

ARCADIA, VOID AND EQUILIBRIUM

ARCADIA, VOID AND EQUILIBRIUM: TURGENEV'S FATHERS AND SONS
AND THE WRITING OF CONTEMPORARY UKRAINIAN-CANADIANS

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Abstract

Russian realist writer Ivan Turgenev wrote Fathers and Sons in 1861, the middle of the politically, socially and ideologically eventful nineteenth century. While the turbulent historical moment is certainly reflected in the imagined landscape of the novel, Turgenev's text is first and foremost a literary work with implications that extend beyond the moment of its conception. Through allusions to the classical pastoral and juxtaposition of social and economic hardship, Turgenev creates a disconcerting ironic pastoral, or Russian Arcadia, that is marked by tension between a discordant ideal and reality. Resolution can be achieved in two ways that mirror nature's duality: one may become brutal, nihilistic and destructive, or one may strive for harmony and endure with the earth. By contemplation of one's own nature and the limits imposed by culture and nature itself, Turgenev demonstrates that the individual can come to this harmony, or an adaptive equilibrium that is characterized by balance, stability, and enjoyment of sensory experience.

Turgenev's ironic pastoral, his concern with human brutality and the madness attendant upon it, the recognition of boundaries, and the sensory as an enduring mode of experience and communication are revisited and reworked by Ukrainian-Canadians in the twentieth century. The 1987 anthology, Yarmarok:

Ukrainian writing in Canada since the Second World War, represents one of the most comprehensive collections of Ukrainian-Canadian writing in English and brings together both accomplished and previously unpublished writers that include: Mykola Ponedilok, Ruth Andrishak, Wasyl Sofroniw Levytsky, Stefania Hurko, Oleh Zujewskyj, Dennis Gruending, Maara Haas, and Bob Wakulich. These writers draw upon personal and family history and memory, which are haunted by the revolution Turgenev anticipated in Fathers and Sons, to relate their Arcadias, and the equilibriums they envision for individuals striving for balance within the limits imposed by the Canadianizing environment.

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Introduction

Before Ivan Turgenev's entrance onto the European literary stage, Russia was largely perceived by the West as possessing no noteworthy literature (Waddington 2). In 1853, two years before Alexander Herzen and Henry Chorley first dropped Turgenev's name in England, Laurence Oliphant appraised Russian literature and fine arts as being "'comparatively unworthy' of the Western observer's attention"(2). After Turgenev's rapid rise to notoriety, he, "at least, was taken seriously by practically every English reviewer"(2). Not just the first Russian on the English scene, Turgenev was also the first to receive public acknowledgment of his work, in the form of an honorary doctorate of Civil Law from Oxford, in 1879 (Andrew, Russian ix).

Before 1885, Turgenev was the widest read of major Russian writers both in and out of his home country. Not even Tolstoy or Dostoevsky were considered his equal as novelists; in fact, Turgenev was thought to have "no rival" in Russia at the time (Andrew 8). What set Turgenev apart from his illustrious younger contemporaries was his aesthetic of restraint and his disinclination to "thunder at his generation" or any other (Berlin 9). Paradoxically, it is this moderation of style and the non-judgmental honesty with which he crafted his types that brought Turgenev first to critical attention, controversy and acclaim in his own time, and then diminished academic interest in his works in more recent times. Jane T. Costlow

explains that "[t]wentieth-century Western critics have ... been less interested in Turgenev's understated aesthetic, more enthralled by the maximalism and 'Russianness' of Dostoevsky and Tolstoy"(5).

In 1909, Dmitry Merezhkovsky expressed regret that the time of Turgenevan moderation had apparently passed -- to be replaced by the radicalism that would lead Russia into an even more turbulent century than the one just past. Merezhkovsky writes: "Didn't our revolution fail because there was too much in it of Russian extremity, too little of European measure; too much of L. Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, too little Turgenev"(137). Joe Andrew praises Turgenev as a "John the Baptist of the revolution" for the author's recognition of the gathering power of his society's "radicals," and for his wish to "work with the new forces" in the spirit of "realistic hope"(40-41).

Turgenev's willingness to accept limitations in the social environment and find a viable course within their bounds characterized his personal hope for the country's future and his literary work. It also provides a link to Ukrainian-Canadian writers in the twentieth century who likewise strive to survive and thrive within the confines that the dominant culture dictates. Canada may be relatively untouched by the threat of revolution (or so "The Rest of Canada" would like to think!), but the limiting forces of acculturation exert themselves upon immigrants in ways that are subtler, but

arguably as intrusive as the political factionalism of nineteenth-century Russia. Much Ukrainian-Canadian writing at present focusses upon navigating the perils of the immigrant-to-ethnic process directly, or frames more general personal struggles for reconciliation with a limited environment. The choice faced by Turgenev in his time and Ukrainian-Canadians today is the same: in the face of oppression or environmental pressure, revolt or reform.

Today's Ukrainian-Canadians are the products, although often removed by one or more generations, of the very revolution Turgenev anticipated in Fathers and Sons. The legacy of communism and the intense, often antagonistic relationship with "Big Brother" Russia is vividly remembered and manifested in Ukrainian-Canadian fiction. Helen Potrebenco, a second-generation Canadian, wrote "The Fifth Bundle," in 1979: a short story that reproduces the closed-mouthed tension of lifetimes of outside control that is still palpable to many Ukrainian immigrants to Canada. The story's ominous refrain is: "no one slanders the Soviet Union" (Yarmarok 208). Mykola Ponedilok, a first generation Ukrainian-American, wrote "An Adventurous Excursion" in 1982: a joke-tale that compares of "the whole Moscow Politburo" to a herd of mountain goats (206).

As the destination of Ukrainian immigrants who leave the stifling shadow of Russia, Canada takes on pastoral overtones, at least initially. It is a land not torn by

revolution, free from choking government -- apparently a place where anything might be possible for the individual who applies her/himself. For those who came from the Old Country and for those who must later leave it behind for the opportunities of the city, the pioneer farm (or the idea of it) becomes the ideal pastoral retreat. In his desire for continuity and reform rather than revolution, Turgenev, too, idealizes the pastoral in Fathers and Sons. The estates in the Russian countryside Turgenev imagines bear numerous similarities to the idealized Canadian pioneer farms: both are rural oases the community's urbanized younger members revisit, both have the potential to inspire nostalgia for bygone, simpler, more felicitous days, and both symbolize the continuity of tradition.

All of the Ukrainian-Canadian works to which I will refer in this thesis are taken from Yarmarok: Ukrainian writing in Canada since the Second World War, 1987, the most comprehensive of a very small number of collections of such texts. The editors, Jars Balen and Yuri Klymovy, bring together samples from "a dynamic literary subculture hitherto accessible only to readers of Ukrainian"(xi), to lay the groundwork for future studies of Ukrainian-Canadian literature. The name of the collection, "Yarmarok," means "fair" and it refers to the yarmarok described in Ukrainian-born Nikolai Gogol's "Soronchyntsi Fair," as well as the sophisticated Ukrainian journal Literaturnyi yarmarok (Literary fair) that flourished briefly before

it was quashed during Stalin's purges. Many of the works were chosen for their depictions of the response of "emigre writers" to the "New World environment" and are therefore especially suitable in terms of the pastoral concerns of my study.

Chapter One is an analysis of the pastoral ideal in Turgenev's Fathers and Sons and the writing of Mykola Ponedilok, Ruth Andrishak and Wasyl Sofroniw Levytsky. In each case, the pastoral exists only as an ideal, and the harsh realities of the social and physical environments turn Arcadia into an ironic reflection of itself. Chapter Two, following Turgenev's lead as read by Costlow, proposes two options for relieving the tension that the distance between the ideal and reality creates: the individual can "become brutal and be destroyed" or "live an ideal of harmony and endure with the earth"(110). The Green Man archetype and the philosophy of Russian nihilism will inform a discussion of the first option as it is relevant to Turgenev, Levytsky, Stefania Hurko and Oleh Zujewskyj. Chapter Three explores Turgenev's second option of harmony and endurance, and the process by which the individual can achieve this ideal. Here I will focus on adaptive balance within the confines of societal and environmental boundaries, and a movement toward the senses as vehicles of pleasure and cultural preservation.

Chapter One

The (Sometimes) Ironic Pastoral: Russian and Canadian Arcadias

The day is come when I again repose
 Here, under this dark sycamore, and view
 These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard-tufts,
 Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,
 Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves
 'Mid groves and copses ...

- William Wordsworth, "Tintern Abbey," 1798

How sweet is the Shepherd's sweet lot!
 From the morn to the evening he strays;
 He shall follow his sheep all the day,
 And his tongue shall be filled with praise.

- William Blake, "The Shepherd," 1789

Turgenev's use of the pastoral in Fathers and Sons grows out of his "fear of revolution, of the unleashing of destructive psychological and political forces"(Costlow 139). The pastoral represents an ideal of human community, cultural continuity, agronomy, harmony with nature, and a vastly preferable alternative to the uncertainty, violence and death promised by revolution. For Turgenev, the pastoral ideal involves the practise of measure and balance in human affairs, modelled after nature's manifestation of these two phenomena. From the novel's beginning, Turgenev admits that achievement of the pastoral ideal is severely limited by social

reality and impending revolution, and he illustrates this by depicting the deterioration of the Russian landscape in the novel's descriptions of nature. What results is an ironic pastoral: where the ideal is implied and embraced, even as it is dismantled by the author's honest representation of "the life of his time"(3).

Contemporary Ukrainian-Canadian writers revisit the pastoral in the context of life in their time to express a yearning for the continuity of tradition, peace and security that are emblems of the genre. Like Turgenev, Mykola Ponedilok, Ruth Andrishak, and Wasyl Sofroniw Levytsky refer to the traditional pastoral as a social ideal. At first glance, Ponedilok's "On a Ukrainian Farm" is gleefully celebratory, although ironic elements appear as the narrative events lead the reader to re-evaluate the author's treatment of the pastoral. Andrishak's Arcadia goes beyond Turgenevan irony to create an even more dismal anti-pastoral that obliquely laments the absence of the pastoral ideal. Levytsky's pastoral reflects Turgenev's in its parallel juxtaposition of ideal and real landscapes, but it also takes the reader into an ironic Arcadia beyond the revolution Turgenev envisions but does not produce.

Turgenev alludes to the classical pastoral to highlight the manner in which the "reality" of the landscape of Fathers and Sons contrasts with the ideal landscape envisioned by the genre. M. H. Abrams defines the pastoral as "an elaborately conventional poem expressing the urban poet's nostalgic image of the peace and

simplicity of the life of shepherds and other rural folk in an idealized natural setting"(127). Abrams's definition of the pastoral can be dissected to illustrate how it serves as an ironic reference point for the first substantial piece of nature description, in Turgenev's novel, which I will analyse in some detail shortly. In spite of numerous echoes of the pastoral in the passage, it quickly becomes apparent that the rural landscape of Fathers and Sons is not the dazzling natural environment or the harmonious human society of the classical vision.

This departure from the pastoral is, to some extent, a natural function of the author's realism. Turgenev ranks among the most prominent realists of 1855-1880, and by definition avoids the exuberant and profuse use of literary convention that Abrams attributes to the pastoral form. In his evocation of the pastoral, as in the novel as a whole, Turgenev attempts to approach the realist, "materialist ethic, based on the central propositions that 'the beautiful is life' and that art is in every meaningful sense inferior to a reality subject to rational comprehension"(Cherneshevsky, Cambridge 248).¹ However, because of his "exquisite feeling for the natural beauties of the world,"(249) he does not manage entirely to resist the temptation to romanticize

¹ According to The Cambridge History of Russian Literature, Cherneshevsky's aesthetic and definition of realism were the standards to which Russian realist authors aspired in the nineteenth century. (248) Turgenev maintained a "cordial personal relationship with Cherneshevsky, and some critics read Bazarov as a representation of Cherneshevsky's pet type the raznochinets -- low born, radical, self-motivated men. (See Todd 253-254)

and embellish even as he presents "some of the finest descriptions we have of the society in which he lived,"(249) or, in this particular case, a description of the depressed imagined landscape that frames Fathers and Sons. When romanticism manifests itself in the novel, it is invariably chided by realism, perhaps as Turgenev struggles with and reproaches his own "exquisite feeling" for nature. Nikolai, for example, embodies this tendency, as he apostrophizes: "O Lord, how beautiful it is!" upon viewing a lilac branch swarming with midges, only to have Stoff und Kraft come to mind and usurp his "favourite verses"(131). In the first two-paragraph description of nature, a similar tension is evident. In place of a photographic portrait of the scenery, there is one paragraph of stark realism and one of enthusiastic romanticism. The line, "The country through which they were driving was not in the least picturesque" begins the first paragraph, whose remainder is comprised of the ungilded details of the degenerating countryside (83). The second paragraph transforms the same scenery into "a sea of golden-green" in which vegetation shines and stirs "in sweeping waves under the soft warm breath of the wind"(83). Arkady's response is irrational and joyous; he gazes until his "thoughts" grow "dim" and he flings off his greatcoat for the sheer thrill of the spring day(84). Turgenev does not reject the "idealized setting" of the pastoral by insisting upon unimpassioned, unadorned observation; rather, he juxtaposes the realistic and the romantic in a

dynamic interplay that emphasizes the inadequacy of both aesthetics at the same time that it celebrates them. Jane T. Costlow suggests that this is a result of the love/hate relationship Turgenev had with his motherland: "his own deep love for Russia was marked by a painful sense of the violence and darkness of her history"(140). Arkady's double-vision of Russian Arcadia may be a mirroring of Turgenev's own.

