JPRS: 3017

24 February 1960

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MAKING OF THE NEW MAN

(USSR)

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JPRS: 3017
CSO : 3307-D

MAKING OF THE NEW MAN

Voprosy Literatury
/Problems of Literature/
No 5, May 1959, Moscow,
Pages 3-24,
Russian, per

Vl. Baskakov

Some American statistician published a book recently which contained several autobiographies of students and their answers to the questions: "What do you want from life? What do you want to contribute to life?"

The author of the first biography, a native of a very small town in Texas, son of a small businessman, expresses deep contempt for ordinary Americans and the firm intention "to rise higher than they." The student writes: "I want to get something out of life that would indicate to me that I stand above the average level.... I want to show greater ability than the masses of average people whom I despise. And therefore I work toward something in order not to find myself among these masses." He frankly admits that he wants to get rich, and that he is only interested in science because it ensures him a povertyless existence.

The author of the second biography comes from a wealthy family in the Midwest and regards himself as a "new-type liberal." He supports "democracy" and the elected governing group, among whom he also counts himself. This student intends to go into business because it promises "the greatest monetary return, prestige, and the most satisfaction."

The third, the son of a government employee, talks frankly about his criminal tendencies during his childhood, when he adopted the principle of the "survival of the fittest."

The fourth student writes that he will try for a military career, for it "provides a place in society which cannot be obtained on one's own."

The author of the next biography talks about the aspiration to "battle" during his whole life with such "crafty and oppressive phenomena" as submission. This battle manifested itself in the stealing of money at home and in school, and in the organizing of drinking bouts. After he had been dismissed from the university he was sent to the Far East and finally found himself in post-war Korea. He writes that the only diversion for the soldiers was a visit to the brothels.

Different people, different biographies, different thoughts. However, these answers have one thing in common: an attempt to get ahead, to live only for oneself; complete indifference to everything that is not in some measure connected with personal success. The old truism that capitalism maims man, humiliates his dignity, makes his thoughts and wishes shallow and base, receives its confirmation daily and hourly. The bourgeois system is limited by hostility to genuine creative work in all spheres of life.

The socialist system has uncovered new traits in the character of man, connected with the very manner of our life, imbued with the spirit of collectivism, with the spirit of true humanism. The aspiration to be a healthy society, to create for it all new material and cultural values -- exactly that incentive, and not the corroding of the soul through passion for profit, inspires the Soviet people to perfection in work and leads them to the great goal: the building of the most just and humane system, communism. Only work thus done in the name of a goal as great as ours uplifts man and brings him satisfaction and happiness.

Communism is now no longer a far-off beautiful dream, not a beckoning from a great distance, but a matter of immediacy, a practical creation by the people of our generation. And everyone who is acquainted with the materials and resolutions of the XXI CPSU Congress must feel a surge of pride, of happy emotion. There it is, tangible, visible! And not just somewhere, but here, on Soviet soil. Over the entire country, over the entire world words full of deep meaning are now spreading: "the material-technical base of communism," "the decisive stage in competition with the capitalist world," "gain time," "communist labor brigades"...

The citing of figures can be heard, each of which stuns with its magnitude, with its concrete impact. A symphony of figures: factories and atomic power stations; new thousands of kilometers of electrified railroad, and synthetic materials; the most complex devices, and thousands of new apartments; a flow of golden grain, and the shortest work week in the world. And an important factor -- the making of a new man, a man of the communist epoch. For in order to build communism not only a powerful material-technical base is needed; a high level of awareness is necessary for the builders of this society. Therefore the question of communist education of the workers, and particularly of youth, has now acquired such great importance.

"In order to advance toward communism, the most just and perfect society, when all the best moral traits of free man will be fully revealed, we must now train the man of the future," said N. S. Khrushchev in his speech at the XXI CPSU Congress. "It is necessary to develop communist morality among the Soviet people, at the base of which lie devotion to communism and implacability toward its enemies, awareness of social obligations, active participation in work for the good of society, voluntary observance of the basic rules of the human community, comradely mutual aid, honesty and truthfulness, and intolerance of violators of the social order."

It is difficult to reapparaise the role and meaning of belles lettres in the great and noble matter of creating the spiritual, the moral aspect of the young man. The writer who truthfully reflects the appearance of reality by the power of his words, can actively influence the consciousness of the reader, teach life, strengthen the true and valuable in his character, while making it possible to discard the lying and the false; he can implant in the reader profound hostility toward a private-ownership morality; toward lies, and toward hypocrisy. In the light of the grandiose vistas opened before the country by the resolutions of the XXI Party Congress, many questions connected with the educational nature of literature and with the shaping of the character of the new man merit consideration.

* * *

A young man enters into life. He has not had a severe toughening-up -- he did not count off long distances on the roads of the civil war, he did not live on the doled-out rations of the builders of Magnitok; he did not take part in the military campaigns from Stalingrad to Berlin. He does not know of the terrible burden of exploitation, and has read only in books about forced labor under capitalist, landowner and kulak. It is seldom that he encounters difficulties in life; these consist only of difficulties connected with the preparation of lessons, and no more. And so this lad or girl enters into a great life. But how extensively are they prepared for it? How will they endure this serious test? What do they know? Will they walk the true, straight and honest path? Will they not come under alien influences? There are many questions -- great ones, complex ones, important ones. And books must be a help in answering them.

All the best, all the most valuable in the arsenal of the multinational Soviet literature has well served the education of our young people. And we have books which carry the direct imprint of the young builders of a new society. Writers of all generations of Soviet literature wrote about youth and about its road into life. They helped the shaping of the character of the young human being of the first proletarian government in the world even then, when they created characters, the likenesses of Kerchatin or of a young guardsman, as heroes of books, and they established an artistic biography for an entire generation. And then when they portrayed such people as Morozka, who was fearless and devoted to the revolution, but now and then weak; and such characters as Venka Malyshev, who was bold and honest, but who did not resist in the struggle with evil, and Polya Vikhrova. And then they depicted for the judgment of the reader young people such as Mechik, Stakhovich or Uzelkov. The power of all these books (and not just of these) consisted of the fact that the writers gave a lucid answer to many questions perturbing young readers, and first and foremost to the central question: how to live.

