" — The Life of a
Twentieth-Century Saint

. . . he [Christ] was not carrying on any liberal or political fight against the established authorities, but wanted to walk his own way, untroubled and undisturbed by these authorities.

Max Stirner, The Ego and His Own

The long story, "Smert' Lande" (The Death of Lande), also belongs to the early period (1900-1904). Its publication in issue 12 of Zhurnal dlia vsekh for 1904 drew the attention of many well-known writers to the work of young Artsybashev. Gorky wrote to Andreev that he could not imagine how Lande could be "a positive type."¹ He remarks:

Read Artsybashev's story in Zhurnal dlia vsekh and see what a true man, a positive type, should be. Even a hungry bear wouldn't eat such a man, so repulsively sweet, a sugar beet and not a man!²

Tolstoy felt that there were parts of the story which were

strong. Soon after the story appeared, it was read aloud to him, in the presence of a few friends. It is reported that Tolstoy commented after one passage: "'Now, that is sincere.'"³ Gippius praised the story, remembering it in a piece she wrote after her exile:

He is a real artist. His talent is outstanding, though at times uneven and even faulty. I still remember his old, impressive and profound story, 'The Death of Lande.' He is not only a talented writer of fiction, but also a very talented person.⁴

Aleksandr Blok considered Artsybashev's story to be "characteristic" of his writing of that time.⁵ The poet felt that the story resembled Dostoevsky's The Idiot. He writes:

Just like Prince Myshkin, the gentle Lande receives a slap in the face 'for good.' And throughout one feels the influence of Dostoevsky and Andreev and the artistic devices of Chekhov.⁶

The popular critics of the day also made various comments about "Smert' Lande." Lande's Christian orientation was especially appealing to Kharbarov, who believed that Lande was "a grandiose intelligent individual far in advance of other heroes of Artsybashev's stories."⁷ Volzhskii devotes a whole segment of one article to a study of "Lande." He too likens Artsybashev's hero to Prince Myshkin in Dostoevsky's The Idiot.⁸ He feels that the work represents "the freedom and courage of his [Artsybashev's] young, searching, daring talent."⁹

The critic Pil'skii sees Artsybashev's talent divided between the moralist and the immoralist; "Smert' Lande" is a

creation of the moralist.¹⁰ These two opposite aspects of Artsybashev's creativity make possible the portrayal of both the Christian Lande and the man-beast.¹¹

When one reads the story, the form of the "saintly lives" comes to mind. A scholar of old Russian literature, N. K. Gudzii, discusses the zhitiinyi zhanr (genre of the saintly life) in his Istoriia drevnei russkoi literatury (History of Old Russian Literature). Gudzii indicates that the saintly one's life follows a prescribed order:¹² 1) His parents are devout and noble. 2) He has an early inclination towards the scriptures. 3) He scorns the sweetness of earthly life and 4) is a strict ascetic. 5) he has a blessed death and 6) after his death miracles occur around his place of burial. Other traditional elements of this form are: the childlessness of the parents until the birth of the saintly one, his departure from the parental home, the distribution by the saint of his belongings to the poor, and his rejection of worldly glory. Certainly, aspects of the story "Smert' Lande" are typical of this genre. Also, the genre may be interpreted as simply a paradigm of an Orthodox Christian godly life.

Artsybashev uses one of his best-known characters, Vladimir Sanin of the novel Sanin, to comment on Lande.¹³ Sanin says he once knew Lande and was influenced by him for a while. He remarks that the trying events in the life of Christ are mirrored in Lande's life. Lande does not defend

himself when attacked, forgives those who wrong him, treats every man as his brother, and is chaste. The characterization of Lande, accomplished through selected details and key words and phrases, shows him to be gentle, meek and loving. His gestures, speaking voice, physical appearance and actions are drawn to present a constantly gentle person. Lande is introduced by the following passages as he goes to meet friends in the small provincial town where he is visiting his mother's home:

Lande approached, smiling calmly and quietly. He was a slight, thin man, and his steps were barely audible upon the damp earth.¹⁴

.....
 He spoke quietly, but distinctly and calmly, and could always be heard. [p. 23]

.....
 [Molochaev] looked him [Lande] full in the face as if looking through his pure and calm eyes into his soul. [Ibid.]

In the introductory twenty pages of the story, Lande's character is consistently depicted as quiet and gentle:

- calmly and quietly walked . . . and smiled [p. 22]
- spoke quietly, but distinctly and calmly [p. 23]
- softly smiled [p. 23]
- pure and calm eyes [p. 23]
- smiled and tenderly spoke [p. 24]
- soft voice [p. 24]
- gently, calming him, smiling, said [p. 28]
- sadly smiled [p. 29]
- joyously and gently smiled [p. 33]
- his voice was especially calm and tender [p. 33]
- he left, softly smiling [p. 34]

- he smiled sadly [p. 38]
- his spirit was calmed [p. 42]
- a full and joyous sensation rose up in him [p. 42]

The observations of two major characters early in the story supplement Lande's image. The main female character, Mar'ia Nikolaevna, says of Lande: "he is a dear one and somehow strange — blessed, innocent!" ("blazhenen'kii", p. 33). The other main male character, the artist Molochaev, says: "That Lande is some kind of Fool-in-Christ" (p. 34).

There is considerable repetition of adjectives and adverbs in these first descriptions: Lande is "calm," "pure," "quiet" and "loving" and all his actions reflect these traits. The repetitions impress this upon the reader. His step is so light it is barely noticed. In his greeting there is sincerity, guilelessness and a very gentle love for those he meets. When Lande hears of the plight of the workers on strike at a local mill he decides to give his monetary inheritance from his father to these men and their destitute families. Thus, the "saintly one" gives his worldly goods to the needy. His mother does not understand his wish to give away his inheritance, and calls him a foolish child. She asks how he will live, and he replies, as the true holy man who thinks not of the morrow, "Somehow."

On Lande's first day at home, he is confronted with many painful situations which weigh upon him. Besides the misfortunes of the workers, his friend Semenev is dying of tuberculosis and is bitter and afraid. During his first

night at home, while alone in the darkness, Lande is tortured by his own lack of faith. Semenev's fate suggests to him the end that awaits all. His state of mind is skillfully depicted:

. . . around him was emptiness, only endless emptiness. Somewhere there were stars, only stars! 'And I am not as much as a grain of sand, and less, much less, and my life in eternity is not an instant' . . . Then he remembered that kitten which Vershilov's coachman had picked up by the scruff of the neck and dashed to the ground, killing it — and to Lande it seemed that he hung by the scruff of the neck over an abyss... he yearned terribly for someone to reassure him that he was not alone in the unfathomably immense universe...
[pp. 39-40]

Lande is released from his dilemma by prayer and abasement of the flesh. He leaves the warmth of his bed and lies down on the cold bare floor, thus feeling united with the workers in their hardships. Lying on the floor, he experiences a calm and blissful feeling from a resurgence of faith:

A full, joyous feeling arose in him, and the space around him was filled with something immense, light and transparent. His fear vanished like smoke. It was cold on the floor and Lande's body trembled... then suddenly the hardness of the floor and the cold and the dark and his own ridiculous discomfort — all faded and became unnoticeable, unimportant... And he was suspended and calmed in a joyful state resembling the greatest and deepest happiness... This was the last time in his life that he had the least doubt, that he was troubled for a minute in anticipation of future trials. A straight road, well illuminated, stretched ahead in his soul.
[p. 42]

Lande's travails and mortification of the flesh are further chronicled. The scene which takes place as he visits an acquaintance, Tkachev, in jail is a further testimonial

to Lande's faith. Lande argues that one must love life despite everything. His words are like "a song from his heart." He tries to fortify the man's failing spirits with a few words about non-resistance to evil:

'You must not meet enmity with enmity!' Lande said, with shining, wide-opened eyes, as if he were not thinking about what he said... 'never will you feel such joy, such peace, such gratification as when you vanquish the hatred in yourself!.. [pp. 49-50]

During his visit to Tkachev, Lande continually tries to take the prisoner's hand in a gesture of unity and love. This gesture is unconscious and shows his sincere desire to reach Tkachev. Throughout the encounter Lande's appearance reflects his inner state: "His light hair stuck to his forehead, his lips and hands trembled, and only his eyes were, as before, shining with love and pity" (p. 52). Tkachev says that perhaps Lande is a holy man ("'sviatoi chelovek'") because his soul is "'clean and clear as a piece of glass'" (p. 53). The prisoner finally vents all his bitterness on Lande, calling him "'a holy soul on crutches'" and "'a fool'" (p. 56). This statement echoes in the foul cell as a condemnation and a curse. Lande has no words to counter this attack, and the drama of the meeting hangs heavily as the chapter ends. He has reached out to a fellow man only to be denounced as impotent: "'a holy soul on crutches.'"

Later in the narrative, while on an evening walk with Mar'ia Nikolaevna, Lande is attacked and robbed by Tkachev, who has been released from jail, and another man. Lande

gives his purse and outer clothing to the thieves without remonstrance. The artist Molochaev, who is near, hears Mar'ia's cries for help and hurries to her aid. He attacks the thieves, but Lande tries to shield them from his blows. He is a poor and comical figure of a man compared to the brutally strong Molochaev. He stands humiliated and half-naked before Mar'ia, the artist and Tkachev, but is not distressed by this and pities the thief, thinking: "'when he jeered at me, he suffered more than I, this I saw...'" (p. 86).

Lande, because of his ascetic nature, is dissociated from some of the usual emotions of life and does not recognize that Mar'ia Nikolaevna has fallen in love with him. She believes him to be a "dear, radiant, pure" ("milyi, svetlyi, chisty") being (p. 127). She dreams of marriage to him which would create a pure relationship, elevating her spirit. She does not differentiate between body and spirit in the same way as he does, and loves him both as a man and as a pure soul. Once Lande is severely beaten as he again tries to mediate between Tkachev and Molochaev. Mar'ia and Semenev's sister decide to sit with him through the night. As Lande lies pale and weak on the bed, Mar'ia lays her head on his chest. When she kisses him for the first time, "Lande kissed her gently like a child" (p. 143). She kisses him more fervently and opens her eyes to see his "cold, afraid, distressed face" (p. 144). He tells her that he loves her, but not in that way. He does not respond to the physical

nature of her love.

During Lande's last meeting with Tkachev, the thief begs him to be the prophet of a "new faith." Lande vehemently declines, saying that all one can do is to refrain from doing evil. "'Travel your own road,'" he says, "'and if someone goes with you — let them... if your life is righteous, its trace will not disappear, but will continue through the ages!..''" (p. 154). Tkachev, who wishes desperately to find a personal and world savior in Lande, angrily denounces him again, saying, "'Christ's fool, unhappy one'" (p. 155).

Thus, Lande's life to this point is similar to that of the saint as defined by Gudzii, and also, in some respects, follows the life of Christ. He does not respond to the sweetness of earthly love, he turns the other cheek to his tormentors, preaches love and faith, gives his money to the poor, and is not interested in the possible glory awaiting a "new prophet."

His solitary death in the forest concludes the story, and is a final point of comparison to the "Lives" genre. There are no miracles after Lande's death. In fact, the odor of decomposition coming from his body repels three Riazan peasants who happen upon it. The bodies of saints are often alleged to be free of signs of decay. The last description of the corpse shows it covered with leaves and damp earth "as if the ground had already seized him with its moist

feelers and were slowly and firmly drawing him down to itself" (p. 189). From Lande's death springs life of a different kind, as the final line of the story relates: "On this place, from year to year, a fern grew especially luxuriantly and joyously" ("radostno," p. 190). This the author presents as the greatest of all miracles.

The fact that Lande's body decays is also reminiscent of the description of the laying-out of Father Zossima in The Brothers Karamazov. The smell of corruption issues from the priest's body so soon after his death that it is considered a sign that his teaching had been false. Artsybashev's final statement in the story echoes the words of Zossima and seems to vindicate them:

Love all God's creation, the whole and every grain of sand of it. Love every leaf, every ray of God's light. Love the animals, love the plants, love everything. If you love everything, you will perceive the divine mystery in things.¹⁵

Lande's last days, spent in the forest in a deserted hut, have a mystical air about them. His solitude begins after he has crossed a large river. This may symbolize crossing over into the other world, conveyed from one bank to the other by a boatman like Charon ferrying souls on the River Styx. The boatman blends visually so well with his surroundings that it is almost impossible to distinguish him from the river foliage. Lande and the boatman-muzhik exchange a few ideas about life. Lande says that most of all one must "'love and pity others.'" To this the boatman

answers, "'You say we must love . . . how can we love when at some time we may have our throats slit for a crust of bread!'" (p. 181). They do both agree, however, that suffering is necessary, and that that which goes forward in the world does so because of the positive effect of suffering.

Lande's observations and sensations in the forest are very sharp. As he sits beneath the trees, he perceives colors, light and life all around him. At midday a thin bear approaches him. Lande has no fear as he and the bear confront each other: "That he might attack him did not enter his mind, because his soul was at peace so nothing mean or cruel could enter it" (p. 185). He only wishes to give the bear some bread, but considers his movement might frighten the creature. This segment was most likely suggested by the Life of St. Sergius of Radonezh, who befriended a bear:

[The beast] formed the habit of always coming to the saint and the latter, knowing it, would bring out of his cabin a small crust of bread and put it upon a log or stump. . . . But when bread was lacking and the bear came as usual he would not go away for a long time but would stand looking here and there, waiting like a merciless creditor for his debt. If the saint happened to have only one crust, he was obliged to divide even it into two parts.¹⁶

Autumn has begun and Lande is exposed to the cold rain. He falls ill and, as he feels his hold on life ebbing, he says to himself, "'Here one may die'" (p. 185). He realizes that Semenev, whom he has left home on foot to visit — a journey of a thousand versts — must now be aided by a power greater than his own. Suffering from cold and illness,

Lande thinks, "'Lord, Thy will be done'" (p. 186). During his last hours he experiences a strange sensation:

Suddenly all around him was bathed in a yellow light as if there were an invisible lamp somewhere above him. By its strange light it seemed to Lande that he stood beside his own body which was writhing in puddles, pitiful in a wet, black cassock, dirty, unhappy — like a worm. Terrible suffering and fear clutched Lande's heart. He cried out and hit his head against the overhanging branches . . . many familiar faces with lively glowing eyes came closer in an endless stream, bowed to him in turn and departed. The 'lamp' shone now as if not behind him but radiating from him . . . — a weak but clear light shone on the face of those bowing to him.

It was not thought, not delirium, not feeling, but the radiant light of a miraculous revelation that pierced the inflamed brain of Lande, and in that instant all his life was split into two parts: it was as if something huge, light and miraculous in its mystery, that which had been his life, removed itself from him and slowly dispersed, filling the space around him; and his very keenest suffering — solitary, dauntless and final — seized him with sharp claws and drove him to the ground.

[pp. 187-188]

In this very strong and mystical description Lande's physical death is chronicled. The image of his dual nature, as he "looks at his own body," is especially striking. Lande's Christian orientation is expanded to encompass all of nature. He is transferred from the realm of man to the realm of nature. With his death he becomes a physical bridge between the two worlds.

An aspect of this character to be considered is that of his similarity to the Holy Fools of the Russian Orthodox Church.¹⁶ Three of the main characters of the work call Lande a blessed innocent, or iurodyvyi. The Holy Fools were at

one time a canonized order of saints in the Eastern Orthodox Church. They derive from the Greek saloi.¹⁷ Fedotov discusses this manifestation at some length, defining the Fools as those whose behavior was often irrational and immoral, but only so for the purpose of teaching and enlightenment. The concept of the madman being akin to the mystic is found in many religions. St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians seems to explain partly the phenomenon of the iurodivyi: "If any man thinketh that he is wise among you in this world let him become a fool, that he may become wise" (3:18).¹⁸ Nakedness, extreme poverty, and all manners of mortification of the flesh were marks of "foolishness" (iurodstvo). Fools were often allowed to say things to the Tsars that no one else would dare say. Chastity was not necessarily a prerequisite for this order, as many shocked the righteous with their behavior. In these respects, Lande can be only superficially compared to the Fools. His action is directed by a social and moral conscience even if it is not recognized by his mother or the priest.

Dostoevsky's Prince Myshkin of The Idiot may well have been the model for Lande. As suggested by Blok, Volzhskii and others, Lande is gentle and loving as is Myshkin. But Dostoevsky's idiot prince is a complex character, and Artsybashev's story cannot be compared in scope to Dostoevsky's novel. There is the obvious love-triangle in both works: in The Idiot — Myshkin, Nastasiia Filipovna, and Rogozhin; and

in "Lande" — Lande, Mar'ia Nikolaevna, and Molochaev. Molochaev and Rogozhin are both as "physical" and strong as Lande and Myshkin are spiritual and frail. Lande and Myshkin are not capable of the physical love that the respective heroines desire. Myshkin's belief that "compassion was the chief and perhaps only law of human existence"¹⁸ is evident in the story of Lande. A final, obvious comparison can be made between Lande and Myshkin. Dostoevsky writes:

One of Myshkin's striking characteristics was the extraordinary naïveté of the attention with which he always listened to anything that interested him, and of the answers he gave when anyone asked him questions. His face, and even his attitude, somehow reflected that naïveté, that good faith, unsuspecting of mockery or humour.¹⁹

Artsybashev's Lande must be considered to be based on Dostoevsky's Prince Myshkin.

One may also discern strikingly Tolstoyan facets in Artsybashev's story. The critic Pil'skii stated that the death of the main character "is not the death of the student Lande, but the death of the young Artsybashev, who was enamored of Tolstoyan moralizing."²⁰ What the critic is referring to is obviously Tolstoy's conception of Christianity to be found in the great writer's works after 1881. In an overview of Lande's actions and ideas, the following may be related to Tolstoyan Christianity: non-resistance to evil, death as a bridge, love of all men, and a social-moral consciousness. Two minor characters in the story represent the hypocrisy that Tolstoy felt was built into organized

Christianity and the church: the town priest and the "rabid Christian," Firsov. Firsov challenges Lande, demanding to know if he confesses the Christian faith. He states that by not participating in the church, Lande is showing that for him "the true Christian religion is outside the church" (p. 96). Their dialogue illustrates Lande's position. Firsov asks Lande if he is a Christian or not, to which Lande replies, "'I, in truth, do not know'" (p. 97). Firsov then asks, "'Do you believe in the Orthodox Church?'" Lande answers: "'What kind of a question is this, Firsov?.. To what purpose?.. And if you must know, I do not believe in the church at all'" (Ibid.). Returning home, Firsov writes a denunciation of Lande to the bishop!

Lande's answer, that he "in truth does not know" whether he is a Christian or not, means that he only does what he can to live justly and does not find the label necessary. As Mirsky says of Tolstoy after 1880:

Tolstoy's religion is entirely egotistic. There is no God except the moral law inside man.²¹

.

Of the moral teaching of Christ the words, "Resist not evil," were taken to be the principle out of which all the rest follows. He rejected the authority of the Church, which sanctioned the State, and he condemned the State, which sanctioned violence and compulsion. Both were immoral, like every form of organized compulsion. His condemnation of every form of compulsion authorizes us to classify Tolstoy's teaching, in its political aspect, as anarchism.²²

Lande does not believe in the church and feels it is not important to identify himself as a Christian. He is simply

an individual with certain beliefs. Observations on the life of Christ by Max Stirner, author of Der Einzige und sein Eigentum (The Ego and His Own, 1845), which Artsybashev acknowledges as having influenced him, may apply also to Lande:

He [Christ] was not carrying on any liberal or political fight against the established authorities, but wanted to walk his own way, untroubled and undisturbed by these authorities.²³

When one considers Tolstoy's heroes, Ivan Ilych and Andrei Bolkonskii, one finds that their experiences near death are similar to Lande's. In all three there is a spiritual relaxation and light. Prince Andrei's dream of his death is much like Lande's last hours:

And all at once it grew light in his soul and the veil that had till then concealed the unknown was lifted from his spiritual vision. He felt as if powers until then confined within him had been liberated and that strange lightness did not leave him.²⁴

Ivan Ilych's great fear of death changes to peace as he learns that there is no death, only light: "In the place of death there was light."²⁵ The presence of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky is felt when one reads "Smert' Lande"; and Artsybashev himself wrote that these two great Russian Realists were important to his development as a writer.

The story of Lande's life and death unfolds as that of a character concerned with the spiritual nature of existence. Lande is prepared to, and finally does, perish for his beliefs. There are also interludes in the story

depicting the very physical love of the artist Molochaev and Mar'ia Nikolaevna. Chronologically, she is one of the first of Arstybashev's heroines. She has many features in common with other female characters created by this author: beauty, sensuality, youth, and an extreme vitality. Most of the scenes in which Mar'ia appears are night scenes. She is often depicted with moonlight shining on her, thus being identified with the night and the moon, which are symbolic of the realm of the feminine:

Mar'ia Nikolaevna stretched out her arms, which were clothed in the wide sleeves of her sweater, giving her the appearance of a kind of large white bird.

'The moon, the moon is rising!..' she exclaimed.

In the deep darkness, from the black horizon, someone ["kto-to"] red gradually emerged silently, growing rounder, larger. Sparks flashed in the dark water. A slender, quivering, golden bridge stretched out from one shore to the other as if mysteriously and silently beckoning one to cross over to the opposite shore into a world of deep azure and silver light. [p. 28]

Mar'ia Nikolaevna's gesture suggests that she is paying homage to the rising moon. Night creates its own mysterious, feminine realm. Mar'ia is transformed by the moonlight:

Mar'ia Nikolaevna laughed. Her breast, outlined by misty shadows, heaved beneath her white sweater and seemed bared by the light of the moon. Illumined by the bright, bluish light, she seemed somehow different, strikingly beautiful and not like an ordinary woman by daylight. [p. 35]

The scene also shows once again the author's impressionistic preoccupation with light and shadow or, to be more exact, with "visual sensations caused by light."²⁶ Mar'ia is

intoxicated by the night and by her youth, as she says, "'I want to live... I want to do something, I want to love... to jump to the moon...'" (pp. 35-36). Mar'ia Nikolaevna's beauty produces different reactions in Molochaev and in Lande. The artist is physically stimulated; Lande is mentally stimulated. Artsybashev's naturalistic manner of describing male/female relations is most obvious in Sanin, but it is also apparent in "Lande":

The familiar welcome feeling of strength and greed trembled in his [Molochaev's] legs and chest and flowed over the earth and filled the entire universe. It was as if the moon was not shining and it was not cold; it was hot and there was no one but her, strikingly and mysteriously beautiful, she stood bright, apart like a star in the darkness — terribly far and terribly near. [p. 75]

Lande believes feminine beauty is a source of spiritual inspiration to man.²⁷

'It seems to me that God has given man feminine youth, beauty and tenderness so that he would not despair and forget about happiness and live while his terrible, heavy, cheerless work of life drags on.' [p. 119]

Artsybashev's women characters are essentially variations on a type. As many of the critics complained,²⁸ his women are usually indistinguishable one from another. Only in later works — the large novel published in 1911-12, U poslednei cherty, and the plays of his last creative period, 1913-17 — does the writer skillfully portray varying woman characters.

"Smert' Lande" bridges the gap between the short and long stories of the early period (1901-04) and the important

novel Sanin, which was also written during this time. The critic Rossof states that he discerns a similarity in the conclusions of "Lande" and Sanin. Both heroes are "abandoned" by the author: "Artsybashev 'threw' Lande into a forest hut... he 'threw' Sanin onto the road, without a suitcase, without a goal."²⁹ There are also other likenesses. The themes treated in the two works are universals such as love, death and sex. Sanin, however, is more topical because the social background is more significant. The sensation caused by the novel attests to its immediacy. In both works there is a conflict between life and death which creates dramatic tension. Lande's physical death is one of the main manifestations of this conflict. Life, as described in this work, has a broader meaning — life continues after Lande's death: as his vital forces disperse, his physical body continues to sustain life.

In Sanin there is one death by illness and three by suicide. Even in this work, whose hero preaches full enjoyment of life's pleasures, death is still an important theme. The student Semenov, who is identical with the character of the same name in "Lande" (and yet probably is not actually the same one who is "still dying") finally finds peace in death. While still alive he is contemptuous of those who are vital and healthy; he is a specter of death among the living. The suicides represent a negation of life.

Love in its various manifestations is present in both

works. The main difference is that in "Lande" the emphasis is placed on Christian love, while in Sanin the emphasis is on physical, passionate love. Even though Lande does not himself take part in physical love, he looks at Mar'ia and Molochaev in their youth and beauty and feels that what exists between them is good. He does not condemn sexual love; he simply does not participate in it himself.

Freedom for the individual to do as he feels is a theme in both works. Lande's beliefs are not changed by his mother's opinions or church dogma. He acts in accordance with one rule which he believes is intrinsic to a righteous life — Tolstoy's one truth chosen from the teachings of Christ — "resist no evil." He acts independently in his practice of Christianity. Lande is more the figure of a holy man than a church member. Sanin is the ultra-individualist. Artsybashev attempted to create unusual heroes in both works.

The plots of "Lande" and Sanin are alike in many ways, as are the imagery and setting. Both stories begin in spring, continue through the summer, and end in autumn. This is significant, as it places the actions of the characters against the backdrop of the life of nature and the natural seasonal cycle. With spring all is new — the introduction of the story, the beginning of the plot, the sketch of the characters. In summer things in nature grow, thus the plot develops and complicates, as do the lives of the characters. In autumn life slows down, preparing for winter, migration

and hibernation. Seeds disperse from ripe plants. In the stories the action concludes, is resolved; there are deaths, the characters are parted; Lande dies, Sanin departs.

Nature imagery is obviously important in "Lande" and in Sanin. Both heroes are affected by contact with sunlight, moonlight, the earth, sky and river. Sanin makes love on a boat on a river. Lande crosses over a river on his journey to the spot that will be his final resting place. The setting of both works is a provincial town. In these towns are both student groups and the established residents such as Lande's mother and Sanin's mother and sister. It may also be observed that both heroes are without fathers at the time when the stories take place.

There are other obvious parallels in the stories of Lande and Sanin. Both are young men who have arrived from the city for a visit to their parental homes. Neither gets along well with his mother, because the young men are different from what their mothers wish them to be. Lande and Sanin are both characterized by their "calm" bearing and smiles. Repetitions of key words like "spokoinyi" are used to establish this trait. The last glimpse the author gives of his heroes is in natural surroundings. Both are unified with nature in the last pages of the stories. Lande dies and returns to the earth. Sanin strides the steppe at sunrise.

In reviewing elements of the story "Smert' Lande" one sees that it is typical of Artsybashev's early writing. The

hero is above all an individual; in the case of Lande, a saintly one as well. He is misunderstood by those around him and alienated from society. The social order is unhealthy: the church is supported by hypocrites and the working class is exploited. Lande goes from one crisis to another. The narrator of this story is not as intrusive as he is in other early stories, in particular "Pasha Tumanov," where he openly judges characters and their actions. He does relate what goes on in the minds of his characters, thus continuing the practice of psychological eavesdropping. Nature scenes are very important: the story begins in spring and ends in late autumn. In this seasonal framework, the characters have the opportunity to be out-of-doors a great deal of the time, and are thus depicted in their natural surroundings. The stylistic device of repetition continues to be observable; indeed, Lande's characterization is sketched by the repetition of key words and phrases such as: "spoke quietly," "walked quietly," "smiled softly," "smiled tenderly," "spoke tenderly."

From a reading of "Smert' Lande," "Pasha Tumanov," "Podpraporshchik Gololobov," "Kupriian," "Smekh," "Krov'," and "Iz podvala" it is possible to make some general observations on the kind of author the young Artsybashev was. A dynamic, intense awareness of life permeates his work from the first story. The sensational rather than the everyday is stressed. Murder, insanity, instability and tension

punctuate Artsybashev's fiction. His characters are trapped in most cases, either by a merciless society or by the realization of the absurdity of life. Interspersed with these negative or stressful aspects are intoxicating visions of the beauty of life. The critic Volzhskii, commenting on the first volume of Artsybashev's stories, which appeared in the spring of 1905, wrote that in the works of the "indisputably talented Artsybashev an acute sensation of life gives way to an equally acute, fascinating, agonizing sensation of death."³⁰

CHAPTER II

SANIN (1903, published 1907): THE INDIVIDUAL LIBERATED

Part 1: The Novel

Lo, this only have I found
that God hath made man up-
right; but they have sought
out many inventions.

Ecclesiastes 7:29

Epigraph to Sanin

Artsybashev gives two obvious clues to the interpretation of his novel. One is the epigraph to the work; the other is the surname of the hero. The epigraph implies that there is a difference between how man was created and how he has evolved in society — "they have sought out many inventions" — or conventions. Man's original state has been altered. The hero's family name, "Sanin," is probably derived from the Latin word sanus meaning "sound" or "healthy" plus the Russian -in surname suffix. These two clues seem to suggest that Artsybashev wished to create a hero who is "healthy" and has been touched as little as possible by society's "inventions." What he did create was a hero who was attacked by some critics for his immorality. Sanin was considered by many to be too free and independent.¹ Some critics believed the book to be not fit for the youth of the time to read.² The author complained ("but kind-heartedly":

"ochen' dobrodushno")³ that

. . . there were people who blamed him for the decadence of the youth. [He said] 'I only draw life and people as I see them... these Pharisaic critics mistake the cause for the effect.'⁴

The following questions, some of which have already been asked or suggested by the critics, are central to an understanding of the novel. Who is Sanin and what does he represent? Is Sanin the pivotal work of Artsybashev's oeuvre? What is the role of eroticism in the novel? And, finally, how is this work representative of the early period of Artsybashev's literary creativity?

The narrator introduces Vladimir Sanin to the reader in the first paragraph of the novel:

That important period in his life, when character is influenced and formed by its first contact with the world and with men, was not spent by Vladimir Sanin at home with his parents. There had been none to guard or guide him and his soul developed freely and originally as a tree in the field.⁵

This passage may be criticized for its weak symbolism: a growing tree is very much dependent on its surroundings. However, a tree could seem alone if it happened to be the only one in a field. The point to be made is that Sanin grew up in a fairly unusual manner. In the first few pages of the novel the narrator gives some characteristic traits of the hero. He is, above all, "calm" ("spokoinyi"); his usual expression is "an attentive smile" and "calm gaze." Physically, Sanin is "tall, fair and broad-shouldered" (p. 3).

Artsybashev shows his hero's relationship to the world

of nature by placing him in constant contact with it. This is a major device in the characterization of Sanin. The plot of the novel is very much dependent on the change of seasons. Sanin arrives in the small provincial town where his family home is in spring. At the time of his departure, autumn has begun. The warm season enables him to be outdoors. As he works in the garden of his family home, aspects of his personality and attitudes to life are shown. When his mother tells him to pull the weeds, he replies: "'Let them grow, I love all green things'" (p. 7). Left on his own in the garden, he relates positively to his environment:

The green, the sun and the blue sky penetrated him with such bright rays that his entire soul opened in welcome to them in a sensation of complete joy. Sanin shut his eyes and stretched himself... [p. 8]

In the first chapter, depicting the homecoming of Sanin, it is important to observe how he is thought of by his mother and sister. Both are disappointed that he has not lived up to their expectations. His mother is upset by his lack of concern for the direction of his life. Asked how he will live, he replies: "'Somehow!'" (p. 6). His sister had created in her mind a romantic hero with great suffering reflected in his eyes. Instead she sees that "he had no ideas to live for; hated no one; and suffered for no one" (p. 5). Sanin reacts to his mother with mild amusement and vexation. He sincerely wishes not to hurt her feelings, but neither will he compromise himself:

At first he thought of professing sentiments that

were false, so that she would be pacified; however, he only laughed and, rising, went indoors. There, for a while he lay on his bed thinking. It seemed as if men wished to turn the whole world into a sort of military cloister, with one set of rules for all, framed with a view to destroying all individuality, forcing it to submit to the mighty rule of some kind of mysterious archaic force. He began to reflect upon the fate and role of Christianity, but that seemed to him so dull that he fell asleep... [p. 18]

Sanin's musings, related here through the narrator, further develop his character.

The novel is based on three simultaneous plot lines:

1) Sanin's return to his provincial family home; 2) his sister Lida's love affair with the officer Zarudin; and 3) the return of another young man as a political exile to his provincial home, and his intolerable inner struggles which lead him to suicide. The stories of Sanin and the exile IUrii Svarozhich are told alternately, with the two heroes interacting now and then. Approximately half of the chapters (21 out of 45) cast Sanin as primary character. About one-fourth (14 out of 45) are devoted to IUrii's story. The remaining chapters tell the story of Lida and Zarudin, show Sanin and IUrii together, or portray the other characters in action.

The characters of Zarudin and Svarozhich are foils to Sanin. To define Sanin more clearly, it is useful to compare a few parallel passages. Upon his return home, IUrii is depressed in the countryside:

He had lived too much in large stone cities, and although he always thought he loved nature, it

really gave him nothing, neither solace nor peace nor joy, and only aroused in him a vague, dreamy, morbid melancholy. [p. 29]

Sanin feels just the opposite:

Big cities with their hustle and bustle were detestable. Around him here were sunshine and freedom and the future did not worry him because he was prepared to take from life all it would give. [p. 8]

When the two characters meet, again their personalities are contrasted:

Sanin found everybody interesting and liked making new acquaintances. IUrii considered that very few people in the world were interesting and always felt disinclined to meet strangers. [p. 41]

It is possible to discern another more symbolic parallel. Sanin in his closeness to nature and personal vitality is a kind of life force, whereas IUrii with his introspective egocentricity is a negation of life. This notion can be supported by the scene in which IUrii, an amateur artist, tries to paint a picture of a lovely woman which would represent "Life." He is unable to do this and the result is:

The last light of sunset faded on the horizon, and in its greenish glow showed crosses and indistinguishable dark figures. Borne on the back of an old woman was a heavy, dark coffin which bent her bony shoulders. Her expression was mournful and despairing, and one of her feet touched the edge of a black pit. The entire picture was gloomy, sad, and ominous. [p. 57]

IUrii sees his own life as tragic and unhappy:

From his own description he appeared a man of extraordinary powers, cramped and crushed by circumstances, misunderstood by his political party, and one who by unlucky chance and human folly was doomed to be just a mere student in exile instead of a leader of men. [p. 63]

IUrii's suicide is a result of his ultimate alienation from the physical world. Love to him is banal and bourgeois. Life affords him no joy, only unanswerable and tedious questions:

'Autumn already... and then it will be winter, snow ... Then spring, summer, again autumn... winter, spring, summer... Boredom! And what will I be doing all the while? The same as I am doing now!' — said IUrii to himself with a bitter spiteful laugh — 'At best I will become dull-witted and won't think about anything! And then there will be old age and death!' [p. 295]

Even the ideas that used to sustain him, about doing great deeds for mankind, have lost their hold. IUrii does not wish to suffer so that "'the workers of the thirty-second century will have no lack of food or sexual satisfaction'" (p. 296). He curses all "'the workers and non-workers of the world'" — a final denunciation of his former Marxist convictions.

At IUrii's graveside, Sanin is asked to say a few words. He bluntly exclaims: "'What is there to say? One fool less in the world, that's all!'" (p. 302).

Sanin is also contrasted with his sister's lover, Zarudin. At their first meeting, the latter is likened to a "gay, spirited stallion" (p. 14). Zarudin is as sensual as IUrii is intellectual. From a position in the garden at night, where he is sitting enjoying the solitude, Sanin happens to see Zarudin and his sister embrace. Sanin is sufficiently worldly to understand that Zarudin is seducing his sister. He thinks that Zarudin is not his sister's equal,

but understands how she can be captivated by his physical beauty and strength. At dinner that evening, Zarudin is "gay and on the alert, like a wild beast that has scented its prey" (p. 25). Sanin walks him home that evening. His tone in addressing the officer is bitterly ironic:

. . . almost in silence the two walked toward the officers' quarters. All the way Sanin kept looking furtively at Zarudin, wondering if he should or should not strike him in the face.

'H-m-m, yes!' he suddenly began, 'there are all kinds of scoundrels [merzavets] in this world!'

Sanin gives the officer what appears to be a compliment as, by his continued argumentation, he makes "scoundrel" sound like a favorable epithet. Zarudin is quite confused by these words and does not realize how Sanin feels about him:

'How original!' muttered Zarudin, as he again shrugged his shoulders.

'Do you think so?' asked the other, with a slight shade of annoyance in his tone. 'Well, I don't! Yes, scoundrels, as I said, are the most sincere and interesting people imaginable, for they have no idea of the bounds of human baseness. I always feel particularly pleased to shake hands with a scoundrel.'

He immediately grasped Zarudin's hand and shook it vigorously as he looked him full in the face. Then he frowned and muttered in a completely changed tone, 'Goodbye, good night' and walked away.

[p. 27]

The reader might justly ask why, at this point in the narrative, is Sanin so contemptuous of Zarudin? Does the would-be seducer of Sanin's sister not simply practise what Sanin preaches? Is Sanin unconsciously in the grip of worn-out bourgeois notions? Perhaps this confrontation between

Zarudin and Sanin would have been more convincing from the point of psychological motivation if it had been placed at a later point in the novel, when Artsybashev has distinguished between the two characters. One need only compare a few scenes in which Sanin's or Zarudin's actions or thoughts are shown. When Lida tells Zarudin that she is pregnant, he cruelly tosses her aside, leaving her alone to face her predicament. But after Sanin and Zina make love, he goes to visit the young woman to assure her that if she ever needs him he will be there. He says to Zina:

' . . . I did not wish you anything but the very best and fondest and I will always remember you as you were yesterday. Goodbye . . . and if I can ever be of any assistance to you — call me. . . I would give my life for you if I could.' [p. 287]

Sanin is not caught in any type of "bourgeois notion" about honor or love. He is simply thankful to another human being for nothing more than the pleasure this person had given him. It seems that the author does indeed present an honorable hero.

The reader soon recognizes that Zarudin's morbid sensuality, as he desires to possess and humiliate a woman, has nothing in common with Sanin's exaltation of Eros. Again one need only read what is written. Zarudin thinks of how wonderful it will be to subjugate Lida to his will (p. 25). Sanin admires and even worships Zina's beauty. He is enchanted by her beauty:

The moon shone on her pale face with its dark brows and sparkling eyes, glided over the white sweater

covering her breast, along her skirt which fell over her round knees, and something happened to Sanin. It was as if they were drifting further and further into a fairy-tale kingdom, far from people, from reason and from the sober-minded laws of man.

[p. 273]

Artsybashev tries to distance his hero from "the sober-minded laws of man" by placing him in this "fairy-tale kingdom." It may be a weak attempt to separate his hero from other men and yet it still is significant enough to show the difference between Sanin and his foils — Zarudin and IUrii. Finally, considering Sanin and Zarudin, one may look at the circumstances surrounding the duel. Zarudin challenges Sanin to a duel because that is what the military code of behavior instructs him to do. Sanin will have nothing to do with this and declines the challenge to fight because he does not wish to kill anyone nor to be killed himself. Zarudin is ensnared in the military code which makes it (in his case) physically impossible to live. When the two meet while on a stroll, Zarudin repeats his challenge, flourishing a whip; Sanin strikes him, not waiting to be struck with the whip. Even worse than the blow to his body is the blow to Zarudin's honor. At home he thinks:

'Nobody will feel flattered to be seen walking arm-in-arm with me on the street, or envy me, or try to imitate my manner... It's the shame, the dishonor of it... No, no, there's no help for it now... They all saw it; saw how I was struck in the face and how I crawled on all fours.'

[p. 219]

Zarudin's last hours are spent in solitary misery in the realization that he has never lived as he wished to, but by

some preconceived ideas:

'After all, have I ever been free? No. That's just why I've come to grief now, because my life has never been free; because I've never lived in my own way. Should I ever have wanted to fight a duel of my own free will, or to hit him with a whip?.. Who first imagined, and when, that an insult could only be wiped out with blood?' [p. 220]

Zarudin realizes that in order to stay alive he would have to become a different person. He does not have the strength of character to accomplish this. Thus, military life in this novel is portrayed just as it is in Aleksandr Kuprin's novel of 1905, Poedinok (The Duel), as oppressing and ultimately destroying the individual.

Neither IUrii nor Zarudin is able to reach an acceptable arrangement with life; thus they reject it by their suicides. Sanin's author wishes to imbue his main hero, Vladimir Sanin, with the zest for life. He is a strong hero who is bound to his natural surroundings. He is identified with the forces of nature:

Sanin stretched out his arms and yelled long and happily at the top of his voice as if to greet the thunder which rolled and roared from one side of the mighty distance to the other. [p. 250]

.

Sanin adroitly jumped into the small boat. The water churned gaily [veselo] from the mighty strokes of the oars. At a wide place in the river, amidst the light, swirling mist, under the morning sky, Sanin threw down the oars, jumped up to his full height and gave a strong, joyous shout. [p. 280]

.

'This is good!' he said loudly, with pleasure giving a cry of freedom... Sanin breathed easily and with joyful eyes surveyed the endless stretch of earth. Powerfully he strode yet further and

further toward the light and joyous brilliance of dawn... and when, directly in front of Sanin, the sun rose sparkling and shining, it seemed as if he were on his way to meet it. [p. 309]

Sanin is life itself. He spends a good deal of time with the peasants who live outside the town where his mother's home is situated. He is comfortable with them and welcomed by them. Once, while visiting old Kuzma, Sanin sees birds that have been killed by hunters.⁶ His love of nature (extending even to weeds) causes him extreme discomfort at the sight of the dead creatures:

Sanin, frowning, looked at the dead birds, turned away quickly and got up. He felt it very unpleasant to look at these beautiful and strong birds lying dusty and bloody with broken and torn feathers. [p. 56]

Although Sanin is depicted as a "natural man," the author does not imply that he is a "beast" like some of the characters studied in the previous chapter. Sanin himself professes to believe that mankind is evolving towards a time when there will be no place for either "beastliness or asceticism" (p. 276). The critic Novopolin says of Sanin that he

... is primitive and crude as is nature herself. But in all his words and deeds . . . [there] is a reckless sincerity. And in this sincerity the mighty and joyful certainty that he is right shows through.⁷

Artsybashev said that he had not read Nietzsche,⁸ but knew of the philosophy of Max Stirner as it appears in The Ego and His Own. There are certainly parallels in the philosophies of Sanin and Stirner. Sanin exclaims:

'Ah, people, people... — you create ghosts, mirages, conditions for yourselves and you suffer. And then you cry: Man is great,⁹ important, incomprehensible! Man is Tsar! The tsar of nature who will never rule; and only suffers and fears his own shadow! [p. 141]

The use of the word prizrak, "spectre, ghost, phantom" echoes Stirner's usage of Geist (spirit). Stirner believes such concepts as "God" and "Man" are ghosts which haunt man with abstractions. He states: "Neither God nor Man is the proprietor of earth, but the individual."¹⁰ Stirner writes:

Man, your head is haunted; you have wheels in your head! Is not all the stupid chatter of most of our newspapers the babble of fools who suffer from fixed ideas of morality, legality, Christianity . . . and only seem to go about free because the mad house in which they walk takes in so broad a space?¹¹

In a discussion, Sanin remarks: ". . . every instant of life gives its new word . . . and we must listen and understand this new word without prejudice" (p. 178). Stirner writes: ". . . I am every moment just positing or creating myself, and am 'I' only by being not presupposed but posited."¹² Each voice, that of the German philosopher and that of Artsybashev's character, speaks out against prejudices and limitations on the free development of thought and man as an individual. The Stirner critic James Huneker comments that The Ego and His Own "is a dangerous book . . . dangerous in every sense of the word — to socialism, politicians, to hypocrisy."¹³ This statement may well be applied to Sanin also.

Another aspect of individualism which has been

criticized in the novel is the hero's concept of sex. Sanin, his sister Lida, Zarudin, IUrii, the other major female character Zina, IUrii's sister Lialia, as well as her fiancé, are all shown expressing their sexuality. This aspect is not hidden, but forms an important part of the psychological characterization of each. Because the work of another novelist, D. H. Lawrence, was also criticized for frank and detailed erotic passages, it seems relevant to use a few of his reflections as expressed in "Morality and the Novel" and "Pornography and Obscenity."

It is not suggested or implied here that the attitude of the biased and impassioned Lawrence represents any kind of comprehensive or balanced view on this highly controversial question. Lawrence, however, was one of the greatest of the twentieth-century writers who attempted to widen and deepen literature in this area. Like Artsybashev, he was a deliberate taboo-breaker, and his words are consonant with the basically sympathetic appraisal of Artsybashev by the writer of this thesis. Lawrence writes:

If a novel reveals true and vivid relationships, it is a moral work, no matter what the relationships may consist in. If the novelist honours the relationship in itself, it will be a great novel.¹⁴

He further observes:

The great relationship, for humanity, will always be the relationship between man and woman. . . . It is no use thinking you can put a stamp on the relationship between man and woman, to keep it in the status quo. You can't. You might as well try to put a stamp on the rainbow or the rain.

As for the bond of love, better put it off when it galls. It is an absurdity, to say that men and women must love. Men and women will be forever subtly and changingly related to one another; no need to yoke them with any 'bond' at all. The only morality is to have man true to his manhood, woman true to her womanhood, and let the relationship form of itself, in all honour. For it is, to each, life itself.¹⁵

Lawrence's essay, "Pornography and Obscenity," discusses a few salient features of these social phenomena:

One essay on pornography, I remember, comes to the conclusion that pornography in art is that which is calculated to arouse sexual desire, or sexual excitement. And stress is laid on the fact, whether the author or artist intended to arouse sexual feelings. It is the old vexed question of intention. . . . We take it, I assume, that pornography is something base, something unpleasant. In short, we don't like it. And why don't we like it? Because it arouses sexual feelings?

