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Ideology in Literature and Literature as Ideology: Totalitarian and Reactionary Appropriation of Resistant Texts

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Ideology in Literature and Literature as Ideology: Totalitarian and Reactionary Appropriations of Resistant Texts

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Abstract

This thesis seeks to explore the means by which nominally or potentially resistant texts are appropriated into violent or exploitative political structures for propaganda and profit. In the first chapter two pre-soviet Russian novels closely associated with the radical tradition are examined, through the lens of literary analysis, in order to uncover the ways in which ideologically egalitarian revolutionary movements can degenerate into authoritarian regimes. The second chapter is concerned with a Welsh text, *How Green Was My Valley,* which, despite being concerned with the conditions of the Welsh mining class, utilizes the narrative form of childhood recollection to insidiously propagate an extremely reactionary social, political, and economic ideology informed by patriarchal and xenophobic tendencies. This thesis looks to uncover the ways in which the text incorporates resistant elements in order to create an economically viable artifact for the capitalist market, as well as buttress the dominant hegemony. This function becomes even more clear in John Ford's 1941 film adaptation, in which labor struggle and economic disparity are put under erasure entirely in order to enhance the marketability of the film and to intensify its underlying ideological message. Both sets of texts, Russian and Anglophone, demonstrate the dangerous and pernicious tendency for texts to be weaponized as means of exploitation, and for ideological perspectives to fossilize and cause individuals and movements to lean towards violence and away from democracy.

Ideology in Literature and Literature as Ideology: Totalitarian and Reactionary Appropriation of Resistant Texts

> "Where there is power, there is resistance. . . . A multiplicity of points of resistance. . . . These points of resistance are present everywhere in the power network. Hence there is no single locus of great Refusal, no soul of revolt, source of all rebellions, or pure law of the revolutionary. Instead, there is a plurality of resistances, each of them a special case" (Foucault 96)

Introduction

The purpose of this project is to identify points of convergence and contention among various ideological alignments, both liberal and radical, on the political left, and to examine the ways that literature represents or propagates these perspectives. Through a literary analysis of two couplings of texts, one Russian and one Anglophone, I will attempt to problematize presuppositions among various leftist perspectives and build an argument that postulates both the necessity for and possibility of rethinking foundational social, political, and economic perspectives in order to prevent the appropriation of these systems of thought into violent or exploitative systems. Although this thesis is formulated from a leftist perspective, the implications of my argument will, I hope, extend to a rethinking of the dogmatic and stagnant elements that not only permeate, but sometimes

even constitute the structural elements of one's functioning ideological and philosophical apparatus regardless of political affiliation. This thesis is, essentially, a reading of politically disparate texts which seeks not to homogenize leftist thought into a monolithic synthesis, but, instead, to advocate a pluralistic consideration of ideological instabilities that may ultimately result in a more inclusive, dynamic, and democratic epistemology and praxis of resistance.

I will first analyze two Russian texts that have had an indelible impact on the Russian revolutionary imagination historically and that have each had considerable force in changing the real political landscape of Tsarist Russia and the USSR: Ivan Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons,* and Nickolai Chernyshevsky's *What is to be done?* These texts form a logical constellation for interpretation insofar as they are written in direct dialogue with one another and exist as a chronological conversation that debates hotly, and sometimes viciously, many of the major ideological issues that a dissatisfied populus poised at a time of major socio-political unrest and incipient revolution were and are forced to countenance.

Ivan Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons* directly confronted the practical and philosophical gap, one that was delineated along largely generational boundaries, between the liberal reformist and radical revolutionary factions of the Russian population. His novel, in fact, popularised the term нигилизм[1] in regards to the largely student revolutionary movement which advocated a total break with existing social, moral,

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[1] "Nigilizim" - Nihilism

economic, and political structures. Although his portrayal of the nihilists is undoubtedly sympathetic, the liberal Turgenev does not by any means ignore the dangers of the rigid tautological dogmatism present already among the revolutionaries and which would come into complete poisonous fruition under Stalin's authoritarian and bureaucratic USSR.

It is in direct response to Turgenev's portrayal of revolutionary youth that Chernyshevsky wrote his infamous *What is to be done?*. This text, while relatively unknown in the West, has had almost inconceivable ramifications and influence on the revolutionary tradition in Russia. It has been argued that "Chernyshevsky's novel, far more than Marx's *Capital,* supplied the emotional dynamic that eventually went to make the Russian Revolution" (Frank 68). Penned from the dungeons of the Peter and Paul fortress in St. Petersburg, Chernyshevsky's propagandistic novel offers his own hyperbolic vision of the "new" people of Russia who live, think, and work, by the hyper-materialist philosophy of rational egoism which Chernyshevsky advocated and which he believed could save Russia and the world from exploitative socio-political structures. Furthermore, in order to avoid the strict censorship of the Tsarist ideological apparatus which was in place at the time, Chernyshevsky presents the reader with a thinly veiled allegory for his idea of a revolutionary utopia which operates under the народничество,[2] or Russian Populist, ideals of egalitarian communism based on the traditional peasant commune, or общи́на,[3] which the author idealizes.

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[2] Narodnichestvo
[3] Obshchina

By reading these texts comparatively, I will seek to trace the various permutations of interconnected ideologies in pre-Tsarist Russia, and explore the points of consensus and friction among these authors, the characters they articulate, and the movements they represent. Despite their vastly different perspectives about how to address the political and economic injustices of their time, these authors articulate a desire to move toward a more just and equitable society. It is my postulation, however, that the multifaceted nature of Turgenev's characters and the radically democratic sensibilities of Chernyshevsky's platform indicate, when read comparatively, the potential for an underlying epistemology that could have hypothetically contributed to the destabilization of the dogmatism and ruthless teleology of the authoritarian USSR, and that can still today speak to the power of a multiplicitous philosophical approach to politics of revolution in the tumultuous political atmosphere of 2018 dominated by partisan infighting among groups that could, and it is my belief should, be willing and able to focus on points of mutual recognition of injustice when attempting to confront the exploitative nature of late capitalism and neoliberal globalization.

I will also read a second coupling of texts for both their productive potential to complicate discourses of resistance, and also because of the danger of their being incorporated into the very structures of domination to which they attempt to draw attention. Richard Llewellyn's *How Green was my Valley,* which shines a light on the plight of Welsh miners under the brutal conditions of industrialization in the early twentieth century, nevertheless exhibits elements of xenophobia, bucolic nostalgia, and

often tends towards reactionary thinking. It is for these reasons, despite the hypothetically oppositional character of the novel, that the book was able to be effectively incorporated into the American culture industry as a film in which the progressive environmental and social themes of the book were sanitized into a politically fangless artifact of bourgeois sensibilities, the viewership of which far surpassed the readership of the original text.

This project will attempt to examine the historical trajectories and theoretical disputes which have not only led to the current impasse of leftists refusing to cooperate and function in unison to resist the injustices and exploitation to which they are all opposed in some capacity, but also have allowed potentially productive modes of thought to become ideological artifacts of exploitative political systems. The politico-historical trend of appropriation of texts, into both authoritarian radical and reactionary regimes, is an aspect of cultural studies to consider as the international far-right continues to gather support through effective manipulation of ideology and information.

Ultimately my argument is that by examining the ways both radical and liberal leftist movements are incorporated into political systems to which they are opposed, totalitarian regimes and the dominant hegemony of capitalism respectively, this thesis can help to clarify the ways in which these movements have failed to interact productively not only to achieve their shared goals of equity. but also to avoid solidifying into a self-justifying dogmatism that allows them to be appropriated into and weaponized by inherently and structurally violent systems. I will ultimately stress the need for ideological dynamism, open and generous exchange of thought, non-hierarchical

organization, and the use of mutual aid principles among revolutionary and progressive movements to create a more democratic epistemology and praxis of cooperation in resistance to oppression, and to avoid an echo-chamber approach of moral self-licensing propped up by tautological logic.

The nature of this project is to a large extent theoretical, and relies heavily on an interdisciplinary approach that combines literary analysis, philosophy, political theory, and historical approaches. In addition to the literary texts mentioned above, I will draw on a diverse group of thinkers who have influenced the authors of those texts, and who have also later provided political and philosophical commentary on the issues that permeate the novelists' thought, or who have offered historical interpretations of the events that their works have helped catalyze or combat.

The dialectical philosophy of Hegel plays an important role in my analysis of the literature, as I attempt to construct a rereading of these Hegelian principles, which stress the dynamism and impetus towards constant change and reconsideration contained within, while attempting to eschew the teleological certainties and idealist metaphysics with which they are imbued. Furthermore, I use Marx's material dialectics as an ultimately productive but far too rigid and dogmatic interpretation of history as a point of departure to help me problematize the grand narrative of the enlightenment and its dire consequences in regards to the political turmoils of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

I further employ elements of the rich and varied tradition of Marxist cultural and literary theory in order to identify the nature of and to consider potential means of destabilizing some of the more insidious exploitative elements of late capitalism and the discourse of power, oftentimes operating invisibly for a large portion of the population, that allow it to continue to exist. I draw extensively from Louis Althusser's *Ideology and the Ideological State Apparatuses* to examine the ways in which the dominant hegemony perpetuates the "reproduction of the means of production" (127) and also from Raymond Williams' *Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory,* which I use as a means to explain not only the incorporation of oppositional thought into the Capitalist ideological machine, but also into "institutional" and "state" philosophy more generally.

José Medina's *The Epistemology of Resistance* provides in many ways a model for the democratic and open-minded ideology that I hope to propose. I use its postulations about reducing epistemic oppression in regards to intersectional approaches to feminism and racial equity as a basis to apply the need for what he calls "uncertainty" and "friction" as vital components of the dynamism and open-mindedness I emphasize the utility of diverse perspectives across the political left. These speculations on the nature and utility of democratic political structures and quotidian lifeways are informed by John Dewey's texts *Democracy is Radical* and *Creative Democracy: The Task Before Us.*

Although my use of these various and divergent philosophies is in no way groundbreaking, my attempt to draw from elements of each to suggest a collaborative theory of thought and action will, I hope, contribute to the various scholarship on each of

these authors who have yet to be read, as far as I know, comparatively with one another or through the literature that serves as a point of departure for my speculations.

The political power of literature lies in its ability to operate as a prism, refracting the beams of the various elements of dominant and subversive ideologies which form a text and a subjectivity into a spectrum of light of which the individual rays can be teased out, examined comparatively, destabilized, and disrupted. It is the dynamic lens which can allow one to revisit and reevaluate otherwise unnoted or ignored perspectives, and deconstruct the elements of ideology which impact and shape one's thinking without one's knowledge. In this project the function of the two clusters of primary texts mentioned above, read alongside each other both within each coupling and throughout the constellation as a whole, is to provide a point of departure from which to deconstruct each through its intersections with the others. This will, I hope, break the ground for a deeper understanding of the powers and problems of various political alignments on the left to create a more fecund field of analysis not only to examine the historical realities and theoretical nuances of undeniably disparate but fundamentally united intellectual traditions, but also to seek to apply the lessons of the past and conglomerations of critique to the present.

Text, stemming etymologically from the latin *textus*, or literary style, shares its root with textile. It is from the stories, theories, and arguments that one weaves together that our perception of the world stems. By spinning a yarn an individual pulls together threads of arguments to attempt to create a cohesive whole, a whole which by necessity

must pull on the threads of other texts and utilize patterns of pre-existing arguments. This project attempts to formulate a theory of the collision and cooperation of theories by beginning with the frayed edges of the texts, worn down both by overuse and by neglect, to attempt to deconstruct and reconstruct a narrative of politics of resistance through the lens of anti-capital critique, in the refracted light of literary texts and with the remedy for meiosis that is historical perspective.

Chapter 1: The Russian Triangulation

"Democracy is the belief that even when needs and ends or consequences are different for each individual, the habit of amicable cooperation… is itself a priceless addition to life... To cooperate by giving differences a chance to show themselves because of the belief that the expression of difference is not only a right of the other persons but is a means of enriching one's own life-experience, is inherent in the democratic personal way of life" (*Creative Democracy* 229)

A: *Fathers and Sons*[4]

Political and Philosophical Nihilism

Fathers and Sons may not appear to be a particularly revolutionary or even politically inflected novel to the modern reader. It contains no explicit plot to overthrow the dominant political apparatus, nor a call to active revolutionary measures. Yet although

[4] It is vital that a brief note on the characters examined in this project be made here. One will notice, undoubtedly, that all of the individuals explored at length in the analysis of this particular novel are male. While it is certainly true that there are several fascinating women in the novel who could be read powerfully for the political ramifications of their thoughts, actions, and relationships, it would perhaps be cumbersome to do so in this argument as these characters very rarely speak directly to their political inclination, and instead tend to demonstrate more obliquely the reifications or destabilization they might present to social structures and hegemony. The contextual apparatus which must be constructed in a analysis of these characters then, although certainly worthwhile and even imperative to a more complete literary analysis of *Fathers and Sons,* would perhaps be out of place in this more theoretically inclined thesis.

the hyper-materialistic philosophy of the mouthpiece of revolutionary nihilism, Yevgeny Vasilievich Bazarov, does not seem to expound, with one very important exception, any ideology that would seem groundbreaking or even necessarily subversive, Bazarov has had a major impact of on the Russian tradition of radical literature. This character, who demonstrates resolute convictions, dedication to his cause, and great energy and magnetism alongside fathomless arrogance, self-absorption, and occasionally cruelty to the point of misanthropy, embodies both the best and the worse of radicalism. This portion of my chapter explores how Bazarov represents on an individual level the broader epistemic failings that radical revolutionary groups have suffered from, and that have led not only to splintering and infighting on the left, but also has facilitated the appropriation of radical ideology into totalitarian regimes. While the bulk of existing scholarship generally approaches *Fathers and Sons* through psychological or exclusively historical analysis, my reading, however, considers the novel from a political and theoretical perspective through the lens of Marxist cultural studies.

To understand the influence of Bazarov on the Russian revolutionary imagination, one must examine the role that literature plays in the ideological conflicts of the time period. Richard Freeborn, in *The Revolutionary Russian Novel,* claims that through Turgenev's work "literature was to become more than a barometer of social change; it was to be a pretext for violent disagreement between two generations of the

intelligentsia" (8). Due to the strict censorship[5] imposed under the autocratic regime during this period, literature became a primary outlet for expression of dissent, and literary criticism functioned as the main platform of ideological debate. As Sasha St. John Murphy points out, "Literature acted as a forum for political discussions as the more obvious government channels remained closed in Russia" (2). It is indicative of the close relationship between works of fiction and real revolutionary movements in the 1860s that the term "nihilist" entered the Russian vocabulary through Turgenev's work, and came to be the definitive signifier for an entire generation of radicals, although they often prefered to call themselves the "new men." It is contextually necessary for a reading of *Fathers and Sons* to examine the meaning of nihilism in its political usage in the nineteenth century, and to make a clear distinction between the ideology and agenda of the nihilist movement and the more common contemporary use of the word to describe an existential philosophical stance.

Philosophical nihilism -- the position that life is inherently meaningless, morality is relativistic and therefore illegitimate, and all transcendental systems of human connectivity are mere metaphysical superstition -- is in many ways antithetical to the very engaged social practice of the political nihilist movement, despite that these two positions share a few vital characteristics. Although the political nihilists[6] of the nineteenth century

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[5] It is worth noting that even the relatively mild *Fathers and Sons* did not escape from the censoring process unscathed. Turgenev, in a letter to K. Sluchevsky, complained about being compelled to remove a section of the novel.

[6] The Nihilism (нигилизм) movement was a uniquely Russian political trend. Although certainly there were thinkers and revolutionaries in other parts of the world who shared the ideals of the nihilists, including the world-traveling Russian anarchist Mikhail Bakunin, the term itself is one that is indelibly associated with particularly Russian schools of thought and action in the nineteenth

tended to hold a disdain for metaphysical speculation and previously existing systems of ethical calculus, the movement was deeply committed to and highly engaged in rethinking meaning in social and individual life and reformulating conceptualizations of morality that could usher in a new era of human happiness, abundance, and progress. While the philosophical nihilist may claim to believe in nothing (although, paradoxically, a belief in "nothing," be it philosophical or political, certainly entails a belief in and of itself) political nihilism is undoubtedly, despite fervent assertions of objective realism and complete materialism, a highly idealistic tradition in its own right. This is a paradox that Bazarov himself wrestles with throughout the course of the text. The nihilist movement advocates a complete rejection of current and past structures of political governance, systems of thought, and ethical constructions, and thus of all authority on principal, as well a total reformulation of society on purely "rational" and "scientific" grounds, supposedly divorced from all sentimentality and superstition.[7] This stance entails a complete leveling of both intellectual and political society as they currently exist in order to clear the ground for a new and better world, hence the shared use of the latin root *nihil,* nothing. To those active in the nihilist movement in Tsarist Russia, the destructive act of

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century, and use of "political nihilism" in this paper references the Russian movement unless otherwise stated.

[7] As will be explored in more detail shortly, both the Orthodox Marxist and Nihilist intellectual traditions focus of "objective" and "scientific" evaluation of socio-political and economic organization. It is worth noting, however, that the teleological nature of Marxist "science" tends to be interested predominantly in the understanding of macro-historical trends of sociological development, while the Nihilist utilization of objectivity is more closely associated with the "natural sciences" and applying the scientific method both to theoretical political speculations and in an unsentimental way to one's lived experiences and interactions with others.

the liquidation of all state governmental and ideological authority was a necessary and ultimately creative step for human progress.

The nihilist theory of historical trajectory differs sharply from the more teleological belief in progress shared by most liberal and radical thinkers. At least up to the postmodern period, a strong sense of the unstoppable development of a new and better society permeated much political belief, and finds expression in the utopian hopes placed on the advancement of technologies as well as in Hegelian dialectic. Such optimism is expressed most explicitly in the dialectical materialism central to orthodox Marxist thought, which attempts to apply to socio-economics the Hegelian philosophical system in which humanity unceasingly and unconsciously works towards the realization of its own perfection through opposition and ultimate synthesis of contradictory emergent concepts and developments with the previously existing ones. For Marx, the dominant political/economic ruling class, which is in a state of stagnation and decay, (thesis) is opposed by the rapidly growing and increasingly dynamic emerging economic class (antithesis). The result of the class conflict between these two groups, which Marx saw as an inevitable rule of historical development, results in the formation of a new order (synthesis) that will in turn be replaced by another emergent group until humanity finally reaches a stateless communist utopia in which conflict will cease to be feasible due to the perfect equality of material conditions and political relations.

Ultimately, dialectical theories, including Marx's materialist reevaluation of Hegel, emphasize beyond all else the need for constant dynamism and permutation of

social structure and ideology. There is a sad irony, however, in the fact that a system that stresses the historical inevitability of change over time, in matters both intellectual and political, should become throughout its own history one of the most notoriously monolithic and dogmatic theoretical apparatuses in its application. This circumstance is due perhaps to the grandiose teleological nature of any argument that has the audacity to claim, especially with allegedly scientific objectivity, to understand the entire route of human progress -- past, present, and future. While this fallacy of objectivity and total synthesis will be examined in the next chapter, for the matter at hand it is the constant building upon and development of new systems from the old, a development that emphasizes the necessity of multiplicity rather than total destruction, that must be kept in mind in regards to *Fathers and Sons* and the nihilist movement. Even revolutionary actions and toppling of old societies, from the Marxist perspective, is inherently a part of the progressive movement of society into its more advanced forms as time passes by. This sentiment is not only rejected by the revolutionary nihilist movement, but is also found by the main nihilist character, Bazarov, to be naive, idealistic, and mawkish.

Bazarov and the Revolutionary Russian Imagination: Principles of Nihilist Thought and Action

Bazarov becomes in many ways the archetypal representation of the young radical nihilist in Russian literature, and in fact the term becomes popularised through Turgenev's widely read and influential novel. Arkady Nikolaevich Kirsanov, Bazarov's younger comrade with whom he is spending the summer after graduation from university, gives a brief but working definition early in the narrative of the nihilist project in his description of the ideals he and Bazarov share.

Arkady, upon declaring that his friend is a nihilist, attempts to define this platform, claiming that nihilists regard "everything from a critical point of view… A nihilist is a person who does not bow down to any authority, who does not accept any principle on faith, whatever reverence that principle may be enshrined in" (29). His uncle, Pavel Petrovich Kirsanov, who represents the reform-minded bourgeois yet retains his aristocratic pretensions, answers with a rebuttal that in many ways represents the main ideological conflict around which the novel is built. He declares decisively that, "Indeed, well I see that it is not in our line. We are old-fashioned people, we imagine that without principles, taken as you say on faith, there is no taking a step, no breathing" (29). As Richard Freeborn observes:

> That there was a desire for revolution in the hearts and minds of leading section of the younger generation is not in any doubt. The older generation

> was committed to change, but on gradualist principles… thus a fairly clear alignment of interests began to emerge. The left-wing younger intelligentsia were in favor of any change, even to the extent of violent, revolutionary overthrow of the autocracy; the more right-wing older generation were in favor of gradual changes of a liberal-democratic character, which would rid Russia of its more obvious backward anomalies and allow it to become more modern and Westernized. (10)

Turgenev applies pressure to the principles of both generations, and a close reading of the characters' interactions with each other, both in conversation and in action, demonstrates not only the fragilities of, but also the similarities between, both camps. A politically focused reading of the novel, one that foregrounds the points at which the characters' ideological inclinations reach impasses of contention and become irreconcilable, allows for a reconsideration of the potential of a theory for commonality across political boundaries, and emphasizes the need for dynamism and heteroglossia rather than stagnation and uniformity in the formation and reformation of one's own ideological convictions. Ideological dynamism of this nature not only opens possibilities for political solidarity amongst various groups, but also would contribute to providing the epistemic tools for individuals to recognize and resist dogmatism in their own political affiliations that could lead to the "toe-the-line" mentality that contributes to authoritarianism.

A generous mode of interlocution and cooperation could certainly result in a far-reaching and thorough reconceptualization of political theory and praxis and would then also, it is hoped, catalyze a fundamental alteration of the nature of pragmatic change and socio-economic restructuring. A radically democratic epistemology of resistance, therefore, regardless of one's political affiliations, is or could be a potentially radical stance against not only social, political, and economic exploitation, but also against division, isolation, and authoritarianism on the left.

In his aptly titled short essay "Democracy is Radical," John Dewey explains the radical nature of true democracy by first contrasting it with "bourgeois democracy," which he defines as "one in which power rests firmly in the hands of finance capitalism, no matter what claims are made for government of, by, and for all the people" (296). He further elaborates in regard to the nature of legitimate democratic principles that "there is no opposition in standing for liberal democratic means combined with ends that are socially radical" (289). Radical democracy, then, consists of the constant meaningful interaction with the thoughts of others coupled with direct social action. This is starkly opposed to simply engaging in the limited freedom to choose between the lesser of two evils that allegedly democratic capitalist systems advocate and that simply serves to address the surface level of government without providing for systemic alteration of exploitative principles. The utility not only of democratic political organization, but also and more importantly of engaging in the cultivation of a democratic mindset through quotidian actions that are conducive to the fostering of epistemically productive

communication, is also a foundational element of Dewey's philosophy. It is exactly this cognitive mindset, as will be explored in the following pages, that is thoroughly lacking in many of the characters here examined in Turgenev's novel. Dewey postulates:

> The means to which it [democracy] is devoted are the voluntary activities of individuals in opposition to violence; they are the force of intelligent organization versus that of organization imposed from outside and above. *The fundamental principle of democracy is that the ends of freedom and individuality for all can be attained only by means that accord with those ends.* (298)

The utilization of radically democratic means for radically democratic ends, then, is not a process that occurs sporadically and irregularly, but is a formative epistemological factor that contributes to an open-minded and dynamic way of moving through the world and interacting with others. Dewey states more fully i*n "Creative Democracy - The Task Before Us"* that "democracy is a personal way of individual life; it signifies the possession and continual use of certain attitudes, forming personal character and determining desire and purpose in all the relations of life" coupled with "a generous belief in [all others'] possibilities as human beings" (226).

Accordingly, the main question at stake in *Fathers and Sons* can then be expressed in the following way: Is progressive reform capable of rectifying a society that is clearly exploitative and inefficient by virtue of its most foundational organizing principles? Must not only the political, but also the social, ethical, and economic

functioning of current society be altered dramatically in order to bring about more than a nominal change in its ability to operate effectively, efficiently, and justly? If this is the case, at what cost and with what risk is this project undertaken? Or, in other words, is the project of gradual reform feasible, or must the status quo be liquidated in order to clear the way for a new and better future? This conundrum is, essentially, a question of the limitations of democratic processes and a study of the points at which these process break down and why. None of the characters in the novel, I suggest, adequately couples a democratic way of living with political activism, and therefore limits the ability of any of their stances, from reformist liberal to nihilist radical, to implement systemic and structural change locally or nationally. As none of the stances are epistemologically democratic, they are all subject to absorption into either rigid authorianism or bourgeois complacency, and therefore become ultimately equally ineffectual regardless of the measures of direct action either taken or not taken.

All the above questions are addressed when the positions of both generational sets are further illuminated by yet another strained conversation around the dinner table. Arkady's father, Nikolai Petrovich Kirsanov, nods his head affirmingly at the ideals of "liberalism, progress, and principles," while Bazarov counters with disdain about these ideals, then elaborates on his own values. He proclaims, "We act by virtue of what we recognize as beneficial. At the present time, negation is the most beneficial of all -- and we deny -- everything!" The liberal democrat Nikolai here points out, justly, that the denial of everything, of all pre-existing constructions of morality and politics, essentially

creates a political platform based entirely around complete destruction, and he argues that one must also, of course, engage in acts of creation. Bazarov, with the fanaticism that will lead the real-world nihilists to undertake numerous murders and bombings in the subsequent years, including the successful assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881, counters;

> That's not our business now… The ground wants clearing first… I'll tell you what we do. Not long ago we used to say our officials took bribes, that we had no roads, no commerce, no real justice… Then we suspected that talk, about our social diseases, was not worthwhile, that it all led to nothing but superficiality and pedantry; we saw that our leading men, so-called advanced people and reformers, are no good; that we busy ourselves over foolery, talk rubbish about art, unconscious creativeness, parliamentarism, trial by jury, and the deuce knows what all; while, all the while, it's a question of getting bread to eat, while we're stifling under the grossest superstition, while all our enterprises come to grief, simply because there aren't honest men enough to carry them on, while the very emancipation our government's busy upon will hardly come to any good, because peasants are glad to rob even themselves to get drunk at the gin shop… All Moscow was burnt down, you know, by a farthing dip… [there is no] institution in our

> present mode of life, in family or in social life, that does not call for complete and unqualified destruction. (65)

Both the promise and danger of radical thinking, epitomized by the unabashedly hyperbolic destructive tendency of the nihilists, are crystallized in Bazarov's words, where sentiments of both energetic humanism and ruthless dogmatism appear in their most unadulterated forms. As the anarchist Mikhail Bakunin, who was closely associated with, although not ideologically a member of, the nihilist movement has proclaimed, "Let us therefore trust the eternal Spirit which destroys and annihilates only because it is the unfathomable and eternally creative source of all life. The passion for destruction is a creative passion, too" (57). This impatient creative/destructive urge is responsible both for many of the most productive moments of the struggle for emancipation, and has also sown the poison seeds of unthinkable atrocity and unimaginable terror.

Bazarov, and to a lesser extent Arkady, demonstrate the sensibilities of the nihilist movement in more than just theoretical discourse. Various characters refer to Bazarov repeatedly as a great leader and an extraordinary man endowed with the powerful intellect, strength of character, and fearlessness that will be necessary to bring the barbaric autocracy of Russia, in which many agricultural landowners still quantify their properties in feudalistic terms by the number of serfs bound to the land that they possess, into the modern industrial age. Although Bazarov demonstrates magnetism, exercises tremendous influence over other characters by force of his great charisma and unbending

conviction, and offends the archaic and aristocratic sensibilities of the older generation with his nonchalant and unpretentious manners, Turgenev's portrayal of this potential revolutionary hero is by no means one-sided or exaggeratedly laudatory. Bazarov is also wildly arrogant, condescending, vindictive, and even sometimes vicious. Within this character both the best and the worst of the ultimate ramifications of the radical tradition in Russia and around the globe are present.

Although Turgenev's own political sensibilities are aligned more towards the liberal progressivism of the Westernizing зáпадничество[8] movement, it is clear from his *Literary Reminiscences* and documentation of his writing process that he bases Bazarov on a group of individuals (particularly one rural doctor) who impressed him enormously, and that he sometimes stated that he intended the character to be a hero, albeit a tragic one, who is meant to command the reader's deepest respect if not always their sympathy. Despite these sentiments, however, reception of the fictional young nihilist has been tremendously mixed. *Fathers and Sons* directly inspired response from the radical materialist Nikolai Chernyshevsky, who viewed Bazarov as a grotesque caricature of the movement of the "new people," and thus sought to present a more accurate (and flattering) image of the revolutionary intellectual in *What is to be Done?*. Interestingly enough, however, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, who read Bazarov as a ridiculous glorification of a faddish and shallow political movement, crafted several novels in response to the dangers and fallacies he perceived in the psychology and ideology of characters like

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[8] *zapadnichestvo*

Bazarov. In his novel, *The Possessed* Dostoevsky even goes so far as to ruthlessly lampoon Turgenev personally as a hack writer pandering to the younger generation in a futile attempt to stay relevant. The plethora of opposing critiques of Turgenev's novel speaks not only to the considerable impact of his writing, but also to the tensions that rise from the interactions among the vast scope of political perspectives circulating in literature at this formative moment in Russian history.

