

The Motive of a Disappointed Terrorist in the Works of M. P. Artsybashev and B. V. Savinkov

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Terrorism had become a phenomenon in the past four decades, at the very least. It had a strong influence on the development of public thinking in Russia from the turn of the 70s-80s of the 19th century when, after the failure of the radical wing of the populist movement, its supporters chose a strategy of open struggle against representatives of state power. This includes the tsar Alexander II. Several attempts to assassinate the tsar turned out to be unsuccessful. However, at the very end of the series of assassinations, there was an attempt to assassinate I. I. Grinevitsky, the consequences of which led the tsar and the terrorist to die.

In addition to literature affecting the theoretical and ideological foundations of the terrorist movement, there were also biased biographies of the most distinguished representatives of the movement, and men and women who popularized this ideology. It should also be noted that several literary works appeared during this period, the theme of which was just the terrorist movement. In addition to all of this, there were novels written in the early period of the emergence and development of terrorist theory, an example of which is the 19-century anti-nihilistic novel (the most famous is F. M. Dostoevsky's novel "Demons" (Бесы)), in Russian literature. There were also works reflecting the later stage of the terrorist movement, a stage in which it became increasingly clear that the terrorists failed to

achieve the most radical goals of the movement, i.e., a mass rebellion of the “nation” and changes in public order.

To such works, the hero of which is a person who approves terroristic ideas about resistance to the existing public order through violent acts directed against the most prominent representatives of this order. It is possible to look at two works to which we want to draw attention from since they are two poles of consideration in the terrorist movement: the first of these works is the story of M. P. Artsybashev’s “Worker Shevyrev” (Рабочий Шевырев), written in 1905, the second will be a prose work in the form of a diary “The Pale Horse” (Конь бледный) from 1909, authored by B. V. Savinkov-Ropshin, an active participant in the terrorist movement. The time of the origin of both works is interesting – the first of them was published at the very beginning of the era of social unrest, uprisings, and their repression in 1905-1907; the second work, on the other hand, just responds to the events of these years. Both pieces, however, are associated with the motive of disappointment and doubt, which is emphasized by both writers as a starting point for changing the value setting of the main characters of their works, which, in our opinion, determines the entire construction of the intrigue, plot and “building” of the characters of the stories. This helps connect the main thought to the primary meaning, which the semantic gesture¹ of both writers introduces into their works. All of this determines not only the entire construction of the text but also affects the receptive activity of the reader.

M. P. Artsybashev’s “Worker Shevyrev”: analysis

Let us start with the Artsybashev work – it comes earlier and deals with the signs of hard times felt by the Russian public, who had to deal

¹ The term of J. Mukarovsky. See, for example, his article *Záměrnost a nezáměrnost v umění*. (MUKAŘOVSKÝ, Jan. *Záměrnost a nezáměrnost v umění*. In MUKAŘOVSKÝ, Jan. *Studie [I]*. Sestavení svazku, kritika textu a komentář Miroslav Červenka a Milan Jankovič. Brno: Host, 2000. Strukturalistická knihovna. Vol. 4., pp. 353–388).

with a series of economic stagflation. This intensified due to the shockingly unsuccessful outcome of the Russian-Japanese war. The hero of the work is a former revolutionary student Leonid Nikolayevich Tokarev, who uses a passport of a peasant Nikolai Egorov Shevyrev. Given the information so far, one can feel a certain inconsistency between the title of the story and the public position of the hero – the name speaks of a worker, but the hero turns out to be a student and even a peasant in his passport. This technique allows the writer to be inclusive and combine several layers of the population in one character. He is their collective representative and is shown precisely in the sphere of contact with workers and then with student Sergei Ivanovich Aladyev, who lives in the same apartment in which Shevyrev/Tokarev rents one room. If the peasant's passport is only a means to hide his real name, then the other two incarnations of the protagonist – the student and the worker – are used by the author to confront representatives of the same estates that he encounters as part of the development of the story's plot. Such a "polyidentity" of the protagonist can also be interpreted as a hint of a possible internal contradiction – the student's position implicates a rather theoretical orientation, and the hypostasis of the worker hints at the advantage of practical activity. It is with this technique that the writer anticipates the main clashes of the hero with representatives of both of these worlds, the world of theory and the world of the practice of movement aimed at changing the impoverished life of these very layers of the population.

