FIVE MAIN NOVELS OF NIKIFOROV -
A CRITICAL DISCUSSION

by

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the five main novels of Georgii Nikiforov, "Beside the Street Lamp", (1927), "The Woman", (1929), "Into the Wind", (1930), "Unity", (1933), "The Mastercraftsmen", (1936). They will be discussed separately and comparatively, pointing out character, situation, and political developments. The unifying element throughout Nikiforov's works is his development of the old professional worker as compared with the psychological development of various contemporary (1920-1935) Soviet Bureaucrats.

Nikiforov's attacks upon the role of the Communist Party is counterbalanced by his personal objectivity in presenting a vivid unfalsified representation of Soviet life during this time.

The Introduction is an elaboration of the Abstract and presents the overall outline of the paper. At the same time describing Nikiforov's personal life and the internal influences that were beneficial or a hindrance, as the case may be, in formulating Nikiforov's realism through complete disillusionment in the new state.

Chapter I, "Beside the Street Lamp", describes the corrupt Soviet bureaucracy that existed during the 1920s and early 1930s. Through the bureaucrats Nikiforov is able to launch a direct attack upon the Party. He also presents a
new type of individual. In the midst of the building a new socialist state during the early N.E.P. period, the appearance of Ramzaev, a former member of the nobleman-intelligentsia class is quite startling to any Soviet reader. But Ramzaev's moral regeneration into a "first rate Communist" is constrained with the degeneration of a Party bureaucrat.

Chapter II, "The Woman", presents the role of the women in the Soviet system during the last stages of N.E.P. and into the First Five Year Plan. Nikiforov's "professional labourer type" has now slowly begun evolving and reaches its climax in this novel. The position of Trade Unions and the Party form a sub-theme.

In Chapter III, "Into the Wind", Nikiforov discusses the truth concerning collectivization and the kulak question. For this he was taken to task by the Party. He portrayed the peasant question with an alarming amount of truth and did not devote it to the agricultural phase of the First Five Year Plan as did Sholokhov "(Virgin Soil Upturned)", Leonov, and the others. He also presented the "city-village" question concerning itself indirectly with collectivization and industrialization. Nikiforov developed this novel frequently by mere hints, consequently the literary value of it suffered.

In contrast to "Into the Wind", Nikiforov wrote "Unity", a hastily poorly written Five Year Plan type novel depicting industrialization through the attempted adaptation of
the author into this sphere of the "proletarianization" of the country. But Nikiforov failed because of complete lack of character analyses and the absence of a definite plot. The theme of complete subordination of the individual to Industrialization was the main element throughout.

Chapter IV, "The Mastercraftsmen", indirectly deals with the question of Soviet reality and Christian Socialism. Nikiforov develops his professional revolutionaries against the background of the Japanese War and the 1905 Revolution. One of the most significant elements in Nikiforov's writings is his complete and final development of the ideal man, a philosopher on one hand, and the professional labourer on the other. This ideological representation is fully realized in this chapter together with an indirect representation of Stalinist Russia through this philosophical ideology.

The last chapter, Chapter V, attempts to trace the line of the old professional worker and his psychology through all of Nikiforov's works. The different character types, the party bureaucrats, the professional labourers, the philosophical individual - all are discussed here. Also, Nikiforov's associations with the Trotskyite faction of the party and his sympathy toward their industrial development programme is mentioned.
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Introduction

Neither Soviet Literature, nor critical literature outside the Soviet Union can boast of any information about Nikiforov (b. 1884). In the Soviet Union there continues to be a definite silence concerning his works. The reason being that Nikiforov could possibly be a great rival to Maxim Gorky. The rivalry of Nikiforov can be considered in the following instances: (1) Both Nikiforov and Gorky originate from almost the same region and from purely proletariat surroundings. Nikiforov was born in Saratov into the family of an upholsterer; (2) Both Nikiforov and Gorky gave much of their strength working in revolutionary circles. From the age of thirteen, Nikiforov worked at a factory, and from sixteen he took part in revolutionary activity; (3) Both took an active part in the events of 1905. Gorky was imprisoned for his revolutionary activity in the Petropavlovsk Fortress, and Nikiforov was a participant of the armed revolt of 1905 in Moscow. He was arrested at the end of that year; (4) Like Gorky, Nikiforov went through hardships, changing his occupation many times. He was a lathe-operator, book-keeper, dock-worker and a projectionist. He valued labour as highly as did Gorky.

While working at a railway car factory in Chelyabinsk in 1917, Nikiforov joined the party and thus established his formal contact with the October Revolution. The growth of his
proletarian solidarity with the revolution continued until his emergence into print in 1923. From 1923-1924, Nikiforov may be referred to as a proletarian objectivist writer. After 1930 there began a gradual and steadily disillusionment in the Soviet regime. This ended in 1937 in a concentration camp.

Here, the last period of his life differs distinctly from that of Gorky. But Nikiforov had generally been different from Gorky. Nikiforov's life shows the ideal development of a worker-writer. Ascending the heights he pauses, studies objectively the surrounding reality and is disillusioned. The path of the ascent and evolutionary disillusionment, like Gorky's path, went zigzag.

When he became an active member in the society of proletarian writers "Kuznetsa" (Smithy), Nikiforov brought to it, as a representative of the older generation, his deepest experience as a professional worker, having been "forged" in the revolutionary struggle against tsarism.

But while he was active in the "Kuznetsa" his position may be characterized as that of being in the right wing of the organization, thanks to his "psychologism" and "individualism". From here one can understand Nikiforov's rapport with Voronsky's "Pereval", (The Pass), and with the sympathies of the literary outlooks of Trotsky. During the early period of the
"Kuznetsa", (1920-22), when the organization put forward the programme of study and development, Nikiforov took much upon himself. He then felt that he was able to speak out after 1922 when the prose writers of "Kuznetsa" gained stature. This was also aided by the declaration of the "Kuznetsa" in 1923, when the problem of transition from study to struggle, that is to an active part in the press, began. That is what happened to Nikiforov who started his writing career in the "Workers' Journal" at the end of 1924. This came about after a great deal of self effort.

He was not in print before the revolution but he possessed a bright intellect, and together with a minimum of opportunities he gradually developed into a talented writer. His objectiveness, that is his condemnation of the "false fronts" of Soviet life placed him in conflict with Soviet reality. From here began the search of a new artistic style which first appeared in the allegorical tale "The Sparrow" (Vorobej), 1928. Later Nikiforov moved further away from realistic descriptions. In his later period he often referred to a realistic symbolism, occasionally presenting the philosophical problems of the future.

Nikiforov was objective from the very beginning of his career. He at once drew attention to this objectivity in his short story "Ivan Brynda" (1925) and then a book of short stories under the title "Either - or", (Ili, ili), 1926. For
Ivan Brynda there is the same "either - or" as Hamlet's "to be or not to be". For the worker - Brynda was either a private owner at the head of his enterprise or his own co-worker with a party ticket in his pocket. The official critique understood Brynda as the decline of the revolution with the introduction of N.E.P. However, the situation went deeper, the characteristic of the worker Brynda is one of the more truthful characteristics of a professional Soviet Worker.

Through these personages, Nikiforov emerges triumphant as compared to Gorky. Nikiforov's skilled workers are definite, glowing, individuals, and more attractive than Gorky's prototypes. But here Nikiforov goes further. He is enamoured by this character. He shows how this character may evolve into a middle-class bourgeoisie, when he is plunged into the midst of the Soviet "apparat". His qualities as a skilled worker may be saved only by his return to his native habitat, of factory labour.

After describing the working man, Nikiforov shows us the characters typical of the 1920s; the saboteur, the bureaucrat, the Kulak, even the description of a "grey" party secretary. The first three characters are the more prominent and they display the tactics that they employ in lawful situations. At the same time in the early works of
Nikiforov, there is portrayed an intellectual, in particular the technical intelligentsia, the old, the new, and an individual from abroad, the organizers, administrators, - both successful and unsuccessful.

Because of his knowledge of the psychology of professional Soviet writers, many critics have called Nikiforov the "Soviet Zola". But the "Soviet Zola" was also the "Soviet Orwell". The allegorical story "The Sparrow" (Vorobey) is the precursor of Orwell's "Animal Farm". The Soviet critique found that it criticized the adaptors, the bureaucrats the "apparatchiki", the petty bourgeoisie, and the intellectual-individualists. But it would not notice the principal theme, that "Vorobey" was to protest against the regeneration of the party into an apparatus of new exploiters. Besides this, Nikiforov's broad attack focussed directly upon his colleagues, who being satisfied by their being called proletarian writers, were turned into "chirping sparrows", unwilling to learn how to sing from "nightingales", and moreover, became the lovers of the philosophy of the "dark raven", that is, the philosophy of the ruling party clique or the "cult of personality".

However, the "Soviet Zola and Orwell" declared his own "credo" of the future. If Boris Pasternak was "inauspicious" in the middle of the 1930s and only after the passing of twenty years had spoken openly in "Doctor Zhivago", then Nikiforov had spoken openly about these things already in 1935, that is
to say, the unity of ideals - christian and social. I will analyze this problem later. At the moment we will dwell on it briefly. This brilliantly illustrates Nikiforov as one of the profoundest humanists.

The dominant part of Nikiforov's writings occurred during the period of reconstruction. The majority of the novels analyzed here are devoted to it. At this time we limit ourselves to only five novels. The novels "The Street Lamp" (U Fonarya), and "The Woman", (Zhenshchina), show the characters of Soviet life from the present moment to the future. The novels "Into the Wind", (Vstrechnii Vet'er), and "Unity", (Yedinstvo), are concerned only to the present, while "The Mastercraftsmen", (Mastera), presents a picture of the past, present, and future.

As we can see, Nikiforov was ever striving forward with full reality and objectivity and this in itself is enough, in order to say that even in these five novels he stands above most Soviet writers.
Chapter I

"Beside the Street Lamp"
(U Fonaryya)

In the novel (U Fonaryya) is shown an entire gallery of types of individuals of our epoch against a background of construction and working of a large scale factory with four thousand workers.

The central theme of this novel - this lantern - is the Party. The Party elucidates and directs all of our lives in all of its manifestations.

Individuals, Party members, and non Party members on whom the Party directs her light, will at once receive the distinct class physiognomy; all that is not clear will become clear.

Throughout the entire novel, is felt a strong faith in the Party - (in it), in the Party is laid an ironic truth, which will be of assistance to it, its historical purpose.

Simplicity, accuracy and some lyricisms - all characterize the language of Nikiforov...

The article from "The Workers' Newspaper," April 1928, sums up the novel "U Fonaryya". The strong will of the Party of 1928 is felt in this article and we see how tightly the Party held the literary critical reins at this time. All was for the glorification of the Party, whether it was of good literary quality or not. There was an extreme, almost a deification of the Party and its organizations by the majority of the contemporary writers.

It is true that the "Party" theme prevails throughout the novel, but a strong element of humanitarianism forms the basic mood. This element was a rare quality that appeared
in the literature of the late 1920s.

After revising the 1925 resolution concerning Party policy towards literature and art the Party urged a tactful and guarded attitude towards fellow-travellers, peasant writers, and even toward bourgeois writers supporting the Soviet regime, so as to 'hasten their approach to communist ideology'. The resolution went on to state that the proletariat may already possess an exact criterion of the social political contents of literary works. But it does not possess definite answers to all questions concerning artistic form. Therefore the Party should aid these proletarian writers materially and morally. Thus the position of the Party is firmly stated.

In his novel, Nikiforov presents a new type of individual. In the midst of the building of a new socialist life during the early stages of N.E.P. the appearance of Ramzaev, a former member of the nobleman - intelligentsia class, is quite startling. But the moral regeneration and rebirth of Ramzaev is just as amazing. He passes through a complete process of psychological and moral regeneration and emerges as a "first rate Communist". Ramzaev is an example of how the Russian nobility adapted itself under the Soviet influence.

But Nikiforov was accused of turning everything upside down in characterizing Ramzaev as a decent man, capable of great service in the reconstruction of his country. He is
portrayed against the Communist-director Chuvyakin, a dull, smug, self-satisfied bureaucrat who 'found himself a snug harbour not because of ability but because of Party membership'.

Consequently Nikiforov was able to attack the Soviet bureaucracy of the 1920s. Here was a system which was bourgeois ridden while building a Socialist country. The entire bureaucratic system was "rotten to the core". The bourgeois tendencies held a far greater fascination than the socialist way of life.

"U Fonarya" was the first long work of Georgii Nikiforov. It was 'dedicated to the representation of our reality with all of its complexities and unconstrained problems.' The author stated: 'the theme of the novel - is to show the facets of the heroes together with their faults. From one point of view - a satire on our shortcomings, from the other, sheer happiness for every step forward, for every day of our success.'

The author defined his purpose and carried it out successfully. The character analyses and descriptions clearly show the gradual reconstruction of a socialist Soviet Russia during the N.E.P. period with 'all of its complexities and unconstrained problems' together with the 'embourgeoisement' of the Communist director and the eventual "socialization" of the "dvoryanin" - communist Ramzaev.
Nikiforov was able to portray his characters with a personal and social life which are inseparably bound together. Thus a more or less psychological portrayal begins to appear and his personalities develop into complex, but 'conscious' communists.

The climate of N.E.P. was milder than that of the preceding Civil War Period; literary characters no longer knew the 'sharp antagonism' between revolutionary task and duty. This theme appeared throughout the works on the civil war but was gradually dropped in later works. Conflicts now arose within literary characters, not only physical but moral and psychological. The 'new men' of N.E.P. led personal lives that were entirely subjected to the social task, i.e. Gleb and Dasha Chumalov, ("Cement", by Gladkov). These were "machine like individuals" within whom love does not lead to a complication in their lives but rather, as a stimulus to better work.

But Nikiforov was able to see beyond this "machine type" individual and portrayed his characters as individuals who felt human emotions, had psychological realizations, but at the same time developed a great interest and devotion to the Party and its functioning.

Nikiforov was able to excel Gladkov in character portrayal. Gladkov's novel is about industry, in which the machine is treated as the proletarians' friend and saviour.
"U Fonarya" stresses the reconstruction process and building of a factory, but at the same time produces individual personalities who experience psychological and emotional upheavals.

Gladkov's characters are stereotype machines, with the exception of Dasha Chumalov, the emancipated woman, fighting for emancipation, reminiscent of Dostoyevsky's 'infernal woman'.

Gladkov's "Cement" lacks both verbal artistry and psychological power, while the artistic descriptive nature of Nikiforov has yet to be challenged by any Soviet writer.

Gladkov's work was an explicit statement of Marxist philosophy with strong overtones of Freudism. It became the model and prototype for the vast industrial construction during the late twenties and thirties.

Nikiforov's novel was an "out and out" attack upon Party bureaucracy, a work which was 'dedicated to the representation of our reality with all of its complexities and unconstrained problems'.

In 1927 Nikiforov published excerpts from the novel "Denis Ramzaev" in the journal "Thirty days". In 1928 this novel was again released under the title "U Fonarya". It was apparently reworked from the 1927 edition to 'play down the
Denis Ramzaev was a "dvoryanin" and a former adherent of the Whites. He had managed to conceal his social origin and secured an important position in industry and within the Party. In his first novel Nikiforov pictured Ramzaev as 'extraordinarily honest, high minded and energetic, capable of valiant efforts and service in the rebuilding of the country.' The implication given by Nikiforov was that the Party had no moral right to cast aside a man in whom such qualities were present in retaliation for his past. In the novel under discussion, Ramzaev is a much less heroic figure.

The gradual moral regeneration, or even "rebirth" of Ramzaev as a Communist is the focal point of the novel. Ramzaev is pictured as an individual with a strong sense of guilt for his past interwoven into a psychological paranoid. The psychological fixation that he must prove to himself through Party and industrial work his devotion to the Party and the dismissal of the past, almost leads him to a physical and mental breakdown.

In order to understand Ramzaev and gain an insight into his mind, mannerisms, and motives, Nikiforov used the flash-back technique of letters and diaries. Through these a clear understanding of Ramzaev's psychological and physical processes occurs and we see the rebirth of a complex, "new
type" of individual, - a 'conscious' communist.

Ramzaev's life will be discussed as seen through the letters he wrote to Marinka, his sister, who lived in Italy. His development as a 'conscious' communist is slow due to the continual internal struggle and strife that has torn him apart. In his first letter he wanders off about the life that used to be, tells of his flight from their 'gnezdo' (nest) or family manor house. He is no longer the nobleman Vyacheslav Anosov, but Denis Ramzaev, Party member.

Thus the beginning of the dual person, one a former intelligentsia, the other, faithful to Party dictate. He is torn between himself and his past ...

... It seems that I am becoming primitive. I feel a discordance. From one side - the nobleman Anosov, from the other - the peasant Ramzaev, and the truth of the matter is, I don't know, which of the two is stronger; but the former me, I do not feel, often I do not hear him, and it is difficult for me to revive the past. (31).

It is on this note that we will carry through a detailed psychological analysis of Ramzaev.

The idea that the past was "wrong" and one must make amends for his "evil" pre-1917 life, is the focal point of Ramzaev's conflict. He is afraid to tell anyone of his past, for fear that he will be expelled from the Party. He has devoted the last eight years to the industrial development of
The new Russia in the period of reconstruction. He has become a trusted party member and is regarded as a dependable, capable individual. But this extreme psychological conflict was continually growing within him.

With the appearance of Elena Vladimirova his conflict reaches its climax. Elena stands before him with the "gaze of an accomplice". She symbolizes the decadent past, a past that is bitterly imbedded upon his soul. A past that he has exaggerated out of all proportions and is now burdening him with its load of guilt and shame. A shame that festers within him and continually derides and debauches his mental stability.

... And now Ramzaev began to fear the meetings with Anna - because of his great shame. He began to hide himself, lock himself in his room when he worked at home. ... he avoided the talks with Tsepilov. (130)

Ramzaev and Elena have had previous engagements prior to his "rebirth". She does not know the reborn Ramzaev, only the "dvoryanin" Anosov. Ramzaev's inner conflict reaches the stage of a "survival for life". Will Elena tell the Party officials? Will she incriminate herself? All will be lost, Party membership, a new life, a new hope.

But the truth will not only be told through Elena. Ramzaev is on the verge of telling anyone who will listen.
He writes to his sister and expresses all. A great personal relief usually follows because he has been pouring out the guilt within his soul to someone, even if it is only on paper.

Throughout the novel he is ready to tell Anna, but always at the last moment he changes his mind, the mood changes, or a complete deflation of the individual occurs. Could it be that he does not have faith in himself, or is it a deep fear of the Party?

... Then there occurred a great desire to tell all, but it became strange to relate this, and it seemed as if there was not enough strength in his soul, a damp sickness was creeping through his heart, and often a clear, mysterious and fearful whispering was heard. "don't tell, don't tell, all will pass, all will be forgotten. How can you tell it? Soon enough Anna will know, and then it will be impossible to go to her .... (153).

This was all mentally tormenting and Ramzaev was not able to find relief. Usually the emotional situation passed with extreme physical and mental exhaustion. He wanted to scream it out to someone, to anyone, so that this guilt-ridden shame could be released.

He writes to Marinka:

... I am in all earnestness Denis Ramzaev, and I do not know anyone else by this name. I suffer for the past, I curse the past, but it still continues to scare me with its absurdity, with its ugliness.(156)

Ramzaev goes on to say that he cannot run away from all
of this because running away not only from himself but from
everything else will bring about his "grazhdanskii" death.
He is not able to run to those who were close to him in the
past because his ties with them are broken, '... our common
interests and understandings are lost? (156).

Ramzaev is on the verge of a complete emotional break­
down. Gradually he develops an avid interest in the industrial­
ization programme at the factory and becomes "wrapped" up in
Party administration. His emotional problems are only aroused
by his loneliness and great love for Anna Golandina.

At this point, a complete regeneration or rebirth of
Ramzaev has taken place. He is no longer the paranoic indiv­
idual, but is gradually becoming a 'conscious' communist. This
socio-political rebirth will be discussed in greater detail
later on in this chapter.

Ramzaev's psychological state reaches its climax when
he meets Elena Vladimirovna while walking in Moscow. Upon
returning to her apartment he finds himself gradually slipping
back into his previous frenzied state of mind, ... 'he saw be­
fore him his distant past rearing its ugly head and all began
to whirl ....

... Ramzaev arose, and was not able to analyze the
situation, he went over to where he thought he would
find his way out: for what reason was this punishment,
is it possible to cleanse oneself from the past? (280)

Elena answers: No, no you cannot, you cannot leave, you don't have to go, stay, stay with me .... (280).

This can be interpreted in the literal sense meaning that Ramzaev does not have to leave physically, or one can delve deeper and seek the psychological reasoning. Elena could be one step ahead of Ramzaev. Possibly, realizing his emotional state, she is hindering his chances of rationalizing and once and for all completely destroying his mind. Personally, Nikiforov did not feel that Elena had that much depth to her. Although earlier she had been in league with the other Party members to overthrow Ramzaev. Therefore, the above statements could be interpreted meaningfully.

Ramzaev's emotional state rages onward, and he grabs Elena, hits her across her mouth, and madly begins to choke her. Ramzaev is not only choking Elena, but also crushing the past, which he sees symbolized within her. All his rage is concentrated on killing the past, killing Elena, cleansing himself completely. '... that woman will be my vengeance upon the old regime.'

... And then the repugnance, a damp, heavy repugnance, and Ramzaev bent down to her face and spat into her eyes, which were as yet alive and malicious ... (281)
The completion of Ramzaev's psychological rebirth and his escape from the past is finalized when he takes the letters that he wrote to his sister and gives them to Anna.

... But the letters - here they are. They are a great burden. They must be given to them. They will judge... (285).

Her heart torn asunder, Anna takes them to the Central Committee. A trial is held.

At this point we must return to the other side of Ramzaev, his moral regeneration, as a builder of a new Socialism, of the reconstruction of a Soviet Russia; as a 'conscious' communist. By observing the complete character change within Ramzaev we see that Nikiforov developed his "new type" of individual together with a personal and psychological life. Ramzaev is not the stereotyped Gleb Chumalov, but an individual with a mind of his own, but, with enough sense to discern right from wrong.

Ramzaev pointed out to his sister in his earlier letter that the people do not protest; they do not even argue with the reconstruction processes. Millions do not understand the path of socialism, consequently they do not argue or display any outward manifestations. They only want to live and reconstruct without socialism, each in his own way.