Naturally, the problems of the spiritual formation of young people were also of interest to authors of novels and stories, plays and poems, written during the last five years.

The young engineer Arefyev who battled with the clever careerist, the unprincipled and narrowminded Kramov, comprehended in the first year of his independent work the great force of the collective, the power of creative work. A lad from Siberia, the riverboat sailor Kostya Barabin, by getting to know different people, affirms in himself high moral quality. Igor Malyutin entered into the great life -- and it gave him spiritual riches and made it possible to renounce more strongly shallow and superficial things. In the stern humdrum life of soldiers peaceful studies polished the character of the village lad Selivan Gromozdkin. The schoolboy Oleg Savin saw the loathsome face of the petty bourgeoisie and told himself firmly all his life: "It is impossible to be thus..."

However, we are not talking in this article about the works of A. Chakovski, S. Sartakov, M. Aleksyeyev, V. Rozov and other experienced men of literature. Our discussion is about young writers who have only taken their first steps in literature. A. Kuznetsov, N. Dementyev, A. Gladilin, V. Moskovkin -- these, as can be seen, are new names.

Books about the young generation which became available for readers during the past year, as well as books on any theme, ought to be looked at in connection with the great and important processes of the life of our society. The processes cannot but excite the reader, stir up aspirations in him reflecting the spiritual ascent of the creative powers of Soviet man. And real creative success was achieved by the writer who was successful in seeing this new aspect and in showing the gigantic upward movement of Soviet society's material and spiritual life, which had been accomplished in our country during the past five years; by the writer who imprinted the character of the man of today, who revealed new conflicts in life. And conversely, an artist suffered failure if he has not been able to see and portray the new in life and in the character of heroes.

During the last year grandiose measures in the mastering of the country's eastern regions were accomplished. Hundreds of thousands of young patriots went to the steppes of Kazakhstan and the Altai, into construction work in Siberia, to the North and to the Far Eastern regions. They performed heroid deeds and showed that it was not without reason that the party had taken some pains in training them. And this fusing of youth with work on an unprecedented scale in the decisive spheres of communist construction played a large role in the forming of the spiritual aspects of young people.

There is still another important circumstance, namely that the party at this time undertook to carry out measures for bringing the schools closer to life and production. The question was posed with renewed vigor about the great meaning of work -- the "ruler of life" -- for the education of man, his development, and moral growth.

When A. Kuznetsov's story, "Continuation of a Legend," was published (Yunost /Youth/, 1957, No. 7), our literary community appraised it essentially in a positive manner. However, many thought that this was an interesting book, showing talent, but all in all a "first" book. Stern voices were heard as well: who, it was said, is interested in what a helpless boy, a mama's boy, experiences, for do such people really work in our great construction projects?

One review even contained this sentence: "The critical perception of reality by the author of the 'Notes' does not reflect a deep knowledge of the life of contemporary youth. And the romantic coloring of the story leaves no doubt that he is a 'bookworm'. He creates purely by means of technical methods: punctuation, phrases, the contrivance of all kinds of trials in the misfortune of the hero."

That is, so to say, stated quite severely and categorically. But did the critic attempt to collate the graphic contents of the story with the facts of life? We think that this is not the case. And for this reason, evidently, he drew such an unfair conclusion. The young author's story is not devoid of considerable shortcomings. But he was able to include in his writer's viewpoint an important vital occurrence, to see the character traits of a certain group of young people who come mainly from the city, who have not received serious toughening-up, and have not chosen their road in life. And not only does he see this, he also shows in an artistically authentic way the growth of these traits and formation. The entire graphic structure of the story discloses an important thought: only in collective work for the good of society, does man find moral riches, become the real master of his land, the creator of his happiness.

Two years have passed since A. Kuznetsov's story appeared on the readers' book shelves. And now, in the light of the great measures adopted for the reorganization of schools, we see more clearly that the author was a pathfinder in the formulation of an important theme, that he had created lifelike and authentic characters.

It is no secret that in our schools, which have done so much good work, proper attention had not been paid to the education of young men and women for work. And what is more, amidst some segments of youth physical labor was regarded as something unworthy of an educated person. One who had not gone to a vuz was now and then considered to be a failure. "He flunked, and now they'll 'stick' him in some factory..."

Young Tolya -- the hero of "Continuation of a Legend" -- was for a long time also a prisoner of this "philosophy." Tolya was at first confused: the future, as it was, appeared to him simple and smooth -- I will finish school and enter the institute. But he did not enter the institute. And suddenly it seemed to him that he had somehow been deceived: "In kindergarten, sweet mama, we learned to sing: 'We young people have a road leading everywhere,'

but in 17 years it becomes apparent that only one road was referred to -- the road to the factory, as a hard worker, full of grease! Nobody needs us and nobody is interested in us...How sad! What is there to be, what will come?"

And that word "hard worker" has a scornful and disrespectful sound. Yes, for Tolya, going in a train to a construction job in Siberia, physical labor is something onerous, unpleasant. For him it is really possible to indulge in despair when he did not enter the institute, when there were no other roads. And we believe that the author's success consists of the fact that somehow, little by little, a step at a time, by bringing his hero in contact with different people, by placing him in the most diverse circumstances, he shows the crisis in his consciousness, the birth of a new attitude toward work, and this means the birth of a new man as well. Tolya -- honest, smart, interested in many things, evidently well read -- is fully the contemporary Soviet youth. He does not live thoughtlessly -- he wants to understand the meaning of life, its purpose. One thought worries him: which is the most correct road -- the one over which Vitka and Yunna drag along, or the one over which Misha Olkhonski, Anya Moskalenko, and Zakhar Zakharovich stride.

And he finds the right road, the road of people who think of themselves as the "salt and pride" of the land. Even though this road is difficult, one cannot permit himself to be indulgent and a shirker: "You cannot spend your entire life on indulgences." And this finding of the road is authentically depicted in the story without rounding off of corners, and without hypocrisy. Reading the hero's lyrical diary, you see how little envy there is toward Vitka, who "took root" somewhere in a cushy job; it changes into a different feeling, a grand one, an inspiring one. And Tolya's last entry does not sound just like an empty declaration: "Yes, it seems that I am really becoming mature and am beginning to understand a lot. Life belongs to the people who build not only their own wellbeing. They are the salt and happiness of the earth. They have sunny hearts, but their hands -- oh, they are strong, sinewy, they have bloody calluses! These hands can build a wonderful life, and its approach cannot be stopped by anyone; nothing can stop it, it can never be stopped!"