Irony is another by-product of Turgenev's juxtaposition strategy, especially in the first paragraph of the passage. Arkady serves as the eyepiece and interpreter of the setting and, by his very name, constantly evokes the classical pastoral.² His new urbanization also qualifies him to be a traditional pastoral narrator as he returns to the rural land of his youth. However, the decrepitude of what he sees renders pastoral allusions simultaneously ridiculous and poignant. "Russian Arcadia," as Jane T. Costlow labels the novel's landscape (113), is rife with decay and irredeemed poverty, even as it refers to the plenty and harmony of the true pastoral. Arkady sees sparse, low flora, "little streams with hollow banks," "diminutive ponds with narrow dams," "hamlets with squat little huts beneath blackened and often half-collapsing roofs," "crooked barns with ... gaping doorways" and "churchyards that had gone to wrack and ruin"(83). The peasants they pass are "in rags" and they ride "the sorriest little nags"(83). Rather than feeling fortified by the wholesomeness that would surround

² Arcadia is a mountainous region in Greece that has taken on the connotations of the pastoral as the archetypal "ideal" setting. (Abrams 14)

him in the classical pastoral, Arkady's heart sinks. Instead of being moved to nostalgic apostrophizing of the landscape's enduring "peace and simplicity" Arkady recognizes an urgent need for change. He exclaims to himself: "It just can't go on like this: this must all be transformed"(83). The notion of revolution replaces that of pastoral continuity. With the introduction of the idea of revolution comes the threat of violence and even death.

Costlow discusses the way that Turgenev modifies the pastoral by introducing, into the traditional form, the forces of revolution and death. Not only does Turgenev ironically compare the pastoral ideal and reality, but he also establishes an "ominous" pattern of "pastoral, death, revolution"(113). In the passage treated above, the pastoral is evoked by allusion, death is reflected in the decay evident in the descriptive details, and revolution is suggested by Arkady's response. Costlow also cites the passage in Chapter Three, where the narrator relates the brief tale of Nikolai Kirsanov's ten year "idyll of conjugal bliss," as another example of this pattern (113). The pastoral, in the form of the couple's remarkably simple and peaceful relationship and activities, is called up so as to heighten the impact of the introduction of darker forces. Turgenev writes:

Husband and wife lived very comfortably and quietly: they were hardly ever apart - they read together, sang and played duets together at the piano; she grew flowers and looked after chickens, while he went hunting now and again and busied himself with the estate, and Arkady grew and grew - comfortably

and quietly like his parents. Ten years passed like a dream.[pastoral] In 1847, Kirsanov's wife died. The blow nearly killed him and in a few weeks his hair turned grey.[death] In the hope of somewhat distracting his thoughts, he decided to go abroad ... but then came the year 1848.[revolution](75)

Early descriptive passages, like the ones above, establish this pattern of pastoral, death, and revolution, and they communicate Turgenev's recognition that the pastoral is unsustainable. Yet it is evident that Turgenev is not launching an attack on this apparently impossible dream of simplicity and peace. Because of the absence of criticism of the Kirsanovs' brief fulfillment of the dream, it appears to be an ideal to which Turgenev would subscribe, even if the real implementation of it is doubtful or elusive. A further implication is that giving oneself over to the revolutionary impulse brought on by the presence of death is an anxiety-laden idea; both Arkady and Nikolai hesitate to do so. Arkady vocalizes the need for revolutionary change within the dying estate system, but does not undertake to put it in motion. (In fact, in the novel's final chapter, Arkady embraces the option of estate reform, and Turgenev allows him to make a healthy profit at it(292).) "But how are we to begin?[to implement revolutionary change]" Arkady wonders, just before all thoughts of revolution fly on the warm spring breeze (83).

Turgenev's ironic treatment of the pastoral is embodied further in the violence that permeates all levels of Russian Arcadia and serves as evidence of its decay. Peasants engage in domestic violence, as the driver of the tarantass that carries

Arkady and Bazarov away from Odintsova's attests. Bazarov addresses the "bleary-eyed" driver with the questions: "Do you have a wife?" and "Do you beat her?"(191). The peasant is quick to reply: "Acourse I might ..." (191). Both Bazarov's father and Nikolai Kirsanov have few qualms about flogging the peasants on their estates(218). Pavel, another apparent gentleman, who originally retreated to the pastoral to nurse a devastated heart, is also not above a violent confrontation. He is moved, by the kiss Bazarov steals from Fenichka, to challenge Bazarov to a duel to the death, and by chance alone ends up wounded, not dead. These microcosmic outbursts of violence remind the reader of the threat of wholesale violence that constantly hangs over the narrative. References to 1848, nihilism, and the presence of Bazarov himself recall the proximity and possibility of tremendous violence in the form of civil war.

Both violence and irony are present in the episode in which Arkady and Bazarov, in spite of their worldliness and recent immersion in polite society, very nearly come to tearing each other "to pieces" as they recline and converse by a haystack on the Bazarov farm (213). Bazarov's comment on their simmering brutality seems to be another purposeful, ironic playing off of the pastoral ideal against reality. "Here in the hay," he states, "in these idyllic surroundings, far from the maddening crowd and out of sight, it wouldn't matter"(213 my emphasis). The students have supposedly exchanged the "maddening" urban environment for the simple, peaceful

pastoral. In the classical formula, they would be experiencing the inspiration and character fortification that the lush and harmonious pastoral provides. Instead, their friendship is disintegrating more quickly the further into the countryside they go. If Arcadia fosters felicity, it would seem that Russian Arcadia rends relationships.

Just as he sets up the image of the pastoral to dismantle it for the sake of irony, Turgenev also introduces the pastoral, death, revolution pattern to invert it. The figure that turns this pattern on its head is, of course, Bazarov. Bazarov, in Costlow's formulation, embodies "the shadow of death and revolution" that "falls from the first" to announce the novel's "own concerns"(113). He is 1848 personified: Turgenev embodies his vision of the "men of 1848" in a character whose class, "otherness for his patrician author," and "radicalism"(116), implicitly respond to Arkady's earlier question: "How should we begin?" As Bazarov moves brusquely through the narrative, he invariably disrupts the pastoral by demonstrating, through the conflict he instigates, that even where there is the appearance of felicity and harmony, this is still and always brutal Russian Arcadia just below the surface.

If imperfect Russian Arcadia is the novel's waking reality, then Turgenev's vision of equilibrium is the dream that sometimes sees modest realization. According to Costlow, Turgenev's pastoral "imagines an equilibrium of culture and nature" that can reside in the natural landscape, on a particular estate, or within the minds of

individual characters. This equilibrium is "adaptive" rather than "static" (in another departure from the classical pastoral), and involves the perception and application of "measure" that is manifest in the balance of nature (107). If measure is the ultimate yardstick of appropriate human conduct, and the ensurer of balance, then the implication is that everything (behaviour, values) is necessary, or potentially "good" in moderated doses, even if, from any one subjective point of view, one action or idea is distasteful. Nature is, of course, indifferent to humanity, although it incorporates elements that are both hostile and benign from a human cultural perspective.

Costlow argues that Turgenev's "political ideal," that of "human community," as well as his "aesthetic ideal", that measured, "contemplative" state of mind, are best exemplified by the narrator of Turgenev's short story: "Journey into the Woodland"(107). The insight the narrator gains from meditating on an emerald insect is "crucial to all of Turgenev's work," in Costlow's opinion(107). While he gazes upon the insect, he relates:

... it suddenly seemed to me that I understood the life of nature, understood its significance - something unquestionable and clear ... Quiet and unhurried animation, a leisure and a reserve of feelings and strength, an equilibrium of health in each separate being - that is the very foundation of nature, its unchanging, law, that on which it stands and endures. Everything that breaks with that measure -- beyond it or beneath it, it makes no difference -- it rejects as unfitting.(107)

The narrator comes to this epiphany only after progressing through "a vision of nature

as hostile, inhuman" with "no rule(either ethical or aesthetic) for human life ... "(107). Nature thus separated from human culture becomes a highly threatening entity, utterly uninterested in human culture and able to wipe it out if it so "chooses." This is certainly not the bountiful and inspiring entity assumed by the classical pastoral. In fact, this conception of nature resembles Turgenev's revolution as it encroaches upon the pastoral with the threat of death. If Bazarov suggests that revolutionary brutality lurks just below the surface of polite society, the decaying landscape reminds us that hostile nature broods just outside the window.

"Journey Into the Woodland"'s narrator's escape from being crushed by this view of nature is fostered the knowledge bestowed by the emerald insect. With "the wisdom of restraint and equilibrium," the narrator sees that the human is able to reconcile himself or herself with nature, as well as glean a natural model for human behaviour. Costlow points out that while the conception of nature "as hostile and a model of equilibrium" initially seems to contradict itself, it actually, when understood in a Turgenevan context, does not. She explains that it "is because nature is alien that we must learn restraint -- or we become agents of that very alien power that would destroy us all"(108).

A progression from a perception of nature as hostile to one that provides a satisfying "human rule," akin to the progression in "Journey," takes place in the mind

of Arkady in the second paragraph of the "pastoral" passage discussed above. There is an ironic reference to winter, a season "unknown in the classic pastoral" (Costlow 115). Turgenev describes "the pitiful sight of the sickly cattle in the setting of the lovely spring day" and how they conjure "up like a white spectre the vision of an interminable comfortless winter of blizzards, frosts and snows ... "(83). Arkady is unsettled by this spontaneous image of nature's unabating potential for causing strife and death among humans and domestic creatures. Nature's winter face is here portrayed as a clawed monster, and against the backdrop of a "golden-green" spring day, is a dramatic example of Turgenev's ironic introduction of Russian Arcadian elements into the pastoral. The fact that the image pops up unbidden from Arkady's psyche emphasizes the deep-seatedness of the fear it betokens. This fear is overcome for the moment, however, by Arkady's continued observation of the landscape, and the appreciation of the gentle weather that he actually experiences. Winter will inevitably come, with all its cold and peril, but so, too, does spring, with its promise of comfort and power of rejuvenation. Implicit recognition of the balance of seasons, of nature as both violent and benign, of Turgenevan equilibrium, is in Arkady's rising spirit. To balance off the emaciated cows, there are also "sweeping waves" of warm vegetation, the trills of "never-ceasing" larks, "rooks" that are "black and beautiful against the tender green of the low spring corn"(83-84). Arkady is gladdened by his

own limited recognition of nature's balance as it is revealed in the splendid spring scene to the point that he exclaims: "But what a marvellous day it is!"(84)

The pastoral for Turgenev signifies a harmonious coexistence of the human and the natural that is achieved through a recognition of the need for balance in all things (perspectives like realism and romanticism, seasons of winter and spring, for example). The equilibrium of Turgenev's modified pastoral would require that even winter be accepted as necessary, if not "marvellous," and adapted to. While Arkady fails to come to such a realization here, the narrator of Fathers and Sons apparently does. By the last chapter, the perception of winter has changed. The stillness of the season is still "cruel" and the cold stings "fresh faces" and horses, but, within the same sentence, the understated loveliness of the "rosy hoar-rimmed trees, pale-emerald sky," and "snow-capped chimneys" is also admitted(290). This final "January day" is also, significantly, the frame for a scene of measure, human community and peace.

When Bazarov's father refers to himself as being "like some Cincinnatus, marking out a bed for late turnips," he makes another dimension of the pastoral relevant to Fathers and Sons(203). Cincinnatus is the figure in pastoral mythology who leaves his rural home to do his military duty, achieves honour and greatness, and refuses to accept these accolades(111). Cincinnatus prefers the simple, industrious

life of the farm. The elder Bazarov extends his allusion to include his son and Arkady. He ventures: "I know you are accustomed to luxury and enjoyment, but even the great ones of this world [like Cincinnatus] would not disdain to spend a short time under a cottage roof"(204). The implication here is that pastoral pursuits are fortifying, wholesome and in some ways preferable to the pleasure associated with urban, sophisticated culture. If Arkady and Bazarov fall into this category of "great ones," then "they follow the retreat of heroes to the pastoral oasis," a place for regrouping and reacquainting oneself with pastoral equilibrium, before re-entering the melee of mainstream culture. Turgenev is not harsh in his portrayal of Bazarov the elder, although the character is certainly not without authenticating flaws: he is inordinately proud of his son, (overly) sentimental and somewhat hypocritical in his dealings with his wife, and, as stated above, not beyond beating his fellow human beings. Ivan boasts of young Bazarov: "He is bound to be famous!"(206). When his wife weeps upon her son's return, he chides her with "This is quite unnecessary," while barely containing his own tears of joy(193). It is none the less apparent that his love for his son is genuine, he is hardworking, generous in spirit -- providing cigars, red wine, extravagant food for his son and Arkady to the detriment of his savings - -, educated and open-minded. There is a realistic balance of positive and negative traits in the character of the older Bazarov, and, in this context, he is not the

butt of the author's ridicule or irony. He is a believable character who has found relative peace in Russia's tarnished equivalent of Arcadia.

Further non-ironic mythical connections can be found between the Bazarovs and Ovid's Baucis and Philemon, a pastoral couple who are emblematic of "hospitality, kindness and conjugal peace"(111).³ Costlow notes that "the rural simplicity and goodness" evoked by this allusion are elements of "a kind of continuity the novel will want to embrace"(111), and that the pastoral contains by definition. Characters like Fenichka, whose uncomplicated acceptance of the conditions of her life and whose ability to find peace through pastoral pursuits like child-rearing and seasonal domestic work like making jam, culminate in her place of untouchable serenity at the novel's end. The reader sees her last dressed in fine, but understated clothing, "sitting with quiet dignity, self-respecting and respectful of everything about her, and smiling as if to say: 'Excuse me, this isn't any of my doing'"(291). It is clear that she has attained her personal equilibrium by living a balanced pastoral

³ According to The Oxford Companion to English Literature, Baucis and Philemon were an "aged couple who lived in a poor cottage in Phrygia"(614). They nonetheless hospitably and unwittingly entertained Zeus and Hermes with what little they had and were rewarded with a "splendid temple" in place of their hut. They lived to a great age as priest and priestess of the temple and were granted the privilege of dying together. After their deaths, they were "changed into trees, whose boughs intertwined"(614).

life.⁴

In “On a Ukrainian Farm,” Mykola Ponedilok’s New Yorker protagonist seeks to achieve a similar balance by visiting a Western Canadian pastoral oasis. Like classical predecessors, Mykola (the narrator and the author share their name) is a weary urbanite, longing for the restful simplicity and continuity of the rural environment. It seems as if Mykola finds the ideal he seeks, until the discontent and violence of Turgenev’s ironic pastoral enter the narrative.