"zheev, seet i slava bogu ..." (17)
Through Ramzaev, Nikiforov points out the ignorance and the apathy of these people. Their complete unconcern for what is happening to them and to their country.

As mentioned before, the moral regeneration of Ramzaev is closely interwoven with the psychological regeneration. His shame can be seen from both sides of his dual person.

...I saw people, I observe their lives, their work, and I do not have any words, for you to understand, what is this veritable humane, veritable heroic and genuine struggle. Do you understand .... (81).

Ramzaev can see and feel himself the great struggle that sweeps across the nation. He says that if he were to see himself reflected in a mirror as he was in the past, then he would turn away in disgust. The past has created this "unhealthy" inhuman environment.

The 'conscious' development of Ramzaev emerges greatly as he realizes the uselessness of his past life; of the futile nature of everyone and everything concerned with it. "One existed, but did not live." He points out to Marinka that he is not a fatalist, but writes about his punishment, the punishment for the past. His extreme shame and guilt for all that has happened and all that he has seen;

... but I was not only an observer, I carried over a great burden, saw the suffering of others and suffered myself. (82).
He describes the struggle and suffering of the Civil War, the hardships and inhuman trials that people were put to during both wars. These people must now cleanse the earth with great strength and built a culture, that is a new life. (83) No wonder the people did not protest, they are defeated, half starved, weak, completely demobilized. They build and reconstruct a new Russia. But why?

Ramzaev becomes more and more involved with factory building and party administration. He is not only building a new land, a new society, but a new man, a Communist. Nikiforov presents Ramzaev as needing someone to help him, someone to love him to fulfil an emptiness within him, - a crutch thus, Anna Golandina, a staunch proletarian librarian, but still retaining a few emotional feminine ideals, not completely "mechanized" as so many of her contemporaries were. She seems to be an "emotional outlet" for Ramzaev. A psychological entity to whom he must eventually tell the truth but is always afraid that she will be repulsed by him.

He has become a supporter of the Soviet regime, Anosov is dead forever. Nikiforov, under the guise of Ramzaev addresses the world. He puts forward Russia's claim that ... the rest of the world watches and thinks that we are dead, but in reality we are constructing our state, replenishing our power, and you will soon enough feel our strength and power.
We shall arise a great nation. ... each brick will go
toward the foundation in the fundamental of our reconstruction.
(155).

Ramzaev tells Marinka ... the old Moscow streets are
gone, life has changed, never to return. As I gaze about me
on the streets of new Moscow... I feel that I am not a stranger
here. I am in the midst of my own and on my own land. (155)

... I am reborn again .... Ramzaev and Anosov are
two different people. (156)

As Ramzaev embraces Communism he abruptly looses the
"dvoryanin" characteristics. Like the old streets of Moscow,
they too are gone. Reconstruction of the factory and a pure
love for Anna are his main concerns.

He begins the life of an industrial bureaucrat and
strives to find the least expensive and time consuming methods
of construction. He feels that the faith of the workers must
be regained, roubles must be spent in order to achieve any
kind of results.

... we want to spend our rouble with sense, in order
that results can be seen; we are often avaricious,
through this often a delay occurs. (164)

Ramzaev and Kotelnikov discuss Universal Mechaniza-
tion. Nikiforov points out that complete mechanization will
take place.
... the individual will eventually become the only master of the earth. And not only of the earth, but of the Universe. ... And what will happen if all the electrical energy is controlled? - Communism will occur, ... we are progressing toward it and will eventually reach it, but we have at the moment a bitter class struggle. (263).

Nikiforov goes on to say that 'Europe stands before us, we must overcome her in technology, with better machines ... Must Communism be broken by resistance? ... No I am for a good machine which will break the resistance.' (264).

Nikiforov goes on to predict what we now know as true: 'a country with many millions of people is late with her strength, in order that she may later give a good struggle to her enemies. (268) Nikiforov, like the other writers of N.E.P. prophesied Party doctrine and propaganda. He was able to "wedge it in" through his 'conscious' communist, and the Communist director Kotelnikov.

Ramzaev's rebirth is complete. He strives to gain the knowledge of Kotelinkov, the frankness and ingenuousness of Tsepilov, and the strength of those who were able to overcome all temptations, who survived exile and prison. Ramzaev, the completed 'conscious' communist who has overcome his psychological frustrations and fears, overcome personal tragedy, and emerged as a shining example, according to Nikiforov, as a "top notch" communist.

At his trial, Tsepilov states:
... Ramzaev was reborn, he, before the others, understood, that without the knowledge of activity, without the proletariats he had nowhere to go, it meant the end for him. He understood this. ... I saw that Ramzaev was a good worker... No I do not want to blame him... Only remember what we have just been through and what we saw. No this is not strange. Yes, I am for acquittal. It is enough for him, that he lived through it, that which I have just related ... (290)

Nikiforov 'conveyed the idea that the Russian people, good-natured and forebearing did not want to elevate anger, hatred and vindictive retaliation to the status of the law'. 7 They were ready to let the dead past bury its dead. The demand for humanitarianism was held above the Party principles. This idea put forward by Nikiforov did not spare the Party principles. The entire novel was based as an attack upon these principles and the bureaucracy which upheld them for their own convenience.

Chuvyakin, a hero of the Civil War, could only see a life of bourgeois luxury in his position. Like so many of the bureaucrats at this time, Nikiforov presented Chuvyakin as an individual whose chief interest lay in protecting and preserving his own career. Chuvyakin was the forerunner of Dudintsev's Drozdov, (Not by Bread Alone), and Ehrenberg's Zhuravlov, (The Thaw). He was the "avante guard" of the powerful bureaucratic class of people which Dudintsev portrayed as a kind of "new class" with values that set them apart from the others and interests that have nothing to do with basic human
values, such as freedom, equality, and individual integrity. The Drozdovs and Zhuravlovs were just beginning to advance in power at this time.

Like Dudintsev, Nikiforov exposes to ridicule and shame the vulgar materialistic standards and low moral and cultural levels of the barbarians who wield this power.

Nikiforov derides Chuvyakin for his bourgeois attachment to creature comforts, for his fine clothes, sleek Packard automobile and his lustful taste for women.

Basically Chuvyakin was just another individual who left his village and his wife to fight in the Civil War. When it was finished he did not return home but joined the Party and rose quickly. He did not send for his wife although she heard that he was in Moscow.

... Eight years had passed. The ninth begins when the May grass is dew laden, and still Chuvyakin is not here, he does not long for his native village nor for Veveya, and during the past year he has not sent one word about himself. (35)

Chuvyakin's success in the party went straight to his head. His position was not due to his ability but to his Party membership. Thus he exemplifies the typical bureaucrat of Nikiforov's time.

He began to live the life of a "bourgeois bureaucrat"
and abused his position. The first voice of rebellion against these bourgeois tendencies was that of his chauffeur, Golandin, a "communist to the core". In his letter to Tsepilov he states that he is a communist. One should not carry on in the manner of your director, Comrade Chuvyakin, of the Factory "Red Star". But possibly, he may not be a comrade at all, if one is to consider his discipline. (60)

Golandin goes on to describe Chuvyakin's private life and wonders where he obtains the money to lead a life like this.

Chuvyakin begins his Party and psychological decline. The tendency of exposing the bureaucrat as a hidden bourgeois in his private life, as an enemy of the future communist society is an important sub-theme in many of the proletarian writers. Nikiforov used this together with an honest rendering of 'living man' and the complex Soviet reality without doing away with or simplifying conflicts and difficulties. Nikiforov slowly begins tearing off Chuvyakin's mask by giving a realistic description of his faults. The process of the 'iron communist' gradually degenerating into a N.E.P. bureaucrat becomes evident.

Slowly but surely Chuvyakin's psychological decline borders on personal hysteria. Subconsciously he knows what he has been doing and how he has been living fraudently, but
he has never openly faced up to this fact. His life, morally and politically has slowly been deteriorating. He is a greedy bourgeois in private life, - a man who long ago lost his revolutionary ideal, though he himself is not conscious of this. He has been perverted by his bourgeois partner, Elena Vladimirova. The 'embourgeoisement' of Chuvyakin can be contrasted to the moral regeneration of the bourgeois-intellect Ramzaev who is partly converted under the influence of his love for the proletarian girl Anna Golandina.

Nikiforov draws the character of an individual torn by a deep psychological guilt. A guilt that could be traced back to early Revolutionary times.

... No, Onisim Chuvyakin did not run from the front - he fought for that one reason, to be the master of the masters and of himself. ... (184)

But did he become master of himself? After the episode at the meeting when he drives his auto onto the second floor of the building, Chuvyakin felt himself to be master of all. Actually he was degenerating rapidly.

... Chuvyakin felt himself to be the hero after that evening. ... he did not consider anything and thought even less, ... and already had concluded to marry, he moved into her (Elena's) apartment. (184)

But here he had a pang of conscious and realized that he had a wife in Motyiga. A general state of nostalgia came
over him and Chuvyakin regressed into his thoughts about Veveya. A guilt ridden feeling arose...

... Thoughts flow and flow, and it seems strange to Chuvyakin that he occasionally thinks about one thing but does what he thought of before. How many times had he prepared himself to clear his name, to cleanse the road, and everytime something unexplainable occurred, pushing it to the side. ... He wanted to show himself that in one summer he could build the worker's hovels but... Then the expensive gifts for Elena Vladimirovna, one must always have money. The first friendly spree, then the second, the drives across the border with company in the automobile... (185)

The emotional psychological conflict is building up slowly within himself. Unconsciously he is realizing his precarious position, his chances of reconciliation with the Party if he is discovered.

Suddenly Chuvyakin's ideal world is shattered when he reads in Pravda that the Central Committee calls him for questioning.

Finally the climax is reached and we see the complete physical and psychological breakdown of the communist-director. He has lived in dread fear of this moment, somehow always realizing that it would some day come but hoping that it never really would. He even knows the questions that the prosecutor Migunova will ask.

Comrade Chuvyakin, - asks Migunova with a cold hard unfeeling face - comrade Chuvyakin, did we receive the materials for the worker's houses. Tell us what is going on there?
... With whom are you living, comrade Chuvyakin? Whom do you love?, with whom are you in league? Who are your enemies? (188)

His almost hysterical state of mind is only calmed through endless glasses of vodka and finally too drunk and too psychologically exhausted he goes to Elena.

Throughout his trial, Chuvyakin denies all of the charges. His only answer is:

Eight years in the party, Chuvyakin pounded his chest, - eight years! I joined during the most dangerous times. I am not an intriguer, like the others, who as petty officials are already great functionaries. In fact, I am like a wrestler. I am in need of nothing. It merely requires, comrade Migunova, an understanding of why and wherefore. You charged me through the newspaper, as if I were a delinquent, concluded Chuvyakin, and the comrades look at me with strange eyes. But what did I do? It was, in fact, nothing! (195).

Chuvyakin becomes panicky as the trial goes on. He is fighting an inner conflict.

... Get a hold of yourself, Onisim! Until death itself, nothing will happen! (195)

The trial wears on and Chuvyakin's main interest lies in protecting and preserving his own career. He denies all the charges; Again examplifying the individual traits of his own "class" of men. He defies all the basic human values, such as truth, self esteem, and individual integrity, thinking only of his own interest and career. Grovelling and
humble himself Chuvyakin appeals to Migunova

... but I appeal to you as a tovarishch, like a comrade-in-arms who served at the front ... You suffered as I suffered, comrade Migunova! ... As soon as I saw your name, when they called me out, I thought to myself. "You are fortunate, Onisim, you will go before a comrade, who will understand. And I straightforwardly declared: To me all is slander on my communist conscience." (197)

When the prosecutor Migunova finally read the document accusing Chuvyakin, he suddenly remembered ...

Of course, I understand the treachery, comrade - scoundrel - ... I agree to the accusation. But understand, comrade Migunova, all was not done consciously, but in a drunken manner. I don't even know myself, how all of this happened, but not because I wanted to do it consciously. (198)

Then Chuvyakin stomped out of the court room with his portfolio - his one and only psychological crutch. To him this portfolio symbolizes his position and the power it held. Without it he is nobody. Once again Nikiforov portrays the decadent bureaucratic mannerisms that Chuvyakin has unconsciously acquired.

When he is expelled from the Party Chuvyakin is completely dumbfounded. He wanders through the streets, hears the wind calling to him:

... Have pity for me - pity me, plead for pity!
I want to live, I want to be happy. What has happened with me, What will happen to me now?
... Where am I to go, and why shame? Why silence from the shame? ... (202)
But then he thinks about his life and how useless it has been. Nothing to comfort him, no child, nothing. We are almost ready to forgive Chuvyakin in his hour of shame and need. But again Nickiforov presents the superfluous decadent bureaucratic side of Chuvyakin.

... This knowledge Chuvyakin tried to remember, the present was impregnated within him, that he began to justify himself for his misdeeds. What is wrong, if he wishes to have a beautiful woman, a stranger by birth, if he allows himself the small luxury of taking a drive once in a while in an automobile, to walk with 'the portfolio' although without any realization. ... to eat in a good restaurant and other things? What is wrong? (203)

Chuvyakin forgets about all, about life, how he was born poor, and hungry, about the knowledge of prayer in the temple, about God Himself, when he discovers that his "purse" has been taken away.

Chuvyakin - an empty shallow shell of an individual who is lost within himself. Nikiforov's attack on the bureaucracy points to the fact that it was not only this man's fault but the fault of the bureaucratic Party system. Thus, it was an attack indirectly upon the Party.

Chuvyakin is shunned by all of his comrades. He visits Tsepilov and confides to him his great shame and sorrow. There is no "love lost between the two," although we feel that Tsepilov does possess humane feelings toward him.
Tsepilov points out that Chuvyakin walked around with 'portfolio', but there was no work attached.

... What is with you? Did you think that you would impress fools with it? That is to say, if I were more important, then no one would know what an idler I was!... You are not the only one like this, I only want to ask, how is it that all of you forget who you are and what it is you are to do? ... (204)

Through Tsepilov, Nikiforov is once again attacking the bureaucracy and its associated functionaries. Tsepilov goes on to say that Chuvyakin should go back to his village, work for the party, without a party ticket, and prove to himself and to the Party that he is an honest worthwhile individual.

... An honest fellow is not expelled from the Party. Once you know your origin and do not forget it, then you will always be in our (Party) line. As far as your Party ticket is concerned, what of it, they will return the ticket, when you have worked and proved yourself - they will return it. What more am I to say? Go! What I did not say, you realize yourself, you only have to think. (204)

Chuvyakin visits Inyakin. He realizes that it was he who wrote the letters to Tsepilov. Chuvyakin lunges at Inyakin and beats him.

Realizing that he will only find peace and self consolation in his village, Chuvyakin returns to Motiga, to his wife Veveya. But Veveya does not wait for him. They meet at their doorstep. He implores her to stay.
... to you I have come, entirely. Please stay Veveya, do not forget about me, where are you going? (182)

All of his words were full of sadness, hopelessness, - a completely broken individual, humbling and grovelling before his wife. But she only answers ...

- no, I too wish to see the light; I am stifled by this place, it is time for a rest, - and she turns to the right, and did not wish to look back. (183)

In contrast to Chuvyakin there is the portrayal of the bureaucrat Bad'in in Gladkov's "Cement". Here the bureaucrat is portrayed as a minor character and the contrast with the main figures who are more complicated is strongly marked. Thus Bad'in is depicted as a repellent 'bureaucrat, a pusher' (311) 'in work and a debauched libertine in his private life. But unlike Chuvyakin he is upheld by the purge committee because of his talents as an excellent Party administrator. In contrast to Bad'in there is the hero Gleb Chumalov, a Communist of moral decency, who turns on Bad'in in disgust.

The characterizations of Tsepilov Inyakin, and Chessosov are excellent descriptions of the Communist-Builders of the N.E.P. era. These men are Party members devoted to their work, but at the same time they display a common human element, they lack culture. They are the original builders of new Soviet industry.

The figure of Inyakin presents us with the picture of
negative party member. Here is a man who had all the makings of an able Communist. He brings about his own downfall through the embezzlement of the company's funds. The result is an extreme guilt ridden moral trial within himself.

Again we see the influence of Elena Vladimirova, with whom he was in love. He tells her of the woman he would like to marry ...

... the beard of Marx is reflected in the eyes of our communist women. I want a real woman; she must be all woman, that is, she must display an interest in me. (55)

Inyakin writes to his mother and from these letters we can piece his life together, his ambitions and his accomplishments. He thinks very highly of himself and hopes to rise within the Party bureaucracy.

Nikiforov presents Inyakin gradually "withering" within himself. His self destruction reaches its climax with the accusation of embezzling the monies for construction materials. He suspects everyone of trying to prove his guilt. His private life is unbearable and his mental stability hinges on paranoia. Guilt ridden he goes to Tsepilov. In the course of their discussion Tsepilov thinks ...

... Surprisingly this communist is hastily trying to convince everyone of his loyalty to the proletariat.
Inyakin states ... I am always ready, comrade Tsepilov, for you and for your plans of socialist reconstruction.

Inyakin is completely at the mercy of Tsepilov. He tries to prove to himself and to Tsepilov his great faith and devotion to the cause. But he is not convincing enough for the clever Tsepilov. He sees through all of this, but at the same time remaining his cool rational self and generally easing Inyakin out of his predicament without him realizing this. Tsepilov must again be commended for his humane outlook, his "fairness" when dealing with these people. Instead of completely demoralizing the man Tsepilov slowly and diplomatically "lets him off the hook".

... Mother dear! (writes Inyakin) ... I have finished my career. I am stricken with a deep sickness within my heart; at the present time they do not appreciate the great devotion to the duty and the feelings of my soul .... And I am going away, away by my own wishes, not on the triumph of my enemies, who would be able to say: "We dismissed Inyakin". (291)

This was Inyakin's way of telling his mother of his disgraceful removal from the party. He threw his party ticket away, looked around his office, and said:

... No, we will not go to Razian. (291)

Inyakin had been demoted and transferred to Razian to do 'independent work'. But the reader is left with the feeling that here was a valuable life wasted. A life that could
possibly have been spent in a brilliant career during the reconstruction. It is presumed that Inyakin committed suicide shortly thereafter.

Tsepilov is a representative of the Soviet bureaucracy. Within him we see a strong devotion toward the Party and its disciplinary actions. But his position in this novel is to act as a middle man, an individual that has not the negative personality of Inyakin, nor the flexible snake-like individuality of Chessosov. His bureaucratic position does not hinder him to any great extent in surveying the situation and expressing an honest opinion. He is an individual with a human and not an mechanical heart.

As far as the future of the socialist state, he says ...

... we have a long way, many rails have still to be laid.
Unity is what we must depend upon - we must have strength...(65)

Tsepilov excels as a builder of Socialism. He observes the entire situation with the knowledge of an engineer and the outlook of a philosopher. He informs Ramzaev about the discordance among the workers. Ramzaev feels there is a general uneasiness among the workers, a class rivalry. The lower echelons feel that the engineer-builders and the Party bureaucrats do not take their cause into consideration. Wages are low, conditions poor.

Tsepilov says that the workers must be shown that we
are not fools. The workers like to see us 'sweat' before them. But we shall not be afraid of our mistakes. They "will" work, we only have to show them "that we mean business". There is no class hatred among them. It is up to us, the builders of socialism, to guide and direct them. Ramzaev declares that the workers still listen to Chessosov after eight years. What is wrong? Undoubtedly Tsepilov feels that Ramzaev does not know and understand the workers.

...you cannot go to the workers preaching one thing - socialism - this is the way of the intelligentsia. (51).

You must have patience. This is why they listen to Chessosov. They have trouble carrying the burdens of everyday life, more so than you or I. You are perhaps consoled with a good book, but what will console a worker who has worked all of his life, lived in some kind of a dirty hovel and even now continues to live there? Come now think of some kind of consolation for him, so that he could walk with his head held high and a clear soul.

You are too ready to attack them, you must have patience. What will eventually happen?

... Later the workers will be convinced, that their masters led them to error, but nothing good will come out of this work. ... Only you comrade Ramzaev, do not rush, ... do not rush with accusations to the workers. You work, you carry out a steadfast surveillance for the workers' village. (151)
Tsepilov realizes the rational way to approach the great problem of utilizing and understanding the masses. He points this out to Ramzaev. 'Do not antagonize them'. (151)

Tsepilov is an understanding individual. He can guide a person, he can help him without his realizing it. In Chuvyakin's case he was stern in his reprimand; but at the same time he displayed a certain degree of leniency, a spirit of humanitarianism.

This was again evident in Ramzaev's trial. Tsepilov could have turned against Ramzaev but instead he pointed out to the Central Control Commission that Ramzaev had suffered enough due to his personal agony. He swayed the Commission in its judgment against Ramzaev.

Tsepilov was an individual who could see both sides of the situation, always surveying the facts and arriving at a rational solution that was compromising but at the same time accorded justice where it was due. It seems whatever the solution was, it was one in which he himself and the Party were made to look superior, in a humane way. He displayed the qualities of a "seasoned" diplomat at the same time upholding his socialist-communist philosophy.

The third member of "socialist constructors" was Chessosov - a man possessing a religio-philosophical outlook,
but at the same time retaining his Communist views. He is an individual who could exist under any circumstances, a flexible personality. In fact you could go as far as to classify him as a "snake-like" individual; if you press him in this or that direction, he will quickly change. Chessosov's main aim in life was to secure as comfortable a position as possible. A position that could afford him much "lea-way" in any direction, as long as it was profitable for him and he was not held responsible for any unaccounted for actions. His emotions blended themselves with this serpentile nature and his religio-philosophical digressions to produce a personality that was capable of adapting itself to any situation.

Chessosov can be compared to the philosopher Alfey, in Nikiforov's last novel, "The Mastercraftsmen". But Alfey was more of a "pure" philosopher than Chessosov. In comparative classification with Alfey, Chessosov would be an ordinal member of the masses, whereas Alfey would be a natural philosopher.

Chessosov's expressions on the state of the government, his religious views, and his thoughts on the people and life in the Soviet Union are a reflection on Nikiforov. In this manner Nikiforov was able to convey his own personal feelings through the instability of Chessosov's nature.
Chessosov was a man who drank to the 'brotherhood of fellow workers', and prophesied 'he who works - eats and dresses, but he who does not work - starves, and in his stomach there is only a great pellucidness'. (73) A man who sternly questions himself about accepting religion and searches his soul for faith.