.

Even quite advanced art critics try to make us believe that any picture or book which had "sex appeal" was ipso facto a bad book or picture. This is just canting hypocrisy. Half the great poems, pictures, music, stories of the whole world are great by virtue of the beauty of their sex appeal. Titian or Renoir, the Song of Solomon or Jane Eyre, Mozart or "Annie Laurie," the loveliness is all interwoven with sex appeal, sex stimulus, call it what you will.¹⁶

Lawrence concludes that the only thing that creates pornography is a "sick soul."¹⁷ Most people want sex to remain the "dirty little secret." Those who deal openly with the problems of human sexuality are censored. "The grey men will pass and will commend floods of evasive pornography, and will suppress every outspoken word."¹⁸

Artsybashev's Sanin was condemned as vulgar by such critics as Kranikhfel'd, Trubetskoi, Lebedev and Pil'skii.¹⁹

But there were critics who defended the novel's portrayal of sexual love. Omel'chenko, Novopolin and Dmitriev acknowledged the right of the author to depict physical love.

A brief examination of selected scenes depicting various characters in Sanin is useful here to illustrate the role of eroticism in the novel. Erotic relationships occur between Lida and Zarudin, IUrii and Zina, and Zina and Sanin. There is also Sanin's admiration for his sister's physical beauty that may be construed as suggesting an incestuous relationship between them. The psychological make-up of each major character is defined to some extent by his or her sexuality. Attitudes towards sex in the novel also reflect the social norms for the times — early twentieth century — in regard to love and marriage. Such issues as the "double standard" and aberration are dealt with in the novel.

Sanin, Zarudin and IUrii all relate to women in different ways. Zarudin is cruelly sensual. His goal is to subjugate woman. The first time he realizes that soon he will possess Lida he is overwhelmed:

And to the sweetly arousing sensation of voluptuous expectation subtly and unconsciously was added a bit of malignant joy that this proud, intelligent, chaste, and cultured girl would lie under him as had all the others and he would do with her as he had with the others. And sharp cruel thoughts began to produce before him degrading voluptuous scenes, in which the naked body, disheveled hair and intelligent eyes of Lida were displayed in a wild bacchanal of cruelty. He suddenly saw her on the floor, heard the swish of the whip, saw the red stripes on her naked, tender, submissive body . . . suddenly he swayed from the rush of blood to his head. Golden

circles sparkled before his eyes.

It was physically unendurable to think about this. [p. 25]

The narrator remarks concerning this type of love:

They did not love women because of the pleasure they gave, but attempted to degrade and offend them and to bring to them the basest and most indescribable pain. [p. 187]

Zarudin's sensuality is sadistic, and may well reflect the fact that he is a military officer.²⁰ Indeed, his sensuality may be linked to that of the character of Pechorin in Lermontov's Geroi nashego vremeni (A Hero of Our Time)

As an executioner's tool, I would fall upon the head of doomed victims, often without malice, always without regret... My love brought happiness to none, because I never gave up anything for the sake of those whom I loved. I loved for myself, for my proper pleasure; I merely satisfied a bizarre need of the heart, avidly consuming their sentiments, their tenderness, their joys and suffering — and never could I have my fill.²¹

On the other hand, IUrii Svarozhich is not without feelings of desire towards the opposite sex, but these feelings are accompanied by guilt and frustration. IUrii enjoys the beauty of women mainly in fantasy. Consider the following: "And at night he dreamed of voluptuous and sun-filled visions of fair and beautiful women" (p. 64). The scene at night in Zina's garden again shows his dreams of sexuality:

And IUrii thought that if she suddenly threw off her clothes and ran naked, white and happy through the dewy grass into the mysterious green thicket, that it would not be at all strange but good and natural. And it would not have disturbed the green life of the garden but would have enhanced it.

[p. 70]

Another image passes through his mind:

. . . a thousand young, beautiful and pure-as-spring maidens standing in the sunlight on spring grass, among flowering trees appeared to him. Low breasts, rounded shoulders, supple arms, shapely hips bending shamefully and mysteriously, flashed before his eyes, and his head swam in voluptuous ecstasy.

[p. 107]

When IUrii does have the opportunity to enjoy a real, physical being, he is not able to. While he is alone with Zina in the forest, they begin to make love. But before their passion can be consummated IUrii is suddenly brought back to reality by her question, "'Do you love me?'" (p. 259). He asks himself, "'What am I doing?'" (Ibid.). Fully returning to his senses, he thinks:

' . . . was it necessary to dirty such a chaste girl... had it all to end with what any vulgar man would have done in my position?.. God be with her.. It would have been vile, thank God I was not able to carry it through!.. And how vile it is: just like that, almost without words, like an animal!' — with a feeling of disgust he thought of that which, a short while ago, had filled him with such happiness and strength.

Within him something ached and tore in a vain sadness, bringing forth a silent and heavy shame. Even his legs and arms seemed to dangle foolishly and his cap sat on his head like a jester's.

'Really, is it possible for me to live!' [p.261]

IUrii's inability to enjoy his sexuality only echoes his inability to enjoy any aspect of life.

IUrii and Zarudin are both foils for Sanin, as stated earlier. Sanin says he believes there will be a time for man when there will not be a place for either beastliness (Zarudin) or asceticism (IUrii). The rest of society is not

sympathetic to Sanin's ideas or practices with regard to sexual behavior. His beliefs are a threat to the social forms of marriage and morals concerning sexual practices. Sanin is the only one of Artsybashev's characters (besides old Kostrov the fisherman in "Pasha Tumanov") who has a pleasurable life-style, not fettered or hampered by "inventions."

Sanin speaks of sensuality with his friend Ivanov, saying:

' . . . there is not one man who would not like to see a beautiful naked woman... if at the sight of a naked woman you were not aroused, then I would call you a chaste man... I would be amazed at your chastity, although I would not try to imitate it, and it's quite likely, I would take you to a hospital... And if you do have some feeling inside, but try to tear it out or restrain it like a dog in the yard, then the worth of your chastity is nothing!'

[p. 248]

At the sight of girls bathing in the river, Sanin exclaims, "'Ah, it is good to be alive in this world!'" (p. 249). He is portrayed twice in the novel with women who are his lovers. The first time is when IUrii is hunting with his sister's fiancé in the countryside. He notices Sanin sitting with the peasants at a bonfire. Sanin is with a young woman whose face is briefly illuminated by a match flame. IUrii observes "his [Sanin's] calm gentle eyes and the other's dark-browed face, naively and joyfully looking at Sanin with dark feminine eyes" (p. 97). A lengthy scene near the end of the novel depicts Zina's surrender to Sanin in a boat on the river at night. As they float on the river, Sanin

becomes intoxicated with the beauty of the night and Zina. "It was as if they were drifting further and further into a fairy-tale kingdom, far from people, from reason, and from the sober-minded laws of man" (p. 273). He talks to Zina about his beliefs and says that "'Man cannot be above life'" (p. 275). To Sanin, man is as much a part of life as any other creature. He says people must be able to love freely without fear and then "'the forms of life will expand into an endless series of chance meetings'" (p. 277). Obviously, such views are in conflict with the family structure as it was in the early twentieth century. Nonetheless, the actual scene which portrays Sanin's lovemaking is in contrast to Zarudin's cruelty and IUrii's frustration. It is one of the most explicit scenes of lovemaking, and must have been both shocking and stimulating to readers of the day:

Instantly he felt with all his being the magical enchantment of the closeness of a woman and she understood this feeling with her whole being, and was overwhelmed by the sensation before she could realize what she was doing. —'Ah' — broke from Sanin ecstatically, and he passionately embraced her, bending her back so that she grasped at the air and instinctively clutched at her hat and her hair. . . .

. . . Sanin forcefully, crushing her breast to his, clutched her fast, and she found it hard to breathe, and what had been a barrier between them disappeared. Around was the pleasant odor of the water and grass, and a strange cold, and heat, and silence. And she suddenly became strangely weak, let her arms drop, and lay back. Seeing and understanding nothing, she submitted to the burning pain and unbearable pleasure of this strange masculine will and strength. [p. 278]

Sanin feels "burning love and thankful tenderness" (p. 280)

for this woman. After she leaves, he feels so exhilarated by their lovemaking that he stands up in the boat and shouts happily. This shout echoes through the forest and the river mist. Sanin goes to see Zina later that day and tries to make her believe, as he does, that their relationship is a precious and beautiful one. He tells her that the night will forever remain one of his dearest memories. Even though Zina is bound by the morality of the time, which censures such action, there is a moment when she looks at Sanin and feels very close to him:

They looked at each other closely for a moment and in that instant something good flowed from the very depths of their hearts and united them, as if they had been relatives, and they knew that what no one else need know about would always remain in their hearts as a warm and bright memory. [p. 288]

Female sexuality and society's attitude to woman's place is shown through the characters of Lida Sanina, Zina Karsavina, and Lialia Svarozhicha. Lida and Lialia both express dissatisfaction with the double standard of sexual behavior. Lialia says to IUrii: "'Why do we so prize our chastity, our reputations... afraid to take a step... to fall, and men consider it an adventure to seduce a woman?.. It's terribly unjust, isn't it?'" (p. 102)

The most important and significant impressions of a woman's sexuality are given through the character of Lida Sanina. After her love affair with Zarudin has begun, she realizes that she will never be the same, but nevertheless she expresses pleasure in what she has done. She asks

herself: "'What would I have gained if I had waited for marriage?'" (p. 52). While she is in her room half-dressed, thinking about what has happened to her, her brother appears at the window. She detects something more than the admiring gaze of a brother as he looks at her. She thinks this must be because he senses that she is no longer chaste and therefore he must feel that she is a low woman. She is torn between what she feels and what has been imposed upon her by society:

Her whole youthful, strong body told her that she had the right to take from life all that was interesting, pleasant and necessary to her, and that she had the right to do all she wanted with her lovely, strong, vital body, which belonged to her alone.

But this thought beat about as if in a tangled net, was seized, torn and fell helpless and sad.
[p. 55]

The weight of society's moral rules does not allow her to feel free. When, as a result of the affair with Zarudin, she becomes pregnant, she feels she must kill herself:

The most terrible thing of all was that the proud and beautiful Lida would disappear, and in place of her there would be a small, persecuted, defenseless animal... All would mock her, and she would be defenseless before the gossip and defamation. She must save her pride and beauty, and go to that place where the foul waves of scandal would not splash her.
[p. 133]

Sanin rescues his sister from the river where she has gone to drown herself. He chides her, saying that she must not take her own life only because she is afraid of what others will say about her. He expresses a distaste for childbirth

but says that Lida is the only one who would suffer should she bring a dozen children into the world (p. 138). At this point Sanin suggests that she have an abortion, an idea which had occurred to Zarudin, but which he did not verbalize. Sanin reasons: "'to kill a creature who already knows the joy of life and the fear of death is cruel, to kill an embryo, a senseless mass of flesh and blood...'" (p. 139). He does not finish his phrase, but the meaning is clear — that he does not consider it cruel to destroy an embryo. He recognizes that Lida is not brave enough to do this, so he suggests that she marry a friend of theirs who loves Lida and has already asked for her hand. When Sanin talks with their mutual friend, Novikov, he discerns the latter's hypocrisy and challenges him:

'Listen, it makes no difference to me whether you marry Lida or go to hell, but I just want to say this — you are an idiot! If you have but one healthy, clean thought in your head, would you suffer so and make yourself miserable because a woman who is a free young female made a mistake and then was again free... I am telling you, but you are not alone... you idiots, making life an impossible prison, without sun or joy, there are millions of you!.. And you, how many times have you lain with some prostitute writhing with lust, drunken and dirty as a dog!.. In Lida's surrender there was passion and the poetry of courage and strength, and you? What kind of right do you have to turn from her, you, considering yourself an intelligent man who understands life!.. What business of yours is her past? Has she become less worthy, less able to give pleasure? Didn't you yourself wish to be the one to relieve her of her virginity?' pp. 147-148

In this attack on Novikov and the other "million idiots," Sanin is saying the same thing that Lawrence realized and

wrote about in his essays. It is the "grey people" who drive sex underground and make of it "a dirty little secret."²²

After Zina's surrender to Sanin, she feels as Lida did when she went to drown herself. She walks down the street "like a criminal" (p. 281). She feels that if then and there

. . . all of humanity, with gawking eyes and open mouths, were to apprehend her on the road and lead her with whoops, jeers, mean words swishing like whips, it would be all the same to her... [Ibid.]

The guilt and shame society associates with the sex act, when outside of marriage, is crippling to the young woman.

On his first night home, Sanin expresses his admiration for his sister's physical beauty. When he looks at her through the window, he is again struck by her beauty. After he saves her from drowning, he is overwhelmed by the thought that she was almost lost to life:

It suddenly struck him that he would not be able to talk her out of this, and a beautiful, sunny young woman, able to give so many people happiness, would be lost to the incomprehensible void. [p. 140]

When he sees that she has fully regained her strength and desire to live, he asks for a kiss:

She put her arms around her brother's neck and, half closing her eyes, offered her lips. She was happy when Sanin's burning lips kissed her hard and long. In that moment it was of no matter to her who kissed her, as it is no matter to a flower whence comes its warmth. [p. 143]

Sanin says: "'Ah, how good... all that is good is good... and no other explanation is needed!'" (Ibid.). It seems necessary here to emphasize that Lida is in a very unusual state of

mind when she kisses her brother. She has come very close to death. The great rush of life back into her creates a feeling of joy at his kiss. The narrator says, "in that moment" it did not matter who kissed her. The phrase "if the novelist honours the relationship in itself . . ." ²³ seems appropriate — as Artsybashev most frankly and consistently describes his hero's and heroine's emotions.

Obviously, by using the characters Svarozhich and Zarudin as foils to Sanin, Artsybashev is not being totally objective but rather trying to create a new hero. The character of Vladimir Sanin functions as the basic organizing principle of the novel. His movement through the novel differs from Ivan Lande's progress through his story. Sanin appears, touches the lives of almost every character he meets, and then exits. Lande, although to some extent he holds ideas just as radical as Sanin's, does not change any of the characters significantly. His death in the forest may be called a "change" in the sense of a transformation.

Sanin creates the hero who transcends society's traps of the sorts mentioned in the previous chapter. Sanin is like a wind, a breath, a free spirit blowing through the novel. The readers of Artsybashev's day reacted in various ways to this new hero. Sanin was not only a novel, it was a literary phenomenon.

Part 2: Notes from the Critics

The many critical articles which were written in the wake of the publication of Sanin in 1907 facilitate an understanding of the novel itself, and indicate the nature of the literary and social climate of the post-1905 period.¹ One often notes that the critics use Sanin merely as a point of departure for further philosophical musings on free love, on the proletariat, and on the petty bourgeois structure of the family. From these critical articles one may see just how seriously the critics considered Artsybashev's fiction. Usually the critics equate the words of Sanin with Artsybashev's personal philosophy. Zinaida Gippius, countering this tendency, wrote: "It may be that to live like Sanin is not at all the same as to live like Artsybashev."²

Although a considerable amount of the criticism condemns Sanin for being apolitical, amoral and asocial, there are critics who believe that the novel did indeed make a positive contribution to society and to literature. Whether Sanin is the direct spokesman for Artsybashev is disputed. I. N. Ignatov states:

The author is absolutely objective; one does not discern either love or indignation towards his hero. Categorically, he simply says: human nature is thus, as Sanin says, and all people, in the depths of their souls, think what Sanin bravely speaks. But whether it follows that one must relate to life as Sanin relates to it is not stated. The issue is set before the reader himself to deliberate on the answers his hero gives to life.³

A. P. Omel'chenko thinks otherwise. He writes that

Artsybashev idealizes his hero.⁴ Dmitriev agrees with this, stating that "Artsybashev bows down before his creation."⁵ Abramovich notes that "[Artsybashev] not only draws the hero, but whispers — 'love him, love Sanin'..."⁶ Thus thought some of the critics about the relationship of Artsybashev to his hero. What did they think about Sanin himself? Was he true-to-life or merely an artificial construct? The reactions of the critics to the character of Vladimir Sanin are extremely diverse. Some see him as a god and superman, some as a corrupter and demon. Some state that he is a believable, realistic character, others that he is lifeless. Novopolin writes: "Sanin is not an invention of Artsybashev, but a real and truthful occurrence in life."⁷ E. Koltonovskaia notes that some of the enemies of the novel say that Sanin is a fantasy of the author and reject calling his character "based on life."⁸ She finds Sanin

. . . amazingly logical, consistent and therefore artistically convincing. All his actions result from his views, which do not contradict each other. That is why, notwithstanding a few overly dry reasoning aspects in the characterization of Sanin, one accepts him as a living being — possible in life, called forth by life.⁹

Abramovich thinks that Sanin is no more than a "hazy spot"¹⁰ from which issues forth the preaching voice of the author.

Kornei Chukovskii also strongly denies Sanin's believability:

The critics are angry with the novel because there are too many naked bodies and voluptuous images. My God, if it were only so! To create an image, to depict a living breathing body — this is indeed a great goal and a great difficulty for an artist . . .

it seems to me in the statements concerning bodies that one gives Artsybashev undue compliments.¹¹

Rossov agrees with Chukovskii's evaluation, as he calls Sanin "but a dream of the strong, fit and free man . . . the Sanins are but chips and foam; superficial, light and empty"¹²

As a side note to the issue of the believability of this character, there appeared a letter supposedly written by the real Sanin. The supposedly real person defends his integrity, claiming that the author has slandered him. The letter says: ". . . if I were like that Sanin, I would not go off to greet the sun, but hide myself somewhere in the dark."¹³ Commenting on Artsybashev's language, "Sanin" states: "Sladko... sladostrastnoe... ne slog', a konditer-skaia!" (sweet... voluptuous... these are not words but a confectioner's shop).¹⁴

In an article, "Bazarov i Sanin — Dva nigilizma" (Bazarov and Sanin: Two nihilisms), V. V. Vorovskii says that "Sanin is an incarnation of the artistic fantasy of the author."¹⁵ Besides being called a nihilist, Sanin is also called an individualist,¹⁶ ultraindividualist¹⁷ and individualist pur sang.¹⁸ Being an individualist is equated with being egocentric by such critics as Engel'gardt, who writes that Sanin does not acknowledge "the psyches of other people."¹⁹ Omel'chenko and Lebedev feel that Sanin's individuality manifests itself in "a negation of moral principles"²⁰ and "a lack of feeling of social obligation."²¹ Kranikhfel'd notes "a lack of interest in Christianity or

the common good."²² Sanin is condemned by Chukovskii: "Sanin is the same sort of boor as is Smerdiakov."²³ Kranikhfel'd says that "Sanin's vulgar nature is draped with a romantic cloak."²⁴ Omel'chenko and L'vov-Rogachevskii believe that Sanin's consumption of beer and vodka mentioned at various times in the narrative qualifies him as "a regular alcoholic." The critic Trubetskoi sees in Sanin nothing more than "a disenchanted revolutionary."²⁵

To this point, we have a sketch of Vladimir Sanin as an individualist-ultraindividualist so devoid of feelings or social obligation as to be a cad or boor (kham). Some critics, however, have a more positive view of what Sanin is and what he represents. The young people who read Sanin were especially captivated by this free-spirited hero. In 1908 a group of students in Kharkov prepared a Sanin collection (sbornik). In one article of this collection they give free rein to their overwhelming enthusiasm:

[Sanin] is beautiful, strong, exuberant. His Weltanschauung is precise and simple. Sanin carries with him everywhere an organic love of nature and freedom of life. And finally, Sanin exits from the grey and colorless petty bourgeois class with its propagation of lies and evil and goes out toward the radiant horizon to meet the rising sun, a new life and a better future. He goes to meet the distant future when life will no longer be imprisonment, when man will be able to develop and grow freely, not education, nor upbringing, nor society will check and deform him, when there will be no strife, no ill will or hatred, no chains, no scaffolds, when there will be no social inequality, there will be no humiliated and injured, there will be no elite, no Jews, all will be equal and free, all men brothers, when there will be only free work

and free love and only one temple — that of universal happiness.²⁶

Baranov characterizes Sanin's world outlook by quoting the lines of Wilhelm Fischer: "Be a master of your own existence or you will come to serve shadows. Be a harmonious valuable individual and be your own world."²⁷ The poet, Konstantin Bal'mont, uses striking neologisms to describe Sanin. He calls him "mnogogrannyi, solntselikii, zmeegibkii, besomudryi" (many-faceted, sun-countenanced, serpent-supple, demon-wise).²⁸ Another famous poet of the time, Aleksandr Blok, wrote that in Sanin "the real man [nastoiashchii chelovek] with an inflexible will was manifested . . . one who was ready for anything, young, strong, free."²⁹

Many critics note that Sanin has relatives in Russian as well as in world literature. The most detailed comparison of Sanin with another hero of Russian literature appears in an article by Vorovskii on Sanin and Turgenev's Bazarov of Ottsy i deti (Fathers and Sons). In this article, appearing in 1909, the characters of Bazarov and Sanin are outlined and contrasted. Both Bazarov and Sanin have grown up independently; they both simply "reared themselves" ("vospital sam sebia").³⁰ Artsybashev had written that Sanin's soul "developed freely and originally like a tree in the field."³¹ Artsybashev and Turgenev set before themselves a similar psychological and esthetic problem — to construct a hero who is apart from the mainstream of social norms. Bazarov, as noted by Vorovskii, originates as if from outside society.

Bazarov does not belong socially to the Kirsanovs' class, as they are gentry and he is of the raznochinets-intelligentsia. Vorovskii comments on this new class, in which education was indeed not "built-in" as it was with the gentry. Artsybashev's hero did come from a background in which one had a formal education as a matter of course. The fact that Sanin is self-educated is only a coincidence, states the critic. Vorovskii maintains that Bazarov represents an actual historical phenomenon, the nihilist, whereas his modern counterpart is but an incarnation of the author's fancy. Sanin lives a wandering life, Bazarov from the very beginning is motivated by a need to work and a thirst for knowledge. The pursuit of knowledge is Bazarov's greatest pleasure and he believes that through knowledge and education society could be bettered. Sanin denies the worth of books or the value of esoteric knowledge. He views all theories with condescension and pessimism. Bazarov's faith in learning and its potentiality for mankind's redemption is a manifestation of that belief in the raznochinets-intelligentsia. It was this belief that gave such momentum to the life of this group. The possibility that man could restructure society for his own benefit figures in Sanin's outlook only insofar as a group of individuals might some day create a society in which "there would be no place for beastliness or asceticism."³² Bazarov believes in change through the individual; Sanin's individualism exists apart from society.

Both Turgenev and Artsybashev strove to depict the total sincerity of their heroes. In showing the reader their innermost feelings, the authors can compare the ideas of their heroes with those held by society. In the history of the raznochinets-intelligentsia, Vorovskii states, it may be observed that some of their energy was diffused by the fact that they could not become a unified class but divided their strength in defense of various causes and world outlooks. By the eve of 1905, they had become apathetic, pessimistic, thoroughly permeated with the Chekhovian mood. After the failure of the Revolution, observes Vorovskii, came the inevitable reaction. From altruism grew egoism, from socialism followed individualism. They turned to personal value-judgments and excesses. In this atmosphere, Sanin was born; he is governed only by his personal desires and sensations. Vorovskii distinguishes between Sanin and Bazarov, saying that Bazarov, by his very nature, had to be honorable ("Bazarov v silu svoikh oshchushchenii mog byt' tol'ko chestnym"). Sanin's sensibilities do not distinguish between honor and dishonor. This leads to the idea of the common good which, as noted before, Sanin cares little for, and for which Bazarov strives with his ideas of betterment through knowledge.

Vorovskii concludes by emphasizing once more that Sanin is but a synthesis of the moods and trends of his time; and he states that the intelligentsia, by moving out of the

arena of political activism, actually strengthened the petty-bourgeois structure that they once fought.³³

Another article comparing Bazarov and Sanin was written in 1909 by F. I. Dan. He compares the ideas and attitudes of the two heroes. Bazarov says: "Correct society, and there will be no illness." Sanin answers, looking him in the face with his bright, unwavering gaze: "'I live alone,'"³⁴ Dan challenges Sanin's real ability to live apart from society and says that Sanin uses this pose as a device to assert his independence from social responsibility. Dan refers to Bazarov's outburst about giving his life for some Filip or Sidor who will not even thank him — he will die and the burdocks will grow. Sanin is a result of the flowering of this feeling: "Sanin's primary ideas grow from Bazarov's last cries of frustration. Nothing more than flowers growing on the grave."³⁵

Peshekhonov notes that Bazarov and Sanin are both great "ladies' men,"³⁶ but that Bazarov prefers "a woman with a brain"³⁷ like Odintsova, the heroine of Turgenev's novel. This critic defines Bazarov's life as being the combination of three elements: love, knowledge and work. Sanin is called by Pil'skii "a replica of Turgenev's Bazarov."³⁸ He adds that one cannot read the book "without a smile"³⁹ as he asserts that the replica is a poor one indeed.

E. Koltonovskaia, in her article "Nasledniki Sanina" (The Heirs of Sanin), mentions works which she feels are

modeled on Sanin: Mertvaia zyb' (Sea Surge) by Mirtov, Chertova kukla (Devil's Doll) by Gippius, and Vinnichenko's Chestnost' s soboi (Truthfulness to Oneself). The hero of the first of the three works is Silin, whose name suggests that of Artsybashev's hero. Concerning the heroes, or the "heirs," in general, Koltonovskaia says:

There is much less that is typical or universal in the other Sanin-like heroes. There is less universality because there is no rigorous thought-process involved or close imitation of life — there is too much capriciousness and chance.⁴⁰

The heroes of the three works mentioned by Koltonovskaia are rather exaggerated Sanins. Silin of Mertvaia zyb' is described by the critic as a degenerate who strikes a prostitute until she is barely conscious and then takes her last penny.⁴¹

Vinnichenko's Miron of Chestnost' s soboi believes in full individual independence of thought and feeling and the abandonment of all that is old, established and traditional; Miron believes in: legalization of prostitution, with the formation of professional leagues of prostitutes; euthanasia; murder, robbery or cheating if one feels it necessary. His only demand is truthfulness to self. He believes that lies to others can be remedied, but lies to oneself cannot.

Rossov sees Sanin as a descendant of one of Gorky's "proud hoboes."⁴² He states that Sanin's pessimism concerning the ability of man to better himself is linked with motifs in Gorky's "Pesnia o sokole" (Song of the Falcon). Only those who are born to fly may do so. Man can have

little hope unless he is one of the free and powerful falcons, wanderers — or Sanins.

Baranov and Peshekhonov, respectively, identify two of Sanin's foreign relatives as the American, Walt Whitman, and the Pole, Stanislaw Przybyszewski.⁴³ Baranov links Whitman's proud love of the body as the incarnation of the spirit with Sanin's kinship to the physical world of nature and the human body. Peshekhonov notes that Eric Falk, of Przybyszewski's Homo sapiens, negates all morals and also consumes a great amount of liquor. Falk, however, does not enjoy life and feels as if he has wasted it: "Maybe I could have done something with my life, but debauchery has ruined my soul and body."⁴⁴

Novopolin states that Sanin's philosophy of life comes from Nietzsche, and claims that "Artsybashev renewed the quarrel concerning the well-known 'nihilist' philosophy of Nietzsche."⁴⁵ The fact that Artsybashev's hero expresses such distaste for Nietzsche's Thus Spake Zarathustra puzzles the critic.⁴⁶ He believes it to be obvious that Artsybashev is indeed using Zarathustra's ideas. Novopolin instructs the reader to

. . . compare Sanin's judgment concerning the roles of desire in life, of the unnatural (against the natural) world outlooks, affixing the brand 'animal' to the needs of the body, concerning pleasure, wisdom, love and jealousy, about evil and good desires, about the role of Christianity, a dozen phrases about the freeing of the body, about the fullness of life experiences with like chapters from Thus Spake Zarathustra, Beyond Good and Evil,

The Antichrist, and you will be convinced how bold is this pitiable plagiarizer Sanin, and how thankless he is to the fig-leaf which covers his own nakedness.⁴⁷

This is a very strong statement that takes as fact Artsybashev's debt to Nietzsche's work. It may be suggested that perhaps the Zeitgeist which Nietzsche captured in his work appears also in Artsybashev's work.

The critics also discuss the other characters in the novel and their relationships to the hero. Omel'chenko mentions that IUrii Svarozhich is a social democrat who has been exiled to the provinces for his political activities. By the end of the novel, IUrii has become disenchanted with politics and any ideas concerning social progress. He finally commits suicide because he cannot fill the void left by his political causes. Sanin calls him "the last of the Mohicans," an epithet which is quoted by many critics — Rossov, Baranov, Engel'gardt, Trigorin. Engel'gardt maintains that "Artsybashev treats IUrii cruelly and unmercifully."⁴⁸ IUrii has intelligence, but no power to act; thus Engel'gardt sees him as stranded "like a fish on dry land."⁴⁹ He is defined as the last variant of the superfluous man in Russian literature. There is a part of IUrii which longs to live; the critic compares him to Faust with his "two souls living in one breast."⁵⁰ Polonskii believes that the antipodes Svarozhich and Sanin exemplify "the two halves of Artsybashev's soul eternally fighting."⁵¹

The three major female characters — Lida Sanina,

Lialia Svarozhich, and Zina Karsavina, a school-teacher — are all presented as beautiful young women. Abramovich considers Lida to be artistically rendered: "We see her in movement — running, laughing, living."⁵² The characterization of Karsavina he call "petrified."⁵³ L'vov-Rogachevskii states that Karsavina, Lida and Lialia are "samki i rabyni" (females and slaves) whose only purpose is to excite and fulfill sexual desire.⁵⁴

The other male characters — Zarudin, Voloshin, Semenov, Ivanov, Novikov and Soloveichik — are only briefly noted and then usually in comparison with or in contrast to an aspect of Sanin's personality. Soloveichik is a young Jew of the local intelligentsia. This group has political leanings toward the social democrats. He does not find fulfillment in any of his life's activities, and does not feel any purpose or enjoyment in life. Danilin makes a judgment based on the fact that in the years 1901-1902 forty-five per cent of the general political criminals were Jews. He believes that the characterization of Soloveichik is simply not true to life.⁵⁵ If anything, Soloveichik would be wrapped up in a political cause, not contemplating life and committing suicide.

Kranikhfel'd equates Sanin's vulgar understanding of love with that of Zarudin and Voloshin.⁵⁶ Trubetskoi concurs, saying: "does not Zarudin do only what Sanin preaches?"⁵⁷ Lebedev and Pil'skii compare Sanin to Zarudin,

calling each of them "kham" (boor, cad).⁵⁸

The novel Sanin was read as a piece of didactic fiction by the majority of the critics. In their estimation, the "teachings" of Vladimir Sanin were more important than the book as an artistic work. However, some critics did consider the novel also from the more strictly literary point of view. Omel'chenko regards the novel as "originally conceived and written beautifully, simply, in a restrained style."⁵⁹ He further describes it as written in the "sexual style of writing."⁶⁰ By this he means that Artsybashev portrays various aspects of sexual behavior. Omel'chenko states that he "does not wish to use the term pornography because this raises the idea of compulsory banning of pornographic literature, censorship of morals, and of encroachment on the freedom of artistic creation."⁶¹ He adds: "To the number of more interesting emotional experiences belongs the sexual emotion. Sexual love strongly rules every healthy human being."⁶² What he does object to in Sanin are the "details" which, he says, "tickle the reader's memory like the strains of an opera"(!).⁶³ The danger in this type of literature, he maintains, is for the slightly "abnormal" or inexperienced reader, who may be over-stimulated by the sexual details and not be attentive to the artistic nature of the work.⁶⁴ Novopolin acknowledges the existence of the "pornographic element" in modern Russian literature, but does not condemn it:

Contemporary artistic literature with the pornographic element not only yields many beautiful, colorful, talented works, not only has become the mainstream of Russian literature and seized in its flow many great talents, but is the urgent question of the moment; it is an important social fact; it is the focus of society's mood and for this reason one cannot relate negatively to this element, and to moralize over it is simply insufficient.⁶⁵

This critic calls Artsybashev "the brightest star in the constellation of young talents"⁶⁶ and his Sanin the rallying work of the contemporary epoch, not only because of the interest expressed in the work, or its success, or the number of parallels with Fathers and Sons, but "mainly because Sanin is the most colorful, most talented and, finally, the bravest work in the new stream of literature."⁶⁷ Novopolin writes that what is barely heard in other work resounds bravely and clearly in Sanin. He believes that there is indeed a place for sex in literature:

One must give him [Artsybashev] this right; in the realm of the depiction of sexual sensations, he is a first-rate artist, and by the colorful nature of his physiological details he completely eclipses the glory of Maupassant.⁶⁸

By giving a realistic treatment to sex in Sanin, Novopolin suggests, Artsybashev has turned a new page in Russian literature. Dmitriev agrees with this opinion:

The novel . . . laid the beginning for the artistic renderings of human individuality from the point of view of those inner experiences happening to all of us. Most people consider [these experiences] to be too distasteful or monstrous to be revealed. They can now be more freely integrated into the personalities of all people.⁶⁹

Dmitriev continues his argument for the literary value of Sanin:

In all the best creations of Russian artists the question of sexuality has always occupied a very noticeable place, and no one would denounce, for instance, Dostoevskii or Tolstoi with the "Kreutzer Sonata" or Anna Karenina for erotomania . . . we will boldly discuss the kind of dress that covers a woman's bosom and shoulders, but to speak of the bosom itself... is considered immoral.⁷⁰

Dmitriev says that Artsybashev has simply stated that the nakedness of the human body is no secret.⁷¹ He defends Artsybashev's novel against the attacks of other critics who sought to find fault with it on the basis of morality:

When the novel Sanin was published, the critics hastened to note that in the novel the sexual issue took first place, and that the manner in which the author came to shed light on the problem could only be called pornography. [They also noted] that the author depicted unnatural experiences of young people of both sexes . . . so they wrote and continue to write. . . . Criticism often serves no purpose. They write only because there is a new, popular novel and they feel that there must be judgments of it in print; then the critics can never be silent about a novel.⁷²

Abramovich writes that Artsybashev, in this novel, shows himself to be both an artist and a thinker:

Beside the master of literary portraiture stands the man of persistent, vital thought. His work is to give life and movement to his ideas and thoughts. Compare Artsybashev and Maupassant and the contrast between the simple artist and the theoretician brilliantly sparkles before us. One is all movement, light, quick as the strokes of a soft pencil; and the other takes in the whole world as the miraculous object of his art... Here is a pose... there movement... says the artist and lovingly depicts them. The artist-philosopher thinks it through, falls not upon the movement but on the immobility of the inner depths of the experience, and, besides a picture, gives his evaluation and directs the reader's attention, holding up his compass to life. Such is Artsybashev.⁷³

Baranov discusses an aspect of Artsybashev's work

which is also noted by other critics: his impressionistic style. Of this impressionism, Baranov says that it "does not limit the experience of his work but deepens and broadens it."⁷⁴ The writer's technique as perceived by Baranov is "to give small, very full scenes... full of specific sounds and colors."⁷⁵ Baranov also notes that there is an integrated poetic symbolism in Arstybashev's work. He comments on the significance of the last scene in the novel, where Sanin jumps off the crowded train and walks the fields at dawn:

The rising sun is man. The finale of this very large-scale artistic work ascends to a real poetical-philosophical symbol — and we can but wish for this young talented artist that the mighty sun always shed its light on his human and literary activities.⁷⁶

Arskii defends Artsybashev's depiction of the body and its sensations: "What justification is needed for the upthrusting of a fountain? The strength of life needs no more."⁷⁷ Engel'gardt also describes Artsybashev's style as impressionistic, and states that, above all else, Artsybashev is a strong artist and Sanin a distinguished work.⁷⁸ L'vov-Rogachevskii writes that impressionism is the most characteristic aspect of the writer's style. He notes the way that Artsybashev combines nature passages with psychological comments on the characters:

The bright, fresh ideas of the author are bathed in many-colored rainbows, and here and there mingle with the experiences of his characters . . . are transformed in them. One must mention the magical images of nature in the novel... Nature comes alive under his pen. In one place it is harmonious

with the mood of man; in another it sharply opposes it. Often it is a regulator of human experience.⁷⁹

However, in the final analysis, L'vov-Rogachevskii believes that the novel portrays too much of the physical aspects of life and is indeed a pornographic work.

The critics who condemned the novel as pornography invariably noted Artsybashev's kinship with such authors as Kamenskii, Annibal and Kuzmin, who discussed sex openly in their works. Botsianovskii, in his article "Eshche kentavr" (Another Centaur), discusses the popularity of erotic literature. He states: "today's erotic literature is the foam riding on the waves, a wave from the deep sea."⁸⁰

Erotic literature is only one of the outward manifestations of the deep current of renewed interest in personal life after the 1905 Revolution. In a discussion of Kamenskii, Kuzmin, Annibal and Artsybashev, the critic Gornfel'd maintains that sexual experiences and sensations do not belong to the realm of art, and therefore such writers as these are not artists. He says their concern is with erotica, not Eros. He condemns Artsybashev's work: "No other Russian author treats sexual matters as crudely as Artsybashev... his images are even psychologically untrue... his characters are monstrous caricatures."⁸¹ Korolenko calls the novel "gynecology, not literature or psychology."⁸² Pil'skii probably holds the most extreme view on the pornographic nature of Sanin, as he compares Artsybashev to the Marquis de Sade.⁸³ Other critics who object to Artsybashev's

descriptions of the physical aspects of life use the novel Sanin as a springboard to launch their various discourses on the immorality of contemporary Russian society. "Sovremennyi bes" (A Modern Demon)⁸⁴ by Trubetskoi,⁸⁵ "Sanintsy i Sanin" (Saninites and Sanin) by Peshekhonov,⁸⁶ and "Problema pola i Sanin Artsybasheva" (The Sexual Problem and Artsybashev's Sanin) by Trigorin,⁸⁷ all use Sanin as a point of departure for their comments on modern society.

Sanin's fame was not limited to Russia. "Translations appeared in Germany, France, Italy, Bohemia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Denmark, and also in part, in Japan."⁸⁸ English-language editions came out in England and the United States. In Germany in 1909 a translation of Sanin was banned and confiscated. It was then submitted to a panel of experts — professors and a writer⁸⁹ — for them to determine whether or not the work was pornographic. The consensus was that the book reflected the social climate in Russia, was less offensive than many works of German literature circulating at the time, and could well take its place among the other established works of Russian literature.

The English translation of Sanin was mentioned by American critics in The New York Times, Review of Reviews, The New Republic, The Boston Transcript, and Outlook. A composite of these reviews would feature the epithets "brutal," "realistic," and "famous/infamous." One typical comment appeared in The Boston Transcript:

Sanine did picture what was going on in Russia. . . . The philosophy of animalism now had its handbook. . . . Small wonder that Sanine attracted attention. . . . Here in America it received the doubtful publicity, gained by so many mediocre books, of being 'smutty.' But Sanine was not mediocre. It was a work of genius — not of great genius, I grant, not of the genius of Dostoievsky or Turgenief, still of that magic, imperishable flavor which seems so lacking in our timid, paltering, unreal fiction.⁹⁰

It is perhaps most fair to let Artsybashev's own ideas about his novel conclude this survey of critical opinions. Keeping in mind the possible pitfall of authorial intent, one reads:

Then the Revolution [1905] came to an end. Society rushed to literature which, in quantity if not in quality, had received a new impetus. The editors of the monthly review who had refused my Sanine [1903] remembered it and were the first to publish it. It evoked almost unprecedented discussions, like those at the time of Turgeneff's Fathers and Children. Some praised the novel far more than it deserves, others complained bitterly that it was a defamation of youth. I may, however, without exaggeration assert that no one in Russia took the trouble really to fathom the ideas of the novel. The eulogies and the condemnations are equally one-sided.

In case it might interest you to know what I myself think of Sanine, I will tell you that I consider it neither a novel of ethics nor a libel on the younger generation. Sanine is the apology for individualism; the hero of the novel is a type. In its pure form this type is still new and rare, but its spirit is in every frank, bold and strong representative of the new Russia. A number of imitators who have never grasped my ideas hastened to turn the success of Sanine to their own advantage; they injured me greatly by flooding the literary world with pornographic, wantonly obscene writings, thus degrading in the readers' eyes what I wished to express in Sanine.⁹¹

After reading the many critical articles written about Sanin, one must agree that the author of this famous

(and infamous) work did indeed exaggerate when he stated that "no one in Russia took the trouble really to fathom the ideas of the novel."

Scholars of Russian literature still discuss Sanin in the context (usually) of the social history of early-twentieth-century Russia. Unfortunately, some myths about the novel, and the way in which it was received, still persist. Richard Stites, in his "Women and the Russian Intelligentsia" (1977) and The Women's Liberation Movement in Russia (1978), gives an incorrect impression of the reception of the novel. He states that all the critics were unanimously "repelled"⁹² by Sanin. However, he does rightly conclude that "Saninism" was not a function of the novel but of the post-1905 cultural depression. One might speculate on how Sanin would have been interpreted if it had been published in 1903 when it was originally submitted for publication. It is ironic that it is often called a typical work of the post-1905 period.

* * * * *

A central question concerning Sanin is whether it is (as has been assumed for so many years in Russian literary criticism) Artsybashev's pivotal, most important, significant and representative work. It is indeed a powerful novel and an unusual one. Precisely because it is such a hymn to life, one may have reservations about calling it a "pivotal" work:

so much of Artsybashev's prose deals with sadness, tragedy and ugliness. Sanin is certainly the most significant of Artsybashev's works depicting a triumphant hero — one who is free and unfettered by society. Although the novel does contain suicides, illness, and domestic upsets, Sanin's story makes these events seem secondary. The question, whether Sanin is indeed the most important work of this author, must be set aside until the second novel, U poslednei cherty (Breaking Point; 1911-12), can be examined. However, to consider only the first years of Artsybashev's writing, the novel and the story "Smert' Lande" are his most significant early works. The author himself would probably rate the short story higher than the novel: "'I am amazed by the public . . . they are ecstatic about Sanin, and many have not even read "The Death of Lande" which I put much thought into..."⁹³

As regards literary technique, the novel follows logically from the prose written earlier. All the characters excepting Sanin are trapped by the social structures — Zarudin by the military, Svarozhich by political idealism, Lida and Zina by the double standard of behavior for men and women. Sanin escapes society, supposedly because he was never really influenced by it while growing up. Logically, this may be the weakest point of the novel. But if one takes the narrator's word that a person like this could indeed exist, all the rest — what Sanin is — follows. The stories

of Iurii, Sanin, Zarudin and Lida stress the sensational. The conflicts between society and the individual and among the characters themselves are dramatic. The narrator shapes the impressions of Sanin and the other characters by exposing their thoughts to the reader. Although the surface action of the novel is very dynamic, the characters do not develop significantly; they do not become anything different from what they are or represent at the beginning of the novel. Iurii's personality, as presented in the first chapters of the novel, is what leads him to suicide. The characters are exposed rather than developed by the narrative and the presence of Sanin. Nature passages are used throughout Sanin, as many of the critics observe. They also classify Artsybashev's style as impressionistic, in keeping with his early works as studied in the previous chapter.

A final question to be considered by the modern reader of Sanin concerns the novel's relevance today. Looking back to the time of the novel's publication, one may safely say that the judgments of the critics are based on interpretations of the work as realistic prose. Chukovskii's remark concerning "naked bodies"⁹⁴ pre-supposes that the novel is to be read as one that is in essence mimetic. The critics who praise the novel also argue about Sanin's reality (here one may refer back especially to Koltonovskaia). If for the moment we take the hero and the novel out of their framework and refer back to the words of Artsybashev himself, the

novel appears as something rather different. The hero is called "a type"⁹⁵ and the novel itself "an apology for individualism." Both these remarks by the author point to the possibility of a different kind of interpretation. The story "Smert' Lande" has been discussed as a twentieth-century variant on the Saint's-life genre. It seems that one can similarly view Sanin as a modified folk hero. Is it not possible that Artsybashev is creating a myth of the liberated individual? By this suggested definition it is implied that the author is constructing a modern myth

. . . which will, he hopes, prove to have universal responses. The mythopoeic poet attempts to return to the role of prophesier, by creating a myth which strikes resonant points in the minds of his readers and speaks with something of the authority of the old myths.⁹⁶

Likewise, the folk hero, or Russian bogatyr, is a manifestation of an idea or ideal which is larger than life or rather a characterization on a more symbolical generalized level.