Ponedilok’s inclusion in an anthology of Ukrainian-Canadian writing is somewhat unusual, since he was never a Canadian citizen or resident (332-333). Ponedilok was born in Novomyrhorod, Kirovohrad Province, Southern Ukraine in 1922. He studied philology in Odessa, served in the Soviet Armed Forces, and emigrated to New York, NY in 1949, where he remained until his death in 1976. The editorial decision to incorporate a Ukrainian-American in Yarmarok is perhaps due to his regular reading tours in Canada, his embracing of Canadian themes, and the fact that many of Ponedilok’s works were published by Canadian presses.

The narrator, at the tale’s opening, fits the profile of Abrams’s definition of the pastoral: he is an urbanite with “the opportunity to escape from New York for a whole month”(202). Like Cincinnatus, Mykola wishes to forego the bright city lights in

⁴ Further discussion of the Fenichka as an exemplar who recognizes the limitations imposed by nature and fashions personal peace within their bounds will follow in Chapter Three..

favour of a rural vacation. It is clear that Mykola looks forward to the peace and simplicity of the Western Canadian pastoral. This is not an overtly ironic treatment, as the narrator sincerely seems to exult in the pastoral surroundings and manifestations of the values associated with it. Mykola describes the "beautiful, spacious" western provinces of Canada as the "best and most Ukrainian" of the country's regions (202). Like the traditional pastoral poets, Mykola's story is nostalgic in its praise and implies the refreshing power of the agrarian environment. Mykola notes that "this trip left me with so many lasting impressions, that I live with them to this day and derive immense pleasure from them"(202).

The action begins with Mykola's arrival at a Ukrainian-Canadian farmyard that displays the "cleanliness, tidiness" and "order" of the traditional pastoral setting. "Good deft hands" have wrought this order and "two dozen chickens" strut "proudly" on the "mown grass, which [is] as green as a gooseberry"(202). Idealization is evident in the assumption of the "goodness" of the hands that keep the yard, the personification of the chickens and the gooseberry-colored grass. The lady of the farm is defined by the farmyard she maintains and the traditional kerchief she wears. Through them she becomes an embodiment of pastoral industriousness and simplicity, as well as a Turgenevan respect for cultural tradition. She is so unconcerned with "modern," urban culture of her new country that she eschews owning one North

American hat, let alone several like her daughter Mariyka (202). She snorts, "What the heck do I need a hat for? To scare away the sparrows?"(202) The absent family members are also industrious and felicitous: they have gone off in their cars to work together in the fields(202). Even the cow on this farm is a marvel of the preservation of culture; she "understands Ukrainian" better than the younger family members, according to Marikyka's mother (202).

The first suggestion that the ideal is illusory, and the first hint at Turgenevan irony appears in Mariyka, the daughter who spends her time trying on hats and experimenting with makeup. She comes dangerously close to rejecting the simple, tradition-respecting life of her parents and causes equilibrium-threatening violence in the family. Mykola witnesses a fist-fight that results from Mariyka's preoccupation with the culture of the new country. Riabenka, the cow, licks the girl's newly made-up face and causes her to complain: "See how your cow has dirtied me with her tongue, mother"(203). The mother is incensed and beats the daughter for her obtuseness: Riabenka is a wholesome pastoral creature in the old woman's eyes, and it is Mariyka's tongue that has been dirtied in the past by a lackadaisical attention to the preservation of the mother tongue. The mother compares Mariyka's Ukrainian to the sound of "chewing on sand and gravel"(203). Shamed into studiousness by the proficiency of the cow, Mariyka returns to her Ukrainian textbooks until she speaks

so well that her words are like a "Ukrainian song floating from her lips"(204). Cultural continuity is rescued.

Mykola, again like classical pastoral narrators, is uplifted by the scene of order and the triumph of old world culture. He notes that he leaves the farm with "a happy, beaming soul," and a slightly overblown sense that all is right with the world if pastoral oases like this one can still exist. "I was so happy," he gushes, "I wanted to take the whole world in my hand and press it tightly to my heart"(204).

The pastoral enters into "Customs Inspection," another Ponedilok story dealing with Canadian travel. Here, a nervous Mykola is rescued by a customs official who shares his appreciation for the pastoral lifestyle. A worrying, perspiring Mykola modulates his Ukrainian accent to avoid potential difficulty as he passes through Canadian customs (203). His anxiety is unfounded, however, for the customs official informs Mykola that he, too, is Ukrainian, and, what's more, was born on a farm called "Drohobych"(204). The name of the farm is of particular interest to Mykola, because he knows that there is a Drohobych in Galacia and appreciates the custom's officer's father's preservation of the memory of Galacia in the naming of the new farm. The brief reference the official makes to his father connects him with the past and shows him to be a man respectful of tradition, and the official's mention that he was born on that farm links him to the earth and a pastoral, agricultural way of life.

Once again, Mykola is left "unexpectedly happy" by this evidence that the lifestyle he so reveres is enduring in a new setting, a true Canadian Arcadia (204).

In this revisitation of the pastoral, Mykola Ponedilok's "On a Ukrainian Farm," celebrates the ideal with greater zeal than Fathers and Sons does, and with an irony that is clouded by the enthusiasm of the narrator. However, the pastoral is presented as a rarely realized ideal because of the lengths the narrator must go to find it. As Mariyka comes dangerously close to rejecting Ukrainian cultural tradition, mother and daughter come to infelicitous blows, and the cow becomes the family's most proficient recipient of the Ukrainian language, irony much like Turgenev's becomes apparent in Ponedilok's Arcadia.

The fact that the narrator must board a plane and fly for hours to seek out a rural oasis that is normally unreachable from his urban home at once reinforces the pastoral framework, and emphasizes that even in "Regal Canada"(202) the pastoral may be an unattainable ideal. While Mykola, true to the pastoral genre, is vastly uplifted by his time on the Ukrainian farm, the reader is left with the sense that even if ideal pastoral environments do or did exist, they are largely irrelevant since so few members of mainstream culture will ever experience them. Beyond the power to momentarily invigorate by an appearance of order and wholesomeness, the Canadian pastoral is a non-viable option for most.

While Ponedilok achieves irony through his narrator's failure to recognize the shortcomings of the pastoral scene he encounters, Ruth Andrishak produces irony through a narrator who is all too keenly aware of her community's deficiencies. At the time of Yarmarok's publication, Andrishak was a relatively little known writer, living and working in Winnipeg. Her Ukrainian roots derive from her paternal grandparents, who emigrated to Canada in 1905 and 1912 (306). "The Night the Rabbit Chewed My Hair Off" is a set of loosely-strung episodes that share a narrator and that each make a critical comment on rural life in Elk Point, Alberta. There is apparently little worthy of preservation in this ironic Arcadia, and, as in Fathers, the "shadow of death falls from the first" and repeatedly.

In her story, Andrishak depicts a social environment that, in spite of its agricultural economy and rural location, is bleak and distinctly anti-pastoral. Accidental death, suicide and despair populate this rural landscape and offer themselves as the only resolution for the social imbalance of poverty, alcoholism, family dysfunction and violence. The first vignette is an introduction to Uncle Si, "a fine old Indian" who has experienced a lifetime of rough breaks. He had been a CN section foreman until he began to go deaf, started drinking to deal with resulting confusion, lost his wife and six children, and was demoted to railroad labourer (1). Uncle Si gives his money to ungrateful family and friends, lives alone, and looks

forward to a year in the sanitorium to clear up his tuberculosis(1). The second section is a single paragraph that summarizes the life and death of Anne. She is "eighteen, beautiful and not even pregnant"(2). The narrator relates her suicide tersely: "She took a twenty-two and walked one half mile from home to the river, put the gun to her head and shot herself"(2). Omar Daniels, the protagonist in the fourth passage, is handsome and beloved in spite of his alcoholism, but he unfortunately dies an accidental death when he falls through the floor of a house he is helping to build (4). Roland Daniels, the narrator's young friend, dies "on an oil rig up north"(8) and Jason, a friend of the narrator's brother, dies in a drunk-driving accident(8). The final episode involves Sigamo's irrational drowning of a pig he had originally intended to rescue (10).

Death's frequent visitation upon Elk Point combines with natural description that invariably depicts harsh weather to emphasize the setting's opposition to the classical pastoral. Anne dies on a "cold forty degree below clear day"(2), Dirty Liz and Roland fall into the mud and water, "cold and wild from the north" after it has rained for days (2). Smokey's vegetables are ruined by hail, a flood, "Bertha army worms," and cold on separate occasions (4). The narrator sets out for Swan Hills on "a bright, frozen solid day"(6). At one point, the reader is informed that the narrative is taking place at the end of June, but the implicit promise of pleasant weather is not

upheld. The narrator only notes that she is at "the lakes" and that it "rains a lot" there(9).

Andrishak's treatment of Elk Point weather forms a backdrop that heightens the impact of the grim description of existence in "that country"(10). Life in this ironic Arcadia is "harsh" and its people must "sweat and curse and pray to pull off that bumper crop"(10). Despite one's best efforts, the result is usually destruction by the elements and "then the whole mess is snowed on"(10). Spring, when it comes, means it's time to "fight like hell to get what's left off - so you can start all over"(10). Violence taints this grim pastoral even more glaringly than it does Turgenev's. Besides suicides and accidents, domestic abuse is accepted as a fact of life. The narrator relates an incident, without any emotional commentary, that involves her "man," Smokey, beating her until he is too tired to get up off the ground (5). Random racial violence against strangers is considered sport at the local pub (6), and alcoholism is rampant. Andrishak provides "the Elk Point Alkies"(2), Dirty Liz, Omar Daniels, Uncle Si, Smokey, and the O'Connor boys as examples.

In an inversion of the way Ponedilok provides balance for his narrator's enthusiasm by hinting at the problems that lurk beneath the pastoral surface, Andrishak's work makes it clear that in spite of all of the disadvantages and hardships of life in Elk Point, that there is some small measure of pastoral mingled with the

problems she depicts. A sense of pastoral community does exist in Elk Point, even though it is a bond based on the sharing of "everyday problems"(10). The grapevine carries gossip, but there is also a suggestion that it is a mode of support as well. The narrator explains that, indeed, "if Ma Ewen's potatoes were frost-bit last night or one of Hein's heifers died giving birth to twins - everyone knows the next morning"(10), but also that it is unwise to insult anyone, because the community stands behind its members, who are "pretty well all related somehow"(10). The alcoholism that is a community dysfunction and defines Elk Point as ironically Arcadian, also increases community closeness: "that's a boozing country, so it's accepted"(10). The fact that the majority of Elk Point's people have had "hard lives"(10), leads the narrator to conjecture that they have a common character trait: "toughness, bred into them"(10). Although it is a haphazard kind of system, dependent upon chance visits by neighbours and friends, there is a social safety-net. For example, when the unreliable and perpetually drunk O'Connor boys leave their mother stranded on the farm with no telephone and no one to help with the livestock, a neighbour arrives in time to limit the damage (10).

While Andrishak's treatment pulls no punches, and does not attempt to redeem her pastoral with romantic description of any kind, there is also no bitter call for revolution. In fact, in Andrishak's pastoral, there is no hopeful gesture toward

improving the rural circumstances at all. Bitter economic, meteorological, and social realities conspire to turn the rural oasis into the exhausting environment from which its inhabitants desire to flee. "Calgary" becomes the new oasis, as the story's narrator describes "beautiful, good days" she spends at art school in that city (11). Here can she look to the future with positive, though tentative, expectation: although she asserts that her work is "not great" she is confident that "in time it will be OK"(11). Irony is manifest in Andrishak's pastoral both in terms of implicit allusion to and of inversion of the classical model.

Andrishak's story does gesture toward nature as a source of a rule for living, by answering Arkady's question: "how should we begin?" with a Turgenevan response: she replies, "look to the balance of nature" for a rule to counter the extremity (violence, alcoholism, intolerance, etc.) of Elk Point culture. The few hopeful moments in "The Night the Rabbit Chewed My Hair Off," in addition to the one cited above, come when the narrator is closest to nature and abiding by its rhythms and values, or in the company of those who relate well to nature. She finds peace when she is camping at the lake and living off the land, remembering the kindnesses of the self-sufficient man who left her for the bush, and musing over the gift of "eight rabbit turds" left by the baby jackrabbit that chews off her hair in the final scene (11). She is unable to muster any anger at the little creature because she

recognizes that it is only acting on its nature, following nature's "rabbit rule," as it were. Indeed, she laughingly recognizes the trade of her hair for turds as an even one, the only one that could be made according to the balance of nature. The rabbit lives a life of order and measure that is appropriate to its form and, therefore, must be respected.

Andrishak's anti-pastoral, then, shares with Ponedilok's super-pastoral the image of the conventional pastoral as an ideal that embodies the natural balance and measure of Turgenev's imagination, although they explore it with different degrees and brands of irony, and in contexts that are substantially removed from that of Fathers and Sons. Wasyl Sofroniw Levytsky, on the other hand, is stylistically and contextually much closer to Turgenev. Born in Struhantsi, Western Ukraine, in 1899, Levytsky fought with the Ukrainian Sich Riflemen until 1920, and also managed to graduate from the gymnasium in 1918. After successful stints at the underground University of Lviv and the University of Prague, European travel and work as a journalist, Levytsky emigrated to Toronto in 1948. Jobs as a labourer preceded his subsequent journalistic career with the Ukrainian-Canadian Press. Levytsky passed away November 1, 1975.