The first clash, which is essentially ideological, is the discussion of the main character of the work with a student who, in line with Tolstoyism (not without reason, Aladyev looks at Tolstoy's portrait on the wall after a conversation) and ideas of the so-called gradualists suggest that the desire to free the enslaved should be slow and without violence. In their first conversation, when it turns out that Shevyrev is familiar with Aladyev's stories, Shevyrev gives this assessment: "If

I'm not mistaken, your idea is that there are no bad people in their right mind and fresh memory. That only external, removable circumstances prevent people from being good. I do not believe in this. A man is of vile nature" (Artsybashev/Арцыбашев, 1994, 267). Shevyrev's negative attitude to Aladyev's idealistic views is evident; he even shocks the young writer, telling him: "I really hate people ... all human instincts are predatory ..." (Artsybashev/Арцыбашев, 1994, 268). They did not manage to overcome their differences. The views of a young idealist writer and the progress denying Shevyrev were at a constant clash since both of them are firmly convinced of their righteousness. After this discussion, Aladyev again took up a new story in which "... he wrote about how peasants executed for truth die: simply, without words, without making this feat, not expecting enthusiasm and hymns, with concentration and calmness, as if knowing something that others do not know" (Artsybashev/Арцыбашев, 1994, pp. 271-272) – and here one can feel the influence of L. N. Tolstoy, first of all, in his story labeled "Three deaths". Aladyev, as it turns out, broke up with more radical friends because of his views, one of whom later hid his bomb and revolver, promising that this would only be for a short time. Shevyrev, however, does not take into account the student's opinion and does not change anything in his views. He considers them theoretical, not corresponding to his requirement to actively change something, achieve something, and not remain in the position of a compassionate theory. He does not sit at home but goes to the factory, where he searches for work in vain. In this search, he witnesses the cruel treatment of workers and, in turn, their helplessness and inability to find an opportunity to overcome what they accept as an unchangeable fate. This episode is a statement of fact, a description of the real humiliating position of the workers, an example of what Shevyrev is very dissatisfied with. This is confirmed in his conversation with a worker visiting the city who tells him how he and his comrades tried

to improve their position and how they were punished with the help of soldiers. Artsybashev uses just such a contrasting comparison of both characters, showing the contradiction of two concepts: Aladyev is a theorist, distant from those in whose name he writes, to whom he has compassion, but not only does not know anything sensible about them, does not come into contact with them, but also nothing concrete helps to alleviate their situation since he is capable of only idealistic, passive compassion and observation. Shevyrev, on the contrary, is in contact with the representatives of workers. He is convinced, however, of what he observed before: the workers do not find any way to actually improve their situation. They either passively accept their role, or – when they become active – even their more or less peaceful performances do not bring permanent change. Moreover, employers use violence to invite soldiers when workers become more active in seeking to improve their situation. In this case, economic inequality is connected with the institutional one, which reinforces the impression of the complete infringement of helpless workers. Shevyrev, who knows this, speaks in conversations as a person who knows all this well and who is convinced that violence must be used against violence – it is necessary not to reconcile, but to fight. This allows him not to respect those who obey – this is how his opinion developed, which is manifested in his behavior in relation to interlocutors.