- Can you Fadeey, endure to re-establish your faith?
- It is sinful, - I answer myself. - I cannot re-establish it. Possibly some kind of sincere hardship might exist within the real ... Fadeey Chessosov? (74)

Thus we have seen the three types of socialist constructors. Inyakin, the negative party member, Chessosov the philosophical snake-like individual, and Tsepilov, the stern but humanitarian Party bureaucrat.

The treatment of the love theme is an interesting topic in "U Fonarya" as compared with the Love theme in Gladkov's "Cement".

Nikiforov presents Elena Vladimirova as a champion of free love. Here is a bourgeoisie woman who lives with Chuvyakin only because of his social prestige and importance. She typifies a type of woman that is present in any era whether in a democracy or in communism.

Her moral views are shown as preferable to those of Party members who in the pretext of free love lead a loose
life. This is her only purpose in the novel.

In most of the works during N.E.P. it is usually the woman who becomes the adherent of the old morality. The N.E.P. period is often compared to the period of the civil war and it is suggested that the deplorable results of free love during the N.E.P. must partly be ascribed to the pernicious example of the bourgeois classes which appear to exert a bad influence. Former Red Army heroes are now leading a lazy and licentious life; in the vulgar reality of the N.E.P. they seem to forget the heroic days of the revolution. Chuvyakin and his relationship with Elena provide an excellent example in this novel.

In comparing Chuvyakin with the bureaucrat Bad'in, there is a distinct difference due to the "Freudian tendencies" of Gladkov. Bad'in is pictured as a drunkard and a licentious Party bureaucrat who forces himself upon the female revolutionary Polja, a deeply disappointed communist. She has become the victim of the 'sensual licentiousness' of Bad'in.

Unlike Nikiforov, Gladkov was more deeply influenced by Freud than by Marx. The underlying mood of "Cement" would be "Marxism with strong Freudian overtones."

... Gladkov saw the unbridled sexual instinct asserting itself in an endeavour to offset the effects of the revolution. The lust of the flesh translated man's attempt to make the loss of his ego, ... by indulging in a feast of the senses.
But sensual passion might also be transmitted into dynamic energy and thus lead to creative activity. Such a transmutation facilitated the process of dissolution of the personality and permitted the individual to become a small but integral part of the storm which raged about him. It is on this basis that the characters Dasha Chumalov, Glek's wife, and Bad'in were evolved.

Nikiforov's novel did not have the Freudian overtones of "Cement" but presented the analogous treatment of love and embourgeoisement.

The theme of bourgeois-proletarian love is exemplified by the former bourgeois Ramzaev who passes through a process of moral regeneration before he can win the love of the proletarian, Anna Galandina. An excellent picture is shown as the 'pioneers of a new sexual morality' are convinced that love and labour can be harmoniously combined. But can it?

Gladkov points out that the traditional family ties are broken. A loose connection between the two family partners count as the most appropriate form. Both husband and wife are so occupied with Party work that there is no question of a home life. Dasha thinks: 'my husband stands alone and I stand alone. ... We are communists in the first place (127). After a heavy day's work they meet in their room, they feel, that the thought of a personal happiness is 'worthless, ignominious and harmful to the cause' (296). Dasha even allows their child to die in a children's home, because Party work must
come first. Thus the picture of family life is woven by Gladkov and other proletarian writers during the N.E.P. Party life takes precedence over family life.

On the other hand, the embourgeoisement of Chuvyakin is equivalent to all kinds of fraudulent debauches 'in order to satisfy the exigencies of his beloved', 10 Elena. But the 'embourgeoisement' of Chuvyakin, the communist partner is not only due to the pernicious influence of his bourgeois love, but also due to the bourgeois leanings of himself. The possibility of losing his revolutionary ideal is within himself but he has not put a continuous struggle against his bad inclinations.

"U Fonarya" differs from "Cement". It pictures Ramzaev and Anna, as two party members, one an ardent Communist Worker, the other an intellectual "reborn" communist. Both are in love with each other. But again Party work comes first. There are few, if any, tender moments and these are usually very naively presented. The individuals usually divert their conversations from any emotional stimulation and discuss factory or Party plans. But Nikiforov does present the psychological emotional feelings of the individual. These are not stifled by Party ideas and principles but begin to reflect a character with personal feelings - with a heart.

"Cement" does not picture any real love, except poss-
ibly Motia and Savchuk. Here a family unit existed which thrived upon strong sexual love. Nikiforov does not present such a vivid coarse love between his characters. Gladkov's main characters are typical Five Year Plan individuals whose personal life is entirely subjected to the task of reconstruction, whether it be physical labour, or administrative work. Love does not necessarily lead to a complication in the lives of these characters but is rather a stimulus to better work.

Dasha, a free Soviet citizen, liberated from the vicious circle of being a captive of man's sensual passions sees Gleb as more of a comrade than as a husband. She has forced traits that make her appear as a machine and not as a woman. She has paid with her life for her part in the revolutionary activities and after her liberation has become accustomed to free sexual intercourse with other comrades.

Gleb could not accept this new way of life as he was still a 'slave of the old bourgeois morality'. But with concentrated Party work and industrialization, Gleb finds all his happiness in his work and all personal sorrows leave him.

Both Gleb and Dasha lead separate lives run by the Party. The reader feels that there is a great inadequacy lacking in both of them - "love".

On the other hand, Anna and Ramzaev leave much to be
desired. But still there remains the general feeling of a warm love and eventually the development of a personal sensual love. This is sensed by a few sketchy scenes in which a genuine warmth is felt by the reader and transmitted by the individuals to each other.

... why then did you do it? Because I love you, I love you, I love you... (235)

Nikiforov gives his characters faith in each other, something which is lacking in Gladkov's novel. A faith bound by the link of love.

Anna's devotion to Ramzaev is fully shown after the discovery of his identity when a full investigation is made by the Central Control Commission.

And you did not know who was hiding under the name of Denis Ramzaev? the Bolshevik Tsepilov asked Anna Golandina, Ramzaev's wife. (288).

No, I only know Ramzaev ... the honest Communist Ramzaev, - she added, after a few hesitations.

I want to know - said the prosecutor - how would you react, if decision rested on you alone? (288)

An avenue of escape opens before Anna she can either completely condemn her husband thereby freeing herself, with only her conscience to contend with, or she can refuse to give evidence against him.
I cannot accuse him, I cannot, she cries out with complete desperation and a few hysterical sobs. (289)

Nikiforov excels Gladkov in character and genuine human emotion portrayal. His main characters manage to have faith and love for each other, combined with a great hope and devotion to the Party and its cause. Whereas Gleb and Dasha do not possess personal emotions or feeling. They just live for the Party and its dictates, whether these are physical or administrative.

In conclusion, the general nature of this novel was anti-Party and not for the glorification of it as stated previously. It is evident that Nikiforov meant the novel to be an attack on the Party, its bureaucrats and the general conditions at that time. But he did succeed in "toeing" the Party line as far as describing industrialization programmes and introducing Party propaganda into the dialogue.

But the striking feature is his character presentation; the types he portrays were the forerunners of individuals introduced only after Stalin's death. These characters had "life" and were not "mechanized individuals" strictly adhering to Party doctrines.

The humanitarian element introduced also played an important role. Here was a new element, a new approach that completely threw the Party "off its guard". But the principle
of Party discipline was subordinated to humanitarianism and the Soviet critics hailed the Party for this.
Reference


4. Ibid 1, p. 3. - Preface - direct translation and quote. Further references will be noted in the text of this chapter. All quotations from the text are translated directly by the writer of this paper.

5. Ibid 4, p. 3.


8. A.M. Van Der Eng-Liedmeier - Soviet Literary Characters, (Amsterdam, 1959), p. 34.


10. Ibid 8, p. 40.
CHAPTER II
"The Woman"

In 1929 Nikiforov wrote the novel, "The Woman", (Zhenshchina). He was more cautious in this novel because of the severe admonition he received from the party due to his last novel "The Sparrow" ("Vorobey", 1928), in which he protested against the transformation of the Party into an exclusive caste of new exploiters.1 "Zhenshina" presents the role of the women in the Soviet system during the last stages of the N.E.P. and into the First Five Year Plan. Nikiforov goes on to show the general participation of these women in the construction of the Five Year Plan, their relationships with Party members, the Komsomol, the peasant-workers, and the non-party members. He points out the role of "specialists" in construction and raises the larger issue of the relationship between the old and new intelligentsia at this time. This question of the intelligentsia was a pressing problem during the Five Year Plan. The new semi-educated intelligentsia, composed of former workers and peasants, had to raise itself to the level of the old intelligentsia so that the Socialist state could not only "forge" ahead in construction but produce its own "Sov-intelligentsia".

The intelligentsia was regarded by Marx as a rather unstable group because of its position between classes. It was actually neither bourgeois nor proletarian; therefore
no one was surprised when it wobbled in its attitude towards the Revolution. At first, the government was forced to handle the intellectuals tactfully because they held a virtual monopoly of scientific and technical knowledge. As an old scientist remarked: "You cannot expropriate us.... All my wealth is here!" (striking his forehead). By 1931, however, the hope of a capitalist restoration or of another capitalist-socialist compromise (as during the N.E.P. period) was virtually dead; and the successes of the first years of the Five Year Plan caused the intelligentsia to rush 'to get on the band wagon'.

The fellow travellers were better fitted than the proletarian writers to handle, both artistically and realistically, the adjustment problems of the intelligentsia since they belonged to this category themselves. They had had personally to conform to the Soviet principles that the greatest growth of the individual occurs only through socialist participation and that individualism is a protest against the "status quo" in society. Leonov and Fedin were fellow travellers. Both chose to handle the problem of the intellectual in the realm of abstract science, and even in the laboratory we again find the class struggle going on between the old and the new intelligentsia.

Nikiforov took a different stand on this question. He
placed the new intelligentsia opposite the old and developed the thesis that it was almost imperative for the new semi-educated intelligentsia through study and contact, either social or constructive, with the old intelligentsia, to raise itself to the level of true intellectuals. The new group will form the "Sov-intelligentsia" and will recognize that the superiority of the old group was mainly a method of self-preservation. The new intelligentsia will eventually outnumber the old and a new state will be constructed, complete with its own intellectuals, striving for the ultimate good of Communism through Socialism.

The theme of the novel could be described as the participation of the intelligentsia with Party and Komsomol members in the building of Socialism. The novel depicts the friction that existed between the two groups, the frustrations that are prevalent in reconstructing a country along new lines, and the organization of workers in relation to the Party.

Nikiforov joins the ranks of the Five Year Plan Writers in describing the construction of a bridge and vivid descriptions of the meetings of the workers and Party members. But he differs from them in that he portrays distinct character types, contemporary individuals with feelings, emotional and psychological, and a human soul. He shows the staunch party member; the spineless Sharanov, who is "too" perfect an in-
dividual; the engineer intellectual Pokrovsky; the Komsomolka Seema Barobina; her brother Fedya, a member of the "new" generation; Bryakin, the old proletarian skilled labourer; Faika Pokrovsky, a member of the old intelligentsia regenerated as a builder of Socialism and emerging as a member of the new intellectual milieu; and Sofia Konstantinova (Sonichka), Pokrovsky's common-law wife whose sole purpose in life - is to be a "bedroom accessory" for some man. Thus Nikiforov draws the contrast between this woman who is a champion of free love and Faika Pokrovsky, an educated girl, who exchanges the cloak of the old for that of the new intelligentsia.

The general stress in literature at this time was the importance of man's participation in collective work; his personal experiences were entirely subjected to this social task. But again Nikiforov does not present his characters as participating to the utmost in their collective work. They participate but at the same time they retain their human qualities and express themselves according to their immediate feelings and not according to party dictate. Unlike the general works of the first period of Soviet literature, 1917-1929, there is a tendency to avoid tragic aspects; optimism prevails, the defeat of the worker is excluded. But this development is closely bound up with a change in the Party's attitude to literature; books were regarded as a propaganda means for the Five Year Plan activities. Authors were given definite
themes; the heroism of socialist construction and class struggles; the hero-of-labour; a definite type of individual must be described. RAPP was obliged to carry out this programme. But Voronskii's ideas had not lost their influence. He had stimulated the proletarian writers to more self criticism. Some of them, including Nikiforov, advocated a kind of psychological realism which was based on Marxian principles. But this programme did not tally with the Party's demands and was sharply attacked, in fact the psychological portrait of the new Soviet man was severely criticized. The theory of the portrayal of "living man" and his individual psychology was expressly condemned in Pravda, May 9, 1932.3

But Nikiforov continued to present his 'living man' with his individual psychology. "Zhenshchina" continues the character insight technique that was so prevalent in "Beside The Street Lamp". Faika's regeneration into a "Sov-intelligentsia" takes place with much emotional and psychological torment within herself. The idea of love plays an important role, but as so often in the Reconstruction Period works, the personal life of an individual is entirely subjected to the social task and love does not lead to a complication in his life, but is rather a stimulus to better work. The propaganda theme of the Party was instilled throughout these works. The conclusion should then be that active participation in collect-
ive work leads to the moral regeneration not only of the intellectual, but also of the working individual. This is what Nikiforov tries to show through Faika. Owing to the regeneration force of collective work in a construction project, she becomes a "Sov-intelligentsia", an old member reborn with a Marxian basis. But love is not squelched completely and this "Sov-intellectual with a Marxian base" continues to carry the torch for Sharanov.

Generally, the three parts of the novel can be discussed separately or collectively. Throughout we are presented with a variety of individuals so that a definite conclusion can be reached and each section concluded separately. Part one concerns itself with presenting Faika as an "old intelligentsia" member. She is doubtful about her philosophy and outlook on life; she cannot seem to find peace within herself and her relationship with Sofia only hinders this.

Part two is concerned with Bryakin a Party member and an engineer who represents the old skilled labourer, one who does not accept all that the Party dictates and questions its authority.

The third part concerns Faika's regenerative process and its completion. It presents all the characters from parts one and two and also brings the Party into the vogue.

The three parts can be labelled: Intelligentsia-
Proletarian, Proletarian, Intelligentsia. We can go further and propose the theory that part one is the Thesis, part two the Antithesis, and part three the Synthesis. Faika's "re-birth" can be looked upon as a Marxist sociological regeneration that has passed through the three necessary and successive stages to produce a new Societ intellectual, or it can be described in Hegelian principles. The latter point will be discussed later.

An analysis of Faika is necessary to understand the unhappiness with her previous way of life and her moral regeneration, and its effect upon her in her new role as a "Sov-intelligentsia". But it should be kept in mind that Faika was in her own way a woman who was the creator of a new way of life - a life that accorded equal rights and representation for the Soviet woman. For this reason alone it can be concluded that Faika was victorious. She had succeeded in overcoming the transition from one social milieu to another. In effect her outward social position did not change, but inwardly she was aware of her potential, she had a purpose in life, a position that not only gave her "social" satisfaction but also a place in the new society that was being built. A position within the echelons of the new "Sov-intelligentsia".

In comparison to her we have Sofia Konstantinova who was a woman whose purpose was to be a "decoration of life",...
one who believed in the philosophy of living life to its fullest and obtaining from it as much pleasure as possible, whether this pleasure was physical or spiritual. Sofia could be regarded as the champion of free love at this time. To her a woman should just be a "bed-companion" for a man, a decoration for his salon, completely feminine in her mannerisms, always submissive to his desires. Whereas Faika was victorious in the struggle for her ascendance to a better life, to obtain a position in a new class, to gain spiritual and philosophical rewards, Sofia was defeated. She belonged to a dead class, an individual that did not belong in the Socialist reconstruction. Sofia would not belong in any society, she just lived by her emotions and sensual instincts. Through Sofia and Pokrovsky, Nikiforov was able to ridicule the ridiculousness of the marriage laws and customs of the 1920's that existed in the Soviet Union. By western standards their union would be looked upon as a common-law marriage.

While Faika was completely regenerated and began a new life, Sofia slowly degenerated. She had fallen from being the "decoration of the old intelligentsia" to that of a common street walker, a gypsy dressed in 'yellow silk'. We see that she now attracts the new generation of men, like Fedya Barobinovich who seek their pleasure from the lower bourgeoisie type of women. This could be Nikiforov's way of explaining to the world that the Soviet woman has become so mechanical
in nature that the art of love can no longer hold any interest or pleasure for her. As mentioned before love did not lead to any complication in their lives but became a stimulus for greater work production rather than an element for personal satisfaction and pleasure. Nikiforov has portrayed Sofia as the antithesis of Faika and every other Soviet Woman; she is too sensual, too interested in the erotic pleasures of life. Life for Sofia is like a 'buffet - she takes what she wants'. But then a society cannot exist with stereotyped mechanical individuals, no matter how hard the system tries to convert everyone. There must be exceptions, there must be individuality, the sheep cannot all follow the same leader. Sofia is an outcast in this society because she is different, she is a "woman" and has strong faith in herself. There are too many Dasha Chumalovs in Soviet literature; and not enough disillusioned Polya Mekhovas, Elena Vladimirovas, or Sofia Konstantinovas.

Nikiforov points out the position of an older woman who was disappointed in the revolution Materina Semenova, Seema's mother, tells Faika of her life and through her Nikiforov expresses the lives of millions upon millions of mothers in the Soviet Union who lived through the Revolution. Their lives have been completely wasted. Materina says that she also would like to go outside, partake in the joys of life, see how others live.
... For twenty-five years I have tolerated through this suffering. I had great hopes for myself in my thoughts concerning the revolution. I thought that life for me would be spacious and plentiful. Look, take a look around - year after year, children were born, then, ah, what then. Yesterday poverty, tomorrow poverty, year in year out... But then I thought; let the others go, those who need to. I can manage, and here I sit and watch.

Faika listens to Materina and she is ashamed of her actions, of her love and of her life with Sofia. She feels a pang of remorse for Materina, but then she thinks to herself;

... Who knows this woman-... Maybe even now she has her thoughts about therevolution. The woman is smiling ... She is happy because her daughter, Seema, knows her own role and purpose in life. (46)

The regeneration of the character of Faika evolves through the three parts of the novel. In part one Faika is presented as a young girl of the old intelligentsia. Someone who is torn apart in life. She doesn't know which road to take in life.

... I am not able to decide which path to follow. That to which my own will is pushing me; the one that Sofia Konstantinova is pushing me toward; it does not tempt me; or the third - the path of Seema - it is unknown to me, but I wish to know this way of life, this path winds down to the depths, it is as though it were the path of the water-elf. (30).

The character of Sofia Konstantinova is introduced so that a vivid comparison of the two women can be made. Sofia
tries to "convert" Faika to her way of life, to become a woman. But Faika is too interested in her "bearded writers" and their philosophies. Faika reads and re-reads Marx, ponders his theories and wonders just what is her purpose in life. The inner conflict develops within her, what is she to do in life, how is she to go about it, is Sofia correct?

Faika is told by Sofia:

.... Listen to me! A woman must be smart, that is, she must often appear naive and also a little dumb - that is, she must judge by the circumstances at hand. Do you understand, Faika? I want to say that you cannot be outwardly brilliant, and that which you know, will be of necessity only for an examination, least of all for life .... (20)

Sofia represents the old class where a woman should just be "seen and not heard", so to speak. She is fighting an inner struggle with Faika, an old intelligentsia, who has the inclinations of becoming a "Sov-intelligentsia". Sofia is aware of this and sees Faika emerging as a complete Soviet woman, a woman who is outspoken in her own way, a woman who can and will compete against men in her new life, an individual who can "hold her own". Sofia is trying to save Faika from this, to remake her into her own image, into a woman.

.... in the life of the beautiful woman. - This is only if the woman prepares herself for bedroom pleasures - answers Faika. - Every woman ... prepares herself for this pleasure - asserts Sofia. -
All is remaining from hypocrisy. Did you not know that ugly women are smarter than pretty ones? Oh, this is very curious! Women are allotted their share. Think to yourself, she does not even have a tuft of hair on her head which would curl or fall poetically above her eyes. What is she to do? She would be ready to present the loving part of her body, often alluring and charming, but in her, all is vulgar and bad.

..... then with what is left of her strength, she climbs the ladder of knowledge, she reads about all the vulgarness of men, who do not recognize her, but are attracted to the empty-headed, but beautiful women. She bear malice, she becomes jealous, and jealousy makes her seek more wisdom, seek personal satisfaction. (20)

This picture that Sofia presents to Faika has an ironic twist to it. She is telling Faika indirectly what will happen to her if she continues to read and not partake in the "joys of life" and live life to the fullest. Faika's maid Ulyana, also tells her that she should be thinking of marriage, children, and not of solving problems and seeking the answers to life's eternal questions.

Faika tells Sofia that seeking and gaining personal satisfaction is a good thing. But Sofia argues that it is only good for that kind of a woman, a woman with whom men can talk, with whom they are able to agree or disagree; they will realize that she is better than they, that she is able to succeed at anything. They will come, but only to talk, to marvel and to admire you for your intelligence. But the prettier, more seductive woman will gain their love and physical
attractions.

Sofia tells Faika that she must:

... always know what she wants. Often it seems good to affix oneself to someone that you love, to walk with him to the end of the world... You often have regrets that you don't have a child. Do you not have these thoughts, and the most difficult - are they not alluring? This I am saying for your benefit Faika! (50)

Sofia is taking the place of a mother for Faika. She is informing her of the pleasures of life together with its disappointments. But at the same time she seems to be subtly undermining Faika in her way of thinking; she is remaking her. But Faika has the strength to realize what is happening; the courage of her convictions to follow her own path, in actuality, that of Seema, to forge ahead and prepare her own life. She begins to abhor Sofia and everything that she stands for. Faika realizes that Sofia had been carrying on illicitly with her father before her mother died. Now "Sonichik" had lost interest in Pokrovsky and is concentrating all her attention onto Faika in order to make her forget all her books and learning, to remodel this girl along her own lines.