The very language of the novel, with its reliance on epithets for characterization, natural imagery and cliché, is reminiscent of folk literature. The hero himself is never described in any detail. He is physically tall, strong and handsome — typical traits of any folk hero. His female counterparts, his sister and Zina, are also only generally sketched. For example, the epithets used to describe Zina as she is seen by moonlight are those of the early Russian heroic-epic or of any number of Russian folk-songs. She is described as "pale-faced" and "dark-browed" (beloe litso s

chernymi broviami; p. 273). There are scenes in the novel which seem to combine Russian folk motifs with those of classical mythology. One such scene is that of Sanin and his companion Ivanov watching the girls bathe. They are discovered by the girls. The Greek myth of Diana and Actaeon tells the story of a similar incident. One day while out hunting, Prince Actaeon comes upon Diana and her nymphs bathing in a glade:

In the extremity of the valley was a cave. . . A fountain burst out from one side, whose open basin was bounded by a grassy rim. Here the goddess of the woods used to come when weary with hunting and lave her virgin limbs in sparkling water.⁹⁷

It is also mentioned that Diana "was taller than the rest." If we keep in mind this scene, Artsybashev's scene of the girls bathing casts them as wood-nymphs, with Zina as Diana:

Some young women were swimming, judging from the many colored sweaters, skirts and hats which showed vividly against the grass. Some were in the water splashing and laughing, and the water poured over their round soft shoulders, arms and breasts. One, tall, slender, almost transparent from the bright sunlight, pink and soft, stood at her full height on the bank... [p. 248]

While on their expedition to the countryside, Sanin and Ivanov swim and sun-bathe, totally enjoying and communing with nature. Sanin breaks into song, singing a few bars from the well-known folk-song "Stenka Razin" (or "Iz-za ostrova"). When at the end of the chapter Sanin is exultant in the storm, he is elevated to a mythic stature. Also note the direct reference to a "fairy-tale kingdom" (skazochnoe tsarstvo) in the scene of Sanin and Zina at

night on the river. The words of the poet Bal'mont, epitomizing Sanin, could also apply to any bogatyr: "mnogogrannii, solntselikii, zmeegibkii, besomudryi" (see p. 129, above). The character Ivanov, Sanin's companion throughout the novel, has prints of the paintings of V. M. Vasnetsov hung all over his walls (vse steny uveshany graviurami kartin Vasnetsova, p. 84). Vasnetsov's famous paintings are of such heroes (mythic and real) as the bogatyri, Ivan the Terrible, Ivan-tsarevich, Prince Igor Sviatoslavich (of Slovo o polku Igoreve). Considering that Artsybashev himself was an artist, the fact that he mentions the name of a painter such as Vasnetsov must be interpreted as significant.

Positing Sanin's likeness to heroes of classical mythology calls forth an investigation of the other major characters of the novel. Sanin is often associated with the sun and all of nature — a kind of Phoebus Apollo. His sister Lida and Zina could both be seen as Apollo's twin sister, Diana. Zarudin represents the darker side of man's personality, thus a Pluto. The story of Lida and Zarudin could be superficially compared to that of Proserpine and Pluto. Iurii Svarozhich, at first glance, does not fit into this scheme, and yet if one remembers that the novel was originally written as "Iurii Svarozhich," he also becomes a kind of Phoebus Apollo (Svarozhich being derived from the name of the Slavic deity who was giver of light and warmth).⁹⁸ The presence of mythopoeic elements in the novel can scarcely

be more than a suggestive hypothesis.

There is yet another hero, a more modern one, who is suggested by Artsybashev's novel. Albert Camus's Absurd Man, especially as he is manifested in the character of Meursault in L'Etranger (The Stranger, 1946), can also be seen as an heir to the philosophy of Stirner via Nietzsche. Moreover, Camus uses mythology — "The Myth of Sisyphus" — to comment on the metaphysical condition of his hero. There are aspects of the character Vladimir Sanin which set him as a kind of existential hero. Both Sanin and Meursault are only sketched in the respective novels. Both heroes are concerned with the here and now — life's physical pleasures. Meursault's concern with the essentials of a good human life is, in the end, what really condemns him to death. While at his mother's funeral-night vigil, he is offered and accepts coffee and then smokes. When he returns home, the day after the funeral, he goes to a movie with his girl-friend and then spends the night with her. These seem to be the most harmless details of a simple life but, when viewed by a jury later, seem to be the action of the most cold-hearted man. He also admits that he did not cry during the funeral or burial of his mother. The prosecutor concludes: "'Oui, s'est-il écrié avec force, j'accuse cet homme d'avoir enterré une mère avec un coeur de criminel'"⁹⁹ Meursault is condemned to death and, as he sits in his cell awaiting execution, is visited by a priest who asks him if he is not

afraid to die. Meursault becomes enraged, saying that at least he knew what life meant for him — that it was human action whose boundary was death. Meursault is condemned by all because he recognizes only one motivator and ruler: his own desires. In the time immediately before his death, he realizes that he is happy:

. . . vidé d'espoir, devant cette nuit chargée de signes et d'étoiles, je m'ouvrais pour la première fois à la tendre indifférence du monde. De l'éprouver si pareil à moi, si fraternel enfin, j'ai senti que j'avais été heureux, et que je l'étais encore.¹⁰⁰

The hero's stand face-to-face with the Universe is somewhat comparable to Sanin's last scene as he strides the fields at dawn. Both scenes of revelation take place in the morning. When Meursault wakes up it is just beginning to get light. He thinks, "et moi aussi, je me suis senti prêt à tout revivre."¹⁰¹ Both Sanin and Meursault are complete in themselves. They realize their relationship (as they are able to discern it) to the universe and to nature ("la tendre indifférence du monde"). Sanin's words to his sister: "'I live alone'" (IA zhivu odin; p. 201), may be more significant when regarded in the light of an existentialist hero such as Meursault.

Concerning the novel as a whole, one must admit that its form is out-dated, considering the experimental work being done with form, structure, narration and style by such contemporaries of Artsybashev as Aleksei Remizov and Andrei Belyi. Artsybashev's idea may have been somewhat novel, but

his narrative style is traditional and basically unremarkable. It would be useless to present Artsybashev as a stylist of marked originality. The reader is quite frequently refreshed by images of nature; however, in the descriptions of erotic emotions his style, it must be admitted, is not distinguished by any striking creativity.

From the point of view of a sociologically accurate picture of the society, Artsybashev does give some worthwhile insights through the female characters. Their interior monologues and dialogues concerning the double standard of behavior for men and women were bold for their day and are, to some extent, even pertinent today. Despite this, the women characters are not individualized or "alive" (most of the critics of Artsybashev's time made this observation).

The novel shows the ideas and actions of Sanin not only in regard to life but also, and equally importantly, in regard to death. There is only one substantial critical study that acknowledges this aspect of the novel. In Artsybashev's work after Sanin, the desire to live and experience the pleasures of life often gives way, in the major characters, to a desire for annihilation. N. P. Rozanov's pamphlet, Kryl'ia smerti (The Wings of Death, 1913), traces this pessimism, which culminates in the novel published in 1911-1912, U poslednei cherty (Breaking Point). Rozanov mentions the painting of "life" as a young maiden undertaken by Iurii Svarozhich, which turns into the figure of an old hag. The

critic writes that Artsybashev portrays the whole process of dying from the last minutes to — in some cases — the final physical disintegration of the body.¹⁰² The body lives, then dies, but because Artsybashev's characters do not concern themselves with souls, there is a resulting "disharmony which condemns this 'new man' to banishment from life."¹⁰³ In other words, if the characters are not both physical and spiritual they cannot belong fully to life. Sanin's negation of social order, religion and philosophy leaves a void. Thus again he is like the existential hero who, having dispensed with God, is left at the brink of a chasm. Artsybashev's later novel, U poslednei cherty, leaves man at this place, or even instructs him to jump into the pit.

Sanin's curious impact upon readers and critics is not that of a brilliantly written piece of literature, but rather that of a confrontation with a thought-provoking hero — Vladimir Sanin. One might compare the novel and its hero to the phenomenon of a super-nova of Russian literature: both sustaining but a short-lived brilliance.

CHAPTER III

THE EBB AND FLOW OF THE HUMAN WAVE:

STORIES 1904-1907

Part 1: Man and Woman

. . . I think we will find that it is not love which is impossible, but the definitions into which we have thrust it, particularly the definitions of the sexes as two warring factions whose interests can never be the same. The soul has no gender.

Erica Jong, "Speaking of Love,"
Newsweek, February 1977

In the novel Sanin, Artsybashev attempts to create a hero who is free of society's definitions, forms and traps, thus allowing the individual to exist relatively unfettered. This is an obvious idealization, inasmuch as every normal person must be somehow influenced by his surroundings. Vladimir Sanin revolts against the rules that govern the social behavior of men and women. Aspects of that behavior and the social forms of marriage and prostitution, as well as the crime of rape, are presented in the stories discussed in this chapter. Naturally, these stories are colored by the times in which they were written, and yet there are also facets of them which are universal and contemporary.

"Zhena" (a Wife), 1904, concern the difference, as perceived by the hero, between love and marriage. "Bunt"

(The Rebellion), 1904, is the story of a prostitute's attempt to salvage her life. "Schast'e" (Happiness), 1906, depicts the trials which must be endured by the lowest in a society: a prostitute who is ill with venereal disease. The last story to be discussed, "Uzhas" (Horror), 1905, tells of the rape-murder of a young school teacher by a drunken doctor, a police commissioner and a magistrate. Concerning the use of such topics in literature, Artsybashev remarked, "'I draw life and people only as I see them.'"¹ Likewise, Anton Chekhov, who felt himself under attack for his own subject-matter, wrote to M. V. Kiselev in a letter dated 14 January 1887:

. . . no literature can in its cynicism surpass actual life; a wine glassful will not make drunk the man who has already emptied a whole cask.

That the world "swarms with male and female scum" is perfectly true. Human nature is imperfect, and it would, therefore, be strange to find only righteous people on this earth. But to think that the task of literature is to gather the pure grain from the muck heap, is to reject literature itself. Artistic literature is called so just because it depicts life as it really is. Its aim is truth — unconditional and honest. To narrow down its functions to such a speciality as selecting the "unsullied," is as fatal to it as to have Levitan paint a tree and to forbid him to include the dirty bark and yellow leaves . . . a litterateur is not a confectioner, not a dealer in cosmetics. Not an entertainer; he is a man bound, under compulsion, by the realization of his duty, and by his conscience; having just put his hand to the plow he must not plead weakness; and no matter how painful it is to him, he is constrained to overcome his aversion, and soil his imagination with the sordidness of life. . . . To a chemist, nothing on earth is unclean. A writer must be as objective as a chemist . . . he must know that dung-heaps play a very respectable part in the landscape, and that

evil passions are as inherent in life as good ones.

Writers are the children of their age . . .²

Leo Tolstoy, in his late work "The Kreutzer Sonata," written in 1889, deals with the problems inherent in the institution of marriage. "Father Sergius" and "The Devil" (1898 and 1889 respectively) along with "The Kreutzer Sonata" form "an epilogue on sexuality, love and marriage to Tolstoy's life-work."³ Tolstoy does not lay the blame exclusively on the individual for debauchery, but on society as well. In "The Kreutzer Sonata" and "The Devil," he attacks society's attempt to harness man's sexuality in the institution of marriage. As he saw it, the real problem was sexuality itself, and specifically the effect women have on men:

Basic to the shared content of the three stories is Tolstoy's assurance that women, and the sexuality that women represent, project, and provoke, are the source of man's downfall.⁴

Death, or an ascetic life, was seen by Tolstoy in these stories to be the only solution to the dilemma.

"Zhena"

Artsybashev's story "Zhena" (A Wife) depicts a different type of dilemma encountered by those who are married. In this work Artsybashev does not blame woman for being man's downfall. Both writers do blame society — but Tolstoy, in addition, condemns woman's primal, almost demonic hold over man ("The Devil"). In "Zhena," Artsybashev shows that women are just as oppressed as men. He places the blame solely on

society for perverting nature by attempting to make two individual lives into one. This story presents an alternative to marriage in which no one need be sacrificed. The term applied to Sanin — "anarchical individualism" — may also be applied to this story. Artsybashev contrasts the total and pure enjoyment of sex before marriage with the sense of boredom and obligation which results for his protagonist almost immediately after marriage. In the birch grove where they meet, the lovers are unified with nature:

We seldom spoke and we did not wish to. It was quiet and smelled of a strange and mysterious aroma which made one's head swim and all disappear before our eyes and mind except a burning and disquieting pleasure . . . the grass was wet and sprinkled us with dew as we lay naked, strangely warmed by the balmy air. It was as if the whole grove resounded with the mighty beats of our hearts, and it seemed to us that in the whole incomprehensibly huge universe there was no one but us and no one could reach us hidden away among these swaying birches, night shadows, wet grass, and the heavy scent of the deep forest.⁵

After the lovers are married, the hero observes his wife with dissatisfaction. The scene is no longer the "wonderland" of the forest grove, but the morning at home:

And my wife somehow immediately grew common, burdensome and dull. After three days she was already so predictable and so ordinary, like any woman one might meet anywhere, and even more so. In the morning, not yet groomed, her hair unkempt, she appeared especially plain. [p. 363]

The marriage itself is the result more of apathy than of anything else. To the hero it seems the logical continuation of the love affair. On the eve of the wedding, the hero feels "oppressed and afraid" ("mne bylo tiazhelo, strashno i

dushno," p. 358). Some part of him really does believe that the wedding ceremony will mysteriously change his life. He thinks:

'And really this is how it is now: she is my wife... wife... wife...' I tried to articulate this word in different ways, trying to find that tone in which the word is pronounced as a great and mysterious symbol. But the word sounded like every other word, simple and empty. [No slovo zvuchalo, kak i vsiakoe slovo, pusto i legko]. [p. 359]

This is precisely the pivotal idea of the story. Is the relationship of husband and wife something great and mysterious or is it a hollow illusion perpetuated by society? Artsybashev's hero believes the second of these possibilities to be true. Not only is the relationship itself an illusion, but it is also destructive to the individuals involved.

It does not take many pages to establish the hero's family tree: he is a Sanin type. In the beginning of the narrative he is portrayed after he has been with his lover:

I watched her leave and then went up onto the railroad embankment. I strode briskly along, feeling the strength of my legs and breathing deeply and easily, smiling at the rising sun [navstrechu razsveta].

The song inside me reached out with an irresistible vitality. I wished to wave my arms, to cry out, to fall flat upon the earth...

The dawn blazed before me, embracing the sky with joyful waves. I felt strong, loving, thankful. [p. 357]

The narrative is in the first person singular, a mode seldom used by Artsybashev. This form makes the story seem more personalized — it is the story of one man as he tells it. It may be mentioned that "The Kreutzer Sonata" is also

told in the first person. In both stories the narrator's consciousness is the reality conveyed.

After the description of the joyous feelings of the hero, in the short chapter II of the story — one large paragraph and a single-sentence paragraph — the reader learns that the hero is an artist. He simply "ate, drank, slept and worked" (Ibid.). The narrator ends this brief aside about himself with the insight that what he did during the day, his painting, had nothing to do with his love-making at night. The two are separate and unrelated parts of his life. He thinks, "And in my life, like day and night, there existed two worlds; and although the two together gave a complete life, they did not merge together" (Ibid.). This statement serves as a clue to the further development of the plot and as a psychological insight into the mind of the hero. The artist relates how he experiences jealousy when his new wife talks to other men. He loses his friends too, and his life-style changes. When he discovers that his wife is pregnant he becomes totally disillusioned with love. Concerning marriage he says, "it was a torment for me as it would be for a strong, vital animal fettered in a field" (p. 368).

In chapter IV, the husband and wife revisit their former rendezvous, the birch grove. It is now autumn. Their kisses among the autumn leaves are "quiet." They realize something is lost and now beyond reach. This is conceivably

a turning-point for the better in their relationship. A new love based on friendship would replace the spring passion of romance, as in Tolstoy's "Family Happiness." Instead, the hero-narrator comes to the conclusion that marriage is impossible for him:

It is not possible to have two people united in one, it is not possible... Love comes and love goes, as does everything, but there is no end to the desire to live [zhelanie zhit']... And that two people create a child, that means nothing...

Men and women meet only for pleasure, and not for the birth of children... [p. 370]

(It seems only fair to Artsybashev that this remark be taken within the context of the story and the hero's narrative.)

The hero defends his own desire for freedom by the argument that it is women who are more instrumental in the child-rearing process and that the maternal instinct to them is foremost. He denies the existence of a paternal instinct in himself. His wife counters by saying that even male animals show concern for their young.

It is noteworthy that there is a conspicuous absence of the father-mother-child relationship in Artsybashev's stories. "Pasha Tumanov," "Kupriian," "Smert' Lande," Sanin — all show scenes of mother-son interaction, but there are no fathers involved. Pregnancy, birth, childhood and family life are not depicted by Artsybashev in any significant way. In fact, pregnancy appears (Sanin) as more of an end point than a process.

The artist sees marriage as a "heavy chain encumbering

his life" (p. 373). In chapter VII he leaves on unspecified business, never to return to his wife and then unborn child. The separation is rendered simply, nonchalantly: "I never returned to her" ("Bol'she ia ne vozvrashchalsia k nei," Ibid.).

The artist experiences rebirth as he feels his individuality reassert itself. He happily realizes: "I was alone" (p. 374). All around him, life beckons; he looks at women as if for the first time. The desire to feel, to experience, is the motivating force in his life, which he cannot ignore. He is like Anton the shoemaker, Lande, and Sanin in his realization of the goodness and beauty of life. This is life of the present, immediate and ultimately real:

. . . I clearly and consciously realized that I would never return to my wife and to what she felt 'was necessary' — to love and care for her, and to be concerned for the coming baby because it was obligatory. This did not touch me at all and had nothing to do with the burning, mighty, curious desire to live which is beautifully stronger than I am and yet is myself [kotoroe prekrasno silnee menia, est' ia sam]. [p. 376]

This long compound sentence well describes the artist's sentiments and beliefs. The length and opposition of the two main ideas of the sentence — obligation/freedom — illustrate that this is the narrator's thought pattern or stream of consciousness. His dream, that night, is a continuation of the theme of individual life opposed to social obligation. He dreams that they are back in the grove together as they had been in the summer: "then all was lost,

some people arrived and it became oppressive and sad" (A potom vse propadalo, prikhodili kakie-to liudi, bylo dushno i zhal' chego-to; Ibid.)

Artsybashev's artist has not been embittered by marriage and feels only pity and tenderness for his wife on occasions when he sees her: their first encounter is soon after the birth of their child. The idea passes through his mind that he could return, but it is immediately rejected. At their second meeting, they come to an understanding about their relationship and themselves. The season is winter, which takes the action indoors. The hero goes directly to the house where his wife has her room, only to find that she is not there. Looking around the room, he notices her narrow bed, a picture of an "unfamiliar student with a handsome, strong, though common face" (p. 378), and an album of poems. When she arrives, all the emotions evoked by the tension of the man-woman relationship are vividly chronicled. There is curiosity, suspicion, fear, jealousy, sentimentality. But in the end, it is the positive joy that they once shared which is reaffirmed:

'And what if I were to stay?.. A year, two, ten, we would become tired of each other, we would become so dull... we would have turned into an uninteresting married couple... And life would be over. And now, you again love someone else... you are experiencing all that we experienced, remember? Now we have so much life ahead of us, so much youth and strength.'

'Maybe you are right,' — she said suddenly and sighed deeply, and then unexpectedly, shyly looked at me and smiled... And she laughed and became at

that instant close, simple, kind and beloved.

[p. 382]

As the artist leaves, he meets the tall, handsome student whose photograph he has seen in his wife's room. He feels momentary jealousy, but tells himself that jealousy is only pride ["Revnost' — samoliubie," p. 383). The unfettered individual has triumphed:

I was happy for my wife, for myself, for every person who could freely, strongly and joyfully live.

I raised my eyes to the heavens and before me arose the immense universe, incomprehensible, fathomless space, strewn with myriads of sparkling stars and the flood of joyful, life-giving, endless light. [Ibid.]

This hero has progressed in self-knowledge from the jealous husband of "The Kreutzer Sonata" or the crazed lover and husband of "The Devil." Morally, he may be judged as severely, and yet it seems the author's reverence for life has created a hero who must learn to live and appreciate what is given to man in this life. One is once again reminded of the Absurd Man of Albert Camus as he is developed in The Stranger. Artsybashev's hero-individuals — Sanin, Lande, Kupriian, Anton the shoemaker, Dr. Solodovnikov, Mariia Nikolaevna — have all, at one time or another, made their peace with the universe and nature. They have looked to the sky and felt themselves, in various yet similar ways, in relationship to it. The heavens, the stars, the rising sun are all material manifestations of that which is beyond man. "Zhena" echoes the desire expressed in some of Artsybashev's other works, for individual freedom and growth.

"Bunt"

In the long story of the same year, "Bunt" (The Rebellion), Artsybashev weaves the story of a prostitute, Aleksandra Kozodoeva — Sasha. There are many points of comparison between "Bunt" and Alexander Kuprin's IAMA (The Pit) of 1909-1915. Part I of Kuprin's novel appeared in Sbornik Zemlia of 1909; parts II and III in 1914 and 1915. The statement Kuprin makes through his narrator — "'Do you understand, gentlemen, that all the horror is just this, that there is no horror! Bourgeois work days — and that is all'" — may also be applied to Artsybashev's story.

In tone, Kuprin is didactic, where Artsybashev is not — he does not judge Sasha or her patrons. Kuprin could indeed be accused of lack of restraint in his outbursts, such as:

Here she is — I! A public woman, a common vessel, a cloaca for the drainage of the city's surplus lust. Come to me anyone who wills — thou shalt meet no denial, therein is my service. But for a second of this sexuality in haste — thou shalt pay in money, revulsion, disease and ignominy.

Kuprin's tale itself is so powerful, one wishes that he had refrained from using the narrator Platonov as an orator against the vices of prostitution. As a realistic portrayal of the drama of life in a house of prostitution, the novel is powerful, but the obtrusiveness of the narrator detracts from the narrative.

As a background to both works, it is helpful to recall the characterization of the prostitute by Dostoevsky. His

portrayal of prostitutes, kept women and street walkers expresses a particular sensibility, which is identified by Nicholas Moravcevic in his article "The Romantization of the Prostitute in Dostoevskij's Fiction." Dostoevsky's prostitutes, Liza (Notes from the Underground) and Sonia Marmeladova (Crime and Punishment), are used by Moravcevic to illustrate his thesis. Both are depicted as pure, innocent creatures. Concerning Liza the article states:

. . . his own work retains much of that sentimental undertone that bothered him in the works of the contemporary liberals, since the grossly deceived and insulted Liza (whose trustfulness and naivete are deliberately highlighted so that the antagonist can trample on them) ultimately emerges so exalted that she herself readily becomes a new romantic symbol of the fallen woman, this one of Dostoevskij's own making.⁷

Sonia appears to the critic as

. . . presented as a wholly unspoiled, innocent, shy and trustworthy soul. She is a prostitute that throughout the novel is neither shown in a degrading soliciting situation nor exposed as at least to some degree behaviorally harmed by her early fall into disrepute. In fact, she is thrust upon the reader with such an idealistic bias, that even the very suggestion of the taint of her body seems to accentuate the strength of her spiritual purity and faith in goodness.⁸

Further, the author argues:

. . . it also must not be forgotten that the very presence in this case of Dostoevskij's intentional contrast of such gross opposites as the profanity of the flesh and the saintliness of the spirit is a distinctly romantic device.⁹

which "strained the social veracity of the resultant portraits."¹⁰ Moravcevic adds that even though Dostoevsky, for his own reasons, may portray the prostitutes Liza and

Sonia as saintly creatures in fallen flesh, he does also in

Notes give a very photographic depiction of a prostitute:

Once — it was a New Year's morning — I saw a woman there by the door of a house. Her colleagues had pushed her out as a practical joke — to cool her off for a while because she was bawling — then they decided to lock the door on her. So, at nine in the morning, there she was, completely drunk, unkempt, half naked, badly beaten. There was a thick layer of powder on her face, still black with bruises under both eyes, and blood streaming from her nose and mouth. Some cabby had just dealt with her, it seems. She sat on the doorstep bewailing her 'miserias' at the top of her voice, striking the steps with a salt herring she held in her hand, as a bunch of soldiers and cabbies gathered around her and taunted her.¹¹

Moravcevich uses this as an example of a "sketch of a fallen woman"¹² which is executed "with all the veracity of a camera eye."¹³ It seems that in part this is true, and yet it is more a reflection of the personality of the Underground Man himself. He feels that he is a pitiful creature and wishes to debase and frighten Liza. The detail of the salted herring makes the story grotesquely funny. A far more realistic description is that of the conditions surrounding the death of a young prostitute of the Haymarket. The narrator tells Liza that "'she kept working to the very end, consumption or no consumption.'"¹⁴

The plight of the heroine of Tolstoy's Resurrection (1899) may also have influenced such authors as Kuprin and Artsybashev in the portrayals of fallen women. Maslova had no means and had the choice of holding low-paying jobs and being constantly hounded for sexual favors by her employers

or of entering a house of prostitution, having a fairly comfortable place to live and being taken care of. As the author tells us, "she chose the second"¹⁵ of these options. Kuprin sets out in his novel I Ama (The Pit) to portray fully the type of life sketched in chapter II of Resurrection. He takes this task very seriously, hoping to educate his readers. He writes in the Postscript to the novel:

The real psychological success of the book cannot be attributed to an unwholesome curiosity on the part of its readers; I am deeply convinced of the fact that Yama has compelled many people to reflect, with sincere sympathy, about prostitution.¹⁶

The format of the book and the function of the narrator, Platonov, give the novel a kind of documentary quality. It is as if an outsider were allowed to look through a one-way mirror at the lives of the women living in the brothel. Artsybashev's "Bunt" is a narrative only, although certainly a moral may be drawn from it and at times the author's sentiments are discernible. Kuprin's heroines are generally not romanticized in the way that Dostoevsky's are.

The following passage from Kuprin's I Ama shows the prostitute Jennka with a young man of whom she has grown fond. She refuses to make love to him as she has recently learned she has venereal disease:

And the half-naked Jennka, this Jennka, the atheist, swearer and brawler, suddenly got up from the bed, stood before the cadet, and slowly almost solemnly made the sign of the cross over him.¹⁷

This may or may not be interpreted as a "romantic pose."

Kuprin characterizes all the women as "four hundred foolish,

lazy, hysterical, brazen women."¹⁸ The speech of the prostitutes among themselves is crude and believable. To Magda, the noblewoman, a girl remarks: "'You have huckleberry jelly instead of a soul!'"¹⁹ Further, the noblewoman is described as "'Rather charming but a fish. She ought to be served up under Provençal sauce.'"²⁰ Another girl, Jennie, remarks: "'And for your damned rouble you want me to go all to pieces before you like a pancake, and that for your nasty love my eyes should pop out onto my forehead?'"²¹ This style of discourse is interspersed with the narrator's comments and straight story-telling narrative.

Sasha in "Bunt" is not specially characterized. She is simply a poor young woman, like Tolstoy's Maslova, who seeks to earn her living by prostitution. The alternative for a woman in her position is to work long hours for little pay as a seamstress. This she has tried and found too difficult. It is only in the last page of the story that a real insight into her character is gained. She sees her reflection in a mirror and sees what she loved most of all: "herself, beautiful, well-dressed, from head to foot."²²

Sasha's rebellion consists in her attempt to leave the house of prostitution and work as an aide in a sanitarium. She is inspired to do this by the love she feels for a young student who visits her. He leads her to believe that he loves her as well and that they may even have a future together. When she learns that he has no intention of being

seriously involved with her, she leaves the hellish atmosphere of the sanitarium and uses the money he has given her, for a gown and a "last fling," which returns her to the position she was in at the beginning of the story. As the critic Polonskii comments, Sasha, and Artsybashev's other characters Pasha Tumanov, Anton the shoemaker, Dora and Liza of "Teni utra" (Morning Shadows) "pass right by the great riches [of life]. They are not to blame for their lack of strength. They are human sacrifices to their social conditions."²³ Baranov echoes the opinion that Sasha is a sacrifice to society:

Artsybashev believes in the great and radiant beginning given by nature to all men. This beginning lives in man no matter how low he may fall . . . one of the greatest perversions of the human spirit, of human individuality, is prostitution.²⁴

One critic, N. Stechkin (pseudonym Starodum), does not see the point of telling such a story at all. He discerns in the story the author's hatred of society.²⁵ In reality, Artsybashev shows only a hatred for hypocrisy. This is evident in the treatment of the would-be saviour of Sasha, and of the young man's father, who is a writer. In the scene at the home of Sasha's lover, Roslavlev, the father delivers a little speech to his son on the follies of youth. He confides that he once thought of "saving" a prostitute in his younger days. The father sits in his comfortable study, and is filled with the importance of being an author. He speaks to his son as a writer who knows about life rather than as a

father: "It seemed to him that to write three volumes of the kind of stories he wrote was a great and important enterprise, and his right to the respect and goodwill of all was indisputable" (pp. 324-325). He advises his son to do charitable work if the plight of such lost souls as Sasha disturbs him to such a degree: "'If you feel yourself guilty before these sacrifices to social temperament, then you could take part in charitable societies...'" (Ibid.). He suggests that his son give Sasha money so that she may buy a sewing machine and work at a dressmaker's shop.

If there is a moral conscience in the story, it is embodied in young Roslavlev's tubercular friend Semenov. This character functions as he has in stories studied previously. He is a direct contrast to the healthy Roslavlev, who glows with life. Semenov is the specter of death. Roslavlev entrusts him with the task of giving the money to Sasha so he will not have to do the unpleasant deed himself. Semenov first asks his friend what right he has to save this woman. He speaks with disgust:

'You are all scum, you and she and everyone... Why do we so despise these prostitutes?... Do they do anyone harm?... We despise thieves, murderers and rapists less... it is hard for us to hate ourselves, so we hate them instead.' [pp. 335-336]

Semenov is torn between his own conscience and a certain admiration for the strong beautiful Roslavlev. This is skillfully depicted:

Semenov silently looked at his ruddy, stout and healthy face.

— What trash you are! — he declared with terrible hatred.

. . . He was almost twice as big as Semenov, and his whole body radiated terrible strength and self-confidence.

— You're trash, I say! — repeated Semenov, but against his will his voice had already become playful and jocular. [p. 339]

The story of Sasha's experiences as she enters the government house of prostitution makes up most of the body of the tale. The house is likened to a hospital: "straight, empty, dim corridors, low opaque windows, high white doors with numbers and signs and the smell of clean linen and carbolic acid" (p. 252). Having been a street prostitute at one time (as can be assumed), Sasha feels that by coming to the government house she will have a better life. Upon arrival, she is stripped and inspected, like a criminal or an animal at an auction. She shares a hospital-barracks-like room with five other women who are hostile and bitter. There is very little information given about Sasha, except that she is "nicely shaped" (p. 255) and twenty-two years old (p. 260). When night falls, her experiences of the day parade before her like a "living photograph" (zhivaia fotografiia; Ibid.). As the evening progresses, the women ready themselves for the arrival of men. One young girl, Liubka, is introduced into the story, and becomes a symbol of the fate of the prostitute. She is approached by Sasha as she sits at the piano; she plucks at the keys, producing "two or three notes which sounded as if two or three heavy crystal

drops had fallen" (p. 265). She then admits to Sasha that she has become "contaminated." Besides Liubka, Pasha also relates a bit about herself. To Sasha's outburst that this life is "a prisoner's existence" (zhizn' katorzhnaia), Pasha replies that there are much worse brothels, and "at least here the men are clean and kind... and you are well fed" (kormiat²⁶ khorosho, p. 246). Pasha tells of her own village where the men are drunkards and can beat one to death and the poverty is great. The arrival of the men, and the bustle that ensues, is juxtaposed to the quiet despair which reigns when the women are alone. The house is likened to "a huge aching head" (p. 268). In her sadness, Sasha drinks greedily to distance herself from reality. She succeeds in this to such an extent that when a voice is heard shouting, "'Liubka has hung herself!' — Sasha could not immediately grasp who this Liubka was, and why she would hang herself." (p. 269). As Sasha quickly regains her comprehension of what has happened, she is horrified. She sees only Liubka's naked legs, which arouse in her a desire to escape. The vision she has that night — huddling in her small bed with a frightened roommate, Pol'ka — of a blue, dead Liubka at the piano recurs throughout the story, haunting her. The women's isolation is underlined by the howling of the wind outside. During this fearful night, after the suicide, Sasha decides that she must leave and seek a new life. With the next day, this wish seems to her "as if in a dream she had the ability

to fly" (p. 277). She realizes how unnatural her "work" was. The piano on which Liubka was playing the night before seems to her to look like a coffin (roial' pokhozhii na grob, Ibid.).

When Sasha tells her new client, Roslavlev, that she plans to leave the house, he reacts enthusiastically, saying he will "fix everything" (p. 280). He justifies "using" Sasha by telling himself that after all, she "cannot be reborn immediately"! (Ibid.). Sasha's decision has not come to her from a rational realization of her plight, but is rather a reaction of physical aversion to her environment. She thinks to herself that she is "like a chip in a whirlpool" (Ibid.). The woman who oversees the girls intercepts Roslavlev's letters to Sasha and becomes furious when she learns that Sasha intends to leave. She beats her cruelly, and takes away her favorite dress. The narrator relates that "a huge and unanswerable question" was put to "this little woman with a small and weak mind." What indeed should or could she do with her life?

She places all her hope for salvation in the student and her love for him. Because of her love she dares to hope. She feels she can make a new life:

. . . she realized that her former life was over, no one would force her to caress drunken and repulsive men, they would not beat her, curse her — that her burden had gone and would not return. And in the quiet, joyful light of the sun, shone something new, happy and pure. [p. 286]

Her prayer, "make me as others are" (Ibid.), seems especially pitiable. The endearing epithets she uses for the student attest to her involvement with him. She calls him "my dear handsome one" (krasavets moi milyi), "my dear golden one" (milen'kii, zolotoi moi), "my saviour" (spasitel' vy moi) (p. 287). But even in her optimism, Liubka's ghost still haunts her. She feels her presence: "dead and ever so long" (mertvaia, dlinnaia-dlinnaia, p. 289). Perhaps this phantom foreshadows the failure of Sasha's rebellion against her circumstances. She goes from the house of prostitution to a sanitarium, where she is assigned the task of taking care of a sick baroness. Her work is very depressing: all around are the sick and dying. The baroness is obviously terminally ill, and although both women have suffered and are suffering greatly, they cannot touch and comfort each other. Each thinks only of her own pain. It is against this background that Semenov comes to give Sasha the money from Roslavlev, and to tell her that the student will be going away for an indefinite length of time. Semenov does not attempt to cushion the blow, but carries out his duty quickly and unfeelingly. This crushing blow makes it impossible for Sasha to endure the long, hard hours of work at the hospital. For her there is no light or joy. She must remain a slave to one condition or another. Now, again, Liubka's playing re-sounds in her memory. Outside it is grey and slushy winter. She feels she is a part of this greyness (p. 352) Says the

narrator:

And that sensation, repulsive, unnatural in a young, strong, beautiful, pleasure-seeking being, left Sasha only when she entered the hall of the Alcazar in a new steel-colored gown and a lovely large hat, purchased with Roslavlev's money, and saw in a mirror what she loved most of all: herself, beautiful, well-dressed . . .

And that night in his [a stranger's] embrace, from wine and the heat of passion, Sasha was comfortable . . . and it seemed to her that she was happy. [p. 353]

The conclusion of the story with a one-sentence paragraph is a summation of Sasha's life — past, present, and future: "The dawn broke grey, dead, endless and hopelessly sad..." (Ibid.). This same mood can be found in I Ama, near its conclusion, after the suicide of one of the women. At her graveside one of her colleagues contemplates the future of the survivors:

' . . . soon we will be scattered to the wind far and wide. Life is good!.. Look: there's the sun, the blue sky... How clean the air is... Cobwebs are floating — it's Indian summer... How good it is in the world!.. Only we are alone — we wenches are wayside rubbish.'²⁷

Artsybashev's story was published in 1904, Kuprin's in 1909. The general similarities in the two works may be briefly noted. Both contain the following: 1) the suicide of a young prostitute because she has become infected with venereal disease; 2) a naive young man who tries to help rehabilitate a prostitute and fails; 3) descriptions of the reversed order of life: night is for work, day for rest; 4) madams depicted as cruel and inhuman; 5) prostitutes

depicted as mainly dull, not having the ability to extricate themselves from their positions; 6) some indication that society is to blame, not the individual.

Yet another vantage point from which to view Artsybashev's work is in relation to the Chekhov story, "Pripadok" (An Attack of Nerves), of 1888. In his article, "Chekhov's 'An Attack of Nerves,'" Joseph L. Conrad discusses the hero of the story as having been based on the personality of the late Vsevolod Garshin.²⁸ The attitude of the hero, Vasil'ev, to prostitutes is a romanticized one. When he goes to a house of prostitution with some friends he is horrified by what he sees. His conclusion is that all their souls are past the point of salvation. This confrontation with an unexpected reality brings on his nervous attack. He feels that he must try somehow to save the women. One of the solutions is that described by Artsybashev and Kuprin: to buy a woman a sewing machine and give her an apartment so that she can work as a dressmaker. He rejects this idea, realizing that without the support of her patron, who would sooner or later grow tired of this arrangement, the woman would be forced to return to prostitution. An alternative solution includes an education with the sewing machine. This is also unsatisfactory, as possibly the woman would not conform well to such a new life. Thirdly, one could marry a prostitute, thus transforming her. As Conrad points out, all these are literary cliches. The hero finally decides

that it is the men who go to such women who must be educated about the evil of the institution. "But he soon realizes that no one would listen to him."²⁹

In Chekhov's story, a man is the victim of a social evil. He understands the full implications of prostitution but can do nothing to change the status quo, and finally becomes indifferent. Chekhov uses the motif of falling snow to contrast the beauty and purity of nature with the houses of prostitution. This device functions similarly to Artsybashev's and Kuprin's glorification of the beauty of life which is in nature and outside the lives of the women; for example, Sasha is shown sitting at the window looking out as life seems to pass her by (p. 260)

Thus the individuals perish, one by one, slowly, agonizingly, some consciously, some unconsciously. What remains and endures is the socially-condemned and yet also sanctioned institution in which a body can be bought cheaply and its soul disregarded. This is the common conclusion of the authors mentioned. Kuprin's words, although perhaps overly dramatic, express this sensibility:

'And when, having satisfied your bestial lust, you are departing from the prostitute, barely concealing your squeamish revulsion, know and remember that you, at that moment, are many times lower and baser than the prostitute. Having taken advantage of the absurdity of the present order of life, you have robbed a blind beggar, you have slapped the face of a man with his hands bound, you have deceived a child...'³⁰

"Schast'e"

One of Artsybashev's shortest stories, seven pages, "Schast'e" (Happiness), of 1906, may be read as a sequel to "Bunt." Artsybashev indeed used his Semenov (or Semenev) character repeatedly; thus, it is possible that the Sasha of "Bunt" and Sashka of "Schast'e" are the same character. "Schast'e" is perhaps Artsybashev's most powerful story. The narrative is free of unnecessary details. It is the bare bones of narrative, showing a definite progression from the intrusive, didactic narrator of "Pasha Tumanov"; the story, with its action and brief characterization, stands on its own and speaks for itself. Sashen'ka is in the lowest class of prostitutes: she is physically sick and spiritually dead. The first paragraphs of the story are brutally realistic:

Since Sashka the prostitute's nose had fallen in and her once beautiful and provocative face had begun to resemble a decomposing skull, her existence had lost all its life-like qualities.

It was simply a strange and terrible existence, in which the day had lost its light and turned into hopeless night, and night had become an endless working day. Hunger and cold tore her sickly, sunken-breasted, bony-legged, dog-carcass body into pieces.

From the main streets she went to the deserted back streets and began to sell herself to the most filthy and terribly people who seemed born of the slimy mud and stinking blackness.³¹

Sashka's will to live, a human being's will to live, even when her life is hellish, gives this story its intensity. She is starving, cold and homeless; yet, for some reason,

she desires to continue her existence. As she searches for a "cavalier" by the cold blue light of the moon, she understands her lot, but struggles on:

. . . Sashka for the first time understood all the senseless horror of her existence and began to weep. The tears tumbled from her cold-inflamed eyes and froze in the abscessed depression where her nose used to be. No one saw these tears; the moon, with a clear, cold blue glow, brightly sailed over the field as before. [p. 132]

Other images of the cold, distant moon serve to emphasize Nature's indifference to her plight:

— "string of lamps shone dimly in the grey-blue moonlight" (p. 131)

— ". . . breath-taking cold and frosty moonlight" (p. 132)

— "the moon sailed high over the field" (p. 133)

— "his eyes like window panes shone lifeless in the moonlight" (p. 134)

— "the moon shone distant and bright" (p. 137)

Soon Sashka sees her chance to earn some money as a man approaches, evidently a worker at the nearby factory. Sashka dances in front of the uninterested man. He looks at her as if she were not there (kak budto pered nim bylo pustoe mesto, p. 134). Suddenly, he becomes interested and asks her if she would like to earn five rubles. What he demands is that she strip naked and submit to ten blows to her body. If she does not cry out, she will be given the money. "He laughed and his laughter was trembling, oppressive and nasty" (p. 134). At first, Sashka complains that it is much too cold, as she is freezing already with her clothes on. As he turns to leave, in desperation she consents. "She stood

completely naked and it seemed unusually strange for this small naked body to be there, in the snow, in the middle of the moonlit, frosty, night field" (p. 136). During the beating, she drops down on her hands and knees, almost losing consciousness. "Sashka twisted like a snake, turned over on her back, staining the snow with blood, and the moonlight dimly shone on her hollow stomach and sharp hip-bones" (p. 137). The last blow falls on her breast, and she momentarily loses consciousness. Above this scene of pain, ignominy and ugliness, the moon floats. It seems the author is making a statement that this is how things are. This is life. He has shown in other works, such as Sanin, how beautiful living can be. This story shows to what extent it can be ugly and perverted. As Sashka rapidly regains consciousness, she finds a gold coin gripped in her blood-darkened hand. Seeing this, she is filled with happiness. Her pain does not hinder her, as she hastens to a night tearoom where she will find "food, warmth, quiet, vodka!.." (p. 138).

The sketch of an incident in the life of the prostitute Sashka is not a moral lesson, but rather an existential statement of how life goes on. Sashka can, for a time, forget her pain and be happy.

"Uzhas"

The final story to be discussed in this section is "Uzhas" (Horror), 1905. It is a tale of the rape-murder of a young schoolteacher in a provincial town, and the resultant uprising of the people in that town. Those who commit the crime are "respectable, powerful men"—a doctor, a police commissioner, and a magistrate. The schoolteacher, Nina, is not only a character in the story; she also functions as the symbol for all that is beautiful, young and pure, and all the aspirations of man trying to better himself and his condition. She is Life and Spring:

She was happy with them [the old Ivolgin couple] . . . because of her youth, joy and hopes, which filled her from head to foot; she was happy, anywhere. The whole time she rambled on about how amazing it was to live and enjoy oneself.³²

In the opening scene, Nina is placed against the backdrop of a late winter-early spring night. The night is ominous and mysterious, filled with indistinguishable shapes where barns, huts and trees merge into one (p. 384). The sound of ice breaking up on the river portends spring, but it is still strangely foreboding. The qualities of youth symbolized in Nina are repeated in the first two or three pages of the story. She is characterized by: "radostno" (joyfully), "molodost'" (youth), "nadezhda" (hope), "veselo" (gaily), and "dobraia" (kind, dear). Her happy anticipation of the coming spring affects old Ivolgin, and he remembers his past springs with "joyful melancholy" (p. 385).

The schoolhouse, where Nina teaches and resides, contains a travelers' room where the doctor, the police commissioner and the magistrate stop to drink and pass the evening. They are here together because a corpse has been found nearby. Matvei, the janitor of the building, tells Nina that she would be better off to spend the night with the Ivolgins. His warning reinforces the foreboding of danger suggested by the description of the night scene. When Nina enters the schoolhouse, the benches resemble coffins. Nina still does not fear anything, as it is not within the realm of her imagination to see what could happen. Out of curiosity, she puts her ear to the door when she is already in her room, to try to hear what the visitors are saying. She soon realizes that there is indeed something to fear, as the three are making noises like "wild animals in a cage. Behind the wall they shouted, roared, moved chairs, and it seemed as if they had begun to fight" (p. 388). She catches a bit of their conversation, a statement which could be ironically applied to each of them: "a vile man, when educated, becomes even viler" (Ibid.). Nina thinks that she has only a few months to teach here and then she will be free: her life ahead seems filled with prospects of adventure and happiness. When she has already undressed preparing for bed, there is a knock at her door and she is asked if she would like to have tea. She becomes alarmed and realizes that she should have stayed with the old couple. The wind howls

outside to highlight her growing terror (kholodnyi uzhas, p. 390). She considers flight and wishes that Matvei would return. Soon, the uproar in the adjoining room gives way to silence and whispers. She panics: "a terrible animal fear seized her body and soul... Ninochka jumped up and stood by the bed, half-naked, small and sensitively beautiful like a little animal" (p. 391). The use of "animal" (zver' and zverok) is here an indication that the social trappings of man may be stripped by powerful emotions, leaving him to react in an instinctual rather than rational way. It is as if the three men are beasts of prey; Nina is the prey. The actual rape is depicted in the last paragraph of the first chapter, in a more abstract than graphic manner:

Then someone huge and heavy fell on her, crushing her to the bed. Someone with sweaty strong hands seized her bare leg above the knee and pushed it aside, muttering something impatiently and panting from unrestrained maddening lust... [p. 392]

The morning dawns upon a horrible scene. Nina has been transformed: she has lost her mind and does not at all resemble the former Nina: ". . . she twisted in the arms of the police commissioner, rolled her eyes and screamed" (p. 393). The three must do something with her. The police commissioner is overcome by "terrible beastly anger," and strangles her while the other two look on. This short second chapter, describing the dawn and Nina's murder is followed by the contrasting opening of the third chapter: "It was a clear, sunny morning" (p. 394). By the light of this morning

Nina's body is discovered. The room in which the "travelers" had been is in such disorder that "It was terrible to believe that there had been people here" (Ibid.). Nina's room —

. . . spoke silently, mournfully of the unseen terrible end of a life. All was washed, obviously hastily and not well by strange hands; the furniture stood too orderly, the bed was made as if long ago abandoned and forgotten, Nina's dress was placed over a chair neatly, deceptively. And it smelled of an almost indiscernible but terrible, lifeless smell. [pp. 394-395]

Old Ivolgin finds Nina hanging on a clothes hook. The chapter ends with the full impact of Nina's death realized: "There was no end or measure of the horror and revulsion which grew, seeking revenge" (P. 395).