Life itself, that grandiose measure for the reorganization of public education, for bringing the schools closer to practical work, which the Party is now carrying out -- all this shows, that the problems of A. Kuznetsov's story are truly based on material taken from real life.

"The best educational institution, the strictest teacher is life, is our Soviet reality. Book knowledge of the communist principles isolated from practical things is worth nothing," said N. S. Khrushchev in his speech at the XXI CPSU Congress. "First and foremost it is necessary that education be closely connected with life, with production, with the practical activity of the masses. At the center of the party's educational work stands the education of all people for work, the development of a conscious, communist attitude

toward labor. We are striving to convert labor, the creator of all the material and cultural goods, into the first vital necessity of the people."

Many contemporary works are permeated by an important theme of our life: the acquisition by the young people of the quality of a conscious citizen of the country who participates in social production, and who acts in everything like a Soviet patriot must act. The pervading spirit of these books is exactly the civic education of youth, the making of the communist qualities of a new man, the overcoming of those traits and habits which need not be brought along into communism.

In some cases the authors' creative conception is broad and very picturesque; in others it still does not give rise to a serious raising of the question about the official, the public value of man. But one rejoices at the young writers' effort to examine their heroes in a practical situation, in real action. The stature of the hero in the most attractive books of the past few years is revealed in real obstacles and in the search for the right way, for correct decisions.

Such a hero is characterized not by eloquence, not by words about duty, about a vocation, about honor, but rather by how he chooses his place in life, how he regards work, people, and the collective. The reader's sympathy iw won by characters who had been firmly shaped in the front lines of the battle for communism, who in persistent work and self-education are acquiring the qualities necessary for the man of tomorrow. And what is characteristic is that these qualities are being cultivated in the very practice of daily life, and not in pretty dreams about the distant future, about interplanetary flights, and others more. However, interplanetary flights are also an "earthy" matter, a matter of human hands, of inspired work by our contemporaries.

It is a difficult task to depict authentically the moral development of the individual which occurs under the influence of our life. When the writer, and particularly the young writer, succeeds in some measure in solving this task, that is very happy news. And the critic, in the evaluation of such books, must be careful and solicitous in a proprietary way.

To N. Makarova -- author of the article "On the Struggle 'For' and 'Against'" (Znamya /The Banner/, 1958, No 9), an interesting article which posed the general question about the training of youth -- the story of the young writer V. Moskovkin, "How's Life, Semyon?," seemed to be primarily incorrect. The critic built the article on the contrast of two figures -- Tolya from "Continuation of the Legend" and Semyon from V. Moskovkin's story; in the first, it is said, it is a case of the rise of the hero, and in the second it is the history of this downfall. However, even the most partial reading of V. Moskovkin's story does not give occasion for such a contrast, and even less so for defining his ideas as "philanthropic humanism."

True, one is bound to agree with one observation by the critic. In spite of the whole development of action in the story, the author suddenly put into the hands of his hero, the young Semyon, God knows from where a letter by a certain Valeriya Ivanova who had just turned ten. It is a letter in which there is a primitive account of the simple "free" philosophy of this youngster. V. Moskovkin apparently wanted to blame the dependent attitude toward life, giving it such a framework. But that did not become apparent. A certain new plot line emerged which added nothing to the outline of the hero. And the author also permitted a number of other errors in the story, and not all of his characters are three-dimensional and convincing. But V. Moskovkin found creative success, and truthfully and artistically showed authentically how the young Semyon in the difficult march into life -- his personal fate surely did not turn out to be simple -- finds moral firmness and a belief in the justice and humanity of our existence. A 14-year old boy, "an orphan," Semyon could have lost his way, but he did not. And Semyon does not utter empty words while thinking about life: "If mama knew... she was always distressed: (You will be lost without me!' And if you want to be lost -- to get nothing, don't give anything."

To N. Makarova it seemed that the pathos of V. Moskovkin's story is in condemning indifference. However, the author's use of vital material does not afford any grounds for such a definition, even if there are indifferent and egostic people like the fiance of Semyon's sister in the story. It seems to us that the pathos of this work lies in the portrayal of the moral maturity of a boy who has encountered a complex condition -- growing up under the influence of life and people. V. Babin is right ("One Cannot Invent This," Zvezda /Star/, 1959, No 2); in polemicizing with N. Makarova, he observes that the young author "succeeded convincingly in depicting the process of the formation of the character as a complex one, and as a result an absolutely positive one."

The knowledge and mastering by man of the world, and his place in it is also characteristic of the heroes in stories by the young Leningrad writer, Nikolai Dementyev.

When Pavel Kaurov -- an engineer with a degree from a Leningrad institute in his pocket -- arrives in the Siberian river port, everything seems simple and clear to him: Well, I studied in school, then in the institute, and now I will work. However, it turns out that to work, of course, to work well, to do real work, it is not enough to have gotten a small amount of theoretical knowledge; practical preparation for his role as engineer, as a leader of production is necessary. And not only that; it is necessary to be a collectivist, to understand people. But in Pavel there was still much that was childish and not serious.

The main success of the author of the story "My Roads" seems to us to be the portrayal of how the hero, step by step, stumbling, sometimes even falling, realizes that he is not a simple fellow who in the performance of

official duties must do such and such, but that he is a conscious and active toiler of the Soviet land. The hero goes through failures, mistakes, mental adversity, before he is able to make the main and vital choice not formally, but with real meaning.