Faika's affair with Fedya should only be mentioned in passing since it was her "first love". Faika realizes that Fedya did not really love her, but only wanted to seduce her to prove his virility. She honestly believed that she
loved him but Seema tells her that it was only in her imagination. Possibly this was true, but Faika has great difficulty in swallowing her pride and the idea that this was only a passing love affair. Her reference to Fedya throughout the novel shows us that she still retained a "soft spot" in her heart for him, even though he only tried to use her. But then again Faika seemed to encourage him and at the climax of their rendezvous she completely shatters him by recounting to him what his sister had said concerning their love, when she had been there earlier.

Faika's pride is deeply hurt and only when she swallows it, has she taken the first step toward her regeneration. Sofia's remark:

.... When you learn to love yourself, then you will love others. Only until then. (86)

But wounded pride takes much time to heal and Faika must find a diversion. She realizes that Seema's path was right. She joins the club and occupies herself with various activities.

Through Faika, Nikiforov is able to discuss the position of the woman in the Soviet Union. Faika compares a woman to a blade of grass:

.... In my heart live all the women of the world. At the first glance, there are many, but in the long run and if it is thought out rationally, the
number of women in the world is altogether very small. They are more abundant in our republic. Throughout the world are a curious lot. Our women - are like young blades of grass. They only arise from out of the ground, they as yet do not know - will the sun have pity on them, or will it, burn them to their core. They do not know what winds will tear them out by their roots, what storms will wash them away, what dew will engulf them. The woman makes a thousand mistakes, because there is not yet a school which will mold the woman into a human, and as yet the woman has not declared herself according to her merit. (73)

Thus Nikiforov presents the problem of the role of the woman in the Soviet Union. Where does she stand? What is her place? Through Faika and the other women members at the construction project we see their position. It is one of equality with men, the women do manual labour together with the men, they are just as fluent in Party principles and doctrine as the men are. A classic example of the new Soviet woman is Dasha Chumalov, ("Cement"), a woman who has not only been emancipated but also is a great industrial and bureaucratic builder. Faika is not this type of an individual. Her regeneration is completed by passing through a proletarian stage and consequently emerging as a new Sov-intellectual, whereas Dasha just became a member of the Party and aided in the industrial development of Socialism. Faika's training at the project led her to regeneration and eventual acceptance into the Komsomol. She learned first hand the technical processes that she studied at her school. She did not only learn technology but also the science of life - the new Soviet
way of life. Eventually she emerges as a victorious individual who has overcome a great transition and personal strife, emerging as a new Soviet intellectual.

Faika left Moscow and went to work on the bridge construction project. Here Nikiforov presents a gallery of individuals representing the different aspects of Soviet industrial, technological, and bureaucratic life. These individuals play an important role in bringing about Faika's regeneration; their influence upon her, either verbally or spiritually, separately or collectively open her eyes to the surrounding environment and mold her life into that of a new Soviet woman.

Faika's inner conflict is once again rekindled, this time between Party loyalty and personal devotion. When her father is accused of being a saboteur, her immediate feelings are devotion to family ties, but at the same time there is Party loyalty. Faika turns against her father completely because of his ideas and his illicit relationship with Seema. But the development of this extreme hatred of both Seema and Pokrovsky could be explained by the mere fact that Seema was gradually breaking the remaining family ties between Pokrovsky and Faika; she was having an affair with him, she was being loved, while Faika goes through an endless physical and psychological frustration trying to prove herself an able
Komsomol candidate and at the same time being completely frustrated in her love for Sharanov. Seema was being loved; she was wanted by someone, cared for, while Faika struggled within herself for the love of Sharanov, to prove herself an able recipient of his love. It was an endless struggle fought against the ever present biological forces and the compelling nature of Faika together with a slowly developing new outlook on life.

At this point Nikiforov introduces Bryakin, a supervisor and a representative of the trade unions. Bryakin represents the old skilled labourers who have joined the Party and have become successful. He is outspoken in his views concerning everything from the construction project to the Party. Nikiforov portrays him as a professional worker with his criticisms and conflict of the Party and its dictates. Through Bryakin, Nikiforov, is able not only to give a vivid picture of the relationship of the professional Party worker and the old intelligentsia - Pokrovsky, but also to show the strength of the trade unions and the degree of importance that they held at this time.

The theory that Nikiforov developed - that is - the relationship between the old and new intelligentsia during the Socialization of the country to produce a new class of Soviet intelligentsia is illustrated here. But Bryakin is too head-
strong an individual. He represents the Party and instead of fraternizing with Pokrovsky, he is in constant conflict with him; - a clash of personalities arises.

Through Bryakin Nikiforov is able to expound his views on women in general, on the nature of truth, and various other aspects that were of importance at this time. Nikiforov's views on Party dictate are strongly put forth through Bryakin in his meeting with the Party committee.

In a discussion with Klement'ev, Bryakin states that truth is presented as being white on Saturday and black on Sunday. In life there is a multitude of different words. All these words wish to express truth, but there was never any constant truth. 'There is not such a thing as truth. Yesterday you sought for truth, told the truth, but tomorrow you will lie.' He goes on to say that he has lived for fifty years and for these fifty years he has lived under someone's mastery.

.... and here to you has come anguish and oppression through truth. Now we have overthrown the masters, - now the truth is ours, and all will sing our truth. (105)

....Only you, my friends; you had inclinations toward truth... - Once God bless us, twice - God bless us - but if this is said once more then it is a blasphemy rather than a blessing. (106)

Nikiforov is able to attack "Soviet truth" and portray its "two facedness"; - white today, black tomorrow. The situation between Bryakin and Pokrovsky is intensified when
Bryakin realizes that the dimensions of the bridge are out. Pokrovsky refuses to take action in dismantling it and Bryakin threatens to quit. Nikiforov's thesis concerning the relationship between the two groups is not working out. Both are able men in their respective fields but they cannot seem to reach an understanding. Pokrovsky will not give in, even if he is wrong, this is his nature. - a stubborn man of the old intelligentsia, whereas Bryakin, representing the trade union, is trying to speed up the work and correct it. He sees the difficulties involved and is presented as the "engineer who has discovered the saboteur." This is a common theme in most of the works of the Five Year Plan.

But Bryakin is an individual with a mind of his own and feels that Pokrovsky is wrong in his outlook, whether it concerns the construction of the bridge or his personal life.

Pokrovsky sends for the commission from Moscow and for the First Engineer Sharanov; an able party technician, who is spineless and weak concerning personal involvement and no faith in himself for love matters.

Bryakin's views on women are strictly and coherently expressed. He feels that a woman must be considered with extreme understanding. She is the 'sap of life'.

.... We have many words for her, but for the insistence of actual intercourse - there is none. (137)
Bryakin believes in the woman for only one reason. He is again misrepresenting the party because of his "ironic" play of words. The party only looked upon love as a stimulus to better work. Bryakin does not imply this in his expression. Bryakin also believes in human emotions and feelings, as exemplified in his relationship with Solomina.

Another picture of the Soviet woman is presented to us by the engineer of the inspecting committee. His conservative nature is startled to see a working woman; he only sees 'a woman like a painted picture of life, (but life is dull and boring).' He himself cannot imagine a 'woman-machinist, a female lathe operator'. He cannot comprehend this idea of female - labour equality, that is to make the woman on a par with the vulgar physical hardships of life that are involved with manual labour.

.... God bless us, what will happen then? he cannot comprehend this ... (129).

In actuality the kind of woman that would suit him would be Sofia Konstantinova. The engineer is from the old intelligentsia, and as stated above, he cannot imagine what life would be with a woman-machinist. She is not a woman but a mechanical doll.

When Faika speaks abruptly to him, he turns to Pokrovsky and does not answer. We can well imagine that the
little round cheeked gentleman, with 'rose petal lips', curled up "inside" was repulsed by this "working woman" with blood dripping from her hand, who spoke out against him. "What was the world coming to with a woman like that?"

Nikiforov completed part one of his novel with Faika's growing repulsion of her father. She is so upset as to what happened between Seema and her father that she tries to commit suicide but Bryakin saves her. Faika's self pity has reached its climax. The completion of part one, the Thesis, closes the door on Faika's old intellectual and semi-proletarian life. Her complete regeneration - begins the Antithesis as Hegel wrote. Nikiforov presents part two as the proletarian episode of the novel, the development of Faika as a proletarian worker, a candidate for the Komsomol. But it also presents the complete degeneration of Fedya, the partial downfall of Seema, a vascillating individual who thought that she was following the path of Party righteousness but at the same time unable to find a niche for herself along its path.

The Proletarian episode of the novel deals with the planning of the Five Year program but in general it presents the period of reconstruction in the U.S.S.R. We are given a vivid description of the bridge construction and the influence of the trade unions on the Party. Once more, Nikiforov strays from the Party's literary path and describes his characters
as rebelling against party dictates and develops his "psychological individual".

Whereas part one dealt with Faika and her inner struggle, this part is related by Bryakin and presents the complete development of his personality. Together with this development, Nikiforov presents a gallery of individuals who are typical Five Year Plan workers. He again shows the struggle between the intelligentsia and the new Soviet intellectual, the avid Party member Solomina, and the vacillating Komsomolka Seema.

Through Bryakin, Nikiforov is able to attack the party and its policies. The question of professional trade unions versus the Party organs arises. Throughout his novels Nikiforov emphasizes the problem of trade unions and the important roles that they played during the twenties. These unions wielded a tremendous influence over the country and one could go as far as to say that the Party was almost subordinate to them. Everyone tried to become a member, a professional worker. The Party was just an instrument in the hands of the Trade Unions, whereas today these professional Unions are weapons of the Party itself. During the 1920's the position of the unions was such that one could not even enter into a University without belonging to a union. Nikiforov shows the position and strength of these professional unions
and criticizes the defeat of the Soviet system together with
the Party bureaucracy.

Another problem presented by Nikiforov is the use of
the "old specialists" as compared to the professional workers.
Pokrovsky is an intellectual who cannot enter very deeply into
Party matters. In fact, he doesn't even try. He is an engin­
eer who is collaborating with the higher party officials in
overseeing the construction project. He is more interested in
his relationship with Seema than with the fulfillment of the
project. He can be compared to Ramzaev, a "has-been", who was
"regenerated into the realm of socialism". Ramzaev is pre­
sented as a former nobleman who completely adapted himself to
the Soviet influence; an energetic individual devoted to the
Party and its cause - the reconstruction of the country along
Socialist principles. He is an individual with a back-bone,
one might almost accuse him of being a careerist. Comparing
Pokrovsky with this man we see that the former is not inter­
ested in bettering himself, in regenerating his philosophy
and placing his intellect before the Party to aid in the
reconstruction. He is not Gladkov's technologist Kleist, a
man opposed to the industrialization, but upon forcing him to
use his talents, he is personally rewarded through the succ­
ess of the reconstruction of the Cement factory, and in the
end is made a hero of labour. Kleist went through an in­
dustrial - technological regeneration while Pokrovsky is con-
tent to serve the Party only to "feather" his nest and retain his former way of life. He does not have the initiative nor the personal incentive to participate in the Party bureaucracy. He is an old "specialist" content with collaborating with the Party officials. But as Nikiforov points out, these men were quickly vanishing from their positions and were replaced with alert Party technologist-intellectuals who were interested only in the Party, its cause and its aid in the reconstruction programme.

Bryakin is an old skilled labourer, a trade union member, but an individual who has the interest of the professional worker at heart. Nikiforov presents a realistic picture of the workers and the constructive situations. He draws Bryakin, not as a hero of the industrialization programme but as a proletarian who is not completely sold on the Party and its dictates, nor does he agree with the old specialists or the intelligentsia. Bryakin could be classed as an individual who has matured without much external pressure being applied on him. Even if such a force were present, he would probably scrutinize the situation according to his own personal merit and not to the whims and nature of the Party. But he himself feels that he has made a mistake in life.

... Possibly, here is where I made my mistake, and I should not judge a person only by his face value, but
should look deeper. That is Faika, this is what I cannot say. (190).

Bryakin feels that he really does not know Faika, but only saw her for what he wanted her to be. He could not understand how and why Sofia was connected in her life. But on the whole, Bryakin is an honest individual. He presents a true appraisal of the situation. He is human enough to understand and feel love. He himself is in love with Faika, but would never show this to anyone, because he realizes that Faika is in love with Sharanov and he with her. Although Sharanov does not want to admit this to himself.

Bryakin says that he has doubts concerning the path of proletarianism. Great obstacles must yet be overcome and an abundant quantity of materials must be provided in order that Socialism must be built quicker. He says that his disillusionment in people stems from the fact that they do not have faith in the true ideologies, but place a greater respect on the "ten rouble piece". Their ideologies are eventually distorted and completely replaced by fallacies. He states ...

... How many times did I tempt Faika Pokrovsky on mental examinations, and not once was I able to detect a note of falseness about her. And then I was happy that these people aid us in our selection. Faika Pokrovsky imparted to him, among other things, the central resistance of the bridge - as if it were weakening, indicating the poor design of her father. ... I wanted to ask and did not know anything and
Faika concealed it, and no one knew about it not even Antonina. (151)

Bryakin was able to trust Faika while at the same time he felt that the reconstruction processes would take time and possibly not be completed. But with the aid of people like Faika his faith was renewed.

Through Sharanov, Bryakin's character is brought out to its fullest. Bryakin's love for Faika has caused uneasy moments within himself. Sharanov's lack of emotional realization only tends to frustrate Bryakin and this produces ill feelings toward Sharanov. Bryakin asks himself:

... can professionalism in the manner of the revolution exist together with a woman lacking a prejudice toward social actions and without a diversion from this action?

Here he is thinking of Sharanov and Faika because he feels that both of them are not suited for each other. Sharanov is a party technician-bureaucrat to the core. He lacks emotional feelings; nothing matters to him except the Party's cause. Whereas Faika is without prejudices and is striving to become a party member. Emotionally speaking Faika and Sharanov are the antithesis of each other. Faika - a noble, energetic, determined individual, Sharanov - a spineless party technician.

As mentioned before Nikiforov is able to attack the
party and present the professional unions through the character of Bryakin. Nikiforov presents the shortcomings of the party and of its technologists and bureaucrats through Bryakin's and Serdobova's discussion prior to the meeting.

The grey train "C" will be the witness from my side, tovarishch Serdobova, (said Bryakin). I don't need anymore witnesses. Your production programme has burst asunder, your good-for-nothings smoked up your production programme. ... On this reason we will have a discussion at the extra meeting of the party productioners answers Serdobva. - It is our responsibility ours to discuss.

... Very good, tovarishch Serdobova, - says Bryakin, agreeing with her words. - Let it be only your responsibility, but I am not talking about that; how can you call an extra meeting, if there will soon be a general meeting?

The general meeting can wait, ... We are communists, we must prepare beforehand. Is that not correct, tovarishch Bryakin?

Yes ... but you know, tovarishch Serdobova, the consideration, that the working masses before their dictatorship, are not going to put up with foolishness, even though they themselves are fools and a party ticket in all of their pockets. (196)

Bryakin's speech illustrates the degree of freedom of speech that existed in the Soviet Union during the late twenties. It also illustrates the dominating position of the trade unions over the Party official. The official was completely subordinate to the trade unions. Serdobova was shocked at Bryakin's words. He himself was appalled at what was said and quickly realized that Serdobova must be put at ease, lest he be accused of counter-revolutionary activity. He felt
that she would call in the 'Zavkom'. He would explain to them
that he did not say anything that would offend the Party or its
officials. Suddenly Serdobova laughs.

Thats enough ridiculousness, Makvech! So I said
foolishness, and I confess it publicly.
... I will call the meeting at once.
... I, so to speak, rarely am the type to confess
my own mistakes and take criticism without insult,
it is actually like medicine. (196)

Nikiforov has succeeded in "tripping up" a Party
bureaucrat and showing the shortcomings of the Party together
with the underhand tactics employed by these bureaucrats.

But Bryakin begins to weaken and back down from his
original statements. Again he confuses the issue by saying

I said what I did, tovarishch Serdobova, from the
sharp attack of your words, that is that the meeting,
so to say, can wait, then I thought about it, and I
turned my words around. (197)
Here Bryakin is probably trying to trick her because
he thinks to himself:
If you agree with me, then I will find disagreement
with you. (197)

Serdobova is completely confused by Bryakin's
statements concerning his agreement with her original point
of view.

... That is let the meeting wait, that will be better.
To the masses a pleasing beginning should always turn
away the stern faces, and that no pain and least of all
no fear should appear on their faces. With the masses,
tovarishch Serdobova, one must talk and show oneself
to them, but the public will turn against itself ...
and human unconsciousness will develop. (198)

By this time Bryakin has himself and Serdobova so com-
pletely confused that he does not know himself what he is talk-
ing about.

Possibly Nikiforov wanted to point out the manner in
which the bureaucrats can be swayed so easily and contradict not
only themselves but to be contradicted by others and not
realize it.

In comparison to Bryakin, Nikiforov presented Sharanov
as a "positive" member of the party. He is not drawn as a
schematic nor as a human individual. Sharanov is "too" per-
fect a man to be real. His life has been devoted to Party
work, he has not had time for anything other than his tech-
nological work. Subconsciously his love for Faika is over-
whelming but he is too stubborn to admit this to himself.

Bryakin states:

... Here lives an individual. He jumps mountains as
if they were ant hills. All the small and great
mountains he steps over, his legs are not entangled,
but suddenly in one hour, not too badly, nor not too
good, he stumbled into a canal and stopped. (153)

Bryakin goes on to say that he is sorry for Sharanov;
he is an individual of great value, he cannot forget himself,
and he cannot divert himself in love affairs, 'if behind him
there is an iron road which must be lifted to the heights.' (176)

The man is completely devoted to his work, but at the same time he is a spineless individual concerning personal matters. He cannot conduct himself accordingly. Nikiforov presents him as the "perfect party member, incapable of any self-expression" - a mechanical individual. Bryakin tells Sharanov.

Break it Nikita, to the devils' mother with it, break the partition within yourself. Beyond this partition you have a bookish person who is sitting and gnawing within you. Throw out this bookish intellectual and let in all the life giving proletariat - it will be better for you. And then Faika will come, and you will embrace her with all your plainness. (194)

But Sharanov does not want to "relax" or else he is afraid to. The man has been too mechanical too long and has lost his touch with reality and simple human emotions.

... because he sees production in all its awareness, with business like eyes, and you cannot hide anything from him .... (203)

The struggle between Faika and her father reaches its climax during this chapter. The hatred for her intelligentsia father grows within her to such a degree that she tries to murder him at the beginning. We have the inner struggle of an individual who has not as yet completely "proletarianized" but is repulsed by the actions of the old intelligentsia as a whole. She projects herself even more toward the socialist point of
view, assimilating the industrialization of the country while at the same time retaining much of the old intellectual features. Faika can be compared to the growth of industrialization in Russia. As the country evolves toward socialism, so does Faika; She also must start from a new foundation, she must rebuild herself spiritually, morally, and intellectually. She has the fundamental basis for this development and only needs guidance. This is given to her, to a degree, by Solomina, her friend and a staunch Party member, and by Bryakin. But she only gains her knowledge through experience. It is surprising how quickly she becomes of a proletarian nature when her self pity and pride have vanished.

Faika realizes that Sharanov loves her and makes the first move but again Sharanov remains immovable, a staunch, solid, cold individual, who wants love but doesn't know how to go about pursuing it.

Faika's admiration for Sharanov gradually grows until her inner psychological conflict almost reaches a breaking point. Sharanov also loves Faika. He only confesses this when Bryakin forces him to expose his weakness of heart and points out his complete lack of expressive emotions.

Bryakin's position is that of a middle man between Faika and Sharanov; an individual who realizes the situation but continues to love Faika secretly. He is aware of Sharanov's love for
Faika and this love is more powerful than his can ever hope to be - so he tells Faika.

Faika's regenerative process is now complete. She has become a proletarian member, a member of the professional unions, and a candidate for the Komsomol. Bryakin notices her popularity with the workers, not only at the project, but at the meeting, and at the recreational center. Faika is quickly asserting herself into the role of a new Soviet woman, a leader in her own right a builder of the Socialist reconstruction.

A comparison can now be made of Faika, Seema, and Fedya. Faika, the old intellectual who has regenerated into a new member of the Sov-intelligentsia, a potential Soviet leader. Fedya is a member of the new class of individuals the lower bourgeoisie. As quickly as Faika became a "new" individual, Fedya degenerated. Born of a proletarian family, Fedya had all the possibilities of rising within its ranks, but instead he fell lower and lower, and had to look to the lower bourgeoisie for his sensual fulfillment and stimulation. Sofia Konstantinova is dragging him down into complete degeneracy with her. It seems that he now only lives for the sensual pleasures of life.

The third member of the triad is Seema. Ostensibly she appears as an able-bodied Komsomolka. An individual with
a purpose in life, according to Faika. But as the novel wears on Seema's character takes on an unstable nature and she eventually becomes a vascillating individual unable to find herself and her purpose in life. Her moral instability is shown in her relationship with Pokrovsky. She is completely the antithesis of the supreme Soviet woman, the high ideal she set out to attain in her early life. She can now be classified as an individual somewhere between Faika and Fedya. Vascillating from side to side trying to get the best out of two lives and not succeeding anywhere.

With the conclusion of the second part we now can see why the Hegelian term "Antithesis" was referred to in this chapter. During Faika's complete regeneration Nikiforov presented a proletarian point of view. Not only were all of his characters and subject matter proletarian in nature, but compared with the first part, this episode was its Antithesis. The situations, the individuals, the problems presented - everything was formulated in this manner; to present the picture of a complete and encompassing proletarianization while contrasting it with a few of the old intellectuals and the vascillating individuals of the new generation.

The development of the cause and the effect - the synthesis - can best be understood in the third part, - the Intelligentsia episode. The new "Sov-intelligentsia" is rep-
resented in Faika, an individual who has become a staunch party member. She herself is slowly becoming a mechanized individual, but at the same time she realizes what is happening.

Nikiforov presents the proletarian individuals from part two as the new Soviet people. They display human emotional characteristics to a much greater degree than they previously did. The only individual who is out of place is Faika - a Communist - dedicated to her work. But then life becomes drab and lonely. The point that Nikiforov is making is an old one. It is fine to assimilate a philosophy and a way of life but one must have mutual love and affection in it also. The human being thrives on this. The women answered the call of the Party toward the restoration and consolidation of socialist industry. They gave a new upsurge in labour productivity and in their creative initiative, but at the same they had to expect to lose something, everything cannot be gained. The destruction of all traces of inequality of women and their transformation into active builders of the new society caused them to forfeit their feminine qualities and in some instances, their respect among the men. Nikiforov points out that the new Soviet woman should revert back to being a woman and not a link on a "production chain". Consequently in this chapter he presents the feminine side of his proletarian technicians, the same technicians who were "able-bodied
builders" of Socialism and leaders of the new class.