As Turgenev does in Fathers and Sons, Levytsky conveys the irony of his Arcadia by alternating between descriptions of the pastoral ideal that recently existed

in the war-torn landscape in which he sets "Klikusha," and the razed reality that has taken the pastoral's place. The concern with the after-effects of war, or revolution, on a landscape and an agricultural community, links Levytsky to Turgenev. The Canadian writer, however, explores territory that Turgenev, out of his desire to maintain cultural continuity and restore the modified pastoral, will not enter in Fathers and Sons: the empty, devastated, liminal space that exists between the pastoral idyll that was (ironic or not), and the new order, or lack thereof that will replace it.⁵

Levytsky's story begins with a setting that recalls Russian Arcadia: a landscape that refers to the pastoral, but quickly becomes only an ironic shadow of the implied idyll. The first sentence depicts a "warm and peaceful evening in August 1915," in an apparently straightforward invocation of pastoral convention (119). The insertion of the year "1915," however, works in the same way as Turgenev's 1848, to instantly introduce war or revolution into the narrative equation. Turgenev's pattern of pastoral, death, and revolution has already unfolded when the reader is let into "Klikusha." Levytsky begins with the revolutionary date, a reference to World War 1, to immediately temper the expectation that the narrative will portray a serene, rural

⁵ A more comprehensive discussion of Levytsky's exploration of the implications of life in this time after revolution and connections to Turgenev's conception of how the brutal in nature can lead to madness will comprise a major section of Chapter Two of this thesis.

portrait. Descriptive detail emphasizes the frustration of this expectation, as "barren and uninhabited villages, the traces of burnt stooks and the sun-bleached dust on the roadways" greet the advancing German and Austrian soldiers(119). The weather is also anti-pastoral: in the introductory paragraph, "a sudden downpour" turns the road into a "quagmire"(119).

Just because the pastoral is technically absent does not mean that it is not figured as the ideal human community and that the conventional pastoral does not echo throughout the narrative. The "everyday" is elevated and the "ordinary" is recalled nostalgically by the narrator, who longingly relates what he hears "the dead villages speak"(119). Like Turgenev's narrator, Levytsky's views the vanished pastoral as a community of balance, measure and concert with nature. Undramatic, but fulfilling milestones of human life, that express human participation in natural cycles and rhythms, are evoked as the reader is led through a pillaged village:

Each little white window of every hollyhock-ringed cottage, every flowerbed of celestial marigolds, and each path leading into a lush orchard, told the tale of the life that but a few days earlier had flowed in its ordinary, peaceful stream. Its everyday worries and joys; its distresses and delights; girlish laughs and boyish pranks; the intrigues of a capricious mother-in-law; a baby's first word, the first kiss stolen at a maiden's gate; and the funeral orations that so often soared in these surroundings from the lips of bearded priests -- all these seemed to reverberate from beyond every fencepost.(119)

As is evident in the quotation above, Levytsky's pastoral has similar concerns to Turgenev's: continuity, peace, satisfaction in ordinary pursuits, and concert with

nature.

Levytsky mirrors Turgenev in the tactic he uses to produce pastoral irony: by alternating between objective description of war's devastation of the land and idealized illustration of the same areas. "[D]eserted fields, mute forests, and lifeless villages" interchange with "the village panorama" of cottages "cupped" in the "intensely verdant" palm of a hillock, "summer-green orchards," "rose-tinted white walls and gilded purple windows that [reflect] the sun's afterglow"(120). The conflation of ideal and reality in the landscape cause the passing soldiers to wistfully turn their "eyes" towards "the white-washed cottages as they [dream] of a comfortable rest" in spite of the fact that they know such rest is impossible in the now empty and inhospitable structures (120). Here, Levytsky's irony appears darker than Turgenev's, as the landscape he creates not only conjures up images of the departed pastoral, but locates itself in the time after death and revolution have encroached upon and vanquished the pastoral ideal.

The scenery's power to recall the pastoral people and lifestyle destroyed by war disconcerts Captain Burghardt so much that he voices a desire to raze the villages completely (120). If he disposes of all of the structures that remind him of the vanished pastoral, he will relieve the ironic tension that is so evident in the landscape. The dream of the pastoral will be gone, and the devastation will be only itself, without

the mocking reminder of simple lives and peace that prevailed before. A blank slate, or one that records only the debris of death and revolution, seems preferable, in Burgardt's opinion, to one that reminds the observer of the relative idyll that existed in the past.

Levytsky's metaphor of "the steel claws of war"(126) recalls and illuminates Turgenev's "murderous talons of winter"(83). Levytsky's claws perpetrate the "murder" of an old peasant Ulashyn discovers in the abandoned village of Malychi. In a "voluntary offering of love for home and hearth," the old man slits his own throat and lies down to die in his pastoral home (126). Turgenev's "talons" snatch at the "sickly cattle" of Russian Arcadia. While, on the surface, Turgenev's metaphor pertains to harsh weather, on another level, it also refers to any force, like war for instance, that threatens to bring death into the pastoral oasis. Arkady can be seen to unconsciously anticipate deaths like that of Levytsky's peasant in the "interminable comfortless winter" that he imagines in the warmth of the spring day(83). Turgenev is not only ironically superimposing winter weather on Russian Arcadia, then, but also predicting the sort of violence Levytsky explores in "Klikusha." Such violence breaks the continuity of peace that defines the pastoral and irrevocably interrupts the dream. While Turgenev stops short of revolution in his use of the metaphoric monster of war, he, like Levytsky, is issuing a warning about giving in to the revolutionary

urge. The message here is that instead of repairing a disintegrating pastoral by drastic revolutionary measures, resorting to violence will only lead to the loss of any security and comfort that exist in exchange for greater suffering and uncertainty. Turgenev and Levytsky are cautioning against a trading of something for nothing.

Turgenev and all of the Ukrainian Canadians discussed in this chapter either overtly or obliquely posit the pastoral (although it is disguised as urban Calgary in Andrishak's story) as an ideal community in which humans have the opportunity to learn balance and measure from nature and live lives of peace and simplicity. In every case, however, the pastoral ideal is elusive, and the result is an ironic thwarting of traditional expectations that juxtapose the individual's desire for harmony and social/ natural environments that render the attainment of this desire difficult or impossible. As a result, the individuals who find themselves in such situations exist in a state of constant tension. Chapters Two and Three of this thesis explore the options Turgenev presents, and Ukrainian Canadians reinvent, as possible resolutions of this tension: one dangerous and destructive and one secure and fulfilling.

Chapter Two

Becoming Brutal: The Negative Response to the Absence of the Pastoral Ideal

“The queen has give birth to a half dog for she has copulated
with the beasts of the forest.”

-from the South American folktale:
“The Handless Maiden”

Turgenev and the contemporary Ukraininan-Canadians discussed in Chapter One share an interest in “human creative and destructive urges”(Costlow 109). Their examinations juxtapose the ideal and real environments, “natural” equilibrium and the disconcert of human culture; a “glimpse of the alien wood” is offered and an alternate gaze is turned “to the places where men and women are at home”(110). In Fathers and Sons , these places are “those ‘worlds within worlds’ where men and women make their peace with nature”(110) with varying levels of success. For Ponedilok, in his less ironic presentation of the pastoral, the “alien wood” is urban culture, and the place of peace, even with its implied flaws, is the rural farmyard. Andrishak places the greatest emphasis on human destructive behaviour - Elk Point’s almost entirely dysfunctional culture is set against moments of peace that involve personal transcendence of that culture. Levytsky delves into the destructive urges as they are unleashed in the context of war, and thereby takes Turgenev’s concern with the

implications of such urges further than Turgenev himself does: to the space and time beyond the introduction of death and revolution into the Turgenevan narrative pattern. It becomes evident through the above examples of failed pastorals that culture as it exists in/as real society will not provide personal peace. The result of this irreconciliation of ideal and reality is a constant tension between what is desired and what can actually be attained. How is this tension to be relieved? In the face of his recognition that human culture provides tarnished exemplars at best, the answer for Turgenev is: do not look to society for a model for human conduct; rather, look to nature and strive to become natural (Costlow 110).

Unfortunately, gleaning one “human rule” from nature is a complex task, in light of the duality Turgenev, and the contemporary Ukrainian-Canadians whom I discuss in this thesis, identify within nature. In Turgenev, nature has two faces: one that is “alien but benign” and one that is “violently destructive”(108). The single characteristic that the human can count on in Turgenevan nature is “elemental indifference” to human concerns (109). Costlow argues that in Turgenev’s body of work as a whole, when the human becomes disillusioned with her/his particular Arcadia, “the human becomes ‘natural’ in divergent ways: man may become brutal and be destroyed; or he may live an ideal of harmony and endure with the earth”(110). These two ways of becoming natural mirror nature’s violent and benign

visages; the implication here is that one may choose to align oneself with either of nature's faces. The remainder of this chapter will examine the first option: the naturalization of brutality, as it is exemplified by Bazarov and Levytsky's Ulashyn and reworked by Oleh Zujewkyj and Stefania Hurko, as well as the repercussions of this choice for the individual and for society. Embracing what is hostile and inhuman in nature, for Turgenev and Levytsky, can only lead to madness or self-destruction, because such an act hurls the individual into an abyss devoid of meaning. Bazarov's nihilism, which I will define below, represents just such a doomed journey into nothingness and his death is the ultimate, necessary result. Although, by drawing upon the Green Man archetype, Turgenev appears to imply that Bazarov may be a match for nature, Bazarov's self-destruction quashes this initial expectation. The second portion of Levytsky's "Klikusha" amplifies Turgenev's portrait of the individual who becomes brutal by setting his story in the time after revolution. Zujewskyj's untitled poem parallels Turgenev's gestures toward the impossible pastoral and seeking a human rule in nature, and similarly exhorts the reader not to select the brutal option. Hurko's "The Modernist" and an untitled poem examine the Turgenevan abyss and assert the necessity of culture.

Turgenev links personal, emotional identification with nature's chaotic face

and the philosophy of Russian nihilism.⁶ In “The Execution of Tropmann,” Turgenev uses natural imagery to convey his perception of the mob assembled to watch the condemned man die, and moves from a depiction of individual faces and voices to a blurring and blending of individuals into a single seething, unthinking mass. “The noise,” he writes, “reminded me of the distant roaring of the sea ... there was the brutal power of some elemental force discernible in it ...”(217). The crowd’s frenzy rises and falls, thereby suggesting the ineffable, eternal life/death cycles of nature: the mob’s one voice would, “retreat, grow quiet, and again swell -- and there seemed to be no end to it”(217). The narrator of “Tropmann” perceives the wish to “tear everything down” in the sound and swelling of the crowd; the phrase brings both Turgenev’s concern with human/natural destructive urges together with the notion of Russian nihilism’s “ground-clearing” ideology. One tenet of Russian nihilism is the determination to negate “what exists for the benefit of what does not yet exist”(CDP 702). Such a thrust implies an implicit trust in the rightness and

⁶ Russian nihilism is a philosophy which contrasts with the “general cultural nihilism that Nietzsche later criticized as a ‘dead-end’ devaluing of all values” in that it is “future-oriented and ‘instrumental’, exalting possibility over actuality.” Russian nihilists “urged the ‘annihilation’ ... of realized social and cultural values ... in the name of the future.” Bazarov is considered the “best-known exemplar” of Russian nihilism, and Pisarev shared the character’s faith “in the power of natural science to solve social and moral problems.” Pisarev actually proclaimed that it is “precisely in the [spread-eagled, laboratory] frog that the salvation ... of the Russian people is to be found.” (702 The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy)

dependability of the natural cycle of death and rebirth, and in destruction and creation as interdependent entities that are neither (in human, moral terms) good nor bad, but always present and necessary. This is compatible with Turgenev's reverence for an ideal balance that incorporates ideal/real culture and violent/benign nature.

Turgenev's narrator is unable to see the crowd as anything but frightening and confusing. He demands to know the meaning of its wordless roar and whether there is any "[i]mpatience, joy," or "malice" in it(217). These human qualities cannot, by definition, be embodied in any natural phenomenon, and the narrator answers his own question with the words: "No! It did not serve as an echo of any separate, human feeling ... It was simply the rumble and the roar of some elemental force"(217). What is particularly disturbing about this description of "Tropmann"'s crowd is not the implicit suggestion that nature "chooses" to display its destructive side when and where it will, but rather that the elemental, unsignifying, destructive force here is made up of individual human beings who have become brutal, or have become a collective entity that on some level ceases to be human. What makes this phenomenon particularly chilling, and what is likely the cause of the narrator's fear and confusion, is that human beings are supposedly cultured and removed from an animalistic state. However, this distance from brutality is illusory. The crowd in "Tropmann" reveals the fragility of this illusion as they are rapidly rendered

“senseless” by observing the violent death of a fellow human (254). By embracing violence, they invite the sinister, potentially fatal shapelessness and meaninglessness of nature into their psyches, and, because the human can not exist in such a presence, they are necessarily transformed by the encounter. This very sort of confrontation is played out in Fathers and Sons in the character of Bazarov, who joins the elemental and the nihilistic with the human, and forces those around him to consider the brutal in humans and the meaningless in nature.

Costlow proposes that what “distinguishes Fathers and Children [sic] -- and what makes it so much more than a novel of generations -- is that Turgenev brings into his house of culture the force that would destroy it, Bazarov ... “(110). Bazarov’s destructive power is a result of his constitution -- he is not merely a human who gives disproportionate rein to his passional nature; rather, he is a creature as alien as nature itself. Akin to vegetable deities through history, “Bazarov joins earth and human, in an elemental and destructive transformation”(my emphasis 110). In a letter to K. K. Sluchevsky, Turgenev characterizes the inception of the idea of Bazarov in terms that suggest an organic process whereby the author “dreamt of a figure that was gloomy, wild, huge, half-grown out of the ground, powerful, sardonic, honest” and “doomed” by his destructive purpose (Fathers, Crit. Ed. 186). Turgenev also claimed that Bazarov seemed to spring from the soil of the author’s unconscious as an

autonomous, strange entity. To M. E. Saltykov, Turgenev writes that he can hardly figure out how he penned Bazarov, and that “there was a fatum there -- please don’t laugh -- something stronger than the author himself, something independent of him. I know one thing: there was no tendentiousness in me then. I wrote naively, as if I was struck myself by what came out”(192). Perhaps Bazarov is such a compelling, disturbing and controversial character because of his association with the idea that humans possess primal recollections, whether psychological or genetic, of precultural times and forms when nature was our culture and synchronicity with it was (more) possible.