The raising of the sunken crane is a very important scene in the whole artistic structure of the story. Exactly here the hero felt the healing power of work. This was not only the raising of a sunken crane — work in the icy water, difficult, stubborn, almost heroic work. This was also the raising onto another level in life. And though he is punished for allowing carelessness, and is reduced in position after these days he had spent in fervent work, let it be. He is a new man. And the people with whom he happened to work in the port see him differently. And the mechanic, the communist Pyotr Ivanovich — quiet, smart, a steady fellow — vigilantly observing the young engineer, wishing that he would be further drawn into things. And the girl, of ungracious appearance, with the fiance by the name of Vitya — a good, affectionate fellow, a real comrade, a Komsomol organizer by vocation. And the working lad, Kotchenko — powerful, strong. Yes, and Pavel Kaurov himself during the days when the crane was being raised appears to his comrades on the job in a different light. The workers no longer say about him, as was the case during the early days: "They send us different ones here." They do not announce with a grin: "We'll see to it, as it is said, that you do it, comrade engineer." Instead they talk respectfully about him as a young specialist.

Work is a healer, work is a great education. It also determined the personal fate of the hero: it showed him the road along which to go — straight and true. And, you know, another road also opened up before Pavel — full of curves, in backstreets — that road along which Tina pulled him, who preferred a life without disturbances, without anxiety about some crane, about some "quite strange" people.

The author, depicting the formation of his hero — a good and smart fellow on the whole, but a little unbalanced, childishly lighthearted, now and then overbearing — leads the reader to the conclusion: the man who asserted himself in work, in the collective, who found his place in the common cause of socialist construction, becomes as a result a man with an active attitude toward life, a man who occupies a firm position with a clear view of life.

When Inga Pirogova, the heroine of another story by N. Dementyev, "I Enter into Life," first went into a shop of a large factory, he presented only her external aspect: "Everything around shone in a dim light. Over there a slab of about 10 meters in diameter hardly rotates. A young fellow stands on it and does something. Does he ride like this on it the whole day? What if his head spins? And over there a girl puts a plate on an iron platform, a heavy sledgehammer descends from above almost immediately, shaking everything around it. But if the girl doesn't draw back her hands in time?"

This is naive: suddenly the worker falls with the crane, or the girl's hand comes under the machine. However, you believe the author that this is just how it is, how a girl, who is unaccustomed to the unusual rhthym of complex production, must perceive a large factory.

Inga Piragova grew up in a split-up and unwholesome family. The mother — a cold, calculating, cruel petty bourgeois — who attempted to inculcate the girl with the thought that she must be better, different than others, or, in any case, no worse than "Svetka Sineyeva," the daughter of the neighboring academician. This woman had pushed her husband onto the road to rapaciousness and acquisitiveness; she was also successful in crippling another, younger life. But the good and pure, inculcated in the girl in school, her comrades and friends, and that which her old nurse Anfisa — a woman with busy hands and a good heart — trained her in, the whole bracing atmosphere of our reality kept Inga from slipping down into the morass of the petty bourgeoisie, even though her road did not turn out to be easy.

"You know, there is a game called 'pulling rope.' I remember playing it in school myself. One of my hands pulls all the good things to me, the other — the bad ones," muses Inga. The reader is shown that the good things prevailed. "Inga-style," Inga — from the surroundings of a sated life, brazenly displayed by its flippant youth — she tears away from all that is empty and tawdry and goes to meet the people of today.

And you believe the author that this Inga — sincere, honest, good in her own way, despite the tainted and bad situation at home — was able to take this step and go into a factory, into a shop, become a worker, sense that she is part of a large collective, feel the beneficial influence of work in the name of a common goal, and know the happiness of this work.

We are told: Inga's fate is exceptional. That we don't have many families similar to the Pirogov family. Yes, this is true. But even in such an exceptional case the writer is able to talk about the main theme, about the big thing in life, about the shaping of character, about the great strength of the collective, about work which strengthens the will and ennobles man.

It is therefore necessary to upbraid the writer for the fact that he took for an artistic inquiry a situation which possibly is not such a widespread and vital manifestation. One must upbraid him because he somewhat simplified the process of Inga's formation in the factory collective, because he did not go into psychological details which would have made it possible to feel the sudden change in her consciousness.

The stories by A. Kuznetsov and N. Dementyev — quite different in their artistic structure, although they are written in the first person — are by their very spirit sharply different from the so-called "school" stories which at one time had taken up space in youth journals. In them were good boys and

girls, one or two disobedient idlers, and, of course, the good and all-knowing class tutoress, who brought about improvement in the laggards and then turned them into excellent pupils. The heroes of these stories thought most of the time about their marks, and not about their road in life.

True, there also were other works. And they now and then acutely posed questions connected with shortcomings in school matters. These books contained interesting, true-to-life characters. However, problems of becoming acquainted with life, through the process of work, were not raised in them.

The lofty, artistic significance of such books about youth is in the affirmation of the importance of man's toughening-up through work, in the affirmation of a high moral ideal, in the bellicose censure of parasitism, of adaption to circumstances, and of a narrow-minded attitude toward work.

Man must earn the proud title of citizen of the country of the Soviets with his work and moral aspect — this thought found its artistic embodiment in the stories by young writers. Put differently, we are talking about the fact that man acquires the traits of communist morality. These traits, these qualities no one "receives" just by being a young man or woman, but, as they say, you treasure them and make use of them. They are produced in the process of collective work, as a result of constant educational and organizational work by the party.

The heroes of these books about youth are thinking and searching ones. But they are not skeptics who have lost their faith in everything, and who see falsehood, two-facedness, hypocrites everywhere they look. We remember that we saw this type of hero not long ago both in the pages of the journals and on the living stage. And to a large extent in critical articles where one read about, as they put it, the hero of our time — this young man who was expiating the "sins" of the father, who was forsaking the challenges of "dogma" and "trivial combination of words." It was not necessary for him to master, to study life. He already knew it all, and excelled in all...

No, the heroes of these books about youth are, fortunately, not of that kind, because they are real, positive heroes. We coined this term and we recall articles in which the words "positive" and "negative" are being used rather ironically.

We read in one of Arkadi Elyashevich's articles that, "Long ago, it was said, the moment arose to come out against the schedmatic use of those very terms 'positive' and 'negative,' to say publicly that 'positive' and 'negative' are not a summation which has been attached from without to the virtue and quality of the hero, but are to a large extent the subtly veiled essence, the internal make-up, the objective meaning of his activity. There is no room here for talk about this extremely interesting question, but I want to note that a sharp and obviously never-concealed over-emphasis on the 'positiveness' or 'negativeness' of the image lies outside the principles of the versatile portrayal of the hero's virtue and quality."