Shevyrev's somewhat arrogant position is strong – the conversation with the worker convinces him once again that the workers are people without firm will and consciousness since he hears such words: “Well, of course, the people are stupid and beaten to infinity. ... Spying is developed – passion. Just a little, now in the ear of an engineer: Ivanov, Petrov, there, they behave badly. Well, and at twenty-four hours, through the police, get out ...” (Artsybashev/Арцыбашев, 1994, p. 285). In a conversation, Shevyrev finds out that there is no solidarity, particularly, the solidarity of workers who opposed unsatisfactory working conditions does not exist. The story of how one of the rebels,

the librarian from the library opened as part of the protest, was punished: “Our Cossack tied our librarian to the saddle and trotted into the city ... His hands were tied back, so if he lagged behind, he would be twisted, and he fell into the mud and dragged right on the ground ... and another Cossack rode behind and pricked him to lift ... Damn! ... Many cried as they drove him ... – Ah, cried! – repeated Shevyrev. Fierce, implacable contempt sounded in his cold voice” (Artsybashev/Арцыбашев, 1994, p. 286).

Shevyrev feels the same complex feeling, which is a mixture of disgust and regret, when he hears a story of a teacher who no longer endured the rude behavior of the director and dared to resist him, thus becoming unemployed. The old people living with Shevyrev in his apartment are considered to be a symbol of authorities and their humiliating attitude, that Shevyrev finds disgusting. He has a negative attitude to Aladyev’s gesture, which takes loans and helps the poor teacher’s family pay for housing for at least some time. He also condemns Aladyev just as cruelly as when he was unable to help the young Olenka, whom he allows to read his works. According to the ideas instilled in them, she expects from him regret and help, even love, when an elderly widower, a merchant from the same house, wants to marry her against her will. Shevyrev menacingly states: “... You, a dreamer, an idealist, do you understand what inhuman torment you have prepared for her?” (Artsybashev/Арцыбашев, 1994, p. 318) And the reproaches continue: “Do you know how many unhappy, deceived by you, instead of dying or killing, they are waiting for something, crying to the Lord God, because there is no other Judge and Justice for them...” (Artsybashev/Арцыбашев, 1994, p. 319). After all the words made to his interlocutors, it is clear – Shevyrev condemns all who are not able to defend their right to exist in actively resisting the violence of the rich and those in power. Sheadyrev’s words had a profound effect on Aladyev. For a moment, he felt his weakness and the weakness of upheld ideas, unable to help such

helpless ones as Olenka: “I wanted to grab the whole world with my huge hands and shake it so that all these houses, people, deeds and thoughts flew into the air with dust”. (Artsybashev/Арцыбашев, 1994, p. 321).

Until that pivotal moment, it was difficult to understand the future of Shevyrev. The next development of the plot shows Shevyrev as a person who decided on a terrorist act, who was previously associated with the terrorist movement, in which he also loved the girl who sacrificed her life. In an imaginary night meeting with her, long dead, she tells Shevyrev, who is in a state of hallucination: “You hate because there is too much love in your heart! And your hatred is only the last sacrifice! ... For there is no higher love than someone who souls ... not life, but will lay down his soul for his friend! ... Do you remember this? Do you remember?” (Artsybashev/Арцыбашев, 1994, p. 324). And he strikes the second ghost who wants to prevent Shevyrev from the terrorist attack: “I cannot live, but when I die, I will remind them that they are mistaken, that they themselves are in the hands of the first, who there has enough courage and reason to get rid of hypnosis ... And you invented a love that became a bridle only to those who would not do evil ... I will show you that there is power more than love ... last, irreconcilable and deadly anger!” (Artsybashev/Арцыбашев, 1994, p. 327).

Shevyrev, however, did not have time to carry out the attack he had conceived. At night when the cops tried to arrest him, he barely managed to escape. Aladyev, on the other hand, became the victim of the police, who thought that the police had come to arrest him because of the hidden bomb and the revolver of his former comrade. Shevyrev, after a long police race, was almost able to trick them, finally trying to find shelter in the theater while being chased by the police. There, at the last moments of his life, he shoots well-dressed and well-fed spectators – those who cause workers’ disasters in his eyes.