Bazarov’s function as elemental challenger of culture is suggestive of the Green Man archetype. In his book Green Man: Archetype of Our Oneness with the Earth, William Anderson explains that the Green Man “symbolizes the union of humanity and the vegetable world” or nature, and examines the prevalence and endurance of the Green Man in literary, architectural, ritual and artistic representations from antiquity to the present(14). The Green Man is most often visually conceptualized as entirely made out of vegetation, disgorging or growing out of it. The purpose of the reappearance of the vegetable deity is, like Turgenev, to reestablish a balance of human culture and nature: to shatter the complacency of individuals who have become so absorbed in their intellectual pursuits or constructed

codes of behaviour that they underestimate or ignore life-giving/death-dealing nature.⁷ Bazarov resembles the Green Man both in terms of physical description and narrative role. Like Turgenev's nature, Bazarov and the Green Man possess "dual nature[s]," "half-animal, half-divine" personalities and the ability to force culture to reexamine itself by flouting tradition and other cultural bastions.⁸

In the final scene of chapter 5, Turgenev's description of Bazarov obliquely refers to the Green Man when, after a morning in the marsh catching frogs, he returns "through the garden, striding over the flowerbeds"(95). He is "bespattered with mud" and a "clinging marsh-plant" is twined "round the crown of his old, round hat"(95). The sack he carries is full of primeval swamp life: green frogs that he will use in his medical experiments. On the following page, Turgenev reinforces the elemental connection in a reference to Bazarov's consuming interest in "natural science"(96).

Even Arkady's framing of Bazarov's brand of nihilism is illuminated by Turgenev's allusions to the Green Man motif. Arkady assures his dumbstruck uncles that Bazarov is not a nihilist of the sort that "respects nothing," but rather one "who

⁷ The 14th C poem, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight and Russel Hoban's Riddley Walker are medieval and contemporary works that prominently feature the Green Man archetype.

⁸These criteria are those Jung used to qualify his trickster-figure, to which the Green Man is closely related in description and narrative function. See Jung's Collected Works, Vol. 9.1, 255.

does not take any principle for granted, however much that principle may be revered”(94). This recalls the Green Man’s awakening of humans, who are lulled into torpor by the artificiality of culture, to their basic natures and nature itself. If an individual accepts and embraces “principles,” on the basis of their being revered by others, without questioning the effectiveness of those principles in relation to their own personality and environment, that individual is at risk of becoming ineffective her/himself. In Turgenevan terms, the human hazards an unbalanced existence; it is not only destructive to embrace brutal nature, but equally so to reject nature wholesale.

Bazarov contributes a few words to the definition of his own nihilism. He sees himself and others of his ilk as ground-clearers, whose business it is to reject principles and the corrupt culture that is built upon them. It will be the task of the other, more enlightened individuals who come later to reconstruct society as they see fit. Reconstruction, according to Bazarov, “is not [the nihilists’] affair”(124). This aspect of Bazarov’s nihilism is not entirely negative, and it strengthens the connection between nihilism and the Green Man. The nihilist places trust, albeit disinterested trust, in the future, and is certain that rebirth will naturally follow the death she/he brings to society. The Green Man is an embodiment of just such trust

as he possesses the cyclical ability to die and be reborn.⁹

As a political philosophy, Bazarov's self-defined nihilism is problematic. His rejection theory appears poorly thought out because it so clearly contradicts itself. First, Bazarov argues that nihilists base their conduct on what they regard as "useful"(123). Bazarov declares that in "these days, the most useful thing we can do is to repudiate -- and so we repudiate ... Everything"(123). Then, only a few short paragraphs later, Bazarov paradoxically states: "Of use or not, it's not for [nihilists] to decide"(125). It seems that Bazarov rejects for the sake of it, adhering to an arbitrary doctrine and applying no tests of critical thinking to his contrariety. Frank Friedeberg Seeley laments this lack of "semantic sophistication" on Bazarov's part, and asserts that "our nihilist is just as dogmatic as Pavel Kirsanov both in his negations and his axioms"(219).

In light of the blatant manner in which his philosophy discounts itself, it is reasonable to view Fathers and Sons as something other than a critique of nihilism as a political standpoint, or a materialist response to social problems. The novel's "fundamental clashes" and "fundamental revelations," Costlow argues, "lie in non-polemical discourse"(106). Turgenev's demonstration of "the proximity of passion

⁹The Green Man is "killed" every year at Hastings, for example, even today as part of spring celebrations. His death is a joyous act of destruction for the sake of new growth and life, that trusts in and is necessary for the onset of spring. (Anderson)

and civility,” (by combining nature and culture in one being, namely Bazarov), and his purposeful neglect of the coherence or defence of Bazarov’s nihilism, testify that the novel’s central concerns are not political. Friedeberg, too, encourages the abandonment of any attempt to understand Bazarov as representing “any such simple,” political label, “as nihilism”(220). Nihilism, if it is not primarily a political designation in the world of Fathers and Sons, is better redefined in terms of Turgenev’s struggle with the brutal in nature.

Turgenevan nihilism, then, involves a (self-)destructive decision, conscious or unconscious, to embrace the brutal in nature, either in one’s own personality or in the form of the entity that is the antithesis to culture, and to become preoccupied with the meaningless void that exists outside and all around culture, and in opposition to human constructions of any kind. That such nihilism is destructive to culture, or the cultured part of human nature, is evident in its aspiration to animal brutality. That it is self-destructive is witnessed by Bazarov’s delusion as he is dying of an accidental(?), self-inflicted sticking-wound. Bazarov’s hallucination reverses Katya’s earlier observation that Bazarov is a “wild beast” while she and Arkady are “domestic animals”(254) by presenting the nihilist as prey to the dogs that represent the brutal, insensible force that exists beyond culture. “While I have been lying here I have kept fancying red hounds were running round me,” Bazarov informs his father, “and you

were making a point at me as if I were a woodcock”(282). It is significant that the elder Bazarov is now the hunter, in light of his role as a character who approaches the novel’s pastoral ideal: one who has achieved some sense of Turgenevan equilibrium. Culture, and those who balance cultural and natural influences, will endure, rather than those who reject either entity out of hand. Young Bazarov reinforces the idea that it is also in fact elemental nature that “hunts” him on his deathbed, as he muses aloud: “ ... there is a forest here ... “ (289). This forest represents the world outside of human enclosures, the unconscious, the natural.

Throughout the novel Bazarov reveals his struggle with the void, and the dissatisfaction it necessarily brings him. He makes a statement that characterizes his illusory belief that he, a human being, can cope with existence that incorporates the meaningless in nature: “But one can come to terms with the insignificant ...”(210). While such a statement can be read as referring to the ordinary, mundane aspects of human life, it is more effective when one reads “insignificant” as “that which signifies nothing.” Bazarov clarifies this reference to natural chaos with other, more direct statements. After he has been to visit Odintsova, Bazarov reflects on the altercation by asserting that:

... all is vanity in this world! Everyone hangs by a thread, at any moment the abyss may open beneath our feet, and yet we go out of our way to invent all sorts of trouble for ourselves to spoil our lives. (190)

Bazarov is clearly aware of the danger of his nihilism, the precariousness of human life, and of nature's overwhelming power. At the same time, he refuses to look to culture for any of the security, comfort or protection it affords. Instead, he trivializes culture and is paradoxically attracted to the natural, destructive power that threatens even him. Nihilists as a group become associated with chaotic nature, or the abyss, as Arkady's early comment suggests: "We destroy because we are a force"(127). This justification is no justification at all, at least not in rational terms, and appears to be a "vanity" of another sort. Only nature may destroy with impunity, precisely because it is outside the human house of culture and values, and because it is a force. For human beings to consider themselves equal to nature, exempt from all cultural parameters, is a transgression of vanity, or as Pavel puts it, "almost Satanic pride"(127). Nature's void ultimately consumes the prideful transgressor, and appropriately denies him the comfort of a meaningful death. Bazarov notes that he wishes to "fix [his] thoughts on death, and nothing comes of it. [He] merely sees a kind of blur ... and that's all"(my emphasis 282).

Odintsova's altercations with Bazarov leads her to confront the abyss, and her own need for the security of culture leads her also to step away from the abyss. Nature's powerful, blank face hangs outside the window as Bazarov and Odintsova wrestle with their sexual attraction and its implications. Nature's constant presence

colours the interpretation of the passage by evoking an elemental undertone that flavours every action. For instance, Turgenev writes: “The mild, dark night looked into the room with its almost black sky, its faintly rustling trees and fresh fragrance of the pure, untrammelled air”(174). Bazarov is attracted by this wordless song of unbounded power, and thwarted by his inability to express himself in a similar manner. When Bazarov throws the window open “at once with a crash”(174) he simultaneously expresses his sexual frustration and welcomes in a force that would not hesitate to do what was necessary to ease that tension. As much as he might wish to, Bazarov can not fully reject culture, for he is trapped in a mortal, human form.

The following evening as he rushes toward Odintsova in a fit of passion, Bazarov fails again in his attempt to become entirely elemental, although his “almost animal expression” reveals that he comes close (183). Odintsova sees the brute sensuality in her own face and gleans an incomprehensible message there:

She had caught sight of herself in the glass; the image of her head thrown back, with a mysterious smile on the half-closed eyes, the half-parted lips, told her, it seemed, in a flash something at which she herself felt confused ... (183).

After some thought, Odintsova decides that she is not up to flirting with such a primordial adversary. She recognizes the danger in “trifling” with chaos and is comfortable enough with culture’s bonds to return to the “quiet life” that she considers “better than anything else in the world”(183). Perhaps Turgenev’s most

evocative rendering of insensible nature ends this episode and chapter 18. Alone in her room, Odintsova ponders “[t]he pressure of various vague emotions -- ... [that] had forced her to a certain limit, forced her to look behind her -- and there she had seen not even an abyss but only a void ... chaos without shape”(184). Odintsova will not be pulled into this void precisely because she has acknowledged the limit to which she has been forced.¹⁰ It is significant and fitting that Turgenev leaves off his chapter here. Indeed, how can he shape the void with words that signify; what better way than to leave blank space on the page?

While Odintsova, in her reclusive lifestyle and her interest in Bazarov, might seem to be a good candidate for Turgenevan nihilism, she chooses culture when confronted with the elemental. Surprisingly, it is Pavel Kirsanov, who initially appears to be culture personified, who deserves this designation, along with his nemesis, Bazarov. Pavel identifies himself as a nihilist through his obsession with Princess R., the enigmatic woman who embodies the same void that consumes Bazarov and frightens Odintsova. Princess R. abandons herself “eagerly to every kind of pleasure” by day, and weeps and prays by night (100). Her “small and grey” eyes are her most notable feature, for in them appears an enthrallingly “enigmatic expression”(101). The narrator explains that she seems to be “in the grip of

¹⁰ A further discussion of the importance of recognizing limits imposed by nature and society in system of values Turgenev installs in Fathers and Sons will follow in Chapter Three.

mysterious forces, unknown even to herself” to the extent that she becomes their plaything(101). Her behaviour, as a result, is a “maze of inconsistencies” and those around her, including Pavel, suffer “bewilderment” in her presence (101). The “unknowable forces” that move her, and her “baffling, almost vacant but fascinating image” mark her as a symbol of the abyss(102).

Like Bazarov, Pavel is drawn to this bewildering entity, and Turgenev writes that Princess R.’s image had “bitten too deeply into [Pavel’s] soul”(102), or awakened that primal part of himself that is at odds with civility and culture. Also like Bazarov, Pavel seeks an impossible relationship with the elemental: one in which a human seeks equality with nature. Capricious like nature itself, Princess R.’s favours are easily won, and just as easily lost for no apparent (to a human!) reason. Just as Arkady’s thoughts drain away when he looks upon nature, just as Bazarov sees “nothing” when he approaches death rationally, Pavel is brought to the brink of insensibility: when Princess R. quits his company, he “almost” goes “out of his mind”(102). Pavel gives up his pursuit of R.’s meaningless smile and the void it represents, but only because she leaves “Baden secretly and thereafter consistently avoid[s] him”(102). Pavel, then, is saved from utter self-destruction by Princess R.’s arbitrary action, rather than by a conscious decision like Odintsova’s. The disconsolate life that follows this doomed romance is evidence that Pavel continues

to struggle with an attraction to the void (102-4), and is, in other words, still tempted by nihilism, in spite of his taking Bazarov to task and his superficial embrace of culture that is witnessed by his “perfect aristocratic manners”(104). When he grills Bazarov for a solid explanation of nihilism, and becomes incensed at the impertinent, empty answers he receives, it may well be because he had hoped his own nihilistic urge would be clarified, or even vindicated.

The attraction to Turgenevan nihilism that Pavel displays and Bazarov’s embodiment of the brutal result of such an attraction are revisited and elaborated by Levytsky, in the second half of “Klikusha.” Levytsky takes the reader further over the precipice Turgenev ropes off from all but Bazarov. Whereas Turgenev offers a purposeful silence, the experiences of characters who draw back from the void, and a nihilist who is unable to articulate his own entrance into the nothingness of death to convey the author’s conception of the madness that is the result of Turgenevan nihilism, Levytsky is more explicit in his exploration of the same madness. (This is in line with the fact that Levytsky sets his story after the sort of revolution which Turgenev only anticipates, in a landscape characterized by ambiguity, death and a culture that has lost much of its ability to shield the individual from the alien power of nature.) Levytsky uses the myth of the klikusha - a designation given to “a form of collective insanity” that involves traumatized people howling like dogs - as his

framework for examining the same process of becoming brutal that occupies Turgenev in Fathers and Sons. A klikusha can be an otherwise ordinary person who suffers a “strong psychological shock,”(122) or, more colourfully, a pregnant woman who gets struck by moonlight at the same time that she hears a howling dog. The affected individuals then “respond with the voices” of their “forgotten ‘animal sel[ves]’”(122) and begin howling and acting out other doglike behaviours. Levitsky’s Lt. Kremer discusses the “strange pleasure” humans take in “imitating the barks and howls of dogs” as well as the physiological ease with which people can mimic the sounds (122). Humans are here presented as having a certain kinship with dogs, in terms of vocal similarities and a primal sense of identity with canines; Lt. Kremer suggests that this is because we see the brutal, less civilized part of ourselves in them (122). Dog vocalization strikes an emotional chord with humans as well, for it “electrifies us with its sad, surging vibrations, and with its ominous expression reminds us of pain and death”(122). Ulashyn’s transformation into a klikusha contains many of the elements and images that Turgenev uses in his depictions of the human becoming negatively natural.