In what is the critic right here? He is right that there is no need to use schematic terminology of literary criticism, no need to prescribe artistically, to thrust on the hero a load of virtues. The author reasonably condemns a prescription concocted beforehand of those or different qualities needed to "adorn" the hero. This is just. We remember the absurd reasoning of some critics about the so-called ideal hero, the bearer of "compulsory qualities." We remember the philosophizing by the "theoreticians" of no conflict...

Yes, one must not forget this. However, all the critics are inexact in their polemics. For I doubt that we must abstain from the precise and clear concept of the "positive and the negative hero." I think that complete clarity in the appreciation of the internal make-up of the hero, of the objective meaning of his activity runs in the channel of the principles of a versatile portrayal of his virtues and qualities. The positive hero can be portrayed by the artist in the whole complexity of his character, feelings, internal struggle of the new with the old, growth, and formation. This depends on the artist's talent, on his mastery.

It is true that the pathos maintained by literature becomes apparent first of all in the creation of the form of the positive heroes; this is the most important conquest of our literature. These positive heroes are not featureless, not soulless diagrams, not "automated creatures"; they have a full life: they work, struggle, love, are afraid, think... They are portrayed in the formative aspect, in battle, in the process of liberation from old ideas. Their inner world is rich. Exactly those are the positive heroes. Yes, the kind of heroes like, let us say, Tolya in A. Kuznetsov's work or Pavel in N. Dementyev's tale, who are portrayed in the formation of their best characters.

Today literature about and for youth is confronted by the task to show a strong hero, of the right dimension, with lofty aspirations, who could become a model, an example to be emulated.

It is not difficult to see something in common between Tolya at the Irkutsk hydroelectric station, Pavel Kaurov and Inga Pirogova — Inga-style — although the circumstances in which they find themselves are not the same, yes, and the characters of these people are sufficiently individualistic. But they have something in common. In essence, the writers portrayed different aspects of one common type: the young man or girl who did not get hardened for work in the family and in school, and who is entering the great life for the first time. But is this perhaps the only possible type? No, of course not. And those who right away, from youth on, became acquainted with the beauty and scope of work, those who law-abidingly and with full awareness of their duty went into construction work, into the State Farms, into factories? They are difficult to find in new books. I think it is not by accident that in A. Kuznetsov's story the other heroes are formed with a lesser degree of penetration into the world of their feelings, like Anatolya.

Yes, among the young people who occupy a central place in the books about youth, we almost never find characters made of a heroic mold. This is to be regretted.

The heroes about whom we are talking in the article solve problems of a moral kind; they are being shown in everyday life, in a way of life. The writers contribute original thoughts, they pose and solve important questions: how to comprehend the aim of life, what are the duties which are beneficial for the society of man. The heroes choose a place in life, and then in the construction of that high and beautiful edifice, the name of which is communism.

The young writers have conveyed the sincere aspirations and thoughts of their generation, and this their books have done in a true and attractive way for the reader; they have given him originality and spontaneity. But after the authors together with their heroes reveal anew something revealed already long ago in literature.

I remember that Matveyev and Bezais -- the heroes of Viktor Kin's novel -- were quite young lads, hardly 17; we remember Koshevoi -- almost a child, who was made the leader of Komsomol underground activities. These heroes affirmed their individuality, their growth, in ardent struggle -- both their moral and political growth. The young writer ought to think about this.

This very epoch raises new demands. We need heroes who reflect the greatness of our days, the spiritual fulness of Soviet life, the beauty of our acts; heroes who are capable of becoming a true example for youth. We are, of course, not talking about the notorious "ideal" hero, concocted from the simple prescription of some theoreticians. We are talking about the truthful representation of the complex and varied processes of life, work, and the struggle of Soviet society. We are talking about the ability to look into the present from the position of the future, from the position of communism.

Our literature actively confirms reality and participates in the development of society. The consciousness of duty, the belief in the truth and greatness of our cause unites the youth which was swept along in the avalanches of Budyonny's attacks, and the youth who built Magnitok; also those who marched in the same rank with Oleg Koshevi, and the young people who plowed the virgin steppe, as well as those who now work in the communist labor brigades. However, the inner aspect of the young hero of Perekop and the contemporary lad -- the builder of the Bratsk hydroelectric station -- is different. For a whole era has passed; and what an era it has been!

Today's young worker has a much broader view of the world, and his knowledge is immeasurably greater. Since childhood he has received the riches of the cultural revolution which is in progress in our country. He knows the basic sciences, he gains an understanding of art and literature. His horizon

is the horizon of the new man. For this reason A. Fadeyev depicted the internal aspect of Koshevoi differently than, let us say, the internal aspect of Morozok. Those political and moral questions which were unclear to Morozok were well understood by the student Koshevoi. The discourses of Bezai and Matveyev about classical literature or about love may perhaps seem naive and even strange to contemporary youth. The great effort of constructing socialism, the gigantic educational work of the party, had formed the generation of citizens of the new world, and enriched the lofty, moral aspect of the young Soviet man as well.

Unfortunately, all the young writers -- even those who achieved the greatest successes and who with talent told the readers about the young boys and girls of today -- did not reflect in full measure the intellectual richness and high-minded steadfastness of the young citizens of our country. How are they to formulate the quality not only of the toiler, but also of the political fighter of our day? This question still remains to be answered.

In recent times a considerable youth movement took place in factories and works -- the communist labor brigades. The young workers attempt not only to work in a communist manner, but also to live in a communist manner. And this means: constant perfection of their knowledge and an enriching of their esthetic and moral aspects; the overcoming of old, narrow-minded attitudes and habits with regard to the way of life. Ripening, they develop new character traits of the communist personality: a feeling of collectivity, care for the public well-being; they overcome the traits of possessiveness and dependency. A careful studying of these manifestations so characteristic of our time can considerably enrich the writers' presentation of the young generation and of vital conflicts.