Shevyrev was disappointed in the ability of the oppressed, enslaved to defend themselves against the enslavers, was disappointed in the propaganda of love and non-resistance to evil by violence. He decided to take revenge, to show by his example that there is not only the power of love but also the power of revenge and hatred. He does not need ideology; he does not need any organization – he enters into the last duel with the evil of the world no longer as the hero of the Garshinsky “Red Flower,” tearing three poppy flowers, thinking that he destroys evil all over the world. Shevyrev does not want to be a slave, does not accept enslavement. He wants to show all those who have not yet been able to assert their rights that this can and should be done on the basis of a personal decision and a personal act. In essence, however, it is he who is defeated. He does not achieve any change, since how can he be certain that the people he shot at in the theater were not attendants there by chance. There is no guarantee that these people are “well-dressed and fed,” meaning that they are, in Shevyrev eyes, work abusing bourgeoisies. And he went to the theater on occasion – that means if he became the first “who has the courage and reason to get rid of hypnosis ...” (Artsybashev/Арцыбашев, 1994, p. 327), if he began to show “... that there is power more than love ... the last, implacable and deadly malice!” (Artsybashev/Арцыбашев, 1994, p. 327), he didn’t fall into those who constitute a “system,” “public order” – his act becomes an individual act of revenge and desperate protest, even at the moment when he is in a position persecuted without hope of salvation.

The story of Shevyrev’s rebellion seems to continue Artsybashev’s polemic with Leo Tolstoy, sharply expressed a year earlier in his prose “Death to the Land.” The passive acceptance of the existing situation, the inability to act in a manner different than compassion, turns out to be a vulnerable point in the concept of a new generation writer both in the worldview and in the activities of supporters of the Tolstoyan philosophy. Embodying in his views the disagreement with the

philosophy of a passive attitude towards violence, Shevyrev comes to neglect those who are not able to free themselves from timidity and passivity; who are not able to defend themselves, to defend their rights. However, Shevyrev's recent actions are not admired, since the fact of chance is also reflected in them (he didn't carry out a terrorist attack, he enters the theater by accident, seeking refuge from the detectives chasing him so that he shoots the audience gathered there without any a specific goal and only because they are rich people who were able to buy tickets and dress up when the workers and their families are starving), spontaneity and complete isolation from those in whose name he acts. His individual revolt is based on the disappointment of both Tolstoy's philosophical concept and life practice, which he observes not only among sluggish intellectuals but also among oppressed workers who could not defend their rights to a proper position in society and lose even their basic human dignity.

Thus, Artsybashev's story casts doubt on two main directions that exist in the Russian environment of the early twentieth century and present two opposing concepts of how Russian society can / should be changed – and the belief in the self-sufficient saving force of everyone and everyone embracing “non-resistance to evil by violence,” and the ideologically aggressive and individually directed ideology and practice of terrorism. The story seems to raise the question of whether there is a “third path,” the contours of which, however, Artsybashev does not lead. This does not appear to be his goal. If he did this, he would just fall into an ideologist's position preaching some kind of concept that was correct in his opinion, would become the same “preacher” that L. N. Tolstoy, and the ideologists of terrorism. His “semantic gesture” to which he directs the reader of the story, is the question of whether one of the two opposing ideological concepts can effectively change the existing order as long as people remain as they are depicted as the heroes of the story – and Shevyrev, and Aladiev, and workers, and teachers ...