Serdobova is presented as a married woman who leads a life of semi-separation. She only sees her husband occasionally, but then this leads to a better marriage, as she points out. At the same time Nikiforov portrays her as truly feminine in nature and not the hard cold technician that she was. Solomina was another. At the construction project she was almost masculine in her habits and conduct. Now Faika is shocked to see ... Solomina, a woman - an ordinary woman with copious breasts. (243) A woman who has made a transformation and again became a woman - she said this herself. ... she lived through it all. (226)

Faika realizes her loneliness but is afraid to tell anyone about it. She feels that her life is empty, something is lacking. Bryakin probably senses her loneliness and he compares life to a small stone, cold, hard, and both are very much alone.

A cause has been put forward and now an effect must take place. Nikiforov presents the effect of loneliness to such a degree that the reader cannot help but imbibe some of the internal conflicts that must have been pouring through Faika's mind. Not only Bryakin's statements but Sofia's letter to Faika produce the utmost effect of sheer isolation. At this climactic point Sharanov appears. Nikiforov implies
that Sharanov has heeded Bryakin's words and a complete regeneration has occurred. Sharanov has now become a member of the Proletariat and appeals to Faika with an open heart. Faika has not only overcome her initial hurdle of casting aside the life of an intelligentsia and assuming the proletariat character and developing into an ardent Communist, but at the same time she has matured in and through love, although she does not realize this. As Sofia told her when she was still a young girl ... when you learn to love yourself, then and only then will you love others. (86) Faika has learned to love herself and through this love she had matured into an individual that knows no boundaries as far as love is concerned for Sharanov. A strong spiritual regeneration, together with a moral and class regeneration has taken place within Faika.

Nikiforov concludes the novel with a testimonial from Sôfia Konstantinova. She states that she is going through a self moralizing process. She asks herself ... What do I want out of life? ... (245) and she cannot answer because she does not know herself. Faïka has found the right life,

... I knocked ... you did the right thing Favsta, 
- you did not allow a common individual into your new life. (245)

Sofia goes on to state that she does not have a truth, a philosophy of truth that she can live and set her standards
... you have some sort of truth, but I have only a truth today - tomorrow it is not a truth. For what truth must you kill an individual? ... I am dying from the torment of shame toward you, with the knowledge that I cannot be as you are. (245)

Sofia is slowly dying within herself, an agonizing self reproaching death. She warns Faika of the bitter loneliness of the world, of the fear that is in one's heart.

...I am quickly searching for consolation,
... and before the end, when there is nothing left, it seems that you want consolation. (264)

Like Bryakin, Sofia compares life to a stone at the edge of the sea.

... And here will I lay, on the shore of the sea, like a great rock, open to the waves and the sun. Centuries will pass, thousands, millions of centuries'. How many people will I see and hear? With what kind of love, with what desires and sufferings? (246)

Nikiforov concludes his novel leaving the reader with a bitter taste. Why should life be so harsh? And was it to Sofia? It is true that she did not belong to this society, but at the same time the world is full of Sofias in each and every society, whether democratic or socialist. It is wrong to say that Sofia did not belong, she did, just as Faika belonged and Solomina and Seema. They are the various individuals that make up the society - it cannot be all Faikas and Dashas, but must be interspersed with Seemas, Elenas, and
In conclusion, the main themes brought out by this novel were important in 1929. Nikiforov presented the various problems from a critical and non-critical point of view. He discussed these problems often as a subtle attack upon the party, pointing out its shortcomings, or as a direct attack upon Party principle. This latter point is best exemplified from the party literary principles. Here was a novel that was in keeping with the reconstruction plans, but at the same time it presented "living psychologically emotional individuals". People that were the representatives of the educated milieu and not stereotyped pre "pyatiiletnye" caricatures.

The most important point of the novel was the role of the trade union and its great impact upon the Party during the reconstruction. Nikiforov draws this problem very clearly to the readers' attention through Bryakin. He is made superior to the Party official Sharanov; enabling Nikiforov to show that the Party was a tool of the trade unions and their attitude toward the Party.
References


4. Georgii K. Nikiforov, *The Woman*, (Moscow, 1929), p. 45. All further references from this novel will be noted in the text of this chapter. All quotations from the text are translated directly by the writer of this paper.
Chapter III
"Into the Wind"

Upon publication of "Into the Wind" in 1931, Nikiforov was taken to task by the Party for 'underestimating the Kulak opposition'. Once again Nikiforov paid for being faithful in his representation of the truth concerning collectivization and the Kulak question.

In 1927 and 1928 the Soviet Government had to break the peasant opposition within the villages because of the stubborn resistance of the peasants who provided the food for the army and the city proletariat. A method was devised to neutralize the power of the whole peasant class by dividing the village population into separate categories and setting one group against the other. The village inhabitants were classified in three groups, the Kulaki (rich peasants), the Seredniaki, (Middle peasants) and the poor peasants Bedniaki, those who possessed no cattle or stores of grain. The Bolsheviks then delegated authority in village affairs to the poor who were empowered to seize any surplus grain or cattle from the richer peasants. By these measures the Bolsheviks succeeded effectively in planting in the "class warfare" of communism in the villages.

The slogan of "loot the looters" with which rich and
poor peasant alike had justified the seizure of land from the large landowners was now turned against many of those who had at first profited by it. The committees of the poor worked with a will and within a short time had brought about a serious disorganization in agriculture and great hardships for all classes. For the Bolsheviks, however, this did accomplish one purpose. The revolutionary struggle which had thus been transported to the very heart of the village community completely absorbed the powers of the whole peasant class, and the government was free to proceed with other plans.

From the economic point of view the "dekulakization" ordered by the government seemed to be an act of cruel madness. The kulaks were the most efficient group among the whole peasant class. To knock out this mainstay of Russian agriculture seemed the certain way to bring the whole structure down in ruins. The kulaks were eliminated before the collectives were strong enough to support the whole national weight. As a result agriculture was plunged once more into chaos, and as production slumped to new lows the threat of starvation again hung over the whole country.

Nikiforov portrayed the peasant question with an alarming amount of truth and did not devote it to the agricultural phase of the First Five Year Plan. The theme presented more ideological pitfalls for the novelist than he had counted on, but on the whole the representation of the times is pre-
sented from a completely different point of view.

Zavalishin points out that Nikiforov saw no
difference of kind between the kulaks, the seredniaki, and the bedniaki. He takes the stand that the Russian Revolution split the peasantry into two groups: 'those who continued to till the soil, and those who, carrying Party cards as a reward for their services during the Civil War were given posts in the Soviet government.' Nikiforov like Leonov in "The Badgers," presented collectivization as a struggle between the peasants themselves, that is, the 'conservatives', (composed of the three peasant groups) who remained on the land and tilled it as before, prior to the revolution, and the 'progressives', those peasants who abandoned the land to participate in the state administration as bureaucrats or technicians. Consequently the struggle within a class of people, the 'fratricidal strife' did not bear any relation to the class struggle as described by Marx.

The intra-class struggle, according to Zavalishin, undermined the nations' strength because of the fratricidal contention for power and existence. If Nikiforov's thesis was correct then the government was free to step in and proceed with their own plans. But the victors would still be the peasantry, not the bedniaki nor the seredniaki, but a mixture of the three groups.
The value of this book is greatly impaired because Nikiforov developed the thesis of "Into the Wind" frequently by mere hints. Often the meaning must be read between the lines.

"Into the Wind" may be compared with Sholokhov's "Virgin Soil Upturned" only insofar as it presents the effort to collectivize the peasant masses and their struggle against any collectivization. Sholokhov's novel was devoted to the agricultural phase of the Plan, but it is easily the more distinguished artistically. Sholokhov treats the Kulak, seredniak, and bedniak question from a different point of view than does Nikiforov.

According to Stalin, the Kulaks, the wealthiest stratum, were the exploiters and had to be liquidated as a class. The exploited semi-proletarians, the bedniaki would flock to the cause of collectivization. The greatest task was to win over the seredniaki, the majority, whom Stalin placed 'at the crossroads between capitalism and socialism'. He felt that the seredniaki emulated the kulak while he exploited them. Stalin felt that collective farming was needed to secure a technical base for agriculture similar to that of industry.

It is on the above note that Sholokhov wrote his novel. Sholokhov's contribution to winning the struggle for agricultural collectivization can be attributed to the harsh realities
of the situations that he portrayed. He did not lacquer life in the Soviet Union during this time. He did not subordinate his literary technique for the propagandist but presented the actual physical struggle that was prevalent in the Cossack village of Gremachy Log where a collective farm was being set up.

Nikiforov drew Russia as it really was during the period of social upheaval. The conflicts presented are between the abandonment of old Russia and the instigation of collectivization and industrialization; the complete destruction of the Kulaks as a class and the eventual semi-enforcement of the seredniaki and bedniaki to embrace agricultural collectivization. Nikiforov also presented the "city-village" question in which he showed the building of the "sovkhoz" and its dependence upon the "zavod Stohod" for industrial and economic aid in establishing collectivization in the rural areas. In turn the city was dependent upon the collective farms for its agrarian necessities.

As before, Nikiforov presented a variety of individuals who were expressive of the individual types prevalent at this time. The "rags to Party riches" story of the bureaucrat-technician Daniela Ossinin; the agronom-technician Victor Suhorukov; the Komsomolka Raissa Hvorostinina, the third member of the love-triad; the cattle herder Serafeema; the old Party director Borodin; the engineer Vetlugin; the Kulaks Kukuev
and Philip Suhorukov, and an excellent cross sectional representation of the different strata of peasants.

Nikiforov developed "Vstrechnii Vet''er" in comparison to a wind storm. Gradually the wind develops from an uneasy breeze into a violent hurricane. Finally "all hell breaks loose" and a howling gale sweeps across the pages. The reader feels the wind whistling around and through each letter, each word. Through the wind, Nikiforov had succeeded in imparting to the reader not only the physical struggle but also the political and social dissatisfactions that were prevalent. The main point that he was expressing was the complete rejection by the kulaks of the Soviet principles of collectivization and industrialization. The rebellion against anything and everything that was socialist in nature. This was prevalent not only among the peasants but also throughout Russia.

... Oh I know what you are talking about Daniela! Twenty years I have studied this region; I know the 'Muzhik, I know the sap of the land, I know the sky; I have lived through the movements of the storm clouds, I have felt the strength of the on-coming wind.

The on-coming wind? ... What do you want to say, Victor? The on-coming wind is not only in the fields, above all, it is less in the fields. Do you know of this? ... The Kulak element...5

Through Suhorukov, Nikiforov also presented the question of the intelligentsia. Ossinin implies that the intelligentsia would not be able to withstand the strength of this

* my own underlining - S.R.
'on-coming wind'. But Suhorukov said:

... I did not realize you thought that, that some intelligentsia who doubted, whined, and complained at the judgement had long ago died? ... The 'intelligentik' wed... - on the other hand the intelligentsia is left, the authentic revolutionary intelligentsia, - that which trained the proletariat strife, inspired it, reveals before it, the manner of its enemies. This intelligentsia, Daniela, is not afraid of any on-coming wind. (236)

Nikiforov brought forward the city-village problems. The novel was written in two main parts. The first dealing with the building of the sovkhoz 'Krasnopolje' in the village and the difficulties encountered with the peasants, the kulaks in general; and the second part, with the operation of the factory 'Stohod' in the city. Nikiforov showed how the village depended upon the city for its industrial products from the factories. Without equipment to construct these sovkhozes and produce agricultural implements, the collectivization programme would not function. In turn, the sovkhozes would supply the cities with agricultural and dairy products. Thus the system would be an inter-dependent one, each relying on the other.

The other point that Nikiforov emphasized was the cohesion of cities and villages into one large industrial and agricultural area. Daniela and Victor Suhorukov discussed this point. Victor points out that a certain 'Central Black Soil' area must be concentrated on,
... encompassing Voronezh, Tamkov, Penza. ... one end at Stalingrad, the other at Samar. The Volga forms the end of the other side. - Region one! ... From here we will start an attacking movement, first of all we will strengthen our position. We will electrificate macademize, cultivate, industrialize. ... In one word, here will lie the heart, which will supply the nourishing power for the country. Here the best factories and machines will be built, the Central Committee will give the best strength here ... (235)

Another factor concerning this question was the adaptation of all people either into sovkhoz or kolhoz workers and the abolition of peasantry as a class.

... There is no peasantry! This must be changed. There are only sovkhoz and kolhoz workers - the most important workers, the ones which we know at the factories, at the mills, at the railroads...

(79)

Victor Suhorukov mentions both of these points of view to Raissa.

... I placed the beginning of the peasant movement to the kolhozes in our district. I hold this point of view, that peasantry as a class must be abolished, otherwise, we will not surmount private ownership, all our governmental planning will remain on paper. ... Millions of industrial workers must in reality fuse with millions of agricultural workers ... (154)

With the abolishment of the peasantry and only an industrial and agricultural group remaining, a more unified stratum of individuals will be formed, thereby giving more unified strength in building the Socialist state. If the two groups are formed then Suhorukov's plans concerning
general industrialization and agricultural development would be realized.

Therefore Nikiforov's idea of the city-village can be explained as a general economic and social co-operative fusion of both in order that they can function hand in glove with each other to establish the Soviet State.

The second major issue discussed by Nikiforov was the peasantry question. He tried to present both sides of the picture. The Party officials advocated complete abolition of the peasants as a class and not as individual groups. Nikiforov presented the peasants as a force against Socialism, not as a unified force, but one which was torn between collectivization and private ownership. The peasantry rebelled against any kind of reform or enforcement toward collectivization. A bitter resentment arose when they were subjected to join the sovkhoz. Nikiforov did not present the peasantry as being composed of three separate groups but the implication was that the Kulaks in general must be dispossessed, especially when they took matters into their own hands and burned the haystacks on the collective farm.

The kulaks were the forcing power behind the masses because they had the most to lose. They realized that the Communist troops were moving about the countryside burning the homes and confiscating their property.
The attitude of the peasants to the sovkhoz was one of complete ignorance. They felt that they were being cheated and at the same time could not see the benefits that would enable them to live a better life.

- The government has its own plans concerning the development of the land, the peasant and the kulak their own ...
- Then it will be our death Victor Stepanovich.
- Then you will have a full life, tovarishch Djinin.
  I don't know if you understand me or not, only have faith in me; if all the land will be cultivated, then you will have a prosperous full life. (50)

But the peasants were always complaining. The government eventually confiscated their land and there was nothing left for them to do but to join the sovkhoz. Nikiforov presents a vivid and colourful description of the peasantry throughout the entire novel.

Daniela Ossinin can best be described as the "rags to Party riches" individual. He rose from nothing to a Party bureaucrat. He can be compared with Suhorukov only by the fact that he ascended the social scale and had reached Suhorukov's position on the industrial level, rather than the agrarian. But as far as reaching Suhorukov's intellectual level Ossinin was much inferior. As an industrialist and Party bureaucrat he was superior to Suhorukov. He was not the ideologist that Suhorukov was, but a more practical person. Ossinin was a faithful party member advocating the construction of the Soviet state through collect-
ivism and industrialization.

As a child Ossinin wanted to have millions. He eventually reached that goal...

- I now have a million, ... and not only millions, but hundreds of millions. ... We now have hundreds of millions. - Have you been to the factory? Have you seen it? It is only an insignificant part. (199)

Ossinin was one of the stereotypsed Soviet literary heroes. He had risen from the proletariat, has spent time in jail, and in general has reached the top of the Soviet bureaucracy the hard way. His career could almost be compared with that of a Wall Street tycoon. An individual who still retained a bit of the past, enough so as not to forget the trials and tribulations, the hardships that made him the man he is.

At party meetings he was an able speaker, always professing Socialism, Collectivism and Industrialism. He was popular with the workers and never once forgot that he worked as they now do; a man not ashamed to "roll up his sleeves" and work with the men. Ossinin was a Soviet bureaucrat, a typical flawless individual who furthered the Party's cause together with his own. The antithesis of Sharanov, the spineless Soviet bureaucrat, too perfect an individual, while Ossinin was a "Soviet Dynamo", an efficient technical bureau-
crat but at the same time an individual with human emotional feelings and desires. He was not the pure lily individual that Sharanov was, nor the licentious bureaucrat that Bad'in was. Ossinin was probably the truest type of technical bureaucrat that Nikiforov drew. He was a member of the "Part-Tyisachnykh," a group of ambitious young men who went to university and were groomed by the Party for top government or industrial positions. They were the future leaders of the country. Another example of this type of individual was Pobedinosikov in "Banja".

To complete this perfect role Ossinin was the "assasin" of 'Old Russia', the bureaucrat who will stop at nothing to further the cause of the new regime.

... I assassinated Old Russia, Raissa, dark, rapacious old Russia. (259)

Ossinin was the third member of the love triangle between Raissa, Sukorukov, and himself. To him Raissa was the ideal Soviet woman. She was a member of the Komsomol, an able individual with a rather "feminine" outlook on life when compared to Nikiforov's other "new heroines". She had broader views than Faika Pokrovsky; she was an emancipated Soviet Woman. A woman of the thirties, a Party bureaucrat, whereas Faika was gradually regenerated into an emancipated woman. Raissa could be compared to Solomina, a straightforward Soviet type of woman, one who believes in a "a private life". Generally speaking Raissa falls somewhere between Faika and Seema.
Nikiforov was finally able to produce the true Soviet Woman.

Through the character of Victor Suhorukov Nikiforov presented his psychological individual. He was not the unstable Chuvyakin nor the Ramzaev type of person. Suhorukov was an idealist, an intellectual idealist. He could not become a bureaucrat as Ossinin was. His role was a perplexing one, one of complete futility. The man was frustrated before he started. Even his death was completely futile and pointless. Nikiforov created a man who saw the difficulty involved in creating the agricultural-industrial bond. He was not able to leave the village and at the same time realized that progress must occur. He wanted to embrace the new regime while retaining traditional characteristics. A man torn between two worlds. He realized the city-village problem and the interdependence of each on the other. But he did not, or possibly could not take action in his convictions.

Suhorukov can be described as a Soviet superfluous man, one who did not have the stamina to follow through on his thoughts. He lacked the courage of his convictions. In comparing him to Ossinin Nikiforov presents two distinctly different individuals. Suhorukov cannot be a bureaucrat because he lacked faith in himself. He could control himself whereas Ossinin had complete physical and mental stability within himself. Suhorukov was an intellectual, a member of the intelligentsia who could not make the adjustment to the quick-
ly changing times. He was more of a professionalist than Ossinin, a careerist. But because of his futile attitude and nature and the inability to comprehend the present situation his death was the only logical event that could happen.

Suhorukov and Ossinin could be compared to Leonov's Skutarevsky and his aide Cherimov. Both of them were friends in earlier life, both were educated and grew up together. Both had managed to obtain responsible positions within the Party. Here the difference ends. Ossinin's path completely differed from that of Suhorukov. Each went his separate way, one a successful bureaucrat, the other a successful technician with an unstable emotional nature.

Suhorukov's inner conflict arises from extreme emotional tension and frustration. He does not know himself who he loves and who he does not love. During the first part he professes a strong love for Raissa, but when she appears his attitude changes. Meanwhile he had declared his love for Serafeema a cattle herder at the sovkhoz.

Both women realize Suhorukov's mental instability, and of course turn to someone else. Both are aware of his frustrated nature and try to help, but at the same time feeling great pity for him.

The love conflict within Suhorukov was enhanced when Raissa was obviously interested in Ossinin. The pangs of
jealousy arose within him; gradually he grows to despise Ossinin, but at the same time he took no action against Ossinin nor Raissa. The man's thoughts boiled within him but he was incapable of any physical or mental action. The reader feels that he realizes his nature but actions for or against the cause would be futile. Consequently, Suhorukov was defeated before he starts.

The love triangle between the individual was broken when Raissa realizes Suhorukov's superfluous nature. She preferred Ossinin because of his dynamic actions and the ability to carry out his convictions. In keeping with the Five Year theme, Nikiforov presented Ossinin as the hero of industrial labour, therefore Raissa "must" admire him because of his great proletarian nature and socialist outlook.

In part one at the sovkhoz, Nikiforov expressed the relationship of Suhorukov and the kulaks. Suhorukov was associated with these men because of his ties with the old village and all it stood for. Nikiforov was able to show the problems that existed among the Kulaks and the peasantry. Suhorukov spent much time with the peasants trying to persuade them to join the sovkhoz and at the same time he explained their plight to them. The gap between the Kulaks and the other peasants had widened. The former did not wish to join the sovkhoz because they would lose everything that they worked for, while
the others began to realize the potential of the sovkhoz.

- Yes it has begun, said Suhorukov. - and comrade peasants it will only end when you understand and master the plain truth, only your knowledge and your organized strength can break the kulaks. You must end this war with the kulaks, equalize fronts, unify your power. (147)

Suhorukov's position in the second part of the novel was not as important as in the first because he was not at his ease in a factory. His inner emotional conflict reached its height during this time and his frustrations mounted to such a level that he left for the village. In a sense, the village was a place of security and psychological comfort for him.

Suhorukov's death was as futile as his life was. Actually Nikiforov had no choice but to put him out of his misery. It could be attributed entirely to his emotional state which reached such proportions that death was the only solution. His death, by the hand of the girl he loved, was symbolic of the collapse of the old intellectual regime and the rise of the new Soviet intelligentsia, a stratum of individuals acting on behalf of the Party completely and not afraid to pursue their convictions. Through his death Nikiforov also tried to show the collapse of the village, the adaptation of the peasantry class into the new Soviet class of workers and the all embracing Soviet reality engulfing everyone.

Nikiforov presented a variety of other individuals who
were associated with the industrial processes during the early 1930's. The character of the engineer Vetlugin is an interesting one because he can be compared with Pokrovsky, at the same time displaying one of the main qualities of Ramzaev - the ability to organize the industrial processes and display a keen interest in the industrialization.

Vetlugin was a member of the old intelligentsia who aided the Party during the reconstruction periods. Like Pokrovsky, he was an able engineer in his own right, displaying characteristics that were lacking in the new Soviet technicians.