Bazarov is a complex amalgamation of many of the same characteristics that would also come to define the nihilist movement historically for both its successes and its failures. In fact, in *Antinihilism in the Russian Novel of the 1860s,* Charles A. Moser postulates that "Bazarov was very much a composite, an emblematic embodiment of the ideas and attitudes rife among the younger generation… distilling the essence of the social and intellectual theories then abroad in the land" (Moser 83). Bazarov considers himself in many ways a man of the people, yet occasionally when angry lets slip a comment indicating that he in fact despises the poor for their ignorance. Over the course of the novel we find that, as Frank Friedeberg Seeley notices in a chapter titled "The First Nihilist" from a larger book on Turgenev's writings, "The prospect of universal prosperity in some remote future only moves him [Bazarov] to hate those who will enjoy it when he is under the ground" (227). While Seeley emphasizes the psychological nature of Bazarov's failings, that ultimately lead to his decline into misanthropy and existential paralysis, William C Brumfield argues that this degeneration stems not from the character's personal shortcomings, but claims instead that Bazarov is a romantic

archetype who must by necessity be lonely and individualistic, and thus also explicitly puts under erasure the politicized elements present in Turgenev's text. Brumfield contends that "by the middle of *Fathers and Sons* the ideological element begins to recede and it becomes clear that Bazarov's radical views, rather than determining his actions, have served to establish a position of isolation from which he can offer his challenge to the order of the universe" (498) and "ideological arguments serve primarily to motivate a course of action which eventually has little to do with ideology" (496). I assert, however, that Bazarov's frustration stems primarily from the lack of fulfillment he finds in the socio-political status quo, a failure that further increases his isolation, which then in turn causes the character to struggle increasingly to find comrades or convert his peers to his nihist worldview. Although admittedly it is true that much of the later portion of the novel revolves around Bazarov's doomed courtship of Anna Odintsova, her position as an intelligent, strong willed, and independent woman is a social statement in and of itself, and politics is never far from the thoughts or words of either character.

The bitterness discussed by both scholars indicates that Bazarov's democratic sensibilities may in fact not be so much more advanced than that of the "liberal snobs" whose vanity he finds so contemptible, a circumstance further reinforced by the fact that his ability to relate and inspire working people may not be as great as he would like to think. His overreaching faith in his own power to relate to others is made evident when in the heat of an argument with Pavel he proudly exclaims, "My grandfather plowed the land… Ask any one of your peasants which of us -- you or me -- he'd more readily

acknowledged as a fellow countryman. You don't even know how to talk to them" (62). While it is undoubtedly true that one of the first things one learns about this character is that "Bazarov possessed the special faculty of inspiring confidence in people of a lower class and, though he never tried to win them, behaved very casually with them" (25), the reader discovers very late in the novel, in one of the few moments when, perhaps tellingly, Turgenev considers the thoughts or feelings of the peasantry at all, that "Bazarov, who knew how to talk to peasants (as he had boasted in his dispute with Pavel Petrovich), did not in his self-confidence even suspect that in their eyes he was all the while something of the nature of a buffoonish clown" (225). This unbridled self-confidence -- perhaps a necessary component of the personality of a potential revolutionary who dares to engage in a reevaluation of the socio-political norms as complete as the one advocated by the nihilist movement -- clouds the ability for those involved to actually consider themselves or their actions with the same critical gaze that they turn outwards. Seeley further emphasizes Bazarov's refusal to apply the skepticism he advocates to his own beliefs in the same way he does to those of others, observing that that "his repudiation of principles is contradicted by his acting on the basis of what he considers useful, since this is obviously to act on principle" (222).

Seeley also takes care to call into question, albeit in a psychological rather than political context, the potential shortcomings of Bazarov's inability to confront his own personal limitations and the limitations of the radical philosophy he espouses:

> The split between ideal and reality, between self-image and self, assumes heroic and fatal dimensions in Bazarov. There is the contradiction between his professed rejection of all principles and all received ideas and values and his blind acceptance of utility and experience as the criteria respectively for action and thought. There is the contradiction between his professed empiricism and his dogmatic negation of matters lying outside his own experience… There is the contradiction between his desperate approach to true scepticism -- when he cries out that not only principles but all biases, including his own nihilism, are reducible to personal feelings and inclinations -- and his failure to recognize the corollary: that in that case, other people's viewpoints and values may have as much validity as his own. (231)

Undoubtedly one of the tragic ironies of history is entailed in radical movements of justice being unwilling or unable to recognize, due either to cynicism or an unreflective faith in the rightness of their cause, when they themselves all too often become the perpetrators of even greater injustices in their attempt to fight inequity. In *Beyond Good and Evil,* Friedrich Nietzsche, an intractable foe of leftist principles of cooperation and equality who nonetheless has inspired many revolutionaries and subversive thinkers, warns "Whoever fights monsters should see to it that in the process he does not become a monster" (146). This is advice which many of the revolutionary movements would do do well to take to heart and keep in mind.

The socio-political historical trend of degeneration of revolutionary movements into tyranny also appears in the development of Bazarov as an individual. He certainly wants desperately to create a better world, and this passion defines his life in an almost monomaniacal fashion. This desire, however, like his other strong emotions is a "Passion not unlike hatred, perhaps akin to it" (127) and can manifest itself in his more emotionally turbulent periods as very real and very dangerous misanthropy. Although it would be ungenerous to read Bazarov as lacking totally in love and compassion for others, particularly the common people, his intense arrogance and the unrealistically high standards to which he holds himself and his interlocutors too often overshadows these more generous impulses. While it's true that he lacks the snobbery of many of the educated elite, indicated by the fact that the reader is informed that "Everyone in the house had grown used to his careless manners and his curt and abrupt speeches. . . The servants, too, took to him, though he made fun of them; they felt, all the same, that *he was one of themselves, not a master*" (emphasis mine, 54) and that Turgenev endows Bazarov with the ability to handle a notoriously fussy infant, stating "To the great astonishment of both Fenichka and Dunyasha the child made no resistance, and was not frightened… Children know who love them" (52), there are also moments when a much darker nature in his personality appears.

Most innocuous, although not least aggravating, is perhaps his harsh judgement of others who do not attain his ideals of independence of thought, stoicism, rationality, skepticism, self-education, and total anti-sentimentality. He states, with the blindness of

narcissism, that "Every man must educate himself, just as I've done, for instance… and as for the age, why should I depend on it? Let it rather depend on me. No, my dear fellow, that's all shallowness, want of backbone!" (41). This self-glorification is distasteful, to be sure, and it is definitively harmful when manifested as a condemnation of other potential allies and productive political movements, as will be examined in the coming pages. More alarming than this tendency, however, is the latent authoritarianism and lack of compassion that lurks beneath the surface of some of Bazarov's ideals for the new world he and his peers seek to establish after the revolutionary destruction of the existing order. He states, terrifyingly, that "A real man ought not to care; a real man is one whom it's no use thinking about, whom must one either obey or hate," and continues to criticize his companion Aleksei, in so doing inadvertently damning his own character: "I hate so many. You are a soft-hearted, mawkish creature; how could you hate anyone? You're timid; you don't rely on yourself much" (156). This misanthropic tirade culminates in a statement that, were it not offset by more noble words and deeds, should altogether ruin one's faith in Bazarov as a figure poised to lead any kind of productive revolutionary change. He rants, frighteningly and with redoubled vanity:

> When I meet a man who can hold his own beside me… then I'll change my opinion of myself. Yes, hatred! You said, for instance, today as we passed our bailiff Philip's cottage -- it's the one that's so nice and clean -- well, you said, Russia will come to perfection when the poorest peasant has a house like that, and everyone of us ought to work to bring it about. . .

> and I felt such a hatred for the poorest peasant, this Philip or Sidor, for whom I'm to be ready to jump out of my skin, and who won't even thank me for it. . . and why should he thank me? Why, suppose he does live in a clean house, while the nettles are growing out of me - well, what do I gain by it? (156)

Proclamations such as this one, although perhaps representing an understandable sentiment of frustration from one jaded and made cynical by a fight that often appears to be going nowhere and that is oftentimes not appreciated by the very people it is waged for (perhaps, but perhaps not, with good reason) indicates a lack of consideration for human beings that can lead to the great atrocities committed by movements that, at least nominally, exist for the edification of the people.

Furthermore, by criticizing Arkady's "soft-hearted" nature and his prioritization of individual subjectivities over a grandiose teleology of historical development, Bazarov's risk of alienation from common cause becomes a clear and present danger -- a danger of fragmentation on the left stemming from epistemic arrogance and close-mindedness that could destabilize any pragmatically unified struggle and could lead to the authoritarian elevation of a single "superior" ideology, thereby effectively marginalizing those who think divergently. Bazarov falls into this counterproductive trap again, to an even greater extent, towards the end of the novel, when he rails to Arkady:

> You're not made out for our bitter, rough, lonely existence. There's no dash, no hate in you, but you've the daring of youth and the fire of youth.

> Your sort, you gentry, can never get beyond refined submission or refined indignation, and that's no good. You won't fight -- and yet you fancy yourselves gallant chaps -- but we mean to fight. Oh, well! Our dust would get into your eyes, our mud would bespatter you, but yet you're not up to our level, you're admiring your selves unconsciously, you like to abuse yourselves; but we're sick of that -- we want something else! We want to smash other people! You're a capital fellow; but you're a sugary, liberal snob for all of that. . . Yes, Arkady yes, I have other things to say to you, but I'm not going to say them because that's sentimentalism -- that means, mawkishness. (221)

Bazarov, for all his belief in himself as an extraordinary man endowed with the necessary traits to participate in or even lead a revolution, reduces humanity to a kind of amorphous blob of clay waiting to be molded by the correct artist's hand.

This lack of consideration for the individual's unique needs and desires, and the subsequent homogenization and objectification of the populous into a mob to be lead by the nose into their best interests,whether they like it or not, represents a horrifying overlap between radical movements on both sides of the political spectrum, and forms in many ways the foundational element of totalitarian regimes. Bazarov theorizes:

> I assure you, studying separate individuals is not worth the trouble. All people are like one another, in soul as in body; each of us has brain,

> spleen, heart, and lungs made alike; and the so-called moral qualities are the same in all; the slight variations are of no importance. A single human specimen is sufficient to judge of all by. People are like trees in a forest; no botanist would think of studying each individual birch tree… No, there is a difference, just as between the sick and the healthy. The lungs of a consumptive patient are not in the same condition as yours or mine, though they are made on the same plan. We know approximately what physical diseases come from; moral diseases come from bad education, from all the nonsense people's heads are stuffed with from childhood up, from the defective state of society; in short, reform society and there will be no diseases. (105)

This continually increasing undemocratic skepticism and alienation from the thoughts and feelings of others, catalyzed by Bazarov's supremely unsuccessful foray into the realm of romantic love, culminates in a disastrously growing cynicism in the young man. His descent from a stoic yet noble-hearted rationalist to solipsistic misanthropy mirrors the deterioration of an idealistic revolution of the people in Russia into the brutal dictatorship of the proletariat, culminating in the purges that liquidated any supposed enemy of the state or counter-revolutionary, and finally starved and executed the very people for whom the political system was supposedly rebuilt. Bazarov's father, who is predictably well disposed to the young man despite the latter's consistent neglect, contempt, and even cruelty towards the older man, states, with the exceptionalism that

defines many of Bazarov's interactions with others and his opinion of himself, that "He is averse to every kind of demonstration of feeling; many people even find fault with him for such firmness of character, and regard it as a proof of pride or lack of feeling, but men like him ought not be judged by that common standard" (151).

One who presumes to be a revolutionary should, however, be held to standards of human decency that both do not assert infallibility and acknowledge the personhood and value of all individuals. Due to the exceptionalism he ascribes to himself, Bazarov is unable to perceive his own flaws, and is unable to employ the cognitive tools to address his own contradictions and instabilities. This dynamic illustrates a lack of what José Medina calls in *The Epistemology of Resistance* the "kaleidoscopic social imagination" that can "expand social sensibilities and facilitate pluralistic forms of solidarity" and help destabilize a definitive view of the world that is "a vain and dangerous ambition that breeds intolerance and makes social learning impossible for it leads people to cling firmly to a single perspective and fosters critical immunity to alternative experiential perspectives" (21). By refusing to engage generously in dialogical interaction with others, opting instead to speak and behave condescendingly and close-mindedly, Bazarov becomes solipsistic and fossilizes his own point of view, thereby disregarding the epistemic virtue of multiperspectivism that Medina defines as vital to "the imperative to renew our perplexities and to reinvigorate our openness to alternative standpoints. . . to constantly expand our own personal as well as shared perspectives and sensibilities, our individual and collective imaginings" (21). Bazarov's arrogance, a

psychopathological quality that Medina describes, in its most developed form, as "when the subject becomes absolutely incapable of acknowledging any mistake or limitation, indulging in a delusional cognitive omnipotence that prevents him from learning from others and improving" is symptomatic of the energizing yet misplaced and pernicious conviction that creates a binary of right and wrong, so that one sees oneself as unalterably and unquestionably on the side of justice (31). Bazarov clearly illustrates the solidification of a dogmatic mode of thought which lacks the means to engage with, learn from, and compromise with the theories of others, and which can lead to modes of thought in which any means are acceptable to achieve a desired end.

Additionally Bazarov is unable to productively address the contradictions in himself and his political stance due to his dogmatism. When Bazarov begins to develop feelings of particular attachment to Anna Odintsova, the woman he will ultimately come to love and be rejected by, he responds with anger, suppression of his affections, and even violence. "In his conversations with Anna Sergeyevna he expressed more strongly than ever his calm contempt for everything idealistic; but when he was alone, with indignation he recognized idealism in himself. Then he would set off to the forest and walk with long strides about it, smashing the twigs that came in his way" (114).

The reduction of all things to the purely rational, while certainly an important countermeasure to the unfounded superstition and false narratives that often allow exploitation to take place, also creates a danger of teleological scientific certainty that can be just as blind and cruel as any other system of belief which intolerantly claims to

have a monopolized possession of truth. The coldness and calculation of Bazarov's personality obliterates the forces of love and affection, whether platonic, romantic, or humanistic, in a way that highlights the cruel failings of the Marxist "science" of the Soviet Union's cumbersome, impersonal, and finally brutal bureaucracy. This sort of tendency represents the personal epistemic failing of Bazarov reflected on a broader socio-political scale. The positivity of the infallible rightness of one's cause, bolstered inevitably in larger contexts by a vanguard of individuals who consider themselves an intellectual elite who possess the right to dictate the "truth" to others regardless of the positionally different, and therefore productively diverse, perspectives of the rest of the populus, creates a hierarchical ideological ruling class conducive to a politically narrow and even potentially violent and exploitative social structure. This principle of organization is systematically opposed to the anti-authoritarian principles that will inform this project's reading of ideology and political epistemology.

Indeed, disillusionment, a disillusionment that stems from his inability to connect with people on a deep level and draw sustenance for his passion for struggle from that connection, creeps deeper and deeper into Bazarov's once vigorous psychology: "A strange weariness began to show itself in all his movements; even his walk, firm, bold, and strenuous, was changed" (224), and Bazarov himself despairs that "Yesterday I was walking under the fence, and I heard the peasant boys here, instead of some old ballad, bawling a street song. That's what progress is" (225), demonstrating his failing belief in

his ideals. Seeley argues this degeneration of morale stems from an untenable and unsound philosophical stance, stating

> Principles [to Bazarov] are nothing but subjective feelings, and that applies equally to his own nihilism and to honour. We see that this feeling has become as indeterminate and undependable in him as in the least heroic of mortals… symptomatic of an at least temporary moral collapse resulting from maudlin self pity. (227)

I believe, however, that this decay stems from more interpersonal sources. While is true that Bazarov's rational egoist philosophy, by the time he utters this discouraging anathema against progress, has already been for a time descending into pure philosophical nihilism and a type of self-obsessed morbidity, the process is socially rather than introspectively catalyzed. His lament about the alienated existential nature of the individual issues from his lack of connection with others, an inevitable result of the combination of aggression and arrogance he seems to believe must exist alongside his radicalism. His alienation is applicable not only to his spiraling psychological condition, but also his failed political ambitions. He is, after all, even in his bleakest moments of depression, still concerned with progress and the development of Russia, as the Turgenev quotes immediately above and below demonstrate. This concern, however, is tinged with a melancholy, despair, and even defeatism.

Bazarov ultimately accomplishes very little with his revolutionary vigor. His arrogant dismissal of all who do not live up to his ideal of the advanced individual,

including finally himself, allows him to change no minds, and forge no productive efficacious functioning political (or, for that matter, personal) relationships. It causes him to be more a source of pain and abhorrence than inspiration to most of the individuals with whom he came into contact. Even before succumbing to blood poisoning, which he contracts from a sloppy, botched surgical experiment, he appears to realize his own misguided vanity and perhaps begins to come to terms with his less than extraordinary political legacy. He utters brokenly, "I was needed by Russia. . . No, it's clear, I wasn't needed. And who is needed? The shoemaker's needed, the tailor's needed, the butcher" (240). Bazarov appears, far too late, to recognize that it is the people, the working people he has so often despised, who are the necessary force of life and regeneration, and not the elite intellectual class who so often take it upon themselves to speak for, condemn, and even do violence to the very people whose interests they claim to represent. History would indicate that without an ameliorating influence on the necessary but complex creative/destructive drive of radical ideologies, an insidious descent into violence and oppression is all too easy. It is worth considering if a pragmatic alliance and democratic cooperation with the moderates might provide this safeguard, although this alliance has proven to be nearly impossibly difficult to foster and maintain in the past, a contention that holds a central place is Turgenev's novel, and will be explored in the next section.

Pavel and Nickolai - Reformist and Reactionary Principles

If some of the promise and much of the failure of the revolutionary tradition can be read in Bazarov, the novel is equally rife for literary examination of other political alignments. Arkady's uncle Pavel, whose viewpoint has already been explored briefly in the above pages, forms in many ways a political foil to Bazarov, and is, in his own way, as extreme and intolerant as his nihilist nemesis for much of the narrative. These characters in fact duel not only with words throughout the story, but even at one point with pistols. Although their perspectives are vastly different in regard to social issues, the similarities in their characters parallel strikingly the tensions between different factions of reform/revolution minded individuals, and become points of departure through through which to examine the gulf which separates the radical and the liberal wings of the left, as well as the need for democratic coalition building and dynamic ideological interaction among differing political camps.

Pavel has lived a privileged life somewhat devoid of activity, and like Bazarov he has been unsuccessful in cultivating meaningful relationships with others. He was in his youth "much admired in society, and he indulged every whim, even every caprice and folly, and gave himself airs" although Turgenev points out generously that "that too was attractive in him" (40). But, after an unsuccessful but vastly transformative love affair with another socialite, Pavel retired to the country estate of his brother where "he was entering upon the indefinite twilight period of regrets that are akin to hopes, and hopes

that are akin to regrets" and, despite being somewhat reform minded and even often displaying characteristics of being kind-hearted, mostly engaged in political and social action "only occasionally annoying and alarming landowners of the old schools by his liberal sallies, and not associating with representatives of the younger generation. Both the latter and the former considered him 'stuck up'" though "both parties respected him for his fine aristocratic manners" (40).

This tendency to be found "stuck up" for his arrogance is one Pavel shares with Bazarov, although neither seems to be able to recognize this element of their own personalities despite being readily willing to damn each other for it. The reader is informed immediately that Pavel's "aristocratic nature was revolted by Bazarov's complete nonchalance. The surgeon's son was not only over-awed, he even gave abrupt and indifferent answers, and in the tone of his voice there was something churlish, almost insolent" (32). The reader learns later that this distaste evolves to the point that "Pavel Petrovich had grown to detest Bazarov with all the strength of his soul; he regarded him as stuck-up, impudent, cynical, and vulgar; he suspected that Bazarov had no respect for him, that he had all but a contempt for him -- him, Pavel Kirsanov!" (54). While both characters jump at any opportunity to denounce and anathematize the condescension and arrogance they see in each other, this tendency seems never to extend to themselves, as is often the case not only in individuals but in political movements as a whole.

The similar condescension and intolerance that both characters show to others, particularly to each other and all those who have the impudence to disagree with them, is

symptomatic of their shared unwillingness to lay aside the egomaniacal desire constantly to be considered correct, an unwillingness that undermines completely their ability to work toward their many shared goals. This attitude is, once again, a cognitive failing to embrace the epistemic "friction" and "uncertainty" which José Medina advocates and which will be elaborated on further in coming portions.

While Bazarov longs to liberate the suffering of the peasants as a means to the end of realizing a dream of a vitally different world organized on the principles of his rational egoist philosophy, Pavel too displays a desire to improve the lot of the sociologically disfranchised out of perhaps more humanistic but certainly less structural motivations. Arkady defends his uncle to Bazarov by saying of him that "He's glad to help anyone, among other things he always sticks up for the peasants" although he qualifies this assertion by conceding humorously that " it's true, when he talks to them he frowns and sniffs eau de cologne," to which Bazarov scathingly responds by criticizing Pavel's privileged liberal complacency, scoffing, "I'm convinced that he solemnly imagines himself a superior creature because he reads that wretched *Galignani,*[9] and once a month saves a peasant from a flogging" (40), further emphasizing his complaint of "These provincial aristocrats" that their entire way of thinking, even when helpful to the poor, is "all vanity, dandy habits, fatuity" (34). This charge mirrors the complaint of radicals that the piecemeal reforms and localized acts of kindness of liberals, while perhaps being

[9] A reference to *Galignani's Messenger,* an English-language newspaper printed in Paris, originally published by Giovanni Antonio Galignani and later managed by his sons, which possessed a reputation for global coverage and progressive perspectives.

laudable on an individual level, really constitute no viable form of real relief from systemic suffering or betterment for society, and may in fact be detrimental containment strategies which postpone the realization in the populous of the need for force in instituting drastic and lasting change.

Pavel, however, articulates a concern not at all uncommon in those of moderate dispositions in regards to this forcefulness and its potentially devastating ramifications, and furthermore highlights the fact that, except for comparatively few moments in the course of history, there are not the necessary numbers of participants able and willing to commit to drastic change, with the result that they are almost always outnumbered by the moderates. This complaint problematizes the often undemocratic nature of revolutionary movements which take the wheel of society purely by force and emphasizes the need for cooperation amongst diverse groups of activists to form democratic and overlapping coalitions.

While Bazarov demonstrates his hyper-rational but also troublingly narrow and anthropocentric view that "A good chemist is twenty times as useful as any poet. . . I have already explained to you that I don't believe in anything; and what is science -- science in the abstract? There are sciences, as there are trades and crafts, but abstract science does not exist at all" (33), a thread he picks up on later by insisting "What does matter is that two and two make four, and the rest is foolery. . . Nature too, is foolery in the sense you understand it. Nature's not a temple but a workshop, and man's the

workman in it" (53), Pavel counters that "There's force in savage," and continues to hypothesize that:

> what is it [force] to us? What is precious to us is civilization; yes, yes, sir, it's fruits are precious to us. And don't tell me those fruits are worthless; the poorest dauber… the man who plays dance music for five farthings and evening, is of more use than you, because they are the representatives of civilization, not of brute force! You fancy yourselves advanced people, and all the while you are only fit for the hovel! Force! And recollect, you forcible gentlemen, that you're only four men and a half, and the others are millions, who won't let you trample their sacred traditions under foot, who will crush you and walk over you! (64)

Pavel here re-emphasizes the preservatory desire of the moderate liberals to take special care not to be in haste to throw out the metaphorical baby of progress with the bathwater of the problems which still need to be addressed in society. This more conservative conviction that the march of progress must not be interrupted or derailed by an overly ambitious total replacement of liberal ideals with more radical principles entails, however, at least to the mind of the radical theorist, a danger of total stagnation thinly veiled by the espousal of lip-service to the necessity of change without a real outlet for action. The question of whether or not it is possible, however, to circumnavigate both of these dangers through community effort is in many ways the central problem posed by this project.

The risk of stagnation and lack of efficacy in moderate socio-economic reformation is highlighted in the character of Pavel's even more reform minded brother, Arkady's father Nickolai Petrovich Kirsanov. Nickolai confesses despondently after being reunited with his son and consequently soundly rebuffed by Bazarov for his liberalism that "I thought I was doing everything to keep up with the times; I have started a model farm; I have done well by the peasants, so that I am positively called a 'Red Radical' all over the province; I read, I study, I try in every way to keep abreast with the requirements of the day -- and they say my day is over. And, brother, I begin to think that it is" (57). Despite his laudable desire to stay abreast of the progress of history and to do his part to bring the tardy Russian Empire into the modern world, Nickolai struggles to find an efficacious embodiment of his liberal ideals due to the anachronistic political detritus in which his society is still deeply embedded. Nickolai "had, twelve miles from the posting station, a fine property of two hundred souls, or, as he expressed it -- since he had arranged the division of his land with the peasants, and started a 'farm' -- of nearly five thousand acres" (4). He desperately wants to modernize in accordance with the more democratic principles coming to the forefront of Russian and global politics, but admits to his son, unwittingly emphasizing the failure of this program, that "You won't find many changes in Maryino" (14). Things are indeed going poorly with his agricultural project at Maryino, "or, as the peasants had nicknamed it, Poverty Farm" (18). Arkady notices on his homecoming that:

> "The peasants they met were all in tatters and on the sorriest little nags; the willows, with their trunks stripped of bark and broken branches, stood like ragged beggars along the roadside; cows lean and shaggy looking pinched up by hunger, were greedily tearing at the grass along the ditches. They looked as though they had just been snatched out of the murderous clutches of some threatening monster; and the piteous state of the weak, starved beasts in the midst of the lovely spring day, called up, like a white phantom, the endless, comfortless winter, with its storms, and frosts, and snows." (17)

This observation leads Arkady to ruminate sadly but with redoubled determination that "this is not a rich country; it does not impress one by plenty or industry; it can't, it can't go on like this, reforms are absolutely necessary" but also simultaneously to wonder "but how is one to carry them out, how is one to begin?" (17). Upon their emancipation, the agricultural laborers at Maryino, undoubtedly due to their being deeply steeped in the psychological damage of untold generations of serfdom, struggle to adjust to their new situation and opportunities, and proceed, to Nickolai 's despair, to attempt to take advantage of each other and their landlord at every possible opportunity. This circumstance causes the kind-hearted but economically unsuccessful man to lament "I can do nothing!... I can't flog them myself and as for calling in the police captain, my

principles don't allow of it, while you can do nothing with them without the fear of punishment!" (172).

It is important here as a tangent to provide some historical context in regards to serfdom in order to give some perspective to Nickolai 's reference, undoubtedly shocking to many modern readers unfamiliar with the Russian agricultural economy of the time period, to the legal corporal punishment of laborers. Furthermore a short digression into some of the more glaring and offensive injustices of the Tsarist political apparatus in this time period may be conducive to the our understanding of the motivation of radicals such as Bazarov. Until the official abolition of serfdom in 1861 the vast majority of the Russian agricultural population was required to fulfill барщина,[10] or obligatory labor, for a landowner in exchange for the use of inferior plots of land to cultivate for their own subsistence. Traditionally the serfs on an estate held their portions of the land in common and worked it collectively, with each family being assigned a certain portion of the land to be worked based on the number of adult male members of the household. This peasant commune, or общи́на,[11] became the basis of hypothetical post-revolutionary future constructed by many Russian radicals, including Nickolai Chernyshevsky, and according to some thinkers including Karl Marx, made Russia an excellent candidate for the implementation of Communist principles. This traditional political structuring will, however, be

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[10] *barshchina*
[11] Obshchina

explored in more depth later in this chapter in regards to the radicalism of Chernyshevsky and his peers.

What is vital to keep in mind now, however, is that despite the fact that the laborers were not technically owned by the economic ruling class, the geographical mobility of serfs was extremely limited, and these individuals could be bought, sold, gambled, or sent for non-volitional military conscription (often as a form of punishment) by the owners of the land to which they were tied. Although the enslavement of agricultural workers was abolished in 1679, and the official end of slavery came under Peter the Great in 1723 when house slaves were "emancipated," the de facto ownership and chattel status of the serf continued until the end of the institution of serfdom, and arguably much longer. Before Nickolai freed the serfs tied to his estate he would have been free to beat them at will for perceived shortcomings of discrepancies, thus insuring a certain amount of order and regularity on the estate, albeit at the cost of the dignity and well being of both the exploited and exploiting class. Now however, as the former serfs have the status of heinously impoverished but nominally free laborers and Nickolai no longer has the same iron right of discipline over these unfortunates, he finds it difficult to prevent an economically untenable miasma of chaos from permeating the environment. His reformist principles seem to flounder in the lukewarm implementation of democratic ideals which lack either the rigid

authoritarian structure of the institutional system or the radically egalitarian ethos of the revolutionary thinkers.