B. V. Savinkov's "The Pale Horse": analysis

The opposite is George's position, the main character in the work of B. V. Savinkov, "The Pale Horse." In this work, the hero changes his name, but neither his inner appearance nor the purpose of his activity changes. He is a terrorist and not an ordinary one, but just the leader of a group of terrorists who have to fulfill the task of a committee of an underground terrorist organization, which is to kill the Moscow governor-general. For him, freedom is the core value in the name of which he acts. The fact is that he thinks about his personal freedom first and foremost, and less about the freedom of others – be it members of his group, be it "people" or "workers," in whose favor, according to the ideas of the terrorists, social changes would take place. Indeed, several times in the text, George claimed that he does not want to be a slave. For example: "If I could, I would kill all the rulers and rulers. I do not want to be a slave. I don't want slaves to be." (Savinkov, 1909), putting himself in the first place.

George has participated in terrorist attacks several times. They are for him a matter of thorough preparation, good organization, evidence of excellent abilities, but to a certain extent, routine. This is evidenced at the very end of the story and the information with which the character comes from the committee, episodic in terms of the development of the plot of the text – Alexey Petrovich: According to the orders of the committee, the next terrorist attack should be prepared. It is this routine nature of the terrorist activity that makes George a professional terrorist, who, however, is interested in the fate of the members of his group. Still, they are primarily a "weapon" for him, without which a terrorist attack is inconceivable. At that moment, when he is interested in the motives that led others to join the organization, it seems that he is interested in them primarily because of his own doubts about whether he still wants to participate in the underground movement, whether he finds any excuse for his personal

participation in the movement, or whether the execution of representatives of the tsarist government makes any sense to him.

The diary form of the work bears witness that the protagonist essentially communicates only with members of the underground movement. He does not enter into conversations with either opponents or representatives of those segments of the population whose rights are protected by the terrorists as the purpose and meaning of their movement. The organization of the attack itself, the deliberation of the details of the preparation of the bomb, the organization of secret meetings, and the careful definition of the role of each member of a small group of terrorists are coming to the fore. The text does not depict the confrontation of the ideology of terrorism with other concepts of the liberation of the “people.” Still, it reveals the inner world and the internal antagonisms of the protagonist. The fact that this story is in the 3rd person, means that it is difficult to achieve this, i.e., some direct transmission of the emotional experiences of the subject becomes the subject of the protagonist’s diary notes transmitted in the text.

While the Artsybashev’s Shevyrev lost his girlfriend who took part in the terror, George met with a female character – Elena, who fell in love with him and became a member of his group. George finds this woman outside of the group he leads. He falls in love with her, and she becomes the only person outside the group to whom he is attached and who represents life outside the terrorist cell. Meetings with her and all the returning thoughts about her become an occasion for a certain variant splitting of his world to appear in George’s ideas. Until this time, the world was divided into the world of the poor and enslaved, on the one hand, and the world of the rich and the enslavers, on the other hand (from which he derived the ideological dogma that in the name of the enslaved it is necessary to kill the enslavers). Now, after meeting Elena, the division of the world is more acute, comprising a

world in terror without Elena, on the one hand, and a world with Elena without terror, on the other.

The new division of the world is essential: the initial vision of the world as divided by supra-individual factors creating social injustice was based on ideological postulates that did not take into account the combination of individual “happiness” with the public, or even the preference of the individual principle of a sense of duty to society. The attraction to such an opportunity, which was not taken into account with the ideological priorities of terrorism, gives George the opportunity to look at his life in a new way, imagine it differently, without fighting for others’ happiness, but to be happy himself. Until that time, a single idea of the future was breaking up, faced with an alternative. Such a split can also be associated with the death x life dilemma because in terror, he is to kill, and he himself is constantly threatened with the death penalty or death right during the preparation or implementation of the terrorist attack. And leaving terror does not only give him the opportunity to get rid of this threat, but also the opportunity not to kill others, and in the future, maybe even give life to a child. The moment of appearance of the alternative future is not new in the prose of that time, as indicated, for example, by V. I. Tyupa, exploring the stories of A. P. Chekhov: “The presence of an alternative way of life represents ... an invariant feature of the story, providing the very possibility of an identity crisis.”²