During a starless night, the three meet for the first time after the murder. Their discussion, each blaming the other, indicates their own feelings of helpless guilt. The fat doctor and the magistrate are genuinely concerned, but the police commissioner is cold-hearted and distant. He wishes to place the blame on Matvei, who was seen leaving the building that night. The doctor is the only one of the three with a developed conscience: he is horrified by the prospect of an innocent man going to jail for his crime (p. 401). The cowardly magistrate says: "'In our place, anyone would have done what we did... We did not desire her death, did we?'" (p. 403). Meanwhile, there is a meeting of workers from the railroad and the nearby papermaking plant. They know the truth; as one says: "They killed her themselves, and they are conducting the trial..." (p. 404). At this

junction, the murder becomes the focal point for the workers to rally against the injustices done to them by the established order. The young woman who was violated and murdered becomes the symbol of their own oppression and the loss of what was good and beautiful in their lives. In the voice of the man who accused the officials "something began to grow, huge, compelling, and threatening as an approaching cloud" (p. 405)

As Nina's coffin is borne through the streets, the mob confronts the officials and the governor, who has arrived to review the case. The narrator remarks that "the terrible, pale shadow of chaos rose over the mob" (p. 410). The crowd denounces the officials and pursues them. Old Ivolgin asks them if they think there is "'only justice for others and none for them'" (p. 409). During that night, the streets already resemble a place where a battle is to take place: soldiers have appeared to put down the uprising. The scene may be based on the "Bloody Sunday" massacre of demonstrators in the streets of Petersburg, as in this scene there are the people on one side of the square and the cavalry on the other. Soon after the confrontation in the story, the mounted soldiers charge, and the scene changes into a nightmare (p. 412). Everything disappears in a cloud of smoke as the soldiers fire on the crowd. In the last chapter, the town is quiet. "Toward evening the clouds parted and the sun came out" (p. 413). Chickens and dogs are the only

creatures to be seen on the streets. An "oppressive, unseen, lifeless force" stands over the town. The horror of Nina's death has been compounded by the deaths of others.

"Uzhas" makes the transition from personal terror and oppression to that which causes revolution. Nina's death sparks the rebellion, but once begun, it is a rebellion against injustice and the corruption of the rulers. It is an uprising of the oppressed against the oppressors. The specter of death and revolution hangs in the air. Nina's rape-murder represents the oppression of the individual by a corrupt society. She is a victim, just as is Pasha Tumanov, Kupriian or Anton ("Iz podvala").

All the stories presented here are based on the difference between men and women, especially in their position in society. Like differences in wealth and class, the difference in sex can give rise not only to difficulties, but also to oppression. In the most positive of the stories, "Zhena," the individual has asserted his own will to live and is true to it. When the dignity of the individual is perverted, prostitution, rape, and murder are possible.

Part 2: The Revolution of 1905

Oh, Russian people!
 You are becoming the shadows of fleeting
 mists, of mists that have always swept
 in from the Baltic. Into these mists
 guns have been pointed.

Andrei Belyi, St. Petersburg

Can it be that there is not room for all men
 on this beautiful earth under those immeasurable
 starry heavens? Can it be possible that in the
 midst of this entrancing Nature, feelings of
 hatred, vengeance, or the desire to exterminate
 their fellow beings can endure in the souls of
 men? All that is unkind in the hearts of men
 should, one would think, vanish at contact with
 Nature — that most direct expression of beauty
 and goodness.

War! What an incomprehensible phenomenon!
 Leo Tolstoy, "The Raid," 1852

In the early years of the twentieth century in Russia, there are discernible among the intelligentsia both a deep awareness of the need for social and political change and, at the same time, a profound aversion to war and bloodshed. Tolstoy's ideas as expressed in his late writings were influential. Artsybashev, like Andreev and Kuprin, laments the brutality of wars.¹ The titles of the three works here treated give sharp visual images of Artsybashev's impressions of the revolution of 1905: "Teni utra" (Shadows of Morning) 1905, "Krovavoe piatno" (The Bloodstain) 1906, and "Chelovecheskaia volna" (The Human Wave) 1906, are all strikingly visual titles. Here morning shadows are disquieting, while the mornings in Artsybashev's fiction usually dawn brightly and affirmatively. Perhaps in these shadows lurk the phantoms

evoked in "Uzhas." The spot of blood is a direct result of the violence of revolt. The human wave sweeps over the earth like one of nature's destructive forces — a tidal wave. Artsybashev's attitude towards the revolutionary activities of his time is evident in these three works. His characters are molded by the events of 1905, and often through them the author's voice is heard.

"Teni utra"

"Teni utra" was generally well received by the critics. A good critique of the story appeared in 1905, written by Ovsianiko-Kulikovskii.² The only point of disagreement might be with his interpretation of the "morning shadows." As the story is generally well covered by this critic, it may be useful to expand upon a point he makes that Chekhov's "Nevesta" (The Bride, 1903) is the basis for the plot of this story. Before the death of the tubercular student Pasha, a revolutionary sympathizer, he reads "Nevesta" and likes the story very much. In Artsybashev's story, there are aspects of characterization, plot and setting which are comparable to Chekhov's work. Firstly, characterization: in "Nevesta," the catalyst for the heroine Nadia's decision to leave her home in a small provincial town is a young student who is ill — Sasha. These two characters, Nadia and Sasha, appear in "Teni utra" as Liza and Pasha. Pasha talks much about the need for change and the need to do something constructive with one's life, but he himself is weak and sick.

The character's main function is to inspire Liza to attempt to change her life. The experiences of the heroines are somewhat similar as well. They are both about to be married; both have oppressive matriarchal homes. When the young women leave for the city, they both experience anxiety on the train, feeling that their past is lost and their future unknown. The difference in the heroines lies in the manner in which they attempt to re-shape their futures. Liza has obviously overstepped her capabilities. She functions poorly in the city, has an unhappy love affair with a revolutionary terrorist, and commits suicide. She is too preoccupied with her own problems, as is also her roommate, the Jewish Dora (who has no counterpart in Chekhov's story). Chekhov does not state exactly what it is that Nadia is doing in Petersburg. Artsybashev's heroine has begun to work in medicine. The main emphasis in "Nevesta" is on Nadia's evolution, the process itself rather than what the result of this metamorphosis will be. Nadia's/Liza's fiancé, in both stories, does not measure up to the heroine. She has already advanced beyond him and would not be content with the life he could offer.

It is apparent from the above discussion of characterization that the plots are also similar. The trips the heroines make to the city, then home again, and the final break with home, are comparable. Liza finds she cannot live peacefully in either place, and commits suicide in the city.

The inability to cope with life is a theme seen before in Artsybashev ("Gololobov," Sanin). Nadia decides, on her last visit home, that this environment is stifling. She leaves, "she supposed, forever."³ Her mood is "lively, gay."⁴ The conclusion of this story is open-ended, to be supplied by the reader's imagination. Perhaps Chekhov developed his heroine as far as he could without compromising the reality of the first years of the twentieth century. Chekhov's story is of the bride, whereas Artsybashev's adds other characters and activities: a small group of terrorists are introduced, who plan to assassinate an important person, presumably a government official. Also, Pasha succumbs to his illness, Liza commits suicide, and Dora is arrested for her part in the terrorist activities. After Pasha's death and Liza's suicide, the story really becomes a different one. This is done rather smoothly, as Dora now becomes the central figure. Before examining more closely the ideas of the terrorists, which form an important part of the story, there is yet one more comparison to be noted between "Nevesta" and "Teni utra". David Maxwell, in his article on the Chekhov story, states: ". . . 'Nevesta' is characterized by an exceptional number of references to time. Five of the six chapters begin with such references."⁵ Likewise, in Artsybashev's story, many of the introductory sentences identify the time of day or year: Chapter I, "It was spring"; Chapter II, "In the evening. . ."; Chapter III, "After four months. . ."; Chapter IV,

"Spring began"; Chapter VI, "Liza arrived home... Again it was spring"; Chapter VII, "After three days...": Chapter VIII, "In the middle of February..."; and so on. The garden at Liza's home is an echo of Nadia's garden. Chekhov's love of nature and constant use of it as a backdrop is also echoed in Artsybashev's story.

The three main revolutionaries are: the practical peasant Andreev, the cold and hard Korenev, and the life-loving Neznamov. Each represents a world view. Andreev's is much like Sanin's: he believes that life is simple and one must firstly love oneself:

'— we must love ourselves as we are — a man of flesh, blood and spirit equally!.. We must love our existence, our body, our pleasures, our individuality, our present reality, not falsely colored artificial world views...'⁶

This maxim, as he further explains, cannot, unfortunately, apply to all men. Those whose lives are devoid of beauty and communion with nature are condemned to remain thus. Andreev does not describe fully the manner in which one attains the higher awareness of one's intrinsic worth, and yet it seems, tautologically, based on individual self-respect.

Korenev is characterized by Andreev as being "complex and a born fighter" (p. 264):

'He went into this type of activity [revolutionary] only because today there is not a higher or more desperate battle... Only in the struggle for freedom, where all man's strength is strained either to break the chains or to perish himself, is this kind

of effort necessary. . . . Korenev is by nature a
cruel man... ' [pp. 264-265]

Neznamov is also characterized by Andreev. The peasant says that Neznamov is one of that type of people who take the whole weight of the world upon themselves. This burden is so great that the person must actively oppose the evils and injustices of life or perish himself (p. 265). The morning of the planned assassination, Neznamov admits how much he loves life and what a pity it is that he must sacrifice it:

'Maybe this is the last dawn that I will greet...
I am only sorry for this!.. Really, I am a dreamer:
I love the sun, the sky, autumn, spring... I love
the grass... all that is light, quiet and life-
loving... and really I don't want to kill anyone,
nor to die myself... [p. 270]

This feeling is reflected in the words of the author himself, as quoted in Chapter I of this study: "'I am an anarchist-individualist... but I am not prepared to kill anyone and I do not endorse violence.'"⁷ There exists a conflict between the need for action and the reluctance to commit violence. The terrorism in "Teni utra" is pointless: the plot fails and the group is arrested. Nothing is solved; indeed, no answer is given to the question, "What is to be done?"

"Krovavoe piatno"

The story of 1905, "Krovavoe piatno" (The Bloodstain), leaves one with an even stronger feeling about the impossibility of change by revolution. The central character, the

station-master Anisimov, has found his life transformed by the revolution. The "universal uprising" has put an end to his former feeling of uselessness. A description of his new state of mind begins the story:

All these days Anisimov had hardly slept, but he felt healthier and livelier than ever. It was as if he had grown younger, and his thin, awkward figure with its mournful, long nose, moved quickly and gaily about the station.

It was all so quick, so unexpected and good, that he experienced the feeling now as if he were swept by a clean, fresh wave, rushing away to some unknown place and clearing away without a trace the old, dull, oppressive life.⁸

The theme of the story is the difference between the revolution in Anisimov's mind and the reality of fighting and death. In this lies the tragedy of the story: that which Anisimov had welcomed as giving him new life is the cause of his death. The story sketches Anisimov's realization that what he had yearned for — change and the "new wave" — has brought death. He had always envisioned war as very much apart from anything in his own experience:

. . . in the first place, it always seemed that it only happened in very special places, which were set aside for it, and that these places were unlike any place where people carried on their day-to-day lives; and secondly, the people participating in the war were unique, and not able to experience fear and suffering as did normal workers, clerks, women and children. Anisimov knew, of course, that this was not how it really was... [p. 294]

Anisimov does not even know how to use a gun (p. 292). He mentally prepares for the battle by telling himself that "maybe he will just be wounded," but also that "sacrifices

are necessary" (p. 291). His confusion mounts as he sees people ready themselves for battle. When he sees his friend the machinist dead, only then does he realize what is at stake. He mumbles to himself, "'They killed him... My God, what is this?'" (p. 296). Reality has become incomprehensible — a nightmare. Time loses its meaning: "The battle lasted a quarter of an hour, but it seemed to Anisimov that it happened in a minute" (p. 298). A locomotive approaches, carrying soldiers to crush the rebellion. Under Anisimov's leadership, a barricade is made of the cars at the station. But the rebel forces are soon dispersed and the soldiers take over. The station-master is taken prisoner and held for execution. His terror at the turn of events is highlighted by the description of the soldiers moving about in the light of the camp-fire. One officer is only partially illuminated so that he seems to have only half a face (p. 301). In the room where Anisimov is held, "the shadows of the soldiers and officers walked slowly and silently along the illuminated wall and became bent in the corners." With the contrast of light and dark, silent shadows and the officer with the "half face," a dream-like atmosphere is created. During this night, as it passes in sleeplessness, Anisimov recalls his life.

A large part of the story is devoted to this flashback and to the thoughts of the station-master about his impending death. He wonders why "people he had never seen in his life

should come, take him away and kill him like a dog" (p. 308). In his state of panic his mind searches for that idea, that word which will save him. He seems to see his future and view his own sad corpse ". . . not only dead but shot in the head and chest, with cold dead eyes, and his mouth open, full of snow and red ice" (p. 309). He is tormented also by the thought that his life has been so poor and miserable, but finally comes to the conclusion that since it was so oppressive, it would be just as well if he were killed. In despair and as a final gesture of impotent rebellion against his fate, he puts his hands through the window pane, cutting himself, and tears at the bars over the window. The soldiers guarding him are taken aback by this action and seem to understand for a moment the tragic absurdity of what they are caught up in. But the moment passes, and a soldier subdues the prisoner with a blow to his "bony chest" (p. 316). Thoughts of his wife and children arise in his mind for the first time: what will they do without him? He begins to write a letter, which makes his situation all the more real to him. He cries out as did Christ on the cross: "'Lord, Lord... Lord!.. Why am I so tormented?'" (Gospodi, Gospodi... Gospodi!.. Za chto zhe menia tak muchaiut? — p. 321). Finally, exhausted by mental and physical anguish, he falls asleep clutching his letter. This segment (chapter IV) ends with a description of the prisoner as he sleeps:

The pale dawn carefully and curiously entered the room and looked upon the pale face which had become

but a skull during the passage of one day. [On this face] were traces of tears and a mournful expression. [p. 322]

After the above description of a pitiful human creature, the next section (chapter V) begins abruptly, jarring the reader: "He was executed at eight o'clock in the morning" (Ibid.). The narrator then retraces the last hours and minutes of the station-master — a dream and impressions. This reverse chronology effectively contributes to the dramatic impact of the story. In his nightmare he meets a large snake, a symbol of death. He finds himself entombed in an underground cave with the earth closing behind him and the snake menacingly approaching. As the snake advances, Anisimov awakens to find a thin soldier in a grey overcoat standing above him — a transformation of the "long, slimy, grey body" of the serpent. Anisimov says he must have his cap, to which the soldier replies, "'It doesn't make any difference, you can [go to your death] without cap!'" (Da vse ravno, možno i bez shapki; p. 324). The inevitable has taken over. The endpoint, that he will be shot, now motivates everything. As Anisimov walks out into the morning, he looks like a madman: "He looked sick and tormented, his face was ashen, his eyes rolled and his hair was disheveled" (pp. 324-325). His final request is that the letter to his wife be delivered. He looks at it in the soldier's hand and thinks that this piece of paper is all that is left of his life. Already detached from the world, Anisimov marches the short distance to the

small graveyard where he is to be executed; he looks at things but they mean nothing to him. His despair has been replaced by resignation, and yet he wishes he could communicate to them what he is living through — if only he could, they would understand the horror of the situation: "'They don't have to kill me and I don't have to die... Because I do not have the word with which to convey to them all the terror and oppression of this...'" (p. 327). The "word" that Anisimov is searching for would be an expression of human love that would make it impossible for one man to wage war against another — a magical formula for peace.

Long after his death, the place where Anisimov falls bears witness to the horror of war. A spot of blood remains on the snow:

The long winter covered it with snow, but in spring it melted and a brown spot again appeared for a while, then, together with the melting snow, faded under the joyous rays of the bright sun and became one with the soft, living earth. [p. 328]

The conclusion of "Krovavoe piatno" is much like that of "Smert' Lande." In both, the human remains — Lande's body and Anisimov's blood — are absorbed by the earth. Both characters, through the trials of their lives, have earned final peace in union with the earth.

The image of the crowd at the railroad station gives the same impression of a faceless mass as that in "Uzhas" and "Chelovecheskaia volna." The same comparison of the people to ants occurs in "Krovavoe piatno" and "Chelovecheskaia

volna." Some of the crowd descriptions are as follows:

. . . from the movement of the black crowds
[chernykh tolpa] about the platform and tracks it
seemed as if everything were alive like an ant-hill...

[p. 281]

The crowd again welcomed them [incoming trains]
with long, thunderous shouts from which it seemed
the earth resounded mightily.

[p. 284]

. . . nervous and somber crowds.

[p. 288]

. . . the whole station was crowded with a huge,
moving mob.

[p. 290]

. . . [soldiers] returned as a long dark belt
moving like a wave, slowly approaching.

[p. 293]

. . . the grey rows were broken, reformed and,
as if from the wind, fell back.

[p. 296]

These crowd scenes are interposed with personal stories,
functioning as the background.

Leonid Andreev's story of spring 1908, "Rasskaz o semi poveshennykh" ("The Seven Who Were Hanged"), describes executions set in a deserted country place. The mood created at the execution scene is much like that of Artsybashev's 1906 story. When one reads the following passage, one thinks of Anisimov's last minutes and the conclusion of "Krovavoe piatno":

— I am alone,— said Tania suddenly and sighed.
— Serezha died and Verner and Vasia. I am alone.
Little soldiers, little soldiers, I am alone.
Alone...

Over the sea the sun rose.

They placed the corpses in a box. They then
took them away. With drawn-out necks, and crazily
staring eyes, with puffy blue tongues like terrible
flowers thrust out through the lips washed with
bloody foam,— the corpses returned along the same
road they had themselves walked when alive. And the
spring snow was still soft and fragrant, and the
spring air was still fresh and brisk. And Sergei's

lost, worn-down galosh showed black on the snow.

And people greeted the rising sun.⁹

Both authors' treatments of the executions are very matter-of-fact, making the events seem all the more terrible. Death comes, takes its toll, and then silently moves on, leaving the world seemingly the same. However, the death of Artsybashev's hero is commemorated by the blood-stain. Anisimov, like many of Artsybashev's heroes, is a victim of the socio-political realities of the day.

"Chelovecheskaia volna"

The long story, or novella, "Chelovecheskaia volna" (The Human Wave), was first published in Trudovyi Put', issues 1 and 2 of 1907. The "human wave" characterizes the revolutionary activities of 1905. The plot makes use of an actual historical event — the mutiny of the sailors aboard the battleship "Potemkin" in the Black Sea.

One important new character appears in this work: the middle-aged, world-weary, kind-hearted, fat doctor. In this story he is called Lavrenko; in Artsybashev's large novel, U poslednei cherty (Breaking Point, 1911-12), he is called Arnoldi, but the character is essentially the same. There is much more of a likeness between these two doctors than between any of the so-called Sanin-types (such as the artist Mikhailov of U poslednei cherty, or the artist in "Zhena"). The novella is affected by Dr. Lavrenko's views on life, much as Sanin is by the attitude of its hero. But Artsybashev's point of view

has shifted; Lavrenko is full of compassion and love of life, and he, like Sanin, appreciates the beauty of nature and women, but in a more passive, philosophic way.

The four other main characters of the work have been at least partly established before in Artsybashev's gallery of personae. The sensual, young, handsome Dr. Zarnitskii is much like Zarudin, but lacks the latter's cruel streak. The student Konchaev is the life-loving, healthy, Sanin type. One is made aware of this by his first appearance in the story, where he reflects to himself: "'It is good, interesting to be alive'" (Khorosho, interesno zhit'),¹⁰ Slivin, the sickly, gentle student is a combination of Semenev and IUrii Svarozhich; his inability to express himself to the girl he loves, and his indecision remind one of IUrii; his illness and unhealthy appearance are reminiscent of Semenev. The lovely, vital Zina Zek is one of the many beautiful women who inhabit Artsybashev's fiction. She could be either Zina Karsavina or Lida Sanina of Sanin.)¹⁰

The setting as the story begins is also typical: it is a beautiful spring twilight. The narrator comments that when nature is so beautiful it is possible to forget that there is to be a battle the next day. It is impossible to forget that it is spring. In the first long sentence of the work, the narrator contrasts man's reaction to two opposite realities — spring and war. He expresses the belief that it was the wind, the fragrances and quiet of spring which haunted

man, not the fear of pain and death. This observation colors the work from the outset with optimistic hues. As the student Konchaev walks in the street, enchanted by the evening, he remembers that he is supposed to see Dr. Lavrenko on business concerning the revolt. He finds Lavrenko playing billiards, engrossed in the game.¹¹ This is the first glimpse of the doctor: "Lavrenko was bent over the bright green billiard table, his large, indolent body strangely and self-confidently adroit for such a large clumsy person" (p. 7). His characteristic address "Golub' moi" (my pigeon, my dear) greets Konchaev. Lavrenko is as passionate about his billiard game as Konchaev is about Zina. Besides his bulk, his endearing speech, and his love of billiards, he also sighs repeatedly, giving the impression that he is burdened or oppressed in some way. After his introduction on page 7, he sighs repeatedly, at least once a page: page 8 "sighed heavily", page 9 "sighed heavily", page 10 "sighed even more deeply" and "again sighed heavily"; Konchaev is annoyed by this habit:

— Why are you always sighing so, doctor?

— It's sad [grustno]...

— What's sad here?

— They'll shoot, many people will be killed, what will happen then? for what?

— Why do you say for what?.. Sacrifices are necessary for such an important enterprise... For what? — for the common cause, for freedom.

— For whom?

— For everyone!

— Not, not for everyone... Freedom will be for those who remain alive, those who are not the sacrifices, my pigeon... And for those who perish, there will be no freedom, only death... Those who offer up hundreds of lives in sacrifice will see: for what, and those who die, my pigeon, it is for nothing... do you think people will be one iota happier?.. [p. 11]

Lavrenko further states that what makes killing possible in war is that each person thinks that it is not he who will be killed but someone else. Konchaev argues that he would be very happy to die for the common cause. The doctor tells him that the only reason he feels this way is that he is still young, and life is beautiful for him. He exclaims: "'How much joy, life and sunshine there is on this earth!'" (p. 12). He says that he also believes that those who are happy pity those who are oppressed. If this were not so, "we would not preach ideas of revolution, but suicide."¹² The doctor admits that he is afraid but will stay nonetheless to aid the wounded. He is resigned to his fear and his revulsion towards killing and dying, and dedicated to try to alleviate suffering whenever possible. The first chapter ends with a glimpse of the infinity of the universe, which gives perspective to the earthly cares and trials of man: "Two large, motionless stars shone close in front of them, deceptively near yet far" (p. 14). This device, comparing the worlds of man and nature, is used throughout the narrative.

The subplot in the story of the rebellion is the love affair of Konchaev and Zina. In their love, they represent all the beauty of life and also the strength of life to

endure anything. Their meeting on the night before the battle is especially well drawn. He wants her to express her feelings about him and to admit that he is very important to her. He asks: "'Zinochka, will you cry if I am killed tomorrow?'" (p. 21). His tone is "gay and shy" (Ibid.). The garden where they meet leads to the sea. The night, sea and spring fragrances form the background of the scene. As in "Smert' Lande" and Sanin, female characters are often viewed at night, creating a mysterious, sensual atmosphere about them. Her feelings echo those of Mar'ia Nikolaevna ("Lande") as she experiences the power of physical attraction to Konchaev: "In her soul was a persistent desire for something she did not yet know or understand" (p. 23). The theme of Zina and Konchaev continues throughout the story, although they do not meet again until the last scenes. Zina is loved not only by Konchaev, but by the student Slivin and Dr. Lavrenko as well; their love is secret and neither dares confess it. The doctor feels joyful about Konchaev and Zina as he repeats to himself, "'dear little youth'" (milaia malen'kaia molodost', p. 25). The night before the battle, he sits in his room and reviews his own life — hospitals, hundreds of suffering people, his secret love for Zina, billiards, and the bitter taste of beer are what make up his life. As he sits in a cab, he and the driver exchange a few philosophical words:

— They want a better life, — stated Lavrenko —
and maybe you want one too... Could you really be

happy with your life?

— Is one to be satisfied?.. It's difficult to live... Life is not easy, it is most difficult, but it is possible to live...

— How is it possible? — Lavrenko said with angry sadness — day and night you sit on the driver's seat...with a bent back and you're not an old man... Besides a horse's tail, cold, and hunger you know nothing, you are tormented, there's the bath house, tea, sometimes blows, lice consume you, and you say — you can live!.. It that life?

— . . . it is a bitter life, but all the same... it is a burden... but one must live... [pp. 26-27]

Even lives like the cabby's and Sasha's (the prostitute) go on. Life is reason enough for living, despite the pain of the experience.

Dr. Zarnitskii and the student Slivin are next introduced into the narrative. The group — Konchaev, Lavrenko, Zarnitskii and Slivin — are discussing the imminent battle. Zarnitskii is seen through Lavrenko's eyes as "a mass of healthy muscles and flesh, whose whole life consists in the fact that this healthy, beautiful mass of flesh eats, drinks, sleeps and has intercourse with women" (p. 36). Slivin is a direct contrast to Zarnitskii, as he is tall and thin as a pole, and sickly. As they talk of death, the narrator gives insights into their thoughts: each fears death and is ashamed of this fear. Slivin believes it is better to die fighting than in bed from illness. Lavrenko thinks it is more natural to die from illness. He expresses the belief that man spends so much time trying to cure illness and prolong life, that it seems a pity that "along with all the attempts to save

and preserve life there are those idiots who seek to destroy it'" (pp. 31-32). He says that the only type of death one may "smile at" is that which comes of one's own free will. The doctor further states that man's real, invincible strength is irony (p. 33). He relates an anecdote of a Turk who, being impaled, says to his captors, "That's not bad for a start." These comments by Lavrenko, concerning the power of irony, together with his observations on his own life and the life of the cabby, make him a kind of "Sisyphus" in Albert Camus's definition:

Si ce mythe est tragique, c'est que son héros est conscient. Où serait en effet sa peine, si à chaque pas l'espoir de réussir le soutenait? L'ouvrier d'aujourd'hui travaille, tous les jours de sa vie, aux mêmes tâches et ce destin n'est pas moins absurde. Mais il n'est tragique qu'aux rares moments où il devient conscient. Sisyphe, prolétaire des dieux, impuissant et révolté, connaît toute l'étendue de sa misérable condition: c'est à elle qu'il pense pendant sa descente. La clairvoyance qui devait faire son tourment consomme du même coup sa victoire. Il n'est pas de destin qui ne se surmonte par le mépris.¹³

The lives of the diseased prostitute Sasha, Anton the shoemaker, Kupriian and Sanin may also be described in the context of the Absurd.

Both Lavrenko and Slivin envy Zarnitskii's physical beauty; however, it is Zarnitskii's over-emphasis on the physical nature of life which is the flaw that leads to his destruction. When his colleagues leave, he becomes obsessed by the fear of death; even honor or duty cannot hold him to his revolutionary commitments. He tells himself:

I am the center of the universe; for me all exists only because I exist, and with my death all will disappear. That means I will sacrifice myself for a mirage, which will not even exist after my death. It's not cowardice, but simple logic... Those idiots who die will be idiots and that's all...

[p. 42]

He decides to flee rather than face death.

In a confrontation between Zina and her father, Zarnitskii's words are echoed. Zina exclaims: "'It is base! .. to flee!.. vile!..' " — to which her father replies: "'In my opinion it is vile to endanger the lives of others for their useless dreams!'" (p. 56). One of the strongest points of this work is the multiplicity of convincing points of view which are presented. Each major character has his own ideas as to why one should or should not die for a common cause. To each, one might nod and agree: yes, it is true. Zina, her father, Zarnitskii, Konchaev, Lavrenko, and even the cabby, live in accordance with their beliefs.

The day of battle: a visit by Konchaev to the battleship to talk with the mutinous crew, endless street fighting and crowd scenes, Slivin's death, executions by the soldiers, and Lavrenko's visit to the Duma to plead for an order to protect his field clinic from the gunfire, are presented in the remaining chapters. The first eight chapters describe the main characters and set the stage for their action in the rebellion. The image of the crowd, the human wave, is introduced with descriptions of the battle. These descriptions of the crowd as it ebbs and flows like the sea across

the town are too numerous and become tiresome to the reader; they could be reduced almost by half and be more effective. The author is trying to stress the feelings of the crowd, and in some cases does it well. One of the best depictions of the crowd is in a confrontation with a police officer. He shouts at them, but they simply pour over him, beating and trampling him and finally throwing his body into the sea. Konchaev watches in horror:

It seemed as if a wave of dark, lashing anger and insanity rushed from an unknown source. The crowd rushed forward, rose, and it seemed as if those in front were thrust upwards, and the crazily swarming mass of bodies, arms and heads with red crazy eyes fell upon the policeman in the blue shirt. [p. 67]

The policeman's blood is at first visible on the ground, but then disappears: "There was nothing there but dust, trampled by hundreds of human feet" (p. 71).

Konchaev, Slivin and Lavrenko are each portrayed in the immediacy of battle. In the scene following the murder of the policeman by the crowd, Konchaev visits the battleship anchored off the coast. The peacefulness of the sea contrasts with the crowd's frenzy, once again reminding one of the beauty of nature and its distance from man's world. Konchaev is impressed by the spirit of the mutineers as expressed by one sailor: "'We are not certain that we will win. We are simply going to our death [my prosto idem na smert']... In this only is all our strength'" (p, 74). The mutineers are an inspiration to the crowd: these are men who "had already crossed the boundary separating them from the old world"

(p. 76). There is also the hope that the ship will aid in the uprising by shelling the governor's residence.

Lavrenko's trip to the Duma chambers shows why that group is ineffectual: they are all concerned with philosophy and oratory, not with the pressing problems of the moment. The fault lies not only with them, but also with the pompous governor-general. Lavrenko is detached and looks at the man as something not human: he asks himself why this man does not do all in his power to avoid useless bloodshed and death.

From his vantage point in the temporary clinic set up off the main street, Lavrenko watches the ebb and flow of people across the town. When a man crawls up to him, not wounded but drunk, the doctor begins to hate people. All man's baser instincts disgust him: "'They should be looking forward to a better life... but only want to plunder and kill... they will soon begin to tear at each other's throats for a crust of bread!'" (p. 100). These words echo those of the ferryman in "Smert' Lande." Lavrenko sees men as savages and wishes that he could "'with one blow destroy everything, so that the earth would be turned into an icy desert'" (p. 101). Around him is "a noise as if pigs were being slaughtered" (p. 102).

Konchaev fights in the streets at a barricade. The soldiers push the rebels back, and Konchaev finds himself at the railway station, where he jumps onto a train. Exhausted, he is half awake, half unconscious, as the train leaves the

town.

Slivin also begins fighting in the street. At first he is overcome by his fear of death, then volunteers to go on a scouting mission with another rebel. He thinks to himself: "'What would Zinochka think if she saw this pale, frightened face?'" (p. 120). When separated from his comrade, he hides at first, but when he sees soldiers passing, he acts as if unconsciously and attacks them. More soldiers arrive and beat him, and as he is led away to be shot he thinks: "'Here is the death I feared so much. I am to die, but it is not at all terrible, or important'" (p. 129). Slivin's body is left where it falls: "The body lay there on the grass by the barn a long while, gazing up into the wide blue sky with dead eyes, and with outstretched arms as if it wished to embrace the whole world" (p. 130). Yet another of Artsybashev's heroes meets his end in symbolic union with the earth.

Meanwhile, when Konchaev awakens, it is dawn. His soul responds to the beauty of the morning. He feels "as fresh and bright as the clear, light, sparkling spring morning" (p. 134). Man may destroy his world, but nature sustains her own. Konchaev, like many other of Artsybashev's heroes, derives strength from the beauty of nature.

The day after the battle finds the townspeople ready to resume their lives. The narrator comments:

All the stupid, weak and cruel people who make human life vile, oppressive and unjust cannot be

swept away at once. And so the wave, which tried to reach the sky, fell back of its own weight.

[p. 135]

Zarnitskii, who has fled from the town, returns and tries to decide what to do. It is possible that people will think that he was detained by the police, and yet he really believes that the truth will be evident to all. He wishes to go away somewhere and begin life again, but he goes to the hospital anyway, hoping that he will not be confronted. As he enters the hospital, the narrator comments: ". . . if someone had seen him then . . . they would have thought him an old man, and he himself would have been horrified" (p. 140). The head doctor greets him warmly, saying they had been told that he died on a barricade with a red flag in his hand! The scene in which Zarnitskii and Lavrenko meet is extremely powerful and dramatic. As Zarnitskii enters the room, Lavrenko stands looking out at the street. The bulk of his figure blocks out the light from the window. Zarnitskii extends his hand, but braces himself for a blow to the face. Lavrenko takes his hand, and Zarnitskii feels his face redden as he trembles and grimaces. Lavrenko talks calmly about the previous day's losses. It is thought that Konchaev had died on a barricade. Slivin's fate is known. When Zarnitskii asks about "our" men, the word sounds strange: ". . . the self-assured, fascinating, handsome man had died, and he who appeared in his place was pitiful and repulsive" (pp. 144-155). Lavrenko leaves him without a word:

For a minute it seemed as if Lavrenko would spit in Zarnitskii's face, but instead of that — and still more horrible, — Lavrenko came forward, heading straight for Zarnitskii, and when Zarnitskii suddenly stepped aside, Lavrenko moved unswervingly as if he had passed right through him, and left the room.

The door closed and Zarnitskii was left alone.
[p. 145]

Zarnitskii's situation and character is reminiscent of Zarudin in Sanin. Both are broken because they are really cowards and cannot face life as it is. The facades that they present to friends are finally exposed in crisis situations and both flee — Zarudin from life by suicide, and Zarnitskii from the place of battle.

The story does not end on the negativism of Zarnitskii's defeat or the passivity of Lavrenko's irony, but on an affirmation of the life cycle. Konchaev's train ride takes him to the summer resort where Zina's family has gone. He finds Zina alone at the dacha; their meeting is rendered with tenderness, vigor and sensitive symbolism:

Everything vanished except the two of them — joyfully embracing, the strong and tender, large and small, hard and supple bodies wrapping each other in sweetly tormenting fire and warm, light mist.
[p. 157]

The narrator relates that they are not ashamed of their nakedness, and will always remember these minutes with pleasure. The result of their union is Zina's conception of a new life:

Everything seemed new and joyful to her, and her body, young and fresh as a flower washed by the

morning dew, was full of happiness, and somewhere
 in its mysterious depths a new, as yet undiscerned,
 human life had begun. [p. 158]

The stars which represent man's hopes and aspirations are witness to this creation: ". . . through the wide open window, past the darkened tree branches, the spring stars looked into the room" (smotreli v komnatu vesennie zvezdy, Ibid.). Their union is blessed by nature. This passage presents one of Artsybashev's most positive conclusions to a work. Sanin and "Zhenia" are optimistic, but show the heroes alone. "Chelovecheskaia volna" expresses a glimmer of hope for coming generation. If it is too optimistic to interpret the ending as hopeful, it can at least be understood as presenting life's renewal by the continuous birth-death cycle.

* * * * *

Artsybashev's technique as a story writer has remained much the same as in his previous works. His descriptive passages, however, seem to show a transition from impressionism to expressionism, as seen, for example, in the nature scenes described in "Schast'e," "Teni utra," "Krovavoe piatno" and "Chelovecheskaia volna." The optimism expressed in the last work presented here is counter-balanced by the other stories in this chapter. Further, this expressionistic vision juxtaposes the beauty of life with its more sordid aspects as if to ask, "Why is this so?" Why does man make

his life a torment for himself and others? Revolution is not the answer for this author, as it too causes suffering and death. Artsybashev's artistic sensibility seen in these stories is very much that of the modern expressionist who recognizes the pain of life. Artsybashev the writer, however, was not completely overwhelmed by existential isolationism induced by the complexities of the new century. The author searched, like the station-master in "Krovavoe piatno," for that word which would show man the futility of war and killing, and the beauty of life as it could be.

CHAPTER IV

THE ANARCHY OF DEATH: STORIES 1906-1910

'Polozhenie kazhdogo cheloveka est' polozhenie prigovorennogo k smertnoi kazni.'

('The situation of every man is the situation of one sentenced to death.')

M. Artsybashev,
"Podpraporshchik Gololobov"
(1902)

The stories discussed in this chapter mark a change in Artsybashev's world outlook. Comparing these stories with his earlier works, it is possible to see the scales tipping from life to death. Indeed, the author's two large novels represent opposite philosophies of life. In Sanin, the strong individual in union with life and nature triumphs. In U poslednei cherty (Breaking Point), living has lost all meaning, leaving death to dictate annihilation. Violence, ugliness and death are included in the works considered in the previous chapters, and yet, for the most part, life and the beauty of living are triumphant. A brief recapitulation of those works will serve as an introduction to the works to be discussed here. Thus, the evolution of the author's Weltanschauung may be clearly outlined.

In Artsybashev's first stories, society is the main obstacle to man's realization of the beauty of life. In "Pasha Tumanov," the old fisherman Kostrov lives his life

on the river enjoying nature. Kupriian the horse-thief lives freely, wildly, until he is physically subdued by the angry husband of his lover. The suicide of young Gololobov opens Dr. Solodovnikov's eyes to the beauty of the world as Artsybashev reminds his readers that "It is better to be a live dog than a dead lion." The story "Krov'" presents the secret world of nature with extreme sensitivity; man is seen as the destroyer of and out of harmony with the world of the forest, field and pond. Nature's "immortality" is questioned scientifically in "Smekh"; the realization that the world will continue after an individual dies causes the major character, a doctor, to lose his mind. Sustaining life and immortality are obviously desired. The shoemaker Anton of "Iz podvala" experiences joy and freedom when he escapes from his oppressive life. Lande both marvels at the beauty of the world and suffers from its injustices. His saintly life and death speak for the possibility of man's goodness. In death he is united with nature. Sanin personifies, is, life itself — beautiful, strong, natural. The artist hero and his wife of "Zhena" discover the significance of their own individuality and express what may well be Artsybashev's own thoughts: "I was happy for my wife, for myself, for every person who could freely, strongly, and joyfully live."¹

The stories "Bunt" and "Schast'e" depict miserable lives, but lives that continue with their own small, pitiful joys nonetheless. The three stories, "Uzhas," "Teni utra"

and "Krovavoe piatno," show life destroyed senselessly by man's stupidity: the revolution brings death and not liberation. But despite this, the story "Chelovecheskaia volna" ends, after a day of battle, with an affirmation of life: a statement that life will continue to renew itself, and perhaps even perfect itself, rings in the last lines of the work. A new life is conceived on which rests, we may infer, the hope of man.

"Milliony" (Millions, 1908) appears in Volume IV of Rasskazy with the other long story just mentioned, "Chelovecheskaia volna." It represents the beginning of the reign of pessimism and death which is to characterize Artsybashev's later stories, novel, plays and other works. Death in its many manifestations, yet uniform certainty, rules the lives of the characters who are presented in the six stories discussed in this chapter. The stories, a sampling of those included in Volumes III, IV and V of Artsybashev's collected works, are extremely varied in terms of time, place and action. The settings are: the south of Russia, Petersburg, a hospital ward, ancient Jerusalem, modern America, and Paris during the Reign of Terror. The main characters are a millionaire, an anarchist, five people suffering from incurable illnesses, two brothers of Arimathea, Pontius Pilate and the crucified Jesus, an American juror, two French scientists and the chief executioner of Paris. The forms of death are diverse and terrible. Perhaps in the variety of people

and places, the author is attesting to the power of death. Anarchical death takes all — those who believe in mankind and those who do not; rich, poor, young and old; the devout and the atheist; the ill and the sound; criminals and prophets.

"Milliony"

"Milliony" (Millions) is one of the few works that the author classifies by genre. Artsybashev calls it a "povest'," a "literary work that has a less complex plot than a novel." This definition is of little significance, because the form of this work and that of Artsybashev's other longer stories — "Smert' Lande," "Bunt," "Chelovecheskaia volna" — are too similar to see a clear distinction between them. The narration, character development, plot and imagery are comparable in the four long stories. The story also bears an epigraph, taken from the Bible.² The author chooses a line from the Book of Job: "It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof" (Job 28:15). The "it" (as defined in Job 28:18) is "wisdom" which is "the fear of the Lord." Artsybashev uses the meaning of the verses in an expanded sense to mean knowledge of how to live, love and have a happy life. The idea expressed in this epigraph is central to the story. The millionaire Mizhuev is unhappy and alienated despite his great wealth. The first two descriptions of Mizhuev convey his physical appearance and state of mind: "He rested his mighty hands on the cold

marble table and solemnly looked around,"³ and "His coarse red beard and massive shoulders suggested his awesome strength and strong will, but Mizhuev's eyes were unhealthy and sunken like those of men who are doomed to death" (kak byvaiut u obrechennykh na smert', p. 162). This phrase is repeated later in the narrative, sealing Mizhuev's fate: "His eyes were terribly sunken like those of men who are condemned to death" (kak byvaiut u liudei obrechennykh na smert', p. 261).⁴

The incident which leads to Mizhuev's final disenchantment with life is related by the narrator through Mizhuev's thoughts. When the millionaire returns from a trip abroad, he goes to stay with a friend and his wife. Mizhuev and the woman begin to have an affair and finally leave to live together. The hero regrets having betrayed his friend and suspects that it is not he whom the woman loves, but his wealth. This episode in his life reaffirms his belief that he cannot be loved, like "normal people," for his human qualities. His life is poisoned by his millions. Everywhere he goes, he feels it is his money people respect, not him as a man. When the critic Abramovich says that Artsybashev "went out of his way to make Mizhuev poisonous to himself and others,"⁵ he is ignoring the sensitivity of the well-drawn psychological sketch of Mizhuev. The millionaire is a doubting, insecure, alienated, prisoner of his wealth. It is his own awareness of his situation that renders him a sympathetic

character. He says to himself: if only he could be a "happy idiot" like his debauched, sensualist, millionaire friend Parkhomenko. But Mizhuev still has a soul and a conscience which will not let him excuse his excesses. He is not a monster like Kuprin's Kvashnin in the story "Moloch" (1896), who demands human sacrifices to his great power as would a pagan god. Mizhuev's understanding of his position damns him. As the story advances, life methodically strips him of all he loves and believes in, until nothing is left except his meaningless millions. The failure of his relationship with his mistress, Mariia Sergeevna, is the first significant loss he suffers. The sacrifices for their love have been too great: Mariia's husband's life has been destroyed and her life radically changed. Artsybashev's sensitivity and insight are evident as we read his portrayal of the last weeks of their affair. They continue to be haunted by the man whose life they have destroyed. Mizhuev never really believes that Mariia loves him as she did her husband. She vainly tries, again and again, to convince him:

'My life was so dull, you came — big, strong, mighty as a tsar! I would have loved you even if you were poor... You are everything to me!'

'I am simply a crazy tyrant!' he thought.

And he wanted her to say more, to argue, to convince him.

'But, really... your husband was more intelligent and talented than I... What do I have?'

[pp. 240-241]

It does not really matter what she says, because Mizhuev is too aware of the power money has over people.

At the seaside resort where they are staying, people stare when he passes and waiters and shopkeepers stand on the alert for his command or even a glance. In the first scene, where Mizhuev sits at a restaurant, the narrator comments: ". . . the lackeys stood around and did not take their eyes off Mizhuev, as if they were awaiting a sign from him at which they would throw themselves into the sea" (p. 162). There is another smaller group presented in the story — those who scorn and despise the millionaire. Once, at a cafe, he meets some acquaintances. Two of the men in the group are writers; one is described as "a tall, thin, serious man," and the other is "a young, tubercular poet" (p. 174). Mizhuev is interested to hear their opinions on the subject of millionaires and they oblige him. The debauches of Parkhomenko are judged by one of the authors to be the ways of a "real millionaire"; he reasons: "'Parkhomenko is not abnormal... in a world where all is bought with money, Parkhomenko is normal'" (p. 202). Mizhuev pleads that a man may be what he is regardless of the money in his pocket. He probes further and is told by one of the authors, whom he highly respects: "'A millionaire, as a living person, in my opinion is an absurdity'" (p. 203). Mizhuev asks: but what about Tretiakov?⁶ The author remarks that by his interest in art he dictated to it, actually stifling it. When Mizhuev suggests that a millionaire might be a man of great talent, the author disagrees, because struggle and suffering are

needed for great talent to develop.