This speaks, perhaps, to the necessity for *total* reform which the radical factions of the political left advocate, and emphasizes the lack of efficaciousness which may be inherent in political movements which address the surface level of exploitation with indignation, but fail to destabilize entirely the political structures from which that exploitation stems. Not only on Poverty Farm, but in Russia and even globally the trajectory from slave to serf to laborer, while certainly by no means meaningless, has never able to address the essential social hierarchy and economic servitude which kept the majority of Russia's population firmly under the lion's paw of inequity. Whether or not the USSR's collectivized farms were able to rectify in any way this history of chattel, feudal, and wage slavery will be addressed in more depth in the coming pages.

The failure of the liberal Nickolai to modernize his estate and edify the peasantry mirrors Bazarov's inability to bring other characters in the novel into the fold of his revolutionary ideals. An observation of the ruminations of the lugubrious Nickolai on one particular occasion may offer the reader some insight into the lack of economic solvency on Nickolai 's farm by demonstrating his latent reactionary attitude, despite all his striving for the opposite sentiments, in regards to the peasants. While Nickolai dreamily[12] overlooks his dilapidated estate,

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[12] Nickolai is in fact "fond of dreaming," a trait unforgivable to the almost ruthlessly proactive Bazarov (66)

nevertheless beautifully illuminated by a glorious spring day, he cannot reconcile himself to Bazarov's scientific materialism and wonders incredulously what it could mean "to renounce poetry… to have no feeling for art or nature" and he cannot help exclaiming in regards to the landscape and weather "How beautiful, my God!" (68). While these thoughts of Nickolai are certainly understandable, and easy and perhaps even salubrious to sympathize with, an examination of what constitutes this landscape is troubling. Relegated to the background of this bucolic picture which to Nickolai is so beautiful are not only the trees, garden, fields, sunlight, birds, and insects but also an impoverished human being. He observes "a peasant on a white nag… his whole figure clearly visible *even to the patch on his shoulder*"[13] (68). Nickolai 's reduction of a human subjectivity to a picturesque element of the environment that he owns legally and which exists to serve as his inspiration, source of livelihood, and comfort may indicate that to him, regardless of all his embrace of liberal democracy, the individuals who actually work the soil for his benefit remain objects that, although they may no longer be beaten, bought, and sold at will, still exist for the benefit, wealth, and use of the landed gentry class. Nickolai once aks himself in regards to the young nihilists: "Doesn't their superiority consist in there being fewer traces of the slave owner in them than in us?" (67), and perhaps he is right. Just as the peasants struggle to adjust to

[13] My emphasis. I italicize this observation on the physical conditions of the peasant's clothing in order to draw attention to the material poverty in which he struggles, while Pavel indolently ruminates on a landscape in which he is relegated to the background.

their new economic and social environment, so too does the landowner. This conflict forces one to wonder, as do the Nihilists, if the agony of labor in the birth of a brand new society might not in fact be perhaps much less than the growing pangs of an old society which is trying desperately to develop.

Arkady - Potential Synthesis[14] and the Polysymphonic

The answer to Nickolai's question, at least to the more moderate mind, may perhaps be found in one final character analysis. Arkady, while sharing Bazarov's revolutionary ideals and energy, maintains the humanitarianism that he seems to have inherited from his father and uncle. He recognizes the need for drastic change in society, but in looking to enact that change manages not to lose touch with the human beings of which that society is comprised in favor a more sweeping teleological moral self-licensing. To Arkady it is the people themselves for whom the current social paradigm must be reimagined, unlike Bazarov for whom revolution is waged in the name of some abstract scientific march towards progress. Arkady confesses to the woman he cares for in a marriage proposal:

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[14] The term "synthesis" is used here cautiously. A Hegelian/Marxist synthesizing of divergent systems of belief into a homogeneous whole is, undoubtedly, the opposite of the democratic multiplicity which this thesis advocates. The potential synthesis of radical and liberal thought characterized by Arkday in this section is one to which pressure, and even deconstruction, must and will be applied to.

> "I am not now the conceited boy I was when I came here. I've not reached the age of twenty-three for nothing; as before, I want to be useful, I want to devote all my powers to the truth; but I no longer look for my ideals where I did; they present themselves to me… much closer at hand. Up till now I did not understand myself; I set myself tasks which were beyond my powers… My eyes have been opened lately, thanks to one feeling." (216)

The feeling he refers to, of course, is love, and while he is alluding specifically to his romantic love for Katerina Sergeevna Lokteva, it is no leap of the imagination to speculate that his love for humanity as a whole, the mawkish soft heartedness that Bazarov so cruelly critiques in his young friend, is responsible for allowing him ultimately to be successful both in his personal and perhaps political ambitions. Without (presumably -- if one is generous) sacrificing his zeal or integrity, Arkady "has become zealous in the management of the estate, and the 'farm' now yields a fairly good income," thus Turgenev points out that due to Arkady's reform and management the Kirsanov's "fortunes are beginning to mend" at the close of the novel (244). While Bazarov is dead, Nickolai ineptly continues to attempt to modernize the province through a governmental position, and Pavel continues an unfulfilled life of aristocratic indolence abroad, it is Arkady who, while maintaining his fervor for justice and yet working with close cooperation and without condemnation of his more moderate allies, is able both to

retain his humaneness and strive toward the justice in which all the above-mentioned characters, in one way or another and in spite of their recurrent hostility to each other, wish to see realized in their world.

Arkady, perhaps more than any other figure in the novel, represents dynamism in thought and openness to theoretical speculations, goodness of intention, and critique of himself that other characters offer. It is through this intellectual humility and willingness to reevaluate his ideological stance that he matures from a hero-worshiping disciple of Bazarov, capable only of parroting his older friend's opinions, to an individual who seems able to approach critically the position of others to form a construction of political thought that is creative, individual, and apparently efficacious for him. Most importantly, Arkady's conceptualization of economic and socio-political progressivism remains fluid and eschews dogmatism and staticity, while maintaining a powerful engagement with the betterment of the lives of those around him as well as with the reformation of society at large.

B - What is to be Done?

Chernyshevsky's Tripartite Hierarchy

Although it would be pleasant to to succumb to the temptation of a neatly packaged and optimistic conclusion like the one above, political realities are rarely if ever so simply and conclusively resolved. Although one is given very little information about the underground network of revolutionary nihilists actively propagating violence and destruction to bring about social reform, Turgenev's novel hints that Bazarov and perhaps Arkady are involved with these predominantly lower-middle class student cells. This vagueness is almost certainly due to the strict literary censorship of the Tsarist regime in this time period, as well as the more domestic focus on individual relationships and generational gaps in *Fathers and Sons.* This ambiguity, however, forces one to wonder exactly what reforms Arkady attempts to implement on the estate, and exactly how much he continues to profit from the labor of an exploited agricultural class. While Arkady seems to find happiness in the comforts of a relatively affluent bourgeois lifestyle, Bazarov lies dead due to an illness he contracts by directly trying to assist the peasantry in a medical capacity. Could it be that Bazarov, from whom even the Bolshevik revolutionary Vladimir Alexandrovich Bazarov adopted his surname, is the real hero of

the novel because, despite his character flaws, he is unwilling to compromise his revolutionary mission even to the point of death and alienation?

It in the opinion of Nickolai Chernyshevsky, neither of these figures accurately represent the character or aims of what he calls the "new people" whose reconceptualizations of social and political realities he believed would usher in a new era of human organization. His novel, *What is to be Done?*, which was written in the dungeons of the Peter and Paul fortress in which Chernyshevsky was imprisoned for his subversive activities, was composed directly in response to Turgenev's work. Chernyshevsky presents an alternative vision of the revolutionary element of the Russian population that is simultaneously in some ways more ideologically extreme but less overtly destructive than Turgenev's nihilists, and problematizes readings of both Turgenev's characters and the moderates' somewhat ambivalent political stance.

Within the novel, the reader finds essentially three types of individuals, whom Chernyshevsky makes no qualms to distinctly, and perhaps problematically, hierarchize and categorize. The "antediluvian" types constitute the vast majority of the population at the time the novel was written and, for that matter, today. This portion of the populus has yet to challenge the traditional authoritarian nature of interpersonal relationships in the family and the autocratic and repressive political regime, and are still caught in the vicious cycle of attempting to climb socially and economically in the existing order. Almost the entire bulk of the novel, however, deals with the "new" or "contemporary" people who have begun to reorganize their personal relationships and the meaning of

their lives along the principles of the materialism, rational egoist philosophy, communalized labor, personal development, mutual respect, and complete freedom that Chernyshevsky himself advocates politically and socially. The author points out repeatedly that this type of character is by no means exceptional, that they can and should be emulated by the reader, and that it is within anyone's power to achieve a level of development equivalent to these models. He reminds readers repeatedly that "My main characters are not ideals at all, but are no better than the general level of people of this sort" (312). The final tier of achievement and quality an individual can achieve in the matrix that Chernyshevsky creates, however, is the intentionally almost unattainable goal of becoming a kind of revolutionary superhero, the characteristics of whom he elaborates upon in his detailed description of Rakhmetov, an "extraordinary man" whose represents the almost deified[15] ideal of elevated humanity, and who serves as a paragon of the potential of human nature at its most well formed and developed.

Although Rakhmetov plays a minute role in the plot of the novel, and is in fact virtually unnecessary for the development of the narrative, the historical impact of this character has been larger in Russian radical circles than perhaps any other single fictional individual. The Soviet government praised Rakhmetov as an ideal of self-control and single-minded dedication to the cause of annihilating inequality and furthering the

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[15] There is, in fact, a tremendous quantity of allusion to biblical and religious tradition in the description of Rakhmetov and the revolution in general throughout the text. Chernyshevsky was himself a graduate of seminary and the son of a priest, and although he later abandoned all religious convictions, he in many ways transferred his spiritual vitality into revolutionary fervor. He is in no way apprehensive to appropriate Christian symbolism, rhetoric, and tradition throughout his work, and relies on these tropes continuously for dramatic effect and inspiration for his vision of the ideal world and future of humanity.

Marxist-Leninist/Stalinist brand of Communism. Vladimir Lenin personally claimed to have read the (quite long) book seven times over the course of just one summer, being especially impressed with Rakhmetov as a character model, and began a daily weight lifting regime in imitation of the character. He also titled one of the most important and influential revolutionary treatises he wrote *What is to be Done?* in a less than subtle nod to Chernyshevsky. Leo Tolstoy, interestingly enough, also borrowed this signifier for his own literary piece on the answer to the titular question. Perhaps the most notorious nihilist of the Russian movement, Sergei Nechaev, whose ideology I will discuss at some length in the coming pages, imitated Rakhmetov by sleeping on a wooden board and subsisting on black bread. Finally the anarchist Alexander Berkman, while he planned his doomed assassination attempt of the American industrialist Henry Clay Frick, adopted Rakhmetov as a pseudonym. The enormous homage paid to Rakhmetov by revolutionary leaders, thinkers, and even terrorists since the publication of the novel exemplifies the far reaching impact of the character, minor though he may be in the plot of the novel itself.

Art and Propaganda

It must be said of all the characters in the novel that their propagandic depiction tends to be one-sided, reductionary, and unrealistic to a degree that can range from the burlesque to the completely absurd. This hyperbolic tendency manifests itself in a

semi-comic vulgarity in the lowest strata of characters, for example Marya Aleksevna's lofty "idealism" (verbal abuse) and pragmatic "materialism" (physical violence) in dealing with her servants and family members. Furthermore, the conversations and thought processes of the "new people" are robotic and dogmatically attuned to rational egoist philosophy to the point of either being (unintentionally) infuriating or (worse yet) hilariously ridiculous. Dmitry Sergeich Lopukhov, for instance, in a point of extreme emotional distress, takes morphine pills in order to induce sleep. Chernyshevsky notes "This time two pills proved to be enough; he was becoming drowsy. Consequently, the spiritual travail was roughly equivalent in strength (according to Lopukhov's materialist viewpoint) to four cups of coffee" (252). The hyperbolic descriptions of Rakhmetov, however, make the psychology of both the previous groupings appear nuanced and subtle to the point of considerable artistry.

It is important to keep in mind, however, before further criticizing Chernyshevsky's portrayal of progressive thinkers in Tsarist Russia, that the text is first and foremost meant to serve as propaganda. The novel attempts to advocate a way of thinking and a system of operating in personal life that is socially revolutionary, and does so by presenting models, albeit hyperbolic ones, of this kind of lifestyle in action. In this effort the text has certainly succeeded historically, and no more validation is needed insofar as the propagandistic value or the ultimate desired effect of the author is concerned. Artistically, and even politically, however, this rigidity (Rakhmetov is himself nicknamed by his peers "the rigorist") leaves something to be desired by way of

aesthetically humanizing both the socio-economic principles and the characters of the novel. Nowhere is this problem more obvious than in the depiction of Rakhmetov. Although this character has served successfully as an emotional inspiration and catalyst of revolutionary action for many radicals historically, his zealotry and epistemic closedness prophesied the turn towards dogmatism and authoritarianism which has haunted the revolutionary tradition and resulted in the totalitarian, and even genocidal, permutation of ideologically egalitarian and democratic thought into violence in practice. Rakhmetov, as will be explicated in the context of a textual analysis of his character, embodies the vices of close-mindedness and arrogance, and fails entirely to engage in the necessary "epistemic friction" which José Medina articulates the necessity for in his *Epistemology of Resistance.*

Rakhmetov - The "Extraordinary Man" of the Revolution

Chernyshevsky emphasizes the scarcity of the Rakhmetovs of the world, and while the reader is certainly encouraged to emulate him, one is not to expect similarity to his character to be a reasonable standard for the vast majority of individuals to aspire to. The author recalls that "Up to the present time I've met only eight examples of this breed, among them two women" and continues to note that these individuals crop up not so much due to their environment, but in spite of it. He states metaphorically that "Whatever the quality of the soil, one can still come across tiny plots capable of producing healthy

ears of grain" (Chernyshevsky 274).[16] Rakhmetov, born a nobleman of the landed gentry, upon coming of age frees his serfs and sells most of his land, keeping only a nominal portion of the capital thus acquired and using the rest to fund the education of a group of (presumably) revolutionary students across Russia. He later encounters a German whom Chernyshevsky declares to be "one of the greatest European thinkers of the nineteenth century, the father of modern philosophy," who some speculate to represent either Karl Marx or Ludwig Feuerbach, and gives almost the entire balance of his available resources to be used in the publication of this thinker's work (292).

While this itself is impressive and even laudable, Rakhmetov stands out even more triumphantly for his personal development rather than his economic altruism. He becomes known by many as Nikitushka Lomov, a folkloric богатырь[17] figure who defended and worked alongside the common people as a barge-hauler and who was, according to the legends surrounding him in the Volga region, nearly seven feet tall and close to 542 pounds of solid muscle. "It was not by birthright" explains Chernyshevsky, "but by sheer strength of will that he'd acquired a right to bear a name so renowned among millions of people" (278). He cultivated this strength of body and will as a student in Saint Petersburg by "Working at common labor that requires physical strength. He carried water, chopped and hauled firewood, felled trees, cut stones, dug earth, and forged

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[16] The metaphor of the drainage and improvement of soil is used throughout the novel as a way of surreptitiously discussing the nature of Russia's socio-political ills and the need for revolution, as will be explored more deeply in the coming pages.

[17] *Bogatyr* - An Eastern-Slavic stock character, similar to the Western knight-errant, who combined enormous physical strength with unwavering morality and courage.

iron. He tried many different kinds of work and changed jobs frequently because with each job and every change different muscles were being developed" (278). Later, "About a year after adopting this program, he set off on his travels" as a full-time revolutionary, and in doing so "had even greater opportunities to devote himself to building physical strength. He worked as a plowman, carpenter, ferryman, and laborer at all sorts of healthful trades. Once he even worked as a barge hauler along the whole length of the Volga" (279). He engaged in this obsessive and constant exercise because, in his own words, "It's necessary… It inspires respect and love of the common people. It's useful and may come in handy someday" (279). This mysterious allusion to the future necessity of physical strength is, almost certainly, a foreshadowing of the violence of combat when the moment of revolution has arrived.

His utilitarian focus on what is "useful" is, in fact, almost the only reason for which Rakhmetov does anything at all. He lives an ultra-ascetic lifestyle which includes complete abstinence from sexual intercourse, superfluous sociality, and consumption of alcohol. Furthermore this "extraordinary man" "wouldn't allow himself a straw mattress; he slept on a felt strip on the floor" (281). On top of this he subsisted on a "boxers diet" consisting almost entirely of nearly raw beef, black bread, and water, as Rakhmetov calculated this was the nutritional system most conducive to the advancement of his physical strength. In addition to this he explains, with his typical rigorous self-control, that "Anything the common people eat on occasion, I too can eat on occasion. Anything that is never available to them, I too must never eat" and goes on to elaborate, with

equally typical dedication to the plight of working people, that "This is essential so that I can appreciate how difficult their life is compared to mine" (281). This desire to understand and live in the conditions of the common people not only speaks to Rakhmetov's ascetic dedication to the revolution and his sense of connectedness with the people, but also differs starkly from the aloofness of the red wine and champagne loving Bazarov. Finally, and perhaps most theatrically, Rakhmetov at one point spends an entire night on a bed of nails in order to test his willpower, push his asceticism to its utmost limits, and, it may be implied by Chernyshevsky, to prepare and fortify himself for potential imprisonment and torture by the brutal police force of the Tsarist regime.

Like Turgenev's Bazarov it is the very hyperbolic nature of Chernyshevsky's revolutionary superhero which has created his enduring legacy in the minds of Russian radicals. Also like Bazarov, however, the exaggerated strengths of Rakhmetov are accompanied necessarily by an ideological and personal inflexibility which leaves the character not only difficult to relate to but also lacking in the humanity which is necessary for the formation of the kinds of interpersonal relationships which could introduce dynamism in thought and reevaluation of dogma in the mind of the character. The only acquaintances cultivated by Rakhmetov are those which he believes are useful to the propagation of his revolutionary ideals. This means, by necessity, that the only opinions and perspectives which Rakhmetov is exposed to are those which mirror his own, and come from a circle which is both epistemically homogeneous and therefore somewhat stagnant. He states that developing working relationships with other

revolutionaries and radicals is "essential" and continues to explain that "Everyday occurrences demonstrate the usefulness of maintaining close contact with a certain circle of people. One must always have available sources of various kinds of information" (282).

Not only does Rakhmetov here reduce his interlocutors to simple means to his own political ends and thereby objectify them, the "various kinds of information" which are made available to him by these selected peers is steeped entirely in the same ideological viewpoint which he has adopted and is provided by individuals whose opinions differ only nominally from his own. This dynamic illustrates the same lack of "kaleidoscopic social imagination" which limits Bazarov in his ideological dynamism and which has been discussed in the above pages.

Additionally Chernyshevsky explains that "He [Rakhmetov] paid no attention whatsoever to your petty concerns, even if you were his closest acquaintance and were begging him to become involved in your predicament," further illustrating the aloofness and coldness which reduces unique subjectivities to simple raw material to be manipulated for the development of the revolutionary's ultimate vision (284). Chernyshevsky elaborates, with his typical glorification of the characters single-minded zealotry, that "He would utter his harshest words and most horrible reproaches in such a way that no reasonable man could take offence… without any personal emotion" (286) which leads to "the impression that our circle had of him as a person completely impervious to personal emotions, possessing no personal heart, if I may use that

expression, no heart throbbing with sensations of personal life" (288). Finally, and perhaps most tellingly, Rakhmetov was no great reader of various political philosophies.When first exposed and converted to the revolutionary ideals of the circle he becomes a member of he engages on a heroic binge of reading. Chernyshevsky explains that:

> The first evening he listened to Kirsanov[18] avidly; he wept and interrupted Kirsanov's words with exclamations that cursed the things that must perish and blessed those that must survive. He asked 'What books should I read first?'... He acquired what he needed and then read for more than three days and nights in a row, from 11am on Thursday to 9pm on Sunday, a total of eighty-two hours… He collapsed on the floor and slept for about fifteen hours (280).

Soon after that point, however, he ceases to read almost entirely as he has already formed his unshakeable ideas and finds more exposure to political theory to be "unnecessary" and a waste of time. While Chernyshevsky is, of course, completely laudatory of Rakhmanov's hyper-efficient time management and dedication to his ideals, the danger of this reductionary intellectual one sidedness need not be elaborated on for a reader in the 21st century. While it is certainly vital to possess a deep sense of right and wrong to avoid amoralism and complete apathetic relativism, it is vital to be willing to engage in

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[18] Not to be confused with the Kirsanovs of *Fathers and Sons*. These overlapping names are of course no coincidence, and indicate not only nominally but later textually, as will later be shown, that Chernyshevsky writes in direct response to Turgenev.

destabilizing processes of intellectual hospitality towards the ideas and opinions of others, even ones which the subject may find offensive and even reprehensible, in order to make one a productive and responsible ideological (and therefore political) agent of change. Tautological systems of justification which do not countenance their own potential failings, such as Rakhmetov displays, can and have historically lead to the crusader mindset which not only marginalizes one's potential peers and allies, but also creates the kind of "epistemic meta-blindness"[19] conducive to violence and authoritarianism on both a personal and social scale.

The "New" People

While this digression into the character of Rakhmetov is necessary due to the enormous cultural impact of the character historically, and the formative nature of Chernyshevsky's ideal of humanity on the personality of future revolutionary figures in Russia and abroad, for the purposes of this project the portrayal of the more rank and file "new people" is much more interesting and important. The personal development of the

[19] Medina uses this term to signify the inability to perceive of one's own perceptual shortcomings, and argues that it is conducive to both hermeneutic and epistemic violence towards others. It is an undoubtedly collective phenomena which impacts different portions of the population in various ways and to various degrees (Medina points out, for example, that it is especially prevalent among the epistemically privileged whose opinions are taken as authority due to the place they occupy in the hegemonic hierarchy rather than on their own merits) and has been routinely weaponized historically to justify marginalization and exploitation, and even to incite physical violence against, the other.

novel's protagonist, Vera Pavlovna, is traced through the progressive acceptance and embodiment of the hyper-materialist philosophy of rational egoism and Russian Populist politics, two marriages, and the establishment of a communally organized sewing cooperative which ultimately leads to her personal, sexual, economic, and intellectual liberation. The very dynamism of her character, while undeniably limited within the strict delineating boundaries of the ideology advocated by Chernyshevsky, stands in contrast to the impersonal rigor of the superhuman Rakhmetov. The novel is decidedly feminist for its harsh rebuttal of the conservative patriarchal society of 19th century Russia, and emphasizes the need for women's complete equality with their male counterparts as one of the foundational preconditions for meaningful large scale political change. Furthermore Vera, unlike Rakhmetov, experiences and struggles with the human need for friendship, love, and community in such a way that she becomes not only an impactful member of the revolutionary circles figuratively and metaphorically described by the author, but also in the community, particularly the working community, at large.

While Rakhmetov disdains love and even close friendship entirely (at least until the revolution has come) it is a defining element of Vera's life. Rakhmetov states, after earning the love of a wealthy widow by rescuing her from a runaway droshky by literally overpowering a draft horse in typical Rakhmetovian style, that "You must see that people like me have no right to bind their destiny to someone else's… I must suppress any love in myself: to love you would mean to bind my hands.... I must not love" (290). Vera, on the other hand, is a passionate and deeply social person who experiences romantic love

twice over the course of the novel, and has no qualms with deep personal feelings so long as they do not eclipse her own unique personality and subjectivity. This, in some ways, mirrors the experience of love dramatized by Arkady and Bazarov in *Fathers and Sons*. While Arkady embraces his romantic passions, and his love for his family and the people that surround him in general, Bazarov, as was explored at length above, resists firmly not only amorous love but also any deep attachment to others. His insistence upon his own independence, like Rakhmetov's, is not only antithetical to the humanitarian, egalitarian, and collectivist principles which the radical left claims to stand for, but also leaves him isolated, misanthropic, and ultimately lacking not only in personal but also in political dynamism which, by necessity, must involve a communicative and dialogic relationship with others in order to attempt to understand and learn from the broadest possible swath of thoughts and experiences. The building of healthy communities is a necessary precursor to the building of healthy economic and social communities based around democratic principles and resource equity. This reaffirms the stance of this thesis that thoroughly and truly democratic ways of living, thinking, and interacting with others is an ultimately radical position not just philosophically but also politically.

Further illustrating this projects argument that ideological dynamism and openness to the thoughts and theories of others need not mean the absorption of all divergent ways of thinking into a monolithic synthesis of position is Vera's relationship first with her "antediluvian" parents and later with her revolutionary comrades. Throughout the novel she expresses a willingness to engage in a sympathetic dialogue

with virtually anyone regardless of the banality of their position, but is entirely unwilling to let her own subjectivity be eclipsed or overshadowed by any person or group, and maintains an independent but open mindset in the face of even the strongest personalities and pressures. Early in the novel, even before her exposure to radical ideology, she resists coercion from her parents and society at large to enter in a marriage to a wealthy but caddish man. She justifies her denial of this financially profitable but poorly suited match by rebutting that:

> You call me a dreamer and ask what I want out of life. I prefer neither to dominate nor submit. I wish neither to deceive nor to disemble. I don't want to be concerned about other people's opinion, or strive for what others advise, when I really have no need for it. I have not become accustomed to wealth, and have no need for it myself (74).

She continues to remark that "I know only that I don't want to submit to anyone. I want to be free; I don't want to be obligated to anyone for anything… I don't want to demand anything from anyone. I don't want to impinge on anyone's freedom and I want to be free myself" (75). The author solemnly but lauditorially remarks, in regards to the oftentimes lonely existence of the "extraordinary people" versus that of the average "new" people, that:

> I feel sorry for them… because the path to which they're summoned leads to no personal joys… There's a great mass of honest and good people, but there are very few people like them… but through them everyone's life

> will flourish. Without them life would wither and go sour. They are the flower of the best people, the movers of the movers, the salt of the salt of the earth (293).

While Chernyshevsky cannot, for fear of the strict censorship he would encounter under the watchful eye of the repressive apparatus of the Tsar (particularly as he was writing from prison due to attention gained from his other subversive texts), speak too openly of the revolutionary preparation which all the characters, but particularly Rakhmetov, are engaged in, he can explore more easily the Russian Populist Communism which he advocates in seemingly innocuous forms. This is most explicitly demonstrated in the detailed analysis of the organizing principles and methods of the sewing cooperative which Vera puts into motion.

Russian Populism and Labor Reorganization

Russian Populism, or the народничество[20] movement, was a distinctly Russian form of radical socialism advocated by Chernyshevsky, which preached a хождение в народ[21] or "going to the people." Advised by Chernyshevsky and other like minded thinkers involved in this movement was a radicalization of the agrarian and industrial proletariat, consisting largely of the impoverished and exploited former serf class which

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[20] *Narodnichestvo* - More literally "Peopleism" or perhaps "Folkism"
[21] *Khozhdeniye v narod*

was then only recently emancipated in 1861, by the intellectuals of the разночинцы,[22] of which Chernyshevsky was a member. It was hoped by these individuals that the production of propaganda, vitalization of collective labor, and education of the working class would lead the masses to become politically active and ultimately revolutionary, and thereby replace the Imperial regime with an egalitarian social order based loosely on the traditional peasant commune (общи́на)[23] which was still a major component of the economic structure of much of rural Russia.

This peasant commune, in direct contrast the general laws of Marxist dialectical materialism, poised Russia in a unique position historically, socially, and economically to embrace collectivised and communalistic economic structures. Marx states, in a letter to the Russian Menshevik[24] and revolutionary Vera Zasulich[25] that:

> Russia is the sole European country where the "agricultural commune" has kept going on a nationwide scale up to the present day. It is not the prey of a foreign conqueror, as the East Indies, and neither does it lead a life cut

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[22] Raznochintsy - "People of miscellaneous ranks" - A largely reformist class in late-Tsarist society consisting of mostly highly educated but non-noble middle class individuals.

[23] Общи́на - Obshchina

[24] The Menshevik (меньшевик - stemming from the Russian меньшинство, or minority) party was a faction within the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party, which broke between these individuals and the bolsheviks (большевики - stemming from the Russian большинство, or majority) after a 1904 dispute between leadership. Mensheviks were, tellingly, later targeted for liquidation under the USSR nominally as potential counter-revolutionaries and enemies of the people, but more plausibly because of the centralized states discomfort with dissent among revolutionary parties.

[25] Zasulich, interestingly, began her revolutionary career as an anarchist closely associated with Mikhail Bakunin and was later jailed for her contact with Sergei Nechaev before converting to Marxism. This demonstrates not only the wide variety of closely related (sometimes through cooperation and sometimes through competition and antagonism) revolutionary groups operating in Russia and abroad at this time period, but also the sometimes permeable and unstable delineating boundaries both ideologically and in terms of membership between these circles. .