George’s doubts about the correctness of his future life path are intensified not only because of a sense of routine but also because he begins to feel only as an instrument in the hands of an anonymous

² ТюПА, Валерий Игоревич. 2017. Кризис как инвариантный конструктивный фактор жанра рассказа. В: *Кризисные ситуации и жанровые стратегии*. Сборник научных трудов., Москва: Эдитус, с. 62. [TJUPA, Valerij Igorevich. 2017. Krizis kak invariantnyj konstruktivnyj faktor žanra rasskaza. In *Krizisnye situacii i žanrovyje strategii*. Sbornik naučnych trudov. Moskva: Editus , p. 62.]

committee that can “remove” him when he does not fulfill the tasks assigned to him. George feels that he has become a “slave,” although he clearly decided that he never was and never would be. He even expressed the opinion that he would kill all the bosses. Suddenly they appear next to him, and someone disposes of him, without asking if he wants to act on their orders or not. However, there is another important factor influencing his opinion. George, after the lucky assassination attempt on the governor-general, sees that nothing has changed in public order and its essence. He observes that not only the “enemy” but also his fellow terrorists died, and people almost forgot about their victim: “The place where Vanya killed, surrounded by an iron grate. Crosses and icon cases behind bars. People rushing past. Rarely will a passerby cross a woman. The officer will salute with a casual hand. They have already forgotten about the murder. Only the police remember, of course, we remember. Vanya is being tried. They will talk, be silent, pronounce a sentence, hang” (Savinkov, 1909). Where is the meaning of the terrorist victims visible, where is the expected result? Where is the gratitude of those in whose name several people were killed? – These are the obvious questions that George faces for the first time in his life.

The chain of motives that gradually destroy George’s conviction of the rightness, along with his internal sense of terror, pertaining his involvement in the terrorist movement and in subordinating his actions to an anonymous committee to which he is subordinate and which can even take his life, is growing in this way. The more George approaches the final decision, the more attractive the idea of a normal, non-terrorist life becomes, and the sharper his sense of danger on Elena’s behalf. He is more and more jealous of Elena’s husband – Elena is married; Elena does not belong only to him. She does not promise him that she will love only him and that she will leave her husband. Nothing! A whole series of statements by Elena suggests that she accepts George rather as a lover. In a serious conversation on this

subject, Elena emphasizes this several times: "... I know: marriage is a habit of love, love is languid, without brilliance. And I want to love you ... I want beauty and happiness Why should I love one? ..."

(Savinkov, 1909). Even at the most crucial moment, when George insists that Elena decide whether she will leave her husband or not, he gets an answer that does not suit him: "And if I do not want to choose? ... Tell me why choose? ... I love you, George: You know it. But I will never be your wife" (Savinkov, 1909). Thinking about Elena's answers and his feelings for her, George internally solves the dilemma of his love radically: "I know one thing for sure: I cannot share love. I can't kiss if she kisses another. ... I like. And in my love, my right" (Savinkov, 1909). It turns out to be a strange parallel: Belief in social justice, love of freedom, and the oppressed gave George the right to kill representatives of the regime, but the same thing – the right! – he feels now.

The anticipation of the future can hardly be expressed more clearly in the text. In the hero's thoughts, there is an alternative to his future life, but in this alternative, he preserves the way of thinking instilled in him by the ideology of terrorism: there are rights that someone takes away from someone, you have to fight for these rights, and the struggle can be connected to violence with those who violate these rights. The old *modus operandi*, i.e., perceived right, justified violence: not only in the name of love for the "people" but also in the name of love for a woman, you can defend your rights by force.

And this is what happens – George, by chance meeting Elena's husband, kills him in a duel. Only the subsequent reflection of this event leads him to the question of whether it is even possible to draw straightforward parallels between terror and love. And only then does he stumble upon the difficulty related to solving the question of the possibility of justifying this type of murder: "... I killed a man ... Until now I had an excuse: I kill in the name of terror, for revolution. Those who drowned the Japanese knew how I am: death is needed for Russia.