Life gives rise to a large variety of characters and types. For instance, open an issue of Komsomolskaya Pravda. How different are the individual fates of young men and girls who are taking part in the construction of the new! But this is journalism. And belletristic? Is not the choice of heroes we have perhaps too "narrow," and is there perhaps always that atmosphere of the great life in books, without which the hero cannot be portrayed authentically and clearly? "Chronicle of the Times of Viktor Podgurski," a story by A. Gladilin, is attractive because of the freshness of its form and the vitality of the language. It is not constructed along standard lines: the precise description of some action makes room for the lyric diary of the hero, and genre scenes are spelled by important, chapter long, internal monologues.

Such construction permits to show three-dimensionally both the thoughts and acts of the hero -- to state it succinctly, the hero is close to material which had been mentioned earlier. Viktor failed the competitive exam for the institute, but the girl he loves, Nina, passed it. She got new interests, new acquaintances, and she, a student, frequently did not speak the same language as Viktor, who went to night school. And only when Podgurski goes

to the scientific-research institute as laboratory technician does he grow spiritually and attain the same level as Nina. We can see that there is much that is similar in Viktor, Tolya, and Inga. In the mind of the author, the hero must in some way stand for his generation -- you see, the book has the title Chronicle of the Times...

And what is that? A. Gladilin said correctly that his hero, who found himself without a cause, who was out of school, was lost, was growing intellectually dull. But in our opinion he had not shown the most important thing -- how Viktor found himself, which new qualities he acquired finding work, and what enriched him spiritually. Is it possible that there should have been some more serious conflict than the conflict which was at the root of the story? Viktor never happened to meet people who could have put him on his feet, who would be remembered by him for a long time -- and not only by him but also by the reader.

What transpired with the hero in the scientific-research institute which he had entered? Nothing, actually. He played successfully in the chess tourney. He participated in a group ski excursion. But have we here perhaps anything qualitatively new, of the kind that forms and transforms man? And the difficulty of the formation is not conveyed by a phrase such as this: "Therefore, despite all his enthusiasm, Viktor ruined some reagents in a rather short period. He had to be reeducated." The information at the end of the story, that the former and present Viktor Podgurski have nothing in common, is just words insufficiently corroborated by the graphic, artistic content.

The author wanted to show that the hero was unusual, non-typical, with subtle feelings. "Why is not everyone this way? It is said that youth is a gay time. Continuous songs until the morning. Walks through the whole town with schoolmates in white-and-rose graduation clothes. The laughter of youth, youthful daring... No, he evidently was not one of those 'model' youths who are supposed either to lie on the grass in the wide field, or, having hoisted a miner's pick, to sing: 'Komsomols have restless hearts.' True, he still was not a complete idiot, and he was able to work. In any event, they did not have a bad opinion of him in the laboratory. But which one of the positive young people, of average significance, will lose a whole evening in dreams over whether to make a phone call?"

In this lyric monologue there is even an argument with some "positive" heroes. And here is Viktor, "Not a model," but what is he? It is difficult to reply to this question, primarily because little is shown of the hero's attitude toward work, toward the collective, toward society; all this is quite walled-off in the story.

A. Gladilin sees his hero best when he talks with Nina, thinks about Nina, speaks about Nina. You believe the author: his hero has a great and pure love. But what is this Nina? What is her character? Why had she been

disappointed in Oleg -- an engineer who had proposed to her? What ties her to Podgurski? You see, for an understanding of that aspect this inner monologue contributes nothing: "No, his torment is enough. Viktor?... Always a little strange, quite passionate, he pleased her sometimes with his astonishing candor about his feelings. But even on days when she felt best she asked herself: 'Do I love him?' And here she found no love in herself. For her cool calmness, strength of will were not enough. When she first saw Oleg (she was 15 then), she made up her mind: that one must be my husband. Now she constantly catches herself thinking about Oleg. Perhaps it is still early for her..."

A. Gladilin is a gifted writer. But his presentation of life, of the hero's character is still to a large extent abstract. I think that is why he was not successful in showing convincingly how Viktor finds that which elevates and enriches man in concrete and real practice. The young writer had not observed enough of life, which is necessary in order to depict the formation, the moral growth of the heroes truthfully had not observed that vital atmosphere in which they live.

Young literature is a literature of creative intelligence, of a fresh feeling of life, of bolt thoughts, courage, Komsomol fervor. And when we see a walling-off, a reticence in ideas about life in separate works -- this can only create concern.

In our times it is impossible to portray a hero in a valuable and striking manner without noting his attitude toward work and toward the collective. Exactly here is the most conspicuous aspedt of everything: what kind of fellow is this -- a creator or a dependent, the host of the land or a weed. Leonid Sobolyov was right when he observed in his speech at the founding Congress of the RSFSR Writers Union, that the most important difference, in our contemporary hero from the traditional hero will be in attitude toward work. "The image of the contemporary hero," L. Sobolyev notes, "is verified exactly in the light of his attitude toward work and toward the collective. How strong are the qualities of the new man in him? What is his attitude toward work? To which extent is it close to the new, the communist attitude? What is work to him: a means for the achievement of personal prosperity, or does he see in it a much higher, socially-significant concept?"

Therefore, in evaluating this or the other book, it is so important to take into account how extensively the writer has succeeded in catching the traits of the new man, to convey how these traits turn out and are being formed, and how they become apparent.

In A. Dovzhenko's "Poem about the Sea" there is such a character -- Valeri Golik. This young engineer works on the construction of a new hydroelectric station. And he knows that his work also consists of creating a new sea. But this is a fellow with an empty soul, with a weak, egotistical outlook. What is the sea to him, what are people to him! He is only interested

in his own person, he lives for himself and only for himself. Golik deceives a girl and sees nothing "special" in this. He even considers himself to be necessary for the society of man: for does he not do good, not shunning work? And he knows: when communism arrives, what, as it is said, does it matter that he is amoral, that he is a cynic and careerist. Golik reasons: "Well, why am I so, why?.... Though wait, this is not the main thing... Yes, I am, of course, amoral. But what is my amorality? Nothing. A drop in the ocean."