> off from the modern world. On the one hand, the common ownership of land allows it to transform individualist farming in parcels directly and gradually into collective farming, and the Russian peasants are already practising it in the undivided grasslands; the physical lie of the land invites mechanical cultivation on a large scale; the peasant's familiarity with the contract of artel facilitates the transition from parcel labour to cooperative labour; and, finally, Russian society, which has so long lived at his expense, owes him the necessary advances for such a transition. On the other hand, the contemporaneity of western production, which dominates the world market, allows Russia to incorporate in the commune all the positive acquisitions devised by the capitalist system without passing through its Caudine Forks (Marx-Zasulich Correspondence 1st Draft 1).

According to the orthodox understanding of dialectical materialism as a historical teleology this is, in fact, an anomaly. Hypothetically the most advanced industrial nations (England, Germany, and France in this time period) should be the first to embrace the new socialist epoch of historical development. As history has shown, however, it is often the places where exploitation is at its worst, and the state apparatus at its most vulnerable, that revolutionary action is catalyzed.

Ideological and propaganda warfare was not, certainly, the only weapon at the disposal of the Russian Populists. Also championed by some members of these radical cells, particularly those more closely associated with nihilist movements such as

Наро́дная во́ля[26], was the use of terrorism and assassination in order to catalyze social change.

Although Vera Pavlovna has nothing to do with any violence in the text of the novel, she does successfully utilize communist theory in the creation of a sewing cooperative, and in doing so does more to alleviate the sufferings of the workers than the rest of her circle who are more engaged with the propagation of revolutionary sentiment than a hands-on project that, despite existing within the legal boundaries of the current regime, disrupts and subverts the capitalistic structure on which it is based. In this context it is worthwhile, given the nature of this examination of democratic epistemology and its historical relationship with power, violence, and authoritarianism, to explore these terms further in their Arendtian usage.

The Question of Violence and Democracy

Political thought and action are, by necessity, interpersonal concepts. A politics of one is, in fact, not a politics at all. This collective and social nature of politics forces one to countenance the motivating factors of political change, and the methodology through which these changes operate. In other words, it is vital to analyze and understand the

[26] Narodnaya Volya - "The People's Will" or "The People's Freedom" - The radical cell which successfully assassinated Tsar Alexander II by throwing bombs at his carriage in the streets of St. Petersburg in March of 1881.

means and not simply the ends of governmental and revolutionary forces. This is exactly what Hannah Arendt attempts to explore in her short book *On Violence*. In order to do this, she unpacks and reevaluates concepts which are too often conflated in political thought: including power, strength, authority, and violence. In particular she focuses on the antithetical nature of power, the extreme form of which she defines as "All against One" and the extreme form of violence which is, in her words, "One against All" (42). This brief exegetical segment provides a succinct recapitulation of this argument.

Although power and violence often occur simultaneously, they are conceptual opposites, which, in their purest forms, could not coexist. Arendt states, "where the one rules absolutely, the other is absent" (56). This is because power is the collective action of a communicating group, while violence is an act of dictatorial individual authority. She states "power corresponds to the human ability not just to act but to act in concert. Power is never the property of an individual; it belongs to a group and remains in existence only so long as the group keeps together" (44). Violence on the other hand is imposed by a dominant force which uses repression, physical, epistemic, or psychological domination, and terror as a method to control others without their collective consent. Violence is, according to Arendt, "distinguished by its instrumental character" (46).Violence is also inherently different from power in its undemocratic nature. It is a force used to achieve a particular ends without ethical regards to the process of this change of the consent, or lack thereof, of the subjects acted upon.

It is important to consider the repercussions of this distinction in regards to functioning governments and in resistance against them. "Violence," Arendt states, "appears where power is in jeopardy, but left to its own course it ends in power's disappearance" (56). For Arendt, legitimate government is based on individuals' collective participation in the communication and discourse that informs the decision making process and results in power. As a government becomes more repressive, and, therefore, less legitimate, it can no longer be guided by the voice of the people (as they are being exploited or abused) and, therefore, must resort to violence in order to impose its politics. Because, of course, this means a domination of the many by the few (or one), this illegitimate government, must rely increasingly on police, military, and propaganda technology in order to counterbalance its lack of popular participation. The ultimate extreme of this is a politics of terror in which the *only* force that assures that individuals toe the line is violence and the fear of violence. The use of violence by revolutionary vanguard groups, rather than the grassroots mobilization of the population itself, begins the process of the increasing necessity of repressive force utilized by governments which become exponentially illegitimate, and therefore rely increasingly on violence and repression. The use of instrumental violence as a means to an end, then, indicates a danger of the creation of a reciprocal feedback loop in which power, or the collective consent of the people, is put under constant and growing erasure.

All of this "implies that it is not correct to think of the opposite of violence as nonviolence; to speak of nonviolent power is actually redundant" (56). Power, coming

from the will of the individuals governed and based on communication and cooperation is inherently nonviolent. Violence, which does not regard collective thought/action or the means through which it achieves its ends is, thus, always illegitimate and inherently opposed to power. This is equally true, perhaps, of both revolutionary and reactionary violence. I contend that Vera's use of collective power offers a productive counterexample to undemocratic use of violence by a revolutionary minority or social vanguard, and therefore demonstrates a nonviolent yet powerful means of social, political, and economic revolution which successfully avoids authoritarian structures.

The cooperative sewing shop, which ultimately begins to branch out, expand locations, and employ dozens of women as well as their relatives and dependents,[27] is organized firstly and foremost on the communistic principles which Chernyshevsky would like to see functioning across the entire breadth of the Russian and ultimately global political economy. In the workshop:

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[27] It is stated in the novel that it seemed very possible, shortly after the expansion of the second shop, that at the current rate of economic growth there could easily be as many as four, five, ten, or even twenty more collective sewing projects operating within two years. This, however, incites an "invitation" to be extended to Vera's husband to a meeting in which "amiable conversation touched on many subjects including the new shop on Nevsky" (380). In this conversation the unspecified interlocutor "spoke at length about the sign hanging over" the store, which read *Au bon travail* (probably a reference to the utopian socialist concept of *le droit au travail* - the right to work- popularised by the French radical Louis Blanc) and wondered if "it was a really good idea to use the word *travail?"* (380). This portion would seem to be a indication of interference from the Tsarist secret police force in the establishment of subversive economic structures, and reaffirms Chernyshevsky's opinion that only truly drastic revolutionary action could bring about real social reform. The result of this interview is that Vera "considerably clipped the wings" of her "daydreams" and "concerned herself with preserving what they had already achieved than with forging ahead" (380). It also worth noting here as a brief and humorous aside that the police interrogator recommends Vera simply use her own surname for the store's name, but is informed of course that the utilization of "Kirsanov" would "be bad for business," a reference to Chernyshevsky's less than positive view of Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons,* which would have made the name Kirsanov familiar to most of the reading population of Russia at the time period (380).

> Receipt of profits is not a reward for the skill of individual workers, but rather the result of the general nature of the enterprise, its organization and its goal. This goal was the greatest possible equality in distribution of the fruits of labor for participants in the enterprise, regardless of their personal characteristics. Any profit sharing by workers depended precisely on the nature of the workshop. The nature of the workshop, its spirit, and its order consisted in the unanimity of all; to achieve this unanimity, each participant was equally important (193).

Furthermore the operation is a thoroughly democratic one from the outset, and relies on the free consent of all those involved in the work to guide its development. Vera announces to the workers, originally just four women, her plan for the project after the first wages are received.

She explains that despite organizing the establishment of the enterprise she will take no more profit than the other members of the group, and uses this as a point of departure to explain her hopes for the venture. She is, however, careful to point out that "I won't organize anything new without your participation. The only changes will be those that you yourselves want. Clever people have said that things turn out well only if people themselves desire it." Chernyshevsky also makes explicit that she avoids the highly theoretical and erudite rhetoric of the intelligentsia, and instead addresses her comrades in an approachable manner which all could find comprehensible; a necessity if the workshop were to function in accordance with legitimate non-hierarchical democratic

principles. Chernyshevsky makes a point of reminding the reader that "She spoke very simply, without looking too far ahead and without painting alluring prospects that, after momentary ecstasy, would engender distrust" (191). This also, it must be noted here, is antithetical to the teleological projection of historical theories on the future which unreconstructed Marxism advocates, and is also opposed to the single minded and impersonal march of progress which Rakhmetov and Bazarov are occupied with in a monomaniacal fashion.

The entire operation, in fact, strives towards the goal of decentralized, anti-authoritarian, democratic and cooperative labor and social organization. It is of vital importance that

> Vera Pavlovna took the greatest possible pleasure in the workshop when explaining to someone that the entire system was organized and maintained by the girls themselves. With these explanations she was trying to convince herself of what she wanted to believe; namely, that the workshop could function without her, that other workshops of the same sort could appear completely independent of theirs, even without any supervision from someone outside the seamstresses' ranks, but entirely as a result of the ideas and skills of the seamstress' themselves. That was Vera Pavlovna's fondest dream. (199)

This dream does, in fact, come into being to a certain extent. The financial solubility of the workshop leads another to be opened in nearby district of St. Petersburg. The structure, in keeping with the decentralized and malleable nature of the project, results in there being "Many differences between them in the details of their organization because everything is adjusted to suit individual circumstances" (386). In both locations, however, the majority of characteristics remain the same due to the rational and and well-formulated nature of their organization. The women live together in quarters attached to the workspace, and by doing so are able to pool their capital for a living situation far superior to what they could afford individually, and also save themselves time and resources on transit. The same applies to their food, which they purchase in bulk and which is prepared by the older dependents of the the workers, thus providing an occupation for these individuals which creates a situation which can preserve the family units of those who wish to do so. The work done by the women, despite the lack of impetus provided by the piecework payment system by which most tailoring shops in Russia operated under in this time, is done very quickly and well because workers are healthy, happy, and directly invested personally and economically in the well-being of the entire enterprise. A visitor notices that:

> Instead of poverty I saw contentment, instead of filth, not merely cleanliness, but even some luxury in their rooms; instead of crudeness, considerable education. All of this came about for two reasons. On the one hand, the seamstresses' income was increasing; on the other, they'd

> managed to save a great deal on expenses. Do you understand why they receive such a high income? They work for themselves; they're the real owners. (383)

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the workers are encouraged to engage in and provided with the resources necessary to balance out their labor with both recreation and intellectual edification. The groups takes frequent outings to the natural areas surrounding St. Petersburg, where they engage in salubrious exercise such as games and dancing, enjoy debate and conversation, and escape the claustrophobic and unhealthy environment of the cramped and dirty city. Additionally Vera initially reads to the workers or tells them stories from her own imagination during their rest periods and meal times. This soon blossoms, however, into a thriving intellectual atmosphere filled with discussion, circulation of books, and visiting speakers. It is worth noting, as well, that Chernyshevsky is none too subtle in pointing out that these visiting speakers are recruited from the ranks of the educated revolutionary circle which comprises Vera's personal connections, indicating that the women in the workshop receive not only lessons on the praxis of revolutionary socialist organization in the shop, but also it's theory and propaganda, thereby demonstrating the "going to the people" advocated by the radical Russian Populist movement.

Chernyshevsky's Utopian Dream

Vera Pavlovna's pragmatic dream of realizing a more efficacious and just system of labor and distribution of capital is mirrored by the sleeping dream which comes to her at another point in the novel. There are, in fact, four separate dream sequences in which Vera interacts with the ephemeral spirits of revolution, whose proper names are revealed to be Love of Humanity and Equality Among the Sexes, and which guide her through the process of her own emancipation from social hegemony, economic and gender inequality, and social/economic dependence on authoritarian figures. It is in these sequences, particularly the final one, where Chernyshevsky most unabashedly and straightforward expresses his utilitarian desires for the communistic future of Russia. In this fourth and final dream "nature confides her secrets" and "history reveals its meaning as… thousands of years of life parade by in a series of tableaux" (361). This sequence traces the development of the various permutations of the oppression and objectification of women through the pastoral, classical, feudal, and industrial historical epochs, and in each, keeping with the theory of dialectical materialism, "The birth of each new kingdom inities the decline of the previous one" (364). Despite the seemingly innocuous nature of this dream sequence, however, it is necessary to consider the dangerously teleological nature of the objectivity of the above claims that nature and history both reveal themselves in complete Truth to Vera. It is this supposed objectivity, one might even say

political gnosticism, which leads to the authoritarian nature of ideologically liberating but pragmatically totalitarian revolutionary projects.

The final historical period elaborated on in the dream is that of the post-industrial future where "Life is so healthy and peaceful that it preserves one's freshness… Machines are doing almost all the work for them [the people] - reaping, binding the sheaves, and carting them away. People have only to walk alongside, or ride, or drive the machines" (371). Here "Each person chooses the company that best suits him" and there is no central authority to prevent "Each person to live as he chooses" (373). Furthermore there is no social hierarchy, based on class, gender, race, or any other factor because, as the Spirit of Revolution states, "A master is embarrassed before his servant, a servant before his master; man is completely free only among equals" (368). Freedom, in fact, is the byword of the future system of organization. Life and social order exist "Of free and willing labor, of abundance, goodness, and enjoyment… every kind of happiness exists here, whatever anyone desires. Everyone lives as he wants; each and every person has complete will, yes, free will" (378). This equality is accomplished, essentially, by the utilization of Vera's model of economics applied to a global scale. The spirit who guides Vera through this and her other dreams points out, in fact, that "You've proven that even in your own time people can lead a free and easy life. One has only to be rational, to know how to organize, and to learn how to use resources most advantageously" (376).

In the utopia people live a more or less migratory life, and follow the seasons to pursue the kind of work which they find most suitable to their dispositions, abilities, and

desires. Massive communal lodgings stand at intervals throughout the landscape, where people live and work collectively for as long as they so desire. It is these "crystal palaces," inspired by the structure of the same name erected in London in 1851 to house the Great Exhibition, which so captivated the Russian imagination of the 19th century. This building came to represent the utopian hope for a life of ease and comfort provided for by increases in science and technology for an entire generation of Russians, and is later famously and mercilessly attacked as a symbol for all the anthropocentric arrogance of humanity in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Notes from Underground*.

The soil around these structures has been modified through processes such as chemical fertilization, irrigation, drainage, etc. to be made arable for much broader swaths than in Vera's time, and most individuals choose to work in agriculture during the day, while in the evening they enjoy the company of their peers in the communal dwellings (although some prefer solitude). While a few "eccentrics" still choose to occupy the dense urban areas of the former metropolises, most find it more agreeable to live and work close to the earth. All the necessities of life are provided for by the community, but there appears to exist some remnant of the exchange system for the procurement of dainties and treats. The Spirit remarks, in regards to the banquet at which the people of the future are seated, that "Here this is regular fare: anyone who wants to can have better food, whatever he wants, and a separate account is kept. No such account is kept for those who don't ask for anything except the dishes prepared for all. Everything else is arranged in the same way. What everyone can afford together is provided free; but

a charge is made for any special item or whim" (372). It is also pointed out, however, that this communal lifestyle is by no means obligatory and "Not everyone's here; those who prefer to eat in their own rooms dine there" (371).

Labor and the Revolution

The necessity for productive work, both within this dream sequence and in the reality of the characters' lives, is a recurrent and heavily stressed theme throughout the novel. One must engage, according to Chernyshevsky, in work which is both personally satisfying and socially constructive as well as physically and intellectually healthy, in order to live a well balanced and happy life. In the utopian vision of Chernyshevsky, which coincides with the thinking of virtually all leftist theorists of the time period, most people would choose, if given the opportunity, to combine physical labor with intellectual pursuits, and in doing so achieve a harmony of multifaceted personal satisfaction with social contribution because, as he states, "Anyone who hasn't put in a good day's work hasn't prepared his nervous system well enough to experience the fullness of such enjoyment [in leisurely pursuits)" (377).

This need for not only productive but personally fulfilling work reflects the Marxist theory of alienation of labor, in which the introduction of an increasingly advanced mechanization of the workplace, rather than reduce the plight of the working

person by shouldering some of the burden of production and helping eliminate want by fostering abundance, instead functions to make the worker increasingly expendable and therefore more effectively exploited by the capitalist class. In *The German Ideology* Marx predicts famously, similarly to Chernyshevsky, that

> In communist society, where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes, society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticise after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, herdsman or critic (*The German Ideology 9).*

To the materialist Marx and Chernyshevsky human beings are in many ways defined by their labor, as labor is in turn the defining element of historical development and occupies a central place in the the individual and collective understanding of the subject and the subjects relationship to the society in which they live. Marx affirms this thought, in his *Comment on John Mill,* by postulating:

> Let us suppose that we had carried out production as human beings. Each of us would have, in two ways, affirmed himself, and the other person. (i) In my production I would have objectified my individuality, its specific character, and, therefore, enjoyed not only an individual manifestation of my life during the activity, but also, when looking at the object, I would

> have the individual pleasure of knowing my personality to be objective, visible to the senses, and, hence, a power beyond all doubt. (ii) In your enjoyment, or use, of my product I would have the direct enjoyment both of being conscious of having satisfied a human need by my work, that is, of having objectified man's essential nature, and of having thus created an object corresponding to the need of another man's essential nature . . . Our products would be so many mirrors in which we saw reflected our essential nature (*Comment on John Mill 2).*

This Marxist stance of the centrality of labor is consistent with the lived experience of the characters, particularly the "new" women, who strive to find productive and enriching outlets for their energies. This gender equality is expressed in Chernyshevsky's statement that "Anyone who is purposefully engaged in some kind of work, no matter what, and no matter what kind of clothes this person wears, men's or women's, that person is simply someone engaged in his work. That's all there is to it" (352). Vera postulates that "A person must have the kind of work that can be neither neglected nor postponed. Then a person is incomparably stronger" (342) and remarks to her husband that "I needed a cause that my life could seriously hinge on, one that I'd value as much as you value your life's work, one that would be just as demanding and would require as much attention from me as yours does from you… I want to be equal to you in all respects" (345). He responds positively, also being a "new person", by

emphasizing the question "What about the energy of work, Verochka? Doesn't that mean quite a lot? Labor takes on passionate exhilaration when one's whole life is organized that way" (356) and thereby further articulates the need for fulfilling labor. Vera, in elaborating on her desire to attend medical school in addition to her role in the organization of labor collectives states:

> Could the enterprise in and of itself really serve as an important support for ordinary people such as me? The Rakhmetovs are a different breed. They identify with the common cause to such an extent that it becomes their own necessity, filling their lives. But that's beyond us, Sasha. We're not eagles, like he is. Personal life is the only thing that indispensable to us (343).

She articulates in this comment, despite her glorification of the "extraordinary people" of the world, the very humanity that makes her more dynamic and more relatable as a character than Rakhmetov. For her the revolution is not the center around which her life revolves, although she works tirelessly for its realization. It is the personal interactions and relationships she cultivates, almost always constructed around some shared project of productive labor, that define her life and her happiness, and for this reason she cannot reduce the people she connects with to mere pawns in a political chess game. She is engaged in the business of bettering the reality of people's lives, both her coworkers as well as her friends and lovers, rather than forsaking these portions of her life in favor of a complete dedication to purely geopolitical unrest.

It is these people, whom Chernyshevsky describes as "Worthy but ordinary," who are the most compelling figures in the novel. He continues to state that "There's but one regret: at the present time, for every contemporary person there are at least a dozen or more antediluvian types. It's only natural, after all, that the antediluvian world should be populated by antediluvians" (354). It is his opinion that, after the rectification of the social injustices which dominate modern life, all people will be able to achieve this standard. Although he argues that "The majority is still on a much lower level than this" one shouldn't see these characters as Rakhmetovs who are somehow transcendent or superhuman. He does, however, recognize the easy mistake of this sentiment by stating that "A person who's never seen anything except hovels would look at a picture of an ordinary house and mistake it for a luxurious palace" (312). He thus emphasizes that to the antediluvian or unenlightened reader these characters may *seem* extraordinary, but are in fact simply the result of rational thinking and well organized living on average human beings.

While Chernyshevsky glorifies the Rahkmenovs of the world and encourages one to aspire as far as one is able to emulate one's strength of personality and will, and also stresses the immanent attainability of the vast majority of the population to achieve the level or moral and intellectual development of characters like Vera, he is somewhat more malleable and multi-faceted in his attitude towards the more "unenlightened" majority. Early in the novel Vera's mother (the same Marya Alekseevna mentioned above), a consistently vicious, drunken, and mercantile figure, opens up to her daughter in an

inebriated confession which demonstrates the author's view of the development of personal character. She states that in trying to provide for herself and her family:

> I [Marya Alekseevna] turned mean. And our affairs began to improve... And then we started to live well. Why? Because I turned dishonest and mean, that's why! I know, Verochka, in your books it says that only dishonest and mean people prosper. It's all true, Verochka! Your books say that we're not supposed to live like this . Don't you think I know that, Verochka? But in those books of yours it says that in order not to live like this, everything has to be organized differently; now, no one can live any other way. So why don't they hurry up and set up a new order? (59).

It is in this moment, the most human glimpse we catch of the character, that Chernyshevsky begins to articulate his position on the the state of human morality at the present time. The reader is forced not only to countenance the inherent lack of evil in humanity, but also the ability for a desire for improvement of oneself and society to peek out from even the most debased personalities. The reader, like Vera, must say "Mother I merely used to dislike you before; but after last night I began to pity you, too. You've known so much grief: that's why you are the way you are" (68). Or as the author later states, "We have no right whatsoever to condemn" those whose behaviors and thoughts are wicked or brutalizing, as these behaviors are a result of sociological forces which are in a large measure out of one's control (134).

Rational Egoism and the "Antediluvian" Human

This sympathetic view of Matya utilizes a paradoxically optimistic and humanizing version of the Rational Egoist philosophy expounded upon throughout the novel, a philosophy which, according to Vera's first husband "is supposed to be cold" because "The mind is supposed to make judgements about things coldly" (115). Lopukhov continues, however, to state that "This theory is pitiless, but by following it people will cease to be pitiful objects of idle compassion" (116). Rational Egoism, in the most reductive and simplified terms, contends that every individual performs no action for any reason other than the pursuit of their own advantage, pleasure, and well-being. Even altruistic actions, of which there are many in the book, stem from the desire of the individual to maximize their own pleasure or minimize their own pain. Vera's second husband Alexander Matevich Kirsanov, for example, decides to avoid the friendship of the couple when he begins to develop romantic feelings for Vera, in order not to cause a division between the happy pair. He does this, in keeping with the philosophy strictly adhered to by all the "new people," because not to do so would offend his own moral sensibilities and thus cause him guilt and pain. Chernyshevsky states that "Such a dishonest act is fundamentally much more unpleasant than any slight struggle within himself which he would have to endure, and concerning the outcome of which (in proud satisfaction of his own resolve) he had no doubt" (218). Furthermore the theoretical

apparatus of Rational Egoism, at least in Chernyshevsky's opinion, ultimately has extremely positive implications for the development of human character on a grand scale, despite what on the surface level could be misconstrued as a selfish cynicism.

To Chernyshevsky's mind it is an indisputable fact that "People become smarter rather quickly when they realize that it's to their advantage to do so, though they hadn't noticed the necessity of doing so before… they've had no previous opportunity to acquire this intelligence; but if you provide them with this opportunity, then they'll gladly make use of it" (121). Therefore the only reason why the vast majority of the people have not achieved the level of development of Chernyshevsky's "new people" is simply because the opportunities for them to be exposed to new ideas and better ways of thinking and living has been denied to them thus far, and that they have not been provided with the resources through which to live in a way which is simultaneously moral and gratifying privately, socially, and financially. He notices, however:

> Nowadays other options are becoming more and more available: decent people have begun meeting each other. This development is inevitable, since each year the number of decent people has been growing. In time it will become the most common option; in even more time it will become the only option because all people will be decent. Then everything will be very wonderful indeed (89).

This optimism explains the sympathetic portrayal of even some of the least attractive characters in the novel. Not only does Chernyshevsky acknowledge the role social

injustices play in the psychopathological development of these characters' mentality, but even goes so far as to recognize the kernels of goodness which motivate these individuals as well as their utility to society as it exists currently. He explains this thought in regards to Vera's mother:

> Your mistake does not bear witness against you. You've encountered a sort of people you weren't used to dealing with; it was no sin to be deceived by them, judging from your own former experiences. Your entire previous life led you to believe that people are divided into two categories - fools and swindlers… This view was very accurate until quite recently. Marya Alekseevna, it was completely accurate… you're to be forgiven for being confused… You dragged your husband out of obscurity and you've provided for your old age - these are both good things that were difficult for you to achieve. The means you employed were bad, but your environment provided you with none other. The means belong to your environment, not to your personality; the dishonor is not yours, but the honor is to your intelligence and your strength of character… Of course you're ruthless when it comes to your own advantage, but if there is no advantage to you in doing harm to someone, you won't do it simply for the sake of some stupid little passion. You figure it's not worth spending the time, effort, and money uselessly… Yes, one can still deal with you, because you don't wish evil for evil's sake if it's to your own detriment…

> I'd be glad to wipe you off the face of the earth,[28] but I respect you. You don't do too much damage. You're now engaged in a bad business because your environment demands it; but if we were to provide you with a different environment, you'd gladly become harmless, even beneficial, because you don't want to do evil without financial reward, and if it were in your own interest, you'd do anything at all, you'd even act decently and nobly if necessary… You're not to blame that this capacity is inactive in you, and that antithetical capacities are active instead (168).

Furthermore Chernyshevsky's sentiment is expressed with even more utilitarian generosity by the Spirit in Vera's second dream. She reveals the purpose and value of such people as Vera's mother, and encourages her to view such types sympathetically but without romanticization of their character:

> Later it will be possible, when people no longer need to be wicked. But for now it isn't. You see, good people are unable to stand on their own two feet; the wicked are clever and strong. You see, Verochka. There are different kinds of wicked people. Some want things to get worse, other better - all to further their own interests… My wicked people are very wicked indeed, but good grows up under their hands. Yes, Verochka, be

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[28] This comment that Chernyshevsky would "be glad to wipe" the undeveloped type "off the face of the earth" is included here not only in an attempt to remain true to the less than completely humanistic nature of this quote, but also to emphasize the ease with which the liquidation of undesirables can be incorporated into an ideology which stresses its own objectivity. This prophetic and terrifying comment, even more unsettling as it is mentioned in a brief aside and offered alongside no explanation, has proven relevant not only to revolutionary movements but also reactionary and moderate regimes.

> grateful to your mother. Don't love her, for she is evil; but you owe her everything. Acknowledge it: without her you would not exist… When the good are strong, I won't need the wicked. This will happen very soon. Then the wicked will see that they no longer can be wicked. Those who were already developing will become good, since they remained wicked only because it was disadvantageous for them to become good. Since they know good is better than evil, they'll come to love the good as soon as it's possible to do so without harming themselves (187).

Edifying the Soil: Breaking Ground for the Revolution

The second dream, as mentioned above, explores the environmental conditions which have produced individuals as they currently operate in society using an extended agricultural metaphor which recurs throughout the novel as a surreptitious means for Chernyshevsky to discuss the social ills which, he believes, must be addressed by revolution. Vera's dream is precipitated by her overhearing a conversation between the members of her circle in which the agro-chemical and historical theories of Justus von Liebig and Henry Thomas Buckle, respectively, are discussed. These discussions, fusing speculation on the development of social issues with scientifically positivist objectivity, demonstrate the interest in the fusion of these principles in their formation of an

"anthropological philosophy" which was "an unavoidable subject of conversation in such circles at that time" (180). Such interests, of course, the purely materialistic sentiments of Bazarov as well as his focus on the development of the hard sciences to further a revolutionary agenda.[29]

After Vera falls asleep she dreams she overhears two members of her circle walking across a field discussing its fertility in terms that thinly veil the allegorical intentions of the conversation. They discuss the quality of grain that springs from the soil of two different fields, one of which contains:

> Fresh dirt, one might even say clean dirt… it's neither moldy nor putrid. You know that in the philosophy to which we both subscribe this clean dirt is called real dirt. It's dirty, to be sure; but if you look at it carefully, you'll see that all its elements are healthy in and of themselves. They constitute dirt in this particular combination, but if the arrangement of atoms were even slightly altered, something else would emerge. And that new substance would also be healthy because the basic elements are sound. Where does the healthy quality of this dirt come from? Observe the condition of the field; you can see there is ample drainage for the water. Consequently, there can be no stagnation. (181)

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[29] It is worth noting here as well the prominence of frog dissection by both of Vera's husbands as part of their scientific research in the field of medicine, a habit Chernyshevsky almost certainly included to mirror that of Bazarov, who famously spends a significant portion of the novel in the pursuit of capturing and dismembering frogs for his own research as a doctor. Also present in *Fathers and Sons* is the repeated mentioning of Liebig's philosophy and the possibility of the amelioration of unproductive soil for agricultural use, a project which is, as has been seen above, also mentioned in its utopian realization in Vera's fourth dream.