But here I killed for myself. I wanted and killed. Who is the judge? Who will blame me? Who will justify? My judges are funny to me; their harsh sentences are funny. Who will come to me and in faith will say: you cannot kill, do not kill. Who dares throw a stone? There is no edge, no difference. Why is it good to kill for terror? Is it necessary for the fatherland, but impossible for yourself? Who will answer me?" (Savinkov, 1909)

Continuing his reflections on this complex issue, the hero finally understands that it was illegitimate to do this: "... why did I kill? What have I achieved through death? Yes, I believed: you can kill. And now I am sad: I killed not only him, I killed love too" (Savinkov, 1909). Frustrated, George is at an impasse – he refuses to go back to terror, not accepting the offer of Alexei Petrovich to head the preparation of the murder of the Minister of Justice, but, on the other hand, he also cannot love Elena after the murder of her husband. He is alone, he is with no one; he is not against anyone. Where, then, to look for the future, how to live? "I realized: I do not want to live anymore. I am bored with my words, my thoughts, my desires. I am bored with people, their life. There is a limit between them and me. ... As a child, I knew love – maternal affection. I innocently loved people, joyfully loved life. I don't love anyone now. I do not want and do not know how to love. The world is cursed and empty for me at one o'clock: all lies and vanity" (Savinkov, 1909). Having reached the last limit, George finds a solution in what accompanied him until that time. He resorts to the same method by which he wanted to take part in solving social issues and in resolving the issue of his love. He understood that freedom and love could not be gained through violence, he understood the fallacy of this path, but he could not find another way. There remains the last use of violence – resolving the issue of one's own life: "When the stars light up, the autumn night will fall, I will say my last word: my revolver is with me." (Savinkov, 1909)

Both of these works studied and delved into the ideology of terrorism in a realistic manner despite being works of fiction. They both depicted a participant in a terrorist movement, focused on the image of internal conflict, and in both stories, the main situation is created in which a lonely character acts in a crisis mental state, disappointed in what he considered a strong ideological basis for his actions – in the idea of terror as a means of liberating the oppressed.

Shevyrev sees how wrong he is in the willingness of workers to actively defend their rights, to oppose those who consider them to be masses without a will and without a sense of personal dignity. Scenes from the factory where workers come to ask for work, a conversation with the worker, which tells him of an unsuccessful attempt to confront the factory owners in the same way as the fate of the poor teacher who lost his job, and the dialogues of old people commenting on his behavior, i.e., the reappearing motives convincing Shevyrev of the pointlessly expended energy of terrorists/revolutionaries – all bring Shevyrev only one piece of information – the oppressed are not able to become free in the near future. The same feeling of despair, the absence of the desired and expected respect and gratitude, is seized by George when he sees that the place where the governor-general was killed does not cause much passersby's attention. It looms over him that those who died or will die due to his participation in the terroristic attacks will ultimately have little to no effect on the so-called "lower" and "upper" classes.

A reassessment of the former belief concerning the "enslaved" leads both protagonists to doubts about terror as an effective means of reversing public order and to the fact that they focus on their personal fate. In it, you can observe a significant difference that determined the actions of Shevyrev, on the one hand, and George, on the other.

Shevyrev loved, his beloved who also belonged to the terrorist movement, but she was executed. Shevyrev decided to avenge her death to follow the same path of individual terror. He confesses to