Mizhuev spends one pleasant evening in the company of an old general and his daughter. He feels for a while that he is with simple, honest people, who have not been touched by wealth. He even relates incidents about his school days to amuse the general and his beautiful Niurochka. He looks at her as an innocent girl and a budding woman. He imagines her naked, and realizes that he probably could have her as he had other women. As the hero becomes more aware of his innermost feelings, he begins to talk of the things that are always bothering him. He says that people can live anywhere and make their lives beautiful. The only thing man cannot live without, he states, are other people ('Bez odnogo tol'ko nel'zia zhit' cheloveku: bez liudei,' p. 189). He laments to the pair that people come to him for his wealth only. Niurochka denies this, saying "'not all'" (Ibid.). Even when real human warmth is extended to him, he cannot accept it, and as he leaves them he feels he could buy them too.

The millionaire derives no satisfaction either from honest, sincere people or from the debauches that he as a wealthy man may indulge in. He participates in a drunken revel with Parkhomenko and some other acquaintances. A woman singer entertains the group and each desires her. They decide to auction her for "a night of love and pleasure." Mizhuev outbids the others, but does not enjoy the woman's shame or the prospect of possessing her. When he does make

love to her it is as if taking out all his anger and pain on this pitiful woman. He realizes he has done a vile thing, but is trapped within his role as a millionaire.

The story can be separated into two parts: the first, Chapters I to X, takes place in the south of Russia on the Black Sea; the second, Chapters X to XV, shows Mizhuev back at home in Moscow. In the first section, his story is presented against the backdrop of the beauty of the southern seashore. Usually, Artsybashev's characters are fortified by their proximity to nature. For Mizhuev, this is only partly true; he feels the peace of nature and appreciates it as he takes long, solitary walks along the breakwater. In "Milliony," as in Artsybashev's other works, nature imagery is both important and abundant; the main images are of the sea, the moon and the sky. Time is marked by the changes from day to night; Chapter I, introducing the story, takes place at night, as Mizhuev notices the moon reflected in the sea and is overcome by a "melancholy feeling" (*tosklivoe chuvstvo*, p. 163). Chapter II begins with a nature passage, attesting to the beauty of the physical world:

The shore shone gold in the bright sunlight and even the sea, foamy-green near the breakwater and blue, almost lilac, in the distance, seemed covered with golden flecks. [p. 167]

In this description, the author's impressionistic technique of, as it were, painting a scene is well illustrated. The impressionist preoccupation with the play of light on a subject is pronounced. Nature continues to be beautifully and

strikingly presented, as in Artsybashev's earlier stories.

As Mizhuev walks alone at night, the sea echoes his feelings:

"The ceaseless ocean spoke of eternal sadness" (p. 191).

For a moment, here, under the spell of night and the sea,

Mizhuev's spirit soars high above his heavy body. He thinks

to himself, "'It is time to die...'. In that instant it

became easier for him, his burden lifted, as if he had ceased

to be Mizhuev" (p. 193). He does not recognize the truth in

his revelation and, still clinging to life, thinks to himself

that he is simply weak from not eating! Thus, by these few

examples, nature is shown to be an important element in the

story. Even as the hero departs from the south, it is as if

nature were trying to soothe him. He is deaf and blind to it:

'Where should I go? And for what?..' he thought, apathetically looking at the shore, the sun and the sea, which he had seen many times — here, along the shores of Italy, and Egypt — and which could no longer speak to him of that intimate sky-blue beauty of nature which touches, softens the heart of man making him gentle, gay and free as a bird on the wing on a warm, sunny day. [p. 247]

There is one transitional chapter, XI, which shows Mariia Sergeevna back at their home after Mizhuev's departure. She feels that her separation from Mizhuev is her ultimate punishment for what she has done. She has ceased to be a person, and is now only an object to be used by men and discarded.

When Mizhuev arrives in Moscow, he goes directly to the building which serves as offices and living space for the Mizhuev brothers. There is no physical beauty here. He

looks around at the people making their way through the wet streets:

If someone had told them that at that very minute somewhere far away the sun shone brightly, the sea was blue and the green grass rippled, they would not have believed such joy possible and would have only continued to hurry on, splashing in the puddles. But Mizhuev did not think about this, because he had long ago grown indifferent to everything, and he did not rejoice with the golden spring or become saddened by grey autumn. [pp. 252-253]

Meeting his brother in his office, he learns that much has happened during his absence. There has been a strike of the workers, who are asking for higher wages. Mizhuev's brother Stepan is also weighed down by the burden of great wealth. His appearance is much like his brother's:

Stepan Ivanovich was also huge and heavy, like his brother, but his face was sallow, unhealthy, and below his eyes hung heavy bags and his voice was weak as if he were deathly tired. [kak budto on smertel'no ustal]. [p. 254]

The description of the two brothers together is very effective. It is as if two giants or gods were conferring about the fates of men:

The brothers sat opposite each other, heavy and huge, seemingly crushing the floor below them with their terrible weight. The cold, bright light shone on the parquet and on the enamel dishes and in the wine like yellow gold in which, on this grey day, it seemed the sun shone. [p. 257]

Stepan also relates to his brother the story of his recent love affair. Mizhuev does not understand why his brother will not marry the woman who is pregnant with his child, thus allowing a little sunshine into his grey life. The narrator comments that the struggle taking place within Stepan — to

let the woman into his heart — was like "the hopeless struggle for life in a corpse" (p. 260).

Mizhuev's long-anticipated visit to an old friend is the beginning of another episode in his life which will torment him. The writer Nikolaev, Muzhuev's confidant and closest friend, has recently won fame. In his company, Mizhuev loses his usual gloomy aspect and looks more like a "kindly bear" (p. 265). At dinner the two friends are so lively that they catch everyone's attention. When Nikolaev asks for financial support for the journal he wishes to publish, the millionaire whole-heartedly consents.

The next day, when Mizhuev attempts to reason with the workers of his factory and protect them from the troops, he is met with open hostility. He becomes a symbol of all that oppresses them and stands between them and a better life. A confrontation arises when he learns that his brother is having the troops stand by to disperse the strikers by force. Mizhuev feels that he alone can reach the workers, because he sympathizes with their plight. When they realize that he can do nothing to help them, they turn on him and beat him, shouting, ". . . between you and the people stand your millions" (p. 277).

The last chapter finds Mizhuev back on board a ship going south. By a series of flashbacks, the reader learns what has happened to drive him into permanent exile. His hatred for men has grown and overtaken him. He hates the

falseness of people and cannot bear to look at them without disgust. He remembers with pain how Nikolaev, the man he felt was the best of all men, did not sympathize with him after the workers had beaten him. Nikolaev gets carried away telling Mizhuev about the oppression of the workers by just such men as him and his brother; then he stops, thinking about the money he wishes Mizhuev to give him for his journal. Mizhuev understands what has passed through his friend's mind and leaves him and their friendship forever, as if it had never existed. The hero then goes to Mariia's husband and is "driven away like a dog" (p. 282). The words of the broken, bitter husband pierce Mizhuev's heart: "'Aha... so there is something that you cannot buy with all your money? That is good...'" (Ibid.). Finally the millionaire decides to seek the counsel of a great writer,⁷ but loses interest in this idea. The desperate thought seizes him that he should renounce his wealth and become poor. This he rejects as impractical.

The final scene in the story is richly layered. Everything around Mizhuev is filtered through his state of mind. He looks at a young couple who are admiring the growing warmth of the day and the south, and thinks, "this was happiness" (p. 284). He overhears two Frenchwomen talking about bull-fighting. Previously in the narrative, Mizhuev with his great size and strength was likened to a bull; thus the description given by the women is symbolic of what has

happened to the hero:

'And before the toreador kills him . . . all the matadors, with their red capes, surround the bull . . . and he becomes dazed . . . then the toreador kills him. . . It's not pretty!' [Ibid.]

Both Mizhuev and the bull are surrounded and driven to their death. Shortly after hearing this conversation, Mizhuev looks around and then clumsily hurls himself overboard. He comes to the surface once and automatically calls for help, but the ship has passed. He then descends finally into the green depths, watched curiously by little fishes.

"Rabochii Shevyrev"

Many of Artsybashev's characters are poor and oppressed, because of their social position. In "Milliony," the hero has everything that the material comforts of life can afford and still he is driven to suicide. The story traces Mizhuev's path to annihilation as, one by one, all the important things of life — love and the fellowship of men, the beauty of nature, and higher ideals — are stripped away. Similar disillusionment with life is depicted in the story of a terrorist-anarchist, "Rabochii Shevyrev" (The Worker Shevyrev). This long story also bears an epigraph taken from the Bible:

There were present at that season some that told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answering said unto them Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay; but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

[Luke, 13:1,2,3]

This epigraph refers to the martyred lives of the two main characters — the terrorist Shevyrev and the "Tolstoyan" writer Alad'ev, who believes that only love and education can change the world. The theme of terrorism was touched on by Artsybashev in the story "Teni utra." Considering the three revolutionaries of that story, Shevyrev and Alad'ev are both most like Neznamov.⁸ The weight of the ills of the world falls upon these three heroes. They love life to such an extent that they cannot bear to see what men do to pervert it: Shevyrev has declared war on mankind. The conviction that he is struggling with the evils of the world is manifested in a fantastic dream he has while hiding in an abandoned house: he is locked in combat with a medusa-like creature on the edge of a precipice. She identifies herself as "all the evil of the world" (IA — vse zlo mira! — p. 102). As he is about to push the monster into the abyss below, he himself is flung into it. In his struggle in the dream and in the waking world, he perishes. Ironically, Alad'ev, who believes in brotherly love as the strongest force, dies protecting a list of the names of a group of terrorists to which he used to belong. He is also temporarily guarding a bomb for a member of the group who used to be his good friend. The authorities come to the old building seeking Shevyrev but, finding him already gone, knock on Alad'ev's door. He knows that if they search his room and find the list he is keeping, many people will be arrested. To protect their lives he

sacrifices his own, dying in an exchange of gunfire with the police.

The urgency of the times is felt in this story and, indeed, dictates it. A contemporary of Artsybashev, the poet Zinaida Gippius, remarked about Russia's entry into the twentieth century:

For us, Russians, to consider the first decade of the twentieth century as years, and not a century, is impossible. . . . This was the time when that which was unformulated found form, that which was undefined became clear, all that was secret became obvious and all fell into place. As if the day of terrible judgment⁹ had happened, but the sentence had not yet been passed on everyone. . . .¹⁰

Indeed, Artsybashev's terrorists, revolutionaries and anarchists are manifestations of the problems and issues of the times. His suicides are also sacrifices to the turbulent, enigmatic years.

The initial characterization of Shevyrev shows him as being the "embodiment of the sinister black shadows and heavy air"¹¹ of the rooming-house in which he seeks lodging. He is but a shadow. He stands "motionless and straight as a pole"; his "figure is weirdly dark in the gloom" (p. 1). He is so silent and immobile that even a cat, passing by, does not notice him. The narrator adds to this that if someone had come upon him standing thus, "they would have been frightened of this black shadow" (Ibid.). His physical description is very vague: he is "of medium height, thin, light-haired, young, with a strange mannerism of continually, deliberately, standing very straight and lifting high his

head" (p. 3). His actions in his neighbor's room are described through the observations of the writer-neighbor and the narrator. Shevyrev shows no normal curiosity on entering the dwelling-place of another for the first time. It is clear from his demeanor that he is a man who would "never be false to that special something that was locked deeply within his soul" (p. 4). His neighbor, Alad'ev, does not believe that he is really a worker. Shevyrev tells him that indeed he is a worker, but unemployed, as the times are hard. He adds: "'It is always difficult for us . . . and soon it will be difficult for those who live easily now'" (p. 5).

Alad'ev is described as looking like a peasant from Pskov or Novgorod. When Shevyrev asks about his writing and activities, he becomes agitated, thinking the mysterious stranger to be a spy. Shevyrev immediately sympathizes with Alad'ev's situation, and "his face becomes changed, soft and even tender" (p. 6). Alad'ev is pleased when Shevyrev says that he knows of his stories. Shevyrev tells the writer that his "'stories are strong and leave an impression... only you idealize people'" (p. 8). Shevyrev's expression of his feeling about mankind echoes the words Sanin speaks to his sister about Zarudin: "'Man is vile by nature'" (Chelovek gadok po priroda; Ibid.).¹² Alad'ev's reply is the same as Ivan Lande's words to the imprisoned Tkachev: "'Life has been hard for you and you are embittered'" (Ibid.). Thus, two of Artsybashev's attitudes, as expressed by his "prophets,"

are debated. Shevyrev argues:

'If really there existed love, sacrifice and pity, there would be a Christian republic instead of capitalism. The well-fed would not be able to watch the hungry die, there would be no more masters and slaves because each would want to sacrifice for the other, and all would be equal. [p. 9]

Shevyrev denies that there is any battle at all between the forces of good and evil in man, as Alad'ev maintains. Rather, he says life is simply the struggle to survive. Concerning the possibility of man's lot improving, Shevyrev believes that things can be different than they are, but not better. In this he differs from Sanin, who had expressed belief in the Golden Age to come for mankind: "'where there will be no place for beastliness or asceticism.'"¹³ Shevyrev calls for annihilation — suicide — to put an end to this useless suffering of man in the name of hope for the future. Shevyrev's negativism inspires Alad'ev to want to write about that which lived in the Russian peasant and would guide Russia to a better future. While these thoughts go through his mind he looks up at the portrait of Tolstoy — an obvious device to show Alad'ev's allegiance to Tolstoy's thinking. He follows the beliefs of the great writer as does Ivan Lande.¹⁴ Lande and Alad'ev are Artsybashev's two outstandingly Tolstoyan characters. However, when we consider their fates, it is clear that neither character's belief in mankind is supported by the author. Each finds inner peace to a degree, but can do nothing to change the condition of man. They are both martyrs to their beliefs, and Artsybashev seems to pose

the question "Why?" The answer, as can be discerned from the works, is a mystical one. When Alad'ev writes his "important" work after Shevyrev's departure, the narrator informs the reader that it is about peasant martyrs who go to their death "calmly — as if knowing that which others did not know" (p. 13). What they know must be that by their deaths they are furthering the cause they believe in.

The main difference between Shevyrev's and Alad'ev's philosophies lies in the conclusions they reach. Both agree that the world is full of suffering and evil. Alad'ev suggests that by love and education man will slowly and steadily better himself. Shevyrev, seeing no such evolution, believes that the evils of life can be cured only by death.

Shevyrev's phantom-like non-human nature is well drawn as the narrator observes him alone in his room. While Alad'ev writes during the night's passing, Shevyrev lies on his bed "with cold, wide-open eyes and an unchanging expression on his face, staring into the darkness" (p. 13). His room is so bare that it is "hard to believe that someone lived there" (Ibid.). He simply sits, listening to all the life around him. He hears the voice of a young seamstress and by her constant questions "What?" deduces that she is a bit deaf. He hears the cries of children.

When he finally does leave the house, he finds just the same sort of ugliness and pain in other places in the city: he goes to a factory to seek employment, where many

workers are doing the same thing. In a cafe where he stops, he listens to the conversations of other men who are poor and starving. One relates how, when he begged a noblewoman for money, she refused him because she had no change. There is a definite line drawn between those who have and those who have not and, as Shevyrev remarks to Alad'ev, the tables will soon be turned.

Shevyrev's intent and purpose — as self-appointed executioner of the wealthy and satisfied — is described in a powerful scene, as he walks the streets after leaving the cafe. He sees in front of him a well-fed, well-dressed man, whom he pursues for many blocks, staring at the back of his fat, pink neck. The narrator observes that "if the man with the rosy neck had seen this look, he would have been frightened." The look on Shevyrev's face proclaims:

'Go ahead... Go!.. But know this, that when in front of me there is anyone happy, well-fed and gay, I say to myself: You are gay, happy and alive only because I allow you to be!.. Maybe in this very moment I will change my mind and then you will have but two, one or half a second to live... There are no words to touch me about the sacred right of each man to live! I am the master of your life!.. And no one knows the day or hour when my patience will be exhausted, and I will come to judge you, you who all your lives have oppressed us, taking away the sun, beauty and love, dooming us to joyless, hungry labor!.. The life of every man is in my hands, and I will trample it into the dirt and dust as I please!.. Know this and change the world!..

[p. 32]

Shevyrev believes that it is only by terrorism that things will be bettered; it is the last resort of a tortured soul. When he returns to his room he appears as "a sinister shadow

which leaves the gloom and then returns to it" (p. 33).

The lives of those in the building are examples of the pain men must endure. From his position in his room, Shevyrev hears and knows about all the sad dramas that are enacted in the old house: a school-teacher with a consumptive wife and children has been fired; a young seamstress must marry a gross old merchant. The young woman has read some books given to her by Alad'ev and she has fallen in love with the idealistic young man. After the merchant goes, leaving behind him a smell of "salted pickles, boot leather and sweat," Olen'ka goes to Alad'ev. The sensual details of the odors in the room after the merchant's departure punctuate his characterization. He brutishly leers at Olen'ka while admiring her small waist and round hips (p. 59).

It is Shevyrev, who goes to Alad'ev's room after hearing all that has happened, who narrates the story of Olen'ka's fate. Shevyrev reproaches Alad'ev for having made her sensitive by giving her books to read, thus refining her emotions. He tells Alad'ev:

'It is terrible to make a human soul more refined so it can be even more horrified by its torment... You deceive people... you make them dream about what they will never see... they will go as sacrifices to the swine who will snort with joy because their victims will more sensitively and exquisitely feel their torments.'

[p. 65]

He asks Alad'ev to be silent and listen for a minute to what the dark house will tell him. He hears:

Someone is crying. A quiet, oppressed, hopeless, mournful weeping softly penetrated the silence...

'That is Olen'ka crying!' thought Alad'ev, and then began to discern that it was not the weeping of one voice, but two... It became terrible. The darkness bore down, he heard in his ears a sad ringing and was amazed that there were not two voices, but three... ten, a thousand voices, the entire darkness cried out... [p. 66]

In the weeping of one tormented soul, Alad'ev perceives, as does Shevyrev, the outpouring of all humanity's grief. This is a very vivid, sensitively drawn image, and again attests to Artsybashev's ability to see life at several different levels — from the odors in a room to personal grief.

Alad'ev thinks that a "madman" stands before him, and feels as if he is having a nightmare (p. 66). The young writer challenges the anarchist, asking: "'What is it that you give, that gives you the right to judge?'" Shevyrev answers: "'I give nothing. Maybe I only remind others about what they have forgotten'" (p. 67). This chapter ends with Alad'ev's realization of Shevyrev's truth. Alad'ev, in his despair, has the same desire as Dr. Lavrenko when faced with the futility of human suffering. Lavrenko thinks if only he could "with one blow destroy everything so that the earth would be turned into an icy desert."¹⁵ Alad'ev wishes "he could grab everything with his huge hands and shake it all so that everything would fly away into the air like dust" (p. 67). This total annihilation would be easier to bear than the great suffering that exists. These conclusions echo Ivan Karamazov's declaration to his brother that he would "give back his entrance ticket" to this world of unjust

suffering. He believes there is nothing he can find to justify the tortured tears of one small innocent being.

One of the main reasons for Shevyrev's attitude toward the world is revealed in a dream, or hallucination, in which he is visited by his dead lover and another figure. He had once believed in a better future, but with the execution of the woman he loved and some of his other friends, who presumably belonged to a revolutionary group, he lost faith in man. The black figure who comes to haunt Shevyrev tells him that those who spill the blood of the innocent must be judged by history or by God (p. 76). When he awakens, he hears the footsteps of those who he knows are pursuing him. Shevyrev begins his flight, which will end with his capture; and Alad'ev is left in the house to make his sacrifice for ideals he has ceased to believe in.

At this point it is necessary to comment on the action of this story. The work is one of the most fast-moving and exciting of Artsybashev's stories. The reader rushes along with Shevyrev as he eludes his pursuers. When Alad'ev is confronted by the authorities, his sensations flash before us. The reader, involved with the lives of these two characters, feels close to them. There are two especially keen insights by the heroes that are shared with the reader. The first of these is when Alad'ev looks around his room in the final minutes of his life and sees how the familiarity of it has been destroyed by the volley of gunfire:

His old, dear room appeared strange and pitiful. The broken lamp lay on its side in a pool of kerosene; the portrait of Tolstoy hung crookedly, pierced by bullets...

Alad'ev's soul was strangely shaken. He imagined he had lost his mind, but that could not be. Only yesterday, a few hours ago, he sat at this table and wrote, while around him all the small things of his existence peacefully dwelt — his books, portraits and drawings... He looked at his table, his books... and with despair tore his hair. All his future life, which could have been so interesting, long and bright, full of his beloved work, kind people, the unknown brilliance of sunny days and love flashed before him. The life that could have been and now would never be. [p. 85]

Shevyrev hides in an abandoned house and thinks about his flight through the streets of Petersburg; he realizes that he is completely alone and alienated from other men:

The streets flashed before his closed eyes, and unfamiliar faces appeared, with arms outstretched to catch him... But the most persistent and terrible impression was that all those who fell in his way during that frightful death-flight were enemies!... No one attempted to hide him, to delay his pursuers or even yield him the road. If a face did not express senseless hatred, if a person did not stand in his path reaching out his arms to grab him, then this person was apathetic or curious, simply watching a hunted man. [p. 98]

The hunt for Shevyrev ends when he is trapped in a theater. The contrast between the elegant audience, stage scenery and unreal world of the theater and Shevyrev's life-and-death struggle is very powerful; his drama is unknown to these people. His action is carefully drawn:

Small, wild with disheveled hair and a dirty, tortured face with crazed eyes, Shevyrev leaned out of the loge and with a shaking arm, not taking aim, fired right into that sea of calm, unsuspecting heads. [p. 109]

When he is seized, his face bears the look of one who sees "what others cannot" (p. 110). This is the same description as that used by Alad'ev to describe his peasant martyrs.

Despite Artsybashev's sympathetic treatment of the terrorist, the story received little recognition by the critics. The critic Adrianov views the story as "a step forward in the development of Artsybashev's art."¹⁶ Indeed, the story of Shevyrev is sensitively drawn and, as the critic remarks, touches upon the same questionings which tortured Dostoevsky all his life.¹⁷ The story as a whole displays many features seen in the works of the great novelist. The house in which Shevyrev stays has the atmosphere of the poor Petersburg dwellings frequented by Raskolnikov (Crime and Punishment). The ugliness of life, as drawn by Dostoevsky, is echoed by Artsybashev's work. Shevyrev rebels against the authority of man and the universe, saying he no longer respects human life in itself as sacred. This mood and reasoning may be borrowed from Raskolnikov, but the difference between the two is the place in which their respective authors leave the heroes. Raskolnikov is on the path of Christian salvation, while Shevyrev is on his way to the gallows. Shevyrev's rebellion is more like that of Camus's Meursault. The story of Meursault, who is condemned to death, ends with a thought that one could apply to Shevyrev:

Pour que tout soit consommé, pour que je me sente moins seul, il me restait à souhaiter qu'il y ait beaucoup de spectateurs le jour de mon exécution et qu'ils m'accueillent avec des cris de haine.¹⁸

Meursault and Shevyrev are alike in their dedication to their beliefs. Meursault believes in the individual's right to a free life, not hampered by social convention which renders life false. Shevyrev dedicates himself to the ruin of the oppressive order that makes life impossible for the individual.

The story of the terrorist, written after the revolution of 1905, seems to be a warning: if the injustices in society are not redressed, chaos will rule and all will be doomed.

"Palata neizlechimykh"

The third work to be considered in this chapter appears in the fifth volume of Rasskazy. "Palata neizlechimykh" (The Ward for Incurables) is a sketch depicting a day in a hospital ward for those with terminal illnesses. Those who suffer there, from various physical and mental tortures, are unable to comfort one another even in their last days of life. In this story, suicide is presented as the most humane solution to the dilemma.

The characters are nameless and are referred to by epithets such as "the newcomer," "the boy," "the old man," "the one with the Roman profile" and "the fourth one." Since they are sentenced to die here, as surely as if they were convicts condemned to death, there is no need for them to have names — just as convicts are relieved of their names and given numbers. This device (namelessness) is commonly

found in expressionism and, in particular, in the works of Leonid Andreev. The characters are not individual but general and typical; they have a generic title. Other devices usually associated with the expressionist drama, such as the dropping of speech peculiarities in the characters, and formlessness and plotlessness, are missing from Artsybashev's story. (The old man speaks in colloquial language, and there is a definite progression of the action.) Thus, again, one can detect signs of modern elements in Artsybashev, but not necessarily any one mode is used exclusively; realism, impressionism and expressionism are blended together.

It is worth mentioning here that Artsybashev himself, at this time (1907-1911), was feeling the ravages of tuberculosis. Because of his illness, he lived in Yalta part of the time and journeyed now and then to Petersburg to keep in touch with his journalistic interests there. In the "Biographical Sketch" of Artsybashev appearing in Neugasimaia lampada, it is stated that on one of his trips to the capital the doctors gave him up as dying ("V odnom is svoikh priezgov v Peterburg on tak tiazhko zabolet, chto vrachi prigovorili ego k smerti").¹⁹ It is not far-fetched to think that Artsybashev's own failing health, along with the turbulent times in Russia, could have caused him to be somewhat preoccupied with death.

The life of those in the ward is completely cut off

from life "outside." When the "newcomer" arrives, the others are interested in him as if he "had come from another world."²⁰ They soon become accustomed to him and return to their individual thoughts. Each of the four is described briefly. Despite their sketchy characterization, each one through his actions is a human, believable character. The young child is described as having "large, almost sculpted [vyrezannye] innocent eyes" (p. 166). The second patient observed by the newcomer is a "beautiful young man with the face of a Roman Patrician (blagorodnyi rimlianin), who "looks at the new patient with humorous, ironic eyes" (Ibid.). Beside the child sits a "tall, thin old man with a parted grey beard, shaggy brows and the huge gnarled hands of a peasant" (Ibid.). The fourth arouses repulsion in the new arrival: he is described as "a whole mountain of human flesh . . . with horrible sores as if the worms of the grave already lived in him." The four represent the varied forms of illness leading to death. The narrator remarks that with the three who bear no outward signs of their sickness, it is hard to believe that they are "sentenced to torturous, ugly deaths" (p. 167). But "the fourth" is the personification of death: ". . . like a disinterred corpse among living people" (Ibid.). The man who has just arrived sits quietly, resigned to his fate. Thus, as each sits or lies silently alone, the day begins with its "indifferent, cold light" (Ibid.).

From the ward, another building can be seen in which "shadows" walk. Nothing exists outside the confines of the room. The narrator adds to the feeling of isolation by stating that each feels himself alone, "but it was necessary to live" (no nado bylo zhit'; p. 168). There is still some life left in this ward, as the small, weak boy goes to the window to greet the first rays of life-giving sun. Against the dark tapestry that the author has woven of the lives of these patients, there is a fleeting, but joyous, streak of gold:

'The dear sun, the dear sun!' he shouted... between the grey walls of the adjacent house crept a blinding, golden band of bright light and its brilliance reflected in the innocent young eyes, igniting them with golden sparks. [pp. 169-170]

Description of the play of light, for creating a visual image and a mood, is a device often used by Artsybashev.²¹ The old man also goes to the window to greet the sun. He "looks upward toward the sun, which was never seen in this lifeless, cold ward of those sentenced to a sure, ugly death" (p. 170). Ecstatically he salutes the light and life. He comforts the boy, saying:

'Be joyful, small bird of God! [ptenchik Bozhii] Here it is, the dear little sun... it shines! It is blessed!.. The loving little sun... One need not die!.. God willing, you will go out into the free world... You will fly from here like a little bird on Annunciation Day... [Ibid.]

The patient who is covered with sores says cruelly: "'He'll go to his grave, not to freedom... there's little joy in that!'" (Ibid.). The spiritual connotation of the old man's

is not understood by the dying man. The boy's body may die, but his soul will be released like a bird to fly in freedom. The old man's speech is laced with diminutives, which suggest his peasant origin and his devout religious faith.

The handsome man and the repulsive one argue about their respective positions. The "fourth" calls the "Roman" a "beautiful animal" (p. 172) who is not at all perceptive. The young man retorts that it is better to be a beautiful animal than a "mass of decaying flesh which only poisons his own air and the air of those around him" (Ibid.). The old man, the only one of the group with any feelings of pity for his fellow-beings, stops their quarrel, scolding them for their heartless behavior. He tells them to love each other. The little boy interrupts when he finds a fly in the room: "The fly seemed to him a miracle in this lifeless, monotonous ward" (p. 173). The old man reacts with reverence to the fly's presence " "Do not bother it... let it live!.. It is but a tiny creature, but it knows the beauty of life. God gave it life... a little life, but its purpose may be immense!.. Man reasons, and the fly prays to God..." (Ibid.).

The boy then tells of a beautiful dream he had. It is a vision of paradise. The "fourth" and the "Roman" laugh at him and he cries. The old man defends the boy, saying they are cruel because they do not believe: "'You are sick with your own hatred... you want to judge everything... close your eyes and believe with open hearts!'" (p. 175).

The patients are trapped in their physical suffering and cannot feel anything else. The "Roman" says the only truth is death. The new patient has had quite an introduction to the hell of this place and sits wild-eyed on his bed.

The second chapter begins, like the first, with a reference to the white door that separates the ward from the outside. In the first description, it opens to admit the new man. With the second mention of the door, it is the doctors who are coming in for their rounds: each patient is to be examined. The doctors are very much apart from the patients: they are cold and methodical in their remarks and manner, and confer with each other in Latin so as not to be understood by the patients. Each patient is asked how he feels and if he desires anything. The "Roman" asks if he might have some flowers brought into the room and books of verse; he is still clinging to life and beauty. The "fourth" complains that he is no longer being bathed. When the doctors move to the bed of the new patient and ask him to undress for the examination he refuses, saying that he does not care to get better. He realizes he is dying, and when a doctor asks him what he wants, he says frankly: "'Maybe immortality, maybe simply happiness...'" (p. 181). All he asks is to be left alone.

The "Roman" congratulates the newcomer on his stoicism, to which the latter replies that he simply wants to die as soon as possible. Then the old man asks the other patients

what it was that the doctors said about the boy. He is told that the doctors thought the boy would recover — actually, they agreed that he would soon die. The scene ends with the bitter ugly laughter of the new patient, which seems to say: Do not hope, death is all you will find here.

The third chapter tells of the passing of the night; sleep brings relief from the tortures of the waking hours. All are asleep except the new patient, who sits alone in the darkness. During his night's vigil all of life passes before his eyes:

Everything — the sun, mankind, whirling according to the unseen laws of the universe, images of beautiful and tender women, cupolas of churches and roofs of pagodas, the heights of proud pyramids, the music of love, the tender caresses of spring evenings and the enchanted light of night and the joy of sunny mornings, the immense starry universe, the struggle of nature, dark desire, naked pleasures of the body, statuary and books, thunder of wars, storms of oceans and microscopic lives of invisible creatures, sickness, joy, happiness and sorrow, life and death, the past, present and future dreams of distant radiant heaven and the image of mighty God — all this in a mad whirlpool turned in this small human brain, filling it with chaos. [p. 185]

Then he thinks: "'It is in my power to refuse this'" (Ibid.).

In the early hours of the grey morning, the man takes his own life. His suicide is described matter-of-factly, in keeping with the tone of the narrative:

At sunrise the sick one got up, went firmly and directly to the wall, took the night light and calmly poured kerosene on his clothes and hair, and with the tinkle of broken glass, ignited himself with the weak yellow flame of the lamp.

A fiery column with a black cloud of smoke whirled wildly to the ceiling, the living torch

rose higher and illuminated the entire ward with a sinister crimson light, reflected on the windows and on the confused, disheveled human figures with pitiful, terrified, desperate faces. [p. 186]

The image of the burning column reflected on the window panes and the faces of the other patients, as well as the use of color, renders this last paragraph very powerful. In this story of those "condemned" to slow, terrible deaths, suicide is a horrible alternative, but preferable to a lingering death.

The theme of being physically or spiritually "condemned" to death occurs frequently in Artsybashev's works.²² Man is imprisoned by circumstances and alienated from his fellow men, and so must bear alone his burdensome existence. The author extends this concept of man's condition to encompass more than contemporary Russia. The last three short stories discussed in this chapter take place in other lands and — two of the three — in other times.

The theme of society oppressing the individual is seen throughout Artsybashev's works. Characters become victims of the social order.²³ In the stories "Bratiia Arimateiskie" (The Brothers of Arimathea) of Volume V of Rasskazy, "Sil'nee smerti" (Stronger than Death) of Volume III of Rasskazy, and "Zlodei" (The Criminal) of Volume III of Rasskazy, the author presents scenes of real executions, not symbolic ones. The executions are of individuals the society deems harmful: people who are either physically or psychologically dangerous. In the manner one would expect from the tone of previous

stories, the author presents the "criminals" more sympathetically than the figures who condemn them.

The "criminals" characterized are Jesus, a French scientist condemned as a traitor during the Reign of Terror, and a patricide in twentieth-century America.

"Bratiia Arimafeiskie"

Artsybashev tells the story of the crucifixion of Christ in a new way — as seen from the point of view of one of Jesus' followers, who is a wealthy man. This man, Joseph, and his brother Jacob go to the palace of Pontius Pilate to request that they be allowed to take the body of Jesus to their family tomb instead of permitting it to be thrown to the scavengers. The incident is related as a psychological test of cunning between the elder brother, Joseph, and Pilate, who tries to make the brother incriminate himself by involuntarily divulging his allegiance to Christ. Pilate "plays with" Joseph like a cat with a mouse:

'You pronounce the truth and beauty of His teachings, you call him a righteous man, but in your lives you do not follow Him?... Where is the truth in your words?'

Joseph was silent. Pilate waited for his answer and his face bore a scornful smile. He mocked the brothers.²⁴

Pilate consents to the brothers' request out of apathy. He defends the execution of Jesus, saying that it is not human to renounce worldly pleasures, and that to preach equality of all men is dangerous "for the gods and for men" (p. 200). He further states that although the teachings of Jesus are

foreign to him, he does recognize the worth of the man's spirit. However, the individual who challenges the beliefs of society is not allowed to survive, no matter how good or intelligent he may be.

The society Pilate represents is one which worships sensual pleasures. His palace is described with great attention to the sensory impressions it gives:

The soft breeze of evening swayed the curtains, and in that instant all was hidden, like a passionate dream; but the quiet ring of tambourines and Greek lyres, the piping of sensitive flutes, the clink of goblets, cries of drunken voices and the quick step of light feet in dance could be heard. [p. 196]

The beauty of life presented here is not whole: it is without a soul. Nature is cold and indifferent. Joseph, sitting in his garden, looks up at the vast face of the night sky and feels alone and tortured. The stars are no longer symbolic of man's aspirations, but of his loneliness:

In the fathomless heights, silent and still shone the stars, and beyond them, beyond the dust of the Milky Way, yet higher and further, even more incomprehensible stretched the black gloom of eternity.

To Joseph in his loneliness, as from across the blackness of the eternal darkness, appears the face of Christ. Joseph is not comforted, and feels only the loss of the prophet.

In the story, Jesus is not deified; He is depicted as the dead, righteous prophet.²⁵ The story ends with the brothers' departure from Pilate's palace to "go prepare a place in their tomb for their Prophet..." (p. 202).

"Sil'nee smerti"

The story "Sil'nee smerti" (Stronger than Death) revolves around a final scientific experiment conducted on the guillotine scaffold. A young scientist is found with a letter from a man condemned as a traitor, and is sentenced to death for his association with the traitor. When his old professor comes to visit him in prison, the young scholar tells him of his plan to use his own execution to prove that life (in the brain) continues after death. He cites an accidental experiment he once performed in the laboratory: having cut a lizard in half, he observed how the half with the head and two legs "ran away," while the other half swished its tail.²⁶ The young scientist, Jules, asks his colleague, Jean, to "take the head by the hair after it is severed from the body so it does not fall upon the scaffold; then, when the head is in your hands, call my name as loudly as possible..." (p. 113). The two agree that "Jules" must blink three times if he is conscious. They are not completely calm concerning the coming death, and both show signs of great emotional stress, and yet their ultimate faith is placed in science. In the second chapter, the old professor goes to the chief executioner of Paris to ask for permission to conduct the experiment. The executioner "loves science" and knows of the work of the man who comes to talk with him. He is so moved that he even suggests that he can spare the life of Jules. The professor protests, saying that the

experiment depends on the execution taking place as scheduled. He states: "'They can kill scientists, but science is immortal! It will shine in the darkness of eternity when all of poor France is nothing but dust'" (p. 121).

The executioner laments that he is only an instrument of the people. He tells the scientist that those who cannot kill "put the axe in his hands" (p. 123). Because he must be the killer he says that he "takes all the sins of the world upon himself" (Ibid.). Both men, however, do believe that eventually reason and science will triumph; when the scientist departs, he extends his hand to the executioner in a gesture showing the strength of their belief. This act is rendered in a one-sentence paragraph; standing thus alone in the text it is emphasized.

The crowd which awaits the execution, as depicted in the beginning of the third and final chapter, is likened to an unruly theater audience "impatient for the curtain to go up" (p. 125). There is no human compassion expressed on the faces of those who are present. The scene is observed through the eyes of the old scientist, who calls it "the mockery of the devil" (Kak diko, kak nelepo, tochno nasmeshka d'iavola; p. 126).

During Jules' last moments of life, he remembers his experiment and dies with its importance foremost in his mind: "the deadened dullness of the agony of impending death was pierced by a bright ray of consciousness... his gaze became

thoughtful and piercing, his cracked, blue lips compressed into a smile" (p. 128). The old scientist closes his eyes involuntarily as the blade falls and the head is severed. He is too stunned to carry out the experiment and it is the voice of the executioner that calls out Jules' name:

The dead face of Jules Marten slowly, slowly raised its eyelids... the blue lips from which flowed rivulets of blood trembled silently, and the blood flowed more quickly... The dead but conscious eyes rolled, turned in the direction of the executioner, and something like astonishment was expressed in them... The eyes of the dead head slowly closed and then again opened huge and bright. The horror of death, silent and terrible, could be read in them. [p. 130]

The eyes half open and quiver, and then cease to move.

This story is one of Artsybashev's most fanciful and yet it is realistically written. The descriptions of the last efforts of the severed head, and man's attempt to triumph over death, at least in its early stages, are spell-binding.

The idea for the story may have been suggested by the following passage from The Idiot, during which Myshkin describes an execution by guillotine and his impressions of it:

There is one point which can never be forgotten, and one can't faint, and everything moves and turns about it, about that point. And only think it must be like that up to the last quarter of a second, when his head lies on the block and he waits... knows, and suddenly hears above him the clang of the iron! He must hear that! If I were lying there, I should listen on purpose and hear. It may last only the tenth part of a second, but one would be sure to hear it. And only fancy, it's still disputed whether, when the head is cut off, it knows for a second after that it has been cut off! What an idea! And what if it knows for five seconds!²⁷

The title of the story is ironically erroneous in the sense that the finality of death is strongest and surest of all. Jean's argument that science prevails seems hollow, as its purpose should be to serve mankind.

"Zlodei"

The third story, "Zlodei" (The Criminal), shows an execution by electric chair. Like "Sil'nee smerti," this story presents the ugliness of the execution in realistic detail. The main character is an American juror who, according to law, must witness the carrying-out of the sentence handed down by the jury.²⁸ The story depicts the morning of the juror, Tommy French — his feelings before and after the execution. Essentially, he is proud of his part in the workings of society; he even thinks himself "a hero."²⁹ His wife asks him if he could not excuse himself by reason of "illness." To this he replies: "'I understand that it is not easy. If everyone thought as you did, then nothing would be better for criminals and murderers!'" (p. 69). While en route to the execution, Mr. French flirts with a woman on the streetcar. He has a feeling of his own importance as he thinks:

They did not realize that in front of them sat one of the twelve people who, by law, had to witness the execution of a criminal who had committed such a beastly crime that the whole town talked about it. He felt he was special. How they would look at him if they knew... How he would describe the terrible details of the execution and his feelings. [p. 70]

Even though he tries to convince himself that he is doing what is necessary and a good thing, he is still apprehensive. When he enters the large room where the execution will take place, he begins to tremble. He looks at the chair used for electrocuting the criminal and thinks that it is very like an operating table: "The comparison flashed through French's head. It is an operation... an amputation of a gangrenous limb of society" (p. 72).

The scene is starkly sketched in black and white. The twelve witnesses and others present are in black; the room is filled with the grey light of day, and the prisoner is all in white. The entrance of the prisoner causes a painful awareness that this is "a living soul that would soon be dead" (p. 73). French feels that the prisoner's eyes are trying to communicate something to him. He realizes that he is one of the jurors who had voted for the death penalty for this criminal. Finally, all the "formalities have been completed and all that is left is the execution. To kill him" (Ubit'; Ibid.). As the man is strapped in and readied for the electric current that will kill him, French closes his eyes. The current is turned on and "a noise is heard" (p. 75). When French opens his eyes, he sees the body trembling. French feels he is losing consciousness. There is also the odor of "burnt hair and something else" (Ibid.). Then, to French's horror, the victim is examined and found to be still alive. Thus, a second current is passed through him.

This time French watches "a blue light and flame over the chair" (p. 76). The details are grisly — the smell of "cooked meat" fills the room. The last official act is then completed as the twelve sign the document stating that the execution has been successfully completed.

French's state of mind, as he returns home, is radically different from that in which he goes to the execution. He feels that there is something he must remember. His thoughts, as he tries to grasp this elusive truth, are like the last-minute revelations of the station-master, Anisimov, in "Krovavoe piatno." Finally, he realizes what the truth is that seems to haunt him:

It was that, in that moment when the helmet was pulled down over those still living eyes, those eyes still possessing life, but being killed, expressed a feeling understood by few others — of the last, unconscious and hopeless prayer for help. And it was also that when French clearly understood this expression he did not move from his place, but with wild and acute curiosity, registered in his brain each moment of the murder [ubiistvo]...

[p. 77]

Thus, this story condemns the executioners as "murderers." Artsybashev is not alone in his concern with capital punishment. Andreev's "Seven that Were Hanged" and Leo Tolstoy's "I Cannot Be Silent" express the authors' horror at the phenomenon.

Thus, in these stories, after "Smert' Lande" and Sanin and before the publication of the large novel U poslednei cherty, Artsybashev's growing preoccupation with death, evil and ugliness comes to the fore. Death is stronger than love,

life, beauty or science. Humanity has not bettered itself since Biblical times. The "solution" to the ills of society is presented by Naumov in U poslednei cherty: it is the extinction of the race.

Technically, the stories differ slightly from those studied in previous chapters. The narrator is not so important in asserting opinions because the author makes his point of view quite clear by the use of themes, characterization and tone of narrative. Nature imagery is still found to be one of the most important ways of setting mood and underlining action and meaning. The stories are characterized by a general absence of the kind of nature description used in earlier stories to assert the positive aspects of life. The night scenes, which before were inspirational, warm and magical, are now cold and lonely, or by their beauty serve to alienate man and make him realize how far removed he is from the secrets of the world. Nature gives a kind of melancholy comfort at best.

The evolution of Artsybashev's Weltanschauung heralds ^{pronounced} the death of the strong, vital, life-loving individual. His understanding of life has led him toward death.

CHAPTER V

U POSLEDNEI CHERTY (BREAKING POINT) — SUICIDE

(1911-1912)

'No, Doctor, if one no longer believes, no longer has anything to live for, then it's better not to live at all.'

.....

'I don't think anybody does believe in anything, either God, or the devil, or humanity, or in ideas of beauty and truth! And nobody cares for life, nobody loves Nature or Mankind! All that's only the result of this dread of the end, of this desperate, insensate cowardice.'

M. Artsybashev, U poslednei cherty

Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher,
vanity of vanities; All is vanity.

Ecclesiastes I:2

In the previous chapter, "The Anarchy of Death," the stories of 1906-1910 are shown to represent the turning point in Artsybashev's world-view. The characters in the stories are men who, having ceased to enjoy the beauty of life, are but walking dead men. The tales of Mizhuev the millionaire, Shevyrev the anarchist-terrorist, a patient in a ward for the incurable, the brothers who entomb the body of Christ, and criminals who are executed — all depict the pain and ugliness in life. Suicide seems a natural escape for those living such lives. Mizhuev and the man with the terminal illness both choose to end their lives. Their respective stories, "Milliony" and "Palata neizlechimykh," end with

their acts of suicide. One of Artsybashev's earlier stories contains a Kirilov-like character, young Gololobov ("Podpraporshchik Gololobov"; 1902) who commits suicide to assert his victory over the natural process of death. The suicides function in vastly different ways in the three stories mentioned. In the stories of 1906-1910, the suicides are the only possible end to the tortured existence of the characters involved. In "Gololobov," the suicide serves, firstly, as vivid contrast to the closing statement on the beauty of life; and, secondly, as a revelation for the heretofore apathetic doctor who is re-born. Life is all the brighter, more beautiful and more precious because of the background of death which brings it into focus. The epigraph to the story underlines the author's belief in life: "'For a living dog is better than a dead lion'" (Ecc. 9:4).