His most outstanding characteristic was his great ability to organize and take command of the construction and operations of factories during the reconstruction and Five Year periods. Like Ramzaev his mind functioned as a machine displaying a great interest in administrative and technical fields. He was successful in this particular field and the workers eventually admired and respected him. He worked in Russia because

- I agreed - and will work. Where can I work if not in Russia, I am an engineer. ... What are you saying to me, you, old master? ... Oh patriotism? I accept this summons! Yes, and patriotism. ... I want to be victorious over the work and the workers. (185)

Vetlugin was able to cope with the work. Whether or
not he was victorious over the labourers or they over him is not made clear. But Vetlugin was satisfied with his job and the Party with him.

The secretary of the sovkhoz, Shementov can be compared with Serdobova, the party secretary in "The Woman". Both types are representative of Party members who were semi-literate. Shementov was probably a semi-literate worker who joined the Party. He represents the type of individuals who were on factory committees, local councils and other jobs during the twenties and thirties until formally educated Party members stepped in and took over.

The director of the factory "Stohod", Mikhail Borodin is an interesting figure and can be compared with the ex-director Chuvyakin in "Beside the Street Lamp". Borodin was a man who believed in himself and felt that he was infallible. His position was of extreme importance but he passed the plans for a ridiculous invention. Ossinin heard of this from the Komsomol members and immediately took action. Borodin was dismissed and sent to work somewhere else. Nikiforov presents an ego centered individual who feels that the Party will call him back.

...Do you think that they can get along without me? Nonsense, brother, I don't believe it. I went to the revolutionary school, I was hardened. If they are going to use for production, then they might as well get rid of the others. (246)
Defeat is difficult to take, and dishonourable dismissal worse. Borodin was reduced to drunken individual still believing in his capabilities, not facing up to reality. In a drunken stupour he tells his wife ... - They will call yet, Manusha! Yes, Yes, don't think what you are thinking. ... They have already told me: "come Misha. In two or three months you will have a good post!" They said this Manusha, I assure you with clear communist words. But I will improve them, I will ask them again. I know my own importance and will not take a demotion. No Borodin can insist. Let the others bow to the bureaucrats and serve them, I will not agree, will not agree, Manusha, and that's final! (253)

Another problem that Nikiforov presents is the ability of Soviet Russia to overcome and surpass the United States. Authors were required to incorporate this theme into their novels and compare the growth of industrialization in Russia to that of the Western Hemisphere. The general idea was to show the super advancement of a Proletariat state over the Capitalist countries. Nikiforov showed how much freedom was allowed in the United States through a distorted misrepresentation of American industry. 'Millions of dollars are allotted to individuals who have scatterbrained ideas' (224) writes Nikiforov. Through the labourer Mamahin, Nikiforov points out that in the United States if you have a "head on your shoulders then they will "Rush" out with billions of dollars to aid you in your scheme.

The idea of surpassing the western hemisphere has
always been of primary concern to the Soviet Union. Nikiforov brings this point out in "The Woman", although it was of minor consequence at the time, and in his industrial novel "Unity"; but in this novel Nikiforov could also be attacking Soviet Russia. He gives the impression that everything is state controlled and there is not enough individual freedom.

Nikiforov continues to present his professional labourer. Following in the footsteps of Chessosov and Bryakin is Epimov, an outspoken lathe-operator, the spokesman for the proletariat, the defender of socialism, the type of the Soviet regime.

- Workers, Proletariat of all countries!
... Listen here, I will cross-examine everything clearly. Now, which of you worked with awls before the war, who owned their own firm? Lift up your hands. None? That is good! ... Indifferent? ...
No my young comrade, we will say falsehood, deceit about all! Now, ask me how many merchants worked in the factories for defence were saved from the war? Here is your on-coming wind! The revolution came up to the gates of the factories and the young merchants who fled to their ships did not have accessibility to them, but we won't talk of this.

Epimov was an individual that Nikiforov had now developed thoroughly in each novel. The climax of this type of person was reached in the "The Mastercraftsmen", Nikiforov's last novel. This will be discussed in the next chapter.

Nikiforov discusses the question of the Kulaks in great detail. The main point of "Into the Wind" was the
description of the Kulaks and their position during this time. Unlike Sholokhov, Nikiforov presents his Kulaks on a sympathetic note. After all, they were also human beings and not animals as Sholokhov implied. Nikiforov added a personal touch and drew them in a favourable light. This of course was against all Party regulations.

The two main Kulaks, Kukuev and Djinin were rich and powerful men. Both were bothered by the fact that they had worked hard all their lives to obtain their rich farms and now the Communists want to confiscate everything and incorporate their lands into the sovkhoz. Consequently there was not too much that could be done except keep up a resistance for as long as possible.

Kukuev represented the peasantry that was dissatisfied with the sovkhoz but realized that eventually he would lose to it. His brother Philip a fanatical individual represented the other peasantry force that was completely opposed to any collectivization at all. They were the bandits, the raiders. They only advocated private ownership. Philip, together with Djinin and others hid in the woods with their grain. They did not want the sovkhoz and the government agents to collect it as part of their tax levy.

Through Kukuev, Nikiforov gives an excellent literary account into the lives of the Kulaks, how they oppose collect-
ivization; how they hide their grain; their secret meetings and many other details that Sholokhov does not show. Nikiforov also discusses the religious feeling that is prevalent among the Kulaks. They have a strong faith in God. Together with their faith they believe in hard physical work and feel greatly rewarded, not only spiritually but physically when the tasks are accomplished.

Eventually Kukuev lost his farm and was incorporated into the sovkhoz. Nikiforov does not describe Kukuev's actions from this time on, until an announcement appears that he has been freed from the sovkhoz and can return to his home which was not destroyed. The article goes on to say that he had been "liquidated as a class" and now has the right to go anywhere in Russia, or else return to his untouched home.

Presenting the Kulaks in this way did not increase Nikiforov's popularity within the Party. He had shown them as a class not harmful to the Party, only rebellious against any collectivization. This rebelliousness could have been and probably was easily put down by the Red Army.

Serafeema was Nikiforov's frustrated feminine personage in this novel. She was a cattle herder at the sovkhoz. Originally she was of Kulak parentage but she did not know this. Kukuev only reveals this when he finds a diary in his mausoleum where he stores his grain. Serafeema is a lost individual.
She thought she was in love with Suhorukov but at the same time she was in love with Philip. Serafeema was an individual whose mentality bordered on the boundaries of hysteria. Eventually she goes mad when Philip is shot but until this moment, Nikiforov portrays her as slowly mentally degenerating. She seems to always be in a morbid, depressed state of mind. Like Suhorukov her frustrations reach such a climax that her mind snaps when Philip is killed. Upon meeting Suhorukov later, she does not recognize him at first. Her mind stopped at Philip's death, she does not remember anything past that. Suddenly she realizes who he was and mortally stabs him with a scythe.

Nikiforov's characters were all beyond the limit of Party dictate, as was his subject. He presented a topic that was completely in opposition to Sholokhov and the other writers. He wrote the truth as he saw it and was not concerned with describing the situation as seen through the Party eyes. One of the main points in question that he brought out in the end was the death of the old decadent regime. This was a sub-theme that Nikiforov developed throughout the novel and it was portrayed against the on-coming new regime, thereby glorifying the Party.
"Unity"

Nikiforov was severely taken to task by the Communist Party for daring to write such a novel as "Into the Wind". His offense was all the more reprehensible in that he was not a peasant writer, but an old worker in the revolutionary movement and a Communist since 1917.¹

Nikiforov hastily wrote an extremely bad novel "Unity" (Yedinstvo), to regain his reputation within the Party. "Unity" was written in 1933 and can be considered as very representative of the literature of the last stages of the Five Year Plan. It meets the basic policy put forward by the literary dictates of that time, that is, it adheres to the theme of industrialization and reconstruction of Russia. As a literary achievement it failed, but succeeded as a Party propaganda novel. Nikiforov wrote in the tradition of the Five Year Plan writers. The reason that he failed in his portrayal of industrialization was because he tried to adapt himself into this sphere of "proletarianization" of the country. He was not a "hack writer" of industry and production quotas or processes. He presented his characters as "living psychological individuals". They are absent in this novel. Instead he developed the theme of construction in Central Asiatic Russia. He described the backwardness and slovenly methods employed prior to reconstruction. With the instigation of Soviet reconstruction processes there was a great "awakening"
within this area. Nikiforov presents the tempo of the construction, the participation, the enthusiasm, and the objections of the Asiatic Russians who lived in this region.

Complete individuals are lacking within this novel because of the importance of the position of the construction and industrial development. All the characters are centered and developed around this theme. They are presented as being subordinate or even secondary to it. In reality, the individual was made to feel this subordination to industrialization and construction in the Soviet Union. Everything and everyone was sacrificed for the benefit of building a new state. In his previous works, Nikiforov portrayed his characters as builders of a new society that was evolving together with the construction of a new state. "Unity" sacrifices character development and presents the typical propaganda - novel of the N.E.P. and First Five Year Plan.

This complete subordination of the individual was a theme that was used by many Soviet writers at this time. The entire mass of the U.S.S.R.'s population had been called upon to participate in the building of a new culture.

... Hence, each and everyone of us is responsible for errors, shortcomings, spoilage in production, and all manifestations of philistine vulgarity, meanness, cupidity and unscrupulousness. This means that our criticism must be genuine self-criticism, that we must evolve a system of socialist ethics to regulate our work and mutual relations.
Maxim Gorky goes on to say in his address delivered to the First All Union Congress of Soviet Writers, August 17, 1934, that there must be complete subordination of not only the individual but of the literary members and of their works.

Like Nikiforov, Nikolay Pogodin expressed a similar theme in his "Poem about an Axe" and "Tempo". The idea of the all embracing enthusiasm and strong will of the people to participate in this reconstruction. Pogodin introduced an American engineer into the Stalingrad tractor plant. At first he was horrified by Russian slovenly methods and then amazed by the tempo of construction which eclipses all American records.

Nikiforov himself pictures the great participation of the people in building the railroad through the desert in Central Russia. But beneath this enthusiasm there still remains the unrest and bitterness toward the Communists by some of the Tartars. But over all, Nikiforov manages to portray the proletarian element. This is done with little success.

As in all works of this type a definite plot is lacking and a direct approach is used in giving vivid descriptions of construction techniques and principles. "Unity" consists of many mass meetings and propaganda speeches. The Marxian philosophy of the Universal victory of the Proletariat over Capitalism is the main theme of most of these meetings.
Fellow workers! Material interpretation is taking place; the events appear to be the necessary obligation of each conscious citizen of the Union of Soviet Socialists Republic. The growth of the revolutionary movement throughout the world and the decaying of the bourgeois ideology, as if it were obsolete, appears to be an unquestionable proof that the century of the supremacy of the capitalistic system, the social-economic attitude, is approaching its logical completion. ... A new force is coming into the world - the proletariat. It will reconstruct the world, it will change the face of the earth...

The managers and directors are no longer individuals but mechanical robots devoted to industry, to reconstruction, and to the Party. They hold the Party in such esteem that one feels they worship it. Their patriotism not only to the country but to the Party is astounding. There is no outspoken opposition toward the bureaucratic or technocratic institutions as there was in "The Woman" or "Into the Wind".

The role of foreign engineers was also a common feature in Soviet literature. Pogodin's American engineer played an important role in "Tempo". Pogodin utilized him in comparing the efficiency of Soviet industry to American. Nikiporov's German engineers are ably drawn individuals. He presented them as completely involved in their work but at the same time through them he showed the equality and or supremacy of Russian industry as compared to European and American industry. The general tendency to use foreign aid and technical advice was practised in the U.S.S.R. prior to and during this period. Dniepostroi Dam, one of the largest dams in the world
was constructed with foreign aid and foreign technicians during the First Five Year Plan.

Throughout the novel Nikiforov tried to prophesy the connection of the individual to socialist realism. This image was not successful because Nikiforov could not adapt nor project himself to reflect the socialist realities and socialist mentality that was put forth by Party dictate. He could only show the true realism that was present, not the false glossy effect that was expected by the Party. Nikiforov saw the Party, its bureaucrats and technicians for what they were and not what the Party wanted the writers to show. Nikiforov’s specialty was the portrayal of the "Living individual", the underlying attacks upon Party principles and systems, and class conflicts, rather than descriptions of industrial processes and techniques.
References


2. Ibid 1.

3. Ibid 1, a summary of Zavalishin's statements.


5. Georgii Nikiforov, "Into the Wind", (Moscow-Leningrad, 1931), p. 234. Translated and quoted directly. The quotes hereafter will appear together with their page numbers in the text of this chapter.

6. Ibid 1, p. 328.


8. Georgii Nikiforov, "Unity", (Moscow, 1933), p. 97. Translated and quoted directly. The quotes hereafter will appear together with their page numbers in the text of this chapter.
CHAPTER IV
"The Mastercraftsmen"

After the completion of "Unity", Nikiforov's reputation was temporarily restored and the accusations against him were given some weight by his writings from 1933-1936. These deal with the history of the labour movement in Russia, and include "Gray Days", "Thirty-three Adventures", "Belated Spring", and a novel, "The Mastercraftsmen", written during 1935-36.

The historical content in all of these novels runs counter to the Bolshevik attempt to falsify Russian history, particularly the history of the revolutionary movement. In "The Mastercraftsmen" Nikiforov made use of the past to criticize contemporary Stalinist Russia.

This criticism of his country emerged from his complete disillusionment of Soviet reality, Nikiforov's last novel presented a panorama of the past, present and future bound together through philosophical-socio-religious problems overshadowed by his realistic symbolism and objectivity.

The indirect attack against Stalinist Russia was launched through a detailed description of late nineteenth and early twentieth century Russia. Through the development of the idealistic personality, whether philosopher or revolutionary, Nikiforov was able to present the conditions and the
institutions that were prevalent in Soviet Russia during the 1920s and 1930s. He attacks the very core of the authoritarian government.

This novel presents the climactic development of Nikiforov's idealistic personality. An individual that was gradually built up in "The Woman" and "Into the Wind" and "matured" in "The Mastercraftsmen". Also, Nikiforov finally reaches the ultimate stage of character representation in his ideal type of labourer and professional revolutionary.

The theme of the novel is not only restricted to an attack upon Stalinist Russia through an historical approach but concerns itself with the "problem of the generations", that is the older generation in conflict not only with itself but with the younger generation as well. Nikiforov raises the question of Christian Socialism, in order to understand the affinities and the needed correctives that must exist in order to combine both religion and socialism to build a truly Socialist state.

Together with these themes, Nikiforov presents a gallery of mastercraftsmen, professional workers, and revolutionaries, all associated directly or indirectly with the Lange Family, a wealthy industrial capitalist family that exploited the working people at the same time displaying the attitudes of the Stalinist government toward these people.
"The Mastercraftsmen" can be compared with Gorky's "The Artomonov Business", an epic novel depicting the emergence of an industrial empire built by an emancipated slave family.

Nikiforov's similarity to Gorky's novel is carried through character representation. Gorky depicts three generations of the Artomonov family and develops them completely, while Nikiforov presents only two generations. Here the similarity stops. Gorky was able to draw complete personages as far as the merchant class was concerned, but failed miserably in his revolutionary, labourer and ideological representations. As a result, Gorky only developed his main characters and left the others as part of the haze behind them. But Nikiforov not only completely developed his chief characters but was a "mastercraftsman" himself in presenting the revolutionary, the labourer and the idealist to his fullest content. Thus Nikiforov's secondary characters did not fade into the background of the novel but occupied a position that was almost equal to that of the main character. His knowledge and interest of the working class cannot be excelled, he is a master "par excellence".

The scope of Gorky's novel extends from 1861-1917, while Nikiforov only wrote of the periods 1861-1910. But the latter was able to give a detailed account of the period of 1905-1910 as far as character types were concerned together with the political developments of the times.
"Masters" can be connected to Soviet reality. It was during these five years that Nikiforov concentrated on his analogy with the Stalinist regime. The novel ended in 1910, this was a "moment of reaction" in pre-Soviet history. The Revolution of 1905 and "Bloody Sunday" had ignited the spark. Lenin had just issued his "Materialism and Empirico-Criticism" in 1909, and the third Duma was more than half way through its uninterrupted session On the literary field Lunarcharsky had just turned to the "God-Seekers" group. Also, many Russian writers who supported the 1905 Revolution now turned against it, i.e. Andreev. The political situation of the time was one of unrest, although political equilibrium was rather stable if compared to 1914-1921. But Nikiforov's contemporary Russia was also in a chaotic state. The purges were ravaging the country and Stalin's dictatorial policies were severally felt throughout. The reactionary forces of 1936 and 1937 were such that Nikiforov's intellectual independence was completely destroyed and he was sent to a concentration camp shortly after.

Nikiforov emphasized the fact that his workers did not distinguish between Bolsheviks, Mensheviks, and Socialist Revolutionaries in their struggles against the tsarist regime. Zavalishin points out that they were "motivated chiefly by desire to better their living conditions", which, "at times fell in with the ambition to change the entire social order".² (I disagree with this statement). The fact that Nikiforov did
not mention the various factions does not mean that he disregarded them. It must be remembered that he was indirectly attacking the Stalinist Regime as a whole and by this time there were not any actual prominent political factions in existence in Russia. The Bolsheviks were the main group, while the Mensheviks, if in existence, were of a theoretical nature only. The workers were struggling under Stalinist principles, against his secret police and the purges. In effect, Nikiforov was presenting Stalinist Russia under a thin veil of disguise. This will be discussed in the sub chapter of Chapter IV.

Nikiforov's main character in this novel was Karp Poludnnoy, symbol of a "boor". The entire novel depicts the life of this individual, his childhood, youth, maturity, marriage, and it concludes with the picture of an old man who has amassed a great fortune, has become the general manager of a factory but still remains a boor. Karp's life progressively rises throughout the two volumes from a poor peasant boy to that of a millionaire capitalist. To a degree his life could be compared with the rise of a rags to riches Western businessman. But Karp has not changed during his ascendence. He still remains the uneducated, unintellectual individual that he was. His ascendancy begins when he joins the household of the Lange Brothers. Thus the development of the combination of respect and cowardice that remains within his character
throughout his life - "pochtitel'naya robost'."

His work at the Lange factory originally was to act as a spy, an informer for the brothers Lange. He was to watch the workers, inform of any disturbances or dissatisfactions that could be brewing among them. Thus the development of cowardice, yet at the same time a boorish air of superiority is realized by Karp. In actuality, he is not superior to the workers but his actions toward them and their ironic yet servile response to him are all beneficial in projecting this false superiority within him. Gradually he saves his money and through a scheming plan he managed to purchase a small inn. From this inn arises a restaurant that eventually becomes the meeting place of revolutionaries and professional labourers. Karp re-invested the capital that he had into the Lange industry and soon becomes a large shareholder in the company, eventually assuming managership of it.

Nikiforov portrayed Karp as a typical man rising in a capitalistic - imperialistic regime, (1861-1910). But beneath the surface Nikiforov portrayed him as representing the typical manager of the Stalinist regime. Here was an uneducated, uncultured individual who rose to top position within the industry. An individual who was a boor, a "kham". This individual was typical throughout Stalinist Russia. These were the men who succeeded only through graft and scheming, these
uncouth, uncultured boors. Possibly they had some business experience or training but they generally arose from the masses. Stalin was able to employ them in industry because of their shrewdness, not only for themselves but for the state as well. He could trust them to the degree that they would operate the factories successfully, but at the same time, Stalin was shrewd enough to realize that being unintellectual they would be easy prey to his policies and methods. Stalin feared the intellectuals, the idealists. In his long range plans he needed men of Karp's calibre - crafty, cunning opportunists - not men of high principles and ideals, who would be "bogged - down" in symbols and idealisms. Possibly a few of the old intellectuals remained after the purges, but the new class of intellectuals were not to be completely trusted. Thus Stalin turned to Karp's type of individual and entrusted industrial development to him.

Nikiforov was also attacking the state for its uncultural nature, for producing industrial and technical bureaucrats, completely void of any intellectual or cultural background.

Karp's position at the factory enabled him to assume full responsibility and control. He managed to out-manoeuvre Fredrick Lange in his decisions. Lange, realizes that Karp has amassed a fortune at Lange's expense, but still can only
accept him as an equal. One has the feeling that Lange despises Karp, but this is due to the latter's "pochtitel'naya robost", his servile yet cunning nature.

Karp is a morally unconscious individual. When Gury, his son is shot and crawls home, Karp unmercifully turns him out. "You lived for yourself, now die for yourself." Karp's attitude toward his son was an unnatural one. In spite of the fact that Gury was a member of the revolutionary movement Karp should have taken him in when the boy was dying, if only from a humanitarian point of view. But Karp's conscience did not bother him. He loved the boy, but upon realizing that Gury was using the restaurant to hold meetings for the movement and of his active participation in it, Karp rejected him. But as Epimax said to Karp later on:

... you, Karp Serafimovich Poludonov wanted to devote your life to your son and through that you wanted to gain comfort; you amassed a fortune, and suddenly there came an investigation, and your son turned to the side of our enemies, he forgot his father and did not consider his age - ... Your Gury cannot be brought back ... not from pity for your fallen son ... (234).

Epimakh tries to console Karp but does not succeed because Gury's death does not touch Karp as it would a normal father.

Nikiforov presents the wealthy industrial family Lange as capitalist exploiters. Here are three individuals,
Fredrick, Pavel, and Heinrich who rapidly built up a small factory into a national industry. Pavel and Heinrick die soon after and the story revolves around Fredrick, or Dreeks Ivanich, as Karp calls him, a man with a strong personality, a manager of the old style. If Karp is a representative of the Stalinist managerial class, then Fredrick is his antithesis. He was an individual who had no regard for anyone, a strong dynamic nature that was almost overpowering. His only concern was the industry, its growth, its production and its potential. This phase of his nature could be easily incorporated into the Stalinist economy. He took little interest in the labouring classes and only exploited them for his own capital gains. His attitude toward them was one of complete neglect and opposition. Fredrick was not a boor in the sense that Karp was, but he was also not a member of the cultural milieu. He came from an "old family", but was progressive enough to realize the present situation and to take full advantage of it; in fact to exploit it to his own advantage.