The artist emphasizes this in the entire graphic structure of his poem: the appearance of such a personality as Valeri is deeply hostile to the entire structure of our life. A people advancing toward communism cannot tolerate in its midst a dependent attitude toward life, toward society. And Dovzhenko draws a fantastic picture: Savva Zarydny, Kolkhoz chairman, angrily brandishes a whip over the head of Golik: "I hate you. Twenty-five years I have worked indefatigably. All my sweat and blood were poured out here... And who keeps the happiness of work from me?. ... You."

Savva is the native sea; Valeri is -- stagnant rot. This rot is now and then not easy to recognize, and it is necessary to possess the insight of contemporary man in order to reveal its essence, its spreading. Mayakovski did that well, was able to notice it, to expose it and to introduce into his sentences different manifestations of "rubbish" and of the "old," wrapping it frequently in very "special" wrappings.

The old, sluggish, hostile is now carefully concealed. You do not see it right away. It takes on the most different forms. And in order to examine the "bad," it is necessary to possess a deep awareness of life, it is necessary to know the "good."

A certain literary type, the zoot-suiter (stilyag) has taken root in contemporary literature, and particularly in the journals. If you believe some authors, it is not necessary to recognize him -- look and you see right away: his hair is long, but the trousers short, that's him. However, in real life this is more complicated. The zoot-suiter suddenly becomes a young fellow in most respectable trousers and with his hair cut in the "half-box" /poluboks/ style. And the dandified lad seldom appears to be a quite hopeless fellow, but a good, smart, and honest one. "Inga-style," the heroine of N. Dementyev's story, "I Enter Life," is an example of that. Unfortunately, the cliche of depicting them as negative and alien is found even in good books.

Anatoli -- the hero of "Continuation of the Legend" -- carries on a polemic in his lyric diary with a certain Vitka, who had remained in Moscow, having been placed by his "daddy" in a technical trade school. But how shallowly the figure of Vitka is presented! The lad unmasks himself without restraint: here I am, cowardly, weak, and nasty. Tolya writes so frankly: you are "stuck" there, and I am diverted here, "I give life."

In N. Dementyev's story, "My Roads," the character of Feliks Petunin evidently also was not worked out, in our opinion; he is an architect who had "sheltered" Tina. This is a "dutiful" character, but not a real one. Feliks, who also relies on such people, lives in "his" luxurious quarters, rides in a Pobeda, talks about "his" projects. However, the essence of this according to the author's intention, the Philistine, a man remote from our morals, has not been revealed. In order to fight with evil it is necessary to see its roots, to be able to discern the true face of the false man with an inner respectability.

We remember with what psychological exactness V. Tendryakov, in "The Wonder Working," depicts a village priest -- not the sort we had become accustomed to seeing in the caricatures of the 20's, but a different one; he is smart, polite, reasonable, and gentle. He also fights for peace, and discusses general happiness; and he smokes cigarettes from a cigarette case on which the Kremlin tower is engraved. The parson does not like publicity in such "delicate" matters like the fate of Rodka Guiyayeva. But the author makes the reader feel through the entire graphic structure of his story that this fellow is alien to our life, to our morals. His clash with the old teacher is a skirmish of principles, the clash of two ideologies.

The writer, having decided to unmask that which agitates us, does not carry on an approximate, "scattered" firing; instead, his shots are well-aimed, exact.

In connection with this it is desirable to dispute one thesis in V. Chalmayev's article, "A Fighting Contemporary" (Voprosy Literatury, 1959, No 1). In the critique of a play by V. Rozov, "In Search For Happiness," it seemed somehow useless to the critic for the writer of a piece to strengthen in man such moral qualities as goodness, sympathy, cordiality. He believes that the main thing does not lie in these qualities. Yes, the true beauty of Soviet man is not only in these qualities; the critic is right there. But can we perhaps, having entered into the period of large-scale building of communism, take with us the traits of narrow-mindedness, stinginess, self-love? Do perhaps the fine traits of the soul of Soviet man not differentiate him from man in the bourgeois world?

There is a reference to Fadeyev's Morozka, with whom, so the critic writes, "not everything was in harmony on this count" (that is, as regards the "condition of real honesty"), but he is able to give his life for the revolution -- to give it in vain. We have already said that today's young man would be hard to measure with a measure suitable for a lad only acquainted with the new life. And yes, the meaning of the image of Morozka cannot be understood in a simple way. The strength of Fadeyev's novel lies in the fact that it showed with great artistic persuasiveness how people, still connected by roots with the old morality, acquire a new, socialist morality in the first of the revolution. Honesty, truthfulness, warmheartedness, sympathy -- those are not empty words, but qualities necessary for the

building of the most humane and just communist society. And if the writer fortifies these qualities in man, and fights against the manifestation of morals harmful to us, he performs important party work.

The party calls on the workers in literature and art to reflect the grandioise events of our days, the basic changes which have taken place in our activity, particularly during the last years; to show the Soviet man in the entire wealth of his spiritual life and creative activity. And together with that to expose the survivals of the old in the minds of the people, the manifestations of stagnation, egotism, order of precedence, influences of proprietary ideology — all the things which hamper us in the building of a communist society.

Real passion and a militant temperament are needed to expose various manifestations of "rubbish" and of the "old." And it is gratifying when you find a type of temperamental poem in books by young authors such as the lines by V. Fyedorov; they are aimed at those who want to live by the work of others and are not participating with all their soul in the historical building of the new:

With a passionate word
With a word that strikes home,
Oh, if I could pass on
To everyone hatred toward those who lazily wait—
Life is too short to wait!
The time
You spend in waiting
Turns grey my head...
For you are stealing our life
Like wormwood saps —
The land!

Much is given to youth. Writers who are beginning to produce literature bring with them new vital material, a freshness and spontaneity in perceiving reality which in some measure compensates for their inexperience. And not only that. Is it perhaps not important to observe where and for what the young writers search? We think that, for instance, one of the attractive aspects of A. Kuznetsov's story was the originality of its form. The writer constructs his story in the form of a lyrical and emotional diary of the hero. The young Tolya shares with the readers his observations about the phenomena of life, his doubts, thoughts, and decisions, his arguments with himself. This is not a simple tale about what happened to him. The hero does not know what is going to happen to him in an hour or tomorrow. The intonation of the story's structure lends the hero a spiritual mood. To a certain degree the spurts of the diary's "nervous" rhythm correspond to the confused feeling which Tolya experiences. The poetic intonation characterizing the story is connected with the author's attempt to depict the poetry of work which is raising the young hero toward a comprehension of the aims and purposes of man's life.