Artsybashev's large novel, published in two volumes in 1910, 1911 and 1912, is completely concerned with the problem of suicide. It was written during the same period (1907-1910) as the stories discussed in the previous chapter.¹ The critics of Artsybashev's time were fairly unanimous in their displeasure with the new novel. Most of the articles written on U poslednei cherty see the novel as a re-statement of ideas and characters from Dostoevsky's works. An anonymous critic states that "the idea of the novel is but an interpretation of Notes from the Underground."² The prophet of suicide, Naumov, is "a variant of the maniac of suicides

of Besy [The Devils], Kirilov,"³ according to Peresvetov. Sovremennik carried an article by an anonymous critic who went even further, criticizing the novel as "shadows and echoes from Dostoevsky's Idiot, Brothers Karamazov, Chekhov's "A Boring Story" and "Three Sisters," Tolstoy's War and Peace, "Family Happiness," Anna Karenina, "The Death of Ivan Il'ich."⁴

The works of Dostoevsky, Tolstoy and Chekhov have been discussed in previous chapters when their influence on a particular work of Artsybashev was felt. Because of the great impact made on Russian literature, and indeed world literature, by such giants as Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, it is not surprising to find their thoughts present in the works of lesser authors who were obviously influenced by them. To assess properly Artsybashev's large novel, it is necessary first to compare passages and ideas from such works as Dostoevsky's The Devils, The Brothers Karamazov, and Notes from the Underground.

An obvious similarity to be explored is that between the engineer Kirilov of The Devils and the engineer Naumov of U poslednei cherty. Generally speaking, Naumov is not Kirilov's "brother" (as is Gololobov), but a "first cousin." Kirilov's suicide, as a final and ultimate assertion of his self-will, is a very personal act. Naumov never does commit suicide himself; he only preaches it as a means to end mankind's suffering. Artsybashev does, however, use the

general description of Kirilov in his Naumov. Kirilov is introduced by the speech of the character Liputin:

' . . . He has already begun his study, and is writing a most interesting article on the causes of the increasing number of suicides in Russia and generally on the causes which lead to the increase or decrease of suicides in society. He has reached amazing conclusions.'⁵

Kirilov is characterized as excitable,⁶ perhaps in part because of his ritual tea-drinking and nightly vigils: "'I like tea at night; I walk about a lot and drink; till daybreak.'"⁷ Kirilov has concluded that people refrain from suicide either because they fear the pain of death, or because they fear the thought of a life after death.⁸ The essence of Kirilov's soul is perhaps best revealed in a dialogue with Stavrogin:

[Stavrogin:] 'Do you love children?'

'I do,' Kirilov replied, rather indifferently, however.

'In that case you must love life, too, mustn't you?'

'Yes, I love life. Why?'

'But you've made up your mind to shoot yourself.'

'What about it? Why put the two together? Life's one thing, and that is another. Life exists, but death doesn't exist at all.'

'Do you believe in a future everlasting life?'

'No, not in a future everlasting life, but an everlasting life here. There are moments, you reach moments and time comes to a sudden stop, and it will become eternal.'

' . . . In the Revelation the angel swears that there will be no more time.'

'I know... When all mankind achieves happiness, there will be no more time, for there won't be any need for it.'

.....
 'I believe you're happy, aren't you, Kirilov?'

'Yes, very happy... Ever seen a leaf, a leaf from a tree?'

.....
 'I saw one recently, a yellow one, a little green, wilted at the edges. Blown by the wind. When I was a boy of ten, I used to shut my eyes deliberately in winter and imagine a green leaf, bright green with veins on it, and the sun shining. I used to open my eyes and couldn't believe it because it was so beautiful, and I used to shut them again.'⁹

Naumov the engineer does indeed drink tea¹⁰ after the fashion of Kirilov. Naumov's personal campaign of preaching suicide is a result of the trauma he suffered while awaiting execution (for political reasons). His goal is extinction of "the idiots who, writing in pain, sing Hosannas to beautiful life."¹¹ While in prison, Naumov realized that all the aspirations of mankind become absurd in view of man's mortality. He feels as if he has actually died — been executed — and looks around him seeing all Nature still thriving. This frustration man feels when faced with the immortality of Nature is the theme of Artsybashev's early story "Smekh."

Naumov's vision of the future is vastly different from that of the gentle Kirilov:

'... There will come a time when the field of human endeavor has become bare... People will shoot at each other for diversion, masses will drown themselves, hang themselves, throw themselves from cliffs... Mothers will bear children sorrowfully, children who are unnecessary and in whom no one is interested... not one mother will believe that an unusual or beautiful fate awaits her child...

in the cradle she will perceive the coming unhappiness, future torments, illnesses, idiotism, degeneration!.. And they will become apathetic and not bear children or will throw the new-born aside in the place they are born...' His wild eyes burned with a black flame and looked above the heads of the listeners as if he saw somewhere in the distance the black fate of mankind. Thus prophets should look, threatening to trample humanity with the wrath of God. [I, 271]

This passage may be compared with Kirilov's comments and reactions to the birth of Stavrogin's son to Shatov's wife. Referring to the people involved in the birth, he despairs:

'Oh, I know, it will be without reverence, with disdain, with abuse, with blasphemy — at such a great mystery, at the birth of a new human being! Oh, she is already cursing it!'¹²

Also, Kirilov shows his kindness to the "new parents":

Kirilov sent up the old woman with his 'congratulations' and, in addition, fried cutlets and made some soup with white bread for Mrs. Shatov.¹³

Kirilov expresses real sympathy for and a belief in humanity, telling Stavrogin:

'All's good... All. Man's unhappy because he doesn't know he's happy. Only because of that, that's all — that's all! He who finds out will become happy at once — that very minute. The mother-in-law will die, but the little girl will remain — all's good...'

.

'... They are not good,' he resumed suddenly, 'because they don't know they are good. When they find out, they won't rape a little girl. They have to find out that they are good, for then they will become good, every one of them.'¹⁴

Kirilov believes in the evolution of man into "man-god."¹⁵

He loves all creation and says to Stavrogin: "'I pray to everything. Look there: a spider crawling on the wall — I

look at it and am grateful to it for crawling." ¹⁶

Essentially, Naumov, in his acknowledgment of suffering and pain in the world, bears a closer resemblance to Ivan Karamazov. In the previous chapter it was observed that the philosophy of the anarchist-terrorist Shevyrev was comparable to that of Ivan. Shevyrev's acquaintance, the idealist-Tolstoyan Alad'ev, realizes that Shevyrev's observations about life are valid and wishes that "he could grasp everything with his huge hands and shake it all so that everything would fly away into the air, like dust." Total annihilation would cure the suffering. Shevyrev and Alad'ev of "Rabochii Shevyrev" and Dr. Lavrenko of "Chelovecheskaia volna" and many characters from U poslednei cherty echo Ivan Karamazov's belief that there can be no justification for the pain of the world, therefore it is better to "give back one's entrance ticket." ¹⁷

Naumov's fury is not without spite, which makes him reminiscent of the Underground Man. Indeed, the very opening lines of the Notes could be applied to Naumov: "'I'm a sick man... a mean man. There's nothing attractive about me.'" ¹⁸ An important point concerning the Underground Man is that he is totally conscious of his own weakness and absurdity. He is self-conscious and both laughs at himself and torments himself with this laughter. Naumov is not this type of character, as he is humorless and self-important in the sense that one feels he believes in his own prophecy.

In part II, chapter XVI of U poslednei cherty, two of the major characters, the rich factory owner Arbuzov, and the artist and local Don Juan, Dzheneev, discuss life and love. Arbuzov tells the story of a man he heard of as a child. This story-within-a-story closely parallels part Two of the Notes. Arbuzov's story is of the local public prosecutor who most of all liked to feel himself superior to other people.¹⁹ Once or twice a year he went on a binge of drinking and debauchery. After these times everyone would avoid him; but they would soon forget, and again respect and fear him. He secretly derided these people who were so willing to forget his cruelties and perversions. One of his favorite games, when he went on his debauches, was to find a young well-bred prostitute who was forced into her circumstances by extreme poverty. He would appear to be her savior, being kind and understanding, then simply trample her emotions and debase her: ". . . he would take her into an adjacent room and in a quarter of an hour she would cry out wildly, wail and call out for help!" (II, 194). The girl was left half-insane by the beastly encounter, but the public prosecutor would go about his business. Arbuzov relates that after one such incident, the young woman hanged herself. After this, the prosecutor wished to marry a young woman but was refused. He then found one of the prostitutes whom he had so offended and asked her to marry him. She agreed, and tormented him in front of his friends, making his

life miserable. He had once visited a simply monastery with small underground cells. He then retired from his position and went to live at the monastery permanently. There he sat for seventeen years in silence until his death.

Arbuzov relates that he once visited the cell in which the prosecutor lived and died, and was himself overwhelmed by the calm he experienced there. During this time he found the essence of life to be "'not in that people walk, talk, but in the soul itself'" (chto zhizn' ne v tom, chto liudi khodiat, govoriat krugom, a v samoi dushe; II, 197).

The story of the public prosecutor and Arbuzov's observations are somewhat Tolstoyan in mood — reminiscent of "Father Sergius." Part II of the Notes deals with the Underground Man's relationship with a prostitute, Liza. The Underground Man is "sick," as he has already stated, and torn between his desire to comfort and be comforted, and his desire to torment himself and others. As he tries to pursue his Liza, he says to himself:

'Where is she going? Why am I running after her? Why? to go down on my knees before her, to sob with remorse, to kiss her feet, to beg her to forgive me.' I was longing to do it, my breast was bursting: I never again thought of that moment without emotion. 'But what for?' I thought. 'Won't I hate her even more tomorrow, just because I've kissed her feet today? As though I could give her any sort of happiness! As though I hadn't found out today for the hundredth time what I'm really worth! As though I could prevent myself from torturing her!'²⁰

Even though Stavrogin and Kirilov die by their own hands in The Devils, there is the author's hope, and indeed

belief, that mankind's devils will be exorcised, and somehow in Russia's future a Christian kingdom will come to pass. The story of the Gadarene swine, from the Gospel according to St. Luke, forms the epigraph to the novel and underlines Dostoevsky's faith in the future of Russia.

Naumov's prophecy is not the underlying cause of the suicides in Artsybashev's novel. Each character has his own personal reason why he chooses not to live. Naumov merely vocalizes and universalizes the sickness and sadness of those in the provincial town. Alex de Jonge's comments on suicide in Dostoevsky's novels may also apply to the social and moral climate represented in Artsybashev's U poslednei cherty:

Suicide is the final stage of man's spiritual bankruptcy, the culmination of his psychological ill-being. Just as Dostoevsky's modern murderers act in cold blood, out of logical conviction, so his suicides are equally convinced by their own logic. They kill themselves because they have exhausted all their resources and have nothing left. . . .

That suicide was a significant sign of the times is suggested by Zametov in Crime and Punishment. He is disturbed by the casual way in which people appear to commit suicide for the most trivial reasons. . . .

Suicide is the direct consequence of the poverty of the materialistic world-view. Unless man has a sense of purpose beyond material comfort, Dostoevsky feels he will inevitably grow convinced of the pointlessness of his existence and take his own life.²¹

Charles I. Glicksberg discusses Artsybashev's novel in the chapter on "Nihilism and Suicide" in his book The Literature of Nihilism. Glicksberg first makes some

observations about nineteenth- and twentieth-century authors and the phenomenon of suicide. He also touches on the question of the writer-nihilist, commenting:

. . . it is clear that the writer who takes the pains to voice his nihilism is in effect protesting against it. Were he convinced that the human condition was absolutely hopeless, he could not summon forth the energy to go ahead with his creative work. The artist is, by definition, a living refutation of the nihilist ethos. Literature presents a curious paradox, the creative nihilist is never resigned to things as they are; it is because he cannot be silent or indifferent that he speaks out so bitterly.²²

In Glicksberg's analysis of theme, plot and characterization there is little to dispute. He enumerates the functions and philosophies of the main characters with regard to the theme of the novel. He believes Artsybashev's engineer Naumov and his other major character, Cornet Krause, differ from their predecessor Kirilov:

Artzybashev's suicidal pessimism is altogether different in theme and content from the tragic pessimism of Dostoevski. Artzybashev rejects Christian doctrine in its entirety. . . . But Breaking Point is, like The Possessed, the classic novel of the absurd. Cornet Krause, methodical in his reasoning, a fanatic in his reliance on logic, his intellect ever active while his heart remains underdeveloped, is a twentieth-century version of Kirillov, but he differs from Kirillov in that he possesses none of his ecstatic mysticism and is not motivated by his sacrificial craving to liberate mankind from the bugaboo of death. Cornet Krause suffers from acedia: the curse of indifference.²³

The critic re-states the difference between Artsybashev's novel and those of Dostoevsky, declaring:

For these characters in Breaking Point, whether they seek relief in wine and sex and pleasure or fall into indifference and take their own life,

there is no Dostoevskian crisis of conversion, no theophany, no promise, however ambiguous, of redemption.²⁴

The main argument that may be raised against Glicksberg's analysis of U poslednei cherty lies in his definition of Artsybashev's suicides as nihilists. It may be argued that Naumov and Krause believe in nothing and hold nothing to be sacred and are, by definition, nihilists. The other suicides are a result of emotional despair on the part of characters who have not arrived at the point of becoming philosophically nihilistic about their deaths; rather they are tragically unhappy for personal reasons. Artsybashev presents other deaths by natural causes in the novel also; they are admittedly less striking in most cases, but still illustrate man's impotence in the face of death. Glicksberg ignores the importance of this theme and concentrates only on the suicide-nihilist.

U poslednei cherty in many respects prefigures the words of Albert Camus, who states in his essay, "Absurd Reasoning":

Il n'y a qu'un problème philosophique vraiment sérieux: c'est le suicide. Juger que la vie vaut ou ne vaut pas la peine d'être vécue, c'est répondre à la question fondamentale de la philosophie.²⁵

"Teni utra," analyzed in chapter III above, depicts the suicide of a young idealistic woman who cannot keep pace with city life and a career, nor can she remain in her stagnant provincial home town. Again, a character is caught between two irreconcilable positions. IUrii Svarozhich is

torn between his physical attraction to a young woman and his intellectual realization that he does not want to go through the usual social forms of marriage and child-raising. Zarusdin realizes too late that he has been living according to a form: a military code (written and unwritten) of behavior, that he does not believe in; it is too late for him to strike out on his own in society. In "Milliony" Mizhuev realizes that for all the luxury his money can afford him, it can afford him no peace of mind, love or friendship. In "Palata neizlechimykh," one of the patients prefers dying by his own hand to lingering illness. Thus U poslednei cherty carries on the mood of despair expressed in these works by the characters who take their own lives. The novel traces the events in the lives of the major and secondary characters, revealing what drives them to suicide. It also depicts the last days of those dying from illness.

Most of the characters in U poslednei cherty have appeared, with variations, in Artsybashev's earlier works. Others prefigure characters in his dramas and later prose works. A brief survey of the characters and their relationships to earlier or later ones is relevant to a discussion of the novel. The "little student" Chizh, who has been exiled to the provincial town where the action takes place, is a combination of two characters from Sanin — IUrii Svarozhich and the Jewish intellectual Soloveichik. The author gives both Soloveichik and Chizh surnames meaning species of

birds: chizh — siskin, and solovei — nightingale. This suggests their fragility, innocence and small size. All three characters (IUrii, Soloveichik, Chizh) are caught up in the search for a Utopian future for man — a phenomenon which Artsybashev calls "vechnyi mirazh,"²⁶ the eternal mirage. Perhaps what is meant is the eternally-receding mirage. This shows that the characters are continually looking to the future, hoping for this or the other social system to transform all that is evil and unjust in society into that which is good and just. When they realize their utopias are but mirages, they turn to suicide.

Dr. Arnoldi is a continuation of the character of Dr. Lavrenko of "Chelovecheskaia volna." Both are obese, kindly but lethargic doctors, who, having seen much pain and suffering, have become detached from life, and Arnoldi "like a dead man" (II, 218-219). Both have platonic love interests: Lavrenko admires a lovely young woman and Arnoldi loves a young actress who is dying of tuberculosis.

The artist and provincial Don Juan, Mikhailo Nikolaevich Dzheneev, is really a combination of characters. He has the cruel detached sensuality of Zarudin in Sanin, and he is an artist, who eventually commits suicide like IUrii Svarozhich. He is also reminiscent of the artist-hero (un-named) of "Zhena." The major difference between the artists is that IUrii is an amateur and Dzheneev is a recognized master, whose paintings are displayed in galleries. He

is also akin to the many celebrated Don Juan characters found in many literatures. He is like the nineteenth-century Don Juan about whom E. T. A. Hoffman wrote:

. . . Nature equipped Don Juan, as if he were her favorite child, with all that raises man toward divinity, above the common crowd, above the standard product . . . and this destined him to conquer, to dominate. A powerful, handsome body, a personality radiating that spark which kindles the most sublime feelings in the soul; a profound sensibility, a quick instinctive understanding.²⁷

Dzheneev's former best friend, Arbuzov, tells the artist:

'You,— what are you? You came into the world with special gifts, not like a common man. You're a genius, good-looking, a noble soul — a superman.

[II, 192]

Artsybashev's hero, like Don Juan, is motivated by the thrill of each new conquest. Hoffmann writes of Don Juan:

Insatiable in his desire, fired by a longing which sent the blood boiling through his veins, he was driven to the greedy, restless experience of all phenomena of this earthly world, hoping in vain to find satisfaction in them.²⁸

Zakhar Maksimovich Arbuzov is a factory owner who has lost his love, Nelly, to his former best friend Dzheneev. Arbuzov is as wild and reckless as Dzheneev is sensitive and artistic. The two serve as contrast to each other. (Arbuzov appears later in the 1917 short novel Dikie [The Dikiis], as Zakhar Dikii.) The intensity of his obsession for Nelly is much like that of Ragozhin for Nastasia Filipovna in Dostoevsky's Idiot.

There are five significant female characters: Nelly, who is portrayed in her pregnancy during most of the novel

(her child is still-born); Liza Tegulova, a virgin who succumbs to Dzheneev's charms and then drowns herself; Mariia Pavlovna, a young actress dying of tuberculosis; her friend Evgeniia (Zhenia) Samoilovna Uzdal'skaia; and the wife of the dying professor Ivan Ivanovich, Polina Grigorievna. Nelly emerges as one of Artsybashev's few believable and fully-developed women. She is quiet and enigmatic, tortured by her betrayal of Arbuzov and her affair with Dzheneev. She is an extremely strong woman, not afraid to act as she feels she must. She loved Dzheneev sincerely, and yet is able to overcome her emotional attachment to him when she finds out what type of man he is. Her seduction by Arbuzov, and subsequent abandonment by him just at the moment when she thinks she has found a true and loving partner, makes her one of the most tragic figures in the novel.

Liza, on the other hand, is not well-developed or distinctly drawn as a woman; she is but another victim of Dzheneev's lust. Realizing that she is pregnant, shunned by her family, abandoned by Dzheneev, she drowns herself — a sad Ophelia.

Mariia Pavlovna and Zhenia are realistically drawn. They are believable characters, who provide a vivid visual contrast in their scenes together. Mariia is pale; her thin, diseased body seems almost "transparent" (I, 154). She is a shadow of her former, vital self. Her love for the old Dr. Arnoldi is a quiet, other-worldly, non-physical dependence.

Zheniia is tall and strong. Her favorite color to wear is red (as contrasted to Mariia's white bed attire). Her body is that of a goddess or nymph: in the scene during a picnic with the usual gathering of male characters, she slips away to bathe in the river. Unknown to her, she is observed by the other picnickers. The bathing scene parallels the one in Sanin, in which Sanin and Ivanov come upon some bathing women and Sanin sees a young village girl, with whom he is acquainted, naked and lovely. The tone of the two passages is similar in that the narrator shows his frank interest in the bodies and admires them sincerely. Zhenia is indeed the only character in the novel, male or female, to display the type of vitality and love of life that Sanin exemplifies. She is not weakened by her relationship with Dzheneev, her friend's death, or any other event in the small provincial town, and leaves the artist and the novel whole and well. In her final dialogue with Dzheneev, she shows the extent to which she understands him. Only her eyes bear some trace of sadness (II, 70-71).

The old woman, Polina Grigoreevna, is a contrast to all the life and vitality of Zhenia. She suffers along with her aged husband who has a terminal illness. Theirs is the tragedy of love which has lived through youth, maturity and now, along with the body, is dying of old age. Her psychological pain, as she wishes her ailing husband would die, granting them both peace, is sensitively and insightfully

sketched by the author.

Cornet Krause and the engineer Naumov have been mentioned previously in connection with their similarities to, and differences from Dostoevsky's characters, especially Kirilov. Naumov functions as the spokesman for the theory of extermination of the human race in order to end its suffering. Krause, with his "Mephistophelian physiognomy" (I, 108),²⁹ is more important dramatically to the novel. He is the suicide par excellence, as he kills himself very calmly in front of his acquaintances at the local club. He is the personification of a late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century affliction of "a large brain and a small heart" (II, 44).

Officer Trenev and his wife exhibit all the symptoms of an ailing husband-wife relationship. The couple's main need for each other is sexual: both find it painful to think of their mates' being with other lovers. Theirs is the dilemma of the man and woman who have spent many years of their lives together, find closeness mainly in sexual intimacy, are estranged mentally, but remain together from habit and because of the pain anticipated from seeing the loved one belong to someone else.

Most of the characterization in the novel is executed in the impressionistic manner which was noted in the first chapter of this work. For example, Dr. Arnoldi is depicted for the first time as he sits dining at the local club:

Doctor Arnoldi was there. A decanter of vodka stood in front of the hulk of the doctor, who was

stifling with the heat in a tussore jacket which was soaked under the arms. He swallowed something greasy, smothered in sour cream and horseradish. The ends of a table napkin, tightly tied about his neck, stood up like hog's ears. [I, 15]

Chizh, "the little student," is also sketched in a few words as he hurries through the dusty summer streets of the provincial town to tutor his pupils:

The little student Chizh felt hopelessly embittered and bored, as he hastily ran from one lesson to the next.

His old white cap with the faded blue rim covered his pointed skull [ostryi cherep] right down to the ears. Under this cap, ideas ceaselessly bustled. [I, 3]

The mood of the novel is set by the first paragraph. The choice of words used to describe the setting immediately prepares the reader for the journey to the "breaking point":

The little town [malen'kii gorodok] was located in the steppe and to one leaving it from the outskirts looking into the mirage of the distant fields, into the phantoms [prizraki] of the far forests, crawling along the horizon and into the high apathetic [besstrasnoe] sky, it became clear that the unimportance of the groups of people, living, suffering and dying on the earth was not a beautiful, tragic phrase, but a simple, even paltry truth. [I, 1]

The feeling of alienation is hereby established. The whole impact of the landscape is described as "puzzling and alien to man" (zagadochna i chuzhda cheloveku; Ibid.). The town's greyness and lack of life is contrasted to other places, showing the importance of this particular setting:

In just such a grey, poor little town [gorodishka], more so than among green trees, pink-tinged mountains, blue seas or splendid buildings, could an idea be born which later would go out into the

world, crossing the face of the earth like an
ominous phantom of death. [I, 2]

Artsybashev's use of nature imagery has been observed throughout his work and is always relevant to the prime meaning of a story. In this passage the stress is on the use of color. The town is "grey" in contrast to the beauty of nature — "green trees, pink-tinged mountains or blue seas." The setting of the town is then described metaphorically:

A rock thrown into the sea vanishes without a trace, but the smallest stone in shallow, stagnant water creates inevitable ripples. And what passes unnoticed every day, in the course of life, here shocks souls to their depths and changes many minds.

Later they looked for and found cause in the person of Naumov, the new engineer at the factory of the wealthy Arbuzov. [Ibid.]

Thus, this town is so small and stagnant that even the smallest disturbances of daily life are noticed. The story begins with a suggested explanation of the epidemic of suicides which has just occurred in the town. As Glicksberg observes: "Naumoff is not the direct instigating cause: he is merely the catalytic agent."³⁰ Naumov functions as a mirror, as one by one he holds up the face of life for each character to gaze at and identify himself as the wretched creature Naumov calls Man. Naumov may be the catalyst in this particular set of events, and yet the author suggests (correctly, of course) that the end of life is inevitable despite anything that one may do:

. . . looking around with one's eyes wide open, it is impossible not to see that the human will cannot increase or decrease an iota of what is in life,

growing from the roots into the depths of the earth,
and sooner or later bringing about the inevitable
end. [I, 2-3]

Life's beauties are contrasted with the "black fog of death"
in the end of part I:

The sun is bright, tenderly and transparently shines
the beautiful moon, the trees are green, the sea
dove-blue, the mountains majestic, love is joyous
and its breath is lively and gay. Into these bright
joys of life, secretly and unseen, creeps the black
fog of death. Every moment someone dies. When one
looks at the bright sun, the green fields, this
simple and only true human truth appears to man as
hollow and false, like a mirage above the steppe on
a hot day. Death is inconceivable and the thought
of it is not accepted even when the hump-backed
coffin slowly descends into the dark pit. But, if
we possessed inhumanly acute hearing that would
enable us to hear all the sounds of the earth,
above the clatter of machines, above the rustle of
a million steps, above the murmur of the forest and
the surf of the sea, above the whispers of lovers
and cries of mothers giving birth, above, shots,
music, cries, whistles and laughter, we could
discern the tedious, ceaseless-by-day-or-night
voice of death. [I, 432]

These are the thoughts of Dr. Arnoldi, who, according to
Glicksberg,

. . . sums up most closely the author's position.
He is surprised at nothing; he seeks to ease the
pain of life in others, whereas he himself has died
within. . . . He has no answers for the questions
the principal characters in the novel ask him in
their anguish. His reply is that he does not know.
As far as he is concerned, there are no solutions. 31

Nature is used as a frame for action, as it is in
earlier works. This device has been observed in such works
as "Pasha Tumanov," "Kupriian," "Smert' Lande" and Sanin.
In part I of U poslednei cherty, the town is suffering from
the heat and dust of summer; this is not the lush, green time

depicted in Sanin. By the end of part I, autumn is approaching as Dr. Arnoldi sits at Mariia Pavlovna's graveside. Also, the first part ends with night falling:³²

'When I die, doctor, and all have gone away... you come and sit with me for a while!..' This voice seemed to echo somewhere very close to his ear.

'I'll sit awhile...' answered doctor Arnoldi silently. Far off, between the silhouetted branches of the birches, the greenish dusk coldly died out. Darkness closed in on all sides. And when it was totally dark, and shadows flitted and phantoms walked among the old crosses, a cold wind rose up and desolately rustled in the trees. [I, 437]

Part II begins with a statement of the change in the time of year:

The puddles sparkled with scraps of white sky; the wet acacias, bowed and trembling, were also reflected in the puddles, and the yellow leaves, felled by the night rain and torn by the wind, floated like living things. After the rain the place seemed especially bright and deserted. [II, 5]

After the many deaths of part II, the novel ends as one of the last major characters, Chizh, joins the number of suicides and winter begins. The last chapter begins and ends with nature descriptions. The beginning:

It was the dim, dry last day of autumn which smelled of frost and coming snow. A harsh wind gusted and whipped the black bare branches in the deserted garden and blew the yellow leaves into heaps on the pathways. The mud in the streets froze... From time to time the sky darkened and lowered, and almost imperceptible snowflakes began to fly in the air. [II, 228]

The end:

The bluish light timidly pierced the room and with pale eyes looked into its corners. The snow stopped falling, and the earth was covered with snow; all was smooth, white and clean. In the garden stood

the trees, their branches powdered with snow.

[II, 232]

Thus, Artsybashev uses nature passages to punctuate his prose. Nature is used symbolically to show how, in the evolution of the author's world-view, the warmth of the summer sun has given way to the snows of winter. Death has replaced life and love as the ultimate truth.

The plot is advanced through individual episodes which focus on each of the characters in turn. The stories of Chizh and Arnoldi begin and end the novel: they frame the other action. Glicksberg observes:

Tchish and Dr. Arnoldi form an excellent study in contrasts: one enthusiastic and idealistic, and the other sunk in indifference, aware that the struggle for existence is basically the same everywhere. . . . A change of government, technological innovations, the conquest of the air by the wings of man — all this will make no difference in the human condition. Tchish, for his part, believes in the greatness of humanity. . . . Tchish, despite his bravely affirmed utopian hopes, suffers from painful seizures of depression. . . . The old doctor, on the other hand, doggedly pursues 'an aimless path, without reason and without joy.'³³

Throughout the novel, it is Chizh's belief in the evolution of mankind which vies with Naumov's doctrine of annihilation and Krause's corpse-like indifference to life. Perhaps, it is Chizh's place as a positive force in the novel that renders his suicide most tragic. Finally, he too comes to a point when the beauty of his dreams cannot obliterate the ugliness and baseness of reality.

Dr. Arnoldi's belief that the beauty of life only masks the real truth — death — is the essential idea

expressed in the novel. There are other deaths depicted in the novel, each representing a type of vanity in life. The first death is that of a child — the only child of a poor family. With his death dies the worldly hope of his parents to see their child grow and develop and perhaps have a life better than their own. Thus, the author shows the vanity of man's hope for the redemption of his lot in future generations. The old professor Ivan Ivanovich has devoted his life's energies to scholarly pursuits, hoping to better man by wisdom. With his death he realizes that his works will survive but most likely be dusty with disuse. Because his name reminds the reader of Tolstoy's Ivan Il'ich, there is a temptation to compare the two. Tolstoy's hero finds peace at his death in the knowledge that there is no death and that he will pass on to eternal light.³⁴ Artsybashev's old professor parallels Tolstoy's dying man only superficially. The professor becomes suddenly religious near the end of his life only as a last resort. He cannot cope with dying, so he clutches at the Christian belief in eternal life. This belief does not sustain him, and he dies unconsolated, laughing hysterically. He realizes the finality of death and the vanity of all pursuits of men:

His face was disfigured with a terror not seen in the living, his eyes stared from their sockets, and he laughed...

That laughter was so wild and terrible that both women jumped back in horror. [I, 317]

The third death by illness is that of the actress,

Mariia Pavlovna. Looking at her thin body, she thinks of how she used to enjoy physical pleasures, and how that time seems so far off and so pointless; thus, the vanity of physical pleasures and beauty.

Glicksberg's analysis of the novel, its characters and their motivations is basically sound. He seems, however, too intent on discussing his theme of nihilism and the nihilist hero, and does not give enough attention to Artsybashev's loudly-spoken message. Artsybashev traces through his characters the loss of belief in life. What is expressed in the novel as a more generalized metaphysical truth is reduced by Glicksberg to a question of only nihilist philosophy. He confuses the idea by inappropriately calling the characters "nihilists." He states: "The nihilist suicide achieves nothing. His death leaves the universe of the absurd intact, unchanged and unchallenged."³⁵ It is exactly this fact that Artsybashev stresses — man can indeed do nothing to change his inevitable end. The only thing he may choose to do is to end his suffering by his own hand. There is "no project"³⁶ to devote himself to.

Artsybashev correlates an attitude of depression in the intelligentsia following the suppression of the 1905 revolution with the growing number of suicides. In an essay, "Epidemiia samoubiistv" (An Epidemic of Suicides, 1911-12), he explains:

Suicides occur because of love, hunger, loss of honor, terror and disillusionment with life. And

love, misfortune, hunger, disillusionment and terror exist everywhere and always.³⁷

He does not blame the post-revolutionary situation in full for the crisis, saying that perhaps man, as a species, has reached the stage when he has begun to decline and degenerate.

He writes that since the publication of U poslednei cherty, people have come to him, young and old, as if he were a "specialist on suicide (as they would go to a specialist-professor during an epidemic of plague...)." ³⁸ It was the same as when people had thought him an expert on, or prophet of free love after the publication of Sanin in 1907. To those critics who blame him for the number of suicides in Russia, Artsybashev replies that suicide is, above all, "an act of free will."³⁹ The final words in his article sum up his feeling that the individual must be responsible for himself — for his own life or death: ". . . he must live who sees joy in life, and for him who sees nothing in life, it is better to die."⁴⁰

* * * * *

As U poslednei cherty appeared a few years after Sanin, it, like all of Artsybashev's works following Sanin, was naturally compared to the first novel. A general opinion held by the critics is that the artist Dzheneev of U poslednei cherty is a continuation of Vladimir Sanin (A. E. Red'ko, D. Koltonovskaia, Adrianov). The message of the novel —

"suicide as a cure for the ills of life" — is conveyed by the engineer Naumov. Red'ko traces the experiences that led Naumov to make war against life and the living. He had once been condemned to death, and had become so accustomed to the idea that he ceased to be afraid. He was released, but the terrible shock he suffered remains and colors all his experience. Life continues as always, yet in Naumov lives the sensation of impending death. He decides that life is a lie and people in their striving for happiness are chasing illusions, following mirages. He feels that his mission is to preach what he has come to see as the logical conclusion to life — suicide. Red'ko's article was written before the final installment of the novel appeared, but as far as he had read, he believed Naumov to be a mouthpiece for the author.⁴¹

The previously-quoted article, which appeared in the Biulleteni literaturny i zhizni of 1911, gives a summation of the critical reactions to the novel: the criticisms are gathered from Novoe vremia, Sovremennoe slovo, Utro Rossii, Odesskii listok. The critic who collated these articles further comments:

[Concerning] the new novel, such differing critics express the same views... All threw themselves upon poor Artsybashev. Artsybashev thought he had a new idea, but all the critics in a chorus say no!⁴²

Utro Rossii carried Botsianovskii's article stating that all the characters of the novel are of one kind and speak the same language.⁴³ He feels that the preaching of suicide is

not convincingly presented in U poslednei cherty. He says to Artsybashev: "We are at the breaking point! There's nowhere to go!"⁴⁴ One German source quoted, Luther of Das literarische Echo, remarks: "Artsybashev . . . philosophizes no better than those Russian secondary schoolboys who have read too much Nietzsche and Stirner in poor translations."⁴⁵

A different opinion is given by E. Koltonovskaia in a lengthy article, "Predel ili pereval?" (Dead-end or the Pass?). She begins her discussion of the novel with a remark made by Belinskii concerning Lermontov's Hero of Our Time. Belinskii noted that, in Pechorin's Journal, the author vowed he would return to his hero. Belinskii believed that Lermontov had left Pechorin forever, as Goethe did Werther, as that part of Lermontov's life which had called forth the character of Pechorin had ended. Koltonovskaia deduces: "Being objective with his own suffering, he is set free from it... after the dissonances, the harmony can be discovered."⁴⁶ She asks how Artsybashev has changed since Sanin, and whether the process of creativity Belinskii mentioned is visible in the work of this author. To this question she replies:

I must first of all mention the great artistic progress which is felt in Artsybashev's new novel. Compared to this, Sanin is but a naive schoolboy's composition. The author has strengthened his own brand of realistic writing, in general close to the manner of Tolstoy, but the language of his imagery is now more lively. The characters are outlined more distinctly and sharply. There is an obvious maturity in the whole novel... In regard to the general mood of Artsybashev's art, it is much as before.⁴⁷

She defines Artsybashev as one of the most subjective of authors; therefore, she says, "to speak about his work is the same as to speak about him."⁴⁸ She believes that the author is concerned with contemporary problems, but that he does not distort life in a "curved mirror" (krivoe zerkalo) as do Andreev, Sologub and Remizov. She states that Artsybashev's images "are merely reflections with some defects... faces after a sleepless night."⁴⁹ She goes on to list four important points with regard to the novel: 1) the positive presence of an advocate of social and spiritual betterment of man in the character of the "little student" Chizh; 2) the fact that although Dzheneev is an individualist like Sanin, he is more psychologically developed and complex than Sanin; 3) there is a platonic love depicted between a dying actress and Dr. Arnoldi; and 4) death is presented as the nullifier of actions. Professor Ivan Ivanovich writes books that people will read after his death, but he will be dead. The swan painted by Dzheneev will live and be admired after he no longer exists. Both characters begrudge their works immortality, while they themselves are mortal. Thus it is the spirit of death that triumphs in the novel. Koltonovskaia expresses the hope that despite this triumph Artsybashev will be able to find "a way out":

The new novel of Artsybashev bears testimony to a "turn," not a "fall," and to the blossoming of artistic strength of one of our most characteristic modern writers... he has yet to work out his feelings to find the pass [pereval] and not come to a dead end [predel].⁵⁰

In an article of 1912, Dmitrii Filosofov gives his opinion about the relationship of Artsybashev to his "little student" Chizh. He says that Chizh, as his name (siskin) implies, has but the strength of a bird. He believes that Artsybashev does not like Chizh and treats him unfairly and cruelly, while exalting Naumov, the prophet of suicide, and Dzheneev, the Don Juan. Filosofov sees the novel as the struggle between the philosophy of desire, as shown in Dzheneev, and the philosophy of destruction, as incarnated in Naumov. In his final pronouncement on the novel, he says: "it is whatever you wish to call it, but not literature."⁵¹

Kornei Chukovskii says, "suicides in the works of our writers have become a real profession. There are lawyers, doctors and there are suicides."⁵² Further, he says, Artsybashev shows the characters in the novel to be so bored and unhappy in their professions — doctor, artist, teacher — that it is not surprising that their real vocation is to be suicides.⁵³

The opinions of American critics with regard to the novel afford yet other points of view. The Boston Transcript carried the following appraisal:

Breaking Point . . . is a far greater book than Sanine. It is morbid, yet more intense; more brutal, yet more illuminating; more disillusioned, yet finer. One might not unfairly call Artzibashev a bourgeois Turgenief. Like Turgenief, Artzibashev has the style of a cool chronicler. He dispassionately writes down what is seen, only the thrill . . . of life is left out. Artzibashev's style is like a

rapier, glistening, true, keen, swift. It has no magic or glamour; it is realistic Russian.⁵⁴

The Nation supplied this criticism:

Breaking Point is a disheartening example of that frantic and unfruitful pessimism to which the Russian realist has so often descended. This nightmare of lust and despair and death is the more dreadful because of the intellectual energy relentlessly devoted to its weaving.⁵⁵

In an issue of The New York Times of 1915, Breaking Point received its most positive American review:

Breaking Point, though frequently intolerable, remains a far deeper and richer work than Sanine, and one of the most remarkable produced in any country in many years. There is no use trying to reconcile it with any of our accepted theories. It stands as possibly the strongest exposition of pure intellectual nihilism known to modern readers. Many of the incidents in Artzibasheff's novel are so needlessly horrifying to our Western taste that we involuntarily cry out against him for leading us from Gogol's broad highway into his blind alley, among the carcasses of worn-out pleasures and the shards of shattered ideals. But even at its worst the alley does not wind aimlessly, nor wholly without purpose, clutter itself with garbage. Here and there it touches most unexpectedly Dostoevski's path among the stars.⁵⁶

The novel, like Sanin before it, was both praised and condemned by its various critics. Some saw in it only depravity and banality and did not even consider it a work of art. Others saw it as a step in Artsybashev's literary evolution.

To this reader, the novel represents the culmination of Artsybashev's prose works. It is the necessary outcome of the author's growing pessimism (as shown in previous chapters). It is not only a novel of suicides, it is the story

of ends of all sorts — ends to young life (the child) and old life (the professor), ends to love and illusions of life, represented especially forcefully by the suicides of the artist Dzheneev and the "little student" Chizh.

The most obviously striking feature about the late novel (in comparison with Artsybashev's other prose works) is its length. It is in two parts, which are unified by the characters Chizh and Dr. Arnoldi, and by nature passages used as frames for the action and as commentary on the human condition. All the major characters are introduced in the first part; in the second part, one by one they commit suicide. The deaths in the first part are natural, but still terrible: a child dies of a respiratory ailment; an aging professor dies of old age and a young actress dies of tuberculosis. It is only with the second part that Naumov's words seem to take effect and cause suicides — if indeed they do. It seems that an alternative explanation lies in the lives of the characters as they are unfolded. One can see the miseries in each life that would lead logically to suicide. These lives as they are portrayed — certainly the lives of the major characters — are both sordid and tragic. And the minor characters, such as the clerk Ryskov, a would-be writer, show how even the loftiest pursuit is insufficient to sustain a soul. When Ryskov reads his story, "Liubov" (Love), to Chizh and presses him to give an honest evaluation of the work, Ryskov is not prepared to face the

truth as expressed by Chizh, that he has no talent and will never be a great and profound writer. Trenev's eternal love-hate relationship with his wife ends both foolishly and tragically with his death by his own hand.

There are two very striking descriptions of Dzheneev's paintings which give insight into the drama of his life, one in each of the novel's two parts. The first, which is to be hung in an art gallery, is of a swan. The artist discusses his creation:

'Here I sat for two months working on my "Swan Lake" . . . Why such a lake? Why?.. But that's not important, that's not the point... Do you know [how it was] when right in front of me, just as if alive, but more perfect than the living, my white swan was reflected in the black water... Do you understand? Such a proud, pure, cold-white [kholodnyi belyi] swan, on the cold deep water... I almost went out of my mind from delight... It seemed that if I could have seen my swan in real life I would have knelt before it on the shore and stretched out my hands in supplication and wept with affection and pride. [I, 94]

The painting, although of a live creature, seems frozen, cold and dead; if not dead, then it is at least completely removed from all that is human. Although the painting (as it is described) is not remarkably original, it nonetheless conveys a mood which foreshadows Dzheneev's second canvas: it is as personalized and real as the first is symbolic and ideal:

The pale bluish light of a foggy city morning timidly penetrated the transparent tulle curtains of a luxurious private room of a fashionable restaurant. The electric lights had been extinguished and in the pale uneven light of morning the traces of the evening's debauchery loomed strangely like

phantoms: the furniture was overturned, the table cloth was stained with wine and covered with empty bottles, wine glasses and tumblers of various hues; cigar smoke still remained; from a pale silver wine cooler the neck of a bottle protruded wrapped in a wet napkin; one bottle was overturned on the very edge of the table and a blood-red stream of wine flowed down the table cloth making a pool on the floor. The morning light refracted in the facets of glass, falling in pale splotches on the table cloth and creeping along a pale human face helplessly and terribly stiffened at the table... A suicide — a young man exhausted by debauchery and sleepless nights. His delicate, now dead face looked older about the mouth... blue shadows lay across his face as if tracing all this endless, senseless life wasted on women, wine and gambling. Blood slowly flowed down his pale cheek, staining his collar, his shirt, and the lapel of his black frock coat... On the floor lies a revolver, fallen from the limply-hanging thin hand... And all of this quiet but terrible room is crowded with women. They are like misty phantoms born of the bluish, bloodless city dawn... They crowd around the body, weeping, caressing, threatening... Their distorted faces show mindless passion, cold cruelty, some are supplicating, some are full of hatred — all are turned toward the dead man... [II, 135]

This canvas of the young suicide is a psychological self-portrait of the artist himself. The women who swarm in phantom throngs around him are strongly reminiscent of the women-vampires depicted by Edvard Munch and August Strindberg. The canvas as described is definitely expressionistic. Artsybashev is certainly to be given credit for these two mood-evoking verbal images which reflect the state of mind of their artist-creator.

In general, the plot of the second part of the novel is made up of a series of stories about the lives of the various characters, all ending in suicide. The suicide of one of the minor characters, Lieutenant Krause, becomes a

dramatization of the words of Naumov — a nihilist play with a real death. Krause has been overwhelmed by Naumov's arguments and seems to be a living suicide just waiting for the right time and place to be accomplished. Perhaps Krause is the real nihilist par excellence — at least Naumov has his driving hatred for mankind and nature to keep him alive. To Krause life simply equals zero:

'It's all the same, rivers of blood or humanity... Let others live if they can... I cannot. I don't want to live, simply because it is not interesting. That's all. It's not a tragedy, it's not terrible, it's not meaningless, it is simply not interesting. Nature and beauty are small things and I'm tired of them... Love is but a trifle... Humanity is simply stupid!.. The secrets of the universe are unknown and when we do discover them — it will be uninteresting!.. . it is simply not of interest to me... maybe it is different for others... I would also like to say goodbye... because I think that I will not see you again... And if we do meet, that would be dull... Why?... Immortality — that is dull.'

[II, 101]

Immediately following this speech, which mesmerizes his companions, Krause goes off by himself and, putting the muzzle of a gun in his mouth, kills himself. He is the only truly nihilistic suicide in the novel because he really does view life as not worth living: it can not stimulate his interest in the least. Others kill themselves because they are tortured souls; he dies because he is tired of nothingness.

Not only does Naumov preach mass suicide for those in the small provincial town — he talks of ending the human race altogether. His words, echoing from the beginning of the twentieth century, perhaps prefigure the First and

Second World Wars and the Atomic Age: "'No, suicide is too difficult, too torturous... Different methods are needed, and they will be found...'" (I, 275). This is not a mystical vision of the Apocalypse, but a description of how man will find ever better ways of destroying himself — considering the present-day possibilities for nuclear war or disaster, famine caused by over-population, or such things as suicide cults, it appears that man is close to fulfilling Naumov's dream. Naumov, derived from na + um "intellect" or "mind" plus the surname suffix ov is, literally, the man of reason or intellect. Thus, cold intellect may lead to the conclusion that life is not worth living and the race of man not a practical experiment. Vladimir Sanin represents the sound mind and healthy body — Naumov is a disembodied intellect.

U poslednei cherty, like Sanin, has obvious shortcomings as a work of fiction. The philosophizing is often long and tedious. Some of the characters are too static and clichéd, such as Arbuzov and Nelly. Their tempestuous love-making is not described in a way that makes it unusual or different from other such scenes which dot Artsybashev's prose. Liza is simply, as her name implies, another "Bednaia Liza."⁵⁷ However, the novel does hold something of value for a modern reader. The characterizations of Dr. Arnoldi, Chizh, Dzheneev and Zhenia are well done. The glimpses of their life-stories are intriguing and captivating. The philosophy of nihilism, some striking visual imagery, and a

basically well-told story hold the reader's attention. Together, Sanin and U poslednei cherty represent the two polarities of Artsybashev's world-view — the one seeking the beautiful and strong, the other perceiving the phantom of death even in the beauty of life and calling it all nothingness.