Culture looks especially unappealing to Ulashyn on the night he decides to take a walk alone. The military field tent that serves as his home and represents what human culture remains in the ruined pastoral landscape, stares “uninvitingly at him

with its gaping black opening,” and the “hard, narrow cot” is “ghost-like” in the shadows. Ulashyn strikes out into the darkness of the “tranquil Volhynian night” that resembles “a still body of water”(123). Leveytsky’s depiction of the night recalls the “mild,” “untrammelled” evening in which Turgenev sets Bazarov and Odintsova’s climactic passionate episode. As he walks, Ulashyn thinks of his fellow soldiers as the encroachers, the foreign beings in this region, rather than nature: he wonders, “[w]hat exactly am I doing here among these olive-garbed, alien beings, these eaters of marmalade ...?”(123) Ulashyn feels a pull toward “the bare earth” instead of the community of his comrades and, as we have seen, in Turgenevan terms, this represents an imbalance as risky as an overabsorption in culture’s trappings. Ulashyn feels his physical body, the primal parts of himself, become energized by the night and distance from other humans; his “blood throb[s] in his arteries and his nerves softly [buzz]”(123).

He is initially ignorant of the real potential for personal harm that aloneness in natural surroundings presents; he walks “without being remotely aware that he [is] exposing himself to any danger”(123). While this ignorance is not the “Satanic pride” of which Pavel accuses Bazarov, it is a lesser transgression of the same order. It is always presumptuous and arrogant to disregard nature’s power and its equal propensities to nurture and to destroy its creatures. Without the protection of human

culture, and in his state of rash ignorance, Ulashyn is especially vulnerable.

As Ulashyn moves on, it becomes clearer that his ignorance is, in fact, a dangerous error. The narrator describes him as “flouting the moon, the howling, and the inky darkness ...”(my emphasis 124) that covers the broken village he approaches. Ulashyn has time to investigate a certain cottage only briefly before nature makes its hostile presence felt in the form of a “large, skulking, brown dog”(124) that materializes out of the forest that has, all along “whispered [its] primordial green melody”(119). In the moments between his sighting of the beast and when it leaps at him, Ulashyn undergoes the beginnings of a dramatic internal transformation. He feels a shock, as if “his spine had been jolted by an electric spark” and survival skills that have lain dormant even through his military service are reactivated by this desperate encounter (124). When the dog lunges and fastens its “long fangs” on Ulashyn’s boot, the physical sensations that result and the instinctual surgings that respond to them shock him from the “soles of his feet” to the “skeins of his brain”(124). All the while, the dog is growling, whining, “barking and snarling” and the sound of its canine voice oddly affects Ulashyn. When the realization that there are other dogs in the village, soon to join their fierce companion, “real terror” pierces Ulashyn “like an ice-pick in the heart”(125). As in the initial pastoral passage of Fathers and Sons, nature’s ability to drain civil, rational thought from humans

submerged in it, is illustrated here again, as Ulashyn's "thoughts" suddenly flutter "away in every direction" "like a flock of sparrows"(125). He is left with pure instinct to guide him, and is in a perilous state of imbalance where the animal overpowers the cultured human. When his thoughts do come together for a moment, "like nuts spilled from a lap,"(125) they form one self-preserving imperative: "Try to make a dash for the open door of the unfenced adjacent cottage ..."(125).

Once inside, Ulashyn feels his rational powers elude him again as the "sounds of the savage orgy of animal fury" cause his thoughts to "refuse to obey him"(126). In Turgenevan nihilist fashion, he gives in to the awful fascination that the animals inspire in him and, "without thinking," he watches "the frothing mass of hunched dogs" and listens to their barking outside the window (126). Though he considers "the absurdity of this idea," he begins to "scrutinize the dogs" and it is at this point that he opens himself fully to the insensibility and chaos of the Turgenevan abyss. Ulashyn is irresistably drawn to try to "comprehend [the dogs'] inner impulses and "understand their character"(126).

When the dogs surrounding the cottage cease barking, and begin howling in earnest, Ulashyn's fate is sealed: he will become a klikusha. In an uncanny parallel to Turgenev's characterization of the crowd in "The Execution of Troppman," Levytsky writes that the dogs' vocalizations begin as "individual whinings, but later

the whole pack unite[s] in the single plaintive and sombre chorus of mystical, ritual canine wailing”(127). Even the imagery in the two stories correspond, as Levytsky describes the one sound as being, in “its intrinsic rhythm of ebb and flow,” like the rising and falling of “the frothy surf of the sea”(127). The ocean image is an apt one for both stories in its communication of the vast, unstoppable power of natural forces. The absence of thought, the inability to see anything but Bazarov’s blur, and the reawakening of instinct and primal perception all relate Levytsky and Turgenev’s concerns with hostile nature’s allure and effects, and are evident in this final passage from “Klikusha” that depicts Ulashyn’s full descent into elemental madness:

He sat there without a single thought, only his perceptions growing ever more animated and intoxicated in the moonlight by the rhythm of the canine chorale. His body was wracked by chills. Something white whirled in his brain. His nerves sweetly tingled. the long-forgotten melody of a lullaby suddenly came to mind Saliva gathered in his mouth and trickled in thin threads out of the half-curved corners of his lips onto the window-sill....From Lieutenant Ulashyn’s throat there began to unravel a clear, trembling, and flat vocal thread that wound itself around the moon, as if it were a bobbin.(128)

While Levytsky does provide greater detail in terms of Ulashyn’s experience of “becoming brutal” than Turgenev does with Bazarov, Levytsky is still forced to stop at the edge of meaninglessness. Because Levytsky, too, must use language that denotes and connotes meaning, once Ulashyn has become a klikusha, or entered a realm devoid of human meaning, Levytsky can do nothing but end his narrative.

Levytsky ends his tale with references to two documents that relate to the

historical Ulashyn: one regarding the officer's desertion and one regarding his alleged insanity (128). By bringing the reader back to "reality" and providing "evidence" of Ulashyn's authenticity at the end of a story that becomes increasingly fantastic, Levytsky reaffirms the Turgenevan desire for form, order and meaning in language. Levytsky takes the reader to the brink of brutality, and then reinstates culture. The fundamental issues for the two authors remain the same: the primal in the human; nature's alien power as a force that demands reckoning; the madness of fascination with the insensible; and the security offered by a human-made language and environment.

Oleh Zujewskyj's short untitled poem, "You longed for peace," revisits Turgenev's concerns without explicitly locating itself in the post-revolution pastoral, and reproduces the nature/culture conflict with a gentler intensity than either Turgenev or Levytsky. Zujewskyj's poem reiterates the human longing for "peace," whether pastoral or personal, and the manner in which animalistic passions disallow its lasting achievement in unenlightened individuals. Like Bazarov, who disparages romantic love as "rot", the poem's addressee decides to "[c]ast out ecstasy and feelings" because of she/he is embittered by their transitoriness, and because they seem "ungrateful and superfluous"(303). Then the speaker documents an epiphany, like the narrator's in Turgenev's "Journey into the Woodland." The final simile that

explains that “love” is “only like the glitter of the grass/ In the last rainbow’s wreath,” urges acceptance of the notion that humans must respond to and accommodate nature’s rule, especially over the emotional aspects of themselves and the phenomena that grow out of these emotions, including romantic love. If one accepts nature’s rules for love, namely, that it will certainly fade as time passes and that love is an impersonal phenomenon like everything else in nature, then one can have “peace” in that knowledge. The speaker encourages the second person to “wait” for, or expect, the “future pain” of the changing of love: the same sort of bittersweet pain that one feels watching the fully-expected vanishing of the rainbow.

A Turgenevan renunciation of nihilism can be discerned in the second person’s initial, out-of-hand rejection of love. Passion, the mutable gift, is compared to “pearls” dropped into “a bottomless sea”(303). Thus discarded, the pearls provide pleasure to no one: oysters do not have them, humans cannot admire them, and the ocean, as the representative of indifferent nature, is utterly unconcerned that the gems are floating down into its void. Rejection of love, or any emotion or principle for that matter, for the sting that is part of its beauty, is presented as wasteful and immature. Through an understanding of natural duality, or of the interdependence of beauty and pain, (a Turgenevan balance!), rather than through rash rejections, Zujewskyj seems to suggest that some measure of peace can be achieved, even in the face of lost love.

Stefanio Hurko, in “The Modernist” and an untitled poem, works through a struggle with the madness that attends the void and humanity’s state of being ill-equipped for life in such a disordered realm. In “The Modernist,” the artist’s works are emblems of his “madness” -- madness that comes from meditating on disorder, working beyond the aesthetic parameters of order, form and balance(69). They are streaks and spots of “coloured madness(69). Like Odintsova who will not enter the abyss because she prefers the comfort of culture, passersby “hurriedly” turn “their heads away” or look at the artist with the “astonishment” they would direct at one “showing the world/ his naked ‘self’”(69). As long as no one buys or legitimizes his work by valuing it enough to pay for it, or seeing it as a thing of beauty, and by definition, form, the artist has no “remedy for his own madness”(69). If he could enter at least into the commercial aspect of culture, the exchange would save him. As it is, he is utterly alienated, with his madness “blind[ing] [his] eyes/ rattl[ing] [his] brain” -- proof, in Hurko’s formulation, that the human cannot do without culture.

The poem, “To perceive the imperceptable,” itemizes the ways in which humans are unequipped for life in beyond meaning, in the void beyond the confines and reassurances of culture. Her poem implies, through its listing of skills humans do not possess and would require to exist in the void, that humans need limits because they themselves are limited. To attempt to:

...perceive the imperceptable
 to grasp the ungraspable
 to see the invisible
 to touch the untouchable
 to express the inexpressible(70)

is an effort that would lead to the madness of the modernist. Unlike nature which is indifferent, humans are not only bound by their limited capabilities in terms of intellectual, physical and linguistic limits but also tormented by their ability to desire what is beyond their ability to obtain. Hurko effectively summarizes the human condition in the poem's final lines by referring to the most ineluctable human limit of all: mortality. She writes that "life is much too short for this/for this we need Eternity"(70). Nature, in contrast, has eternity, no physical limitations, no need for meaning, and no concern with morality. Hurko does not suggest that the human attempt to transcend these boundaries, wisely, in light of Bazarov's failure to do so; rather, she leaves her poem as a poignant appraisal of the human condition, and no more.

Hurko poses the problem of the limited human condition, but offers no solution. For a solution, we must turn back to Turgenev, and the measured balance that he proposes in "Journey" and exemplifies in Fathers and Sons. It is clear in Fathers and Sons, Hurko's poetry, and Zujewskyj's poem, that the brutal option, the option in which the human strives to become natural in negative ways, leads at best

to the fruitless flirtation of Odintsova or Zujewkyj's second person, or worse, to the debilitating obsession of Pavel or the modernist , or at worst, to the self-destruction of Bazarov or Ulashyn. Rather than reject nature for its alien, apparently hostile traits, Turgenev urges the human to contemplate and adapt to the limits she/he necessarily faces living in a natural world.

Chapter Three

From Jam to Varenyky:

Recognizing Limits and Finding an Adaptive Equilibrium:

Nature has cushioned man in sheer illusions: that is man's proper element. He sees form and stimuli rather than truths. He dreams and imagines godlike men as nature.
- Friedrich Nietzsche

In Fathers and Sons it is the characters who recognize their own limitations as creatures bound by social situations, personal characteristics, and nature itself achieve the greatest measure of peace. Fenichka, because of her mature and sedate acceptance of motherhood and a less than ideal marriage, and her ability to appreciate her imperfect life, best exemplifies Turgenev's adaptive equilibrium. Arina and Vassily Bazarov also personify pastoral balance, but it is a balance that is not quite self-aware, and Katya and Arkady achieve some measure of equilibrium in their romantic union.

Aside from a brief descriptive passage, the reader is first introduced to Fenichka near the end of chapter five. Turgenev bestows symbolic physical characteristics upon her that communicate the internal concert of her diverse human elements. Her skin is "soft" and "white," while her hair and eyes are "dark"(95), implicitly suggesting her capacity to synthesize contrasting values or experiences.

Her lips are "red" and "childishly pouting," "evidence that she possesses a passionate nature, while her "small delicate hands" suggest that she is, at the same time, also disposed toward refinement and social decorum. Her dress is modest, but subtly sensual, as she wears a "neat print dress," and "a new pale blue kerchief" that accents the attractiveness of her "soft shoulders"(95). The blush of "hot blood" that often appears under her "delicate skin" underlines this incorporation of both the passionate and the civilized.

Fenichka's demeanor responds to and defuses the awkwardness of her unwed motherhood and presence in the Kirsanov house. Under Pavel's glare when she first shows herself in front of Arkady, Fenichka appears at once "ashamed to have come in," and as though "she had a right to come"(95). It is apparent that Fenichka is aware of the self-righteous uncle's disapproval and Nikolai's embarrassment, but she is capable of disengaging herself from principles that do not bear upon her practical concerns: like the necessity of comfortable surroundings in which to raise Mitya. She is composed when she responds to Pavel's address, which he delivers with his brows knitted "severely"(95). She responds with utter decorum, in a voice bespeaking quiet confidence: it "carrie[s] without being too loud"(95). Indeed, Fenichka's politeness applies to "every member of the household"(108), whether they are of high or low social stature. Such an attitude of goodwill and regard for every person fosters

pastoral harmony, as do her caniness in negotiating social situations and her self-assurance.