Use of extended metaphors, particularly these agricultural ones, are vital both the philosophy of the novel, the political systems which spring from its utilization, and for this reading of ideology within texts. The soil referred to undoubtedly represents the social conditions from which individuals spring, as is indicated by the appearance of Vera's mother directly after this conversation in the dream as well as by several other allusions dropped throughout the novel such as when Vera, lamenting the fate of an excellent but impoverished women forced into prostitution and and untimely death, wonders that "The soil I grew up in was also bad, but it didn't stick to me; thousands of women who grow up in families no better than mine manage to remain pure just the same" (221). It is implied, as was mentioned in regards to the "antediluvian types" in the pages above, that individuals themselves are not guilty for the social conditions which shape them into what they are to become, and that they grow morally sick due not to some failure within themselves but because of the environment from which they are formed. This indicates then that an alteration of these insalubrious environmental forces will alter the ways in which people think, act, and interact, and therefore a tremendous emphasis is put on the dynamism of thought through time, which will in turn permute social conditions, which will then lead to increased and changing ideology which will further serve to catalyze change of social conditions. First and foremost in order to create a thriving and healthy intellectual and social environment *there must be no stagnation.* Political dynamism, as well as ideological dynamism, must be facilitated by an ever-present willingness to engage in honest reconsideration of one's own values and

opinions fascinated by epistemologically democratic exposure to new and different ideas. I will argue, however, that the teleological nature of dialectical change towards an ultimate good is a philosophically failed concept as it targets a trajectory which instrumentalized change as a means to a political and historical end. The preservation of multivoicedness, and by extension the preservation of democratic thinking, however, is a means in and of itself. As John Dewey states "All ends and values that are cut off from the ongoing process [of democratic change] become arrests, fixations. They strive to fixate what has been gained instead of using it to open the road and point out the way to new and better experiences" (Creative Democracy 229). In other words democratic thinking and organization are the means to the end of democracy itself. A radically democratic society is not the destination, but the process of change which must inform our actions and interactions with others constantly.

The interlocutor in Vera's dream continues to agree that "Yes, movement is reality… because movement is life; reality and life are one and the same But life has as its main element labor; consequently, the main element of reality is labor, and the truest sign of labor is activity" (181). In doing so this character applies the necessity for incessant movement and reconfiguration to the material realm of activity, and in doing so emphasizes the need for more than just cerebral and speculative reconsideration of ideas, but also the actual implementation of these new ways of thinking. It is quite possible that the "labor" referred to is in fact the labor of revolution, or in metaphorical terms the "drainage" of the "putrid soil" in which the "elements are in an unhealthy condition… It's

only natural that however they might be rearranged, and whatever substances unlike dirt emerge from these very same elements, they'd still be unhealthy and rotten… because the elements themselves are unhealthy...the cause of this is stagnation" (182). The necessity of dynamism is elaborated upon, in even more explicit metaphorical terms, in the next paragraph. It is adumbrated that:

> Yes, the absence of movement is the absence of labor… because in an anthropological analysis labor constitutes the fundamental form of movement which provides the basis and content of all other forms: recreation, relaxation, amusement, enjoyment. Without labor to precede them, these other forms have no reality. And without movement there's no life, that is, no reality, because the dirt is phantasmic, putrid. Until very recently no one knew how to restore such fields to health; but now a method has been discovered. It's called drainage.[30] Excess water is channeled off into ditches, leaving the required amount, and this water is kept in motion (182).

In order to make these implications increasingly clear Chernyshevsky then introduces several of the less than wholesome characters from the novel into the dream to discuss their formative environment, and denounces both the opulence of excessive wealth and indolence as well as the demeaning grind of constant work and poverty. Finally, as if to reduce any ambiguity whatsoever about the meaning of the dream, the revolutionary

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[30] I.e. revolution

spirit of Love of Humanity elaborates on precisely why these individuals exist and what role they still may play in her ultimate trajectory of historical development, a sample of which has already been cited above. The fact that more undesirable individuals can serve to further the goals of the revolutionary vanguard class is, disturbingly, similar to the utilization of the economically disenfranchised to create profit for an exploitative class under capitalism. The overlaps between the egalitarian failings of Chernyshevsky and other revolutionary philosophers and the injustices of the very systems they would attempt to overthrow are all the more troubling as oftentimes these thinkers are unwilling or unable to recognize these potentially violent elements in their thought, or worse yet are willing to justify them in the name of some lofty, if slippery and nebulous, artificially constructed moral hierarchy. This is, ultimately, an instance of epistemic blindness which permeates Chernyshevsky's novel, and is present not only in the the "rigorist" Rakhmetov, but also forms a role in the cognitive structure of all of the "new" people.

The Problem of Epistemic Blindness in *What is to be Done?*

Despite his emphasis on the necessity of socio-political dynamism to avoid stagnation, Chernyshevsky exhibits a degree of epistemic blindness in regards to his own claims. Both he personally and his characters demonstrate an extreme degree of inflexibility and almost hubristic confidence in the objective certainty of their beliefs. It is

true, in fact, that the more rigorously a character subscribes to the rational egoist philosophy the author advocates and the more single-mindedly and unquestioningly a character works towards the realization of the ideal society Chernyshevsky represents, the more highly the character is esteemed and glorified in the novel. This is epitomized by Rakhmetov, who is little more than a revolutionary robot with no sense of humility, intellectual curiosity, or political open-mindedness. Even the "new people" never once, over the course of the entire novel, express the slightest doubt, misgiving, or reconceptualization of their philosophies. The potential for the reduction of humanity into quasi-mechanized and non-autonomous cogs into a system that attempts to reduce the entire spectrum of human emotion and subjectivity into an "objective" formulation built to reproduce a dominant ideology is never addressed, nor even fleetingly considered, throughout the course of the text. Chernyshevsky, in fact, at one point bluntly states in regards to his philosophy that "Lobukhov found that his theory provided an *infallible* means for analysing the movements of the human heart; I must confess that I agree with him entirely on this point"[31] (251).

[31] My emphasis

The Two-Dimensional Novel and Ideology

It is the lack of willingness to recognize the vital role of dissent that is entailed in any "objective" theory of universal human nature, and that claims to reduce all history to a scientific teleology and all thought and emotion to universal phenomena and that horrified Fyodor Dostoyevsky and led to his composition of *Notes From Underground* and *The Possessed,* and inspired the characters of Raskolnikov in *Crime and Punishment* and Ivan Karamazov in *The Brothers Karamazov.* The consequences of this thinking in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, alarmingly enunciated by Dostoyevsky, have haunted the ideology of leftist revolutionary movements globally and throughout history.

A brief examination of Dostoevsky's anti-nihilist novel, *Notes From Underground* will help to transition into the next chapter of this thesis, which seeks to explicate the ideological similarities of two-dimensional pieces of literature that, regardless of political affiliation, can serve to align the reader, consciously or unconsciously, with a particular socio-political perspective, and that can all too easily be appropriated into exploitative systems despite the potentially resistant nature of the texts. It is not the political alignment of a character or a novel that renders it propagandistic, but, as is the case both with *What is to be Done?* and *How Green Was My Valley,* rather the inability or unwillingness of a text to be politically multifaceted and complex that leaves it ideologically flat and therefore problematically reductionary.

The purpose of utilizing the thought of Dostoevsky in this interchapter connective tissue is not only to draw attention to the ways in which he identifies the danger of radical thinking like that of Bazarov or Rakhmetov to slide into authoritarianism, but also to point out that even the conservative perspective that is articulated as a reaction to these ideological stances can be appropriated just as easily by existing structures of exploitation.

Dostoevsky wrote *Notes From Underground* as a direct response to Chernyshevsky and the rational egoist movement, which he saw as embracing political and ideological traits that he believed could be conducive to chaos or authoritarianism, just as Llewelyn would similarly fear radical movements in the next century. Dostoyevsky's protagonist, Underground Man, exemplifies the fallibility (to Dostoevsky's mind) of the unrealistic and arrogant dialectical improvement of humans and human conditions that Chernyshevsky sees as the unavoidable trajectory of human progress. He argues of the human being that, even under the best socio-economic conditions:

> He's still just a man, and still out of plain lampoonery will commit abominations. He will even jeopardize his gingerbread and deliberately wish for the most ruinous rubbish, the most uneconomical nonsense, simply in order to print his own disastrous, fantastic element onto all this positive good sense… solely in order to convince himself that people are still people and not piano keys… he would invent chaos and destruction,

> he would think up various forms of suffering… man would deliberately go mad in order to escape his reason and assert himself (31).

It is the materialist stance that the entire human consciousness and all human interaction can be reduced to objectively understandable scientific phenomenon that Dostoyevsky bridles against. He believes that if human beings become simply factors in a grand social equation that can be solved with algebraic certainty, than their very humanness is in danger of being denigrated, replaced by a cog-like impersonality in a social machine, or, as he puts it, humans will become little more than organ stops or piano keys.

Furthermore, he finds this very attempt at a complete and systematic understanding progress a doomed endeavour, because to his mind, in direct refutation of teleological dialectical principles, humanity much prefers, and always will prefer, destruction to creation.[32] He articulates his position in this way:

> Man loves to create and to lay paths, that beyond doubt. But why is he also so passionately find of destruction and chaos?. . . Because he is instinctively afraid of achieving his aim and completing the building he is erecting… twice two is no longer life, gentleman, but the onset of death… Man loves the process of achievement, but not so much the achievement

[32] That is, without accepting intervention from the divine goodness of God. To Dostoyevsky a secular understanding of the world is inherently meaningless and therefore condemned to the most violent and cruel whims of a beastial humanity. If one presupposes a godless universe, thereby removing the theological crutch of an external guiding force that could guide humans in a more loving and kind direction, Dostoyevsky must be read as a thoroughly cynical and nihilistic author whose greatest appeal is his ability to look deeply into the darkest recesses of the human condition and thereby force one to countenance the parts of oneself that one would oftentimes rather not acknowledge.

> itself… twice two makes five is also a very nice little thing. . . . Doesn't reason make mistakes about what is advantageous? I mean, perhaps man doesn't really only love prosperity. Maybe he loves suffering just as much? Maybe suffering is just as much of an advantage to him as prosperity?... Whether it is good or bad sometimes it is very pleasant to smash something… I'm not advocating suffering or prosperity either. I'm advocating… caprice" (34).

If the utopian socialist dreams of thinkers like Chernyshevsky were to be realized despite their incompatibility with human nature as Dostoevsky sees it, the ideal of the "Crystal Palaces" would mean little more than the creation of anthropological "anthills" on a giant scale and would, rather than result in ultimate freedom of will liberated from constraining socio-economic limitations, in fact result in a complete subservience to laws of "objective" reason as put forth by the radical intelligentsia, and thus diminish not only the unique personalities of individuals, but also create a society that would refuse to countenance any deviation from its ideal of what a human being should be and how one should operate within social structures. In others words, he effectively diagnoses the potentially authoritarian elements present in much radical thought. He says of the freedom to doubt and question in this utopian future that:

> "It [doubt, dissent, or criticism] is inconceivable in the Crystal Palace; suffering is doubt, it's negation, and what's a crystal palace where you can

> doubt? And besides, I'm sure that man will never give up real suffering, that is, destruction and chaos. Suffering is indeed the sole cause of consciousness. . . . Perhaps the reason I fear the crystal palace is that it is crystal and eternally indestructible and that you cannot even stick your tongue out at it" (36)

Although Dostoevsky is able, perceptively and even prophetically, to recognize how "scientific" Marxist ideology can be mutated into the foundation for politically dogmatic and uniform state totalitarianism, he fails, not surprisingly given his own political perspectives, to address the ways that progressive or traditional beliefs can just as easily be utilized by equally repressive systems to justify their own modes of exploitation. Although Llewellyn's novel is less overtly politicized than Chernyshevsky's, his message is no less potentially dangerous ideologically for all its subtlety. Despite being cloaked in the seemingly innocuous genre of childhood reminisces, the similarities between the hyper-individualism and unwavering certainty about one's own righteousness is as prevalent in Llewellyn's heroes as in Chernyshevsky's. While one novel relies on an immovable historical teleology and pseudo-scientificism to justify its political perspective, the other falls back on an equally static nationalism and traditionalism to buttress its ideological agenda. The similarities between both sets of texts examined in this thesis, both in terms of ideological loading, character development, and ethical calculus, can be more effectively explored

after an analysis of Llewellyn's bestselling novel and the blockbuster film that it inspired.

Chapter 2

"If the masses are not thrown a few novels, they may react by throwing up a few barricades" (Eagleton 2142)

Ideology and Action in *How Green Was My Valley*

While the previous chapter, through an examination of two literary texts closely associated with the Russian nihilist tradition, attempted to demonstrate the epistemological shortcomings prevalent in the sometimes narrow ideological confines of many radical movements, the following pages will seek to expand a literary study of the function of ideology through an examination of the impact of Ideological/Repressive State Apparatuses on Huw Morgan, the narrator of *How Green Was My Valley*, and his relationship with subversive labor movements and their various methods of resisting economic exploitation. This chapter will first seek to unpack the complicated relationships and sometimes permeable boundaries between liberal and radical movements in the novel, specifically the reform-minded chapel politics of Mr. Gruffydd, the more hard-line Unionism of Huw's brothers Ianto, Davy, Owen, and Gwilym, and finally the revolutionary group responsible for the disastrous ending of the narrative. An analysis of the points of both similarity and friction among these parties will provide a

base from which to turn a critical eye to the modes of ideological reproduction that inform these positions and allow for their propagation.

The strong contrast between residual and emergent cultural elements, as defined by Raymond Williams, in Llewellyn's text situate it nicely as a point of departure to examine the ways in which both nostalgic longing for the past and impatient hopefulness for the future can serve both as catalysts for activism in social justice movements as well as be incorporated into structures of oppression and exploitation. Nowhere is this more clear than in the film adaptation of the novel, where any semblance of serious engagement with real socio-political issues is put under erasure in order to make the plot and message of the text as palatable as possible to consuming audiences in the capitalist markets of the 1940s, as well as to insure that the dominant discourse of hegemony continues to be reinforced.

Additionally, *How Green Was My Valley* serves to epitomize the sometimes blatant and sometimes insidious role that literature itself plays in the propagation of particular ideological stances. While *What Is To Be Done?* takes an extremely heavy-handed approach to its political propaganda and unabashedly advocates a single ideological position, LLewellyn's text (and to a lesser extent Turgenev's) pretend to examine socio-political and economic unrest in terms of individuals and their emotional relationships to each other, and therefore marginalize the larger ideological observations and indeed judgements that the books contain. As Derrick Price points out in his insightful article *How Green Was My Valley: A Romance of Wales,* "Within a few pages

it is clear that we are not reading a realist novel. The text is organized by the use of nostalgia and sentimentality to give us an account of life in the valleys in which history, memory, and political action are stripped of collectivity and presented as the qualities of heroic individuals" (75). The book, especially since it takes the form of recollections from childhood, presents the reader with two-dimensional characters and unproblematized ethical assumptions conducive to a pleasant and bucolic reading experience rather than a critical perspective by which one might recognize the patriarchal, socially reactionary, and xenophobic attitudes that permeate the text. "We are taken to a mythic past," argues Price, "and are invited to share Huw's early recollections of life in the Morgan family," but "the past is not mobilised in the service of recuperating or illuminating the present and the future. Rather, it is treated as a site of tranquility, order, and apparent permanence. A place of unproblematic relationships and time-hallowed ways of doing things; a place, that is, outside of history -- a place of nature" (77). Although it is a charming book and emotional narrative told by an extremely charismatic narrator, *How Green Was My Valley* is undoubtedly, at least in terms of heteroglossic multiplicity and ideological multifacetedness, an insidious and perhaps even a dangerous book. Llewellyn, writes price, "Makes connections with ideas and conceptions readers already cherished, even though these were for the most part in circulation not as ideas, but as 'natural' ways of feeling and respond," and therefore"'Welshness' becomes a cover under which highly specific analyses and ideological stances are smuggled into the book as unproblematic and natural," resulting

in the effect that "what is presented as particular and local is in fact part of a much more general and dominant ideology" (93). The novel reminds us of the danger of reading any text as apolitical (apolitisism is indeed itself a political stance) and the necessity of reading simple books complexly and bad books well.

Chapel Radicalism, Union Organization, and Revolutionary Movements

The overall tone of *How Green Was My Valley* is undoubtedly characterized by a cautious reformism closely associated with the Nonconformist Church. As Kathy Rue, author of *From the End of Eden to the Advent of Evangelism: The Influence of the Nonconformist Church in How Green Was My Valley,* articulates: "Believers in the Nonconformist religion placed much emphasis on social causes" including "missionary work and a general goal of helping others" but "involvement in the development of trade unions and political participation in working-class issues were the most popular and immanent vehicles to fulfill these goals," so that, to these individuals, "God is the essential center of political action" (3). While Huw, his father, and his oldest brother Ivor subscribe to an ideology that seeks to reform economic conditions in favor of a more equitable distribution of capital and resources all the while stressing the importance of traditional values, particularly the nuclear family, patriarchal gender roles, and the centrality of the Church, the pastor Mr. Gruffydd most explicitly represents the ideal of a

spiritually informed activist and also verbalizes the doctrine of "The Sermon on the Mount… Brought up to date, and given out with a fist on the end of each arm, and a good voice" (Llewellyn 109). This clergyman occupies a central place in the text, representing Llewelyn's belief in the necessity of a meaningful dedication to issues of class discrepancy without resorting to extremism, violence, or a radical reconfiguration of social structures. Gruffydd encourages the workers to "Elect men to parliament. Gain for yourselves representation. Then form a society among yourselves. Elect a body of officers to tabulate your wrongs and give them authority to approach the chief men in the coal trade and the Government" and to "Do all things with order" (Llewellyn 127), as opposed to engaging in any revolutionary tactics.

It is worth noting that Gruffydd is not opposed to the formation of Unions or collective action in order to better the conditions of the people, but emphasizes emphatically the necessity of doing so gradually and with caution. He states that "The Unions are only part of a whole. Let the Unions become engines for the working people to right their wrongs. Not benefit societies, or burial clubs. Let the Unions become civilian regiments to fight in the cause of the people" (133). One of the several strikes in the novel, in fact, is facilitated by Gruffydd's ability to bridge the gap between the more conservative older miners and the more radical beliefs of the younger men. At a revival service that catalyzes a labor walk-out "He went through the history of the Valley and spoke to them of the steady fall in wages, and their willingness to work for less and less, while others who had nothing to do with coal, but handled only paper, owned the land

above the workings, took more and more." Gruffydd then ferments resistance by exclaiming "You must fight… Fight. Fight now'" (127).[33]

For Gruffydd, prayer is synonymous with rational thinking and clear-headedness. "Not mumbling, or shouting, or wallowing like a hog in religious sentiments. Prayer is just another name for good, clean, direct thinking. When you pray, think well what you are saying, and make your thoughts into things that are solid. In that manner, your prayer will have strength, and that strength shall become part of you mind, body, and spirit" (80). After encouraging the miners to use rationality and prayer in their struggle, he strikes an emotional chord by further elaborating on his disgust with economic inequality from a religious perspective by lamenting

> … Our daily bread, that others, blind in sight and soul, would take from us. Let them be brought from their blindness, Lord God. Let them see… For the lighted mind of man can bring to fruition all good things for himself and his kind, if he choose. But too many skulk behind the golden bars of the mansion of Mammon, and are filled and replete, and forget

[33] He further elaborates on his particular message of religious resistance in the same sermon through a discourse on proper method. He asks rhetorically "How shall we fight? How? It is simple. Men lose their birth rights for a mess of pottage only if they stop using the gifts given to them by God for their betterment. By prayer. That is the first and greatest gift. Use the gift of prayer. Ask for strength of mind, and a clear vision. Then sense. Use your sense. Not all of us are born for greatness, but all of us have sense. Make use of it. Think. Think long and well. By prayer and good thought you will conquer all enemies. And your greatest enemy now is coal. You must be stronger than coal. Coal is lifeless, but to subtle men it lives in the form of gold. To you it is so many trams at so much a ton. To others it is so many shiploads, so many credit notes, so many loans, investments, interests. Your enemy is usury. And the usurer takes no heed of men, or their lives, or their dependents' lives. Behold, the night is coming. Prepare, for the time is at hand" (Llewellyn 127).

> their brethren, and deny them, and allow them to walk in hungry idleness, and their women to die of want, and their children to perish even before they are born. Lighten our darkness, Lord God. Let there be light. (Llewellyn 192)

The deep distrust of the current economic system that Gruffydd and his supporters feel, however, is informed not only by a sense of economic and social injustice but also by a fierce and sometimes problematic Welsh nationalism and a deep intergenerational bitterness about the English colonization of Wales. Steve Bruce points out that historically "The Nonconformist churches acted as the repository of Welsh cultural identity and anti-English political sentiments. Wales was one part of England where religious affiliation was a politically charged issue" particularly because services were held in the vernacular Welsh rather than English language (521). The value of autonomous and mostly self-regulatory Welsh communities is a constant theme throughout the preacher's discourse. Gruffydd believes that the foundation of these communities, and what has allowed them to function with relatively minimal intervention from outside authority thus far, are their deep religious sentiments and their adherence to traditional religious structures. He explains that "'You must realize, Huw, that the men of the Valleys have built their houses and brought up their families without help from others, without a word from the Government. Their lives have been ordered from birth by the Bible. From it they took their instructions'" (99). Gruffydd later warns

that if secularization, economic structures conducive to poverty, and the imposition of the English government persist, then "Before you are much older you will have policeman here to stay. A magistrate court. Then perhaps even a jail. And the counterpoints of those things are hunger and want, and misery and idleness. The night is coming. Watch and pray" (126).

Reactionary Elements of Chapel Politics

Although the Chapel occupies a powerful position for community building and an alternative space for the organization of resistant practices, leading Huw to reflect that "That is how we came from Chapel every Sunday, re-armed and re-armoured against the world, re-strengthened, and full of fight" (Llewellyn 138), there are particularly reactionary and even vicious practices spearheaded by the religious community that even the comparatively conservative Huw cannot countenance without distaste and repugnance. When, in a relatively rare moment of considering structural upheaval and more drastic modes of change, Huw reminds his mentor of the story of Jesus and the clearing of moneylenders from the temple, Gruffydd explains this as happening "Because they desecrated a holy place, but never against the law or constituted authority" (Llewellyn 214) and thereby further articulates the inherent conservatism of his own stance. This conversation is precipitated by the most pronounced failing of the chapel in

the novel. To Huw's shock the church condones and facilitates the public chastisement and social ostracization of a young woman found to be with child out of wedlock. Huw indignantly observes during this process that "The priests and the scribes and the pharisees were in session, and bitterly enjoying themselves" (Llewellyn 90). This leads him to condemn the spectacle bravely and admirably in the woman's defence. To the horror of his father and the pastor Huw rails

> Thou hypocrite. First cast out the beam out of thine own eye and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of they brother's eye. But woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against men, for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanliness. Even so ye outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of Hell? Behold your house is left unto you desolate. (Llewellyn 91)

It is a testament both to the power of ideological indoctrination as well as the deeply ingrained patriarchal nature of Huw's cultural community that rather than praising his willingness to speak against a room of individuals taking sadistic pleasure in the suffering

of another he is in fact condemned for his boldness.[34] Although his mother is silently proud of Huw's empathy, his father is appalled by his willingness to challenge tradition and declares to Huw, both condescendingly and problematically, that "You see, my son, you cannot say what you like.There are things to be done, and things not to be done. Things good and things bad. And the best judges are those who have lived longest, and thought most" (Llewellyn 94). Gwilym, Huw's father, goes on to attempt to justify this banal and reactionary advice by falling back yet again on the Welsh communities need to be self-regulatory through religion, even to the point of utilizing cruel and dogmatic tradition:

> We have never had trouble in the valley because we have always been strict. Men have thought twice before doing a wrong. The same with women. If all the women like Meillyn Lewis were allowed to go their own way, what would happen to us? You would have a police station in the Valley, for a start… there is a nice thing for you. As though we were all a lot of jailbirds waiting to be taken off. And what about our homes and your mother and sisters? Would you like Angharad ro have the same as Meillyn Lewis… Let all things be done in order, with right and decency. Those are worth a man's life or two. Life without would be a hell, indeed. (Llewellyn 95)

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[34] Price calls our attention to the fact that "The nature of a patriarchal family and of rigidly enforced divisions of labour and standards of behaviour is extensively explored by Llewellyn, and its presence must be noted, even though he celebrates a sentimentalized and reactionary view of it" (Price 81).

Although Gruffydd's perspective on this savage collective abuse of an innocent woman is slightly more forward thinking, his refusal to immediately and unequivocally condemn an injustice in favor of a slow reform again resurfaces, and his ultimately ineffectual attempts to rework the economic paradigm of the valley is mirrored by his failure to adjust its populus to his exacting moral standards. Huw recalls, "with heat in [his] throat just to think about it" that "They were cruel to her. And all those men were groaning and nodding to make her hurt more. That is not the Word of God. Go thou, and sin no more, Jesus said" to which Gruffydd responds flatly that "You know your Bible too well and life too little… Let there be moderation in all things, Saint Paul said, and a more sensible man never trod the earth." Huw, of course, "felt injustice stiff in [himself]" and is little comforted by his mentor's assertion that "I will change their foolishness in my good time and without the help of Huw Morgan" (Llewellyn 98).

Although the relationship among the various political camps represented in the novel will be explored in greater detail, it is worth keeping in mind here that although Gruffydd's moderate political approach does not reap the disastrous consequences of the radicals, both his social justice mission and his desire to edify the morality of the populous of the valley are pronounced failures, and result not only in no positive economic or social reforms, but also in his being expelled from the community. He reflects to Huw, before being forced to abdicate his leadership position in the community and immigrating to Argentina, that

> I thought when I was a young man that I would conquer the world with truth. I thought I would lead an army greater than Alexander ever dreamed of, not to conquer nations, but to liberate mankind. With truth. With the golden sound of the Word. But only a few heard the trumpet. Only a few understood. The rest of them just put on black and sat in the Chapel… they are brought to dress in black and flock to the Chapel through fear. Horrible, superstitious fear. The vengeance of the Lord. The justice of God. They forget the love of Jesus Christ. They disregard his sacrifice. Death, fear, flames, horror, and black clothes. (Llewellyn 302)

Despite his admirable intentions and dauntless efforts, it is the very moderation of Gruffydd's theory and praxis which result in the shortcomings of his projects. Unless one adopts the (philosophically) nihilistic view that nothing can be done to better the conditions of the work and personal life of the population, then it can only be assumed that all of Gruffydd's kindness and humanity proves impotent in terms of larger socio-political goals due to his inability or unwillingness to speak and act against situations in which cruelty or injustice prevail.[35]

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[35] It is ironic, considering this, that the principal of the dreaded National School which Huw attends once states that "The man who goes to the top is the man who has something to say and says it when circumstances warrant. Men who keep sildent under duress are moral cowards" (Llewellyn 210).

Gruffydd's position stands in stark contrast to the belief of Huw's brother Davy who, despite being equally as political ineffectual as the preacher, at least states firmly that "I will speak against anything I know is wrong… In this house or outside. Wherever there is wrong I will speak against it." He refuses to let decorum or etiquette dictate the articulation of his moral sensibilities, declaring that "If table manners prevent the speaking of truth, I will be a pig," and Davy soon proves his claim by getting himself ejected from the family home for doing just that (Llewellyn 29).[36]

This refusal to let the criticism of others detract from engagement in social issues is mirrored, on a separate occasion, by similar words from the pastor. Gruffydd responds at one point to a complaint that his politics lead him to "step outside his position in life" and that he should stick to chapel business with the sharp reply that "My business is between anything that comes between men and the spirit of God" (Llewellyn 127). This exchange further emphasizes Rue's claim that the Nonconformist church placed tremendous emphasis on "religious education through the Bible, the importance of witness and fellowship achieved

[36] This moral staunchness under pressure is further mirrored by the democratic sensibilities of another of Huw's Unionist brothers, Ianto, who asserts to a conservative counterpart who insists that "he keep his nose where it belongs" that "as for our noses, they will go where they think. I will speak to you of a wrong as long as you will stand to listen. That is my right. And if you think I am wrong, stand to speak against me. That is your right, and I will never question it" (Llewellyn 177).

through singing, and the working towards social justice through politics" (Rue 1).

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There is, on the other hand, a situation in which Gruffydd does not refuse direct action in the rectification of a wrong. Although it is not addressed as a misdeed in the novel, but is instead viewed as an assertion of Welsh autonomy in jurisprudence, this encounter speaks frighteningly to an underlying xenophobia and jingoism which accompanies the nationalism of the people of the Valley. An atrocious crime occurs in the community when a child is raped and murdered. Rather than rely on the "English Law," which the novel's Welsh community of the text is always loathe to do, retribution is taken by a posse of miners led by Gruffydd, who exclaims that "Beasts live among you, working with you shoulder to shoulder, who will kill your children and go their ways unpunished. They will make your community a morass of corruption" (Llewellyn 167). To rectify this danger Gruffydd gathers the men of the Valley to apprehend the monster responsible for the crime. After capturing the man, repeatedly referred to as

[37] This statement is, however, problematized by Beth's pithy but telling remark that "What is in the Bible and what is outside is different" in regards to her own threatening murder on disgruntled miners opposed to her husband (Llewellyn 50).

"swine" rather than with a human pronoun,[38] the pastor authorized the wronged family to take justice into their own hands.