CHAPTER VI

THE PROSE OF M. P. ARTSYBASHEV

Presented in the previous chapters, Artsybashev's prose bears the stamp of the tradition of the nineteenth-century Russian novel, especially of Dostoevsky and Tolstoy. It is also closely related to the off-shoots and continuations of realism as seen in the works of his contemporaries Gorky, Kuprin and Andreev. Finally, Artsybashev, to some degree, foreshadows the type of sensuality found in the works of the English writer D. H. Lawrence, and the existential hero of the French writer-philosopher Albert Camus. These connections to the past and future should not seem surprising considering that Artsybashev was, after all, writing in the early twentieth century. Moreover, it seems fair and just to identify him as a significant minor prose writer who has, nevertheless, suffered from unjust neglect.

Artsybashev's first stories of the period 1900-1903 are, to a great degree, already indicative of his later work. The themes of man struggling alone against the conventions of society, and the more absolute but still confining laws of nature, continue throughout his prose. The impressionistic style which characterizes his first period can be discerned also in the later stories, as it deepens and develops into expressionism. The heroes and characters of "Pasha Tumanov,"

"Kupriian," "Iz podvala," "Podpraporshchik Gololobov," and "Smekh" are all men and women who reappear as slightly different characters in later works. "Smert' Lande" links Artsybashev to Dostoevsky and more especially to Tolstoy (as most critics of the time noted). In the words of Mirsky:

The negation of culture and the intense consciousness of the elemental realities of life — death and sex — are the essence of Tolstoyism, and they reappear in the philosophy of Andreyev and Artsybashev. As for the purely literary influence of Tolstoy over these two writers, it can hardly be exaggerated.¹

With the novel Sanin, Artsybashev displayed either extreme talent or a vulgar lack of it. His contemporaries, the poets Bal'mont and Blok, both showed a definite appreciation and understanding of Sanin as a hero. Bal'mont's epithets, "many-faceted, sun-countenanced, demon-wise,"² and Blok's affirmation of Sanin as a "real man with an inflexible will . . . one who was ready for anything, young, strong and free"³ attest to the fact that Sanin did indeed enjoy popularity with some of the better writers of the period. The censure of some critics and the applause of others does not change the fact that the novel was sensationally popular with the reading public. Even Mirsky, who does not like Artsybashev's work, concedes that

. . . its [Sanin's] success was instant and tremendous. The old-fashioned critics cried out against its immorality, and the modernists pointed out the absence in it of all literary merit. But it was a sensation and everyone had to read it.⁴

Probably one reason why this was so (apart from its obviously

bold sexuality) is that, as the American scholar Phelps wrote: "In direct contrast to most Russian novels, the man here [Sanin] is endowed with limitless power of will. . ."⁵ Sanin was translated into many languages, appearing in two parts (1914-1915) in English.⁶ The popular English version translated by Percy Pinkerton, which would be encountered by most non-specialists, is regrettably poor, with many passages either severely abridged or completely deleted. The Sanine of Pinkerton is not the Sanin of Artsybashev. However, even in this poor version, it must be admitted that the message does come through: a tribute to its strength rather than to the translator's expertise. It may be mentioned in passing that all the translations of Artsybashev are equally unrepresentative of his work.⁷

Although Sanin was successful as a novel, it can not be claimed to be a great novel. Artsybashev here can be called really little more than an interesting writer and thinker and engaging story-teller. The ideas expressed by the hero are basically a condensation of the Nietzsche-Stirner anarchism in vogue at that time in Russia. Phelps notes the post-1905 temperament of the Russian intelligentsia when he writes: "Anarchism, posing as self-assertion, is the note in most recent Russian literature, as, indeed, it is in Russian life."⁸

Artsybashev's literature of the period 1900-1907 (the publication dates of Sanin) is mainly a literature of social

protest. It is directed against the school system and accepted bourgeois morality. Besides this restraint by society, the author also recognizes the constraints nature places on the individual. Often the two seem to conspire against the individual to such a degree that he is completely obliterated. These ideas, as pointed out by Mirsky, are at base Tolstoyan. They are shared by many writers of this time, in particular by Maksim Gorky, Aleksandr Kuprin and Leonid Andreev. Gorky's "Znanie" (knowledge) school of new or more advanced realism, which allowed mention and discussion of the ugly side of life (life in the so-called "lower depths"⁹) and sexuality, prevailed in the beginning of the twentieth century. "The taboo-lifting work begun by Tolstoy was continued by Gorky, Andreev and Artsybashev."¹⁰ Andreev, also a founding member of the "Znanie" school, expanded his realism to include expressionism and existential thought. Of the four authors — Gorky, Andreev, Kuprin and Artsybashev — Andreev is the most abstract. Some of his works, such as "Krasnyi smekh," create a world in which perception is marked by altered states of mind and ultimately madness leading to complete disintegration of familiar forms.

Gorky, on the other hand, can be viewed as a romantic (in the sense of European Romanticism, as Mirsky calls it¹¹) and a writer concerned with social change. His origins in the lower middle class, and his harsh upbringing, show in his choice of a pseudonym — gor'kii: "bitter." His heroes

are of the lower classes, but this does not stop them from engaging in philosophical discussions: for example, the following speech from Na dne (The Lower Depths, 1902), made famous by the line "chelovek eto zvuchit gordo!" (Man — that sounds proud!):

[Satin.] When I'm drunk I like everything. Yes, sir. He's praying? Fine. A man can believe or not believe — it's his own affair. A man is free — he pays for everything himself — for belief and disbelief, for love, for intelligence, and that makes him free. Man — that's truth. What is man? It's not you nor I, nor they — No, it's you, I, they, the old man, Napoleon, Mohammed — all in one. (Outlines the figure of a man in the air.) You understand? It's tremendous! In this are all the beginnings and all the ends. Everything in man, everything for man. Only man exists, the rest is the work of his hands and his brain. Man! It's magnificent! It has a proud ring. Man! We have to respect man, not pity him, not demean him — respect him, that's what we have to do.¹²

This proud hero created by Gorky is personified in Artsybashev's horse-thief Kupriian and, of course, in Vladimir Sanin.

Aleksandr Kuprin's novel of 1905, Poedinok (The Duel), is both a condemnation of the inhuman brutality encountered in the military and the story of a rather sensitive, romantic young officer who is offended by the coarseness of military life. This work made him famous, as Sanin did Artsybashev. His second large novel, I Ama, has already been discussed at length; it is basically a realistic portrayal of the life of prostitutes and a didactic tract against prostitution. Kuprin's retelling of "The Song of Songs" — "Sulamif" — was published in 1908 in the almanac Zhizn', which was edited by Artsybashev. The story is a highly elaborate and poetic tale

of the love of the young Sulamith for King Solomon. "All the splendor of Solomon's reign is — in the words of Ecclesiastes — only a 'vanity of vanities' beside the love of Sulamith."¹³ This type of love, eternal and yet very sensual, is found infrequently in the work of Artsybashev. Perhaps there is only one fleeting vision of the possibility of this love in the final scene of "Chelovecheskaia volna."

A recent book on Kuprin, by Nicholas Luker, describes the writer as

. . . one of the most distinguished Russian realist prose writers of the early 1900s. . . . Kuprin's writing is essentially optimistic, assertive of life in all its manifestations. Despite the gloom of his declining years, his career was devoted to the exaltation of man and the beauty of natural things.¹⁴

It has been noted previously that Artsybashev, as well, began his works in an optimistic tone, which later turned darker. Portrayals of the beauty of life gradually turned to descriptions of the ugliness of life permeated with the fear of death.

The mood of Artsybashev's late stories (discussed in chapter IV) and the themes found there and in the large novel, U poslednei cherty, which marks the end of his period of prose creativity, is most comparable to that found in the stories of Andreev. Mirsky's over-generalized statement about Artsybashev and Andreev as prophets of gloom does apply to Artsybashev's later stories and his second novel. Mirsky asserts:

Andreev and Artsybashev proceeded from a scientific agnosticism and were strangers to all mystical optimism — theirs was an all-round and absolute pessimism — a pessimism of death as well as of life.¹⁵

Mirsky further identifies Andreev as a writer of the "pessimistic or metaphysical school."¹⁶ This means that he was a prime example of that depression and disillusionment which plagued the Russian intelligentsia after the 1905 revolution failed to bring about the dramatic changes that had been hoped for. In broader terms, it may be linked with the general breakdown and questionings of all previously-accepted values and systems. Woodward describes Andreev as a "unique figure in the literary life of his times"¹⁷ who both wrote about and lived the problems of the early twentieth century:

The isolation and rootlessness of the intellectual in contemporary Russian society, the intrinsic perils of a predominantly rationalistic culture, the inevitable bankruptcy of an assertive individualistic philosophy of life, the irreconcilability of abstract ideals and mundane reality, the relation of man to his neighbour and to the universe as a whole — these are the problems to which his thoughts were constantly directed, problems which had inspired some of the best-known works of nineteenth century Russian literature, but which from the turn of the century to 1917 acquired an unparalleled ascendancy in Russian intellectual life. And the level of abstraction to which he raised them was in itself symptomatic of that renewed concern with the metaphysical, as distinct from the social-political, dimension of life which was an important contributing factor in the birth of Russian symbolism and in the general renaissance of art and letters in the two decades before the Revolution, and which, tragically for the future of Russian literature, proved incompatible with Bolshevik aesthetics. The excitement and controversy which greeted almost his every work is evidence of the extent to which Andreyev was inwardly attuned to the spirit of his times.¹⁸

This general summary can also hold true for Artsybashev's prose, especially the later works.

Again and again, when reading about the early twentieth-century literature of Russia, one name is repeated — that of Tolstoy. His influence on the "Znanie" group is pronounced. His ideas and style of writing filtered through to probably all minor prose writers of that time. Because such a topic as Tolstoy and the prose writers of the early twentieth century could easily be a thesis in itself, only a few obvious and important aspects will be mentioned here. Discussing the cleft that occurred in Tolstoy's work after 1880, Mirsky observes:

From the very beginning we cannot fail to discern in him an obstinate search for a rational meaning to life; a confidence in the powers of common sense and his own reason; contempt for modern civilization with its "artificial" multiplication of needs; a deeply rooted irreverence for all functions of State and Society; a sovereign disregard for accepted opinions and scientific and literary "good form"; and a pronounced tendency to teach.¹⁹

Most of these statements are applicable to the four writers discussed here. Perhaps the late stories of Tolstoy are most comparable in theme to the work of the young prose writers.

As R. F. Christian states:

The themes of nearly all his late stories were chosen to enable him to express his iconoclastic attitude to the organisation of society, the administration of justice and the relation between the sexes.²⁰

Tolstoy's obvious censure of sexuality did not take root in the works of the "Znanie" group to any degree. Artsybashev's

Naumov (U poslednei cherty) does not decry sexuality per se, only the children that result from the union of man and woman and keep the race alive. Sexuality, however, did play an important part in the prose of the early 1900s. As realism broadened its scope, the depiction of human sexual relations became just another part of the description of life.

Professor Christian identifies yet another of Tolstoy's obsessions during his final years: "Vanity and sexual desire tormented Tolstoy almost to the end of his days — but not more insistently than the fear of death."²¹ It was this preoccupation with man's mortality which motivated much of Andreev's and Artsybashev's work. "Smert' Ivana Il'icha" (The Death of Ivan Il'ich) perhaps is the cornerstone of the entire edifice of prose about death appearing in Russia in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Death as an absolute compels man to look at life and more particularly at his own life. Christian's interpretation of Ivan Il'ich's end seems to give a possible explanation to the end of "Smert' Lande" and the many deaths by suicide and illness in U poslednei cherty and the stories discussed in chapter IV:

His tragedy is — to be mortal. 'Why this torture?' he asks himself when gravely ill. And he answers: 'For no reason, it just is so.' . . . Before he dies, it has been said, 'he sees the inner light of Faith, renunciation and love.'²² But faith in what? And whom does he love? And how can he help renouncing life when he is at death's door? . . . Tolstoy resists a facile 'religious' conclusion — the light he sees at the bottom of his imaginary sack is not God's love or immortality, but only a release from suffering.²³

Indeed, Naumov's mission, as he envisions it, would be to save mankind from any further suffering by bringing about its liquidation as soon as possible.

Finally, when discussing technique in the stories and novels of Artsybashev, Tolstoy again comes to mind. Twentieth-century prose in general uses the devices of interior monologue and psychological eavesdropping to probe characters' inner states. As mentioned in previous chapters, Artsybashev often used this popular device. Another aspect of Tolstoy's technique — juxtaposition — is found in Artsybashev's prose. Sharp juxtapositions of scenes of battle with scenes of peaceful countryside (as in Tolstoy's early war stories) or of poverty with wealth (especially Resurrection) are also plentiful in the prose works of Artsybashev. Repetition, used for effect and to stress and underline an idea or character trait is yet another device common to both authors. The Tolstoyan device of ostranenie or "making it strange" — that is, describing a place or thing in such a way as to make it seem unfamiliar, as if one were seeing it for the first time — can be found in the prose of Artsybashev. An example of ostranenie is the description of the lamb-carcass in "Krov'" (page 56, above): a fitting place for the use of this device, since Tolstoy was favorably impressed by the story, viewing it primarily as propaganda for his belief in vegetarianism.

With regard to the English writer D. H. Lawrence, it

is mostly his sentiments concerning the man-woman relationship that are relevant to Artsybashev. Lawrence's mastery of human psychology and problems of sexuality is far greater than Artsybashev's. His densely symbolic and religious, and at the same time intensely realistic, prose is more akin to the best of Dostoevsky. It is Lawrence's fundamental critique of the times in terms of living human relationships which makes his work somewhat comparable to that of Artsybashev. Probably, considering the writers of this time, Rozanov or even Merezhkovskii would be closer in spirit to Lawrence. Certainly the symbolic nature of his writing would place him closer to the Symbolists in Russia if one were to find relatives for him (aside from Dostoevsky or Tolstoy²⁴) in Russian literature. Lawrence describes in his novels the elemental nature of man and woman and their meeting. They are as elemental in their physical states as earth and air or fire and water. Their souls and the relationships that occur between the bodies and souls of the two sexes is what connects them to a higher order. They also have the power to reach the Infinite through realizations proceeding from both spirit and reason. An illustration of this is the well-known passage describing Ursula in the laboratory in The Rainbow (1915):

She looked still at the unicellular shadow that lay within the field of light, under her microscope, It was alive. She saw it move — she saw the bright mist of its ciliary activity, she saw the gleam of its nucleus, as it slid across the plane of light. What then was its will? If it was a conjunction of

forces, physical and chemical, what held these forces unified, and for what purpose were they unified?

.

It intended to be itself. But what self? Suddenly in her mind the world gleamed strangely, with an intense light, like the nucleus of the creature under the microscope. . . . She only knew that it was not limited mechanical energy, not mere purpose of self-preservation and self-assertion. It was a consummation, a being infinite. Self was a oneness with the infinite. To be oneself was a supreme, gleaming triumph of infinity.²⁵

This understanding of the relationship of the human or animal to the infinite is suggested by the life-loving Sanin. One might suppose that Lande would also approach such an understanding. Lande is Artsybashev's most spiritual creation as a hero and thus perhaps closest to Lawrence in this respect. It seems that Artsybashev was approaching Lawrence's purpose: to portray human relationships as they exist in all their deep sensuality and complexity. Artsybashev may be credited in part with attempting to do what Lawrence later so skillfully did accomplish.

It has been mentioned in previous chapters that some of Artsybashev's heroes and heroines are strikingly like the formulation of the Absurd Man by Albert Camus.²⁶ One might posit a lineage in the European existentialist tradition, beginning with Stirner, to Nietzsche, and then an interchange between Dostoevsky and Nietzsche, proceeding to Artsybashev. Then one may posit another branch running from Stirner, Nietzsche and Dostoevsky to Camus. Camus's interest in Dostoevsky is apparent to anyone acquainted with the former's

works, such as "Un Raisonnement absurde" where Kirilov is mentioned; "L'Homme absurde" where Ivan Karamazov is discussed, or "La Création absurde" which once again turns to Kirilov. Camus also successfully adapted Dostoevsky's novel Besy (The Devils) into a play, Les Possédés. A notion expressed in Camus's "La Liberté absurde" is that of life "without appeal."²⁷ This idea is applicable to many of Artsybashev's heroes and heroines, particularly to Vladimir Sanin:

Ainsi ce qu'il exige de lui-même, c'est de vivre seulement avec ce qu'il sait, de s'arranger de ce qui est et ne rien faire intervenir qui ne soit certain. On lui répond que rien ne l'est. Mais ceci du moins est une certitude. C'est avec elle qu'il a affaire: il veut savoir s'il est possible de vivre sans appel.²⁸

A comparative study of any one aspect of the relationship of Artsybashev's philosophy with Camus's would be much too extensive for inclusion herein; however, the prevalent mood in much of Artsybashev's fiction and the themes used by the Russian writer seem definitely to anticipate what Camus later wrote in his essays and novels. The spirit of pre-Revolutionary Russia and pre-World War II (and later the time of the Resistance in France) are complexly parallel. In both, crisis and rapid change are imminent, bringing man to the brink of something new and terrible which tests his strength to hold on to life with integrity and love. Even when Artsybashev preaches mass suicide through Naumov, there is still a wistful, sunset love of life (as is embodied, for

example, in Zhenia or even the old doctor Arnoldi) which counters Naumov's shrill call for annihilation and suggests that the author would seek a different "way out."²⁹

Thus, as suggested in previous pages, there are numerous valid comparisons to be made between the prose of Artsybashev and the prose of his contemporaries, Tolstoy and writers in other European literatures. These few connections established here are by no means meant to be exhaustive or constraining. Here then, on this crossroads of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, of the realist tradition and that which, rebelling against this realism, would later be called modernism, stands the prose of Artsybashev.

* * * * *

Once again briefly summarizing and scanning the main features of Artsybashev's prose, from the first short story of 1901, "Pasha Tumanov," to the large novel U poslednei cherty of 1911-1912, which concludes the decade of this author's prime prose creativity, there are some trends and forms which may be observed. Generally, one may say that those works (of whatever time period) with one main hero who embodies or illustrates the theme of the work are superior to those in which there are numerous heroes expounding various points of view. For example, Sanin in this respect is structurally more satisfying than U poslednei cherty, and "Smert' Lande" in this respect is better constructed than

either of them. U poslednei cherty is, nonetheless, striking and engaging for the many characters and viewpoints presented, if not so cohesive as a work of art. It functions rather as a collection of stories joined together by the main heroes Chizh, Arnoldi, Dzheneev and Arbuzov (an important secondary character). At no time does Artsybashev's presentation of his major characters in the large novel reach the masterly proportions of Dostoevsky's polyphonic novel, for instance. This diffusion of energy, which occurs when there are too many dissimilar viewpoints or focal points in a work, can also be noted in a comparison of two short, thematically connected works — "Teni utra" (1905) and "Krovavoe piatno" (1906). Both deal with the events of the 1905 Revolution. The first, because of its relative length and the presence of three main characters, as well as three important minor characters, seems to have less impact and to be structurally weaker. The second story chronicles the experience of one hero and discusses the part he plays in the battle between soldiers and revolutionaries at a railroad station. The story of the needless sacrifice of his life is detailed psychologically and may serve as an example of one who believes in a cause and is then lost to it. The same comparison holds true for the longer stories or novellas "Milliony" (1907) and "Chelovecheskaia volna" (1906). The first is unified by the action and character development of the hero-millionaire. The second focuses separately on four main characters;

however, it is more skillfully drawn because the characters are really illustrations of the themes of historical process versus the individual, and the temporal and eternal elements of life.

In general, Artsybashev's works are not dense or especially rich in presentation; rather they are fairly fast-moving and fluent. In reference to his writing technique, the remarks made in the first chapter hold true, with few exceptions, throughout his works. If there is a marked progression, it is in the artist's vision, which develops from impressionism to his later expressionism. The more select descriptions and the moods evoked by these details reflect the writer's ever-darkening world view as one surveys his major prose. Artsybashev's Weltanschauung changed significantly from his early stories to the large novel. Considering the events of the early twentieth century in Russia — from the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905, the Revolution of 1905, World War I beginning in 1914 to the final dissolution of the Russian Empire with the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 — it is not surprising that an artist of some sensitivity would depict and chronicle the social and political unrest of the period in his works and would be infected by the anxious mood running through it.

In the final analysis, one can identify Mikhail Petrovich Artsybashev as a writer who, while continuing in the tradition of nineteenth-century realist prose, like his

contemporaries expanded the boundaries of realism and introduced modernist elements into this tradition. He exhibits in his prose a sometimes insightful understanding of psychology; man's hopes and fears. His style, sometimes uninspired, is at best vivid. He tells an engaging story with some unusual and memorable characters. Many of his ideas are relevant today; the questions which he raised seventy years ago about the changing role of the individual in society are yet to be answered. Most of all, one would hope that this study has helped this neglected writer to take his place among other prose writers and thinkers of early twentieth-century Russia.

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION AND BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

¹"The Silver Age" — a second period of great poetry in Russia, after the Golden Age of Pushkin and the Classical Poets. See The Silver Age of Russian Culture, An Anthology, eds. Carl and Ellendea Proffer (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1971).

²Wladimir Weidle, Russia Absent and Present, trans. Gordon Smith (New York: 1952), p. 80.

³Samuel Cioran, The Apocalyptic Symbolism of Andrej Belyi (The Hague: Mouton, 1973), p. 12.

⁴Ivan Bunin, Sobranie sochenenii, vol. 4 (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1966), p. 327.

⁵Boris Lazarevskii, "M. P. Artsybashev," Neugasimaia lampada (Warsaw: Edineniia, 1928). This is a collection of articles published on the first anniversary of the death of M. P. Artsybashev by the Russian émigré community in Warsaw. (Full title: Neugasimaia lampada, Sbornik statei v pamiat' M. P. Artsybasheva.)

⁶Ibid., p. 26.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Anonymous, "M. P. Artsybashev: Biograficheskaia svedeniia," Neugasimaia lampada, p. 9. This article was originally published in Za svobodu, No. 109, 26 April 1925, Warsaw. Artsybashev edited this publication.

⁹Lazarevskii, "M. P. Artsybashev," p. 26.

¹⁰See E. Gomberg-Verzhbinskaia, Peredvizhniki, Rasskazy ob isskustve (Leningrad: Iskusstvo, 1970, 2nd ed.) for examples of the work of this group and some discussion of the art movement.

¹¹Letter received from Prof. Valerian Revutsky, 17 November 1975.

¹²Mikhail Artsybashev, Introduction to The Millionaire, trans. Percy Pinkerton (New York: Huebsch, 1915), p. 8.

¹³Anon., "M. P. Artsybashev," p. 9.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵"Boris Artzybasheff," Current Biography, 1945, p. 18.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Anon., "M. P. Artsybashev," p. 9.

¹⁸Aleksandr Kuprin, writer and contemporary of Artsybashev, mentions Miroljubov's tie with these authors. See A. I. Kuprin o literature, ed. F. I. Kuleshov (Minsk: BGU im. V. I. Lenina, 1969).

¹⁹See note in Letters of Gorky and Andreev, 1899-1912, ed. Peter Yershov, trans. Lydia Weston (New York: Columbia University Press; London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958) p. 149.

²⁰Lazarevskii, "M. P. Artsybashev," p. 24.

²¹A. I. Fedorov, "Nezabyvaemoe," Neugasimaia lampada, p. 21.

²²In various critical works about Sanin this remark is made. D. S. Mirsky also thus labels Artsybashev: "Soon after the First Revolution, Andreyev's popularity was almost eclipsed by the great vogue of the author of Sanin." A History of Russian Literature (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966), p. 401. See also Chapter II of this text for further discussion of the reception Sanin was given by the critics.

²³Lazarevskii, "M. P. Artsybashev," p. 26.

²⁴Anon., "M. P. Artsybashev," pp. 10-11.

²⁵Ibid., p. 11.

²⁶Weidle, Russia Absent and Present, p. 92.

²⁷Lazarevskii, "M. P. Artsybashev," p. 26.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹M. P. Artsybashev, Vechnyi mirazh (Berlin: Izdatel'stvo Gutnogo, 1922), p. 132.

³⁰M. P. Artsybashev, D'iavol: tragiko-komicheskii fars v 4-kh deistviiakh (Warsaw: Za svobodu, 1925), p. 124.

³¹Weidle, Russia Absent and Present, p. 114.

³²Lazarevskii, "M. P. Artsybashev," p. 26. Prof. Gleb Struve states that Artsybashev left Russia "of his own free will. There were no individual expulsions in those days, and Artsybashev was not one of the great number of those who

were expelled at the end of 1922 (mostly writers and scholars) — most of them from Moscow and St. Petersburg to Germany." Letter to author, 9 November 1977.

³³Lazarevskii, "M. P. Artsybashev," p. 27.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ibid., p. 28.

³⁶Fedorov, "Nezabyvaemoe," p. 21.

³⁷Lazarevskii, "M. P. Artsybashev," p. 28.

NOTES TO CHAPTER I, Part 1

¹Facts here (pp. 17-18) from Russkaia literatura kontsa XIX nachalo XX veka (Moscow: Nauka, 1971), pp. 321-348.

²Ibid., p. 324.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid., p. 325.

⁵Russian Modernism: Culture and the Avant Garde 1900-1930, ed. George Gibian and H. W. Tjalsma (Ithaca, London: Cornell University Press, 1976). This work is used to give a basic definition of Modernism here.

⁶Ibid., p. 11.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Thrall, Hibbard and Holman, A Handbook to Literature (New York: Odyssey Press, 1962), pp. 237-238.

⁹Larousse Encyclopedia of Modern Art, general ed. René Huyghe (London, New York: Hamlyn, 1961), p. 267.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹I. I. Baranov, M. Artsybashev kak khudozhnik-psikolog i impressionist i kak pevets smerti starogo i zhizni novogo cheloveka (Kiev: 1908). See also: Anonymous, "Literaturnye besedy M. Artsybashev, T. I., Rasskazy," Nasha Zhizn', 1906, p. 1.

¹²Baranov, Artsybashev kak khudozhnik, p. 8.

- ¹³As quoted in Lazarevskii, "M. P. Artsybashev," p. 24.
- ¹⁴Artsybashev, Introduction to The Millionaire, p. 9.
- ¹⁵John Carroll, Break-Out from the Crystal Palace: The anarcho-psychological critique: Stirner, Nietzsche, Dostoevsky (London, Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974), p. 22.
- ¹⁶M. P. Artsybashev, Rasskazy, Vol. I (Moscow: Skirmunt, 1907, 2nd ed.), p. 1. Further references are to this edition.
- ¹⁷Seymour Chapman, "The Structure of Narrative Transmission," in Style and Structure in Literature (Oxford: 1975), pp. 224-225.
- ¹⁸Artsybashev, Introduction to The Millionaire, p. 6.
- ¹⁹Thrall et al., A Handbook to Literature, p. 458.
- ²⁰Baranov, Artsybashev kak khudozhnik, p. 10.
- ²¹"Pasha Tumanov," 45 pages; "Kupriian," 104 pages, "Krov'," 43 pages; "Smekh," 14 pages; "Podpraporshchik Gololobov," 37 pages; "Iz podvala," 19 pages.
- ²²A. S. Pushkin, "Brozu li ia vdol' ulits shumnykh" (1829). Eighth quatrain quoted by Artsybashev.
- ²³James B. Woodward, Leonid Andreev: A Study (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), p. 103.
- ²⁴Fyodor Dostoevsky, Besy in Polnoe sobranie sochinenii v tridsati tomakh, Vol. 10 (Leningrad: Nauka, 1974), p. 470.
- ²⁵F. Dostoevsky, The Notebooks for the Idiot, ed. Edward Wasiolek, trans. K. Strelsky (University of Chicago, 1967).
- ²⁶Ibid., p. 18.
- ²⁷Ibid., p. 234.
- ²⁸Baranov, Artsybashev kak khudozhnik, p. 12.

NOTES TO CHAPTER I, Part 2

¹Letters of Gorky and Andreev 1899-1912, ed. Peter Yershov, trans. Lydia Weston (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), p. 72. This correspondence is from 1905.

²Ibid.

³L. N. Tolstoi v vospominaniakh sovremennikov, Vol. II (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literature, 1960), p. 239. (From 21 December 1904.)

⁴As quoted in Temira Pachmuss, "Mikhail Artsybashev in the Criticism of Zinaida Gippius," The Slavic Review, XLIV, p. 86.

⁵Aleksandr Blok, Sobranie sochinenii, Vol. V, p. 118.

⁶Ibid.

⁷IU. Kharbarov, Artsybashev kak pevets lichnosti (Saratov: Chernozem, 1909), p. 11.

⁸Volzhskii, "O rasskazakh gg. B. Zaitseva, L. Andreeva i M. Artsybasheva," Voprosy zhizni, No. 1, 1905, p. 281.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰P. Pil'skii, "Artsybashev (Revoliutsiia i belletristy)." Svoboda i zhizn', No. 13, 1906, p. 2.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²See N. K. Gudzii, Istoriia drevnei russkoi literatury (Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 1966, 7th ed.), p. 39.

¹³See M. Artsybashev, Sanin (Bradda Book reprints, 1969), pp. 226-227.

¹⁴M. Artsybashev, Rassказы, Vol. 2 (Moscow: Skirmunt, 1906), p. 22.

¹⁵See F. Dostoevsky, Bratiia Karamazovy; P.s.s., (Vols. 14, 15), Vol. 14 [Book VI], Chapter 2.

¹⁶George P. Fedotov, The Russian Religious Mind, II. The Middle Ages: The 13th to the 15th Centuries (Massachusetts: Nordland Publishing Company, 1975), p. 205.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 319.

- ¹⁸Ibid., as quoted p. 321.
- ¹⁹F. Dostoevsky, Idiot, P.s.s. Vol. 8, p. 278.
- ²⁰Pil'skii, "Artsybashev," p. 2.
- ²¹D. S. Mirsky, A History of Russian Literature, p. 295.
- ²²Ibid., p. 298.
- ²³Max Stirner, The Ego and His Own, p. 317.
- ²⁴L. N. Tolstoi, Sobranie sochinenii v dvenadtsati tomakh, Vols. 4, 5, 6, 7; Voina i mir (Vol. 7) (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1958), pp. 70-71.
- ²⁵L. N. Tolstoi, "Smert' Ivana Il'icha," Sob. soch., Vol. 10, p. 186.
- ²⁶Thrall et al., Handbook to Literature, p. 238.
- ²⁷The feminine principle or "Divine Feminine" was found in the poetry of such writers as Blok, Vladimir Solov'ev and Mandel'shtam.
- ²⁸Such as Kornei Chukovskii, L'vov-Rogachevskii, and N. Abramovich.
- ²⁹A. Rossov, "Sanin i ego ucheniki," Russkoe slovo, 1908, No. 66, p. 2.
- ³⁰Volzhskii, "O rasskazakh gg. B. Zaitseva, L. Andreeva i M. Artsybasheva," Voprosy zhizni, No. 1, 1905, p. 282.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II, Part 1

- ¹See the comments of the critics Novopolin, Baranov, Omel'chenko, in Part 2 of this chapter.
- ²E.g., Gippius' comment re Sanin and Artsybashev in Neugasimaia lampada, p. 30.
- ³Lazarevskii, "M. P. Artsybashev," p. 26.
- ⁴Ibid.
- ⁵M. P. Artsybashev, Sanin (Letchworth: Bradda Books, 1969, reprint), p. 3.

⁶Cf. hunting scenes in "Krov'" discussed in Chapter I of this work.

⁷G. S. Novopolin, "Pornograficheskii element v russkoi literature" (Petersburg, 1909), p. 235.

⁸Artsybashev, Introduction to The Millionaire.

⁹Perhaps a counter to Gorky's "Chelovek eto zvuchit gordo" (Man — that sounds proud) in the play Na dne.

¹⁰Stirner, The Ego and His Own, p. 251.

¹¹Ibid., p. 43.

¹²Ibid., p. 30.

¹³Ibid. (stated in Introduction).

¹⁴"Morality and the Novel," in Selected Literary Criticism, ed. Anthony Beal (New York: Viking, 1932), p. 111.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 112-113.

¹⁶D. H. Lawrence, "Pornography and Obscenity," in Selected Literary Criticism, pp. 35-36.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 36.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 38.

¹⁹See Part 2 of this chapter.

²⁰In my interview with Prof. Valerian Revutsky, of the Department of Slavonic Studies, U. B. C., in May 1975, he remarked that Zarudin's behavior was indeed typical for officers of that era, who often spent a great deal of time occupied with love affairs, and they were often cruel in the handling of these relationships. See A. I. Kuprin, Poedinok (The Duel) a novel concerned with the Russian military of this period.

²¹M. Lermontov, Geroi nashego vremeni, in Polnoe sobranie sochinenii (Moscow, Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo khudozhestvennoi literatury, 1948), p. 126.

²²D. H. Lawrence, "Pornography and Obscenity," p. 36.

²³Lawrence, "Morality and the Novel," p. 111.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II, Part 2

¹See the chapter by Jeffrey Brooks, "Readers and Reading at the End of the Tsarist Era," in Literature and Society in Imperial Russia 1800-1914, ed. William Mills Todd III (Stanford University Press, 1978).

²Gippius, Neugasimaia lampada, p. 30.

³I. N. Ignatov, "Literaturnye otgoloski (Sanin, roman Artsybasheva)," Russkaia vedomost', 1907, p. 3.

⁴A. P. Omel'chenko, "Geroi nezdorovogo tvorchestva (Sanin roman Artsybasheva)," Posev, 1908, p. 78.

⁵I. Dmitriev, "Zhurnal'noe obozrenie," Obrazovanie, 1907, No. 11, p. 124.

⁶N. Abramovich, "Literaturnye zametki," Obrazovanie, 1908, p. 74.

⁷Novopolin, Pornograficheskii element, p. 235.

⁸E. Koltonovskaia, "Nasledniki Sanina," Prosveshchenie, 1912, p. 63.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Abramovich, p. 73.

¹¹Chukovskii, as quoted by V. Polonskii in "Iz literatury i zhizni (O M. Artsybasheve)," Vseobshchii ezheimesiachnik, 1910, p. 126.

¹²R. Rossov, "O starykh bogakh i novykh nastroeniakh," Poznanie Rossii, 1909, pp. 40-41.

¹³Anonymous, "Protest V. P. Sanina," p. 73.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 74.

¹⁵V. V. Vorovskii, "Bazarov i Sanin — dva nigilizma," Sob. soch., Vol. 2, p. 211.

¹⁶Baranov, Artsybashev kak khudozhnik-psikholog, p. 31.

¹⁷L'vov-Rogachevskii, "Ul'traindividualizm i roman Sanin," 1908.

¹⁸Vorovski, p. 212.

¹⁹Engel'gardt, "Krivoe zerkalo," Vestnik znaniia, 1908, p. 1007.

²⁰B. N. Lebedev, Sanin M. Artsybasheva, 1908, p. 12 and Omel'chenko, p. 31.

²¹Ibid.

²²V. Kranikhfel'd, Obrazovanie, 1907, IV, p. 23.

²³Chukovskii as quoted in Omel'chenko, Svobodnaia liubov i Sanin, p. 8.

²⁴Kranikhfel'd, p. 17.

²⁵E. N. Trubetskoi, "Konets revoliutsii v sovremennom romane," Moskovskii ezhenedel'nik, 17, 1908, p. 10.

²⁶As quoted in Novopolin, p. 121.

²⁷As quoted in Baranov, p. 48.

²⁸As quoted in Omel'chenko, pp. 9-10.

²⁹A. Blok as quoted in Russkaia literatura kontsa XIX nachala XX v, 1901-1907, M. 1901, p. 531 [originally in Zolotoe runo, No. 11-12, Vol. 5, p. 228].

³⁰Vorovskii, p. 210.

³¹Artsybashev, Sanin, p. 3.

³²Ibid., p. 276.

³³A recapitulation of some of the ideas expressed in Vorovskii's article.

³⁴F. D-N, "Geroi likvidatsii," Na rubezhe, 1909, p. 91.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶A. Peshekhonov, "Sanintsy i Sanin," V temnuu noch', May-June 1908, pp. 211-212.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸P. M. Pil'skii, "Polovaia provokatsiia," Voprosy pola, No. 1, p. 64.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Koltonovskaia, "Nasledniki Sanina," p. 70.

- ⁴¹Ibid., p. 72.
- ⁴²Rossov, p. 16.
- ⁴³Baranov, p. 73.
- ⁴⁴Peshekhonov, pp. 27-28.
- ⁴⁵Novopolin, Chap. VII, "M. Artsybashev i Nietzsche," p. 136.
- ⁴⁶Note the scene in which Sanin picks up his sister's copy of Zarathustra, begins to read but throws it aside, saying that the imagery is too "high-flown," Sanin, p. 28.
- ⁴⁷Novopolin, pp. 136-137.
- ⁴⁸Engel'gardt, p. 1001.
- ⁴⁹Ibid.
- ⁵⁰Ibid., p. 1002.
- ⁵¹V. Polonskii, "Iz literatury i zhizni (O M. Artsybasheve)," Vseobshchii ezhe mesiachnik, 1910, No. 12, p. 112.
- ⁵²Abramovich, p. 74.
- ⁵³Ibid.
- ⁵⁴L'vov-Rogachevskii, as quoted, p. 13.
- ⁵⁵N. Danilin, "Introduction," Sanin v svete russkoi kritike, 1908, p. 9.
- ⁵⁶Kranikhfe'ld, p. 30.
- ⁵⁷Trubetskoi, p. 8.
- ⁵⁸Pil'skii, p. 66.
- ⁵⁹Omel'chenko, pp. 5, 7.
- ⁶⁰Ibid., p. 10.
- ⁶¹Ibid.
- ⁶²Ibid.
- ⁶³Ibid., pp. 13-14.
- ⁶⁴Ibid., p. 52.

- 65 Novopolin, Chap. VII, p. 118.
- 66 Ibid.
- 67 Ibid.
- 68 Ibid., p. 119.
- 69 Dmitriev, p. 123.
- 70 Ibid., p. 124.
- 71 Ibid., p. 125.
- 72 Ibid.
- 73 Abramovich, pp. 72-73.
- 74 Baranov, p. 46.
- 75 Ibid., p. 45.
- 76 Ibid., p. 67.
- 77 Arskii, "Motivy solntsa i tela v sovremennoi belletristike," Voprosy pola, 1908, N.. 3, p. 28.
- 78 Engel'gardt, p. 108.
- 79 L'vov-Rogachevskii, pp. 20-21.
- 80 V. Botsianovskii, "Eshche kentavr," Rus', 1907, No. 287, p. 2.
- 81 Gornfel'd, "Eroticheskaia belletristika," Knigi i liudi, Vol. I, 1908, pp. 25-26.
- 82 V. G. Korolenko, "Otzyvy ob M. P. Artsybasheve," Pis'ma 1881-1921 (Petersburg: Vremia, n.d.), p. 69.
- 83 Pil'skii, p. 64.
- 84 Other famous demons in Russian literature which are alluded to here are Dostoevsky's Besy (The Devils), 1871, or the more contemporary Melkyi bes (The Petty Demon) of Fedor Sologub, 1904.
- 85 E. N. Trubetskoi, "Sovremennyi bes," Moskovskii ezhenedel'nik, No. 24, 1908.
- 86 A. Peshekhonov, "'Sanintsy' i Sanin," Russkoe bogatstvo, No. 5, 1908.

⁸⁷M. Trigorin, "Problema pola i Sanin Artsybasheva" (public lecture), Moscow, pub. Sovremennye problemy, 1908.

⁸⁸Artsybashev, Introduction to The Millionaire.

⁸⁹Sud'ba Sanina v Germanii, ed. Rotenshtern (Munich and Leipzig, 1909).

⁹⁰The Boston Transcript, as quoted in Book Review Digest, 1915, p. 14.

⁹¹Artsybashev, Introduction to The Millionaire.

⁹²Richard Stites, The Women's Liberation Movement in Russia: Feminism, Nihilism and Bolshévism (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1978), pp. 185-187.

⁹³As quoted, Lazarevskii, pp. 24-25.

⁹⁴See note 10.

⁹⁵See notes 71 and 72.

⁹⁶Thrall et al., Handbook to Literature, pp. 299-300.

⁹⁷Bulfinch's Mythology (New York, London: Spring Books, 1964), p. 29.

⁹⁸See Franjo Ledić, Mitologiya Slavena, p. 105.

⁹⁹Albert Camus, L'étranger (Paris: Gallimard, 1957) p. 142.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., p. 179.

¹⁰¹Ibid.

¹⁰²N. P. Rozanov, "Kryl'ia smerti (Tvorchestvo M. P. Artsybasheva)," Vladikavkaz, 1913, p. 16.

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 26.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III, Part 1

¹As quoted in Lazarevskii, "M. P. Artsybashev," p. 26.

²A. P. Chekhov, Letters on the Short Story, the Drama and Other Literary Topics, ed. Louis S. Friedland (New York: 1964), pp. 275-276.

³Ruth Crego Benson, "The Ideal and the Erotic, Tolstoy's Heroines in Love and Marriage," dissertation, Yale, 1969, p. 137.

⁴Ibid., p. 170.

⁵M. Artsybashev, "Zhena," Rassказы, Vol. I (Moscow, St. Petersburg: 1905-1917).

⁶A. Kuprin, Iama (The Pit), trans. B. G. Guerney (New York: Modern Library, 1932), p. 100.

⁷N. Moravceovich, "The Romanticization of the Prostitute in Dostoevskij's Fiction," Russian Literature, Iv-3, p. 302.

⁸Ibid., p. 303.

⁹Ibid., p. 305.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹As quoted, Ibid. (Dostoevsky, "Zapiski iz podpol'ia").

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴F. Dostoevsky, "Zapiski iz podpol'ia," P.s.s., Vol 5, p. 161.

¹⁵L. N. Tolstoy, Voskresenie (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literature, 1967), p. 10.

¹⁶Kuprin, Iama, p. 437.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 354.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 31.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 35.

²⁰Ibid., p. 40.

²¹Ibid., p. 69.

²²Artsybashev, "Bunt," Rassказы, Vol. I, p. 353.

²³Polonskii, p. 114.

²⁴Baranov, Artsybashev kak khudozhnik-psikholog, pp. 15-16.

²⁵N. Starodum, "Bunt," Russkii vestnik, October 1904, p. 800.

²⁶The verb kormit' usually applies to the feeding of animals, or is a vulgarization when applied to people ("they feed you well").

²⁷Kuprin, Iama, p. 425.

²⁸Joseph L. Conrad, "Cexov's 'An Attack of Nerves,'" Slavic and East European Journal, Vol. XIII, No. 4, 1969, pp. 429-443.

²⁹Ibid., p. 434.

³⁰Kuprin, Iama, p. 739.

³¹Artsybashev, "Schast'e," Rassказы, Vol. 3 (Moscow: Skirmunt), p. 131.

³²Artsybashev, "Uzhas," Rassказы, Vol. 1, p. 384.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III, Part 2

¹A. Kuprin writes, in the Postscript to Iama (as it appears in the uncensored English translation here cited), that war is one of the eternal problems of mankind, p. 437. Leonid Andreev's "Red Laugh" (Krasnyi smekh) is a nightmare of war.

²Ovsianiko-Kulikovskii interprets the "morning shadows as harbingers of the sunrise" and change for the better. As all the main characters either die or are arrested, the story does not warrant such an optimistic reading. (See the article: "'Teni utra' M. Artsybasheva," Novaia Zhizn', No. 358, 1906, p. 3.)

³A. Chekhov, "Nevesta," P.s.s. i pisem v tridtsati tomakh, Vol. 10 (Moscow: Nauka, 1977), p. 220.

⁴Ibid.

⁵David Maxwell, "Chekhov's 'Nevesta,'" Russian Literature, 6, p. 94.

⁶Artsybashev, "Teni utra," pp. 232-233.

⁷Lazarevskii, "M. P. Artsybashev," as quoted, Chapter I of text.

⁸ Artsybashev, "Krovavoe piatno," Rasskazy, Vol. 2, p. 293.

⁹ L. Andreev, "Rasskaz o semi poveshennykh," Povesti i rasskazy v dvukh tomakh, Vol. II 1907-1910, p. 135.

¹⁰ Artsybashev, "Chelovecheskaia volna," Rasskazy, Vol. IV, p. 6.

¹¹ Boris Lazarevskii, a close friend and companion of Artsybashev, remarks, in his short biographical note on the author, that Artsybashev was a billiards enthusiast ("S takim zhe azartom igral na billiarde," p. 26).

¹² This is precisely what happens in Artsybashev's novel U poslednei cherty (published 1911-1912).

¹³ Albert Camus, Le Mythe de Sisyphe, p. 196.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

¹ Artsybashev, "Zhena," Rasskazy, Vol. I, p. 383.

² "Podpraporshchik Gololobov," Sanin, and "Rabochii Shevyrev" also have epigraphs taken from Biblical verses.

³ Artsybashev, "Milliony," Rasskazy, Vol. IV, p. 161.

⁴ Cf. also p. 206 of story — same description given.

⁵ N. Abramovich, "O khudozhestvennom pis'me v sovremennoi belletristike," Obraz, No. 6, 1908, p. 76.