Fredrick's nephew, Yakov Lange was a Westernizer. Yakov was educated in Europe where he studied engineering along European methods. Upon his arrival at the Lange factory he was repulsed by the management, the condition and the appalling nature of the factory.

- Now there, tell me, what did you see? Yakov was silent - sensibly and unusually businesslike.
- What is one to say, said he, ... I saw all and nothing ... "Aziatchina". (Asiatic)
The nephew was precise and categorical:
- It is necessary to change the system.
- Which system: - Fredrick did not understand.
- The system of the exploitation of the factory.
In the first place - to the devil with these wooden barns! A factory must have form.
- To have form, to have form ... - Under our supervision, thank God, work went along fine.
You want much, Yashenka ... One has to think this over. (121)

Yakov arrived in Russia with European ideas and tried to model the Lange factory along these principles.
Of course he was met with opposition by all. Fredrick personally felt the change should not be made because their system was agreeable, not only to them financially, but also to the workers in general.

But Yakov would not accept the Russian industrial system and condemned it from the beginning. He condemned everything that was Russian, praising European methods at every opportunity. He labelled everything that was backward or non-European as "Aziatchina" (Asiatic). At first his father and his uncles laugh at him and say:

- He gave us a task that son of yours, there is nothing to say ... - He has been spoiled while he was abroad, oh, how he has been spoiled! (121).

Later they realize that second thoughts be given to his opinions, but Fredrick takes the first step in "educating" the young man in life and in his relations toward people:
- To the individual, if he is worth it, you must have good approach, and also a good word. You Yashenka, must understand the Russian way as far as western ideas are concerned. When an individual is not useful to you any longer - you simply get rid of him ... (123).

Yakov could not accept the Russian point of view. He was completely repulsed by everything that was "Aziatchina". But he approached everything in his immediate surroundings with the idea that he would remodernize it, Europeanize Russia! Yakov did not realize to approach anything with one's mind made up beforehand is utter futility because the struggle to change or attempt to change is almost beyond human comprehension. Thus Yakov was defeated before he even started. He was his own worst enemy. But another approach to Yakov's intentions could be taken. Realizing the backwardness of Russia. Yakov subconsciously felt himself a second "Peter the Great". This is going too deeply into Yakov's character. He probably felt this indirectly but his main idea was that everything European was good, everything Russian was bad, consequently he was carrying on a "one man re-vamping campaign" to Europeanize Russia in order to make it good. What he didn't realize was that Russia would progress at her own speed and develop accordingly.

Yakov had assimilated the European character to such a degree that he was repulsed by everything else, and in turn he repulsed anyone who had contact with him due to his
falsely superior European nature. Gradually he submitted to Russification, but this was due only to the immediate surrounding forces which plied at his crusty exterior.

Yakov eventually desires to return to Europe. The reader feels his great love for this Europe through the discussions with his uncle. He is completely Europeanized in spite of his lengthy stay in Russia.

Fredrick, a firm believer that Russia's path to industrialization was along her own natural course, felt one must take advantage of every situation. The two men's views were diametrically opposed to one another.

But Fredrick and Yakov managed to reach a compromising situation which they held until Yakov's return to Europe. Of course Fredrick yielded to some of Yakov's European methods but on the whole both were not antagonizing to each other. Fredrick was broadminded enough to realize that Russia's industrialization would evolve itself but a certain degree of Europeanization would be necessary.

Another question that Nikiforov deals with in this novel is the problem of the generations. As in most cases there is the conflict between the elder generation and the younger. But conflicts arise within the same generations. "The Mastercraftsmen" can once again be compared with "The Artomonov Business" by Gorky. Here the position of the Langes,
(Fredrick, Pavel and Heinrich) can be contrasted to that of Ilya Artomonov Senior. The latter was an emancipated serf, the founder of the family's prosperity, a strong self-willed man. An uncultured individual who could almost be likened to Rousseau's "noble young savage", completely unspoiled by society, if compared to his sons and grandsons in whom there are signs of imminent decay. The Langes were refined individuals originating from the intelligentsia. They were businessmen who were in a different position, financially and socially, than was Ilya Artomonov. But both the Langes and Artomonov had a common enemy - the rising working class and the professional revolutionaries. Both of these groups were out to undermine the capitalist exploiters and further Russia's development, not only industrially but democratically, together with their own. The Langes and the Artomonovs had to put up a resistance against these "revolutionary" forces and eventually either give in to their demands or lose everything. The Artomonovs lost their factory to the Soviets in 1917 as presumably did the Langes.

The older generation was also in conflict with the younger concerning the development of new political revolutionary policies. The older generation wished to retain their contemporary system, or else a moderate edition of it, whereas the younger generation wanted a complete revolutionary change.
The younger generation was itself hesitant and completely unorganized as far as any political or industrial revolutions were concerned. Gury Poludonov was a member of the revolutionary movement that advocated: "We will commit friendly attacks on our mortal enemies - autocracy and capitalism".

He can be contrasted with Yakov Artomonov the grandson of Ilya Artomonov. Yakov like Gury also joins the revolutionaries and is altogether a useless individual as far as carrying on the Artomonov tradition. Both Yakov and Gury are lost individuals who are great disappointments to their fathers. They are not qualified to do anything. An analogy can be drawn between them and the theoretical reactionaries of the middle nineteenth century, although the latter seemed to be more active. The futility of both their lives is exemplified when Gury and his idealist revolutionary teacher Boris Krakov were shot at the barricades.

Possibly the blame rests on their parents. The parents of both young men were rich self-made men who struggled to get ahead. Upon achieving success they "paved life's path" with gold for their sons. These offsprings quickly showed signs of imminent decay and degeneracy. Possessing youth, wealth, and a sense of adventure, these men stumbled upon the revolutionary philosophies that well afforded them the excite-
ment lacking in their stilted lives. The revolutionaries in turn "used" these young men, not only for political agitation purposes, but also for their social and financial positions.

The second group representing the younger generation were Yakov Lange and Miron Artomonov. Both were European engineers - intellectuals who were completely aware of the surrounding circumstances and their position in relation to this circumstance.

Yakov Lange, as discussed earlier in this chapter, wanted to completely Europeanize the Lange Factory. At the same time he was an individual who could see the end of the road on which Russian autocracy was travelling. He was a realist, to a certain degree, because of his firmness and level-headedness concerning the revolutionary activities that had been going on in his area. He did not partake in any of their activities nor did he condemn them.

Miron Artomonov, the grandson of Ilya, and the eldest son of Aleksey was also a European trained engineer. An individual who upheld the contemporary truth and realized its consequences. In comparison to Gury and Yakov Aromonov, Miron and Yakov Lange did not display the same degenerating qualities that were prevalent among their contemporaries. They cannot be compared with their fathers, grandfathers or uncles respectively, because these men were strong, self-
willed individuals who strove ahead in spite of their failures and shortcomings. Generally speaking the younger generation, although divided as it were into two classes, already displayed signs of degeneracy.

Nikiforov presents the reader with a gallery of mastercraftsmen, professional workers and revolutionaries. Just as Gorky develops the self-made bourgeois merchant family, Nikiforov delves into the masses and produces entire individuals representing the various strata of the working class. These individuals rise above the masses and are developed into full personages with a complete level of consciousness that reflects their knowledge or their ignorance of the contemporary truths. Like Gorky, Nikiforov combines great vigor and vitality within his characters. Both writers display a keen vision of the gloomy, sombre side of life, not only in its outward manifestations but also in the inner workings of human nature. This is a characteristic that is more prevalent throughout Gorky's works and present to a lesser degree in Nikiforov's.

As mentioned before, Nikiforov climactically develops his ideal type of professional labourer in this novel. Both Leonty Chemeryitsin and Matvey Gryaznov are representatives of the Soviet professional labour group that existed up to this time. Nikiforov gradually developed this type throughout his earlier novels, (Bryakin, the old professional labourer
in "The Woman", and Efimov, the typical outspoken representative of the proletarian in "Into the Wind"), until he had perfected the type in this novel. Nikiforov was the last to write about the professional labourer and in later Soviet novels there was a complete standardization of the labour characterizations. No distinctions were made in this working proletarian after 1936.

Chemeryitsin is an individual who has completely assimilated the proletarian cloak. As a representative of the professional working class he performs his task with precision and exactness. He is a semi-intellectual labourer who has wandered about the country most of his life, helping the working class in their struggle against the oppressions of capitalism, and profiting from past experience to organize and guide new groups of workers. He tells the workers of the Lange Factory to unite together, form a workers' union against Fredrick Lange. Stand up and demand your rights as individuals and as a proletarian mass. "Unite so the capitalists cannot crush you beneath their feet", this is his slogan.

... Two years ago the workers in Harkove drove out all the police together with the governor but we cannot consolidate ourselves against Fredrick Lange ... (145)

Chemeryitsin plays the role of a professional labour or organizer without appearing as a labour agitator. He approaches the masses psychologically realizing that the fate
of Russian industrialization lies in their hands. If the masses are guided directly along the straight and narrow, then capitalism will not prosper in Russia. One must have faith in the masses and be prepared to guide them accordingly.

But the workers only laughed at him. His ideas were too progressive for the society of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He was the forerunner of the modern business agent and the executive union official, the only exception being, at that time his outlook and philosophy was rather idealistic according to the reactions of the masses.

Chemeryitsin was not an educated man in the exact sense of the word. His education was gained from the world and from his experiences in life. He read more than the average individual. He could be called a labour philosopher. He was not a truly idealistic person, as was Alfey nor was he a Chessosov type of individual. His philosophy was a blend of self insight and worldly experience - the best philosophy available. Alfey was more of a pure ideologist while Chemeryitsin was a philosopher of human nature and understanding.

Chemeryitsin describes a mutual friend of his and of his apprentice, Mitka Tururok, but the underlining meaning is obviously meant to apply to the entire working mass.
...Petrov will drink while worrying about his last kopeks, then he will sober up and will look for work... He! Just try and find work when you don't have a recommendation, and without exception, there are many others seeking work. What is to be done Petrov? Very simple! When he has reached the end, he will hang himself or else will drown himself, here in the Yaze, that's all.' I cannot say any more. Each has his own fate. One will protect his property - (the brothers Lange must possess by now over a thousand acres) - the other will praise fate for that which allows him a hunk of bread, the third will drink on the days of celebration - "Do chortikov". He! Life is merciful to all ... (146)

The people are irresponsible and cannot even trust themselves. The majority of them live entirely by their emotions, but "life is merciful to all...! Chemeryitsin realizes the plight of the masses but he also is aware that they do nothing to help themselves, consequently many are out of work, many starve, and the employers take advantage of them, forcing them to work under precarious and dangerous conditions.

As the novel progresses, Chemeryitsin gradually moves away from the labour type of individual and slowly dons the "habit" of a revolutionary. At the end of the first volume, have a revolutionary labourer supporting both causes. But in his dual role he still continues to support the proletariat.

(... It is necessary to mention, that Chemeryitsin concealed an acting spark. This he himself did not know. At the time of his revolutionary activity he skilfully taught himself to evade the police; pre-
pretend; when it was necessary, be a simpleton and play a trick. He became so skilled at this role and without being aware of how it happened it became a necessity. (319)

Chemeryitsin married Alfey's daughter Alevtina who bore him a son Yefimka, who later became a supporter of the Social Revolutionary movement and was sent to the Urals. Chemeryitsin continued his dual role although it became one of a revolutionary importance rather than labourer movement. He went away for eight years and it was during this time that his revolutionary nature developed. Upon his return he jointed forces with the revolutionary members, Semon Rorbax and Krakov, both of whom before had worked for the Langes; participating as before in the proletarian movement.

When Chemeryitsin heard that his son had been sent to a prison camp in the north

... It would have been better to have sent me, thought Leonty, -- I am getting old, just the same, it is all the same to me, besides them Alevtina would live better. Now, in her old age, the best thing for her would be to be near her son. A mother looses all if she looses her son. (251)

Gradually his life comes to a close. His wife goes to live with Yefimka in Urals. He remains at the workshop doing what he can contemplating life in general.

... And love is like the ringing of the church bells ... And what use am I for anyone anymore?
Chemeryitsin's death was, as his life, a violent and unexpected one. He died as did so many revolutionaries at this time, at the hands of the police, but succeeded in blowing up the workshop and himself with a bomb. Nikiforov's meaning here is obvious when referred to the Stalinist regime. He gives an accurate description of the entrance of the secret police, a detailed study right down to their clothes. At this time (1935-1936) the purges were ravaging Russia. Many families were completely annihilated by the secret police. Chemeryitsin's violent death was representative of these "raids" by Stalin's secret police. They descended on their chosen victim with warning.

Nikiforov's second ideal type of labourer was the machinist Gryaznov who was accused of leading the revolutionary forces in the 1905 Revolution in Moscow. Nikiforov takes full advantage in the description of his trial to present a thinly disguised attack against Stalinist Russia. This will be discussed later on in part two. Through Gryaznov, Nikiforov was able to present the position of the proletarian in early twentieth century Russia.

Gryaznov was a mastercraftsman. The presence of Fredrick Lange indicates the importance of the labourer-revolutionary. Lange praises him as far as industrial and technological work is concerned, but he only wishes to satisfy
his own ego in seeing that Gryaznov is finally hung. Lange has managed to create a "father image" among the people for his concern in the recovery of Gryaznov, who was beaten and then sent to the hospital. But the exterior superficiality turns inwardly to a deep hatred for this young man. He led the Lange proletariat in the 1905 revolution, consequently he is a threat not only to Lange but to all the capitalists. He could act as an agitating force in a general uprising that would destroy the capitalistic system in Russia.

Gryaznov represents the labour movement in general. His ideal representation and his firmness in his convictions almost convinces the examining magistrate that this man is guilty, but from a humanitarian point of view he should be saved. This was the type of individual that was needed to save Russia in her first decade. This was a leader, a man who had faith not only in the proletariat but also in himself.

- My wolfish habits are known to me, said Gryaznov, - and, moreover, I do not want mercy, it cannot be that we have mercy for each other; your honour, yes, and this hypocritical mercy is not demanded, we will not come to terms with your, no we will not reconcile ... I have a large family, your honour, very large, the entire Russian proletariat; therefore it is difficult for me to ask for mercy, my family will be perplexed by my cause, they will say, he seccumbed, comrade Matvey bent to their will...

(260).

Here was an individual who understood the people
and the situation. Given the chance, he possibly would have found a solution to the problems of the proletariat. But men like Fredrick Lange and Karp Poludonov realized the great threat to their stability and consequently wanted him out of the way. Prokuroar sums it up:

... Particularly the accused, Matvey Gryaznov, led the trained workers into the battle against the army; he appears to be the instigator of the untimely deaths of many ... great sons of the citizenry. There is no word, no strength, in order to pass the blame of the actions on to the accused; he rejoiced only because he felt the odour of human blood spilt in the name of the salvation of our motherland from confusion and anarchism; he was in league with those who assassinated the closest servant of the tear, destroyed the towns, villages and the largest estates of the landowners. (263)

During the trial Bras gave a detailed account of the history of the labour movement ...

... a short biography of the Russian proletariat, he told the hardships that it endured along its path, about how the liberals, rather the (un-educated) boorish historians accused the proletariat with partiality toward liquor, boistrous living and violent behaviour.

Matvey Gryaznov was sentenced to be hung. The man himself was basically a peaceful individual. He was an idealogist to a certain degree. That is he was able to find peace within himself. As death approaches Matvey passes into a state of limbo, where life seemed too peaceful, content, and happy. Death approaches Gryaznov in the shape of a seductive woman ....
Machinist Gryaznov arises, drops his feet to the floor; in all earnestness he wants to go to this woman, he hears her footsteps, and he himself hurries to the rendezvous, here she is at the door; dazzled by her smile, he falls to his knees and suddenly, weak and with an infinite fortune, he falls on his side ... (275)

Nikiforov presents the reader with an insight into a happy life. A life that Nikiforov was trying to attain, a peaceful limbo-type world. You can almost feel Nikiforov's longing to exchange places with Gryaznov, to escape the cruel realities of Stalinist Russia and fly to a Shangri-La.

Nikiforov's second type of character that was developed was his portrayal of the "ideal man". "Mastera" deals with three distinct individuals, each differing from the other only in his type of ideology.

Alfey, the "pure" noble savage type philosopher; Epimakh, the drunken philosopher; and Krakov the idealistic revolutionary.

Alfey was an ideal individual. He was completely unspoiled by society, a purist in the true sense of the word. His main loves were his daughter Alevtina, Nature and birds, thus the name "ptitsilov". Alfey's individuality proclaimed him a true philosopher, a scaler of Olympian heights. His world revolved around the pure natural pleasures of life. His actions were often those of a simpleton, but then, according to Rousseau, society spoils the individual, and Alfey was un-
inhibited, void of all maliciousness. He can be compared to Turgenev's Poetical Nature Philosopher in the tale "Kasian Krasivoy Mechi", contained in a Sportsman's Sketches.

...As it happened Alfey was found in the same inspired frame of mind, and the trifles of every day life did not overshadow the eminent soul of the bird lover. Mitka saw, with what negligent generosity this fellow wasted his festive smiles, and does not accept the drunkness of these days (a soft bird will not survive a watery scent), was drunk only from his chirping of the birds. (172).

But at the same time his sharp tongue was not kind to the existing regime and to revolutionary activities. This complete reversal from a soft spoken averian old man into a strong critic of the existing conditions was one of his most remarkable qualities. But Alfey did not often change his character in this way.

Perhaps Alfey was one of the most different individuals in the novel. Through him Nikiforov was able to attack the Stalinist regime. Alfey told many allegorical tales to whoever would listen. These tales took the form of simple human idealogical stories, pointing out the fallacies of life, the hurdles that must be overcome in order to attain a peaceful existence with the world and with oneself; some of them were Aesopean in nature while others showed the frailties and pitfalls of life. To the novice reader these appear as small "fablets" within the story, but in all actuality these stories
were direct descriptions of Stalinist Russia. They showed
the bleakness and complete disparity that existed. This
subject will be dealt with in Part II.

Alfey's life revolved around his birds and through
them he found peace and contentment. As would be expected,
when he felt that death was near, he opened his cages and
let the birds fly away together with his soul.

Epimakh was Nikiforov's drunken philosopher. He was
employed by the Lange Brothers in their office. Together
with Karp Poludonov they managed to run the factory. Epimakh
philosophizes about life's trials and tribulations, joys and
disappointments. In comparison to Karp, Epimakh arises as the
completed individual, not only literally, but psychologically,
intellectually and socially. Karp is a "Kham" a boor,
whereas Epimakh, though not exactly a member of the intellectual
millieu, cannot be compared to Karp, an empty, cold, yet
shrewd and scheming individual. In their many conversations
Karp neither joins Epimakh nor voices an opinion. He remains
silent throughout, always listening. The reader concludes
that Karp does not have the depth to him that is required to
be a foil for Epimakh, consequently the latter enjoys freedom
of speech. But these philosophical meanderings are not at all empty.

As mentioned in the Introduction, "Mastera" presents
a picture of not only the past and the present but also of the future. Epimakh is able to forecast the future. Throughout the novel he makes references to various events that take place years later.

Epimakh forecasts the 1917 Revolution:

It is noteworthy how the sign of the times and the instructions point to the fact that the cup of steaming Russian government already boils and will soon explode into the faces of many of the suffers of our country, just as it was shown in the wise books ... and the merchants of the land will sob and cry ... (185).

The character of Krakov is an unusual one because of his position in the story. He is an ideological revolutionary, a member of the intelligentsia who was dissatisfied with the existing regime and joined the underground movement. He became a leader in the Lange area and advocated the principle of "Russian Social-Democratic Workers Party, (Bolshevik)".

Krakov was Gury Poludonov's former teacher and later he becomes the revolutionary master who guided Gury in his underground activity. He was not only a friend and confident but advised Gury, as to the different roads to life, the consequences and the pitfalls. Krakov's main significance throughout the story is that Nikiforov discusses the development of the class struggle through this individual. This struggle existed prior to the revolution and right up into the middle thirties, (although there is very definitely
a class struggle in the Soviet Union at the present).

As the other revolutionaries, Krakov was killed at the barricades together with Gury. The younger revolutionary carried the body of his dead teacher until he too was wounded and died.

Nikiforov portrayed the professional revolutionary through the character of Rorbach. Like Chemeryitsin, he fought for the labour movement but always through the underground channels. In comparing Rorbach to Krakov, a definite significance can be seen, the latter completely patterning his life on ideological circumstances and theoretical practices, while Rorbach faces reality and reacts accordingly. Rorbach was a non-Russian individual who joined the revolutionary movements. This was a commonplace action and is mentioned by Nikiforov in numerous occasions.

Nikiforov raised the question of Christian Socialism - that is the unity of ideas, Christian and Social, throughout this novel. It was a movement to combine both religion and socialism to build a Socialist state. Nikiforov openly spoke about the unity of these ideas in 1935. It was not until 1956 that Boris Pasternak mentioned them in "Doctor Zhivago", thereby remaining silent for almost two decades! Nikiforov's main attack was on the class struggle that was
going on, and this he incorporated into his novels. But he felt that there should be a stronger return to true socialism; recognition of its good traits, such as socialization of industry, collectivism, common governmental ownership of everything. The people must forget about class struggles and put an emphasis on religion so that unity can be restored and then a return to true socialism can occur.

Nikiforov's chief advocate of Christian-Socialism was Soluntsev. Concerning the class struggle he says:

... During the revolution one has to be a bit of a poet, musically inclined and most explicitly a romantic. Our argument about the class struggle will arouse a spiteful, low-lying character. The class struggle then will be good, when it is of nobility (liveliness, cheer, applause, and the merry clinking of glasses). (315)

Nikiforov goes on to discuss the 'creation of a socialist religion' within Russia. Why cannot people live by the Bible?

... Do you remember, how it was written? .... - ... "Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you." - and if we were able to live according to the Bible, then all would have come about otherwise. (277).

Soluntsev and his friends continue discussing the Bible and religion in relation to its complete adoption into the Russian way of life. They say "life is rather like heaven; it is so light and airy that it seems it is
is drawn, this type of life is based on that which is found only in the Biblical truth". (277).

... You speak remarkably well, Sergei Andrieevich, but this is impossible ... - we have a raw materialistic century - and suddenly a biblical truth, think about Sergei!