Liza's ghost on the last night of her life: "I decided this is the dream of my life since you died ... I consciously and joyfully go for it, because this is the only outcome of my hatred that crushes me! ... I believe in my truth the same way you believed in what you went for suffering and death ... This is not a calculation, not a theory, it's me myself ..." (Artsybashev/Арцыбашев, 1994, p. 323). Shevyrev, it seems that he's close to Vanya, George's comrade-in-arms, since both of them act on the same principle: "... there is no higher love than to lay down not your life but your soul for your own friends! ..." (Savinkov/Савинков, 1909; Artsybashev/Арцыбашев, 1994,) But this is not so. In a conversation with the second ghost, who is a representative of the oppressed, because Shevyrev reproached him for falling "... into a terrible mistake, thinking that hatred can serve the cause of love ..." (Artsybashev/Арцыбашев, 1994, p. 327), he answers with full awareness of why he decided on his act: "I am avenging myself! Understand this once and for all! ... I would take revenge on your unfortunate and happy, equally ruining life from two ends, if these unfortunate people were not too insignificant and did not die themselves ... I turned my hatred on those who consider themselves to be unpunished masters of life ... I can't live, but when I die, I will remind them that they are mistaken, that they themselves are in the hands of the first one who has the courage and reason to get rid of hypnosis ... I will show you what is power is more than love ... last, irreconcilable and deadly malice! ..." (Artsybashev/Арцыбашев, 1994, p. 327). Love for humiliation transformed into hatred towards both them and their oppressors, the desire to avenge personal insult when it no longer makes sense to live, the collapse of all ideas, the feeling of complete loneliness in the fact that he understood how things are essentially and that his "business" was gone, and that he could only go to his death as the last opportunity for protest, as well as revenge and an example to all those who have not yet understood the need for active resistance, which is obvious to the hero – these are the main

motives for the act Shevyrev. How much his actions fulfill these goals is partly doubtful – after all, in the theater he shoots those who are caught, in fact, by chance. Shevyrev does not die directly, but it is obvious that he will be sentenced to death: “Someone shouted at him, someone shook his shoulder, but Shevyrev’s eyes were hard and cold and looked with an expression incomprehensible as if he saw something that others could not see” (Artsybashev/Арцыбашев, 1994, p. 361).

In George’s case, another outcome becomes visible. The woman he is in love with is alive but married. Love is hindered by her husband. George, accustomed to the fact that violence is a way to eliminate those who constitute an obstacle to freedom, kills a young officer. It turns out that he not only “removed the obstacle” but also killed love. The decision to kill himself is not, in his case, a protest, nor a gesture of strength, but an act of complete disappointment in everything and everyone, including himself. Living no longer makes sense. There is no worthy respect for value; everything in his world is just a booth, cheating, a game. And he does not need to participate in it. Although in his case, a complete loss of the meaning of further life is planned, he does not intend to make his death a protest but wants to eliminate himself as a person without meaning in life, without a goal, without an ideal.

Both of these works that arose in the first decade of the twentieth century had three main motives for the so-called terrorists that alternate as fundamental: disappointment in terror and its results, love, and death. Love is a kind of catalyst: Shevyrev brings terror, George leads him out of it. The resolution of the internal conflict of both characters, who were disappointed for partly different, partly related reasons in terrorist activity and its impact on society, and the solution to the question of the meaning of life is death. In the case of Shevyrev, death is the last opportunity for revenge and active protest; in George’s case, it is the recognition of a complete collapse of life.

Both writers respond to social events and the results of a terrorist movement. Both characters of the analyzed works see that the terror did not lead to the expected results; both of them choose a hero associated with terror. Shevyrev sought at the beginning of the first Russian revolution a solution to an active personal struggle, but was disappointed in its sense at this stage, seeing the passivity and obedience of those to whom he wanted to bring “liberation;” he kills theatergoers who are accidentally caught on the scene, sacrificing his life thinking that in such a way he takes revenge on the “rulers,” and gives an example to the “enslaved.” George ends his life with a murder and subsequent suicide, motivated by complete despair, i.e., disillusion in everything and everyone. Although the outcome of both stories differs, the specific motivation for the actions of their heroes diverges to a certain extent, they are basically similar: both the ideology and the practice of terrorism are questioned, which led both heroes to crush the meaning of their life to the very brink of death.

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