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Abstract

In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"Throughout the works of literature, there constantly appear certain characters who, although merely products of an author's imaginative pen, make such a profound impression at first meeting that they live on further within the mind of the reader. They are those who are deliberately molded in such a way as to emphasize either main, or lesser, themes of a work solely by their own motivations and actions, as if divorced from all other activity. In this way, the theme itself, personified in the character, becomes an unforgettable *rondo*, playing itself again and again in our memory."

Cover Page Footnote

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THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION AND THE ANNIHILATION
OF THE INDIVIDUAL; CASE IN POINT—
PASTERNAK'S PASHA ANTIPOV

FRANKLIN L. KAMP

Throughout the works of literature, there constantly appear certain characters who, although merely products of an author's imaginative pen, make such a profound impression at first meeting that they live on further within the mind of the reader. They are those who are deliberately molded in such a way as to emphasize either main, or lesser, themes of a work solely by their own motivations and actions, as if divorced from all other activity. In this way, the theme itself, personified in the character, becomes an unforgettable *rondo*, playing itself again and again in our memory.

One such figure is Pavel Pavlovich Antipov, alias Commissar Strelnikov, the creation of Boris Pasternak, in *Doctor Zivago*. Here was a man who, although born of poverty in the tumultuous environment that was later to explode into the Russian revolution, appeared eminently successful in his life. Employed as a teacher in a provincial university, Antipov's future, with his loving and devoted wife and child, looked to be hopefully bright. Yet he was not happy; indeed he was restless and unsettled, even uncomfortable.

Leaving his family and position, Antipov joined the Russian army, was eventually taken prisoner and disappeared from sight.

Years later, when he returns, all traces of the shy, mischievous youth or the aspiring scholar or the successful husband have vanished. It is 1917 and Pasha Antipov is no more. Out of his grave steps Strelnikov, the hated ruthless leader of the Revolutionary army. Reputedly known as, "The Wild Beast" or "The Executioner," Strelnikov paves his way with bloodshed and suffering until finally, when the Party decrees that his usefulness is at an end, he is pursued into the Urals where, in front of a desolate cabin, he dies with a bullet in his head, by his own hand.

Why?

Pasternak, through the voice of Strelnikov or Antipov, gives reasons for this change in a man's life, but they are important only insofar as they contribute to a clearer comprehension of the central theme—the madness of the Revolution as it affected the individual. For not only was the old order overthrown, not only were existing social institutions scattered to the winds,

but truly every walk of life was obliterated, the world was thrown upside down, and man as man was lost in its confusion, as Pasha Antipov was. The new regime was welcomed and acclaimed but when it too was found

failing, there could be no turning back, no further upheaval. Fear and violence engendered a giant that had destroyed society and was now beginning to feed upon the individual — upon his conscience, upon his soul.

JAMES BOND:

INTERMEZZO

Majestic movements, tumultuous tomes, counterpoint
Of solid ideas have now the air their ponderous,
Oaken, creaking, hinge-sounds quit;
For this is the voice of reality—
The ordered creaking of the cosmos—
The *crescendo* and *diminuendo* of the market place of all.
Of the iron-forged, of the human personality strangled by its ties
Selling its soul to buy another length
And of the mind, the latter where the soul-bought sweet soaks the scalp
And not the buttockdown.

Ascending to the gap
The silver tongued flute
Now bends the air
And punctuates the tunnelled vowels
Of the English horn.
Together, in a coursing *diminuendo*
They create in a spiral, downward
Down,
Down,
Down,
Down,
Down into the river of *Tuonela*,
Sheathed in nothing but a vision,
An idea,
But more a liquid,
And are alone.