> To hand her murderer to the police will give him an extra day to live, which your daughter was denied. He shall be fed and housed until the day he meets the rope, but your daughter will lie beneath the dead wreaths long before then, and the rope gives a good death, quick and clean, without blood, without pain, without torture of the soul or body. Is justice done, then, with a rope about the neck of a man, and his victim, a child of seven years, torn and twisted, laying in her grave? (Llewellyn 171).

The perpetrator is then, it is implied, tortured, killed and burned by the father and brothers of the unfortunate young girl. It is unquestionably true that such a heinous crime should be punished with the utmost severity, especially as undeniable evidence was found against the wretch responsible for the vile actions. Although the ethics of the barbarity of the punishment alloted by the community are questionable at best, what must be acknowledged is the process of immediately assigning guilt to the Other in the attempt to bring about retribution, despite the fact that ultimately the right man is found and punished. Huw recollects that "Around each public house, and all around the three rows

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[38] It is interesting that when Huw is taken hold of by fury he reduces individuals to the ontological state of animals, here by referring to the villain as "swine" and later by referring to those who take pleasure in watching men fight for money as "cattle" and finally by also referring to the unorganized mob of radicals who (from Huw's perspective) upset the equilibrium of the valley as "cattle." What makes these moments so emotionally resonant and, in the final example, ideological powerful is the trend in the rest of the text for inanimate objects to be continually humanized.

of houses where the half-breed Welsh, Irish, and English were living, the men took a stand, almost elbow to elbow, so that none could go in or out" (Llewellyn 167).[39]

Huw is also callous in regards to any collateral damage resulting from the investigation, stating that "It was a bad night for the pubic houses, for nobody was in them, and indeed the landlords were not to blame. They were good men in themselves, and they had to make a living, too. But they had to suffer, and they suffered in silence. They knew it would only take a match to put them in the street with nothing, and the flames of their property to warm them" (Llewellyn 168). Gruffydd once again invokes God in defense of all his actions, including the immolation of wrongdoers, and concludes the events with a prayer: "Let us pray. Lord, God we are weak men. If we have done wrong to-night, so be it. I will face Thy wrath at the Bar, and I will answer that we did right. Unto each his just reward. In Christ's Holy Name, Amen" (Llewellyn 171).

Price notes, in regards to "this extremely unpleasant chapter" that it serves to "to assure us that the community is capable of taking care of its own system of justice. This lays claim to be 'Welsh' law and is seen as antithetical to a bureaucratic English system of police, courts, magistrates, and all the formal apparatus of juridical authority." Welsh

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[39] He goes on to describe the conditions of the foreign proletariat with unabashed class discrimination. He attacks "the rows of houses where the dross of the collieries lives. These people did jobs the colliers would never do, and they were allowed to live and breed because the owners would not spend money on a plant when their services could be had so much cheaper. For a pittance, they carried slag and muck, they acted as scavengers, and as they worked, so they lived. Even their children were put to work at eight or nine years of ago so more money could come into the house. They lived, most of them, only to drink. Their houses were beastial sties, where even beats would rebel if put there to live, for beasts have clean ways with them and will show their disgust quick enough, but these people were long past such feeling. They were a living disgust" and furthermore he repeatedly emphasizes that these unfortunate laborers are not Welsh, but "Irish, Scotch, English, and some inter-breed Welsh" (Llewellyn 169).

law epitomized conformity to "vaguely invoked laws of God and the the traditional mores of the community" but, more darkly, "This law is often indistinguishable from patriarchal authority and is enforced by male retribution" (Price 89).

The people of the Valley appear, at least from Huw's perspective, to have acted in unison and organically selected Mr. Gruffydd as head of the vigilantes. The backing of the entire community to authorize the course of action is clear both in the massive attendance of the child's funeral and in the fact they collectively avoid the interference of "English Law" in favor of internally managing jurisprudence. Huw remembers that "A policeman with a silver spike in his helmet, and a silver chain hanging on it, came to the Valley the next day, but nobody knew what he wanted, and nobody could be found to answer his questions, so he went off again" (Llewellyn 172). Despite such solidarity amongst the middle-class Welsh community, even at the potential expense of the growing industrial proletariat of the Valley, Gruffydd's response to the tragedy is unsatisfying for many ears, as the usually eloquent and powerful speaker can only respond flatly to the event with a "We can only have faith in God, and resolve that the things which made her death possible be swept away now" (Llewellyn 176).

Welsh Autonomy and Self-Governance

Before examining more deeply the tensions between the more conservative religious reform faction led by Gruffydd and the more radical subsets of the village, it is vital to digress briefly in order to elaborate on the prevalent theme of Welsh autonomy advocated in the novel. As has been noted above, there is a very real fear in the Valley that the influence of English culture and government, especially English Law, will encroach on the inhabitants' ability to regulate themselves as independently as possible and threaten the preservation of Welsh language, culture, and community. "The putative homogeneity of Welsh society is threatened," Price argues, "by the importation of new ideas and ways of acting" leading finally to the destruction of the community through "class action which he [Huw] sees as the action of 'cattle' and sets against the nobility of an individual fight" (Price 92) In the interest of fairness, however, is worth observing the more innocuous moments of Welsh self-governance alongside the two rather macabre examples above.

After Gwilym and his sons have an encounter with a petty and sniveling shopkeeper who had stolen their prize turkeys out of meanness of spirit and jealousy, Llewelyn emphasizes the weakness and loathsomeness of the character by having him threaten "I will have the English Law on you" to which Huw's father replies, with his typical (even perhaps overstated) combination of virility and independence that "You have had a bit of Welsh law to-night, for a change. I will be glad to see what will the

English law do in return. And remember. Closed doors tomorrow" (Llewellyn 124), thereby fulfilling his promise that "I will be my own police while I have health and strength" (Llewellyn 118). Once again patriarchal modes of thinking and organization lurk just beneath the surface of this encounter as "This incident makes clear the conflation between 'I will be my own police' and 'Welsh law' and the connections of both with male strength, against Old Elisa's 'womanly' appeal to English systems of justice" (Price 90) It is also true, though, that the almost hyperbolically kind Gwilym takes no pleasure in his victory: "There is terrible, indeed. He could have had the old turkeys if he had asked" (Llewellyn 124). He is reassured as to the rightness of his actions by his constant ally Gruffydd, who states "I know a few more that would be the better for it [a beating]. And if things are not better very soon, I will go out of my way to deal a few in person, too" (Llewellyn 125).

The Welsh community is fiercely exclusionary not only to the presence of outsiders and outsider intervention in their affairs, but even to outside thought. After a certain "Mr. Marx" is mentioned at a discussion regarding union formation, Gwilym replies, "I am not in favour of anything put up by a lot of old foreigners. Owain Glyndwr said all there is to be said for this country hundreds of years ago. Wales for the Welsh. More of him and less of Mr. Marx, please" Llewellyn 133).[40]

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[40] Isolation and lack of exposure to "a lot of old foreigners," however, may be more responsible for this xenophobia than hatred or baseness of character. Dai Bando, one of the most fervently conservative and isolationist characters in the Valley, warms rather quickly even to the English soldiers sent to quell labor disputes between the workers and the pit owners. "Good boys, they are, see," he decides, "No harm in them, and swearing very tidy about coming here, too. Couple of officers up in the front room, and saying worse than the men. Educated they are. No trouble from these down here. They are only having a few pence a day pay, and nothing extra for a black

It is extremely unusual, given the distaste for the English government which permeates the population of Huw's village, that they also harbor a bizarre and almost deific love for the Queen, even stating in prayer that "For you are Our Father, but we look to out Queen as our mother" (Llewelyn 267). It is not surprising then, given this love for the figurehead, that when Huw's oldest brother Ivor is selected to bring chosen members of his choir to sing before the queen, the entire valley is in a frantic state of uproar. What is most interesting about this occurrence though, at least in terms of the relatively democratic self-organization of the people of the Valley, is the community's willingness and ability to come together rapidly and in harmony to accomplish the task of preparing for the festivities and sending the vocalists off. There are "No orders to anybody, no notices in print, no trumpets, no canon to throw fire and give headaches to old ladies, yet everybody was going about with a job to do, and willingness to do it well, and if you had asked any of them why, they would have looked at you once with their eyebrows up, and clicked their tongues and pushed you from the light" (Llewellyn 268).

The tightness of the community and its oftentimes anti-materialistic values emphasize a communal inclination to mitigate the suffering of others (at least among the Welsh middle-class) through generosity. During one of the many strikes in the novel, inevitably resulting in starvation and death, Huw observes that "Women like my mother, who had sons earning, and had saved and kept a good house were putting money and

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eye" (Llewellyn 387). This statement, however, remains an outlier in the sentiments of the inhabitants of the valley, and one of the few times the historical or present occupation of Wales by the English is spoken of in any way positively.

food together each week for the babies of women who had just married, or for women with only a husband earning and many children" but unfortunately also that "as the weeks and months passed by, more and more women had to stop giving, and needed help themselves" (Llewellyn 203). Although this charity is inevitably limited during periods of poverty, in times of plenty, however, goods and capital are given more freely and in abundance to those in need. Huw recalls the dreadful conditions of a pregnant woman forced to give birth in a shed after her eviction from home as a result of her husband's unemployment

> Mrs. Beynon was lying on one of our old red blankets and another one hanging over her to keep the water coming in from the roof. Evan Beynon had broken a plank to make a fire, and an old bucket was heating water. Rusty iron wheels, and broken rods of iron were red among the growing grass and dandelions. Puddles were plenty and a rill ran right through to the river. Cold and damp, too. (Llewellyn 112)

The townspeople, after being made aware of the situation, begin to collect goods and provide services to the unfortunate woman and her family. "You should have seen the collection," Huw exclaims, "the clothes would have covered a shift in the pit. The food was enough for the village. And by the time the furniture was all together, two houses would not have held it. Well, there it was, and no lack of hands to take it down to the old shed at the ironworks, either" (Llewellyn 112).[41]

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[41] Huw goes on to recall, in more detail, that "all the women were saying 'O' and 'Eh' and clicking their tongues, and taking off their coats to tidy the place, and chop grass, and move iron. Then

The Efficacy of Reform and Prayer

While the religious set, including Gwilym and Gruffydd, are confident that prayer and gradual reform will better the conditions of the workers, there is also a faction in the village that is dissatisfied by the meager results that these methods yield, and which gains support as circumstances become increasingly difficult for the miners and their families. Huw's sister Angharad, who will eventually fall into a doomed love with Gruffydd, complains that "He is trying to make them pray for what they want instead of going together and making the old owners give them it" (Llewellyn 40) and attempts to convince Huw that "You will have nothing through prayer, boy. I have had nothing yet, and nobody else has, either. Look at Mrs. Mostyn the Grove. Everybody did pray for her and yet she went with her baby as well" (Llewellyn 41). This statement stands in stark contrast to Gruffydd's conviction that all things are in the hands of a God who takes a direct interest in the life of individuals, as emphasized by his statement that "Nature is the handmaiden of the Lord. I do remember that she was given orders on one or two occasions to hurry herself more than usual. What has been done before can also be done again" (Llewellyn 68). Huw's father, who shares the same perspective, teaches the boy:

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the men started coming in and knotting ropes to put up a canvas over the bad places and boards over the open window and doorways. Indeed, in a couple of minutes it looked so good I could have lived in there myself" (Llewellyn 114).

> You will have everything from the ground if you will ask the right way. But you will have nothing if not. Those poor men down there are all after something they will never get. They will never get it because their way of asking is wrong. All things come from God, my son. All things are given by God, and to God you must look for what you will have. God gave us time to get His work done, and patience to support us while it is being done. There is your rod and staff. No matter what others may say to you, my son, look to God in your troubles. And I am afraid what is starting down by there, now this moment, is going to give you plenty if troubles in time to come" (Llewellyn 380).

Anti-religious sentiment and impatience with a self-satisfied and smugly complacent clergyman (not Mr. Gruffydd) even leads Ianto at one point to declare that a minister is "a limpet on society" and justifies his claim by explaining this is the case "Because you are doing useless work… Because you make yourselves out to be shepherds of the flock and yet you allow your sheep to live in filth and poverty, and if you raise your voices, it is only to say it is the Will of God. Sheep, indeed. Man was made in the image of God. Is God a sheep? Because if He is, I understand why we are all so damn stupid" (Llewellyn 107). In keeping with the ideological inclinations of the novel, however, Gruffydd immediately and miraculously converts Ianto to his perspective over the course of one short conversation after this outbursts, which leads Ianto to go so

far as to consider entering into the profession himself, and to declare "We disagreed on nothing, except method. I said to start now. He said to wait. The time is not yet" (Llewellyn 110).

Huw's most radical brother, Davy, however, remains unconvinced and questions why "There are men in the valley without food in their bellies or boots on their feet. There are children without houses and mothers without hope. What has Mr. Gruffydd to give them? The Sermon on the Mount? God's holy will? (Llewellyn 110). His mother points out in response to this complaint, legitimately, that " Mr. Gruffydd has collected more for them than a dozen of you. Not another word, now" (Llewellyn 110). Although her faith in Mr. Gruffydd may be adamantine, her faith in God proves not be, as she declares by the end of the book, shaken by her husband's death, that "If I set foot in Chapel again, it will be in my box, and knowing nothing of it" (Llewellyn 402).

Such skepticism is not the case with Huw (and thus, by extension, the overall tone of the novel), who adopts his religious sensibilities from his father who encapsulates the political message behind the book early on in the first dispute over labor conditions amongst the miners. Gwillym speaks prophetically in regards to the radicalism which will ultimately be the downfall of the village and its traditional way of life. He warns the gathering of miners, which is the inchoate and unorganized base for later unionization, who have gathered in secret on the mountain to avoid interference from the mine owners, that they must not strike or act rashly.

> If you were clear in your conscience about what you want to do, you would not be up here out of the way, but down in the village for everybody to be

> listening… You are right in what you want, but you are wrong in your ways of getting it. Force is no good to you until you have tried reason. And reason wants patience. And if patience wants a tight belt, then right belt it should have. You cannot as the help of God with hate in your hearts, and without that help you will get nothing. It is no use to say you will all go together in a Union if you have no notion what that Union is to do. Get better wages? You will have better wages or as good as can be got without a Union. The owners are not all savages, but they will not give you whatever you want just because there are a lot of you and you use threats. Reason and civilised dealing are your best weapons. And if your cause is just, and your consciouses are clear, God is always with you. And no man will go far without Him. (Llewellyn 36)

The narrator, in fact, credits the pondering of theological mysteries with the very intellectual autonomy he later comes to accuse the "sheep" and "cattle" of the politically radical camp of lacking. As a very young boy he takes lessons at a neighbor's house, whose husband Tom "had been burnt by molten iron at the Works and had done nothing for years only lie in a chair" so that "his wife had started a school to keep things going… Tom was always in pain, so lessons were often broken off when she went out to see if she could do anything for him" (Llewellyn 16).[42] Every day after lessons are complete the children pray for all of mankind,[43] a word and concept which Huw is unfamiliar with. When he investigates the meaning of this word and why he is to include it in his prayers

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[42] He recalls even more heartbreakingly that Tom "had caught the iron on his head and shoulders. He was blind, of course, and his nose was burnt off, and his mouth was like a buttonhole with his teeth all black inside, and his head was naked and a purplish color. He would have been about thirty, then, and my father said he had been a well-favoured man and the finest tenor the valley. Now he could only make funny noises in the back of his throat, and I am not sure he knew Mrs. Tom or his little girls" (Llewellyn 17).

[43] Llewellyn's term - The use of word mankind, rather than the more gender inclusive humanity, is telling.

Tom's wife explains that "We are all equal, and all of us need helping and there is nobody to help mankind except mankind" (Llewellyn 17). While this explanation of one's duty to humanity seems fairly innocuous in terms of the religious teaching of Huw's father and Mr. Gruffydd, it causes the boy to consider the place of God in the sorting out of human affairs and to question the stance of his father and mentor that a deity is responsible for all things and is constantly observant and protective towards the faithful. Furthermore, to stir the ideological pot even more, Huw overhears Mrs. Jenkins question the very existence of God under her breath when faced with the hardship of her husband's condition. Here Huw looks back and decisively admits "That is when I started thinking for myself" and reminisces "Not that I am not satisfied with what I have become, or that I am where I am. Only that is I had not started to think things for myself and find things for myself, I might have had a happier life judged by ordinary standards, and perhaps I might have been more respected" (Llewellyn 17).[44]

Soon thereafter Huw, after sustaining an injury in an attempt to save his mother from death by hypothermia or drowning after their falling into a frozen river, claims "I was crying to God to help me save my mother, and I was helped for sure, or I cannot tell where I found the strength" (Llewellyn 54). His belief in help from above in this situation

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[44] He continues on in a more philosophical vein, reflective both of his own moral compass as well as the deep concern with the ethical (read spiritual) concerns which his upbringing has inscribed on his personality. "Neither happiness nor respect are worth anything, because unless both are coming from the truest motives, they are simply deceits. A successful man earns the respect of the world never mind what is the state of his mind, or his manner of earning. So what is the good of such respect, and how happy will such a man be in himself? And if he is what passes for happy, such a state is lower than the self-content of the meanest animal" (Llewellyn 17).

further emphasizes his firm belief in, and reliance upon, the support of a deity throughout his endeavors. It is telling that after this trying moment, in which Huw is convinced that he has felt the hand of God, he is bedridden for several years due to illness related to the incident. Having plenty of time to think while recovering leads him to continue to situate himself and his lived experiences into a Christian spiritual worldview. He picks up this thread by continuing "It was then that I had thoughts about Christ, and I have never changed my mind. He did appear to me then as a man, and as a man I still think of him. In that way, I have had comfort. If he had been a God, or any more a son of God than any of us, then it is unfair to ask us to do what he did. But if he was a man who found out for himself what there is that is hidden in life, then we all have a chance to do the same. And with the help of God, we shall" (Llewellyn 57). The positioning of the viewpoint advocated by the text then, as one which is thoroughly humanist and nonconformist Christian and which advocates spiritual, intellectual, and ethical autonomy, speaks to the ultimate conclusions drawn by the narrator and the ideological motivations of the book. This belief in the centrality of God in all human endeavors is unshaken despite the ultimate inability or unwillingness of Huw's God to save his father from a mine collapse when, he remembers despairingly, "I looked Above for help, and prayed for one sweet breath for him, but I knew as I prayed that I asked too much" (Llewellyn 401).

The Unionization Camp

The second political camp present in the novel is the slightly more radical Union movement which, despite drawing subtly on Marxist influences and, in its most extreme configuration verbalized by Davy, resembling an IWW style international organization, still eschews violent or revolutionary tactics and embraces (more or less) the teachings of the Chapel. This group is able, on several occasion, to work in solidarity and conjunction with the religious party despite serious ideological differences. Davy, who later becomes a leader in the movement, reflects at a young age that "Everything" is wrong with the economic structure of the Valley, and continues to lament "yet nobody seems to notice. And if they do, nothing is done" to which his father lovingly replies "Let me hear you… and if there is something a man can do, you shall have it done" (Llewellyn 12). His clear understanding of the Marxist theory of the surplus labor army and its relationship to the alienation of labor leads him to consider that "There is nothing you can do. It is something for all of us. It is this. Next week our wages are going to be cut. Why? Just as much coal is coming up, in fact, far more than last year. Why should wages be cut? And then, look, the ironworks are closing and going over to Dawlais and they are calling for men for Middlesbrough. Are the men from the ironworks going to follow iron to Dawlais, or to Middlesbrough, or are they going to the pit for work?" (Llewellyn 13).[45] His

[45] He answers his own rhetorical question by affirming "To the pit. And the pit is well supplied with men. The Owain boys have had to go over the mountain for work. So what chance have others, when their uncles and fathers have been here years? I will tell you what will happen Dada… You will soon have this [the money box] as empty as my pipe. When those ironworkers gather round

concerns prove to be valid, and are actualized shortly thereafter, when "The ironworkers started to work in the pit for not much more than some of the boys. Some of them even started pulling trams in place of the ponies. A lot of the older and better-paid me got discharged without being told why" (Llewellyn 13).

At this point in the narrative the Unionization movement is still mostly unformed and holds its meetings in secret and remote locations. There is, therefore, no friction between the more conservative and more radical miners and all are willing to strike for better conditions, as Gwillym affirms by declaring "That is what the fight is for. Proper wages and no terms that are not agreeable to us" (Llewellyn 14). It is important to note here that the novel takes the stance that at this point the miners are organized, reasonable, and autonomously thinking yet politically united. This perspective stands in direct contrast to Dai Bando's complaint about the revolutionary tactics taken by strikers at the end of the novel, and who admonishes their lack of solidarity by encouraging them to "Think for yourself. Do any of them know what you are out for? Some for a price of the five-foot seam, and some for ballots on places, and some for a price on cutting stone. Instead to have it solid on the table among them all. Everybody pull, pull, pull. And every pull a different one, and the owners sitting fat to laugh at us for fools" (Llewellyn 386). It is implied without subtlety, then, that the only way to build a productively resistant labor movement is through the guiding and unifying presence of the Chapel and traditional

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the pit for work, you will have some of them offering to work for less, and the manager will agree. You will see, now, and the older men and them with more pay will be put outside, too. And you will be one if you are not careful" (Llewellyn 13).

community and family values, as will be proven later by cataclysmic implosion of the revolutionary movement and its cost to the community.

This initial strike, despite what Huw perceives as rationality and patience in the miners, proves woefully inadequate to address their wrongs. He remembers "For five weeks the strike lasted, the first time, and then the men were only back two days before they came out again because a dozen of them were discharged, my father among them" which forces another strike (Llewellyn 14).[46] Even when the second strike is finally broken and the miners can return to their work and wages, Gwillym is forced to explain to his wife that "We have finished the strike, Beth, but our wages must come down. They are not getting the price for coal that they used to, so they cannot afford to pay the wages they did. We must be fair, too" (Llewellyn 15). This conciliatory statement shows clearly the pliability of his subversive tendencies and foreshadows the ultimate trajectory of the labor disputes in regards to the wellbeing and quality of life for the miners and their families.

Worse yet, at least for the Morgan family, is the poor usage of their father by the mine owners as a leader amongst the men and therefore his punishment as a potential threat to the status quo. Gwillym is denied shelter as he counts the loads of coal taken from the mine and his health and dignity are endangered by being forced to stand in the

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[46] This strike causes circumstances to be even more desperate for the community, as Huw recalls "By that time people were feeling the pinch. Food was scarce and so was money, and if the women had not been good savers in better times, things would have gone very hard. As it was, savings were almost at an end, and my mother was dipping into our box to help women down the Hill who had big families still growing. Poor Mrs. Morris by the chapel, who had fourteen, and not one older than twelve, had to go about begging food, and her husband was so ashamed he threw himself over the pit mouth" (Llewellyn 14).

rain, wind, and snow as he works. The mine owners had decided to make an example of dissenters, and Huw soberly recalls after observing his father's mistreatment that "The first time I saw my father as a man, and not as a man who was my father, was when I was coming home from school to my dinner the day the men went back to work after the strike" (Llewellyn 18). This course of events leads him to consider, with a tinge of destabilization for the hyper-traditional facets of his own personal social and political philosophy that"Perhaps the things he held to be good and right to do, were not the good and right things for our time, or if they were, then perhaps he carried them out with too much force or with too straight a tongue and through that, put men against him" (Llewellyn 32).[47]

Although the failure of this strike, including the fall in wages, death of dependents, and increased brutality in the treatment of workers, puts a bad taste in the mouth of Gwillym for collective bargaining, his sons are filled with righteous indignation at the treatment of their father. Davy exclaims "You will get nothing without a fight… Do you think I will allow my father to stand like a dog in the rain and not raise my hands to stop it?... Let us stand together and you will see how they will act, then. It is no use one

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[47] He goes on to consider that "My father was a great one for honest dealing, but he never had his reward down here, and neither did my mother. I am not bitter about anything, and I have no feeling left inside me to be scornful. I am only saying what is in my mind" (Llewellyn 18) and ruminates, despite unquestionable admiration for the nobility of his father that "Yet, looking round this little room, such thinking is poor comfort indeed, and strangely empty of satisfaction, too. There must be some way to live your life in a decent manner, thinking and acting decently, and yet manage to make a good living" (Llewellyn 18). The question, however, of how to go about achieving this laudable goal, at least in *How Green Was My Valley,* remains melancholically unanswered.

pit coming out. It must be all the pits as once… if they find they can do things like that to the spokesman, what will they do to the men?" (Llewellyn 19). His father, however, demands stubbornly to Davy to "Look after yourself. You shall not make my case a plank for your politics. Leave me out of it. I can take care of myself… You shall not make me an excuse for more striking. I will not have people going without just because I am standing in the cold, and if I did, I would deserve a worse death than that" (Llewellyn 19). While the stoic unselfishness of the older man is indeed admirable it contains, at least to the more radical thinker, the seed of complacency and powerlessness which will allow for the increased exploitation not only of the individual but also of the working people collectively. Even more problematically he explains, with total unwillingness to countence the validity of his son's perspective that "Davy wants socialism… and he wants a union with everybody in it, all over the world I think he said" and unflinchingly refers to this internationalism and radicalism which is so opposed his own traditional and nationalistic goals as "nonsense" (Llewellyn 21).

Many of the other miners, however, seem to find validity in this means of actualizing economic change as evidenced by the number of supporters Davy is able to gather at his pro-unionization meetings. Huw recalls "There were crowds of men there, hundreds easily, all in their overcoats with caps pulled down, standing in ranks, listening to Davy. He was standing on a piece of rock, and although I could hear nothing only very faint, I could tell by his hands how his voice would be sounding, and I knew what his face would be like without looking. It was knowing that made me more afraid than being

caught up there" (Llewellyn 25). It is telling, however, in regards to the democratic nature of these gatherings that when Gwillym, with the help of Huw, is able to find his way to one of these meetings and address the crowd that Davy insists the men listen. He declares "Before you make up your minds properly to do what we think is right and best, it is certain you should have a word from Gwillym Morgan. Fair play, now" and that the men respectfully remove their caps for Gwillym's prayer, despite their increased dissatisfaction with politics built around the teachings of Christ and the chapel (Llewellyn 35). The father, however, is dissatisfied with the men's response to his invocations of patience and "reason" and remarks to Huw on the way back home that "Sad it is, Huw, my son. Sad, indeed. Here [in an pastoral valley they pass through] is everything beautiful by here, nothing out of place, all in order. And over with us nothing but ugliness and hate and foolishness" and explains that the trouble is caused by both the miner's and owner's "Bad thoughts and greediness. Want all, take all, and give nothing. The world was made on a different notion" (Llewellyn 37).

The tractability of the patriarch's demands on the exploiting class and his insistence on the good intentions of the mine owners is contrasted by the authoritarian attitude which he adopts towards his own nuclear family.[48] Disputes over politics

[48] Price notes that in the text as a whole the Welsh exploiting class is virtually ignored in favor of a shift of blame to distant Londoners, Jews, and foreigners in general. In regards to the mine owner "Mr. Evans is killed in the pit, like many of his men, and we are given the impression that his life does not differ in major respects from that of the rest of the people in the village. This implicit similarity between the lives of coal-owner and workers points up the absence of any exploration of complex class relationships" perhaps because in Wales "Overwhelmingly working class communities lacked a developed bourgeoise, so that there was little immediate class antagonism. They were close-knit communities linked together by shared values, class position, and work within a single industry" (Price 91). This position is, from a Marxist position, untenable as it does

ultimately lead to the brief expulsion of his more radical sons from the household, and he sadly reflects that "It was hurting me to have to do it. I am proud of my family, and I am proud to think that you are prepared to make sacrifice for what you think is right. It is good to suffer in order that men should be better off, but take care that what you are doing is right and not half-right. My sense is against what you are doing. If you were right, you would not have had such a disgraceful meeting up there to-day. There would have been a different spirit" (Llewellyn 42) but that "I am not a father because I have no authority. No man shall say he is father of a house unless his word is obeyed. Mine is not, so I am not a father, but somebody paying for his keep. I am a lodger, and so are you and the boys, and your mother will look after you and me. That is all" (Llewellyn 43). This harsh stance leads to a collapse of any ability to openly discuss politicization democratically in the family unit and, as Huw recalls, "We all seemed afraid to say what was in our minds, I suppose for fear it might start trouble. So instead of the laughing and joking there had been, you would have thought there was a preacher at the table with us" (Llewellyn 44).

Despite Gwillym's disapproval, however, the Union movement continues to grow. "At that time Davy was meeting men of other valleys and coming to an agreement about forming a union of them all, so that is one lot came out on a complaint, they would all

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not allow the working class to recognize the those who benefit from their exploitation and therefore to resist these groups' influence. This leads the novel to be criticized for its "Lack of verisimilitude to working class life" as well as for its obfuscation and reactionary analysis of significant historical struggles: for its individualist account of political action; for its racism and sentimentality" (Price 73).

come out and put the coalfield at a standstill… Just as it happens now, so they were planning then. And after weeks of work, Davy got what he wanted. After that it spread like fire over all the valleys. All the younger men were in, but the older men like my father would have nothing to do with it" (Llewellyn 44). The father, as intractable and individualistic as ever, declares unconditionally that "Never will I put pen to it. I am a man and I will deal with my own problems my way. I want no help from anybody" (Llewellyn 44) and "I am against demands of any kind. You cannot reason with demand, and where there is no reason, there is no sense" (Llewellyn 45). He even goes so far as to declare those involved in unionization process are "A dull collection of monkeys who cannot think for themselves" (Llewellyn 45).