The mosaic-like structure of the story was dictated by the author's effort to create a conflict between the hero and a great number of people. As can be seen, a new form was born here not from the arbitrariness of the author, but from a very real situation.

"Continuation of the Legend" is a story in which the main means of depicting the hero's character are a line, a detail. In this lies the strong aspect of the book. In this, if you please, and to a certain extent in its scantiness. The story only gained from the most extensive use of material from life.

A very interesting observation observation about the artistic originality of V. Moskovkin's story, "How's Life, Semyon?" was made by N. Zamoshkin in his article which appeared in the journal Oktyabr /October/ (1959, No 2). He noticed the peculiarity of intonation in the author's discourse and the discourse of the character, which makes it possible to feel the formation of Semyon, an impulsive and impressionable lad.

The search for originality of form marks A. Gladilin's story, "Chronicle of the Times of Viktor Podgurski." He succeeds in conveying the feeling of confusion which gets hold of Viktor after he was not accepted in the institute. However, the young writer did not forcefully and visibly depict the very process of the hero's moral development.

A. sharpness of perception of life is also characteristic of N. Dementyev's stories. However, it seems to us that the search for a new form which corresponds to the scheme of the book is here barely perceptible. And that is too bad. Pavel Kaurov and Inga Pirogova are presented in the comparatively restricted sphere of manifestations of their personality, less than the writer could have shown had he used fresh means of artistic expression.

Not only new vital material, but also the most significant means and forms of portraying the heroes' world of feelings, the means which are responsible for the lofty creative task of work — exactly this is what makes for originality in the creative person of the writer. The road for young people in literature is the daring road. It is impossible to be otherwise.

The party fights consistently and steadfastly for art, for the richest progressive ideas, for brilliant mastery, for artistic implementation, and for penetration into the world of feelings.

One of the most serious problems facing our critics now is the scientific solution of the question about the interrelation of method and style, the community of lofty, artistic principles, and about the creative versatility of literature. You seldom see a study about "inertia," lack of subject matter, "dull" organization of some books; about the fact that they "do not carry one along," that the character of the heroes is not depicted in all possible connections and manifestations. It is even less possible to name articles

which have seriously analyzed the innovation of that or another artist — the creative search which gives the work a lofty profoundity and educational power.

Youth is avidly drawn to books, loves the theater, movies, and paintings. And the critic can help them to understand and feel art. The critic, interpreting the literary scene, writes first of all for the reader; he shapes public opinion and illuminates the entire literary process. He is called on to depict the high-minded thought and the artistic essence of a work, and at the same time to enrich the esthetic tastes of the reader, particularly of the young reader, and to give him the possibility to feel the vital picture of the artistic word better, to gain understanding of what is genuine poetry and what is artless imitation of it, where beauty is, and where there is tawdry "prettiness."

Madam Mezalyansova, one of the characters in "The Turkish Bath," spoke languorously as she turned to the director: "Well, of course art must reflect life, the beautiful life of attractive vital people." Another character in the comedy — "a cultural worker," the chatterbox and toady Ivan Ivanovich — chimed in: "Yes, yes! Give us something beautiful." Their understanding of the "beautiful life" is something pretty, for the sake of delighting the petty-bourgeois tastes which have been nurtured.

Mayakovski came out angrily against this confectionary beauty which is in contrast to the contemporary beauty of life, the beauty of Soviet men; he came out against beauty which spoils the tastes of Soviet man, of the spectator, of the listener.

Soviet art has always portrayed the authentic beauty of our life in the best of its work. There is also something different for which it is difficult to choose a definition. We recall, for instance, the movies "To the Black Sea" or "Girl with a Guitar." They were made entirely in the spirit of Madam Mezalyansova's requirements to "give us beauty." It is difficult to believe that the heroes of those pictures work somewhere and do something. The music plays, color pours out, the machines hum, and sweet girls smile. However, there is no contemporary beauty which reflects our fine creative life.

Serious, thoughtful, pedagogic, and, when necessary, trenchant, feuilleton-style discussions about similar types of manifestations in art are very beneficial for our young readers.

The critic is called upon to come out sharply and actively against everything that spoils the tastes of young viewers and readers. Not long ago the literary community justly turned its attention to the serious danger of detective stories which were flooding the book market, which are being presented as books in the adventurous vein. It is possible that such books which have been newly-published in the cave of Likhtveis and Rokambol, like

Copper Button by L. Ovalov, train the readers, particularly the young ones, to look at books only for diverting intrigue, while not scrutinizing the contents for lofty meaning as well.

A similar type of book has inner signs of artistic production. In it are conflict, and positive and negative characters. But how far they are removed from life and literature! Their characters are only, as one says, topography, "conventional relations," but not an image, a character. Such books cleverly call forth in young amateur readers an attitude toward belles lettres as something especially entertaining, "not the present," far from real life. Our criticism cannot be reconciled to the penetration of hack work in reading and viewing habits, in whatever garments this hack work might be dressed up: in the ball dress of a "smart" movie review, in the peacock feathers of a poetic opus, or in the book's resemblance to an interesting subject.

The party has always turned the attention of the artist to the representation of the major processes and phenomena of life; it has eliminated all obstacles on this road. The party has converted into reality the dream of the genial people of the past -- to educate man with a purpose, through the means of art.

Soviet writers regard the problems of depicting youth as the most important literary problem, which emanates from the very nature of the socialist realistic method. The task which has now been put before literature is to show the formation of a new man, a man of communism. This concerns the entire generation, but in particular youth, for it grows up in new conditions, acquiring from childhood on the traits of communist morals, of communist work. It will live under communism!

Perhaps the loftiest and noblest thing for an artist is to know the questions of the young reader, to think about his moral make-up, about the fact that each of his actions, each spiritual move shall be beautiful, so that he will always remember about his high purpose; to awaken the builder and creator in him, the collectivist and high-minded and hardened fighter, to prepare youth for the battle for the realization of the highest ideals of mankind, to teach him to live in a communist manner.

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