⁶ Pavel Mikhailovich Tretiakov (1832-1898), Moscow art patron who founded an art collection in 1856 and gave it to the people of Moscow in 1892. (See A Concise History of Russian Art, T. Talbot Rice (New York: Praeger, 1963), p. 235. Also, V. I. Antonova, Gosudarstvennaia Tret'iakovskaia galereia (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1968).)

⁷ Perhaps Tolstoy? "A great writer who was now an old man, whose name he has known since childhood," p. 282.

⁸ See pp. 127-128, Chapter III above.

⁹ "Strashnyi sud" is used as the Biblical "Day of Judgment" also.

¹⁰ Z. Gippius, "Po Artsybashevu," originally published in Za svobodu (Warsaw), No. 108, 1925. Here quoted from that article in Neugasimaia lampada, p. 30.

¹¹ Artsybashev, "Rabochii Shevyrev," Rasskazy, Vol. V, p. 2.

¹² Artsybashev, Sanin, p. 201.

¹³ Ibid., p. 276.

¹⁴ Lande and Tolstoy, Discussed in Chapter I, pp. 54-56 above.

¹⁵ As quoted in Chapter III, p. 139 above.

¹⁶ S. Adrianov, "'Shevyrev,'" Vestnik Evropy, No. 4, 1909, p. 781.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Camus, L'Etranger, p. 179.

¹⁹ Anonymous, "Biograficheskie svedenia," Neugasimaia lampada, p. 10.

²⁰ Artsybashev, Rasskazy, Vol. V, p. 167.

²¹ See especially Chapter I, pp. 19, 21, 22 above.

²² The phrase "a convict's life" is used to express oppression in the stories "Bunt," "Kupriian" and "Rabochii Shevyrev." The idea first appears in somewhat different form in "Podpraporshchik Gololobov" ("sentenced to death").

²³ Such characters as Pasha Tumanov, Kupriian, Anton the shoemaker ("Iz podvala"), Sasha ("Bunt"), Sashen'ka ("Schast'e") and Shevyrev are such "sacrifices."

²⁴ Artsybashev, "Bratiia Arimafeiskie," Rasskazy, Vol. V, p. 199.

²⁵ Because the action in this story portrays events that take place before the Resurrection, it is not possible to discern whether the author believes that Jesus is indeed divine. The nouns and pronouns that refer to Jesus, however, are capitalized.

²⁶ Artsybashev, "Silnee smerti," Rasskazy, Vol. III, p. 112.

²⁷ Dostoevsky, Idiot, p. 56.

²⁸This detail is incorporated into the story to explain the hero's characterization as an instrument of the law — he must witness the execution, thus see justice served.

²⁹Artsybashev, "Zlodei," Rassказы, Vol. III, p. 68.

NOTES TO CHAPTER V

¹Anon., "Biograficheskie svedeniia," Naugasimaia lampada, p. 10.

²Anonymous, "Kritiki o romane Artsybasheva," Biulleteni literatury i zhizni, No. 8, 1911, p. 224.

³Ibid., p. 226.

⁴Ibid.

⁵F. Dostoevsky, Besy, P.s.s., Vol. 10, p. 77.

⁶Ibid., pp. 77, 92-93.

⁷Ibid., p. 92.

⁸Ibid., pp. 93-94.

⁹Ibid., pp. 187-188.

¹⁰Artsybashev, U poslednei cherty (Munich: Georg Muller, 1910), p. 111, Part I. The novel was published in two parts, and further quotations from it will be identified as to page number and Part I or II.

¹¹Artsybashev, U poslednei cherty (Paris: Jacques povolozky, n.d.), p. 36.

¹²Dostoevsky, Besy.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 189.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Dostoevsky, Brat'ia Karamazovy, P.s.s., Vol. 14, 15, p. 223.

¹⁸Dostoevsky, Zapiski iz podpolia, P.s.s., Vol. 5, p. 99.

¹⁹The story of the public prosecutor is also reminiscent of the story told by Prince Valkovskii in Dostoevsky's Unizhennye i oskorblennye (The Insulted and the Injured).

²⁰Dostoevsky, Zapiski iz podpolia, p. 177.

²¹Alex de Jonge, Dostoevsky and the Age of Intensity (London: Secker and Warburg, 1975), pp. 122-123.

²²Charles Glicksberg, The Literature of Nihilism (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1975), p. 102.

²³Ibid., p. 104.

²⁴Ibid., p. 108.

²⁵A. Camus, "Une Raisonement absurde," Essais, p. 99.

²⁶Artsybashev's philosophical tract of 1919 is entitled Vechnyi mirazh.

²⁷E. T. A. Hoffmann, "Don Juan," as appears in The Theatre of Don Juan, ed. Oscar Mandel (Lincoln, The University of Nebraska Press, 1963), p. 322.

²⁸Ibid., p. 323.

²⁹"Mephistophelian" is a fixed epithet used for Krause throughout Parts I and II of the novel.

³⁰Glicksberg, The Literature of Nihilism, p. 104.

³¹Ibid., pp. 107-108.

³²Compare this conclusion with the joyous early autumn sunrise in Sanin.

³³Glicksberg, p. 108.

³⁴L. Tolstoy, "Smert' Ivana Il'icha," p. 186.

³⁵Glicksberg, p. 115.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Artsybashev, "Epidemiia samoubistv," Rasskazy, Vol. III, p. 315.

³⁸Ibid., p. 319.

- ³⁹Ibid., p. 322.
- ⁴⁰Ibid., p. 325.
- ⁴¹Red'ko, "Sbornik o strashnom."
- ⁴²Anonymous, "Kritika o romane Artsybasheva," p. 226.
- ⁴³V. Botsianovskii, "Sanin vernulsia, literaturnye nabroski, U poslednei cherty," Utro Rossii, No. 269, October 9, 1910, p. 2.
- ⁴⁴Ibid., "'We are at the final limit (breaking point)! We have nowhere else to go!'"
- ⁴⁵As quoted, Anon., "Kritika o romane Artsybasheva," p. 226.
- ⁴⁶E. Koltonovskaia, "Predel ili pereval?" Novyi zhurnal dlia vsekh, No. 11, 1910, p. 85.
- ⁴⁷Ibid.
- ⁴⁸Ibid., p. 87.
- ⁴⁹Ibid.
- ⁵⁰Ibid., p. 92.
- ⁵¹D. Filosofov, "Chizh i Artsybashev," Staroe i novoe, sbornik statei po voprosom iskusstva i literatury, 1912, p. 57.
- ⁵²K. Chukovskii, "U poslednei cherty," Sobranie sochinenii — Stat'i, Vol. 6, p. 260.
- ⁵³Ibid., p. 286.
- ⁵⁴The Boston Transcript, 30 October 1915, as quoted in Book Review Digest, 1915, p. 13.
- ⁵⁵The Nation, 14 October 1915, as quoted in Ibid.
- ⁵⁶The New York Times, 24 October 1915, as quoted Ibid.
- ⁵⁷"Bednaia Liza" (Poor Liza, 1792), Nikolai Karamzin's (1766-1826) sentimental story about a seduced and abandoned young woman who commits suicide by drowning herself in a pond. The alleged site of the incident became a popular spot for the youth of Moscow (D. S. Mirsky, A History of Russian Literature, pp. 61-62).

NOTES TO CHAPTER VI

- ¹D. S. Mirsky, A History of Russian Literature, p. 395.
- ²As quoted in Chapter II, Part 2 of this text.
- ³Ibid.
- ⁴Mirsky, p. 402.
- ⁵William Lyon Phelps, Essays on Russian Novelists (New York: Macmillan & Co., 1911), p. 250.
- ⁶Sanin was first published in the United States in Trend (New York), pp. 280-305 and 373-402, 1914-1915.
- ⁷The following translations are cited:
M. Artsybashev, Sanine: A Russian Love Novel, trans. Percy Pinkerton, illus. Cameron Wright (New York: Three Sirens Press, c. 1923);
_____, The Millionaire, trans. Percy Pinkerton (New York: D. W. Huebsch, 1915);
_____, Tales of the Revolution, trans. Percy Pinkerton (London: Martin Secker, 1917);
_____, Breaking Point, no trans. given (London: Martin Secker, 1916).
- ⁸W. L. Phelps, Essays, p. 250.
- ⁹"Na dne" (The Lower Depths), Maksim Gorky's immensely successful play of 1902.
- ¹⁰Mirsky, p. 375.
- ¹¹Ibid., pp. 380-381.
- ¹²Maksim Gorky, Na dne (Berlin, Petersburg, Moscow: Russkaia literatura, izdatel'stvo Z. I. Gzhebin, 1922), pp. 123-124.
- ¹³Nicholas Luker, Alexander Kuprin (Boston: Twayne, 1978), p. 124.
- ¹⁴Ibid., p. 155.
- ¹⁵Mirsky, p. 395.
- ¹⁶Ibid., p. 394.
- ¹⁷Woodward, Leonid Andreev, p. 278.

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 278-279.

¹⁹ Mirsky, p. 294.

²⁰ R. F. Christian, Tolstoy: A Critical Introduction (Cambridge University Press, 1969), p. 230.

²¹ Ibid., p. 236.

²² Ibid., p. 237.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ See especially Russian Literature and Modern English Fiction, ed. Donald Davies (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, c. 1965):

²⁵ D. H. Lawrence, The Rainbow (New York: Modern Library, 1915), pp. 416-417.

²⁶ See especially Chapters II, III and IV of this text.

²⁷ Camus, "La Liberté absurde," Essais, p. 137.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ As E. Koltonovskaia suggests in her article "Predel ili pereval?" (as discussed in Chapter V of this text).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. Works by M. P. Artsybashev

Artsybashev, Mikhail Petrovich. Breaking Point. London: Martin Secker, 1915 (no trans. given).

_____. Diavol; tragiko-komicheskii fars v 4-kh deistviakh. Warsaw: Za svobodu, 1925.

_____. Dikie; povest'. Berlin: Izdatel'stvo I. P. Ladyzhnikova, 1923.

_____. Jealousy, Enemies, The Law of the Savage, "Essay on Marriage". New York: Boni and Liveright, 1923 (no trans. given).

_____. The Millionaire. Trans. Percy Pinkerton. New York: B. W. Huebsch, 1915.

_____. Pod solntsem; kniga rasskazov. Warsaw: Dobro, 1924. Contents: "Redkaia nakhodka," "Dereviannyi churban," "Staraiia istoriia," "Brat'ia Arimafeiskie," "Smekh," "Muzhik i barin," "O brake" (posleslovie k p'ies am: Révnost', Zakon dikaria, i Vragi).

_____. Sanin. Letchworth, Herfordshire: Bradda Books, 1969.

_____. Sanine; A Russian Love Novel. Trans. Percy Pinkerton, illus. Cameron Wright. New York: Three Sirens Press, c. 1923.

_____. Sobranie sochinenii. St. Petersburg, Moscow: 1905-1917.

Contents:

Tom I. Rasskazy. "Pasha Tumanov," "Kupriian," "Podpraporshchik Gololobov," "Krov'," "Bunt," "Zhena," "Uzhas." Izd. 2-e. St Petersburg: S. Skirmunt, 1907.

Tom II. Rasskazy. "Iz podvala," "Smert' Lande," "Teni utra," "Krovavoe piatno," "Iz zapisok odnogo cheloveka," "Bog." Izd. 1-e. St. Petersburg: S. Skirmunt, 1906.

Tom III. Rasskazy. "Sil'nee smerti," "Derevianny churban," "Mstitel'," "O revnosti," "Prestuplenie doktora Lur'e," "Rasskaz ob odnoi poshchëchine," "Roman malen'koi zhenshchiny," "Zlodei," "Propast'," "Schast'e," Zapiski pisatel'ia, "O smerti Chekhova," "Smert' Bashkina," "O Tolstom," "Po povodu odnogo prestuplenia," "Chastnoe pis'mo," "Uchitel'ia zhizni," "Epidemiia samoubiistv," "Kol'tso Pushkina," "Propoved' i zhizn'," "Samoubiistvo." Izd. 2-e. Moscow: Moskovskoe knigoizdatel'stvo, 1917.

Tom IV. Rasskazy. "Chelovecheskaia volna," "Milliony." Izd. 4-e. Moscow: Moskovskoe knigoizdatel'stvo, 1917.

Tom V. Rasskazy. "Rabochii Shevyrev," "Skazka starogo prokurora," "Staraiia istoriia," "Palata neizlechimykh," "Brat'ia Arimafeiskie," "Iz dnevnika odnogo zamechatel'nogo pokoinika," "Rasskaz o velikom znanii." Moscow: Moskovskoe knigoizdatel'stvo.

Tom VI. U poslednei cherty. Roman, Ch. I. Izd. 3-e. Moscow: Moskovskoe knigoizdatel'stvo.

Tom VII. U poslednei cherty. Roman, Ch. II. Izd. 3-e. Moscow: Moskovskoe knigoizdatel'stvo.

Tom VIII. Zakon dikaria, Revnost', Voina. Izd. 2-e. Moscow: Moskovskoe knigoizdatel'stvo, 1917.

Tom IX. Zhenshchina, stoiashchaia posredi, "Raba," "Bezemysl'nitsa." Izd. 2-e. Moscow: Moskovskoe knigoizdatel'stvo, 1917.

Tom X. Sanin.

The Savage. Trans. Gilbert Cannan and Mme. Strindberg. New York: Boni and Liveright, c. 1924.

Tales of the Revolution. Trans. Percy Pinkerton. London: Martin Secker, 1917. Contents: "Sheviriof," "The Blood Stain," "Morning Shadows," "Pasha Tumanov," "The Doctor."

U poslednei cherty. Paris: Bibliopolis, n.d.

Vechnyi mirazh. Berlin: Izdatel'stvo Gutnogo, 1922.

War; a play in 4 acts. Trans. Thomas Seltzer. New York: Alfred Knopf, 1916.

_____. Vragi, Zemlia — Sbornik deviatnadsatyi. Moscow: Moskovskoe knigoizdatel'stvo, 1917.

_____. (Warsaw publishing house, Za svobodu, also published: Sanin, Dikie, Vechnyi mirazh, Zapiski pisatel'ia.)

II. Letters and Biographical Material

Artsybashev, M. P. to:

Aizman, D. IA., otryvki, 1907-1908 in M. Gor'kii, Materialy i issledovaniia, T. II, L.: A. N. SSR, 1936, pp. 315-317, 342.

Gor'kii, M. Svoboda, 1917, No. I, pp. 1-2.

Editor of Rampa i zhizn', Rampa i zhizn', 1913, No. 28, p. 12; No. 42, p. 13.

Editor of Russkie vedomosti, Russkie vedomosti, 1913, No. 249, 29 October, p. 5.

Editor of Rus', Rus', 1907, No. 292, 1 November, p. 4.

Editor of Svobodnaia mysl', Svobodnaia mysl', 1907, No. 16, 3 September, p. 4.

Editor of Sovremennyi mir, Sovremennyi mir, 1907, No. 1, p. 136.

Frid, S., Rech', 1913, No. 301, 3 November, p. 6.

_____. Portrait of M. P. A. in Teatr i iskusstvo, 1913, No. 42, p. 841.

_____. "Avtobiografiia," Al'manakh molodykh, Petersburg, 1908, p. 11.

_____. "Avtobiografiia," Literaturnyi kalendar'-al'manakh, Petersburg, 1908.

Anonymous. "Beseda s Artsybashevym," Novaia Rus', 1909, No. 311, 12 November, pp. 3-4.

_____. "Kak zhivet Artsybashev," Birzhevye vedomosti, 1909, No. 11262, 15 August, pp. 3-4.

- Anonymous. "M. Artsybashev" (Nekrolog), Ogonek, 1927, No. 13, p. 2.
- Bakhtiarov, A. "U avtora Sanina g. Artsybasheva," Peterburgskaia gazeta, 1910, No. 287, 19 October, p. 3.
- Borisov, V. "V gostiakh u avtora Sanina," Vestnik literatury, 1908, No. 4, pp. 74-75.
- I. "M. P. Artsybashev v IAl'te," Novaia Rus', 1909, No. 295, 27 October, p. 5.
- Ibe. "U M. P. Artsybasheva," Birzhevye vedomosti, 1910, No. 11638, 30 March, p. 3.
- Kozhevnikov, P. "U Artsybasheva," Utro Rossii, 1911, No. 12, 16 January, p. 5.
- Nazharenko, IA. A. "M. P. Artsybashev," Literaturnaia entsiklopedia, t. I, Moskva, 1930, pp. 262-265.
- Raev. "U M. P. Artsybasheva," Birzhevye vedomosti, 1913, No. 13810, 18 October, pp. 4-5.
- Reginin, V. (Rappoport, V. A.). "10-letie literaturnoi deiatel'nosti Artsybasheva," Birzhevye vedomosti, 1910, No. 11984, 23 October, p. 5.
- Skitalets (Petrov, S. G.). "Vospominaniia" (Artsybashev), Natisk, 1935, No. 4-5, pp. 35-36.
- _____. "Vstrechi," Oktiabr', 1937, No. 5, pp. 199-201.
- Vengerov, S. "M. P. Artsybashev," Novyi entsiklopedicheskii slovar', t. III, Petersburg; F. A. Brokgauz i I. A. Efron, 1911, pp. 938-943.
- Zhdanov, S. "Kak zhivet i rabotaet Artsybashev," Vestnik literatury, 1910, No. 11, pp. 304-308.

III. Critical Works on Sanin

- Achkasov, A. Sanin i okolo polovogo voprosa, Moskva, 1908.
- Arskii (Abramovich, N. IA.). "Sanin M. P. Artsybasheva," Novogo dnia, 1907, No. 2, 1 October, pp. 3-4.
- _____. "Motivy solntsa i tela v sovremennoi belletristike," Voprosy pola, No. 2, pp. 28-30; No. 3, pp. 27-31.

- Barchan, Paul. "Sanin und die erotische Bewegung," Die neue Rundschau, Berlin, 1909, V. 20, pp. 123-128.
- Blok, A. Sobranie sochinenii, t. X. Leningrad, 1935, pp. 46-52, 147-148.
- _____. Sobranie sochinenii, t. V. Leningrad, 1962, pp. 115-124, 228.
- Botsianovskii, V. "Eshche kentavr," Rus', 1907, No. 287, 27 October, p. 2.
- Burenin, V. "Kriticheskie nabroski," Novoe vremia, 1907, No. 11366, 2 November, p. 4.
- Chukovskii, K. "Geometricheskii roman," Rech', 1907, No. 123, 27 May, p. 2.
- Danilin, N. "Sanin v svete russkoi kritike," Moskva: Zaria, 1908, 76 pp. Includes shortened versions of the articles of Amfitreatrov, Gornfel'd, Koltonovskaia, L'vov-Rogachevskii, Pil'skii, Trubetskoi, Chukovskii.
- Dmitriev, I. "Zhurnal'noe obozrenie," Obrazovanie, 1907, No. 11, pp. 122-130.
- Engel'gardt, M. A. "Krivoe zerkalo," Vestnik znaniia, 1908, No. 7-8, pp. 1000-1009.
- F. D-N. "Geroi likvidatsii," Na rubezhe, 1909, pp. 76-116.
- Fridman, IA. Kharakteristika 'geroia' nashego vremeni Sanina (po romanu Artsybasheva 'Sanin'). Brest-Litovsk: 1908, 32pp.
- Gornfel'd, A. G. "Eroticheskaia belletristika," Knigi i liudi, t. I, 1908, pp. 22-31.
- G-r., G. (Grossman, G. A.). "Sanin i nemetskaia kritika," Russkie vedomosti, 1909, No. 3, 4 January, p. 4.
- Greidenberg, J. 'Sanin' (Itogi proshlogo i problemy budushchego). Khar'kov: 1908, 16pp.
- I. (Ignatov, I. N.). "Vozzreniia na chelovecheskuiu prirodu v noveishikh literaturnykh proizvedeniakh," Russkaia vedomost', 1907, No. 50, 3 March, pp. 4-5.
- _____. "Literaturnye otgoloski (Sanin roman M. Artsybasheva)," Russkaia vedomost', 1907, No. 134, 14 June, p. 3.

- Izmailov, A. "Roman o 'novykh liudiakh' (Sanin M. P. Artsybasheva)," Birzhevye vedomosti, 1907, No. 10108, 20 September, p. 3.
- Khizhniakov, E. 'Sanin' Artsybasheva v kritiko-iumoristicheskom ocherke. Khar'kov: 1908, 29pp; Izd. 2-e. Khar'kov: 1908, 30pp.
- Kol-Oman. "Kto zhe, nakonets, Sanin?" (Opyt materialisticheskogo tolkovaniia 'Problemy pola'). Odessa: 1908. 16pp.
- Koltonovskaia, E. A. "Nasledniki Sanina," "Kriticheskie etiudy," Prosveshchenie, 1912, pp. 76-117.
- _____. "Problema pola i ee osveshchenie u neo-realistov (Wedekind i Artsybashev)," Obrazovanie, 1908, No. 1, pp. 114-130; also in Novaya zhizn', 1910, pp. 86-117.
- Lebedev, B. N. "Sanin M. Artsybasheva," Petersburg, 1908, 16pp; 2-e 1908, 24pp.
- _____. "Po povodu broshur A. P. Omel'chenko ('Geroi nezdorovogo tvorchestva' and 'Svobodnaia liubov i sem'ia')"
- Lokot', T. V. "Saninskaia polosa," Voprosy polovoi etiki i liubov'. Petersburg, Moskva: M. O. Vol'f, 1909, pp. 92-181.
- L-r., M. "Ul'traindividualizm i roman Sanin," Ekaterinoslav, 1908, 32pp.
- L'vov-Rogachevskii. "Satiry i nimfy," Obrazovanie, 1908, No. 4, pp. 42-53.
- Omel'chenko, A. P. "Geroi nezdorovogo tvorchestva" (Sanin, roman Artsybasheva). Posev, 1908, 56pp; pub. repeated 3 in that year.
- _____. "Svobodnaia liubov' i sem'ia (Sanin kak vopros nashego vremeni)," Posev, 1908, 56pp; 2-e 1909, 52pp.
- Orlovskii, P. (Vorovskii, V. V.). "Bazarov i Sanin. Dva nigilizma," "Literaturnyi raspad," Kriticheskii sbornik, Petersburg, 1909, pp. 144-164.
- Also in Vorov. Sochinenia, t. II, Moskva, Leningrad: 1931, pp. 74-100.
- Also in Literaturno-kriticheskie stat'i, Moskva, 1956, pp. 221-249.

- Ostrogorskii, A. N. "Pedagogicheskie ekskursii v oblasti literatury (Sanin Artsybasheva. K voprosu o besedakh po polovomu voprosu)," Russkaia shkola, 1908, pp. 1-22.
- O. Sh. "Sanin, g. Artsybashev i zhenshchina." Petersburg, 1908.
- Peshekhonov, A. "'Sanintsy' i Sanin," Russkoe bogatstvo, 1908, No. 5, pp. 104-130; No. 6, pp. 146-175; also in the book Temnuiu noch', 1909, pp. 160-223.
- Pirogov, P. V. "Artsybashev kak khudozhnik i myslitel' (Kak prishel Artsybashev k apofeoze Sanina)," Moskva, 1908, 32pp.
- Popov, V. "Modnyi roman (Sanin M. Artsybasheva)," O veianiiakh vremeni, Petersburg, Tvorchestvo, 1908, pp. 39-51.
- Rozanov, V. "Na knizhnom i literaturnom rynke (Sanin)," Novoe vremia, 1908, No. 11612, 11 July, p. 3.
- Rossov, A. (Pankratov, A. S.). "Sanin i ego ucheniki," Russkoe slovo, 1908, No. 66, 19-March, p. 2.
- Sud'ba Sanina v Germanii, ed. Rotenshtern, 1909, 87pp.
(Legal proceedings having to do with the arrest of Sanin in Germany) (Zur Geschichte Sanins in Deutschland, München u. Leipzig, 1909.)
- Trigorin, M. "Problema pola i Sanin Artsybasheva" (public lecture), Moskva, pub. Sovremennye problemy, 1908, 54pp.
- Trubetskoi, E. N. "Sovremennyi bes," Moskovskii ezhenedel'nik, 1908, No. 24, pp. 4-13.
- _____. "Konets revoliutsii v sovremennom romane (Po povody Sanina Artsybasheva)," Moskovskii ezhenedel'nik, 1908, No. 17, pp. 3-15.
- Usmovich, IA. (Petrov, G. S.). "Artsybashev protiv artsybashevshchiny," Russkoe slovo, 1908, No. 103, 4 May, p. 5.

IV. Critical Works: Other Artsybashev Prose and Drama

- A. B. (Bogdanovich, A. E.). "Rasskazy g. Artsybasheva," Mir bozhii, 1905, No. 9, pp. 1-12. Also in Gody pereloma 1895-1906, 1908, pp. 444-458.
- Abardov, M. (Ivinskii, M. I.). "Terror snizu i sverkhu ('Teni utra' M. Artsybasheva i '13 let v Shlissel'-burgskoi kreposti L. A. Vol'kenshtein')," Vestnik znaniia, 1906, No. 1, pp. 167-178.
- Abramovich, N. IA. "O khudozhestvennom pis'me v sovremennoi belletristike," Obraz, 1908, No. 6, pp. 72-76.
- Adrianov, S. "Kriticheskie nabroski," Vestnik Evropy, 1909, No. 4, pp. 780-792.
- _____. "Kriticheskie nabroski," Vestnik Evropy, 1910, No. 12, pp. 384-395.
- Aikhenval'd, IU. "Literaturnye nabroski," Rech', 1915, No. 357, 28 December, p. 2.
- Aleksandrovich, IU. (Poteriakhin, A. N.). "Nashi moralisty," Posle Chekhova, t. II, Moskva, Osnova, 1909 (?), pp. 129-196.
- _____. "Reaktsiia v literature i zhizni," Posle Chekhova, t. I, pp. 177-182.
- Anchar (Botsianovskii, V. F.). "Konets Sanina (Pervoe predstavlenie p'esy Zakon dikaria)," Birzhevye vedomosti, 1915, No. 15162, 21 October, pp. 3-4.
- Anonymous. "Kritiki o romane Artsybasheva," Biulleten' literatury i zhizni, 1911, No. 8, pp. 224-236.
- _____. "U poslednei cherty. Roman. Ch. I," Sovremennik 1911, No. 5, pp. 390-393.
- _____. "Literaturnye protsessy," Nasha gazeta, 1909, No. 40, 18 February, p. 2.
- Artsybashev, M. P. "O p'ese Voina," Birzhevye vedomosti, 1914, No. 14557, 15 December, pp. 3-4.
- _____. Autobiographical note in trans. Millionaire, "Introduction," pp. 5-10.
- Baltrushaitis, IU. "M. Artsybashev. Rasskazy," t. II. Moskva, 1906," Vesy, 1906, No. 9, pp. 64-67.

Baranov, I. I. M. Artsybashev kak khudozhnik-psikholog i impressionist i kak pevets smerti starogo i zhizni novogo cheloveka. Kiev: 1908.

Botsianovskii, V. "Kriticheskie nabroski," Rus', 1905, No. 108, 6 August, p. 3.

_____. "Sanin vernulsia, Literaturnye nabroski, U poslednei cherty," Utro Rossii, 1910, No. 269, 9 October, p. 2.

Burenin, V. "Kriticheskie ocherki," Novoe vremia, 1907, No. 11366, 2 November, p. 4; also in Novoe vremia, 1912, No. 13135, 5 October, p. 5.

_____. "Slugi skandala (Revnost')," Novoe vremia, 1914, No. 13651, 14 March, p. 5.

Burnakin, A. "Zhenofobiia," Novoe vremia, 1914, No. 13172, 16 May, p. 5.

Chukovskii, K. "'Chelovecheskii' talant (M. Artsybashev. Rasskazy)," Odesskie novosti, 1905, No. 6706, 31 July, p. 2.

_____. "Ob Artsybasheve," Rech', 1909, No. 349, 20 December, p. 3.

_____. "M. Artsybashev," Ot Chekhova do nashikh dnei. Izdat. biuro, 1908, pp. 117-128.

Dmitriev, P. "Ob M. Artsybasheve," Novaiia gazeta, 1906, No. 13, 29 November, pp. 2-3.

Filosofov, D. V. "Chizh i Artsybashev (U poslednei cherty, Staroe i novoe)," I. D. Sytin, 1912, pp. 52-59.

Fortunatov, L. "'Zhenshchina, stoiashchaia posredi' (Novyi rasskaz M. Artsybasheva)," Zhurnal Zhurnalov, 1916, No. 2, pp. 18-19.

Fri-Dik. "Kinematograf," Birzhevye vedomosti, 1915, No. 15138, 9 October, p. 4.

Gippius, Zinaida. "Razocharovaniia i predchuvstviia," Russkaia mysl', 1910, No. 12, pp. 175-184.

_____. "Chto pishut?" Russkaia mysl', 1912, No. 1, p. 28.

_____. "Knigi, chitateli i pisateli," Russkaia mysl', 1911, No. 4, p. 17.

- (Gippius, cont'd). "Literatura i literatory," Russkaia mysl', 1912, No. pp. 26-31.
- _____. "Belletristicheskie vody," Russkaia mysl', 1912, No. 7, p. 25.
- _____. "Torzhestvo v chest' smerti: Al'ma, tragediia Minskogo," Mir iskusstva, 1900, No. 17-18, pp. 85-94.
- _____. "Letnie razmyshleniia," Novyi put', 1904, No. 7, p. 252.
- _____. "Literaturnaia zapis' Polet v Evropu," Sovremennye zapiski, 1924, XVIII, p. 126.
- _____. [On the death of M. Artsybashev] Novyi korabl', 1927, Paris, p. 39.
- Golikov, V. G. "Liudi-teni," Vestnik znaniia, 1914, No. 5, pp. 338-345.
- Gor'kii, M. "Izdaleka," Zaprosy zhizni, 1912, No. 27, 6 July, pp. 1572-1575.
- _____. Stat'i (1905-1916). 2nd ed., 1918, pp. 140-143.
- _____. Nesobrannye literaturno-kriticheskie stat'i, 1941, pp. 427-435.
- Izmailov, A. A. "Bankrotstvo idealov (Literaturnyi portret M. P. Artsybasheva)," Pestrye znamena. Literaturnye portrety bezvremennia. Moskva: I. O. Sytin, 1913, pp. 5-36.
- _____. "'Zhenshchina stoiashchaia posredi' (Novaia povest' M. P. Artsybasheva)," Birzhevye vedomosti, 1916, No. 15429, 8 March, p. 45.
- _____. "Putanitsa idealov," Birzhevye vedomosti, 1910, No. 11813, 14 July, p. 3.
- _____. "Triumfy smerti i bankrotstvo bytiia (Konets romana M. P. Artsybasheva U poslednei cherty)," Birzhevye vedomosti, 1912, No. 12774, 7 February, p. 4.
- K. T. (Treneuk). "Revnost', p'esa M. Artsybasheva," IUzhnye vedomosti, 1913, No. 252, 7 November, p. 3.
- Kadim, N. (Abramovich, N. IA.). "Literaturnye zametki, 'Milliony,'" Obrazovanie, 1908, No. 3, pp. 35-36.

- Kantor, P. "Artsybashev i ego 'kritik' gen. Tolmachev (Odin iz mnogikh tsenzurnykh epizodov)," Vestnik literatury, 1919, No. 7, pp. 9-10.
- Kharbarov, IU. Artsybashev kak pevets lichnosti. Saratov: Chernozem, 1909, 25pp.
- Koltonovskaia, E. "Predel ili pereval?" Novyi zhurnal dlia vsekh, 1910, No. 11, p. 85-92; also in Kriticheskie etiudy, Petersburg, 1912, pp. 57-68.
- _____. "Iz noveishchei literatury," Russkaia mysl', 1913, No. 10, pp. 49-58.
- Korolenko, V. G. "Otzyvy ob M. P. Artsybasheve," Pis'ma 1881-1921, Petersburg, Vremia, pp. 69, 72, 78, 293, 296.
- Kranikhfel'd, V. "V podpol'e," Sovremennyi mir, 1910, No. 11, pp. 82-100.
- _____. "Literaturnye otkliki (Oblichen'e zhenshchiny)," Sovremennyi mir, 1913, No. 12, pp. 200-215.
- Larin, O. (Rabinovich, I. IA.). "Revnost' Artsybasheva," Zavety, 1913, No. 11, pp. 138-141.
- Lunacharskii, A. V. "Zhurnal'nye zametki ('Bunt')," Obrazovanie, 1904, No. 7, pp. 131-135; also in "Kriticheskie etiudy," Russkaia literatura, Leningrad, 1925, pp. 406-410.
- L'vov, V. (Rogachevskii, V. L.). "Rasskazy M. Artsybasheva," Obrazovanie, 1905, No. pp. 60-73.
- L'vov-Rogachevskii, V. "M. Artsybashev," Sovremennyi mir, 1909, No. 11, pp. 26-48.
- _____. "Oderzhimyi (U poslednei cherty, roman Artsybasheva)," Snova nakanune, Moskva, Kn-vo pisatelei, 1913, pp. 53-66.
- Minskii, N. "Literatura i iskusstvo ('Smert' Lande')," Novost', 1904, No. 360, 31 December, p. 2.
- Mirsky, D. S. A History of Russian Literature. New York: Knopf, 1966 (on Artsybashev: pp. 401-403).
- Morozov, M. "Pred litsom smerti (Nepriemliushchie mira anarkhisty)," Literaturnyi raspad, Zerno, 1908, pp. 273, 278.

- N. G. (Gekker, N. L.). "'Chudaki' M. Gor'kogo i poshliaki Artsybasheva," Odesskie novosti, 1910, No. 8244, 20 October, p. 2.
- Ne-Bukva (Vasilevskii). "Molodezh' i obshchestvo," Birzhevye vedomosti, 1913, 10 March, p. 3.
- Novopolin, G. S. (Neifel'd). "Pornograficheskie element v russkoi literature." Petersburg: 1909, pp. 116-154.
- "O zhenshchine Artsybasheva (Opyt literaturnoi ankety)," Priazovskii krai (morn. ed.), 1913, No. 288, 3 November, p. 4; No. 294, 10 November, p. 5.
- Ol'minskii, M. (Aleksandrovich, M. S.). "Artsybashev i Kuprin," Pravda, 1912, No. 106, 1 September; also in Po voprosam literatury, Leningrad, Priboi, 1926, pp. 30-31; also in Po literaturnym voprosam, M.L., GIKhL, 1932, pp. 36-37.
- Ovsianiko-Kulikovskii, D. M. "M. Artsybashev. Rasskazy T. I ('Pasha Tumanov')," Nasha zhizn', 1905, No. 192, 3 August, pp. 2-3.
- _____ . "'Teni utra' M. Artsybasheva," Novaia zhizn', 1906, No. 358, 1 February, p. 3; No. 370, 15 February, pp. 2-3.
- Pachmuss, Temira. "Mikhail Artsybashev in the Criticism of Zinaida Gippius," The Slavonic and East European Review, XLIV, pp. 76-87.
- Pasyukov, L. "Odnodum (Zakon dikaria M. Artsybasheva)," Zhurnal zhurnalov, 1915, No. 28, p. 11.
- Petrov-Petrovskii, M. "Kogda skhodiut rumiana," Zhurnal zhurnalov, 1917, No. 24-25, pp. 11-12.
- Pil'skii, P. M. "Artsybashev (Revoliutsiia i belletristy)," Svoboda i zhizn', 1906, No. 13, 20 November, p. 2.
- Polonskii, V. "Iz literatury i zhizni (O M. Artsybasheve)," Vseobshchii ezhemesiachnik, 1910, No. 12, pp. 103-115.
- Rozanov, N. P. "Kryl'ia smerti (Tvorchestvo M. P. Artsybasheva)," Vladikavkaz, 1913, 32pp.
- Rossov, I. (Pashutin, N. I.), "O starykh bogakh i novykh nastroeniakh (Iz poslednikh stranits istorii Russkogo intelligenta)," Poznanie Rossii, 1909, No. 1, pp. 136-159; No. 2, pp. 12-41.

- S. M. (Kirov, S. M.). "Revnost'," Terek, 1913, No. 4747, 2 November, p. 3.
- Semi. (Kirov, S. M.). "Literatura i zhizn' (Revnost' i Zakon dikaria)," Terek, 1916, No. 5510, 9 June, p. 2.
- Skif, N. (Sokolov, N. M.). "'Teni utra' M. Artsybasheva," Russkii vestnik, 1906, No. 10, pp. 690-735.
- Smolenskii (Izmailov, A. A.). "Teatr g-zhi IAvorskoi (Zakon dikaria M. P. Artsybasheva)," Birzhevye vedomosti, 1915, No. 15161, 21 October, p. 5.
- Starodum, N. IA. (Stechkin, N. IA.). "Zhurnal'noe obozrenie ('Bunt')," Russkii vestnik, 1904, No. 9, pp. 300-306.
- Tsagareli, K. "Revnost' M. Artsybasheva (Opyt filosofsko-psikhologicheskogo razbora)," Khar'kov, 1913, 32pp.
- Turankhol'd, IA. "Teatr ili kinemo-teatr? (Artsybashev, Zakon dikaria)," Severnye zapiski, 1915, No. 11-12, pp. 222-224.
- Tverskoi, M. "Revnost' M. Artsybasheva i postanovka ee v teatrakh, (Kriticheskii kratkii ocherk)," Samara, 1914, 14pp.
- Veliavskii, F. "Rassказы Artsybasheva," Slovo, 1905, No. 256, 15 September, pp. 5-6.
- Volzhskii (Glinka, A. S.). "O rasskazakh gg. B. Zaitseva, L. Andreeva, i M. Artsybasheva," Voprosy zhizni, 1905, No. 1, pp. 281-291.
- Zakrzhevskii, A. Karamazovshchina. Psikhologicheskie paralleli (Dostoevskii, Briusov, V. V. Rozanov, Artsybashev). Kiev: Iskusstvo, 1912, pp. 119-143.
- Żeromski, Stefan. Kalendarz życia i twórczości, opracowali Stanisław Kasztelowicz i Stanisław Eile. Krakow: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1961 (on Artsybashev: pp. 257, 460, 490).

V. Other Sources Consulted (Published)

- A. I. Kuprin o literature, ed. F. Kuleshov. Minsk: Izd. BGU, 1969.
- Andreev, L. N. Povesti i rassказы v dvukh tomakh. Moskva: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1971.

- Antonova, V. I. Gosudarstvennaia Tret'iakovskaia galereia. Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1967.
- Bell, Clive. The French Impressionists. London, New York: Phaedon, 1969.
- Benson, Ruth Crego. The Ideal and the Erotic, Tolstoy's Heroines in Love and Marriage. Urbana: The University of Illinois Press, 1973. (Dissertation use here: Yale, 1969.)
- Blok, A. Sobranie sochinenii v vos'mi tomakh. Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo khudozhestvennoi literatury, 1960.
- Bullfinch's Mythology. London: Spring Books, 1964 ed.
- Camus, Albert. Essais. Paris: Gallimard, 1965.
- _____. L'Étranger. Paris: Gallimard, 1957.
- Carroll, John. Break-Out from the Crystal Palace, The anarcho-psychological critique: Stirner, Nietzsche and Dostoevsky. London, Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974.
- Chapman, Seymour. "The Structure of Narrative Transmission," in Style and Structure in Literature. Oxford, 1975.
- Chekhov, A. P. Polnoe sobranie sochinenii i pisem v tridsatsati tomakh. Moscow: Nauka, 1977.
- Christian, R. F. Tolstoy: A Critical Introduction. London: Cambridge University Press, 1969.
- Cioran, Samuel D. The Apocalyptic Symbolism of Andrej Belyj. The Hague, Paris: Mouton, 1973.
- Conrad, Joseph L. "Cexov's 'An Attack of Nerves,'" The Slavic and East European Journal, Vol. XIII, No. 4, 1969.
- Current Biography, "Boris Artzybasheff," 1945, p. 18.
- De Jonge, Alex. Dostoevsky and the Age of Intensity. London: Secker and Warburg, 1975.
- Dostoevskii, F. M. Polnoe sobranie sochinenii v tridsatsati tomakh. Moscow: Nauka, 1974.
- _____. The Notebooks for the Idiot, ed. Edward Wasiolek, trans. K. Strelsky. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967.

- Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre, ed. Walter Kaufmann. Cleveland, New York: World Publishing Company, 1956.
- Fedotov, George. The Russian Religious Mind, II, The Middle Ages: the 13th-15th Centuries. Massachusetts: Nordland Publishing Company, 1975.
- Glicksberg, Charles. The Literature of Nihilism. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1975.
- Gomberg-Verzhvinskaia, E. Peredvizhniki, Rasskazy ob iskusstve. Leningrad: Iskusstvo, 1970.
- Gudzii, N. K. Istoriia drevnei russkoi literatury. Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 1966, 7th ed.
- Hauser, Arnold. The Social History of Art, V. 4, Naturalism, Impressionism, The Film Age, trans. the author and Stanley Godman. New York: Vantage Books, n.d.
- Kogan, P. Ocherki po istorii noveishei russkoi literatury. Moscow: Sovremenniki, 1910.
- Kuprin, A. I. Sobranie sochinenii v deviati tomakh. Moscow: Pravda, 1964.
- _____. Iama (The Pit), trans. B. G. Guernsey. New York: Modern Library, 1932.
- L. N. Tolstoi v vospominaniakh sovremennikov, T. II. Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo khudozhestvennoi literatury, 1960.
- Larousse Encyclopedia of Modern Art from 1800 to the Present Day, Gen. ed. René Huyche. London, New York: Hamlyn, 1961.
- Lawrence, D. H. Selected Literary Criticism, ed. Anthony Beal. New York: Viking Press, 1932.
- _____. The Rainbow. New York: The Modern Library, 1915.
- Letters of Gorky and Andreev 1899-1912, ed. Peter Yershov, trans. Lydia Weston. New York: Columbia University Press, 1967.
- Luker, Nicholas. Alexander Kuprin. Boston: Twayne, 1978.
- Mandel, Oscar, ed. The Theatre of Don Juan, A Collection of Plays and Views, 1630-1963. Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1963.

- Masaryk, Thomas. The Spirit of Russia, ed. George Gibian, trans. Robert Bass. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1967.
- Maxwell, David. "Chekhov's 'Nevesta,'" Russian Literature, 6,
- Mirsky, D. S. A History of Russian Literature. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966.
- Moravcevic, Nicholas. "The Romanticization of the Prostitute in Dostoevskij's Fiction," Russian Literature, IV-3.
- Phelps, William Lyon. Essays on Russian Novelists. New York: Macmillan, 1911.
- Pushkin, A. S. Sobranie sochinenii v vos'mi tomakh. Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo khudozhestvennoi literatury, 1967.
- Rice, Tamara Talbot. A Concise History of Russian Art. New York, Washington: Fredrick A. Praeger, 1963.
- Russian Literature and Modern English Fiction, ed. Donald Davies. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Russian Modernism — Culture and the Avant Garde 1900-1930. ed. George Gibian and H. W. Tjalsma. Ithaca, London: Cornell University Press, 1976.
- Ruskaia literatura kontsa XIX-nachala XX v. Devianostye gody, ed. B. A. Bialik. Moscow: Nauka, 1968.
- Ruskaia literatura kontsa XIX-nachala XX v. 1901-1907, ed. B. A. Bialik. Moscow: Nauka, 1971.
- Ruskaia literatura kontsa XIX-nachala XX v. 1908-1917, ed. B. A. Bialik. Moscow: Nauka, 1972.
- Shaw, Bernard. Man and Superman, A Comedy and a Philosophy. Edinburgh: Penguin Books, 1946.
- The Silver Age of Russian Culture, An Anthology, ed. Carl and Ellendea Proffer. Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1971.
- Slonim, Marc. From Chekhov to the Revolution 1900-1917. Oxford University Press, 1962.
- An Outline of Russian Literature. New York: New American Library, 1958.

- Stirner, Max. The Ego and His Own, trans. S. Byington. New York: 1918.
- Stites, Richard. The Women's Liberation Movement in Russia: Feminism, Nihilism and Bolshevism. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1978.
- Thrall, Hibbard, and Holman. A Handbook to Literature. New York: Odyssey, 1962.
- Tolstoi, L. N. Sobranie sochinenii v dvenadtsati tomakh. Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo khudozhestvennoi literatury, 1958.
- _____. Voskresenie — Roman. Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo khudozhestvennoi literatury, 1967.
- Watts, Alan. Beyond Theology. New York: Vintage Books, 1964.
- Weidle, Wladimir. Russia Absent and Present, trans. Gordon Smith. New York: 1952.
- Wolfe, Bertram D. Three Who Made a Revolution: A Biographical Novel. Boston: Beacon Press, 1948.
- Women in Russia, ed. D. Atkinson et al. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1977.
- Woodward, James B. Leonid Andreev: A Study. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969.
- (Unpublished Materials)
- Christian, R. F. "Tolstoy and Vegetarianism," Tolstoy Symposium, The University of Victoria, Canada, November, 1978.
- Luker, Nicholas. Letter to author, 21 December 1978.
- _____. 24 June 1979.
- _____. 1 October 1979.
- _____. 21 November 1979.
- Revutsky, Valerian. Letter to author, 19 November 1975.
- Struve, Gleb. Letter to author, 9 November 1977.
- _____. Personal interview, 19 February 1976.

Thomson, S. M. "Resurrection: An Example of Lev Tolstoi as a Mythopoeic Author," unpublished paper, University of Waterloo, April 1973.