Overlaps Between the Religious/Traditional and Unionization Camps

There is a considerable range of ideological predispositions articulated by different individuals involved with the Unionization movement at different points in the novel. Although sometimes the more traditionalist chapel politics faction is entirely unable to countenance the more demanding policies of the younger Union builders, as was demonstrated above both in the microcosm of the Morgan household and in terms of the

organization as a whole, there are also many periods of solidarity and mutual aid between these groups.

Mr. Gruffydd himself, in fact, is in full support of unionization and even the utilization of striking as a method to force the mine owners to address the needs of the men. He does of course, in keeping with his character, continue to emphasize the necessity of avoiding larger scale social upheaval in the interest of effecting localized economic disparities. When Davy mentions the possibility of the miner's union joining the Social Democratic Foundation the clergyman warns "Have a strong Union of your own first, then you can join fine sounding names" but continues more supportively by stating "You do it, and when you have done it, you will find that my work has met yours, like forks in the road. Then we shall help one another" (Llewellyn 133). With the encouragement of a working alliance between these two groups political rifts within the Morgan family begin to heal. After Mr. Gruffydd's support "Even Ivor and my father were ready to work with the [union] boys, and that had never happened before. Indeed, when Gwilym came over after tea, he was so surprised he stood looking in at the door" (Llewellyn 127) so that his father encourages him with hope for mutual aid "Come on, my son. Sit you by here, now. You can take the message to the men on your side" (Llewellyn 127). Gwillym verbalizes his own support of strike action, informed by an unshockingly moderate position, by explaining "I am in favour of a man from each colliery in all the valleys meeting the managers of all the collieries and their owners. Table the complaints, listen to the difficulties on the other side, and giving a bit and

taking a bit, with fairness for all" (Llewellyn 265). This unified front continues to operate effectively until the harsh realities and lack of effectiveness of the strike create enough friction to begin to dissolve the bond between the two groups and thereby gives birth to the revolutionary radical wing which ultimately costs the valley its peace and wellbeing.

It is worth noticing, however, a few more subtle but oftentimes striking similarities between the Union and Chapel political camps before moving forward. A conversation about who should rightfully own the mine in which it is suggested that "the mines should belong to the people. Like the post office" leads to the proposition that even "the land should all belong to the people" and finally in a passing mention of the dreaded Mr. Marx. While the conservative Gwillym responds with a "Wales for the Welsh" type nationalism, the unionizers contend that "The peoples of all countries should own their own countries. This world was made for mankind, not some of mankind" (Llewelyn 134). The conservative Huw, however, must have internalized this message overheard in his youth at some point and incorporated it into his own ideological system, as he states later, in his own more theological words, "God made the earth for man, not some of the men… God made the coal, but man makes the money. Pity, indeed, if God put His hand down through the clouds and gave us a bill for all the riches He made for us and gave to us, free" (Llewellyn 332).

Furthermore the lack of personal profit incentive is strongly emphasized in both the Union leaders and Mr. Gruffydd. The pastor's relative poverty is well known and is strongly emphasized by his refusal to marry Angharad because, as he says, "I am afraid

that you will go threadbare all your life. That you and me will have to depend upon the charity of others for most of our good meals, and on my living enough to exist. Do you think I want to see the white come into your hair twenty years before its time? Shall we see our children growing up in the cast-off clothing of others… I can bear with such a life for the sake of my work. But I think I would start to kill if I saw it having an effect on you" (Llewelyn 212). Mr. Gruffydd's life is completely dominated by his work in trying to better the social, spiritual, and economic health of the Valley, and he is entirely willing to sacrifice his own happiness and comfort to do so, despite a lack of financial compensation or appreciation from his parishioners. Huw's Union brothers, similarly, devote all of their free time to the development of collective action in the Valley, despite doing so entirely free of charge and often receiving nothing but scorn for their efforts. Ianto verbalizes this sentiment most pithily and directly when he is fired from his position in the mine for his unionizing efforts and is offered a full-time job working for the cause. He categorically refuses the offer and explains "What I do for the Union is from the heart. Will you have it said of me that I skulked into a job I made for myself?" (Llewellyn 332).

Additionally the reader sees both the Unionizing Morgan sons and Mr. Gruffydd working on several occasions to channel the energies of the miners into productive outlets in an attempt to avoid unnecessary chaos and bloodshed. In the very first strike, when the men's moods begin to turn nasty towards the reactionary Gwillym and Ivor, it is noted that " If Davy had not been strict with them they would both have been put over the bridge already" (Llewellyn 47). Later, during the strike in which the pastor and older

Morgans are willing yet again to participate, "Mr. Gruffydd had trouble to keep the men from a riot, and going down to the colliery and killing the police" (Llewellyn 204). One sees over the course of the novel, in fact, a gradual coming together of the more "reasonable" unionizers with the traditionalist stance of their elders and an increasingly stark contrast between these two groups and the revolutionary faction.

Mr. Gruffydd does not allow his socially conservative politics to leak into his own economic theories, and is in fact able to verbalize some of the means of exploitation of the workers lucidly and with passion. He explains at one point, in an almost Marxist fashion, that

> If coal is sold at a cheaper price, wages will go down. The cheaper the selling price, the less the wages, and the more the selling price, the more the wages. That is sliding scale, and it's working, is it? Now think, knowing your enemies, what could be done by using a little guile. Has coal gone up? No. And not likely to till your sliding scale is thrown aside and a fair living standard adopted as a basis for a working wage… Not only the miner but for every working man in this country (Llewellyn 134).

Compare this, for example, to the faith that "every man will have his reward for working" and Huw's own rumination "Why is it, I wonder, that people suffer, when there is so little need, when an effort of will and some hard work would bring them from their misery into peace and contentment" (Llewellyn 83) and it is clear that Mr. Gruffydd is

not only socially conscious and engaged, but also far from naive in his adoption of ideological position. Furthermore he believes in an environmentally affected sense of ethics, most often associated with left-leaning individuals, explaining that people can be bad because "They are products of a faulty environment. And faults are what you shall expect" implying, of course, that a healthier environment would instill healthier ethical compasses in the population (Llewellyn 338).

If Mr. Gruffydd is at least familiar with some of the theoretical backdrop of the unionization movement in terms of recognition of means of exploitation, then it is even more true that the Morgan brothers are familiar with, and mostly sympathetic to, his own religiously informed ideological perspective. They even go so far as to equate their mission with a religious one through the utilization of language borrowed from Christian scripture. When their mother frets "Where will you end? What trouble will you cause?" Davy replies that "There is no end, Mama. Only a beginning" at which point Owen "deep with a voice to shake" intones solemnly "In the beginning was the Word… and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (Llewellyn 49).

In addition to these similarities both groups value highly the effect of education on improving the lives of the working class, although both are suspicious of the ideological influence of state run schools and the elitism of high tier institutions, as will be explored further later in this project. When a wealthy landowner in the valley argues to Mr. Gruffydd that "It is a good job some of us have done something with what land we have got, whatever. Enterprise is in the individual, not in the mob" Mr. Gruffydd

responds, progressively, "Then let enterprising individuals pay rental to the mob, and the mob be that much better off. It is the money that enables men to come from the mob by education, the purchase of books, and schools. When the mob is properly schooled, it will be less a mob and more a body of respectable, self-disciplined, and self-creative citizens" (Llewellyn 133). He also reflects, after Huw has been beaten and had his prized pencil box destroyed by ruffians at the National School, that "Huw can teach them he is better with his fists, but he will never teach them the sanctity of property. The vandal is taught physical fear by superior violence, but he cannot be taught to think… Fists are between man and man. Twigs [education including corporeal punishment] and reason are the universal law, good for all men. Fists will teach you to fight better if you have heart and head, and your fists will teach other men to let you have your share of the road in peace. But twigs and a talk will teach you to think and live better" (Llewellyn 162). Education then, to Gruffydd, is a cure not only for socio-economic inequality but also for moral degeneration, two societal flaws which are completely intertwined and interrelated in his mind. As an aside it is worth noting that the interconnectivity of these two issues is ultimately reflected in the manner in which both Gwillym and Gruffydd exit the novel. While Gwillym is killed as a result of the social unrest fostered by the revolutionary group which represents the political degradation of the worker's movements in the Valley, Gruffydd is essentially run out of town by the gossip mongering and meanness of spirit which epitomizes the concurrent ethical decline of the people themselves.

The Revolutionary Group

By the disastrous end of the novel[49] the differences between the political factions discussed above are put under erasure due to their stark contrast from a final movement which emerges from the frustration of the workers and which is uncompromisingly condemned by every named character in the narrative. Huw is infuriated by outsiders intervening in the politics of the valley, who push for striking and even violence as a means to achieve their goals. He remembers "A stranger was talking about capital and labour with the names of Marx and Hegel thrown in as candied peel is put in a cake. Mr. Marx was made to sound like a newly risen Christ and Mr. Hegel as John the Baptist, with gold flowing easily between them, endless as the water of Jordan ready for all to gather by the capful" and goes on to say, with disgust, that "Red revolution and anarchy was what the speaker wanted, with a red flag to fly over all, and everybody equal" (Llewellyn 381). At this point, at least from Huw's perspective, all differences between the chapel and union political camps are put aside as minimal when compared with the extremity of the views of this new faction. He laments "It was pain to me that men could be so blind, but it was greater pain to know that my brothers and Mr. Gruffydd, and the

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[49] Llewellyn's ultimate labor catastrophe is, almost certainly, a fictionalized version of events inspired by the Tonypandy riots of 1910 and 1911, in which Winston Churchill mobilized the English army against disgruntled miners in South Wales, resulting in violent conflicts between the soldiers and workers, as well as destruction of property,looting of businesses, and arrest of labor leaders.

brave ones of the early days, had all been forgotten in a craziness of thought that made more of the notions of foreigners than the principles of Our Fathers" (Llewellyn 382).[50] The difference between these "sheep" and the, to Llewellyn's mind, more legitimate unionization movement is again reemphasized by his brothers' inability to mollify the angry men. Huw's father states "Your good brothers are from home only through speaking to them, and for them. They warned them enough not to strike. They saw its uselessness, at the last, as I have seen it these years past. Speaking to them is a waste of breathe. They are drunk with unreason. Leave them (Llewellyn 385).[51] These "Cattle, to be herded, as with dogs, from gate to gate" prove, in fact to be much more dangerous, although equally as unorganized and incompetent, then even Huw's father can predict (Llewellyn 393). "Every hour the crowd got more dangerous, for the leaders could do nothing, the owners would do nothing, the Government did nothing, and in the meantime, the soldiers marched up and down in handfuls, and the police walked about in fifties, and having it stiff whenever they showed their heads, and windows were smashed and shops were looted, and honest men were stopped from doing what they had a mind to do, by gangs of boys, who had been given eight years of free education, and were still unable to use their minds" (Llewellyn 393). Once again, however, the reader finds Gwilym acting bravely for the benefit of these "strangers" and "cattle" by attempting to undo the damage

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[50] He wonders "How are the men such fools? They have had lesson after lesson. A few words of the right sort, a bit of flattery, a couple of words to have sympathy, and then some fighting talk, and most of them are like sheep for slaughter. Those who are not can be accused of cowardice, or of knuckling to the owners" (Llewellyn 385).

[51] Gwilym also advises, with scorn for the group, that Huw should let the problem sort itself out due to the incompetence of the leaders of the movement. "Leave it" he says "they will get tired of it. Revolution, indeed, and not enough sense among them all to turn a tap" (Llewellyn 383).

caused by their radicalism at the risk of his own life by trying to save the sabotaged mines from a flood. While collective action continues to spin its wheels in utter uselessness above ground Gwilym is hard at subterranean work. In Huw's own words, "While the cattle were shouting and throwing, and the leaders on both sides were arguing and being offended, and men were worrying about such matters as wives and children, my father was underground, with rats and floodwater, and darkness for companions, with his eyes sharp for danger to the livelihood of men" (Llewellyn 394).

The escalation of resistance movements, though, is a natural result of the failure of more moderate approaches to provide sustenance to the miners and their families. Indeed it is worth considering perhaps that the actions of Gwilym, despite the best of intentions, might amount to a betrayal of his fellow workers. Although the flooding of the mine certainly seems to be a bad idea in terms of job prospects, a single individual unanimously deciding to attempt to counter collective action not only impedes potential progress undemocratically, it also erodes the solidarity of those involved in a movement, strains trust, and creates political and social cracks for the exploiting class to capitalize on. Furthermore there were no workers in the mine for the planned sabotage due to the strike, so the direct action would not have cost a single life should Gwilym not have taken on himself to intervene. Once again, as is recurrent in the novel, the individual is prioritized over the group, and collective action is viewed suspiciously as a kind of blind frenzy which only the most grounded and autonomously thinking are able see through.

Individuals pushed to desperation must either be subjugated into nonentities or revolt in such a way to radically alter the economic structure which oppresses them. While Huw wonders at the foolishness of "Thousands wasting the rich moments of their lives, with the earth offering them an abundance just beneath their feet, and given free to them, by God" in regards to "A concern [the coal industry] that runs itself, and is given to us free" one cannot help wonder in return at the naivety and idealism of an individual who believes, despite all the evidence to the contrary, that somehow just resource allocation need not be strived for but simply let run its own course laissez faire (Llewellyn 388). The reliability of the narrator, in fact, who even admits at one point that "I was too small to have the whole picture. I only know what I saw and heard" must be addressed in the coming pages in terms of both the two-dimensionality of many of the characters in the book and the way through which it functions to reproduce a certain ideology in and of itself (Llewellyn 44). As Price elaborates, in regards to the narrator and his mode of discourse, "We are inclined to trust his judgments and opinions" due to his presented "innocence and impartiality" and because of "his ingratiatingly populist" tone and "seemingly innocent virtues" which, nonetheless operative effectively to present the reader with a solidified and reactionary ideological position which simultaneously feigns honesty, purity, and lack of political agenda (Price 79).

The division between the the revolutionary movement and the more moderate factions has its roots in the strike in which the unionization camp and the chapel faction ban together yet still remain impotent. This attempt, despite the solidarity shown by the

workers, is even more wildly unsuccessful than previous actions to achieve just wages and conditions. Huw looks back, recalling, "Strikes we had had, and funerals, to keep men from work, but that was the first time we ever had men standing in the street without work waiting for them" (Llewellyn 266) and although the men do receive a minimum wage some speculate "The minimum will be the minimum when these men are working. Four hundred men extra in this valley, and others to join in the other valleys. When all those extra men are back at work, there will be a new minimum" and in fact " a new minimum there was, too, for when a man complained, or spoke too loudly near the manager, he was put from work, and another take in his place from the idle crowd at the pit head. For less wage, always" (Llewellyn 266). While some, like the Morgans, despair about the inefficacy of their measures and lament that "However hard we fought, we must be beaten by empty bellies. The rights of man are poor things beside the eyes of hungry children. Their hurts are keener than the soreness of injustice" others are only driven further into desperate measures to secure economic stability and justice for themselves and their dependents, and thus the revolutionary faction comes into being (Llewellyn 370).

Ideological Apparatuses

Having explored the relationships between various political camps in the novel in the above pages, we may now more fruitfully examine the ways in which these ideologies are propagated in the text, the ways in which these modes of transmission reflect on current cultural realities, and in what way the text itself functions as an ideologically charged artifact. In *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation)* Louis Althusser notes that "a social formation which did not reproduce the condition of production would not last a year" and that "The ultimate condition of production is therefore the reproduction of the conditions of production" (127). He goes on to mention several of the institutions which serve to accomplish this task in capitalist society. It is interesting, given the sites of ideological and repressive control in the novel, that almost every apparatus mentioned by Althusser is represented specifically and at length in Llewellyn's text.

In terms of repressive apparatuses Althusser takes time to consider "the Government, the Administration, the Army, the Police,[52] the Courts, the Prisons" and notes that all of these fixtures of society function through some form of overt repression or violence. Given the positive sentiments which Huw harbors towards Welsh autonomy it is not surprising that he turns a critical eye towards all of these modes of repression and

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[52] "Anything in blue, with silver buttons, from that day on, was an enemy. That policeman, who knew Sami, and all of us, was no stranger. But if he had a mother, she was hard put to know her son that night. He went over the bank, quick, and his mare was behind the Three Bells for weeks after, well fed, and fat, and ownerless" (Llewellyn 389).

is either forced to navigate unpleasantly through them (the administration and the court system), fear them as symptomatic of the collapse of the traditional values and way of life of the Welsh peasantry (prison), or, either, actively or through observation and critique, resist them (the army and the police). The detested occupation by the English government, of course, serves as a conglomeration of these factors and, along with the industrialism and secularism it carries in its wake, is in many ways the ultimate force of evil in the novel. What is more interesting, however, is the way in which Huw either confronts or ignores the more insidious ideological apparatuses that permeate his life and form his own philosophical and political positions.

One of the reasons for Huw's, as well as oftentimes our own, obliviousness and therefore vulnerability to ideological control is that these modes of domination oftentimes do not appear, at least at first glance, to be imposed from above but are instead taken to be natural or commonsensical. This is a point worth keeping in mind when reading *How Green Was My Valley* given the novel's internal obsession with advocating a constructed hyperreal image of traditional values that are portrayed as pure, natural, and uncontaminated by political sentiments. For the time being it will suffice to notice that the very focus on independence of thought and action which Huw stresses leave him in a position to be unknowingly taken in by means of ideological control. Althusser points out that "whereas the unified - (Repressive) State Apparatus belongs entirely to the *public* domain, much the larger part of the Ideological State Apparatuses (in their apparent dispersion) are part, on the contrary, of the *private* domain. Churches, Parties, Trade

Unions, families, some schools, most newspapers, cultural ventures, etc., etc., are private" (144). These sites of domination then, because they are supposedly under the control of the individual to take or leave as they desire, and furthermore because they offer the *illusion* of plurality (they almost all function the majority of the time to support the same ruling political class and economic system), are usually invisible and unfelt, and therefore all the more dangerous, as means of social control and placation. Althusser draws the reader's attention to the fact that "the Ideological State Apparatuses are multiple, distinct, 'relatively autonomous' and capable of providing an objective field of contradictions which express, in forms which may be limited or extreme, the effects of the clashes between the capitalist class struggle and the proletarian class struggle, as well as to subordinate their terms" (149).[53] Furthermore "those who are in ideology believe themselves by definition outside ideology: one of the effects of ideology is the practical denegation of the ideological character of ideology by ideology: ideology never says 'I am ideological'" and thus "It is indeed a peculiarity of ideology that it imposes (without appearing to do so, since these are 'obviousnesses') oviousnessness as obviousnesses, which we cannot fail to recognize and before which we have the inevitable and natural reaction of crying out (aloud or in the still, small, voice of conscience): 'That's obvious! That's right! That's true!" (172).

To return to the novel, however, the way in which an Althusserian reading of ideological control in the world of Huw Morgan has is relevant to the means of control in

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[53] Allso that "the unity of the different Ideological State Apparatuses is secured, usually in contradictory forms, by the ruling ideology, the ideology of the ruling class" (149).

the text is almost alarming. Althusser mentions "the system of the different churches," "the system of the different public and private 'Schools,'" "the family," "the legal [system]," "the political system, including the different parties," "the trade unions," "press, radio and television," and "Literature, the Arts, sports" as the main ideological apparatuses, all of which factor significantly into the novel and the ways in which Huw navigates his changing world (143).

The Church

It should have been made sufficiently clear from the study of Mr. Gruffydd and the nonconformist church in the above pages that the chapel politics of the religious party instill in Huw a traditionalist attitude that is incompatible with drastic and systemic social change, and therefore assigns the novel in its own uniquely and insidiously reactionary message. Although the residual cultural elements of the Church (alternative, oppositional, and hegemonic) will be examined more properly in a Williamsonian Marxist reading in the third section of this text, it is important to draw on Althusser's historical attention to religion as an ISA here and now. He argues that in the Middle Ages "the Church (the religious ideological apparatus) accumulated a number of functions which have today devolved on to several distinct Ideological State Apparatuses, new ones in relation to the past I am invoking, in particular educational and cultural functions" and he goes on to state "In the pre-capitalist historical period which I have examined extremely broadly, it

is absolutely clear that there was one dominant Ideological State Apparatus, the Church, which concentrated within it not only religious functions, but also educational ones, and a large proportion of the functions of communications and 'culture'" (171). It will be important to keep this observation in mind when considering that Huw and the rest of the traditional reformism party will seek, in fact, to weaponize the remains of this dissolving centralized ideological structure as a mode of resistance to industrial development and the advanced forms of capitalist exploitation. Huw's ruminations on the spiritual nature of challenging moments is meant in a religious sense, but applies equally well to the nature of ideological control which, of course, cannot be separated from religion. He considers "There is a spirit greater than you, always within reach of you, but he only comes to take charge when your own spirit is lost, and cries out in his own tongue, which you cannot understand but only feel, and it is in feeling that you will have orders" (Llewellyn 141). Ideology, indeed, not only gives orders when one is "lost" but even informs one's judgements and decision making in the most qutildian and "apolitical" of moments.

Most importantly the chapel, and especially Mr. Gruffydd, provide an education that is sometimes alternative and sometimes oppositional to the dreaded National School. Furthermore the Welsh community provides Huw not only with a religious education, but also a intellectual one superior to that which he receives at the hands of the sadistic Anglicized Welshman who is Huw's school master. His reading at home and in chapel of the English canon, along with familiarity with the Greek philosophers and Christian religious texts, not to mention his familiarity with mathematics, allows Huw to best his

schoolfellows effortlessly.[54] In addition to these subjects Huw is exposed to the fine arts through continuous engagement with choral music and the occasional sounding of the harp, and also to trade skills in metalworking, engineering, mining, and carpentry (he becomes, in fact, a master carpenter through the training of Mr. Gruffydd, whose Christ like status is further reinforced by his sharing of the trade with Jesus). If this was not enough, Huw also receives a more than competent course of study in boxing, athletics, and rugby. While the relationship between the community's organic educational system and its religious sentiments cannot be overstated, it is vital to juxtapose this combined apparatus with that of the National School in order to fully appreciate the somewhat heavy handed approach taken by Llewelyn in regards to the values and dangers of various forms of education. As Price notices "Huw is given, from within the community, an education in fist fighting, but also in scholarship and high culture."[55]

The School

Davy, with great intuition, advocates that Huw attend a technical school to learn a trade rather the National School that will provide him an education befitting an

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[54] He even goes so far as to say of his classmates "Hard it is to suffer through stupid people. They make you feel sorry for them, and if your sorrow is as great as your hurt, you will allow them to go free of punishment, for their eyes are the eyes of dogs that have done wrong and know it, and are afraid" (Llewellyn 155).

[55] Problematically enough, however, Price points out that "there are no Welsh writers in the family pantheon" who opt instead to read English texts such as *The Life of Dr. Johnson* and Mill's *A System of Logic* (84).

upper-middle class professional or bureaucrat, stating that "All he will learn in that kind of place [National School] is how to look down on his Father and Mother" (Llewellyn 109). Although Huw's ties to his Church, community, and family are far too strong to allow this grave condescension to occur, the reader is confronted with an excellent, even hyperbolic, example of the ways in which ideology is transmitted through a formal state education. Althusser claims that "the Ideological State apparatus which has been instilled in the dominant position in mature capitalist social formation as a result of a violent political and ideological class struggle against the old dominant ideological state apparatus, is the educational state apparatus" and that "the School-Family couple has replaced the Church-Family couple" (154). He notes that children not only learn the skills ("know-how") that they need to function properly in their class positions, but that they also learn to accept their socio-economic positions and therefore to continue to help reinforce the dominant class's position uncomplainingly.[56]

The stratified nature of class is enforced through the school, and the sadistic Mr. Jonas reminds the students to "kindly remember that you attend here to qualify for

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[56] "Children in school also learn the 'rules' of good behavior, i.e. the attitude that should be observed by every agent in the division of labour, according to the job he is 'destined' for: rules of morality, civic and professional conscience, which actually means rules of respect for the socio-economic division of labour and ultimately the rules of order established by class domination. They also learn to 'speak proper French' [in Huw's case English], to 'handle' the workers correctly, i.e. actually (for the future capitalists and their servants) to 'order them about' properly i.e. (ideally) to 'speak to them' in the right way" because "the reproduction of labour power requires not only a reproduction of its skills, but also, at the same time, a reproduction of its submission to the rules of the established order i.e. a reproduction of submission to the ruling ideology for the workers, and a reproduction of the ability to manipulate ruling ideology correctly for the agents of exploitation and repression" as "it is in the forms and under the forms of ideological subjection that provision is made for the reproduction of the skills of labour and power (133).

respectable positions in life. You are the self respecting citizens of the future. Remember it, and revise your conduct accordingly (157) while also not letting Huw forget his own working class background: "What a dirty little sweep it is… Your dirty coal mining ways are not wanted here." "Perhaps that hammering will teach you that your ways are not ours. There is no wonder that civilized men look down upon Welshmen as savages. I shudder to think of your kind growing up. However, I shall endeavour to do my utmost with you, helped by the stick. Remember that" (Llewellyn 165).[57]

Furthermore the dominant English hegemony is buttressed by a refusal to allow the students to speak their native Welsh language under any circumstances, and by a constant shaming of Welsh culture and people. Jonas demands "You must instruct his parents that he on no account be allowed to speak that jargon in or out of school. English, please, at all times" (Llewellyn 147) and "Welsh was never a language, but only a crude means of communication, between tribes of barbarians stinking of woad. If you want to do yourself some good, stop troubling your tongue with it" further emphasizing the superiority of English by referring to it as "The language of the Queen and all nobility"

[57] In regards to the "hammering" Huw receives from his peers and the ruthless flogging inflicted upon him by Mr. Jonas, Althusser reminds us that "There is no such thing as a purely ideological apparatus" and, as is shown by both the dictatorial nature of the family patriarch (who is not loathe to administer the occasional belting), the public chastisement of unchaste women by the chapel deacons, and the corporeal punishment entailed by the frequent cainings at the National School, "Thus Schools and Churches use suitable methods of punishment to 'discipline' not only their shepherds, but also their flocks. The same is true of the family… The same is true of the cultural ISA (censorship, among other things)" (145).

while of Welsh "Good God Almighty, the very word is given to robbers on racecourses" (293).[58]

Mr. Jonas is himself, in fact, an interesting study of the power of ideology to turn communities against themselves through, in Althusser's words, "cramming every 'citizen' with daily doses of [in this case English] nationalism, chauvinism, moralism, etc, by means of the press, radio, and television" (154). Mr. Jonas is instilled with a hatred for his own class and community and becomes, therefore, the most effective weapon imaginable to attempt to destroy it through the English educational system. "He spoke English with pain, making his words sound more English than the English. Pity is it that a beautiful language should be at the mercy of such" (Llewellyn 155) and "His greatest trouble was his Welsh blood, so ashamed he was of it, and so hard he tried to cover it" (Llewellyn 167). This leads ultimately to his isolation from his own community, as evidenced by Huw's recollection that in the teacher's Anglicized neighborhood locale "I noticed the front doors were all shut, right down the street, even though it was a hot day," something which is unheard of in the close-knit Welsh community (Llewellyn 291).

It is worth considering that in some ways the educational ISA has its way with Huw, although he is too blinded by both pride and an obliviousness to ideology to notice.

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[58] Mr. Gruffydd, however, with his usual combination of erudition and saintly patience for the wicked ways of men, comforts Huw with a lesson in history and etymology by expounding "Welsh, they call us, from the Saxon word waelisc, meaning foreigner. About the racecourse I cannot tell you. But if some of our fathers were a bit ready with their hands and quick in the legs the English must blame themselves. Perhaps most of them never heard of the laws they made against us. You cannot blame ignorant men. You might as well kick a dog for not wishing good morning" (294).

As he is unable, despite his intelligence, to conform to the strict behavioral and ideological codes of the National School, he is ultimately relegated back to his "proper" position in life as a coal miner. When Huw proudly declares that he will join his father and brothers in the coal industry after being ejected from school, a conversation occurs between his father and mother which simultaneously expresses a laudable respect for honest work and a problematic reproduction of the socio-economic paradigm. Gwillym laments "I want the boy to have the best. I want him to have a life that is free of the foolishness we are having. Where he can be his own master in decency and quiet, and not pull one, pull the other, master and men, all the time" to which Beth responds, "What is not respectable about coal cutting? Are you and his brothers a lot of old jail-birds then? If he grows to be a man as good as you and his good brothers I will rest happy in the grave. Since when have you fallen out of love with the colliery?" His father rebutts, with nostalgic pragmatism, that "I am thinking of the boy. It was a different time. There was good money and fairness and fairplay for all. Not like now. And I was never a scholar. He is. And he should put his gifts to good use. What use to take brain down a mine?" (Llewelyn 290). This philosophical conflict within the family demonstrates the nature of ideology in the home, and segways effectively into a brief study at that apparatus in the novel.