The room Fenichka inhabits radiates both the measure and the comfort of Turgenev's ideal pastoral culture. The room itself is "small," "low," "clean and snug," which attests to the absence of extravagance or imbalance in the person who furnishes and maintains the space(108). The smells are pleasant proof of the room's cleanliness and comfort: the odours of fresh paint, "chamomile" and "lemon-balm" waft within it(108). A lamp glows invitingly, an ikon of St. Nikolas offers the security of religion, and the cheerful sounds of a caged bird (another creature who is happy in spite of the obvious environmental constraints it endures) add to the scene of domestic order(108). Fenichka's acceptance and conscientious execution of her domestic duties are witnessed further by the jars of jam that perch on her windowsill: painstakingly labelled and tied up with "meticulous care." "[B]ad" photographs of Nikolai and a "hopelessly poor" one of Fenichka herself hang on the wall and silently comment on Fenichka's celebration of a less than fairy tale romance, and a lover who is kind, but still regards her as less worthy than his dead wife(132). Fenichka's own person completes the idyllic domestic scene with the "captivating" natural beauty of a "young mother with a heathy child in her arms"(109). In Mitya, too, she accepts and refuses to discourage natural behaviour. Even though Pavel is in the room, demanding extra

decorum by his very presence, she does not draw Mitya's hands away from her face when he squashes her nose and lips into an undignified expression(110). Even Bazarov approves of Fenichka's confidence and unaffectedness. Immediately after meeting her he comments: "What I like about her is that she's not too shy and awkward ... Why should she be embarrassed? She's a mother and she's quite right"(115).

That Fenichka does indeed realize the limitations that her relationship with Nikolai imposes is made clear when she defends herself to Pavel, who accuses her of impropriety with Bazarov. Instead of attributing her love for Nikolai to any grand romantic feeling on her part, she proclaims deep affection for him as the "benefactor" who has rescued her from an impoverished and solitary life after the death of her mother(112). It seems that Fenichka, in her good-natured domestic responsibility, also realizes that Nikolai loves her for having "inherited her mother's love of order, her common sense and dependability"(112). No bitterness taints her practical appraisal of and conduct within the confines of her marriage. As I mentioned in Chapter One, Fenichka maintains her serenity through to the novel's end. When last the reader sees her, she is still dignified, in good humour, and at ease in her home and the company of family and friends"(291).

Arina and Vassily Bazarov have already been discussed in terms of their

associations with the pastoral, but they bear revisiting as representatives of Turgenev's balance as well. It is apparent that Turgenev is not a rigid traditionalist for his use of an unconventional woman like Fenichka as a model for equilibrium illustrates, but he does, at the same time, place considerable value on cultural continuity and interpersonal harmony. The Bazarovs embody these two traits in their joint respect for tradition, particularly in terms of domestic gender roles, and the manner in which their emotional personalities are synchronized throughout the novel.

The Bazarovs divide their labour along traditional lines and are comfortable in their roles: Arina is an "expert housewife" and knows all about preserving and jam-making "although she delegates these tasks to her servants, and Vassily manages the property Arina "no longer [takes] any part in"(203). Arina obediently bustles off when Vassily directs her to see to their son and his friend, delighted that after three years she finally has the opportunity to mother at full capacity(194). In truly traditional fashion, Vassily leads the young men off to the study to await supper, smoke and converse "man to man"(194-196). While they surely enact harmony in marriage, the Bazarovs seem to lack Fenichka's restraint and common sense, in light of the emotional contortions to which they succumb upon Yevgeny's arrival. Arina's "convulsive sobs" and Vassily's "twitching" lips and eyebrows betoken the concert of the couple's personalities; both parents love their son to distraction, and are bound

together by their common adoration.

In spite of the tremendous blow that Yevgeny's death deals to the doting pair, the Bazarovs remain united in their grief. The final passage in Fathers and Sons marks a return to the framework of Russian Arcadia in the form of a "small village graveyard in one of the remote corners of Russia"(294). In keeping with Turgenev's ironic landscape, the ditches that surround the cemetery are "overgrown," the crosses "sag and rot," the stones are "all askew" and "sheep wander at will over the graves"(294). Bazarov's parents come regularly to tend their son's grave although they are now so very frail as to have to support each other as "they walk with heavy steps"(295). Still dedicated to each other, and still so generous of spirit toward their "passionate, sinful, and rebellious" son, Arina and Vassily once again poignantly evoke Baucis and Philemon(295). Both the Turgenevan and the classical couple respect and fulfill their cultural responsibilities: parental, gender, religious, and, most significantly, toward visitors to the pastoral oasis, to the very end of their resources. (Arina begs "flowers from a neighbour" to brighten Bazarov's room, and Vassily nearly breaks his meagre bankroll, "pulling out one crumpled banknote after another" to procure the red wine his young guests enjoy so thoroughly(219).) The Bazarovs assuage their grief together, through prayer beside, and respectful maintenance of, their son's grave.

While Arina and Vassily are able to accept their traditional roles and find comfort in the fulfillment of duty, they do not possess the calm understanding or the "common sense" that sets Fenichka apart as the novel's definitive exemplar of Turgenevan equilibrium. They do not adapt -- their equilibrium is static, and therefore less effective in equipping them for the change of daily living in Russian Arcadia. The Bazarovs recognise the limitations nature and society place upon their existence: for example, Vassily is quick to admit that they lead a provincial, "simple, soldierly" life. However, they are obviously excessive in their esteem of Yevgeny. Vassily goes so far as to gush to Arkady: "I ought to tell you ... I worship my son!"(205). This overexuberant love for their son reduces the peace they can achieve, even as they strive to follow the rules of pastoral society. In Fathers and Sons, recognising and understanding limitations is a prerequisite for reconciling with them.

Unlike the static Bazarovs, Katya progresses toward just such an understanding of the cultural and natural boundaries that restrict her. When she first enters the narrative, Katya is a pleasant but barely remarkable figure. Her initial shyness is likely due to her youth: indeed, "everything about her" in these initial stages is "still innocently fresh"(159). She is also "overawed" by her powerful sister, but the diffidence Katya displays may grow out of the recognition that reservation is the best course for a less dynamic personality in a relationship with one who is more so(163).

Katya is not a dull person, in spite of her shyness. In what later proves to be an understatement, the narrator notes: "Arkady [is] not bored in her company"(166). Just as Fenichka analyses her own circumstances and responds without bitterness, so, too, does Katya. When she realizes that Arkady may be using her as a substitute for Anna, Katya does not react petulantly, but continues the association because it intrinsically pleases both herself and Arkady. Turgenev writes:

Katya vaguely realized that [Arkady] was seeking some sort of consolation in her company, and did not deny him or herself the innocent pleasure of a half-diffident, half-intimate friendship. (168)

The reader becomes aware of Katya's growing maturity as her relationship with Arkady strengthens. Her ability to judge the character of others and her knowledge of her own character is evident in her comparison of Bazarov to a "wild beast" and herself and Arkady to "domestic animals"(254). Slightly offended, Arkady claims that he wishes he had the "strength and energy" of a wild beast, and Katya's response communicates her grasp of the need for understanding and obeying one's nature. She notes that "[i]t's no good wishing to be like that ... your friend does not wish for it, he is like that"(255). To know and express one's nature, to live gracefully within its constraints, is what Katya and Turgenev are here urging. Katya spells out the personal balance she has achieved by adapting to her circumstances and knowing the nature that restrains her. To "respect oneself and obey -- that I can understand; that

is happiness ..." (257). Katya's view has a profound effect on Arkady, who realizes, because of her sensible words and actions, that his own personality is fundamentally unsuited to the philosophy of nihilism and that an adaptive equilibrium promises an opportunity to find meaning, if not truth, in life. "I want to devote all my energies to the pursuit of truth," he states, "but I can no longer seek my ideal where I did before ... [in Bazarov and nihilism] Up till now I did not understand myself, I set myself tasks beyond my capacity ..." (266). Arkady has had the epiphany of the narrator in "Journey;" he has seen that nature is the ultimate, alien force that dictates measure, balance and reserve in all things. He has seen that all of the aspects of himself, including those that enjoy "fine talk," (212) nature, music, recognise "duty" (266) of one person to another, and love culture, are not despicable, but essential to his own nature. All elements in balance are neither good, nor bad, but necessary in Turgenev's equilibrium. Arkady forgets his "former mentor" as he spends more time with Katya, and begins to "surrender to her influence," (272) though this "surrender" is not a frightening one. In the final chapter of the novel, Arkady "has become passionately engrossed in the management of the estate" he once would have had to view, as a nihilist, as an emblem of the rotting established order and worthy only of being destroyed. He is making a "fairly substantial income," and is living happily with a wife who is both kind and sensible, and a father whom he struggled to reject in his

earlier incarnation as a nihilist. Arkady has found meaning in the synthesis of his own nature, culture and nature itself.

Turgenev's value test is endurance, and the reward for those who find adaptive equilibrium is that they will endure with the earth. The established order survives Bazarov's onslaught, and is thereby shown to have value. It is fitting, then, to examine the values that endure in spite of Bazarov's effort to discard them. Frank Friedeberg Seeley does precisely this in his book, Turgenev: A Reading of His Fiction. Seeley undertakes a process of elimination to distill the values that remain unravaged by Bazarov's frenzy of rejection. Among the values that Bazarov negates, Seeley lists: "art and literature and all aesthetic feeling, even for the world of nature; philosophy and other forms of abstract thought; and personal relations, in particular, all forms of tender feeling"(219). What are left are the two values Seeley considers Bazarov's own: "utility(that is his criterion for action) and experience(that is his criterion for truth). In other words, he is a utilitarian and an empiricist -- though he would certainly have protested against those terms as being foreign and abstract, and therefore superfluous"(219). Bazarov's practical orientation is evident in his fervour for "critical thinking" and his dedication to science.

The combination of Bazarov's utilitarianism with the empirical holds significance applications in terms of Turgenev's equilibrium and in the contemporary

Ukrainian-Canadian writing to follow in this chapter. To Odintsova, Bazarov asserts that knowledge of people is indeed gained through “the experience of life”(160). “A decent chemist,” whose conclusions are ideally based on purely empirical data “is twenty times more useful than any poet,” Bazarov tells Pavel(97). To Arkady, Bazarov notes that “principles don’t exist; rather, there are feelings. Everything depends on them”(211). If one reads “feelings” as “sensations,” Bazarov’s statement is an overtly empirical one.

Bazarov enacts his utilitarian-empiricism more vividly than he proclaims it, for he allows himself to take pleasure only in his scientific work and in the sensory delights of food, drink, smoking and sleep. For instance, when he first arrives at Maryino, his first words are an unreserved request for food: “A meal would not come amiss, certainly”(85). After delivering this demand, he revels in the tactile sensations of a good stretch and drops onto the sofa(85). When supper does appear, Bazarov eats “heartily”(87). Throughout the novel, Bazarov guzzles red wine at every opportunity and never refuses food or a comfortable lounging spot. Whether it is on the haystack at his father’s farm(207) or on an armchair at Odintsova’s hotel room(152), Bazarov lets no opportunity for sensory enjoyment pass him by.

Until his perception is changed by Odintsova, Bazarov’s attitude toward women emphasizes usefulness if they are not physically attractive, and sensory

stimulation if they are. Bazarov hazards a visit with the visually unspectacular Kukshina only because of Sitnikov's promise that she customarily serves her visitors lunch and plenty of champagne(139). Kukshina's intelligence and activism on behalf of women's rights do not impress Bazarov, who asserts his utilitarian empiricism and behaves offensively at once, by claiming that "there is no need whatsoever" for "pretty women" to be able to converse with skill, and that "silly women," as long as they are pretty, are perfectly fine with him. The kiss he steals from Fenichka is an act carried out simply for the sensual pleasure it affords Bazarov. The scents of lilacs and roses waft in the air, and Bazarov uses the pretense of enjoying one sensory experience (smelling the rose Fenichka is smelling herself) to obtain another: the tactile delight of a kiss. Bazarov initially views Odintsova as a wonderfully sensual "specimen" he would like to see on the "dissecting-table"(155). While his metaphor is likely an attempt to sublimate the attraction he feels toward her, it nevertheless reinforces his empirical orientation. Bazarov disentangles himself from as many of the tender overtures his mother offers as he can, but he accepts her gustatory offerings without hesitation. In fact, on his deathbed, on the only occasion that he expresses any affection for her ungoaded, it is in terms of the food she serves. Bazarov wonders: "who will she feed now with her wonderful beetroot and cabbage soup?"(283).

To apply Bazarov's utilitarian empiricist system of valuation beyond Bazarov himself may appear out of place, in light of Bazarov's main function of devaluing all principles by repudiation. However, Bazarov is not the only utilitarian empiricist in the novel, or individual to whom practical pursuits and sense experience provide satisfaction. In fact, the characters who attain Turgenevan adaptive equilibrium all gain fulfillment from sensory sources and practical use of sensory information or products. Fenichka serves food, pours tea, cares for her child's basic needs, enjoys the beauty of flowers in the garden, and produces the jars of gooseberry jam that line her windowsill, as the emblem of her domestic aptitude and adjustedness(108). Katya arranges flowers for her own visual and olfactory enjoyment and that of others. She also plays the piano, but significantly: "a trifle too mechanically and drily"(163). The music becomes a social tool rather than an art form with which Bazarov would take issue. The instrumental value of the pleasing sound is emphasized by Turgenev's description of Katya's playing, rather than its power of emotional stimulation or inspiration. The elder Bazarovs are agricultural people, engaged in the production of products that offer sensory pleasure in addition to being vitally useful to human beings: food. One of the episodes in which Vassily is featured most prominently involves him pulling up turnips for later consumption and enjoyment. The sensory and the useful, then, in Turgenev's formulation, are to be regarded as essential

avenues for gathering self-knowledge and an understanding of nature itself. The senses are windows to and messages from the force that defines the physical human body and its environment, and are therefore worthy of attention and nurturing.

Ukrainian-Canadians share this focus on the utilitarian and the empiricist in the balances their immigrant characters strive to strike. The balance in the Canadian works is one that synthesizes the limiting requirements of the new environment and the preservation through modification of values of the old tradition. Robert Bogdan Klymasz's 1968 study of the adaptation of the Ukrainian folklore complex, Ukrainian Folklore in Canada, provides a framework in which to view these concerns of the Ukrainian-Canadian works. Klymasz's study is an analysis of transcriptions of first-person retellings of Ukrainian folklore by immigrants to Canada, and his own observations of surviving forms of ethnic expression that include the Ukrainian wedding and ethnic festivals. Klymasz's study group consists of individuals from the three areas in Western Canada with the highest density of Ukrainian Canadian population: Dauphin, Manitoba; Yorkton, Saskatchewan; Vegreville, Alberta. The interviewees have backgrounds and immigration experiences that are similar, in some cases, to those of the writers included in Yarmarok, or of the parents/grandparents of the collection's contributors. While Klymasz's work gives a sociological perspective to oral literature of Ukrainian-Canadians, his work also contextualizes the literary

texts found in Yarmarok and illuminates their connections to Turgenev.