... I must say that your idea ... of transforming the Bible, and Biblical truth, quite possibly will be realized better in Russia, where one can still see God in the pure soul of our peasantry, but namely what is to be done for the extension of your idea? ... it is unknown to us ... the socialist religion ...

... Yes, yes, namely in this manner .... - The creation of a socialist religion!q

What can be higher than God? What can be brighter and more glorious than this? And did the idea of liberating Russia arise from Christianity? (277).

Thus Nikiforov is putting the question forward during Stalinist Russia. Cannot Christianity be allowed to exist freely together with Socialism? Cannot socialism and religion evolve to form a new state? These questions were prevalent during the dark middle 1930's and Nikiforov was the only one who spoke out. Pasternak was aware of their existence but did not openly discuss them. The significant feature of Nikiforov's discussion on Christian socialism is his mention of the Bible and how individuals would be able to live by it. For this reason alone Nikiforov would have been "liquidated". But he did not stop here in his criticism of the Stalinist regime.
Part II.

Throughout "Mastera", Nikiforov made many derogatory references and direct attacks upon the Stalinist era. It is the purpose of this chapter to discuss these remarks in reference to the events which occurred during 1920-1935.

A story told by Alfey was obviously meant to be a direct description of 1935 Stalinist Russia. Nikiforov wrote this tale with the style of Russian folk tales interspersed with "Symbolical realism" which applied directly to Soviet Russia. The main characteristic of Russian folk tales is its use of common "peasant type" words. Nikiforov successfully combines Symbolical realism and folklore.

... The important point in this story is that there was a dark country where people never laughed from the time they were born, and from their birth were beset by a great dejection, as though, you might say, they found themselves in a cemetery on a rainy day; the clouds droop down to earth and hang from the trees, the dead, as it is their custom, are silent, the birds are all hunched up, the wind hangs its head and hides in the mountains, and nothing moves on earth; silence - as if it were by sorcery, only the rain falls on the leaves Krap, Krap ... But the people who were appointed by fate to reside in this state wander about as if they were asleep. The appearance of the people is gray, and their eyes are bitter - they cannot shelter from weariness. ...

Nikiforov's stark attack on the grey gloomy nature of the Soviet regime is portrayed through the barren futility of symbolical realism.
... And there lived in that state one meek individual, hunting was the means of subsistence for himself and for his wife. He trapped small animals. Once he approaches an overgrown path and sees that an old badger had fallen into his trap. The badger waits for the hunter, motioning with his paw he says "Come to me, you are my salvation". The hunter was surprised and began to look around; who is speaking to him? Again the badger cried out: "come here, come here, I wish to speak with you." - motioning again with his paw. The hunter, dumbfounded by the nature of the circumstances released the spring of the trap, the badger jumped to the side, fortified himself between rocks and laughingly called out from there: "Eh, you numbskull, you lost your luck! But that's life, - said he, - for your simplicity your wife will bear for you a daughter Vyidumka, with her you will find happiness on earth". ... (37 - 38) 1.

This was definitely written in the style of the Russian folk tales; the use of such peasant words "melkyu zverugy", "moey volen", "bez-uma-golovii", "durak-Chudak", clearly exemplifies this. Nikiforov employs symbolical realism in describing the badger who represents the evil forces that were caught in the trap of the basically godd but simple hunger. This can be likened to Soviet reality. The badger representing the Soviet government, quick, smart, always on the alert but also being infallible. The hunger represents the simple but pure peasant. Nikiforov switches from the formal composition of the first part into the rollicking language and the ideas present in folklore.

... The hunter returned to his hut and sees a marvellous miracle; his wife is sitting on the threshold, and in her arms she is holding a new born baby daughter, Vyidumka. ... (38) 1.
With the appearance of Vydumka, Nikiforov retains the folklore technique. Vydumka represents the ideal communist state. She was a symbol of the new Stalinist regime. The language is once more peasant in tone.

... Vydumka's eyes - are ocean-blue; wherever her gaze falls, there the sun also falls, the woods bloom, the apples fill with honey, the birds sing, and boredom is gone. "Ah, what a wonder you are! - thinks the hunter. - Now in our state we can live without grief". He took his daughter from his wife, and pressed her to his heart, with free flowing strides he sets off in all directions, in order to spread joy in life. Wherever he goes there storm clouds turn pink and the sky shines, golden raindrops fall. The hunter continues walking and speaks with his daughter Vydumka. They come to the shores of a river where grapes and apples are growing. The hunter wanted to eat a grape, he picked a few, - sour, he broke a cluster of grapes and placed the grapes in his mouth - bitter, he plucked a plum ... how was he to live - he did not know. And here Vydumka noticed her father's tears. ... "Don't worry, - ... don't cry, I will help you with your worries". And she orders him: "Take a spade, father, dig a hole, pick out the granules from the hole and give those granules to me." Thus did the hunter. ... "Now watch, said Vydumka. She placed a few in her hand, and cast them to the east - apples grew; cast to the west - plums grew - cast to the north-grapes entwined. The hunter picked an apple - sugar flowed; he placed a grape in his mouth - it melts itself; he tasted a plum - he almost swallowed his tongue. The hunter was overjoyed and thought: "Now I will not starve. I will live and invite guests". He glanced around, all is in bloom, it was as if boredom had never been. He wanted to take his daughter into his arms, so he could carry her across the world, but Vydumka arose into the air above the glowing garden, and calls from above: "Good-bye father! When you need me, call me, and I will appear at once," - and she ascended and the
further she went the brighter it became, all was tempting ... (38-39) 1.

The last episode was written in a formal style but is abundant in symbolical realism with folklore overtones.

Vyдумка constructs an ideal communist state in which the storm clouds are pink, golden raindrops fall, it is the land of plenty; food is not scarce, a reference to the great famines, Vyдумка scatters seeds to the west; the hope of planting seeds of Communism in these countries. The hunter wanted to carry his daughter across the earth, signifying the creation of a world revolution, but Vyдумка rose above the shining garden, implying that the universal revolution was a failure, the state just went poof, it was gone; with her ascent the region became brighter. Никіфоров could be saying hopefully that with the disintegration of the state the future will become brighter. But the bright light from Vyдумка’s ascent could also symbolize the growth of Stalin’s personality cult and its penetrating influence.

Никіфоров’s next attack was upon the Soviet system of the "apparatchiki" during the Stalinist epoch. "Грядет на Россию кхам ..." (69) 1. He criticizes the entire Soviet bureaucratic system, as in "У фонаря", he wrote that Russia is being overrun with boors.

Епимах expresses his views on an authoritarian govern-
ment. In reality Nikiforov says that one should possess magnanimousness and daringness not only in one's actions but also in his thoughts; that the laws of the country should not govern an individual's thinking and impair his actions. Freedom of speech and action, and not the binding ties of an authoritarian state.

Alfey tells another story in which he describes the escape of Asmodey, a spirit of evil (zloy dykh) (115) 1. He terrorizes the people while a great storm lashes the country, completely destroying their faith and submitting them to great hardships. It is obvious that Nikiforov is describing the purges and the evil that resulted during that time.

Once again, Nikiforov attacks the dictatorial nature of Stalin through a description of tsarist Russia.

... Our Russia is like a bed of submissiveness and humbleness, ... at the head of which sits the tsar, like an old woman sitting at the forefront, and from this old woman are invisible reins directly to the heavenly transmission. This god-building. When you bow to the tsar don't bend your head ... (163) 1.

Tsarist Russia was an autocracy. Stalin is a dictator. The tsars believed in their divine nature, and Stalin in building a personality cult for himself. Consequently Nikiforov points out what is the difference between the two?
Either way the people lose.

He writes about the government taking the Soviet youth from the villages and forcing them to the cities where they work in unfamiliar surroundings. They are completely untrained for their work. Through Alfey's story Nikiforov describes the problems that arise and the tasks set out for the youth.

"Nyet, yehat, ubezhat ot etovo nevozmozhno." (193) 1.

Chemeryitsin and Vikul discuss the conditions for people in other lands but indirectly Nikiforov says that escape from Russia is impossible. Nikiforov wishes to escape from life itself through spiritual satisfaction, through the development of the ideal state. But he realizes that life is inescapable and one must carry on with his burdens. You cannot escape from Soviet Russia with its terrorist purges and dictatorial powers.

Nikiforov discusses the great famines that ravaged the country, in particular famines of the Ukraine the Caucasus area and the Volga region during the thirties.

... Today I returned from the Volga region; I will tell you the truth - I ran away. A general famine a plague is there, the people that have strength are mutinying along the shores, the others died from cholera, a few of the cossacks fled to Siberia. (218) 1.
The famines spread throughout Russia. The peasants, it was reported, were eating "bark from the trees, intestines and hay, and from this they will die ... and just think how many will die without a struggle!" (247) 1.

Nikiforov makes reference to the bread lines that were forming during the thirties. The term "bezrabotniitsa" symbolically refers to a queuing of the people. In 1933 especially in the Ukraine and Voronhez districts there was no bread. Thousands starved.

... Rassohin (a minor character), walks down the street, it is like a graveyard, lined with bodies. (171) 11.
... In sleighs the dead are piled one on top of the other, a woman with a wattled hand-bag lies on the top of the sleigh ... (170) 11.

There existed at this time, 1935, a great feeling of hope among the people, an anticipation for something better to come about. A better life, a lessening of the governmental terrorism. But instead the people were met with more purges and the outbreak of World War II soon after. Nikiforov echos the peoples' cry for a better life. "Not a rising up, my dear Vasili Timofeevich, but an anticipating time as to success." ("Ne vosparenie, liubezneeshi Vasili Timofeevich, a vsechasnoe bdenie est' zalog yspekha: ) 229) 1.

But their hopes were not fulfilled. After the war the people again felt that there should be a relaxation but
Stalin retained his iron grip on them.

The hope of the people is again expressed by Rorbach. He states:

... Truth will come in time and Vaal will fall
... Those who are guilty for the poverty of the nation are many. Don't give up hope, comrade Boris. In the open struggle there will be many sacrifices and you yourself will beg for pardon. In the class struggle all is like nature, all is forecast. Be careful not to infringe on the strength of the masses. (246) 1.

Nikiforov not only expressed the thought of the people but he felt himself that a "thaw" must come. Unfortunately it did not.

Nikiforov writes about the thousands, even millions of people who stream into the city to work for the Lange factory. This again is a reference to the previous actions of the Soviets in collectivizing the youth, in particular the children of the Kulaks, who were sent to the city to work, while their parents were sent to other parts of the country, either under Soviet supervision or to wander and beg for themselves. He attacks the Soviet government through Fredrick Lange. It is too powerful, it can do whatever it pleases, it is too strong, no one will contradict nor attack it. A restraint must be found.

But Nikiforov mentions further (303) 1, that many of the peasants who opposed this collectivization moved to
Siberia or to the Don region to escape the Soviet influence, only eventually either to be brought back or incorporated into collective farms and industry in that area.

Nikiforov attacks careerism through Epimakh. He states that Epimakh is content only when he is in command of the situation; he became accustomed to the other necessary adaptations that led to greed, to grab something and devour it'.

... At your glorifying eulogy we will praise your descendent, if you did not sacrifice them for yourself. (325) 1.

But Nikiforov is including careerism in general. He states that the men will sacrifice everything for their own benefit. They are greedy, grasping, hoarding individuals not content unless they are at the top, and quickly become accustomed to their positions. They become demanding not realizing that they are slowly destroying their image as they rise in their career.

Nikiforov criticizes the lack of interest among the people to work in the Kolkhozes and sovkhozes. There is complete apathy among them; they are dissatisfied with the conditions that exist, there is no social security for the aged. A person works for "ten, twenty, thirty, even fifty years" (328) and what does he get in return. One works a lifetime and does not have any reward. Surely there is some-
thing wrong'. Thus the apathy within the individual. Why should he work? What is he working for? Is there a means to the end? Yes, the construction of a Socialist state. But the reader feels Nikiforov is not satisfied with this answer, certainly the people are not. As would be expected, Nikiforov eventually attacks the standardization of thinking.

Be firm in your convictions before submission. Those who oppose find themselves beneath the axe ... (331) 1.

Stalin purged indiscriminately consequently people were restricted in their expressions because of the inevitable if they were misinterpreted. Nikiforov regards this standardization as the supreme element of a dictatorship. Freedom of speech should be allowed. Thoughts withheld will eventually burst forth and serious consequences will result. But Stalin realized this and in this way the purges were successful. They managed to destroy the "core" and Russia remained a dictatorship.

The "cult of personality" is found throughout Nikiforov's book. It is only insignificantly developed in Alfey's first story about Vydumka. Nikiforov presents this "cult" in the form of two people who believed that truth existed on earth, but no one had seen its face. For this reason alone everyone speaks of truth as being shrouded. The wise men declared:
... It is beautiful, so beautiful that the earth cannot contain its beauty, for this reason truth remains in heaven ... But there were people who spoke about the great approach of misfortune, when people will overthrow truth and their humble adoration to the earth ... - then truth will wallow in the prosaic side of life, and the world will think of another truth, one which will be of assistance to it, a condescending truth, which will justify the crimes; war, thievery, greed, the subordination of one individual by another, and the presence of God and His servants! (17-18).11.

Thus Nikiforov was able to express his opinion of Stalin through the discussion of truth. The hope that Stalin will fall and the establishment of a regime which will justify his actions in the eyes of the people, a regime which will restore faith.

...A time will come, mumbled Rudenko, - when the earth will shrug itself free from the debauchery of thoughts ... (182).11.

Alfey has always longed to go to America and in his dreams he walked across it with all of his birds. As in his previous works, ("Unity,""Into the Wind"), Nikiforov's references to America express a longing of the individual Soviet citizen. His dream of America with its streets paved with gold could never come true. It was forbidden.

Like Rorbach, Nikiforov adapted himself to the Soviet regime. He wrote the literary unsuccessful novel "Unity", but as far as the Five Year Plan was concerned it was a success. But Nikiforov had to adapt himself into the regime because of
of the pressure from the government and the literary organizations. Thus Rorbach must adapt himself to the conditions around him, to the world in general, but

... to free oneself from this hum-drum existence a revolution must occur. The revolution will be the first not the hum-drums beginning in all the history of man ... (24)11.

Nikiforov forecasts the class struggle, in his earlier novel, "Into the Wind". He says that 'brother will rise against brother; the son will strike father' (109) 11. The class struggle will come about but an inciter is needed, one who will agitate, rouse up the people. All must be destroyed and a complete new regime set up. Everything and everyone will be purged.

Philanthropic action was scorned at in Russia. It was only for the 'stupid individuals' according to Epimakh. He tried to connect this action with the idea that people would not associate with you, friends would not recognize you if you felt this way toward them. Nikiforov shows the attitude that people had toward each other.

Chemeryitsin was a representative of the old communist guard who were disappointed in the Stalinist regime. There was a great similarity between Nikiforov and Chemeryitsin. It has been suggested that Chemeryitsin was an autobiographical figure of Nikiforov. Consequently, the disillusionment in the Stalinist regime. Nikiforov's attitude
toward the regime and his appraisal of it can be felt in the four previous novels.

Chemeryitsin's feelings are expressed through a dream in which he loses all touch with reality, ... and he approached this reality with such sadness and melancholy, that not even the brightest days were of joy to him ... (252) 11.

The Soviet reality is best expressed by the following...

... Is it possible that we have angered our God to such a degree that he allowed such a beast, a hellish crew, into our universal family? Is it possible that in reality we have returned to the time of barbarity and savageness? Is it possible, I ask you, that you will leave this spittle to remain on earth, that which is apt to spread evil through our families and misanthropy? No, my God I do not believe this. I think, that a great love still lives in the hearts of many, this is why I call out to you and hope that you will destroy the core of this, diffusing evil, spittle ... (263) 11.

Through the figure of Bras Nikiforov is able to give the reader a chance to decide for himself whether or not the immediate past and even the present is worth while. The question that Bras puts forward is one that has been thought of many times but never said:

... Why is the history of the development of our state, the development of our industry still evolving along the path of insurrection, armed rebellion and struggles? What is the reason for this? (267) 11.
Thus Nikiforov has presented "the" question of the Soviet regime. He lets the reader decide for himself.

... We bow to justice, to our justice, your honour, an impartial period before history. (268) 11.

Nikiforov possibly feels that this is the end of the regime. It is declining and through this sentence he is forecasting its decline but at the same time ironically submitting to it.

Perel'iivkin expresses the opinion of the labour class and describes the complete destruction of human individuality. He is an old professional worker, and says that he was never able to gain consciousness throughout his entire life, he served the tsar, then the soviets, never gaining enough strength to overcome these forces and develop his individuality. Nikiforov feels that all personal activity and thought is governed by the state. Thus he mercilessly opposes the Stalinist regime.

In comparing Nikiforov with Yury Olesha we can see that the latter made use of intellectuals rather than the labouring class to make accusations against the Party.

Nikiforov's novel caused a great sensation when it appeared in the Soviet Union in 1936. By 1937 Nikiforov had disappeared and it was presumed that he was dead. As
the reader obviously realizes by now, Nikiforov was probably one of very few known writers at this time to draw so much criticism against the Stalinist regime. But he paid for this with his life. "Mastera" is one of the greatest books ever written in Soviet literature. It gives a wealth of information concerning the labouring and revolutionary classes and acts as an expression of the thought and the suppressions that were prevalent during the violent thirties.

2. Ibid 1; p. 329.


4. While Nikiforov was writing this novel Alexi Tolstoy had just completed "Peter The Great". It was extremely popular in Russia, and possibly this had an influencing effect upon Nikiforov, as far as describing the Western influence.
Chapter V
Conclusion

As mentioned in the earlier chapters Nikiforov's individuals were portrayed with a personal and social life which was inseparably bound together. Consequently a psychological portrayal began to appear and the personalities developed into complex but "conscious" communists. This idea of "psychological consciousness" was thoroughly developed in his earlier novels. Together with these individuals Nikiforov strove to perfect his labour and revolutionary individual. This was finally accomplished in "Mastera" by Nikiforov, a literal mastercraftsman himself.

Nikiforov's party bureaucrats follow a pattern of similar characteristics, yet at the same time differing in their personalities. All are dedicated men, degenerating and regenerateing as the case may be, but still men who are faithful to the cause. This "faith" is possibly only professed because they realize that the party is a means to an end, or possibly they are genuine ideal type individuals with strong convictions iij the Party.

Nikiforov's professional labourer was precisely and almost perfectly drawn. He presented the various aspects of labour organization; trade unions - Bryakin; revolutionary-labour movements - Gryaznov and Chemeryitsin; labour at the
collective level, Epimov, and the position of women in labour organizations and movements, Faika, Serdobova, and Seema.

Nikiforov was the last writer to attempt to discuss the subject of labour psychology. After Nikiforov there was a general standardization of labour characters, so that his individuals are portrayals rarely found in any other Soviet novels. Possibly a portrayal could be found in a few of the Five Year Plan works, but this is doubtful. Nikiforov's ability to portray such individuals was recognized not only by eminent writers but also by the Party. They realized the artistic quality of these individuals but sacrificed Nikiforov because of the harm that he had done to them. Other writers would probably follow in his wake and the realities of the Party, its fallacies and non-ideological content, would eventually be destroyed.

The line of the old professional worker can be traced from "U Fonarya" through "Zhenshchina" and "Into the Wind," to "Mastera". Chessosov was the snake-like party bureaucrat of "U Fonarya", but at the same time he could not be discussed as the primary representative of this movement. Bryakin, "Zhenshchina" was an old professional worker who finally joined the Party. He is the representative of the Trade Unions and Nikiforov strongly attacks both the Party and the trade unions through him.
The character of Epimov followed quickly the footsteps of Chessosov and Bryakin. He was the spokesman of the proletariat, the defender of socialism, the typical representative of the Soviet regime. Chemeryitsin and Graznov were the ultimate representatives of Nikiforov's character type. The former was a "labour-psychology" individual. He was a reactionary labour-revolutionary who understood the psychology of the masses and tried to help them. But like Nikiforov he too was disillusioned in the Stalinist regime and gave up from despair. Gryaznov was an ideal individual and realized the importance of the labour and revolutionary struggle. But like the rest he did not succeed.

Nikiforov's ideological characters were for one reason only. As a mask under which he could attack the Stalinist regime, an attack that was professionally and ably carried out. An attack that only one who was completely disillusioned in the system could carry out. But Nikiforov overstepped his disillusionment and tried to present an unbiased point of view.

Nikiforov was accused of being a supporter of the Trotskyite principle "Industry in the first place". Thus the industrial development went "hand in glove" with the professional trade unions. This of course was anti-Party and later Nikiforov was accused of Trotskyite leanings. It is fairly obvious that Trotskyism played an important role in the
underlying theme of "U Fonarya" and possibly in Zhenshchina," but it is doubtful in the case of the latter. After his disappearance Nikiforov was severally criticized for his affiliation with the Trotskyite faction and his works were completely banned in 1938.

It is interesting to note the references to the past that Nikiforov has made throughout his novels, in particular to those in "Mastera". The influence of Sergei Eisenstein's film "Battleship Potemkin" is reflected in Krakov's letter to Gury of the Odessa uprising in 1905. Nikiforov gives a colourful description of the events. Since Eisenstein's film was popular at this time, it is presumed to have influenced Nikiforov in writing this. Nikiforov mentions the 1905 Revolution in detail throughout the novel, together with the "Blood Sunday" riot led by Father Gapon. Also there are numerous references to the Russo-Japanese War, 1904. But the most important reference still remains the Trotskyite influence throughout his earlier works.

In passing it should be mentioned that many writers were rehabilitated some post-humously - for instance Issak Babel', Sergei Budantsev, Ivan Katayev, and Boris Pil'nyak to mention a few, - and the admission has been made by the Soviet press that they were all subjected to arbitrary and unjust treatment. But Georgii Konstantinovich Nikiforov has not been rehabilitated,
nor have his works even appeared as have those of Yuri Olesha, Anna Okhomatova, Marina Tsevtayava and others. This is to be expected because many of his attacks were directed to the very core of the party. But because of the de-Stalinization that has taken place, one wonders why Nikiforov has not been resurrected and even glorified for speaking out against the dictator.

In conclusion, it is necessary to state that Nikiforov was "ever striding forward with full reality and objectivity" and his five novels are classic examples that human expressions and individuality cannot be suppressed.
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