The Family

Huw's own position if informed most not by the schooling he rejects, but, as was mentioned above, by the family apparatus which is impossible to disentangle from the Church. While Althusser argues that the school today seems as "'natural,' indispensable-useful, and even beneficial for our contemporaries as the Church was 'natural,' indispensable, and generous for our ancestors a few centuries ago" in the hyper-traditional world of *How Green Was My Valley* this role is still occupied by the Church-Family couple (157). It is from these apparatuses that Huw forms the sense of ethics and duty which inform his own moral compass and thereby his character and actions, rendering false in this context Althusser's claim that the school is the most powerful ISA in the 20th century and beyond.[59]

Huw's admirable insistence to go his own way and follow his own moral compass throughout the novel is, despite undoubtedly showing strength of character through his refusal to succumb to the pressure of whatever ideology happens to be in vogue amongst his peers, simply an articulation of his own wholesale acceptance of the ideology propounded through the moral sensibilities of the Church-Family couple[60]

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[59] "Of course, many of these contrasting Virtues (modesty, resignation, submissiveness on the one hand, cunning, contempt, self-importance, even smooth talk and cunning on the other) are also taught in the Family, in the Church, in the Army, in Good Books, in films and even in the football stadium. But no other ideological state apparatus has the obligatory (and not least, free) audience of the totality of the children in the capitalism social formation, eight hours a day for five or six days out of seven [in the school]" (156).

[60] Althusser notices, insightfully yet unromantically "An individual believes in God, or Duty, or Justice, etc. This belief derives (for everyone, i.e. for all those who live in an ideological representation of ideology, which reduces ideology to ideas endowed by definition with a spiritual

With this in mind in regards to Huw's own staunch morality, inscribed upon him by his material existence in the working class community, his ideological alliance with the Church and the traditional values of his family, and his resistance to and suspicion of both the radical sentiments of "foreigners" and the occupation of Wales by the English, the reader, it is hoped, will be armed to examine the political nature of *How Green Was My Valley* with an ideologically critical eye which is deprived of the charming and pleasant, but ultimately patriarchal and politically reactionary, vale which Llewelyn throws over his supposedly "apolitical" text by the utilization of the pastoral childhood bildungsroman genre. Being disillusioned of the vicarious ethical triumphalism which the novel provides, the reader may notice that "A kind of workers struggle dominates the book" but also that "this is not seen as arising out of any determine mode of reproduction, or even as workers opposition to owners and managers" but rather "constructs the class enemy as remote landowners and finance capitalists" (Price 90) in a way which is ultimately politically incorporated into dominant hegemony and leaves "The novel as cyclical" as it "ends as it begins; it offers us no way out. Its nostalgia, too, can only return us, longing but helpless, to another time. The past cannot affect or chance the present; it is sealed away and our only access to it is through the individual act of memory." This reading of the text allows

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existence) from the ideas of the individual concerned, i.e. from him as a subject with a consciousness which contains the ideas of his belief. In this way, i.e. by means of the absolutely ideological 'conceptual' device (*dispositif*) thus set up (a subject endowed with a consciousness in which he freely forms or freely recognizes ideas in which he believes), the (material) attitude of the subject concerned naturally follows. The individual in question behaves in such and such a way, adopts such and such a practical attitude, and, what is more, participates in certain regular practices which are those of the ideological apparatus on which 'depend' the ideas which he has in all consciousness freely chosen as a subject" (157).

us to realize, with an almost cynical eye toward the nature of the cultural ISA, that "the social constructions and accounts of the past which it [the novel] helps to keep in circulation need to be understood and challenged if we are to find radical solutions to recurrent crisis" (Price 93).

How Green Was My Valley as an Ideological Cultural Artifact

Thus far every major ISA listed by Althusser, barring two, have been examined. The Church, the School, the Family, the Law, the Trade-Union, and the Political Machine have all factored into an ideologically attuned reading of *How Green Was My Valley.* This leaves the Communication and the Cultural ISAs as yet relatively unmentioned, because they factor only minimally into the plot of the book itself. it is important to recognize, however, that metatextually these are by far the most significant means of control to countenance in regards to a piece of literature and its relationships to, and complicity with, the material political realities faced by a reader engaged in cultural studies and critical theory. This novel, by its very nature as a best-seller demands to be read as an ideological artifact of great power in and of itself.[61] Despite being a romanticized version of a nonexistent past which fails to represent faithfully the political and social realities of a

[61] Particularly as a best-seller informed politically by "The unique cultural life of the valleys" which "was formed in opposition to the development of capitalist mode of production in a once rural area" (Price 79) and which is "an interesting, complex, and even key text to the body of writing about the industrial valleys of South Wales" (Price 73).

historically exploited region,[62] the novel has been met with renown not only internationally but even in very geographical locale whose struggles it appropriates to propagate its own reactionary stance. As Price points out, the book is well loved in South Wales and "If it is returned to the people of the mining valleys a bizarre and inaccurate picture of themselves, it was certainly one that they embraced with pleasure" (Price 73).

The hyperreality of Huw's lost childhood amongst the bucolic yet fabricated community of the book reached audiences across the globe and, in addition to making the born and bred Londoner Richard Llewellyn (Richard David Vivian Llewellyn Lloyd) a very rich man,[63] put forth an ideology of political complacency and nationalism which is a damning condemnation of radical movements and international solidarity all of which continues to be absorbed by countless readers. Furthermore the romanticized values of patriarchal family and social structures, rigid class hierarchy, and xenophobic nationalism have undoubtedly helped shape, although perhaps unconsciously, the social views of many of the individuals understandably enamored with the text.

For these reasons the novel has been incorporated into the hegemonic structure of the late capitalist culture industry, and even the nominally resistant chapel politics advocated by Llewelyn lose much, if not all, of their value as oppositional cultural

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[62] "There is little connection between the speech of its characters and the English spoken by the people of South Wales, nor is the language of the novel translated Welsh. It is, in fact, an imaginary speech, created out of an amalgam of real dialect and literary speech (Price 85).

[63] Llewellyn's birth name. His name, as John Harris points out in *A Hallelujah of a Book: How Green Was My Valley as Bestseller* was "of a piece with an authorial persona that Llewellyn was anxious to construct: a process of self-mythologizing which intensified with Welshness, leading him to claim St. David's as his birthplace… boyhood fights over the language… and his own brief employment as a miner on the nightshift" even going to far as the change David to the Cambrian Dafydd (44).

phenomena. In order to understand this process more fully one might look to Raymond Williams' *Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory*, the author of which, coincidentally enough, is in fact a of a working-class Welsh background and published novels of his own taking place in the region, as well a critical piece regarding the development of Welsh industrial literature.

In *The Welsh Industrial Novel*, in fact, Williams argues that *How Green Was My Valley* is "widely and properly seen as the export version of the Welsh industrial experience" and since the book fails to reckon with the "many-sided turbulence, the incoherence and contradictions" of lived experience it is therefore a "historical stereotype" marketable for mass consumption (227). It is due to the fact that "the romance is wholly organized by a single, central, sentimental or rhetorical figuration, which is at once its simple and particular cohesion" that the novel has its "readily and instantly communicable potency" but also its "excluding limitation and reduction" (227). Williams accounts for the novel's popularity by explaining "The will to a wider perspective, always more readily accessible to a fascinated observer than to the sons and daughters of the history who had its defeats, its settlements, its local rhythms and local fractures in their bones, has now increasingly more pull, more weight, in a different phase of the national culture. It is in this direction that much contemporary writing is moving" (227). This proposition hints at the ways in which a political reality can be transmuted into a sellable hyperreality, incorporated in the mainstream market, and eventually come to impose itself as a "real"

experience even to the populus most directly exposed to the reality that is usurped and replaced (227).

To return the matter at hand, however, a more theoretically nuanced examination of the methods of incorporation needs to be examined. Williams postulates, in *Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory* that "some experiences, meanings and values, which cannot be verified or cannot be expressed in terms of the dominant culture, are nevertheless lived and practiced on the basis of residue - cultural as well as social - of some previous social formation" and that these residual elements can sometimes operate as alternative or oppositional to capitalist hegemony. Williams mentions specifically that "there is a real case of this in certain religious values, by contrast with the very evident incorporation of most religious meanings and values into the dominant system." He explains "The same is true, in a culture like Britain [or Wales], of certain notions derived from a rural past, which have very significant popularity" (41). The Chapel progressivism of Huw's Valley certainly falls within these categories both in terms of its religious basis and its inextricable relationship with Welsh peasant culture. Williams continues, however, to remark that although "A residual culture is usually as some distance from the effective dominant culture… it may get incorporated into it This is because some version of it - especially if the residue is from some major area of the past - will in many cases have had to be incorporated if the effective dominant culture is to make sense in those areas" (41). What Williams proposes, then, is a dynamic system of capitalist hegemony which is mobile enough to render marketable, and therefore impotent, residual elements which

otherwise may have been mobilized against its ideological dominance. Although, due to the many reasons examined above, Llewellyn's progressivist notions of social change never pose any real threat to the totality of class domination, the incorporation of the novel into the film industry further solidified its ideological buttressing of dominant discourse.

Before considering the film version of *How Green Was My Valley* a few more sentences on the nature of literature as a means of propagating ideology are timely. Any literature (emergent or residual) functioning in any way outside of dominant hegemony (either as oppositional or alternative) is, should it garner enough attention, subject to incorporation. Williams observes "it is a fact about the modes of domination that they select from and consequently exclude the full range of human practice" (43) and that "a meaning or a practice may be tolerated as a deviation, and yet still be seen only as another particular way to live. But as the necessary area of effective dominance extends, the same meanings and practices can be seen by the dominant culture, not merely as disregarding or despising it, but as challenging it" with the result that "In capitalist practice, if the things is not making a profit, or if it is not being widely circulated, then it can for some time be overlooked, at least while it remains alternative. When it becomes oppositional in an explicit way it does , of course, get appropriated or attacked" (43). Although *How Green Was My Valley* hardly operates as either alternative or oppositional, it is telling that even this innocuous text must be further sanized and depoliticized to be marketed to every larger audiences as a film.

As a final word on the nature of literature as ideology in this section, another quote from Williams will serve to explicate the complicit role of much of literature, including such nominally progressive books as the novel in question, as a mode of ideological domination: "We cannot separate literature and art from other kinds of social practice, in such a way as to make them subject to quite special and distinct laws. They may have quite specific features as practices, but they cannot be separated from the general social process" as "Most writing, in any period, including our own, is a form of contribution to the effective dominant culture. Indeed many of the specific qualities of literature -- its capacity to embody a enact and perform certain meanings and values, or to create in single and particular ways what would otherwise be merely general truths -- enable it to fulfill this effective function with great value… They contribute to the effective dominant culture and are a central articulation of it" and, as is the case with Llewelyn's novel, "They embody residual meanings and values, not all of which are incorporated, though many are" or, if they become problematic to the ideological system as it stands, certainly will be in time (45).

The Film and Ideology

As has been mentioned above, if the novel version of *How Green Was My Valley* represents an image of the Welsh working-class is romantic, ahistorical, and immensely

palatable, the film version, then, represents an even more sanitized version of the narrative which functions, to return to Althusser's words, to achieve the task of "cramming every 'citizen' with daily doses of nationalism, chauvinism, moralism, etc, by means of the press, radio, and television" (154). In addition to a fairly self-explanatory and brief synopsis of the ways the film skirts the political issues at play in the novel, this section of writing will also draw on Lea Jacobs' *Making John Ford's How Green Was My Valley* as a historical study in order to appreciate the conscious trajectory which Twentieth Century Fox adopted in order to depoliticize the novel, relying especially on the author's painstaking research which provides primary documentation of this project in the form of the handwritten notes left on the script by producers and others working on the film. Furthermore a foray into Peter Stead's *How Green is My Valley Now?* will function to observe the ways the ideology of the text has continued to operate on influencing the hearts and minds of individuals half a century after the publication of the novel and today. Ultimately what will be demonstrated through an examination of the film and these secondary sources will be the nature of the dynamic and homogenizing force of the Culture Industry in its incorporation of even the most slightly oppositional texts into an ever-changing hegemony of ideological domination.

Divergences Between Novel and Film

The plot of the novel is significantly distorted in its movie adaptation, and while some of this can be explained by the difficulties of translating a meandering storyline filled with retrospective narration and lacking a strong central narrative opting instead for a more vignette-style approach to recalling Huw's life, the majority of the reason for this maneuver is undoubtedly to circumnavigate the potentially problematic or controversial themes of labor dispute and budding sexuality which permeate the original text.

Included in the film's voice-over reading of passages from the novel are some of the many pleasant and nostalgic passages of family love and virtue but noticeably avoided, [64] however, are starvation deaths, labor riots, police brutality, and Huw's impregnation of a young teenager who is his schoolmate.

The Morgan home, furthermore, is cozy multiple-story bourgeois nest filled with china dinnerware, an ever-roaring fire, and heavy expensive furniture. Important subversive characters are synthesized or eliminated completely from the plot, which shifts its focus from Huw's loss of innocence coupled with the environmental and economic

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[64] Included, for example, are excerpts like "As soon as the whistle went they put chairs outside their front doors and sat there waiting till the men came up the Hill and home. Then as the men came up to their front doors they threw their wages, sovereign by sovereign, into the shining laps, fathers first and sons or lodgers in a line behind. My mother often had forty of them, with my father and five brothers working. And up and down the street you would hear them singing and laughing and in among it all the pelting jingle of gold. A good day was Saturday, then, indeed" (Llewellyn 3) and "My father always said that money was meant to be spent just as men spend their strength and brains earning it and as willingly. But just as they work with a purpose, so the results of that work should be spent with a purpose and not wasted. So in our family, since all the grown-ups were earning except my sisters and my mother and me, there was always thought before the tin was taken out of the kitchen" (Llewellyn 5).

degradation of community instead to focus on the romantic subplot between Angharad and Mr. Gruffydd, who, in fact, becomes in many ways the primary character of the film which culminates is a rousing speech by the preacher. The rhetoric of the clergyman, however, is of course toned down in its political activism and distrust of capitalist economic structures. Additionally the entire Morgan family is over-awed by the presence of the economically elite mine owners in the film, and behave in a manner which is both materialistically grasping and grossly obsequious. This toadyism stands in stark contrast to the novel, in which the Morgans disdain the money and anglicized dandyism of Angharad's husband (one of Huw's brothers goes so far as to publicly beat the young Mr. Evans for his discourteous advances toward Angharad), and demonstrates the film's reproduction of subservient attitudes in the working population which Althusser mentions as a necessary component of the ISAs above. Furthermore Huw's descent into the brutal conditions of the colliery in his very young adolescence is barely mentioned in the film, which instead depicts a youngster filled with pride at the manly fulfillment of his duty, chest swelling with the serene knowledge that he is doing his part to contribute to the furthering of environmental catastrophe under the industrial capitalist economic complex. The labor blacklisting and expulsion of Davy and Ianto from the Valley, due to their unionizing activities, receives a single sentence of recognition in Ford's motion picture classic. Finally, and perhaps most tellingly, it is an entirely accidental cave-in which kills Gwilym Morgan, allowing the film to avoid altogether the ultimate catastrophic labor disputes which wrap up the novel. In a stroke of Hollywood genius it is the preacher who recovers

Huw's father's body from the collapsed mine shaft, allowing the film to conclude with an upbeat religious sentiment and a saccharine reunification of the happy and robustly healthy Morgan family in Elysian Welsh hills uncontaminated by coal slag or, more importantly, any need to consider the working conditions and socio-political realities of the inhabitants of the Valley.

The Sanitization Process

The first of many version of the script for the film included a narrative significantly closer to that of the novel in which labor disputes figured strongly and centrally. Jacobs notes that "Pascal and O'Flaherty's script tells a unified story about the attempt to unionize labor within the colliery and the attendant disputes between mine-owners and working class factions within the village… Moreover, all the elements of the story - the sons verus the father, Angharad's marriage, the decline of the town as a whole - relate to this central dispute and come together in a distinct climax, the sabotage of the mine" and that in this version "If Gruffydd is the hero, it is because he acts as a mediator and the voice of conscience among the factions" (37). Despite the fact that "When this historical context is minimized, it becomes more difficult to handle the shifts between the different set of characters and the episodic nature if the novels plotting" the films producer, Darryl E. Zanuck rejects this version of the script, evidence of which can be found in "undated story

conference notes attached to the May 18, 1840, draft held at USC" in which he argues "I get the impression that the mine-owners were very mean and that the laborers finally won over them. All this might be very fine if it were happening today, like GRAPES OF WRATH, but this is years ago and who gives a damn? And anyway, there was no triumph at the finish because the Welsh coal-miners are still starving. The smart thing to do is to try and keep all of the rest in the background and focus mainly on the human story as seen through Huw's eyes" (37).

This avoidance of controversial issues is a theme that Zanuck will continue to emphasize throughout the development of the film, including notes such as these attached to the August 23, 1940, script which read "Labor troubles to minimum" and "This should be the history of a family, not a labor dispute" and attempting to make the rather grim nature of the loss-of -Eden tale more consumable to audiences by emphasizing other elements of the plot, most notably Angharad's love for Gruffydd, with instructions like "Angharad to Mr. Gruffydd end on high we compensate for heaviness or futility" which "indicates that Zanuck considered the relationship between these characters of great importance, forming the love story that he hoped would balance the depressing tale of the family's dispersal and the valley's decline" (Jacobs 43). In general Zanuck is opposed to scenes which, in his own words, might "disturb rather than entertain the audience" (45).

The continual eschewal of any resistant elements present in the novel is made more evident by many of the comments in a 1940 memo in which Zanuck continues to ruthlessly put under erasure any potentially "disturbing" scenes, especially ones regarding

labor troubles or sexuality. This version "asks for many small revisions in the prologue, which Zanuck thought painted too depressing a picture of poverty in the valley in the present day. He recommends that they cut portions of the early scenes relating to the disputes about the strike and the formation of the union, as well as parts of the scene in which Ianto and Parry quarrel about the union at the celebration for Beth. He recommends deleting a scene that had been used in all the previous versions to mark the initiation of Iestyn courtship of Angharad, a scene in which one of the Morgan boys knocks down the mine owners son for speaking to his sister without permission" and also notes "Comedy is absolutely essential for this story, and if we don't have it throughout we are in trouble" (45). An interesting sentiment indeed in terms of the revision of a novel which, for all its faults, was undoubtedly originally about the ruthless exploitation of a working population and the destruction not only of their traditional culture and way of life but also of the very environment they inhabit.

Reception and Effect

The long process of increasingly brutal revision by Zanuck and later Ford[65] in order to sanitize the novel completely ultimately paid off, quite literally, in a very big way. The 1941 film received five Oscars, including best film, in the same year in which *Citizen Kane* and *The Maltese Falcon* were released. Peter Stead, who worked at making an adaptation of the film in 1991 for its 50 year anniversary, writes about his experience with both this project and his relationship with the original film, and is indicative of the ways in which the film, problematically, continues to capture the hearts, minds, and ideological orientations of viewers.

He begins his piece, unselfconsciously, by watching real Welsh miners at the Taff Merthyr colliery emerging from the pit "obviously delighted to have finished a shift and as primed to embrace leisure in all its forms as any workmen could ever be" and admits that "all [he] could think," startlingly representative of the nature of capitalist hyperreality, was "Sing, you buggers, sing!" and continues to ruminate in regards to the film that it is "representative of much that was best in Hollywood" and that "What was absurd was not the miners singing on their way home but rather the fact that they sang with all the precision of an eisteddfod winning choir. Just a little more spontaneity and raggedness and

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[65] Ford own politics, interestingly enough, are notoriously slippery. As an outspoken critic of both Nazism and Mccarthyism, a supporter of the IRA against the British, and an advocate for unionization in Hollywood, Ford's inclinations would seem to lean left on multiple occasions. This is further supported by his statement in a 1937 letter to a nephew, Bob Ford, that "Politically, I am a socialist democrat -- always left." This does not explain, however, his role in the production of *How Green Was My Valley* of his support of Goldwater and Nixon in his later years.

surely John Ford might have won over those hardened cynics who only understand dry-as-dust realism" (4).

He continues to argue that "What Ford was aiming for above all else was to create a sense of working-class or rather peasant community" and that Zanuck had recognized that Llewellyn's novel was not an engagement with real political issues but rather "a celebration of precisely that family-based sense of community" that was "the most profound and the most universal aspect" of the story (5). He lauds the filmmaker's perspicacity "to create a film that would rely far less on the story line and far more on atmosphere and mood than the usual Hollywood product" and goes so far as to praise Zanuck for removing "the sub-theme of industrial tension in the novel" which "always annoyed him" and instead to "bypass and clinch the triumph of what he took to be both llewellyn's and Ford's real interest, the integrity and nobility of peasant family" (5). Finally he appreciates the screenwriters' ability to transform "LLewellyn's long novel into a version short and *uncontroversial* enough for Zanuck," as if the minimal controversiality of labor dispute and sexual repression in the novel are its deviant flaws, rather than the very structures around which the narrative is built (6).

He unabashedly contends, with of course no real argument needing to be provided for such "obviousnesses" (see Althusser) that "clearly Hollywood had built their story and their sense of Welshness on what they thought was the essence of the novel" and in doing so created through the film "A new appreciation of how democracy was ultimately based on working-class families and communities… Certainly there was too much industrial

strife in the novel for Zanuck's taste and too many radical speeches from one brother to another (in both the novel and the film one gets them confused) but in general llewellyn got the balance about right" because, in his reactionary opinion, the people of the Valley "had difficulty largely and directly through the greed of *both employers and labor*" (6). Indeed, one must thank Stead for disabusing the reader of this piece from the cynicism it might have festered in them in regards to the rights of working-class individuals to prevent their children and dependents from starving while working 12 hour shifts below ground. He even goes so far as to disregard in a few pithy words "Those who were dismissive of the novel either as a hopeless romance or as Tory blackleg propaganda" and who cannot appreciate the fact that the childhood memoir genre "recommended [the film] to Hollywood" by allowing it to "neatly side-step" "many of the kinds of political and sexual choices that adults have to make" (7).

This sentiment is, of course, understandable when one considers "the period into which Huw Morgan was born had been something of a golden era. Of course this kind of working-class aristocratic family owed everything to entrepreneurial risk-taking, economic growth and dramatic possibilities for social mobility… [the Morgans are] "an upwardly mobile family daily learning of new worlds" (8). Indeed this plucky and optimistic film reveals "the most exciting and successful era in Welsh industrial history" and was much needed in order to "restore a sense of hope and meaning to industrial society" all the more necessary because "After all the years of depression and anguish there were many people who had wanted to recall that it was economic growth that had given working-class

communities their confidence and sense of excitement" (9). There could be no more damning condemnation of the ideological reproduction of vicarious joy and class satisfaction the film attempts to provide than these joyous and triumphant words of unconditional praise.

The Ethics of Enjoyment

It would be unnecessarily harsh, maybe even hypocritical, not to recognize that Stead's perspective, despite the sarcasm with which it is addressed above, has real validity for a great many people. Although it is hoped that an argument attuned to the ideological nature of *How Green Was My Valley* is able to demonstrate that the novel is, despite its disarming nature, a powerful piece of political commentary, it cannot be assumed ipso facto that the ideology which it seeks to reproduce is necessarily bad. Instead of focusing on the ethical and social utility of the nationalism and traditionalism which Llewelyn advocates for through the text, however, this project will instead briefly turn its gaze to the untenability of this position as it is portrayed through the novel itself.

Firstly the text operates as a containment mechanism which presents the reader with a world which is defined starkly in terms of right versus wrong and which always allows the reader to align themselves with the forces of benevolence and compassion and so, therefore, to say "I detest X and support Y. Now I know where I stand!" The reader is

filled with righteous indignation throughout the book and, as is mentioned above, therefore allowed to feel vicariously virtuous by means of proper placement of sympathies and admonishments.

One may argue that the edifying purpose of literature, however, is to do exactly this. By presenting the reader with fictional situations which draw both their sympathies and indignations it could be said that this broadens the perspective of the individual to see from multiplicitous perspectives and therefore trains the ethical agent to be broader minded and therefore more readily able to be compassionate or condemnatory as real-world situations require. Perhaps. It is worth considering, though, that the entire ethical apparatus of the novel is built on a platform of nostalgia for an idealized and fabricated lifestyle and community and therefore may present the reader not with the tools through which to make better informed ethical decisions but rather skew their perspectives by the propagation of hyperreal sentiments divorced from any of the real social, political, and economic conditions which must complicate one's moral judgments.

This nostalgia for hyperreal idealizations of the past, then, operates as a concealment mechanism which allows a very constructed "traditionalist" perspective of nationalism, patriarchy, religious homogeneity, and conservative economic positions to be taken for granted and even glanced over. One cannot be nostalgic for a past that never occured as presented, and one cannot feel vicariously resistant through a text which functions, essentially, to prop up the bourgeois values of individualism, upward mobility through hard work, obedience to authority, and moderatism at all costs. The text is after

all, at its last gasp, a condemnation of collectivist thinking outside of the Church-Family ISA coupling as recounted through the individual act of memory.

Where then does this leave the reader? Are we, through our very enjoyment of the novel or film therefore complicit in supporting its political message? Are we all either dupes or hypocrites for loving texts such as these? Is it an ethical shortcoming to enjoy an ideologically problematic book simply for its aesthetic value? It could be argued that a well written and thoroughly enjoyable text is a work of art which goes beyond, it some ways at least, its politics, and can be appreciated as such. It seems though that this position, at least from the critical Marxist perspective this argument is written from, is an attempt to have one's cake and eat it too.

Perhaps it is worth considering, when faced with this ethical conundrum, that literary enjoyment itself is multifaceted and complex. There is, certainly, a consumptive element not only to the uncritical reading of a text for pleasure, but also in the destabilization and critique of a text. Both modes of reading lend themselves to the propagation of an ideological stance, either is alliance with or resistance to the one advocated for by the text itself. The ethics of enjoyment, then, are thoroughly complicated by the fact that if one presupposes a "correct" way to analyze a piece of literature then one has already succumbed to a narrow and rigid ideological position.

The question of enjoyment as complicity then remains unanswered. Despite the ethical rightness or wrongness of whatever kind of pleasure one derives from the act of reading and criticism, one can at least attempt, never entirely successfully, to be aware of

role of ideology in literature and literature as ideology, while also trying to keep in mind one's own biases and presuppositions. Art is never simply for art's sake and nothing is ever apolitical, but ideologically attuned readings, despite spoiling the "pureness" of a text, can at least allow one to enjoy it without entirely absorbing its politics, be those the radical nihilism of Chernyshevsky or the nationalistic traditionalism of Llewelyn.

Conclusion: Authoritarian and Capitalist Appropriation of Political Ideology and Literature

"It is not just a question of seeing things (that is, social reality) as they 'really are,' of throwing away the distorting spectacles of ideology; the main point is to see how the reality itself cannot reproduce itself without this so-called ideological mystification. The mask is not simply hiding the real state of things; the ideological distortion is written into its very essence... the moment we see it 'as it really is,' this being dissolves itself into nothingness or, more precisely, it changes into another kind of reality" (Žižek 25)

Despite the divergent political positions of all of the texts examined above, the similarities are, in many ways, striking. While Turgenev's text takes a more ambivalent stance ideologically, resulting in harsh criticism from both moderates and radicals, the character of Bazarov exemplifies the rigidity and lack of humanism which can lead to intolerant individual positions as well as, when adopted on a larger scale, authoritarianism. Chernyshevsky's novel fulfills an unapologetically propagandistic role in terms of literary ideology, most blatantly embodied in his revolutionary superhero Rakhmetov. Finally Llewellyn's characters, especially Mr. Gruffydd, exhibit two-dimensional nature similar, if arguably more imoderate, as Chernyshevsky's, despite the more nuanced and subtle political implications of the book and film. The reader is forced to wonder, for example, exactly how different the radical leftist

hyper-individualism of Rakhmetov and the conservative/traditionalist hyper-individualism of Mr. Gruffydd really are. Despite their polarly opposite political inclinations, and the moderatism of the one versus the radicalism of the other, the parallels remain striking. This observation demonstrates, if nothing else, that the means of ideological propagation function in a structurally similar manner regardless of the position advocated for.

All of the pieces of literature examined in this thesis have, to some extent, been appropriated by exploitative political structures despite being written with the intention of resistance to exploitation. A comparative reading of the texts, it is hoped, draws attention to the similar epistemological shortcomings that have been conducive to the incorporation of these texts into the very hegemonies they seek to destabilize or disrupt. While a reading of ideological propagation and appropriation of texts across political boundaries seeks to reveal the nature of ideological domination stemming from a limited perspective and refusal to countenance the presence of, and failings of, one's own political presuppositions, the heteroglossic perspective advocated for by this text is, of course, the propagation of an ideological position that, no doubt, could be rendered just as complicit in tyranny as any other. The unstable ideological function of literature is clear in each of the texts examined, just as the ideological function of criticism is present in this project itself. Ideology is everywhere and is inescapable, and the analysis of ideological apparatuses in literature is an ideologically inflected endevor in and of itself,

and therefore must be subject to the same scrutiny and skepticism in order to avoid epistemic blindness and ideological fossilization.

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