Although Turgenev does not write immigrant fiction, his concern with the human being who finds her/himself in an environment controlled by a powerful, alien force, namely nature, does relate to the situation Klymasz's interviewees struggle with as "old country" people immersed in a new, alien, dominant culture. The dominant Anglo-Canadian culture imposes its expectations and -- especially significant in terms of Turgenev -- its limitations upon new Canadians. The immigrant is confronted with a choice that mirrors the one Turgenev presents to his characters: either recognise and reconcile the limitations by modifying one's "ethnic" behaviour and values, or refuse to adapt. Those who manage to find an adaptive equilibrium, (and Klymasz identifies the Ukrainian wedding and festival as instruments of such adaptation), will endure and ensure some measure of cultural continuity in their own lives and as part of the new environment. Those who reject either the old tradition or the new culture, will see some part of themselves brutalized: either the Ukrainianness they discard in hopes of vanishing into modern urban society, or the acculturated ethnically identified individual they might become.

Klymasz characterizes the acculturation process in Western Canada in terms that could accurately be applied to the dual, indifferent entity that is Turgenev's nature: it is a "flux, replete with ... various tensions, seeming contradictions and

ambivalence"(122). The process is marked by:

... the emergence of radical departures from the immigrant folklore heritage, divergences which simultaneously demonstrate the ability of the old complex to identify, respond to, and exploit the various opportunities for continuity afforded by the new environment and the contact situation. (my emphasis 122)

Turgenev's adaptive equilibrium echoes in the quotation above as well as in Klymasz's discussion of weddings and festivals as dominant culture-approved containers of Ukrainian ethnicity. Klymasz asserts that "[i]n effect, ... the reconstructed folklore complex allow its assorted carriers and enthusiasts to indulge in ... ethnic separateness and individuality without transgressing the limits and patterns prescribed and sanctioned by the surrounding, dominant English-speaking culture"(my emphasis 123).

Part of the immigrant-to-ethnic adaptive process is the loss of the Ukrainian language as business affairs and other exchanges with the dominant culture must be done in English. What the loss of this "rich, verbal core" leads to, Klymasz argues, is an increased

... stress on the remaining non-verbal elements in order to balance off the resultant vacuum by disseminating the folklore heritage more or less in sensory terms alone,--- acoustic, optical, and tactile manifestations devoted, for instance, to the 'sound' of Ukrainian country music and the 'art' of such traditional crafts as Easter egg ornamentation. (125)

The result of this increased emphasis on the sensory is both positive and negative.

The new "highly condensed, hyperbolic" and primarily sensory folklore both fits the

"compartmentalized ways" of life in the receiving culture, and is accessible to a much wider population. Therefore, it is also more likely to survive in some form. On the other hand, what survives may be so far removed from the original and meaningful product as to produce a nebulous continuity at best.

Klymasz identifies a process of compromise, but also of tenacity, survival and success of ethnicity, albeit in forms modified from the originals. The overwhelming force that the dominant culture represents necessitates adaptation and resourceful preservation of viable ethnic elements. Turgenev also imagines a process of compromise, of modifying human desires to accommodate the limitations that an overwhelming nature imposes. While ideals and values that transgress natural limitations must be discarded, sometimes painfully, the result is a sustainable, satisfying, balanced existence. The sensory elements in folklore that endure beyond language loss in Klymasz' formulation, and inform the work of contemporary Ukrainian-Canadian writers, form a link to the sensory orientation of Turgenev's adaptive equilibrium. Dennis Gruending, Maara Haas, and Bob Wakulich all focus on the sensory as a vehicle for communicating cultural experience.

Dennis Gruending, a Canadian-born, University of Saskatchewan-educated journalist and radio host living in Regina, is of Slavic-German ancestry. His grandfather emigrated from Ukraine between 1918 and 1920. Gruending's "Poem to

Grandfather” documents an immigrant’s experience of an ironic pastoral scene, poses the brutality versus balance problem, and sees cultural continuity ensured in the protagonist’s decision to respect old country tradition in a new environment. Empirical imagery communicates the hardship of immigrant life.

Gruending’s grandfather figure begins his journey in Bukovyna, where the grain fields have been sliced into sections by the migrating boundaries fostered by war. A younger grandfather looks out of his “bright, white, hut” onto the steppe where “Austrian wheat” and “Polish oats” wave in the breeze(51). The setting in this first section is an ironic Ukrainian Arcadia -- where the rich land and the people who live on it are strangled by political unrest and severely limited subsistence prospects. The most basic of expectations are thwarted here. Grandfather is healthy, strong and willing to work, traits that traditionally and pastorally entitle one to proportionate material success. Confoundingly, grandfather instead “[h]as no land/ .../ no young bride” and is, according to his own standards, “no man”(51). Early in his life, grandfather has the opportunity to fight brutality with brutality, when he is “beaten” for speaking the Ukrainian the “master” calls “mongrel Polish/ and diluted Russian”(51). Grandfather chooses to leave, rather than enter the brutal fray of the military or remain in the emasculating landscape and become bitter and ineffective.

Canadian Arcadia, to which grandfather comes, is still a harsh natural

environment, but the young man once again makes the Turgenevan choice. He adheres to tradition; never having “rubbed his rough hand/ inside the thighs of an Englishwoman/ He [takes] a Ukrainian bride at Fort William”(52). His wedding is a Klymaszian compromise: old traditions modified by a new setting. Grandfather takes the requisite “three drinks of clear liquor” on his bride’s brother’s doorstep, and embarks upon a two day odyssey of “eating and dancing kozachok”(52). Grandfather’s respect for tradition is rewarded by the land that exchanges bounty for handiwork: a reassertion of pastoral balance. Gruending concisely communicates this in the line that summarizes grandfather’s existence: “Life was hammer handles and stooks of grain”(52).

The final section is a celebration of the empirical legacy of grandfather’s life of labour. The third-to-last stanza describes his “gnarled fingers” with the “right thumb wide and flat/ where he struck it with a hammer”(52). His left leg is “poker stiff/ after a fall from a train”(52). The quilt his departed wife made provides him with warmth and physical comfort in his later years, and is the focal point of the second last stanza. The final image in the poem is a visual-tactile one that evokes the continuance of traditional practices: the reader is presented with the smooth, “last coat of whitewash/ on [grandfather’s] neat summer kitchen”(53).

Maara Haas, a Winnipeg freelance writer of Polish-Ukrainian parents, appeals,

like Gruending, to the senses in her reinterpretation of the pioneer experience. "Anton, 1930," from Haas's cycle of "Immigrant Poems," captures and freezes a moment in time: "then," when "the street was different"(54). Uncontextualized slurs, like "hunky/ yid/ galacian/ wop/ limey," are inserted one to a line at the beginning of the poem to set the tone of the ethnic and racial tensions that new immigrants face on the "street"(54-55). These tensions and sensory images make it apparent that this is a hostile environment, rather than one of pastoral harmony. Haas's tactile images, in particular, evoke Anton's hard 1930. It is a time of "frostbitten palms," "railroad steel," labourers "elbow-deep" in "pigs' scalding urine," and "flesh scathed with open sores"(55). These hardships, imposed by the dominant culture upon immigrant workers, are the new reality that can either be integrated with old country values and traditions, or provoke brutal behaviour, nihilism and despair.

Anton endures "thick boots seamed with clay" and the heavy, sore feet inside them; he turns his "feldspar"-hard face toward home in the evening, and is welcomed by "lice-headed children, stinking kerosene" and "six to a mattress sleeping on the floor"(55). That Anton's endurance, his refusal to be brutalized into rejecting the environment that treats him as an animal, bears fruit is evidenced by the poem's last lines. A speaker somewhere in the future (perhaps a grandson) remembers his sacrifices, his dedication to the preservation of family, tradition, and future prosperity,

and reverentially addresses Anton and those like him: "O shimmering ghosts/ the dust of my beginnings"(52).

In Bob Wakulich's "Love Me, Love My Varenyky," the empirical, or, more specifically, the gustatory, is the active mode of cultural preservation. Wakulich is a Calgarian, with degrees from Lakehead University and McMaster University. His grandparents emigrated from Ukraine in the 1930s. "Love Me, Love My Varenyky" is a monologue that relates pieces of the narrator's family history and the process of preparing varenyky, the cheese and potato dumplings that are the concrete -- if modified -- evidence of the endurance of the narrator's Ukrainian background.

The speaker addresses his lover throughout the narrative, and he promises to share the imminent feast with her. The varenyky, then, link food and regard for family tradition with an expression of romantic love. The speaker proposes that when he is finished his task, he and his lover will "eat some of these and then go to bed and tell each other silly lovers' things by the light of my no-drip candle"(287). That the lover is not herself Ukrainian is implied by the speaker's compulsion to tell her appropriate times for consuming the Ukrainian staple: " ... you can freeze them, or fry them up for breakfast ..." (287), and the importance of family history to an understanding of varenyky: "You know, to really understand my mother [and the fact that "twenty-four dozen" was a "regular batch" for her] you have to understand a few

things about baba, her mother”(287). Varenyky are presented as a universal treat, no longer the in-group immigrant cuisine they once were: the speaker asserts that "you can down about a dozen in one sitting without much thought, even if you're not Ukrainian"(287).

The speaker's varenyky are not exactly the same as the ones his mother or grandmother once made, for he relies on "measuring cups and spoons" that were not part of the traditional process(287). The speaker's mother "reckons" the amounts "in the palms of her hands," but allows her son to "take notes like it was some kind of applied science lab" and record the amounts. What was once a practical, highly individualized form of expression of culinary culture has been modified, in the manner Klymasz describes above, by rigid regulation for a more universal, less Ukrainian culture. The reproduction of "Baba Mary's Varenyky Dough" and filling recipes in the text is done with the awareness that they describe a product that only imperfectly preserves the culture they represent. The speaker chides his lover when she reads the recipes by exclaiming: "Hey, don't be staring at my recipe cards!"(288) He then demands her attention to the story of baba and dido's emigration. An awareness of the events and memories to which the varenyky refer in the speaker's mind is given priority over the written record of measures that are necessarily inaccurate.

The speaker remembers when his mother cooked varenyky as part of her personal adaptation to the limitations of a hostile environment. The speaker's brother is disciplined for having "mixed" his languages at school(292) and upon arriving home he orders his mother not to "speak that Chinese to [him] anymore. It makes the teacher mad"(292). The mother says nothing in response, but goes to the kitchen and prepares a special batch of varenyky: "some with fruit, some with kapusta, and she cried the whole time"(292).¹¹

After the incident, for the sake of her son, she speaks only English, with the result that the speaker himself loses most of his own grasp of Ukrainian. In this situation, varenyky remain a cultural expression approved by, and even enjoyed, by the Anglo-Canadian establishment. The speaker's mother carries out her own pain-filled gesture toward the integration of old and new elements, by accepting the stricture against her spoken language, and, at the same time, expressing her family's Ukrainianness by preparing a varenyky feast.

The speaker's mother shows the practical domestic acumen that Turgenev's balanced individuals possess, for she is "always the one" who takes care of the children's problems and runs the family like a "mayor" oversees a "city"(292). Her

¹¹In my personal experience, varieties of varenyky other than potato are usually saved for special occasions and laid on the table with reverence. Quite often, the hands that made them are honoured in prayer, as well.

practicality and her ability to accept her children's leaving, and to take a job outside the home also mark her as having the Turgenevan ability to adapt. Her duties at the doctor's office that employs her include assisting the "old, ethnic types"(292). Not only does she find a way to cope with the divergent old and new experiences in her personal life and with those imposed upon her by the dominant culture, she also acts as a bridge for others who must adapt in the same way(292).

Varenyky, grain-stooks, feldspar faces and jam are emblems of a process of recognising and reconciling with the limits imposed by alien, inescapable forces. While the process is often characterized by heartache and compromise, personal equilibrium is the reward to those who are determined to survive it. Because of the inevitable paring of expectations that Turgenev depicts, and the corresponding streamlining of cultural expression in the context of Canadian acculturation, the language of adaptive equilibrium often becomes inarticulate -- communicated primarily to and through the senses. The final line of Wakulich's tale is a highly effective illustration of this; the speaker presents the finished, steaming varenyky and says, "Here, taste"(292). He trusts the taste of the food to "speak" of the hazards they have passed. The truth, in this case, is in the varenyky.

Conclusion

Turgenev invested "enormous faith" in the Russian language -- "as guarantor of a future liberation, of realization of justice and freedom" -- but, as part of his own adaptive equilibrium, he "balanced" his hope for the future with "recognition of the futility of art's consolation"(Costlow 141) or its ability to change or improve reality. He recognized his art as a dangerous delusion, like Bazarov's pretensions to overcoming nature's human rule or Levitsky's Ulashyn's disregard for the dangers of the night. Turgenev, the Ukrainian-Canadians in this thesis, and all writers, have the option of believing in the worlds they fashion, in the values they impose upon the characters in those worlds, and in their own power as the alien force outside that sets the environmental boundaries. Turgenev regards such authorial grandiosity, as well as immeasured decoration in art, language, emotion, or rhetoric in art or language as jewels on a goblet of deadly liquid; he writes:

I mould my speech in roundness, take comfort in the sound and harmony of words. Thus, like a sculptor, like a master goldsmith, I diligently fashion and engrave and make variously beautiful that chalice in which I will offer poison to myself. (141)

Because of his recognition of the excess that writing, like living, invites, Turgenev adapts his words to the rule he sees in nature: the result is a style that embodies the "reserve of feelings and strength" of healthy, reconciled creatures in nature. Adaptive equilibrium allows the writer to express his/her own nature and experience the simple,

natural pleasure of working something "good" for the sensory enjoyment of the reader. Like Fenichka's jam and Wakulich's narrator's varenyky, the text is something the writer can pass with moderate pride and fulfillment to the reader and say: "Here, taste."

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